

NINETEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE
STATE OF LOUISIANA
DIVISION J, SECTION VIII

.
STATE OF LOUISIANA .
V. . DOCKET NO. 03-09-0429
GREG HARRIS .
.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

SENTENCING

THE HONORABLE TRUDY M. WHITE, JUDGE PRESIDING

APPEARANCES:	FOR:
PREMILA BURNS	STATE OF LOUISIANA
RONALD GATHE	STATE OF LOUISIANA
LEWIS UNGLESBY	THE DEFENDANT
LANCE UNGLESBY	THE DEFENDANT
SCLYNSKI LEGIER	THE DEFENDANT

REPORTED BY: TAPESTRY SMITH, CCR #24006

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

(DEFENDANT IS PRESENT IN COURT WITH COUNSEL)

THE COURT: BEFORE SENTENCING YOU, MR. HARRIS, I HAVE A FEW REMARKS THAT I'D LIKE TO MAKE. QUITE DISTURBING FOR THE COURT, IS THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU CONDUCTED YOURSELF AFTER THIS CRIME WAS COMMITTED. AFTER STABBING YOUR WIFE TO DEATH, YOU CONCOCTED AN ELABORATE RUSE IN AN ATTEMPT TO THROW OFF SUSPICION FROM YOURSELF. THE EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT AT 5:49 AM ON FEBRUARY 20, 2009, YOU MADE A FRANTIC 911 CALL. YOU STOPPED AN OFFICER WHO WAS PATROLLING IN HIS UNIT AND ASKED IF HE COULD CHECK YOUR WIFE'S LAW OFFICE. YOU INDICATED CHIQUITA DID NOT RETURN HOME THE PREVIOUS NIGHT. YOU INDICATED THAT THE LIGHT OF THE LAW OFFICE WAS STILL ON, WHICH YOU INDICATED WAS MOST UNUSUAL. YOU WAITED OUTSIDE OF THE STATE NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING UNTIL THE OFFICERS INFORMED YOU OF YOUR WIFE'S DEATH. YOU APPEARED TO BE SURPRISED WHEN YOU WERE TOLD THAT SHE HAD BEEN KILLED. THE CRIME SCENE WAS CONTAINED USING CRIME SCENE TAPE, THERE WERE UNIFORMED OFFICERS PRESENT AND MARKED POLICE UNITS. IN THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION, YOU CONSENTED TO BEING INTERVIEWED BY HOMICIDE DETECTIVES. THE EVIDENCE AT TRIAL REVEALED THAT THE NEWS OF YOUR WIFE'S DEATH SHOULD HAVE BEEN NO SURPRISE TO YOU. AS THE EVIDENCE SHOWED, YOU TOOK THE TIME TO GO HOME AND CLEAN UP THE NIGHT OF FEBRUARY 19, 2009 PRIOR TO RETURNING TO THE SCENE OF THE KILLING THE NEXT DAY. DNA EVIDENCE BELONGING TO BOTH YOU AND CHIQUITA WAS

FOUND ON A BLOOD SAMPLE TAKEN FROM A CLOROX BOTTLE IN YOUR HOME, WHICH YOU USED TO CLEAN UP. DNA BELONGING TO BOTH YOU AND CHIQUITA WAS FOUND IN A BLOOD SAMPLE TAKEN FROM PROTECTIVE SUNGLASSES IN THE CAR THAT YOU WERE DRIVING THAT NIGHT. THE EVIDENCE SHOWED THAT YOU REMOVED CHIQUITA'S GUCCI WALLET FROM HER PURSE THAT NIGHT AND LEFT IT ON MARINER STREET IN THE GARDERE AREA. YOU FIRST STATED TO THE HOMICIDE DETECTIVE THAT YOU WENT DIRECTLY HOME FROM THE STATE NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING. WHEN THE DETECTIVE SUGGESTED THAT RECORDS FROM A CELL PHONE TOWER CONFIRMED THAT YOU WERE IN FACT IN THE GARDERE AREA THAT NIGHT, YOU LATER ADMITTED TO BEING BLOCKS AWAY FROM WHERE HER WALLET WAS FOUND. YOU CLAIMED TO HAVE ATTEMPTED TO BUY STEROIDS FROM AN ASSOCIATE THAT LIVED IN THE GARDERE AREA. IT WAS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH THE GUCCI WALLET WAS TAKEN, CHIQUITA'S WATCH, HER ENGAGEMENT RING, DIAMOND STUD EARRINGS AND THE KEYS TO AN AUTOMOBILE WERE NOT TAKEN. IN FURTHERANCE OF THE PLAN, YOU MADE COVER-UP CALLS TO CHIQUITA'S CELLULAR AND LAW OFFICE PHONES. TO FURTHER CAST SUSPICIONS AWAY FROM YOU, NINETY-ONE STANDS OF BROWN EXTENSIONS, OR FALSE HAIR, WERE PLACED IN HER HAND. THIS COURT FINDS THAT THE PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED ACTIVITIES ARE ADDITIONAL AGGRAVATING FACTORS RELATING TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THIS CRIME WAS COMMITTED. CHIQUITA PATRECE TATE WAS A TENACIOUS LAWYER AND A FIGHTER. SHE FOUGHT AGAINST ADVERSITY FROM A YOUNG AGE. SHE DIDN'T BACK DOWN FROM TOUGH CASES, AND SHE DIDN'T BACK DOWN FROM A FIGHT. CHIQUITA TATE HAD

EXPERIENCE AS A BOXER. AT 5'6" AND 135 POUNDS, SHE WOULD BE CONSIDERED A LIGHTWEIGHT. AT 6'2" AND 225 POUNDS THEN, MR. HARRIS, YOU WOULD BE CONSIDERED A HEAVYWEIGHT. AS A LIGHTWEIGHT, CHIQUITA FOUGHT OUT OF HER WEIGHT CLASS THAT NIGHT, AND SHE WAS NO MATCH FOR YOU PHYSICALLY. THE STATE CALLED SOME FIFTY-FIVE WITNESSES AND INTRODUCED OVER THREE HUNDRED ITEMS INTO EVIDENCE. THE JURY HEARD TESTIMONY FROM A CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR, A FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST, ATTORNEYS, A HOMICIDE DETECTIVE, A DNA EXPERT, A CRIME LAB PROFESSIONAL, A LATEN FINGERPRINT EXPERT, A 911 OPERATOR, AN EMS WORKER, AN EMPLOYEE WHO WORKED IN THE STATE NATIONAL LIFE BUILDING, A PARKING LOT EMPLOYEE, THE CHANCELLOR OF THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER, CHIQUITA'S SISTER, A CELL PHONE REPRESENTATIVE, HER SECRETARY, WOMEN WHO TESTIFIED ABOUT PRIOR VIOLENCE, OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT PROFESSIONALS AND OTHERS. YOUR DEFENSE TEAM CALLED TEN WITNESSES. SOME OF THE WITNESSES THAT WERE CALLED ON YOUR BEHALF INCLUDED AN EXPERT IN HAIR EXTENSIONS, SEVERAL ATTORNEYS WHO KNEW YOU AND YOUR WIFE, A JUDGE AND A FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST. YOU EXERCISED YOUR RIGHT TO NOT TESTIFY AT TRIAL. ON FEBRUARY 19, 2009, CHIQUITA WAS ON THE ROPES, OR RATHER ON THE WALL AND ON THE FLOOR FIGHTING HER BIGGEST FIGHT. YOU WENT FOR THE KNOCKOUT PUNCH, CHIQUITA FIRED COUNTERSHOTS, AND SHE GOT UP BEFORE THE MANDATORY COUNT. THE EVIDENCE SHOWED SHE WAS A FIGHTER, BECAUSE SHE HAD NUMEROUS DEFENSIVE WOUNDS. SHE HAD THIRTY-ONE STAB WOUNDS, WOUNDS THAT WAS DEEPER THAN LONG.

THERE WERE TWELVE INCISED WOUNDS, WOUNDS LONGER THAN DEEP. TWO OF THE WOUNDS WERE FATAL. THE EVIDENCE SHOWED THAT THERE WAS BLUNT FORCE TRAUMA INJURY FROM A CLOSED FIST, FROM AN OPEN HAND AND FEET. CHIQUITA WAS FOUND ON HER BACK WITH COAGULATED BLOOD AROUND HER NECK. HER LEFT ARM WAS IN THE HALLWAY, HER LEFT LEG WAS IN THE COPY ROOM. MR. HARRIS, YOU ALSO HAD DEFENSIVE WOUNDS, FRESH SCRATCHES TO YOUR HANDS AND BACK. YOU EXPLAINED THAT THESE INJURIES WERE NORMAL EVERYDAY WORK INJURIES FROM HANDLING ANGLE IRON AND WEARING A SAFETY HARNESS. THE JURY THOUGHT OTHERWISE. THE EVIDENCE SHOWED THAT CHIQUITA PATRECE TATE FOUGHT WITH EVERYTHING THAT SHE HAD THAT NIGHT, AND WHEN SHE COULD NOT FIGHT ANYMORE, SHE WENT DOWN FOR THE FINAL COUNT. SHE COULDN'T GET UP BEFORE THE COUNT OF TEN, OR EVER AGAIN. MR. HARRIS, YOU WERE LEFT STANDING AND CHIQUITA WAS DEAD. SHE WAS STABBED TO DEATH IN SUITE 307, HER OWN LAW OFFICE, WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN HER SANCTUARY. ON THAT NIGHT, MR. HARRIS, YOU ZIGGED WHEN YOU SHOULD HAVE ZAGGED, AND BY ZAGGED, I MEAN YOU SHOULD HAVE SIMPLY WALKED AWAY. IN HINDSIGHT, SOME MAY SAY THAT CHIQUITA SHOULD HAVE THROWN IN THE TOWEL AND WALKED AWAY FROM THE RELATIONSHIP THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 27, 2007 WHEN SHE CALLED 911 TO REPORT THAT YOU HAD BATTERED HER. THE RECORD REFLECTS THAT SHE DID NOT LEAVE. INSTEAD, TWO MONTHS LATER, CHIQUITA TATE MARRIED YOU, A MAN WITH WHICH THE TRIAL RECORD REFLECTED PRIOR ACTS OF VIOLENCE TO TWO OTHER WOMEN. MR. HARRIS, YOU ELECTED TO EXERCISE YOUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT NOT

TO TESTIFY ON YOUR BEHALF. YOU ASSEMBLED A CAPABLE AND COMPETENT TEAM OF LAWYERS TO REPRESENT YOU. SOME WOULD SAY A DREAM TEAM. THROUGH THEIR PRE-TRIAL PREPARATION, THEIR CROSS-EXAMINATION OF THE STATE'S WITNESSES, THE DIRECT OF YOUR OWN WITNESSES, THEIR ADVOCACY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THEIR TRIAL STRATEGY, THEY WERE ABLE TO CREATE DOUBT IN THE JURORS' MINDS WITH RESPECT TO THE SPECIFIC INTENT REQUIRED OF THE SECOND DEGREE MURDER CHARGE. WHILE THE JURY DID NOT RETURN A VERDICT FOR SECOND DEGREE MURDER, THEY FOUND YOU GUILTY OR A LESSER CHARGE OF MANSLAUGHTER. AS JUDGE, IT IS MY DUTY TO SENTENCE YOU. IN THIS CASE, THERE IS NO WINNER TO DECLARE, NO HAND OF EITHER FIGHTER TO RAISE. YOU TOOK THE LIFE OF A LEGAL WARRIOR. YOU TOOK THE LIFE OF A GIFTED LAWYER. YOU TOOK A LIFE THAT WAS NOT YOURS TO TAKE, AND FOR THAT, SIR, YOU HAVE TO PAY. GREG HARRIS, PLEASE STAND FOR YOUR SENTENCE. AFTER CONSIDERING THE FACTORS SET FORTH IN CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE ARTICLE 894.1 AND APPLYING THOSE FACTORS TO THE RECORD IN THIS MATTER, THE COURT, ON THE CONVICTION OF MANSLAUGHTER, SENTENCES YOU TO A TERM OF IMPRISONMENT OF FORTY YEARS AT HARD LABOR. THE ENTIRETY OF THE SENTENCE IS TO BE SERVED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF PROBATION, PAROLE OR SUSPENSION OF SENTENCE. THE COURT WANTS TO INFORM YOU THAT YOU HAVE THIRTY DAYS TO ASK FOR A RECONSIDERATION OF YOUR SENTENCE, THIRTY DAYS TO APPEAL THE SENTENCE AND TWO YEARS TO FILE FOR ANY POST-CONVICTION RELIEF. THAT'S THIS COURT'S ORDER.

MR. LEWIS UNGLESBY: EXCUSE ME, JUDGE. CAN WE GET CREDIT FOR TIME SERVED?

THE COURT: CREDIT FOR TIME SERVED. YES, SIR.

MS. BURNS: THANK YOU, YOUR HONOR.

THE COURT: COURT IS ADJOURNED.

END OF TRANSCRIPT