The Make-or-Break Testimony of Michael Cohen

0:02

first

0:07

floor I'm uh just leaving my apartment

0:11

again um 6:14

0:15

a.m. Monday May

0:17

13th recording one of my little voice

0:19

memos

0:21

again I do feel like a goofball doing

0:24

it

0:26

but but they keep publishing though

0:33

today is well it's the climax of the

0:36

prosecution's case

0:38

[Music]

0:40

today we're expecting to see Michael

0:42

Cohen he's Trump's former fixer Cen

0:45

worked for years for Trump fixing his

0:48

problems cleaning up his

0:50

messes

0:52

so funny

0:54

that Cohen has become that

0:57

mess he's going to

1:00

face his old boss in court today and

1:02

make a giant problem for him if

1:04

prosecutors had their

1:06

[Music]

1:13

way from The New York Times I'm Michael

1:16

Babar this is the

1:19

daily today what happened when Donald

1:23

Trump's most loyal Lieutenant took the

1:26

stand against him in the most important

1:29

testimony of the hush money

1:32

trial as always Jonah Bromwich was in

1:35

the

1:37

room it's Thursday May

1:42

[Music]

1:45

16th hey friend how are you I'm all

1:48

right that's

1:50

good you rested oh yeah you know how

1:53

rested I

1:55

am not at all woke up at 420 this

1:58

morning

2:00

cuz yeah I'm having trouble um sleeping

2:02

much later than that I I mean I wake up

2:04

at 4:45 every morning on child

2:06

days I know it's insane it's really

2:09

crazy okay are you ready yes Jonah the

2:14

last time we dropped in on this case

2:15

with you was when Stormy Daniels was on

2:17

the stand last week today we're talking

2:20

to you because it's Michael Cohen now on

2:22

the stand and you had always explained

2:24

to us from the beginning of this trial

2:25

Cohen was the prosecution's biggest

2:27

weapon and potentially its biggest

2:30

liability he's the Lynch pen of their

2:32

case you told us because as Trump's

2:35

former right-hand man he made the hush

2:37

money payment at the center of this

2:38

trial without which there would be no

2:40

case but Cohen is also a proven liar

2:44

with an ax to grind against Trump so

2:48

he's just an incredibly complicated

2:49

figure that's exactly right so Cohen is

2:52

the line that connects all the dots of

2:53

this trial he knows most of the

2:55

witnesses and not only did he make the

2:57

hush money payment to Stormy Daniels

2:58

that's at issue here he is also the

3:01

person who was reimbursed for that

3:02

payment by Trump and the only person who

3:05

can link Trump to what prosecutors say

3:07

was the criminal disguise of those

3:10

records used to pay him Trump is charged

3:12

with 34 felonies every single one of

3:15

those felonies is attached to a document

3:17

that was involved in the repayment of

3:19

Michael Cohen for the hush money to

3:22

Stormy Daniels right I mean campy

3:24

overstated how much the criminality

3:26

alleged in this trial entirely revolves

3:29

around

3:30

Michael Cohen's role in it yes okay so

3:34

he takes the stand walk us through that

3:38

when a witness takes the stand in this

3:40

trial and many other trials they begin

3:43

talking about their educational history

3:45

and their professional background It's

3:47

usually the most boring part of their

3:49

testimony frankly you need to know where

3:51

these people came from and the jury

3:52

needs to know more importantly but

3:55

sometimes we zone out a little bit

3:56

during that part because we want to

3:58

quote unquote get to the good stuff with

4:00

Cohen the quote unquote good stuff

4:02

meaning the relevant part of his

4:04

testimony begins almost immediately what

4:07

do you mean Michael Cohen begins to

4:10

explain from the stand how he came into

4:13

Trump's orbit and it starts from afar

4:16

this is a guy who idolized Donald Trump

4:18

who saw him as the symbol of wealth and

4:21

power and kind of this place where

4:23

aggression and money-making meat in the

4:27

kind of go- go 8s and so Cohen likes

4:29

that he's attracted to that he wanted to

4:31

be a Wall Street guy himself and so he

4:33

even fashion himself to some extent in

4:36

the Trump mold he begins buying property

4:39

in Trump's buildings soon he catches

4:41

Trump's eye and before you know it

4:43

Michael Cohen is being asked by Trump he

4:46

testifies if he wants to leave his

4:48

sleepy old law firm and come work for

4:51

Trump at the Trump organization he's

4:54

going to report directly to him and soon

4:56

enough Michael Cohen is going to be

4:57

calling Donald Trump either the boss or

5:01

just boss right and where things would

5:03

be anything but sleepy that's right so

5:05

Cohen moves into Trump's world and

5:07

immediately he's doing this nasty shady

5:11

is work for Donald J Trump this involves

5:15

negotiating down Trump's bills he uses

5:18

Cohen to say Mr Trump isn't going to owe

5:20

you that much he's actually going to owe

5:21

you this much right and it also involves

5:23

yelling at reporters Trump cares a lot

5:25

about what's said about him in the media

5:27

and so he asks Cohen to call reporters

5:30

who have written stories that Trump

5:31

doesn't like and yell at them and tell

5:34

them that they're going to be sued if

5:36

they don't change or take down what

5:38

they've written right and here I have to

5:40

confess I am one of the journalists who

5:41

endured these screaming sessions with

5:43

Michael Cohen when I was writing about

5:46

Trump's University and its alleged

5:49

scandals when I was writing about

5:51

Trump's real estate problems I ended up

5:53

on the phone with Michael Cohen and man

5:56

he was relentless he was bullying and

5:58

you kind of left the phone call

6:01

traumatized yeah there's an elite group

6:03

of you I've heard from many of you and

6:05

you all describe something of a similar

6:07

experience well Jonah what is the

6:09

prosecution doing here by having Michael

6:13

Cohen so openly

6:15

Embrace this role as basically Trump's

6:19

number one jerk this General role that

6:23

Michael Cohen is describing will become

6:25

the specific role he played in what

6:27

prosecutors say is the crime here m mhm

6:30

so they're laying a couple of things

6:31

down one is that Cohen reported directly

6:35

to Trump no one else and that it was

6:38

extremely important to Michael Cohen to

6:40

make sure that Trump knew every little

6:43

thing he did on Trump's behalf not only

6:46

because Trump actually asked to be kept

6:48

in the loop in that way which he did

6:50

Cohen says but also because Michael

6:52

Cohen himself wanted credit from Trump I

6:55

mean it's hard to exaggerate the way

6:58

that Cohen saw Trump in these days he

7:00

idolized him he wanted his praise His

7:03

adoration as he was on the stand

7:05

describing those days almost as His

7:07

Glory Days he was quoting Trump saying

7:09

Trump would say this was fantastic this

7:11

was great nice job Michael H and that is

7:16

important why exactly because Cohen is

7:19

going to testify about interactions only

7:21

he had with Trump and those interactions

7:24

are going to be prosecutors say the

7:26

beginning of a criminal conspiracy that

7:28

led to Criminal false documents and so

7:31

if jurors can understand why Cohen was

7:34

motivated to check in with Trump not

7:36

just Trump with Cohen but Cohen with

7:38

Trump and it's this innocent almost

7:40

embarrassing reason that he wanted this

7:42

praise it may be that they're more

7:45

liable to find coin credible got it

7:48

they're establishing a track record a

7:51

dynamic and a motivation in which Cohen

7:55

doesn't do anything without telling

7:57

Trump because Cohen is so desperate for

7:59

his idle to love him back and praise him

8:02

for every little thing he does exactly I

8:04

started to think of this as a modus

8:06

operandi argument or Mo argument yes

8:08

we'll get to the specifics but we're

8:10

talking about how Cohen works with Trump

8:13

that's his Mo and the reason that

8:15

prosecutors need that is to show this is

8:17

what they did all the time this was

8:19

their habit and so when it came to

8:20

forming a conspiracy to suppress

8:22

negative news about Trump during the

8:25

2016 election that wasn't so far off

8:28

what Cohen had always done for Donald

8:30

Trump okay so with all that in mind

8:32

Jonah take us to the testimony from

8:34

Cohen that prosecutors hope will in the

8:37

eyes of the jury prove that Trump

8:41

committed a crime here prosecutors say

8:44

that the impetus for the Stormy Daniels

8:46

payoff was the release of the Access

8:48

Hollywood tape right this tape in which

8:51

Trump is recorded saying that he can do

8:53

pretty much anything he wants to women

8:55

Washington Post breaks the story it's

8:57

considered a turning point in the

8:58

campaign because it is so utterly

9:00

damning with women and anybody else who

9:03

thinks that this behavior is completely

9:05

Unbecoming a precedent right and Cohen

9:06

sitting on the stand actually takes us

9:08

into that moment and attributes a

9:10

reaction to Trump to the Access

9:12

Hollywood tape and what's Trump's

9:14

reaction Cohen from the stand recalls

9:17

Trump's reaction saying this is a

9:20

disaster total disaster women are going

9:23

to hate me and he says the words

9:25

disaster and he says women will hate him

9:27

according to Cohen's testimony and that

9:30

prosecutors say that reaction from Trump

9:32

and from the campaign is what provides

9:35

the impetus for Cohen to go ahead and

9:38

make that hush money payment to Stormy

9:40

Daniels but first he has to wait for

9:42

Trump's approval so he strings Daniels

9:45

and her team along as we've already seen

9:47

in this trial from daniels's Team now

9:50

Cohen is testifying about intentionally

9:52

trying to delay even using the Yum kipor

9:55

holiday the Jewish holiday as an excuse

9:57

for not getting back to Daniel his team

10:00

mhm and Trump Cohen says from the stand

10:04

has this conversation with some of his

10:06

advisers Trump's advisers and they say

10:09

in essence what are you doing man you're

10:10

a billionaire this is

10:12

$130,000 this right here could be the

10:15

election just do it just pay her right

10:18

don't take the risk that amid all this

10:21

Fallout in the final days of the

10:23

campaign from the Access Hollywood Video

10:25

that Stormy Daniels is going to go tell

10:27

the world that you had an extra marital

10:29

fair with her allegedly like that is not

10:31

a tolerable risk right and the way Cohen

10:34

tells it this affects Trump and he's

10:36

influenced and so what Trump was told

10:38

just do it becomes the directive to

10:40

Michael Cohen just do it just pay her

10:44

we'll pay you back but just pay her and

10:46

make this go away so Cohen does it he

10:49

does what he's told he makes the payment

10:50

to Stormy Daniels and he does it in this

10:53

really almost humiliating way he uses

10:55

his home he takes out a line of credit

10:57

on his house he getss

10:59

$130,000 he needs for the Daniels

11:02

payment that way and so he's putting

11:04

something really personal on the line

11:05

here and this actually relates obviously

11:07

to his testimony earlier right his

11:09

unbelievable loyalty to Trump they're

11:11

almost Fusion together that he would do

11:13

something like this do something that

11:14

concerns his home and his family and

11:16

take $130,000 out of that for Trump to

11:19

suppress this story of having had sex

11:21

with a porn star so Daniels gets paid

11:26

$130,000 and then as everyone knows

11:28

Trump wins the election so if this was a

11:31

scheme to suppress that story it seems

11:34

to have worked I mean she doesn't tell

11:36

the story he wins the election we can't

11:38

know the counterfactual we can't know

11:39

what would have happened if the story

11:40

came out but we do know that it didn't

11:42

and we do know that he wins right so

11:45

everything worked you would think Trump

11:47

would be very happy about this but he

11:50

and his Chief Financial Officer at the

11:52

time Alan weberg and the other people at

11:54

Trump organization have a little bit of

11:55

a problem here because they have to deal

11:57

with a very grouchy she increasingly

12:00

kind of salty unreimbursed Michael Cohen

12:04

who knows this story about Trump who

12:07

actually paid to have this story removed

12:09

but is getting upset both because he

12:12

knows he's not getting a job in the

12:13

administration which he says he had

12:15

wanted and he got a very small bonus

12:18

that year it's the little things to some

12:21

extent yes but also Cohen has paid

12:23

$130,000 out of his own pocket not being

12:26

reimbursed you're going to give this guy

12:27

a small bonus this year all years so at

12:30

this point we're in January 2017 so this

12:33

all is happening not only while Trump is

12:35

president-elect but while he's about to

12:37

be inaugurated he's about to be the

12:39

president of the United States and then

12:42

once he is President once he's in the

12:43

White House who should come for a visit

12:45

but Michael Cohen and he goes to the

12:47

Oval Office and he and Trump have this

12:50

similar conversation according to Cohen

12:52

on the witness stand where again Trump

12:55

affirms that he has knowledge of the

12:57

reimbursement plan and in fact even

12:59

tells Cohen the president of the United

13:01

States in the Oval Office tells Michael

13:04

Cohen you're going to be receiving

13:06

checks and prosecutors say that those

13:09

checks are some of the first of the

13:11

false documents for which Trump is

13:13

eventually charged so this is good for

13:15

the prosecution right this is their case

13:17

this is what they want to happen these

13:19

are the all important conversations for

13:21

them and now they have them Cohen has

13:24

said them the jury has heard them but at

13:27

the same time this is exactly the ri

13:29

risk too because yes there's a lot to

13:31

back up that Cohen was in the room with

13:33

Trump but only Cohen can tell you what

13:36

was said right there's no recordings

13:38

there's no recordings of these

13:39

particular conversations it's just Cohen

13:42

it's just his memory right you have to

13:44

believe him you have to believe him and

13:46

as the defense has said and as even the

13:49

prosecution has acknowledged Cohen is a

13:51

liar Cohen is a felon Cohen's a bully

13:54

Cohen is a bully and he's a guy who

13:56

really has an acts to grind against

13:58

Trump who once do anything for Trump and

14:00

now almost prosecutors and defense have

14:03

acknowledged would do anything against

14:05

Trump who is Trump's kind of sworn enemy

14:09

here and so the prosecutors know that

14:11

while they're still questioning Michael

14:13

Cohen they need to deal with his

14:17

motivations with his liabilities with

14:20

all that mess before the defense can try

14:22

to use them to undermine everything that

14:25

Michael Cohen has just said

14:32

[Music]

14:42

we'll be right back

14:44

[Music]

15:01

Jonah what's the story that the

15:03

prosecution has Michael Cohen tell

15:05

proactively about how he becomes Trump's

15:09

sworn enemy about their falling out you

15:12

had said that Cohen was increasingly

15:14

disillusioned with Trump even before

15:16

Trump became president because of the

15:18

small bonus and not getting a job in the

15:20

white house but in Cohen's telling on

15:23

the stand when does the true breakdown

15:27

actually come yeah so Cohen takes the

15:30

jury blowby blow through this but I

15:32

won't do that here we'll go straight to

15:33

2018 the news of the Stormy Daniels

15:36

payment breaks Cohen is in big trouble

15:39

here because a lot of law enforcement

15:41

agencies are like hey this looks a hell

15:42

of a lot like a crime soon enough Cohen

15:45

is in a hotel room being raided by the

15:47

FBI his legal fees are up in the air

15:50

this often comes back to money and he

15:53

loses his direct connection to Donald

15:56

Trump instead Trump hires Rudy Julian Y

15:59

and this new guy Robert Castello starts

16:02

coming up to Cohen and offering him

16:04

legal advice and offering him this back

16:06

channel to the White House Cohen to

16:09

Castello to Giuliani to Trump that's

16:12

very different from only having one boss

16:14

in the whole world and that's a direct

16:16

line to Donald Trump that's exactly

16:18

right that must have been very painful

16:20

for Cohen there's so many motivations

16:22

going on here there's that closeness

16:24

that we know that he treasured there's

16:25

the money issue that keeps coming up and

16:29

so long story short as this pressure

16:31

continues to build on Cohen and he

16:34

continues to feel as if he does not have

16:36

the Loyalty of his former boss that he's

16:39

unsupported by his former boss he breaks

16:42

and he

16:44

flips I am done with the lying I am done

16:47

being loyal to president Trump and not

16:51

only does he start cooperating with law

16:52

enforcement but he starts speaking out

16:54

publicly Mr Trump is a con man he asked

16:57

me to pay off an adult film star with

17:01

whom he had an affair and to lie about

17:04

it to his wife which I did telling the

17:07

same story beginning in 2018 and going

17:10

on to 2019 and for years now I am sorry

17:13

for actively working to hide from you

17:15

the truth about Mr Trump when you needed

17:18

it most that he is telling in the

17:21

courtroom right now I lied for Donald

17:23

Trump I bullied for Donald Trump I

17:25

committed crimes for Donald Trump and

17:28

now I'm not going anymore well how does

17:30

the prosecution confront the obvious

17:32

question which is is Michael Cohen so

17:35

angry and so betrayed by Trump that

17:39

what's really going on here is not

17:40

necessarily a vivid recollection of

17:42

truth but an effort to just destroy

17:47

Trump so trials are an exercise in kind

17:50

of competitive storytelling prosecution

17:53

Story versus defense story and the

17:55

prosecution has a reasonable story about

17:56

Michael Cohen and that's what they're

17:58

going to use here Cohen is an emotional

18:00

person we've heard that in the context

18:02

of his anger but there's all kinds of

18:04

different emotions going on there

18:06

including just this real vulnerability

18:08

and so at the end of their questioning

18:10

prosecutors ask him about his emotional

18:12

state toward the Trump organization and

18:15

Donald Trump himself now and Cohen says

18:18

that he doesn't regret having worked for

18:20

Trump at the organization he says I had

18:22

some interesting great times but he does

18:26

say that he regrets having done the

18:27

things for Trump that he did lying and

18:30

bullying people on Trump's behalf and

18:33

what he says and prosecutors are hoping

18:36

to answer your question that this is

18:38

kind of Mega compelling that in order to

18:41

keep the Loyalty of trump and express

18:44

his own loyalty Cohen violated his moral

18:47

compass and he suffered the penalty for

18:49

doing so and so did his family MH but at

18:53

the same time this is all in the eye of

18:55

the beholder even when he's telling this

18:57

big emotional story and prosecutors are

18:59

asking him to do it who knows what these

19:01

jurors are making of Michael Cohen

19:03

either they believe him they find this

19:04

sympathetic they think oh yes this

19:07

sounds exactly like how Trump Works

19:09

based on everything else I've seen at

19:11

this trial or they're saying once a liar

19:14

always is a li how can I believe this

19:16

guy I don't care about his emotions

19:19

frankly because he's a thug and a bully

19:21

as I've heard not only from him himself

19:23

but from other people I'm going to

19:25

ignore this I don't believe it okay so

19:28

let's turn to what happens once the

19:29

prosecution ends its questioning of

19:31

Michael Cohen hopes to God in their

19:34

minds that the jury does find in

19:36

credible and Trump's defense lawyers

19:39

start taking a whack at him and

19:42

obviously seeking to ensure that the

19:43

jury does not find him credible so I

19:47

should just start by explaining that I'm

19:49

talking to you on Wednesday the cross-

19:51

examination has only lasted about a half

19:53

day and we still got a full day of cross

19:55

to go got it so there's a lot of Michael

19:57

Cohen being grilled by Donald Trump's

19:59

defense lawyers that hasn't happened yet

20:00

that we have not yet seen okay so we're

20:02

only covering a small amount what ends

20:04

up happening so Todd blanch is Trump's

20:07

lead trial lawyer here and he walks to

20:09

the lecturn and Cohen has just given

20:11

this emotional testimony about

20:12

vulnerability and loyalty and this and

20:15

that and Todd blanch asked Michael Cohen

20:18

about a Tik Tok he made a video on Tik

20:20

Tok a video on Tik Tok and what he says

20:23

is after the trial started in this case

20:26

you went on Tik Tok and called me a

20:28

crying little [ \_\_ ] didn't you huh and

20:31

the jurors sit up in their chairs as you

20:32

might imagine and the entire mood in the

20:35

courtroom changes Mr emotional over here

20:38

Mr Michael Cohen is now being called

20:41

what he says he was for Trump a bully a

20:44

person who slings insults someone who

20:47

maybe his behavior hasn't changed quite

20:49

so much as he said it had this was a

20:52

really interesting decision by blanch

20:55

this is a remarkable moment and blanch

20:58

does it one more time he brings up

21:00

another insult actually slung at blanch

21:02

and his co-counsel Susan necklace and

21:04

then something happens to interrupt them

21:06

which is that the judge calls them to

21:07

the bench now we didn't know in the

21:10

moment what the judge had said but we

21:12

get transcripts afterwards so we can

21:14

hear things that the jury doesn't hear

21:16

and what we saw in the transcript is

21:18

that the judge in this moment after

21:19

blanch asked these two explosive

21:21

questions turns to Todd blanch in

21:24

private and says why are you making this

21:25

about

21:26

yourself a question that has asked of me

21:29

constantly but the answer is what well

21:33

blanch doesn't really have that much of

21:35

an answer and this is a bit of a

21:36

momentum killer I think blanch goes back

21:39

to the lecturn but now he's trying to

21:41

balance between angry judge Angry client

21:44

Michael Cohen jur there's a lot of

21:46

elements to keep in your mind his stride

21:48

has been broken it has and he seems a

21:51

little less sure of himself the

21:52

questions are a little less sure-handed

21:54

and he seems to lose momentum right at

21:57

the top of CR

21:59

and then suddenly it gets very confusing

22:01

what he's trying to do he's throwing a

22:03

lot at the wall he seems to be arguing

22:05

that Cohen is a liar Cohen is a bully

22:08

Cohen is trying to make money off Trump

22:11

and these are all Salient points and

22:13

they could make for a coherent story but

22:15

that story isn't really being told

22:16

instead we're getting bits of pieces of

22:18

it and it's all over the map I think

22:21

what blanch was trying to do was tell a

22:23

story that wasn't so dissimilar to the

22:25

one that prosecutors told he was saying

22:29

that Cohen yes had been very loyal to

22:31

Trump and yes had broken with Trump but

22:34

did not have this kind of change of

22:36

heart and change of personality and in

22:38

fact was still a liar and still a bully

22:40

and was lying and manipulating the

22:42

evidence and doing everything he could

22:44

to get back at this man who he used to

22:46

love and who he felt betrayed by and

22:48

that sounds like a pretty good story but

22:50

he wasn't telling it clearly enough to

22:53

my ear to really land in the room he was

22:56

confusing he got into these kind of of

22:59

petty back and forths with Cohen who by

23:01

the way we had expected to be really out

23:02

of control during cross but in fact

23:04

stayed composed and kind of gave the

23:07

same answers over and over again saying

23:09

yes sir or when blanch brought up an

23:12

insult that Cohen had used Coen would

23:14

say that sounds like something I would

23:16

say kind of defanging like yes you know

23:19

I said that but who cares it's not a big

23:21

deal and Todd blanch almost seems as if

23:23

he's trying to win back control and he

23:25

starts asking questions that are a

23:26

little harder to follow mhm for example

23:28

he talking about these different

23:30

investigations in which Cohen talked to

23:32

this prosecutor or that prosecutor and

23:34

it's all just very complex and somewhat

23:36

obstru or obscure and I'm watching the

23:39

jurors and they're glancing around the

23:41

room one yawns and so these are about

23:44

the most visible signs we can see of

23:45

what the jurors are thinking and what

23:47

we're seeing is that they don't look

23:49

keyed into this all important question

23:51

and answer session and so by the end of

23:53

the afternoon on Tuesday it's hot in the

23:55

courtroom it's dry it's confusing

23:59

and it's not really clear that Todd

24:02

blanch accomplished what he was trying

24:04

to accomplish mhm although as you said

24:06

before we're only a couple hours into

24:08

cross- examination but first impressions

24:10

matter this is a crucial witness and

24:13

from what you're saying it sounds like

24:15

this first stab at discrediting Michael

24:17

Cohen kind of Peters out I think that's

24:20

exactly right but I also want to

24:22

emphasize the first part of what you

24:23

said again this was 2 hours it was the

24:26

afternoon it was after a long day of

24:29

trial in which Todd blanch is taking

24:30

Furious notes about Cohen's direct

24:32

testimony right now Todd blanch like

24:35

those of us who are covering the trial

24:36

has a whole day a whole day to study

24:39

Cohen's testimony to prepare for it and

24:42

to come back on Thursday with the whole

24:44

day ahead of him and a coherent strategy

24:47

that he hopes will discredit Cohen and

24:50

win him the trial with this all

24:52

important witness so just to end here

24:54

Jonah I want to understand where you

24:56

think we are and our last check in you

24:59

had said that in the parlaments of the

25:01

legal world the evidence was coming in

25:04

well for the prosecution by which you

25:07

seem to mean the prosecution was hitting

25:09

its marks there wasn't a lot of

25:11

confusion about what it was trying to do

25:12

and it seemed to be doing what it was

25:14

trying to do and without treading into

25:17

the land of prediction which is totally

25:19

pointless and counterproductive when

25:21

we're talking about a jury trial I

25:23

wonder if you think it's fair to say

25:25

that so far this trial is was going

25:29

reasonably well for the Manhattan

25:32

district attorney and the reason I asked

25:33

that is because there were always these

25:36

pretty big questions around this case

25:38

why was this the first criminal case

25:40

against Trump a hush money trial

25:43

business falsifications I mean this is a

25:45

guy who in many people's eyes inspired

25:49

an Insurrection at the capital and this

25:51

is the case right it just to some people

25:53

felt like a confusing anticlimax and so

25:56

I'm curious if as the order covering

25:59

this in the room day in and day out

26:01

you're finding that so far this just

26:05

does seem like a relatively

26:07

well-executed strong case prosecutors

26:11

can only bring the case that they have

26:12

in front of them so Alvin brag the

26:14

Manhattan district attorney doesn't have

26:16

the January 6 case January 6 case he

26:19

doesn't have that he has this and this

26:21

case I think maybe more than any of the

26:23

other cases in which Trump is charged is

26:26

a case that really exists in the eye of

26:27

the beholder and Michael Cohen is its

26:29

perfect Avatar in that

26:33

sense Michael Cohen may seem credible

26:37

and he may seem utterly

26:39

unbelievable so as we look toward the

26:42

end of this trial this is the

26:44

prosecution's last witness we don't know

26:46

what kind of case if any the defense

26:48

will put on we could very much see this

26:50

case go to a jury very very soon wow

26:53

it's worth refocusing on these 12 jurors

26:55

and their relationship with Michael

26:57

Cohen Michael Cohen has told a

26:59

compelling story a compelling story but

27:02

again he is the only witness who can

27:04

link Trump to the crimes that

27:07

prosecutors here in Manhattan have

27:09

alleged and so as the trial is very very

27:13

close to ending Michael Cohen is exactly

27:16

what we expected this big prominent

27:19

important star witness and probably the

27:22

biggest risk that prosecutors have taken

27:31

well Jonah until next time thank you

27:34

very much of course thanks for having me

27:58

we'll be right

28:01

back here's what else you need to

28:04

another dat Donald Trump lost two

28:06

debates to me in 2020 since then he

28:08

hadn't shown up for debate now he's

28:10

acting like he wants to debate me again

28:12

well Make My Day pal I'll even do it

28:14

twice after exchanging online taunts

28:18

President Biden and Donald Trump agreed

28:20

to two general election debates to be

28:23

held in late June and early September

28:26

the debates will bypass the nonpartisan

28:29

organization that has managed

28:31

presidential debates for decades but

28:34

whose rules have frustrated both

28:37

campaigns as a result the Biden Trump

28:40

debates will play by their own rules the

28:43

first debate for instance will not

28:45

include a live audience as presidential

28:48

debates typically do and will establish

28:51

a high bar for including a thirdparty

28:54

candidate like Robert F Kennedy Jr in a

28:57

statement Kennedy wrote that Trump and

29:00

Biden want to exclude him from the

29:02

debates because quote they are afraid I

29:06

would

29:08

win today's episode was produced by Eric

29:11

krupky Stella tan and will Reed it was

29:14

edited by Devin Taylor contains original

29:17

music by Pat mccusker Marian Lozano and

29:21

aliciaa and was engineered by Alysa

29:23

Moxley our theme music is by Jim

29:25

brunberg and Ben Lanford of wonderlake

29:33

[Music]

29:36

that's it for the daily I'm Michael

29:38

Bavaro see you tomorrow

29:44

[Music]