Witness: Rene Tomlinson

Date: 2004-06-21

Proceedings held June 21, 2004

Called by: People (prosecution)

Phase: Guilt

Examinations: Direct – Rick Distaso; Cross – Mark Geragos

Day 1 of 1 for this witness

Court: San Mateo County Superior Court, Redwood City (People v. Scott Peterson)

Source: https://pwc-sii.com/CourtDocs/Transcripts/Tomlinson.htm

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Direct Examination by Rick Distaso

DISTASO: Miss Tomlinson, did you, you grew up in Modesto?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: And as you were growing up, did you meet a girl, or later a woman, named Laci Peterson?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: When did you first meet her?

TOMLINSON: I probably met her maybe my sophomore year. But became better friends in my junior year.

DISTASO: In high school?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

DISTASO: And you were aware she went off to college?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

DISTASO: And then were you aware she moved back to Modesto?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

DISTASO: And when she moved back to Modesto, did you and Laci get back in touch with each other and stay friends?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: And were you aware when Laci became pregnant?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: And it was something she talked about, correct?

TOMLINSON: Yeah.

DISTASO: Did you see her during the year, I mean during 2002, after she became pregnant, and kind of the pregnancy progressed?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: When did Laci ever talk to you about how she was feeling in the latter stages of her pregnancy?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: What did she say? What kinds of things did she tell you about?

TOMLINSON: She felt big, and just tired, kind of worn down, taking it easy.

DISTASO: Did you see Laci at a Christmas party in December?

TOMLINSON: Yes, I did.

DISTASO: Okay. And we heard with this Christmas party from some of the other witnesses on the 14th. Was that one you saw her at?

TOMLINSON: No. I actually saw her at my next door neighbor's Christmas party on the 7th, the previous week.

DISTASO: And then did you talk to her then?

TOMLINSON: Yeah.

DISTASO: Okay. Then did you speak to her during the month as it went on?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

DISTASO: Did you also, let me ask you this way. When is the last time that you spoke to Laci Peterson?

TOMLINSON: I think it was close to December 20th probably.

DISTASO: All right. Do you know if it was, as you sit here today, I'm not going to pin you to it, the exact, or just some time around that date?

TOMLINSON: I'm pretty sure, I think reviewing the report, that it was the 20th, yeah.

DISTASO: Okay. And what did you talk to Laci about on that phone call?

TOMLINSON: That phone call I believe was the one she had been out shopping for fabric for the baby's cradle.

DISTASO: Okay. Did she talk to you at all during that phone call about how she was feeling?

TOMLINSON: Yeah.

DISTASO: What did she say?

TOMLINSON: She was just saying she was tired, and that she was just, you know, would be. She wouldn't be working any more. That kind of came into it. Just basically just kind of tired, and just ready to have the baby, and just preparing.

DISTASO: Did, when did you first find out that Laci was missing?

TOMLINSON: When Scott called my house.

DISTASO: And what day was that?

TOMLINSON: Christmas Eve. Probably about, I guess it would be about 5:30 or so in the evening on the 24th.

DISTASO: Did you go over to the house at that time?

TOMLINSON: No, I didn't. I didn't get to the house until probably eleven, 10:30 or eleven that night.

DISTASO: On Christmas Eve?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

DISTASO: You did go over some time late in the evening?

TOMLINSON: It was very late in the evening.

DISTASO: And was anybody still present at the house?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: How many people, if you know?

TOMLINSON: There was some neighbors, all of our friends, Sharon and family, police officers. When I arrived Scott was inside, and then came out. I was on the phone, and just, there was probably, I don't know, twenty, thirty people. I guess.

DISTASO: And then were you aware of the next day that there was a Volunteer Center kind of set up, and then moved over to the Red Lion?

TOMLINSON: No, not the next day. It wasn't until the 26th that that was,

DISTASO: The 26th when it moved over?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

DISTASO: All right. And did you go to the Volunteer Center and help out?

TOMLINSON: Yeah.

DISTASO: What was your kind of main job there?

TOMLINSON: I guess I ran it.

DISTASO: Okay.

TOMLINSON: The 25th, I don't know if they talked about, the next day, the 25th, was mainly family that, you know, and actually I was at the house pretty much by myself the day of the 25th.

DISTASO: At the 523 Covena?

TOMLINSON: Then the 26th we met again at, I think, eight in the morning, or something like that. And that's when we started, really had, you know, a lot of people, neighbors, and things coming over. And then later that day we moved, on the 26th we moved to the Red Lion.

DISTASO: And then you were, did you work at the Red Lion until the center closed later in the month?

TOMLINSON: Right. Correct, yes. Later in January.

DISTASO: Nothing further.

Cross Examination by Mark Geragos

GERAGOS: Good morning.

TOMLINSON: Good morning.

GERAGOS: How are you?

TOMLINSON: Okay.

GERAGOS: Good. There was an, I think you mentioned, when Mr. Distaso was asking you questions, that you had talked to Laci about your baby?

TOMLINSON: About my baby?

GERAGOS: Yeah.

TOMLINSON: In my last conversation with her?

GERAGOS: No. I was going back earlier, I think. You had a baby shower at some point, is that correct?

TOMLINSON: Right.

GERAGOS: Do you remember the date of that?

TOMLINSON: June 8th, 2002.

GERAGOS: Okay. Where was that?

TOMLINSON: At Laci's home.

GERAGOS: So she gave you the shower, or she hosted the shower?

TOMLINSON: Right.

GERAGOS: And she called you the next day, is that right?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

GERAGOS: That would have been June 9th?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

GERAGOS: Okay. You have to say yes so he can take it down.

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And she told you on June 9th that she was pregnant, correct?

TOMLINSON: Actually told my husband over the phone. And then I talked to her later in the morning.

GERAGOS: Okay. So that I got it right, the 8th you had your baby shower?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh.

GERAGOS: At her house?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: She didn't mention anything about being pregnant?

TOMLINSON: No, not that day.

GERAGOS: Okay. The first day that you heard from her that she was pregnant was the following day, even though she told your husband first, then you talked to her after that?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: That was June 9th?

TOMLINSON: June 9th.

GERAGOS: Of 2002?

TOMLINSON: 2002.

GERAGOS: And you talked to her a couple of times after that. For instance, when she found out it was going to be a boy?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And then there was a couple of questions Mr. Distaso asked you about, I was whispering, so I apologize. You were at the Covena house on the 25th and the 26th?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. And on the 25th, what time did you get there?

TOMLINSON: We met, it was probably early afternoon. I think we all met at the police station that day, that morning on the 25th, and had the first news conference, and then went to the house immediately after that. I would assume twelve, 12:30, something like that.

GERAGOS: Was Scott there?

TOMLINSON: No. He stayed at the police station.

GERAGOS: And he, was he at the police station during the press conference?

TOMLINSON: I would assume so. I don't remember seeing him or talking to him. But, yeah, no, he was.

GERAGOS: He was there?

TOMLINSON: Yeah.

GERAGOS: On the 26th where were you?

TOMLINSON: The 26th we were back at Covena, at Laci's house.

GERAGOS: And would Scott come in and out and get flyers there at the Covena house, correct, at that point on the 25th and the 26th?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: We have heard some testimony that the Covena house was kind of the makeshift volunteer center at that point, correct?

TOMLINSON: Uh-huh, yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. So the flyers would be there, and people would, volunteers could come and get the flyers and distribute, they hang them, or post them?

TOMLINSON: Yeah.

GERAGOS: Did you, on the 26th did you see Scott doing that as well?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: He would come in, do you need water?

TOMLINSON: I'm fine.

GERAGOS: The 26th he would come in and get flyers, disappear, and then come back later on get more?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: Okay. Do you remember approximately on the 26th how many people were doing that?

TOMLINSON: I know we tried to keep track. That first day I would say we probably, including friends and family, fifty or more, forty, fifty.

GERAGOS: Fifty or more?

TOMLINSON: I would think.

GERAGOS: When you got that house set up in kind of the makeshift volunteer center, was that on the 25th?

TOMLINSON: No.

GERAGOS: 26th?

TOMLINSON: 26th.

GERAGOS: 26th. And as that happened, would the people come in and out of the house, and grab the flyers, and then when you say you were, is that a fair statement, characterization of what was happening?

TOMLINSON: Well, I guess define what you mean in and out of the house. They wouldn't travel through the entire house.

GERAGOS: Nobody was taking tours. But,

TOMLINSON: They just basically would walk in the front entrance to the dining table and sit, and then leave.

GERAGOS: Okay. Were you keeping, you said you were trying to keep track of people as well?

TOMLINSON: Yeah. People, like I knew my friends that didn't necessarily know Laci very well, had come and picked up flyers. And we tried to track who those people were, where they were going.

GERAGOS: Okay. And on the December 7th Christmas party that you, that was the one where you saw Laci, right?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: Was Scott there?

TOMLINSON: Yes.

GERAGOS: And whose house was that?

TOMLINSON: At my next door neighbor’s.

GERAGOS: Thank you. I have no further questions.

DISTASO: No redirect.

JUDGE: May this witness be excused? Miss Tomlinson, thank you. You can be excused. Thank you.