

Good morning. Ah, we're going to identify everyone in the room here present. My name is Tim Donnelly. I'm the Assistant State Attorney in Charge of the Broward State Attorney's Office. Monica Hofheinz's, who is the Executive Director of the Broward State Attorney's Office. Tim Bronson, one of our Investigators and John Abrams another one of our Investigators. Also present is Ms. Ginger Downs.

TD: Timothy Donnelly, Assistant State Attorney  
MH: Monica Hofheinz, Executive Director  
TB: Timothy Bronson, Investigator  
JA: John Abrams, Investigator  
GD: Ginger Downs

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TD Hi Ginger.

GD Hi.

TD Ah, we are here because we had a, ah information that was provided to our office from an individual that detailed some serious allegations. Ah, and we've been investigating those allegations. Ah, I want to tell you up front that we're not proceeding criminally with respect to those allegations. Ah, so you would not face any type of criminal charge as a result of those allegations or any response or statement that you give to us today. Ah, what we intend to do at this time though is proceed administratively. And as part of that ah process, we are asking and compelling you actually to provide a statement to us regarding the allegations. What that means though is that since it's a compelled statement that ah, it's considered an involuntary statement in the sense that it could never, your answer, you could never have that answer used against you in any type of criminal proceeding. However, it could be used for or against you in any type of administrative proceeding. Okay. You're following me everything so far?

GD Yes, sir. Yes.

TD Okay. Ah, it's like a, ah, a Garrity statement in the sense that it's a compelled statement. Ah, there are ramifications if you decline to give one, you could face termination.

GD Yes.

TD Having said that though, we also offer you the opportunity if you need more time before you give this statement since you just found out about it within the last ten (10) minutes when you came up here to this ah, office, ah that we're asking you to provide us a statement. Ah, we offered you or I offered you the opportunity if you need a day or two (2) or you wanted to go talk to an attorney or someone before giving this statement, that

we would afford you that opportunity. Ah, and you had indicated that you wanted to go forward at this time. Is that correct?

GD Yes sir.

TD Okay. So you don't want to an opportunity to go speak to anyone about this? You're ready and comfortable to go forward now?

GD Yes sir.

TD Okay. Ah, let me just identify where we are. We're in the, ah, on the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor of the Broward County Courthouse in Room 610, the Organized Crime and Gang Unit Conference Room. Okay.

GD Yes sir.

TD Ah, could you tell me then ah, your, your boyfriend, how long have you known him and what is his name?

GD His name is Edward Barona.

TD Okay.

GD And I've known him for a little over 5 (five) years.

TD Okay. How's he employed?

GD He's not right now.

TD Okay. Has he ever been during your relationship?

GD Yes he has.

TD Okay. And then what was his occupation at that time?

GD Ah, he was a deliver person for a flower company.

TD Okay. Which one?

GD Ah, the Flower Shop. It's in Margate.

TD Okay.

GD Ah, he worked as a, as an as needed type of employee for ah, ah, Richard Iannelli.

TD And when was he employed at what the Flower Shop.

GD He was employed ah, I take that back he's had a few jobs. Ah, he was employed from approximately November 15 to just after Mother's Day 2015.

TD I'm sorry.

GD At the Flower Shop.

TD November of what year?

GD November 2014,

TD Okay.

GD I believe it was.

TD Through

GD he was hired.

TD Through Mother's Day of 2015.

GD 15, yeah.

TD So about a year and a half period.

GD Yeah, approximately.

TD Okay. During the other 3 ½ years that you've been in a relationship with him what other ah, jobs has he held?

GD He worked for ah, Niagara Foods over in Hollywood in their warehouse and he also worked with a company called Boca Systems

TD Okay.

GD in the shipping department

TD Alright. How's he currently employed?

GD He works as needed with ah, Rich Iannelli.

TD Doing what?

GD They do ah, they tear down ah, construction sites, homes, businesses and then they refurbish.

TD Okay. So it's just whenever there's a call, he'd goes and (inaudible)

GD As needed. Yes. He's, he's diabetic. He's very ill so he's almost pretty much unable to work.

TD Is he on disability of any type?

GD No sir.

TD Okay. Is he qualified for disability?

GD I don't even know.

TD Okay. How long have you been employed by the State Attorney's Office?

GD Twenty-three (23) years.

TD Okay. And your current position is what?

GD Ah, Support Staff Supervisor in Drug Trafficking.

TD How long have you held that position?

GD I'm gonna say probably Twenty (20) years or so.

TD Okay. Ah, and what are your duties and responsibilities within that position?

GD Ah, Supervise support staff

TD Okay.

GD And I am also the assistant to the ASA in Charge.

TD And that would be John

GD John Gallagher.

TD Gallagher.

GD Yes sir.

TD Ah, what are some of the, the, duties that you do within that unit though?

GD Ah, we take cases from beginning to end, starting with investigation, ah search warrants, ah, we charge individually with drug, ah, individuals with drug trafficking charges ah,

crime lab ah, basically we take our investigations from the beginning stage to the end prosecution stage.

TD Okay. The Drug Trafficking Unit, do they only handle the 15 (fifteen) year trafficking amounts?

GD Ah, no. We handle ah, anything over the three (3) year minimum mandatory amounts.

TD So you're handle the five (5) year amounts also and the fifteen (15)?

GD Correct. Yes.

TD Okay.

GD Ah, except the first yeah, seven (7)

TD Seven

GD (Inaudible).

TD Okay. Ah, approximately how many cases would you say you, the unit currently has? Pending ah filed cases if you know.

GD Ah, pending filing cases.

TD Pending cases that are filed.

GD Ah, I'm going to guess maybe three (3) to four (4) hundred.

TD Okay. Now as part of your duties ah, you've taken the paperwork and you put the case together then give it to the attorney, right?

GD Yes sir.

TD Then you also subpoena witnesses for either motions or hearings or trials.

GD Yes sir.

TD Okay. Ah, do you participated in any way in the substantial assistance ah, that is conducted in the Unit.

GD Only the setting up of sub, substantial assistance.

TD Okay. So do you keep a log on who comes in and provides substantial assistance or ah, the tapes. Do you keep track of the tapes of the substantial assistance meeting?

GD We obtain them from the file. They're not housed with me personally.

TD Just in the files?

GD Yes.

TD Okay. But do you keep a log of who comes in and provide substantial assistance?

GD A log, no sir.

TD Okay. Ah, what programs do you have access to as the secretary in the unit?

GD I have access to SAFES, which is our State Attorney's Office

TD Okay.

GD computer system. I have ah, the Clerk of the Courts. I have the jail. I have ah, WORD, which is our word processing. Ah, I do have the Internet.

TD Do you have DAVID on your computer?

GD I do have DAVID, yes sir.

TD Okay. Do you have any other ah, programs on your computer that ah, certain other people don't have without permission?

GD No.

TD Okay. Ah, as part of your, your job, do you have to access ah, like BSO Pics or information regarding detainees that you're prosecuting?

GD Yes.

TD Okay. What about ah, do you have to ever go on the Department of Corrections website to check on individuals that you're bringing back from prison or to see who's on probation?

GD Yes sir.

TD Okay. What about ah, warrants. Do you ever have to access warrants as part of your, your duties there to see if someone has a warrant?

GD I'm able to do that through ah, through Odyssey, which is the Clerk of the Courts.

TD Okay.

GD Yes.

TD What about through the BSO ah, Leads ah, website?

GD I personally have never, now let me think cause I don't want to answer this wrong now. I would say yes. I, through BSO Lead. No I don't think I've ever like searched it.

TD Okay.

GD Ah, to my recol, to my knowledge right now, no.

TD Okay. Does Eddie have any criminal history?

GD Yes he does.

TD Okay. Would you describe it please?

GD He was ah, arrested for Drug Trafficking

TD Okay.

GD And he served time in, in prison.

TD Okay. Did your unit handle that case?

GD I don't think so. I believe it was Chester McCloud. He was never assigned to Drug Trafficking.

TD Okay. You didn't know Eddie at the time that he was prosecuted?

GD No sir.

TD Okay. When did you meet him?

GD I met Eddie about five (5) years ago. We met through Facebook.

TD Okay. And when did you become aware that he had a criminal history?

GD Ah, I knew he had a criminal history when we met.

TD Okay. How did you find out?

GD Somehow or another ah, he had a violation of probation and I know that it did come to our unit ah, and I'll be honest with you I don't know who handled it. From what I recalled it was Chester McCloud that handled his case.

TD Okay. The violation of probation was that after he had been out of prison or was that the basis for him going to prison?

GD That was the basis of him going to prison.

TD Okay.

GD He had, he had been arrested for a, ah, he had been arrested by Hollywood for the Drug Trafficking.

TD Okay.

GD And then he ah, ah, he posted bond et cetera and then apparently Plantation was, was also watching him. Ah, but did not know that he had been arrested by Hollywood and ah, they then did a search, served a warrant on his house, but he was only charged with possession at that point.

TD Okay. What type of drug was it?

GD Cocaine.

TD Okay. Did you ever after you started ah, your relationship with him talk to him about ah, the deliver or the trafficking in cocaine? Or the possession?

GD Yes, sir.

TD Okay. Did you ever have a concern that he had this record in the past? I want it to stay in the past or is he gonna keep doing this in the future. Did you have that conversation?

GD We, we have, we have talked about it, yes.

TD Okay

GD Ah,

TD Has he assured you that that's in the past?

GD No.

TD Okay. Do you know whether or not he is continuing to deal drugs?

GD I, I'm going to venture to say yes.

TD Okay.

GD Unfortunately.



TD Okay. How do you know that? What is it that you've seen that leads you to think that?

GD Ah, I have been with him when he has done what he does.

TD Okay. When?

GD A lot.

TD Okay. When was the last time?

GD Ah, (exhaled). We were there last night.

TD Okay. Tell me

GD For himself though.

TD Alright, but tell me what happened.

GD He went into his supplier's house and got his recreational supply, I guess you could say.

TD Okay. Do you know his supplier?

GD Yes.

TD Okay. How long has this been going on in your relationship?

GD Sadly, throughout the course.

TD Does John know? Gallagher?

GD No.

TD Have you been present with him when any transactions were conducted where you were actually there?

GD Yes.

TD Did you ever supply him any money or receive any money when the transaction was conducted?

GD Just to assist him with getting what he was getting and then he gave it right back to me. And it was not, I mean it was, you know small amounts.

TD Okay.

GD Unfortunately.

TD Okay. This was he using or was he dealing?

GD It's both.

TD Okay. The times that you were with him when he went to pick up or did he go to pick up drugs or to sell drugs when you were with him?

GD Unfortunately, both.

TD Okay. When you went with him and he sold drugs, ah, were they done in the car or were they done outside of the car, in a house or where you present with him?

GD Ah, present with him, if, if he met somebody in the car, yes. Ah, I've never been inside of a house or anything like that where he's done a transaction, no.

TD Okay. Did you ah, know the people that he was dealing with?

GD Ah, before our relationship, no.

TD Okay.

GD But, I mean I've met them through him.

TD Okay. When you, when he would, let's, let's separate the two. When he would go buy drugs

GD Yes sir.

TD from someone, did you know the seller that he was buying from?

GD Yes, after he introduced us.

TD Okay. And you knew when he went there that that's what he was going there to do?

GD Sadly, yes sir.

TD Did you ever give him any money to buy the drugs?

GD Small amounts on a, on occasions, yes.

TD Okay. Now when he was selling drugs, were you ever with him when he sold drugs to individuals?

GD If, if the transaction took place where he was meeting somebody in a car, yes.

TD Okay. And you knew a head of time that that was what was going to happen?

GD Unfortunately, yes sir. I did.

TD Did you know any of the buyers?

GD Personally, other than through him no.

TD Were they regular buyers?

GD Ah, yes, yes.

TD Okay. So they weren't just someone randomly that he would drive up to on the street. There was usually an arrangement made where he would go and meet with them and you would be going with him.

GD Unfortunately, yes.

TD How many times did that happen, Ginger?

GD It's, it's been a lot Tim. Unfortunately.

TD And it's, and it's still going on?

GD Yes.

TD Now, the selling of the drugs ah, that's also going on still?

GD Yes.

TD Why are you participating in that?

GD I'm going to be honest with you. Because I'm, he, he forces me to go.

TD How?

GD He, we, we end up fighting and he wants me to be with him. And I've explained to him, you, you, if we, God forbid ever get caught, I'm going to lose everything. I'm going to lose everything. And, and you're right, it's a very, very, very, very bad core decision on my part. I understand that. I get that. And believe me I'm embarrassed. I love the man. I love the man. He has a problem. He knows he has a problem.

TD Well

GD And unfortunately, this is, this is how he supports unfortunately his problem.

TD Okay. How much money does he make off this?

GD It's not a large amount.

TD Okay. How frequently would you guys go out to sell drugs during a two (2) months period? How many times would you go out?

GD I, I would say two (2) times a week maybe, three (3) times a week, but not on a regular basis.

TD Okay. And how many times would he go out to purchase them? From his suppliers?

GD He would, for himself, I'm gonna say at least five (5) nights a week.

TD Okay. Have you ever been pulled over by the police during one of these times that you were out together?

GD No sir.

TD Have you ever used your identification to ah, not be ah, to when an officer pulled you over to, to escape a predicament?

GD No sir.

TD Okay. Ah, have you ever provided him any information regarding any of the people that he is either purchasing from or selling to?

GD He, there are two (2) people that are currently in custody, yes that, that he one person he would buy pills from ah, and then one person that he would take with him occasionally because the gentleman does not drive. He doesn't have a license.

TD Okay. Were they

GD But this was, this was quite a while ago.

TD Okay. But what information did you provide him?

GD Provide?

TD Eddie, about them.

GD About them. Only that they had been arrested and taken into custody.

TD Okay. And what, what, where did you get that information from?

GD Well, one of the gentleman actually, he saw on t.v., he told me that the guy had been arrested. Ah, and then after I reviewed the jail, I'd run a jail log to assure that we get all of our cases, our booking sheets and everything on a regular basis like we should. Ah and I saw the name of another gentleman. That got

TD That had been arrested.

GD Yes sir.

TD Then you told Eddie that?

GD I told him that he was in custody, yes.

TD Okay. And what was the point of telling him that?

GD Just the fact that he knew him.

TD Okay.

GD He had told me, Eddie had told me in the past that ah, that he knew that this guy had been in trouble. That he had open warrants for him et cetera. The guy and his girlfriend actually took off because I guess he felt like he was gonna get caught so they took off out of the state of Florida. I don't really, I mean, you know Eddie said that ah, in the past this gentleman had ah, I guess stolen credit cards from somebody that he was working for and that he use to make, not Eddie.

TD Uh, huh.

GD The gentleman would you know go and purchase

TD (Inaudible) who is Eddie's source?

GD His name is

TD I'm sorry.

GD

TD what?

GD I don't know his last name.

TD Okay. And you've met him.

GD Yes.

TD Okay. And how much, I mean, Eddie was dealing himself so how much is he getting from his source to deal?

GD Honestly, I really, it's not a large amount. Ah, I know that he does have ah, his the people that Eddie sells to ah, would just, you know single I guess recreational. What they would call recreational u. I don't know. They're, they're not it's not kilos. It's not large amounts. It's like you know little baggies or whatever.

TD Okay. Did Eddie buy it already prepackaged? The bags or did he package it himself?

GD He bought it prepackaged.

TD He bought it prepackaged?

GD Yes.

TD Okay. Ah, and this was cocaine?

GD Yes sir.

TD Were there any other drugs?

GD The only other thing that I know about was ah, he has people that call him to get pills. But that, that was not, for the most part it was cocaine. The pills were not a regular thing.

TD Now Ginger, you're in the Drug Trafficking Unit.

GD I know Tim.

TD And you know that this guy is a supplier to drug dealers. Did name ever come across your desk?

GD No sir.

TD Did you, I mean you deal with law enforcement all the time. Ah, the, the, the drug detectives around the County and you had information that a supplier of drugs to other suppliers existed and you did not tell anyone that.

GD Yes sir.

TD Why?

GD I don't have a good answer for you.

TD Did you ever

GD I really don't.

TD Did you ever use your position in the ah, Drug Trafficking Unit to help these guys?

GD No sir.

TD Well do you think by not telling law enforcement that you were helping them when you knew they existed?

(Pause)

TD I mean you deal with the undercover guys that come to you all the time. They're doing undercover operations.

GD I know.

TD And people are then doing substantial assistance after they're arrested. And not only is your boyfriend buying from this guy but officers that are undercover working these people that you know about, you do not share that information with them. Did you ever have a concern that any of them could be hurt by that individual because of some deal that was going on?

GD Absolutely.

TD Why didn't you bring the information forward? Why did you remain in Drug Trafficking Unit when you knew this stuff was existing?

GD I don't have a good answer for you.

TD Well, you could have asked to go to any other unit. I mean other than Drug Trafficking. Why did you stay in Drug Trafficking for twenty (20) years? Were you cultivating any type of relationships out there?

GD No sir.

TD How many, how many transactions you think you've been involved in over the years? You're saying two (2) a week. Are you saying a hundred (100) a year over five (5) years?

GD It's, it's a lot. It's a lot.

TD Were you ever concerned that someone could get hurt during one of these transactions?

GD Absolutely.

TD Did Eddie carry a firearm during them?

GD No sir.

TD Did he have a firearm?

GD No sir. To my knowledge no.

TD Okay. Do you know

GD I do.

TD Okay. Were you ever present with when any of these transactions occurred?

GD was the gentleman that he would take from time to time.

TD Okay. Did you know that had warrants outstanding?

GD I did.

TD And this was when you guys were present?

GD Yes.

TD Okay. Did ever have law enforcement approach you with and not tell law enforcement that you had someone,

GD No sir.

TD a wanted person with you?

GD Absolutely not.

TD Okay. Now you knew where was. Why didn't you notify law enforcement that he had a warrant outstanding, this person that you were with?

GD Again, I don't, I don't have a good answer for you?

TD Did you ever sell any of the drugs on your own without Eddie?

GD Absolutely not.

TD Did you ever go buy them by yourself, make an errand for him or run to go get them for him?

GD Absolutely not.



TD Cause you always, but you always with him? Now he may have bought them went by himself, but every time that you were involved in a transaction it was you were with Eddie.

GD A lot of times, yes.

TD Okay. You said that you had conversations with him about that this could cost you your job if, if anyone ever found out. So you knew the dangers and the ramifications of what you were doing.

GD Yes I did. Unfortunately, yes I did.

TD Why do it? Why do it if you knew it.

GD Tim, I can honestly tell you that he knew that I didn't want to go. He, he knew, he knows that I'm against what he does, unfortunately like I stated he has a problem. I, I was

TD I understand his problem.

GD I know, I know.

TD But I don't understand why his problem is become your problem.

GD My problem. You're right. It is. It's a hundred (100) percent my problem. I'm wrong.

TD Did he force you to do anything?

GD He forced in that he use to get very upset with the fact if I told him I did not want to go.

TD Well he knew what you did.

GD Yes he did.

TD You could have easily broke off your relationship with him.

GD You are right, I could.

TD Why didn't you?

GD Because I love him.

TD Love him enough to commit crimes with him.

GD I understand what you're saying and I don't disagree with you, really. I'm not, I'm not a bad person. I have fallen in love with this man. He has a problem. I get it. I understand.

TD Could you describe the problem that he has because I'm not understanding that aspect?

GD He, he is addicted to cocaine.

TD Okay. So he's not just a dealer he is a user also.

GD Yes he is.

TD Is he selling them to support his habit?

GD Yes he does.

TD Okay. Have you attempted to get him any type of assistance with his problem?

GD I have offered. Yes sir.

TD Okay. He's not interested in it?

GD It's ah, I'm gonna say it's not that he's not interested. Ah, I kind of think that ah, he does want help, but it's he has no insurance. He can't afford it. And personally I just don't think he's ready to give it up. His mind is not there. His head is not there.

TD Okay. Let's separate the use from the selling.

GD Yes sir.

TD Because I can understand someone having an addiction.

GD Yes.

TD But you also know that he is part of the problem out there because he's a seller. In the unit you've worked in for twenty (20) years the irony isn't lost on anyone here. The gravity of that situation. How can you be part of that Ginger?

GD Tim, I understand what you're saying.

TD I don't think you do.

GD You, yeah, I do. Yes I do. Yes I do. Yes I do. Yes I do. And, and I'm wrong. I'm wrong. I personally, unfortunately have allowed this, him to continue what he's doing. Okay. Because I'll be honest with you, I'm afraid of him. I'm afraid of him.

TD In what way?

GD He's a big man.

TD Has he ever

GD And (inaudible).

TD has he ever been violent toward you?

GD He is verbally aggressive, yes. Hit me, absolutely not.

TD Okay.

GD Ah, and unfortunately and this I'm going to say yes I'm, I am verbally abused.

TD Okay.

GD Most definitely.

TD Does he have any other suppliers other than

GD Ah, the only other person that I know of is ah, which is who he used to get his pills from.

TD Okay.

GD Or other people.

TD Okay. And where is now. Is he still active?

GD He's in custody.

TD He's in custody. Being prosecuted by your unit?

GD No sir.

TD Okay. For something else?

GD Yes sir.

TD Okay.

(Pause)

JA During the times that you were with Eddie when he was buying or selling

GD Yes sir.

JA He was with I'm sure that, did they know what you did for a living?

GD Yes.

JA Did any of them ever ask you about undercover operations or who were the police were?

GD No sir.

JA Nobody ever brought that up?

GD No sir.

TB You had indicated that there was somebody that had credit cards and had a warrant

GD Yes sir.

TB for them. Did you ever access any data bases to tell your boyfriend that there is a active warrant for that person?

GD I'm gonna say that I saw it there,

TB Did you (inaudible)

GD but Eddie, Eddie did tell me, yes,

TB Okay.

GD that knew had a warrant out for him. Yes. He, was, the one that provided the information to us.

TB Okay. Did you ever access any data bases in this office to confirm that?

GD I, yes I did. I saw it in the clerk's office.

TB Okay.

JA That was in Odyssey then?

TB Odyssey?

GD Yes sir.

TB Okay.

MH Did you access any of our computer systems that you have been provided access to, to get any information to share with Eddie

GD Ah, I, honestly, yes. I did. Once he, once [redacted] was arrested, okay. And, and we were then told he was arrested. Because we did not know. Okay. Yes. I did see the ah, police report, the P. C.

MH Okay. So you went to, you looked for it?

GD After we found out that he was in custody, yes.

MH Were there any other occasions where you used our systems, the clerk's system or BSO Pics to obtain information to provide to Eddie?

GD No.

MH On anyone else?

GD No sir. Ah, no ma'am. I'm sorry. Excuse me. No.

MH Do the other secretaries in your unit, are they aware of your relationship with Eddie?

GD They're aware of the relationship, yes.

MH And of Eddie's past?

GD That I don't know. I have not given them. The only, I take that back. Excuse me. Yes. Denise and I did speak, but she does not know that it was in reference to drug trafficking.

MH Okay.

GD She knows that he was arrested ah, I believe that I did not tell her that he did serve time in prison. If she looked that information, if, if she got that information it's because she looked it up herself. I didn't provide that.

MH Did you ever have Eddie, bring Eddie or entertain Eddie to our office?

GD He was here once, yes. And I'm trying to think why he was here? He was, yes. He's been here once.

MH And when he was here was he privy to any activities in your unit. Were there undercover officers coming in? Were there statements being taken.

GD No.

MH Was anything like that occurring while he was here, you knowing that he was a drug current dealer and seller?

GD No.

MH Okay.

TB I got one other thing, have you ever disclosed to Eddie the names of any police officers, undercover officers or anybody providing substantial assistance?

GD No.

TB Okay.

TD You want to have her wait right outside here?

MH Yes.

TD Okay.