NOT FOR PUBLICATION

In the United States Court of Appeals
For the Eleventh Circuit

No. 25-11764
Non-Argument Calendar

RAYMOND SHANE GREENE,

Plaintiff-Appellant,

versus

WESLEY S. PIPES,
Mobile Circuit Court Judge,
MARY B. WINDOM,
Presiding Judge at Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals,
MARK S. TUNSTALL,
Detective at Mobile County Sheriff's Office,
TRERRA WINSTON,
Clerk at Mobile Circuit Clerk's Office,
WILL SELLERS,
Supreme Court of Alabama Justice/Judge, et al.,

Defendants-Appellees.

Appeal from the United States District Court
for the Southern District of Alabama
D.C. Docket No. 1:24-cv-00122-KD-N

Before ROSENBAUM, GRANT, and KIDD, Circuit Judges.

PER CURIAM:

Raymond Greene, proceeding pro se, appeals the district court's determination that the *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine stripped it of jurisdiction to consider his 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint. *See Rooker v. Fidelity Trust Co.*, 263 U.S. 413 (1923); *Dist. of Columbia Court of Appeals v. Feldman*, 460 U.S. 462 (1983). After careful review, we conclude that this case does not fall within *Rooker-Feldman*'s narrow scope. We therefore vacate the district court's dismissal order and remand for further proceedings.

I. BACKGROUND

Greene is an Alabama prisoner currently serving life imprisonment for his commission of multiple sex offenses. The instant case arises from Greene's attempts to seek various forms of post-conviction relief. We will summarize the relevant state and federal proceedings.

A. *State Court Proceedings*

In 2022, several years after his convictions, Greene requested that the Mobile County Clerk of Court and the Mobile County Sheriff's Office produce copies of certain documents related to his state criminal case. Both offices told Greene that the

requested documents were unavailable. Greene soon thereafter petitioned the Alabama Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus ordering state officials to provide him with the requested documents. This petition was ultimately transferred to Judge Wesley Pipes, the presiding judge for the Mobile County Circuit Court, who denied relief.

Just days later, Greene made another request for mandamus relief, asking that Judge Pipes be directed to set aside his order. The Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals denied this request, reasoning that Greene had an adequate remedy because he could have directly appealed Judge Pipes's order. Greene then petitioned the Alabama Supreme Court for certiorari, which the court construed as a mandamus petition and denied.

During this time, Greene also filed a "complaint" in state court pursuant to Alabama Rule of Civil Procedure 60(b). The complaint named Assistant District Attorney Nicki Patterson and alleged that prosecutorial misconduct caused his first criminal trial to end in a mistrial. Greene also contended that his retrial, which resulted in his instant convictions, violated the Fifth Amendment's Double Jeopardy Clause. The state court dismissed the complaint, and the Alabama Supreme Court affirmed.

B. *District Court Proceedings*

While his Rule 60(b) appeal was pending in state court, Greene initiated federal proceedings against several Alabama officials. In his operative, amended 42 U.S.C. § 1983 complaint, Greene appeared to challenge the integrity of his civil and criminal state

court proceedings. In relevant part, Greene alleged that the procedures used in reviewing his filings were contrary to the First, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments, and were "arbitrary" and "capricious," as they failed to provide an adequate remedy at law and denied litigants access to the courts and to relevant evidence. Greene maintained that these constitutional violations required "declaratory-injunctive" relief and "equitable intervention."

Acting sua sponte, a magistrate judge recommended dismissal of the action for lack of subject matter jurisdiction. The magistrate judge interpreted the complaint as "broadly request[ing] injunctive relief." The magistrate judge further interpreted the complaint as specifically requesting the court to order the production of the state court records Greene was denied and to determine whether there was prosecutorial misconduct at his original trial. With this understanding, the magistrate judge determined that Greene's complaint fell within the scope of the *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine. The magistrate judge noted that Greene "made conclusory allegations of constitutional violations," but found that the complaint "c[ould] only be read as a *de facto* appeal [of] state court judgments."

Over Greene's objections, the district judge adopted the magistrate judge's recommendation and dismissed the action without prejudice. In addition to the magistrate judge's conclusions, the district judge noted that, to the extent Greene's complaint could be construed as seeking habeas relief, such claims would be untimely, impermissibly successive, and meritless.

This appeal followed.

II. STANDARD OF REVIEW

We review de novo a district court's determination that it lacks subject matter jurisdiction over a case based upon the principles of the *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine. *Behr v. Campbell*, 8 F.4th 1206, 1209 (11th Cir. 2021).

III. DISCUSSION

The *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine precludes a district court from exercising subject matter jurisdiction over "cases brought by state-court losers complaining of injuries caused by state-court judgments rendered before the district court proceedings commenced and inviting district court review and rejection of those judgments." *T.M. v. Univ. of Md. Med. Sys. Corp.*, 146 S. Ct. 1739, 1744 (2026) (quoting *Exxon Mobil Corp. v. Saudi Basic Indus. Corp.*, 544 U.S. 280, 284 (2005)). *Rooker-Feldman* "bars all appeals of state court judgments—whether the plaintiff admits to filing a direct appeal of the judgment or tries to call the appeal something else." *Behr*, 8 F.4th at 1211. The doctrine also applies "regardless of whether [the complained-of] judgments are final trial-court judgments or those of a State's highest court." *T.M.*, 146 S. Ct. at 1752.

But *Rooker-Feldman* "does not prevent a district court from exercising subject-matter jurisdiction simply because a party attempts to litigate in federal court a matter previously litigated in state court." *Efron v. Candelario*, 110 F.4th 1229, 1235 (11th Cir. 2024) (citation modified), *cert. denied*, 145 S. Ct. 1958 (2025). "Nor

does *Rooker-Feldman* block claims that require some reconsideration of a decision of a state court if the plaintiff presents some independent claim, albeit one that denies a legal conclusion that a state court has reached in a case to which he was a party." *Id.* (citation modified). "Indeed, we have stated that *Rooker-Feldman* 'will almost never apply.'" *Id.* (quoting *Behr*, 8 F.4th at 1212). We conclude that this is one of those cases where the *Rooker-Feldman* doctrine is inapplicable.

We must liberally construe Greene's amended complaint. *Campbell v. Air Jam. Ltd.*, 760 F.3d 1165, 1168 (11th Cir. 2014). So construed, Greene alleged constitutional violations associated with the resolutions of his records requests, petitions for mandamus relief, and request for Rule 60(b) relief filed in the state courts. And, contrary to the district court's conclusion, Greene sought both "declaratory-injunctive" relief and "equitable intervention" related to these arguments. *Rooker-Feldman* did not strip the district court of subject matter jurisdiction to evaluate Greene's requests for declaratory relief related to these alleged violations of his constitutional rights. *See Efron*, 110 F.4th at 1235.

The source of Greene's alleged injuries was not exclusively the adverse resolution of his state court actions, but also the procedures by which Alabama officials evaluated his filings. *See id.* at 1236. For example, Greene's operative complaint pointed to Alabama's "processes" in the adjudication of his mandamus petitions and Rule 60(b) filing, alleging they were inadequate and contrary to principles of federal law. Greene also claimed that Alabama's

processes were "arbitrary" and "capricious" and that they failed to provide litigants an adequate remedy at law. While these arguments suggest that Greene was unhappy with the results of his state actions, construing the entirety of his case as directly appealing those state judgments would be too broad an interpretation of the pleadings. We therefore conclude that Greene's constitutional challenges fall outside the "narrow ground" occupied by *Rooker-Feldman*. *Behr*, 8 F.4th at 1209 (citation omitted); *see also Efron*, 110 F.4th at 1235.

We note that "[o]ther preclusion and abstention doctrines remain alive and well," and we leave to the district court to determine in the first instance whether Greene's action is subject to dismissal on some other basis. *Behr*, 8 F.4th at 1214; *see also Exxon Mobil Corp.*, 544 U.S. at 293 ("If a federal plaintiff presents some independent claim, albeit one that denies a legal conclusion that a state court has reached in a case to which he was a party, then there is jurisdiction and state law determines whether the defendant prevails under principles of preclusion." (citation modified)).

IV. CONCLUSION

We **VACATE** the district court's order dismissing Greene's complaint for lack of subject matter jurisdiction. This case is **REMANDED** for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.