

Blood Town S1-E11

Shift the Blame

[00:00:00] **Penny:** The following interview contains opinions that may not reflect those of Blood Town.

I'm Penny DearIn, and this is Blood Town.

Carson: Well, I'm an open book. There's really nothing that I have to like hide in this situation at all, you know, I've been pretty quiet for the past year about it, you know, the only people I really talk to are like immediate family and the GBI ..Kind of have a lot of information, to share about this situation, just because I think, you know, I'm one of the only, maybe like one or two or three other people like really know all three of all, three of, you know, Clark, Marianne and Marcus well.

I certainly appreciate you, though, letting me on here and kind of share my side of the story.

Penny: This is Carson, Marcus Lillard's son with his first [00:01:00] wife. He's a musician who recently moved away from Milledgeville. Carson reacted to the interview with Abigail White.

Carson: The best way to handle this is for me to kind of come on here and then clear up a lot of the false truths.

And also, just kind of explain who dad is as a person. And like really once you figure out kind of who he is, it makes sense why, you know, he would have somebody who he only met once on a trip to Key West, you know? Why that's the person that's like explaining his side of the story. Cause he kind of just collected people like that, you know, and especially kind of at that time in his life, you know, right before I would say in the year or so, leading up to that situation, I had tried to be pretty close with him and took over a lease for him, the summer before that in 2018, because he was never in town and not able to afford the rent anymore.

Penny: And that was up on the Hill?

Carson: Yeah, and that was up on the Hill. Over that summer was [00:02:00] when it really, when I realized that my dad was really too far gone; he had always really been a sick person, but during that time, he was really just diving off the deep end with psychedelics. I was 19 years old working a full-time salary job, and I would come home from work at 11 o'clock at night and had to be back the next morning, and he would just have a bunch of random people just over at the house where I was paying the rent. He was doting out drugs to people that you know, didn't really, I could tell, didn't really know what they were getting into.

He carried around this like vape pen, this like THC, wax pen, but it had DMT in it and he would, you know, go up to people and just say, you want to hit that. And then not after they hit it, he would tell them, you know, that it was DMT. So yeah, all of this happens in 2018 with that, and kind of going off the deep end, going really crazy.

And the big thing was like, you know, him saying that he doesn't like synthetic drugs is very false because he was a rabid [00:03:00] like cocaine addict for well over 20 years, I would say. I think when he was about 18 years old, he got arrested for selling crack. He was always selling drugs my whole childhood, like looking back now I can see; I remember so many times of drugs being around or him carrying around big wads of cash, you know, and this is not long before this incident happened, but I would say about, you know, a year or two before the incident, he kinda cut it off because he got in trouble and he was already on, you know, felony probation for about 15 years cause he had commuted a drug trafficking charge into probation and rehab.

But he, I mean, he, he had already been convicted of felony drug trafficking of cocaine and all the while was a heavy user.

Penny: I've heard this before that it was about a year or a little bit more than that, where people saw like a big shift or change in Marcus.

Carson: Right. And it was, you know, he went from being this, in his own words, a kingpin, [00:04:00] and he was doing it, you know, and he had a lot of attention from police and GBI and stuff. And then I think it just got too hot for him. And so right around that time. Yeah, about a year or two, before that he started hanging out with Marianne, you know, and then yeah. Started going on ayahuasca trips. Doing a lot of DMT, a lot of mushrooms.

Like I was 18 years old and he would show up at my house at midnight and be like, hey man, I got all these mushrooms, come eat some with me, and then verbally berate me for not doing it. Yeah. And that's, you know, everybody around him at that time was really starting to separate away from him. From what I understand, he was telling people that he was only sleeping like an hour or two at night, even like a month leading up to the incident.

He was not sleeping and just doing a lot of psychedelic drugs, and then pairing that with cocaine or ecstasy.

Penny: It sounds like that shift wasn't necessarily that he stopped doing cocaine. He just kind of added the psychedelics onto it. He just stopped selling it.

Carson: Right. Yeah. Yeah. He stopped selling it, you know, really stopped caring about [00:05:00] making money at all.

He was, you know, he was down there in South America a lot, talking to gurus and shamans. And even here in America, he went on like some bus tour, gotten people through an ayahuasca trip. And so, this was kind of where he was at. And when I was at really found out through having Clark as a therapist, which, I mean, I guess we kind of haven't started diving into this, but, you know, one of the things that were like that he had lied to Abigail about. And I guess, you know, in some ways, I guess he's lying to himself about is he did not introduce me to Clark, who first of all was not a psychiatrist. He was a psychologist. And so because of, you know, the years of abuse from my dad verbally and psychologically.

You know, he can really just belittle you and bully you; you know, from years of that going on and the situation when I was about 14, when, you know, he flipped out because I moved

in with him for a little bit. That was completely miserable. I wanted to do joint custody and see both of my parents for a week on and week off.

He got really angry when I [00:06:00] brought up, you know, maybe the fact of meeting in the middle of going halfway and kicked me out of his house.

Penny: How old were you when that happened?

Carson: I was 14. And he was, you know, he was like, if you wanna, you know, he was like, you know what, if you want to see your mom that much, you just go live with her, and you don't have to deal with me.

And he would spend hours and hours verbally going in on, he did it to everybody, you know, it was, you know, it's what narcissists do, but you know, he was doing it to me as a kid and at that time I was already seeing Clark. So, I started seeing him twice a week then, once I was back living with my mom, dad had kicked me out, wouldn't have anything to do with him.

And so, the first time that he met Clark was...Clark wanted to bring that in for a therapy session, you know, for all three of us to sit down together for Clark to kind of mediate the situation.

Penny: I bet that was tense.

Carson: It was, it was horrible. You know, and Clark was really just trying to give me the opportunity for really the first time in my life to speak for myself.

It didn't take 10 or 15 minutes [00:07:00] for dad to become extremely angry and he starts screaming. And had to be escorted out of the building. And that was the first time that he met Clark. Clark, you know, retired shortly after that. I was about 16 years old and I didn't, I didn't speak to him for a couple of years, you know, you know, him saying that Clark and I maintained a close friendship, really wasn't very true.

Every now and then we would text or whatever, you know, I would, I would call him from time to time and ask for his wisdom on the situation 'cause he was just, he was just somebody that I thought very highly of and. You know, and through, you know, therapy sessions with him, I kind of got to understand my father better and that, yeah, my father was a narcissist and a master manipulator.

He would just spend hours and hours and hours trying to say the worst things that he could to like beat you down, you know? And he, you know, and he did this to my mother, my stepmother, both of my step siblings, his own brother, you know, you know that, and that's why, you know, nobody really wants to speak on his behalf because, you know, he just caused a lot of pain [00:08:00] to basically everybody around him.

Penny: Because your parents got divorced when you were really young. Right?

Carson: I was about a year old. And the reason why was because he was, he was off doing cocaine, like, and not being a dad; basically the whole time up until mom got pregnant, they had the most wonderful relationship.

He was a loving person, you know, he was probably the best version of himself that he ever has been, and then shortly after I was born, when he started selling cars, he made friends with this guy who was kind of a rich kid who always had weed, had blow on him and they were, yeah. And they would just go off and do wild stuff, you know, while I was, you know, at home with my mom and.

You know, and she just felt alone, you know? And, and he was 22 years old, you know, and I that's hard, but you know, he just wasn't there for her. And so, she left him. I don't know if he showed the side of himself that he showed me to everybody, but I know if I know if he showed it to a lot more [00:09:00] people, like a lot more people would be wary of him.

And that was a conversation that I had with Marianne September of 2018 when I finally was done with him. He had her reach out to me and basically, you know, tell me that I needed to, you know, respect my elders more. And I was like, look like this guy has like, caused me pain my whole life; it's made it really hard.

And I was like, I don't, I don't know why he hasn't like he's been able to control himself really well with her up until that point where she didn't see that angry darkness. I told her, I was like, you're gonna to see it and it'll make you change everything you know because up until that point when it gets there, like, you know, he does seem like a totally harmless person.

That's a mask.

Penny: Tell me about the first time that you met Marianne.

Carson: You know, I couldn't, I honestly couldn't really tell you the first time I met Marianne, but I thought really highly of Marianne and she was a really beautiful person. When I first met her, I was like everything in me and just wanted to [00:10:00] say like, just get away, like you're too good for this man.

And, and, you know, he only proved that right when, I mean, he just spent their whole relationship, just kind of mooching off of her for a free ride. You know, he would work for like a week, every other month, as far as he was staying in her house and going on trips with her for free and whatever money, you know, she wasn't spending to feed his life.

You know, he was borrowing from my grandfather, but I mean, I thought, I always thought really highly of Marianne and, you know, she was doing a lot of great things. I felt like, and was a very smart and educated person, but because of how valuable she was to him as that free ride, he made it a point to, you know, manipulate that situation, the best that he could,

Penny: What do you think that she saw in him?

Carson: He was fun. You know, he was a lot of fun for her, I think. And almost like an escapist kind of thing. Like, you know, he kind of just made her feel young again, you know, even though they were in this relationship [00:11:00] together, he was actively having sex with a lot of different women.

Penny: Do you know, if she, and he had an open relationship, do you think that she agreed that he could be sleeping with these other women? Or was she unaware?

Carson: From what he told me, she wasn't a very big fan of it, but he, you know, had it in his head that it was just in his nature to be that way. And that that's just how he was. And that she was just gonna have to deal with it. And I mean, when I moved into the Hill I guess in May, 2018, and they had already been together for about a year at that point.

I mean, I cleaned out all his stuff for him and I found drawers full of S&M equipment and masks and gear. You know, and I, I threw it all away. When I did that, he told me that that was stuff that was going on with another woman he was involved with. And, you know, he was constantly texting several women all the time and telling them anything that they wanted to hear and, you know, and painting them this picture [00:12:00] of I'm this, you know, super free, loving pacifist, hippie, or whatever, but, you know, and then when they showed up to the house, he's got gags and ties and just really debauched stuff.

Penny: And I'm sure this is not something that you really want to talk about, but it's out there now that he engaged in that stuff.

Carson: I feel like it's really, you know, it's really necessary to get an understanding of who he is, you know, and that's really all I can come on this podcast and do is really like, just explain from my own personal experience, how I know these people, you know, and how I know him specifically, you know, at this point I feel like I know him better than he knows himself, because he isn't able to look at any of these behaviors or any of these actions or any of the stuff from the past and take any kind of accountability or responsibility for it.

If he was a third party on this phone call right now, he would be screaming as loud as he could to try to not [00:13:00] only shut me up, but you know, tell me how I'm dumb for seeing the patterns in this behavior. And then try to shift all the blame off to somebody else. What I see with him is like, I, I love him, and I wish that he could get better, but it won't ever happen as long as he's still lying to himself.

Penny: Let's talk a little bit more about what Clark and Marcus's relationship was like, you know, Clark is a 69-year-old man. He owns a yoga studio in town. He had parties at his house every Sunday and people came and played music. Some people did drugs; some people didn't. It's an environment where things like this could happen if the wrong people are introduced to the situation.

Carson: The thing about it is, you know, he told Abigail that I was a frequent at these parties and that's a lie. I only went to Clark's house once.

That was three weeks before the incident. So that was in April 2019. [00:14:00] Yeah, dad was in town. And he gave me, he wanted to give me this guitar and he gave me a, give me a Gibson, Les Paul. I met him at my granddad's house, picked him up, rode him around, kind of showed him where I was staying what I've been up to.

I hadn't spoken to them since like September. And I spent the whole day with him, and I was just really studying him, but he wanted to go to Clark's party that evening. I've never been to Clark's house before. And I already knew like from the second that I saw that, that like, he was on blow that day.

We show up to this party and yeah, there's young people there and people are drinking and smoking weed, whatever. Me and Clark made some food, but really dad was the only person there who wasn't a musician. And he wasn't really well liked by too many people there. And like, from what it seemed like to me, like dad had initially reached out to Clark when he moved to the Hill.

And so that, because dad was in this whole like hippie character or whatever, he felt like if he could [00:15:00] get in with a Clark, then he would be like accepted by that piece of the community, I guess. And I walked, I left that party that night at Clark's pretty early. Dad was kind of just running around like a crazy person and really kind of being disruptive to the whole, like energy of what the get together was. I didn't see anything going on with any ecstasy or anything like that, or any, any sexual activity. From what I saw, we made some food and, you know, we jammed for a little bit. And then, you know, I kinda got out of there, but I got in the car and I told my girlfriend, as soon as we got in the car, I looked at her and said, I think that's the last time I'm ever going to see my dad.

And a week after that, I spent a day with Clark at the yoga studio. He and I spent a couple hours just playing music and talking about stuff. And I was sitting there with the question kind of on the tip of my tongue of like, why are you having dad around? Really, from what I could tell that was kind of forcing his way in, nobody was really inviting him.

And I, you know, I wish I had asked Clark that, like, why [00:16:00] are you doing this? But Clark knew me well, and you know, my own history of trauma kind of inflicted by Marcus. From what I can tell Clark kind of wanted to help Dad. He had already told me when I was 15 years old, that know Dad was obviously, you know, had narcissistic personality disorder on top of, you know, just complete manic behavior.

And I think, you know, as a good-hearted person, he wanted to help this man.

Penny: Clark clearly had an understanding of your experience growing up. And so that, that is my question is, why would Clark have Marcus over to his house if he felt as though he were a damaging person, let alone a dangerous person?

Carson: Exactly. And I mean, and yeah, in a lot of ways, I wanted to ask that question too, because in some facets, that was a little part of me that felt a little betrayed by that, but. Dad was again, like kind of forcing his way into this. Yeah. He would come to the yoga studio all the time and you know, [00:17:00] he had this big talk of being somebody when he really had all these ulterior motives to somebody else.

So the night of the incident, when he went over there, you know, he told Abigail that he went over there to bring me a poster that he made; that's false. It was actually, it was a, it was a mural that had been painted on a wall that he and I lived in when I was about 16 or 17 and yeah, he had had this mural commissioned by like a local artist in Milledgeville at that time. He was really brilliant.

Penny: He is really brilliant. I know him actually. He's amazingly talented.

Carson: Yeah. Really genius artist. And so, I mean, yeah, we thought it'd be a really cool idea to have him paint this thing in the house, but I ended up moving out and, you know, cutting Dad out of my life, you know, before it even got finished. And there was a lot of debauchery going on in that house, you know, and at that point I was, you know, 17 years old and pretty awake to it and also getting into my own trouble as like a 17-year-old would. That was a really crazy experience, like kind of having like a target on my [00:18:00] back because of who my dad was and not even knowing like what he was up to and having to learn through police officers that my dad was like this cocaine dealer and that they were suspecting me of like having a part in it.

But anyway, yeah. So he, yeah, had this wall painted in this house and went and broke and entered into the house, cut the wall out, you know, that's...that's criminal behavior already. And then yeah, to that wall, to Clark's house for him to give him to me.

And I'd already told dad when I saw him the month before that I did not want it, you know, and I had spoken to the artist who made it. And we were both like, yeah, like some things just need to be painted over and left alone. That was what was so like, I guess alarming about Abigail's telling of the story because there's these like small lies all over it that really, in my opinion, like really discounted the whole story.

Penny: Well, and it's hard to know what exactly he told [00:19:00] her. I'm sure that some of it is not what you know the truth to be, but some of it might just be a game of telephone.

Carson: It could be. But from what I understand of like how their friendship began from what he called it and all this, again, it was, he was a very manipulative and controlling person and, and yeah, he told her a lot of things about himself that, you know, just, just weren't true, you know, basically her whole assessment of his character was completely based off of his, you know, own side of it, but it's, none of it is based in reality at all. The thing is, is like, I'm not angry with her for it because I've been in that position too. And he, and I've seen other people there too, where he's so good at like making you believe what he has to say.

Penny: People who are in sales, people who are able to convince other people of their reality as being true, there's a reason why they're able to do that. So, explain what that's like. I mean, how did he convince people of that?

[00:20:00] **Carson:** He's a gripping person. I mean, he has a charisma that is. I mean, it's, it's hard to explain. I've spent a lot of my adult life like studying people like Jim Jones and Charles Manson and David Koresh, like that same kind of like character, that charismatic ego maniacal person, they all kind of use the same vernacular.

There's nine tells of like a narcissist. And he checks the bases for all of them. On the most basic level, I mean, he would make you feel like you were nothing and that he was something. He knew, he could size you up and figure out exactly. Like what about yourself you were insecure about and he would hit you on that.

And then he would spend a lot of time basically describing himself and how great he was, and basically saying, you know, the only way to be great was to be just like him. He would

just really prey on a person's insecurity, you know? And, and it happened a lot [00:21:00] with women and from conversations he had with me, he really thought of women as like less than.

You know, and he thought of people in general as like tools to be used and manipulated. It was never like never was building a genuine relationship or friendship with the person. It was always like, what can I get this person to do for me? And so, yeah, he would make friends with somebody and then like give them a gift or you know, make them feel validated in some kind of way that hit them. Right. You know, where they needed to feel validated at and you know, and then he would ask you to do a small favor for him and you do that. And then favors would just get bigger and bigger until next thing, you know, like you're completely wrapped up in Marcus' world and you don't even know what you're doing.

He would just completely just envelop you as a person.

Penny: I asked Carson how he found out about the Mother's Day murder.

Carson: My mom called me the morning after it happened as she was leaving the [00:22:00] GBIs office, you know, the GBI came to her house early that Sunday morning. I was in Rockingham, North Carolina with my dad's brother.

Pretty much the first thing that the three of us all said was that could have been me. We everybody knew that something was up with dad, and he was like really spiraling out of control and trying to bring down whoever was around it. All we can say is that we were just really lucky and blessed that it wasn't us.

I felt really bad for, Clark's got a daughter, you know, and Marianne had two kids and they were in high school at the time. I don't know how old they are, the fact that it was three of them that night and that he was the one, you know, the, the only one to come out alive. And not only is it really telling, but it's just really, really sad because Marianne and Clark were both leaders in their respective communities.

They were really just bright, beautiful people. And my father is a dark, dark man.

[00:23:00] **Penny:** So when you say it's telling that he can, he was the one who came out alive, what do you mean by that?

Carson: He's...he's, you know, was just destructive. Through his whole life, there's this pattern of him really messing up really bad, and then constantly getting away with it. I've even heard him say before that that's like, that's like a thrill for him to do something really, really wrong that he shouldn't be doing. And then kind of come out unscathed. It happened several times with drug charges that he got in; he would constantly be driving drunk.

He had several DUIs and, but even with talk his way out of them all the time, just by being verbally abusive to police officers, and so now he's actually finally being held accountable for a situation and still isn't able to be honest about it. You know, he's still shifting blame and still coming up with ways to try to get himself out of it. Everything that [00:24:00] he had done in his whole life was leading up to that. night

I knew as soon as I was told that he was completely responsible for both of their deaths. You know, there's not a question in my mind about that. You know, not saying that he himself killed Clark, but I know those two men well enough to know that in those two hours, between her not breathing and the police finally showing up with how, how frightening my father can be. I'm pretty certain that he spent probably those two hours between them not calling the cops and calling the cops, really trying to shift the blame onto Clark.

And I feel like the best thing I can do for him is tell the truth about him because he needs to be held accountable and he needs to hold himself accountable, and until he knows that he's really making the situation a lot worse and doing a lot more injustice to both of [00:25:00] these people that deserved a lot better and their families deserve a lot better. If he really is like worried about Marianne's family and really cares about them, he needs to be honest about what happened that night, because listening to his account of the story, you know, there there's so many different moving parts that he leaves out.

You know, the fact that he dropped her, you know, he completely left that out. Apparently because of DNA evidence, there was somebody else there, you know, that was left out of his account of the story. And even when I spoke to the GBI, it was two or three weeks after the incident. And they said they had talked to him just about every day and every day they got a different story.

Penny: Do you think he knows what happened?

Carson: That's a great question. That's a, that's a question that I ask myself a lot. You know, I haven't spoke to him at all since this went down. My grandfather, his dad, has spoke to him and from conversations that they've had, and my granddad doesn't think that he knows what has happened.

I think he knows what happened. I think, you know, somewhere [00:26:00] in that brain of his, he knows what happened, but he'll never be able to come clean about it because he's fundamentally lying to himself to a point where he may have talked himself out of knowing what happened. He has lied and lied and lied to the point where he may not know what happened because he's just buried the truth with these, you know, just different story after another, trying to shift blame. Really at the root of it, he did something really wrong and isn't able to accept it.

Penny: What do you think that he did wrong?

Carson: I mean, I think he strangled Marianne. He had a history of doing that with women, and he told me about that being a thing that he liked and, you know, I'm, I'm aware of a relationship that he was in about a year or two prior to him and Marianne getting together where he choked the woman until she was unconscious.

And when she asked him to stop, he didn't. You know, I, I wasn't there that night, so I can't really speculate, but I [00:27:00] know him and I know what he's capable of. And I, I think that she died because of him.

Penny: If the evidence shows that there was no sexual activity that night, then that means that somebody just murdered her.

And do you think he's capable of just murdering her with no reason whatsoever?

Carson: I think under the right circumstances, yes. I know that, I mean that day they were blackout drunk before they ever even, you know, cut the hole in the wall, before they ever even showed up the Clark's house, they were blackout drunk.

He had taken \$200 out of the ATM that day and used it to buy a pretty large amount of cocaine and bought ecstasy. So, before they ever even went over there, he was already wrecked. He was already completely on tilt and twisted going over there. And he is an angry, angry person when he is on cocaine, and when he has been drinking. He can be truly terrifying.

Penny: I haven't talked to anyone, [00:28:00] and there's not any police reports that show that tendency. So, maybe you could give an example so that we understand it better.

Carson: You know, I think about that therapy session, you know, the, that Clark had that kick him out of, I mean, he was standing up red in the face, vein about to pop out of his neck, standing over me pointing at me, and I was 14 years old. And all I was trying to do is like, say like, Hey dad, like the way you handled this really hurt me. He never physically abused my stepmother, but he would be so angry and tower over her. You know what I mean? Like it was scary. A police report was never filed because like, you can't call the police on domestic violence if there's no violence.

But again, I mean, as soon as this happened and you know, and I was given the basic facts of. what happened that night the morning after, as my mother knew them, you know, that I just knew it then in my gut in a way that I can't even explain, [00:29:00] you know, that he's completely responsible for what happened that night. It broke me when it first happened.

You know, it was immediately like that could have been me, you know, under the right circumstances with him being blackout drunk on cocaine, on ecstasy, and then mixing whatever they got into at Clark's. I just, I just know the, the anger, you know, that's, that's in him and I don't know what could have happened to make him so angry, but I mean, from what I understand, she died from strangulation.

He's you know, between him and Clark, he's the only person who's capable of doing that. Who's strong enough to break her neck that way.

Penny: When you say it could have been me, do you feel like you could be the one dead?

Carson: Certainly. I never thought until this situation happened, you know, but when it happened, I really thought like, you know, and I think back that times in my life where he was angry with me under, under those same circumstances and that same, you know, cocktail [00:30:00] of inhibitors that he had in him and what as angry as he would get at me.

You know, it was, even though he never hit me or even put his hands on me, really, the anger that he showed me was just violent in its nature. You know, I feel like when somebody

is scared, that's when they're the most dangerous. And the biggest thing that whatever scare him is, or yeah, somebody that he thinks that he has control over, bucking that.

It's, it's hard to explain. It's a gut feeling, you know, that like everything in his life up until that point was just leading to that night. He did something and he's not able to be honest about it. Two people are dead, you know, and he's still not able to be honest, you know, that just really shows me that it was. something pretty heinous.

Penny: I mean, you knew Clark as well. Under what circumstances would Clark [00:31:00] be convinced to not call 911? Do you think he knows he knew what happened or do you think you didn't know?

Carson: I think, you know, dad did something inherently wrong and made a huge mistake and made Clark fearful. I mean, imagine coming out of your house and you see the two of them and you know, she's there dead and then you have an angry narcissistic manic person coming at you saying don't call 911. You know, and at that time, like dad like really beefed up and it was like probably in the best shape he was ever in, really muscular, kind of physically imposing at that time. And I think he really made Clark afraid of him and afraid to call 911, afraid of what he would do to Clark

if he did call 911. From like what my mom recounts of the phone conversation. I mean, yeah, dad was, he was angry. He was basically berating her for not coming to Clark's house and resuscitating [00:32:00] Marianne herself. He screamed at her, basically like you're just five minutes down the road. Why don't you come fix it?

Penny: It's 11:20 PM when this conversation reportedly takes place. Marcus has Clark's phone and he calls his ex-wife who is also a respiratory therapist. She tells Marcus to call 911.

You know,

Carson: and he was on the phone with my mother, unable to grasp the reality of the situation, you know, right after it happened.

Penny: At 11:39 PM. Carson's mom calls Marcus who's going back and forth about whether Marianne is breathing or not. She tells Marcus to call 911. According to Agent Maybin, Marcus says that Marianne is enjoying laying there doing nothing.

Carson: He thought that like she was pranking him. He couldn't accept the reality of that he had done something wrong. And so, he was like, Oh, she's playing a trick on me. You know, she's not actually laying there unconscious right now. She's actually joking. And that was what he was doing. He made a mistake and he [00:33:00] was desperately trying to get everyone around him to fix it for him. And I think Clark was just afraid that night.

And I think if, yeah, and if my dad wasn't a serial abuser, Clark would still be alive, and Marianne would be too. Cause I know, I know Clark well enough to like Clark was, he was all about just doing what was right. You know? And so, in that moment, I think, I think he really wanted to call 911 and was forced not to.

And then went inside and wrote a letter. And, you know, the thing was, he was 69 years old and I think he was really afraid of going to prison, especially on behalf of Marcus. And it's, you know, it's just really sad.

Penny: It's absolutely tragic. There's no question about that. Why do you think it would go through Clark's mind that he would end up going to jail if he didn't do anything?

Carson: I mean, on a basic level, they didn't do right by Marianne by not getting help right away, you know? And I can [00:34:00] imagine the guilt that he felt from that had to be impossible to live with. For dad to show up at his house, twisted, giving him this wall that he had just sawed out of a house to give to me. This, the shock of all of that.

And then saying like, wow, like cops are here. You know, this guy has been freaking out calling people for the last two hours. And like, we, we don't even have our clothes on. I love Clark and I, my biggest pain from this situation is that yeah, I did lose a friend that, you know, I got a lot of wisdom from.

I think the guilt just had to have been unbearable, you know? And he knows that. Yeah, like not calling 911 did incriminate him pretty badly. But in a situation like that, how could he have explained himself? You know, because it was clear that things weren't handled the right way, but I mean, both of them were going to go to jail.

Penny: One of the factors is definitely the drugs. Do you [00:35:00] think that that had an impact on Clark's decision-making? Was he maybe under the influence of something?

Carson: I certainly would not doubt that at all, Clark had his own vices too. And was no angel. Yeah. I knew Clark to, you know, smoke a little weed, you know, drink some beer.

He probably, you know, did engage in taking some psychedelics from time to time. And yeah, dad was that guy, that like, if Marcus Lillard is showing up at your house, he's got drugs on him and he wants you to do them with them. That was, that's who he was as a person. That's his whole identity. It put Clark in this really compromising position, you know, because yeah, dad was trying to be this Timothy Leary hippie character, and because Clark owned a yoga studio and probably did mushrooms every now and then, Dad kind of latched on to him. As much as he tried to like change himself with all these outside substances and appearances and going on these trips and stuff, he's still the same person. Last Father's Day, you know, which [00:36:00] was a couple of weeks after it happened, maybe about a month. I decided that I was going to go visit him in prison. And I had the whole thing written down and, you know, just everything that I wanted to say to him, you know, just like a whole lifetime of things that, you know, you wanna look your abuser in the eye finally, when they're where you feel like they're supposed to be.

And, but as soon as I went in, I came out and I looked them in the eyes. And I realized I was like, he would never listen to anything I had to say. You know, he, they, there was no guilt. There was no humility. There was nothing but pride on his face, even as he's in chains.

Penny: So, you just visited him in Milledgeville. And did you, you looked at his face and you didn't say anything?

Carson: I looked at him and then I turned around and left. That was as much as I could have gotten out of that visit, you know? Cause I knew if I would sit down and talk to him, I would've got all worked up and he wouldn't listen to anything I had to say.

Penny: How does your healing move forward now, without you being able to talk to him or to get [00:37:00] closure, if you will.

Carson: This time, this past year, without having him around, it has been the most healing thing to know that he's away. And then he can never, he can never hurt me again. You know, it's devastating that these are the circumstances where it has to happen in, but it's, it's been like a long journey over the past year.

I went through like a couple months where I like really separated from reality and just didn't want to, you know, I wasn't able to heal, but it's, it's been a slow thing and like looking at it like a year later, I've come a long way since then. And like, my story is pretty sad, but it's not nearly as sad as Marianne's family or Clark's daughter.

I want to tell my truth just so that those people can see like they're like justice for what happened to their family members. That's like the biggest thing that breaks my heart is like, there's a boy and a girl who are younger than me, who like, they don't have a mom, you know, and that's not their fault.

And it's [00:38:00] not her fault either. Even if somebody else that night killed her, or even if he wasn't responsible for it, he, he was responsible for taking her there that night and manipulating her into being around for these situations, and I'm sure somewhere she didn't feel comfortable in. That was the thing, you know, she's a, well-to-do UGA professor.

There's no need for her to be in Milledgeville, hanging out with this crazy drug addled man. There was no need for her to be riding shotgun in that adventure at all.

Penny: So ,moving forward, how will you deal with the upcoming trial? Will you be a part of that? How will you protect yourself if you are a part of that?

Because that's going to open up a lot of wounds for you.

Carson: I'm not afraid of any of it, you know? And that's been, the biggest thing is like to not be afraid of him anymore. Like he doesn't have that power over me to like, to make me even nervous, you know, like I'm, I'm busy in my [00:39:00] own life. You know, I've got two albums about to come out, I work all the time, writing new music, but you know, with the trial, I pretty much said, you know, I understand that my mom's definitely going to be a witness for the prosecution. I want to be there for her, and, like, with her. I don't really see how I could be any kind of a witness in this trial. It doesn't, it doesn't affect my life really. He doesn't exist for me anymore.

I already know because of his probation he will do 15 years for that already. You know, he's definitely pretty much going to get convicted of the concealment of a death charge, which I

understand is about 12 years. And I'm sure because of his history with the state of Georgia, like Milledgeville police department and GBI hated him before this situation ever happened because he was a known serious drug dealer and abated a lot of trouble.

He's got the state of Georgia really against them. And so just based off of the probation and that charge, which there's no question that he will get on the concealment. [00:40:00] That's automatic 27 years, even if he got out of jail tomorrow, I'm never going to see him.

You know, and he's never going to have an effect on my life. I'm my own person now, like in spite of the situation, you know, and, and also because of it. Kind of like the, the essence of my trauma pertaining to him has pretty much already been written. If he really kind of like looks at the facts, look at the facts of the situation, like there's not a lot of hope for him and there doesn't need to be. You know, not if he's not able to tell the truth, but when I spoke with the GBI. And it was funny cause the agent I spoke with actually bought a car from him, which she said he was a great car salesman, but we're not buying anything that he's telling us. And that, and that's what he doesn't see is because he's so, you know, enveloped in his own reality, his view of things like, you know, he's not able to really accept the hard facts, I think, that he's, he's gonna do about 30 years in prison, no matter what. And the more you come up with these crazy [00:41:00] lies and stories like that only incriminates you even more and makes you more likely to maybe end up with a, with a jury deciding that he's guilty of murder.

Penny: I talked to Carson for over two hours and honored him for coming on and sharing his story, while also acknowledging that his father would likely have a different interpretation, not just from when he was growing up, but also about what took place that night, and perhaps within his relationships.

While Marcus Lillard does have family and friends who believe in his innocence, the authorities who showed up on Watson Reynolds Road on Mother's Day were likely aware, and maybe even had personal knowledge, of Marcus Lillard's criminal record and past behaviors. They likely viewed Dr. Clark Heindel in much the same way that Carson described him, as a pillar of his [00:42:00] community. Marcus was locked in the patrol car while Dr. Clark Heindel was allowed to take his knowledge of what took place that night with him when he died. And key evidence was not gathered for analysis. Given that there is DNA that does not match Marcus or Clark, and no further arrests have been made, we have to assume that the DNA was not found as a match in CODIS, and since the opportunity to find further evidence was lost by not collecting and analyzing the beer bottles at the scene, one can only hope that this misstep is being compensated for by pursuing every avenue available to identify the identity of the party or parties who contributed the DNA, including forensic or genetic genealogy. [00:43:00] Now that we've heard Carson's side of the story that he shared with the GBI, I think we have a clear understanding of how Marcus Lillard ended up being charged with felony murder.

Now it's the state's burden to prove it.