



EPISODE 49: Russell Laffitte Is FINALLY Behind Bars + How Is Alex Murdaugh Paying Dick and Jim

[00:00:05] **Mandy Matney:** So just when we thought we were getting out, the Murdaugh team pulls us back in. But before I get into that, I want to share some good news from Sandy Smith. Sandy and I, along with Eric Bland, had the opportunity to join Vinnie Politan on Court TV to announce the Steven Nicholas Smith Scholarship, which is now live. You can donate and learn more at stevensmithscholarship.com. While Sandy still eagerly awaits any new information from SLED, she decided to take some of what is leftover from the \$130,000 exhumation and investigation fund and create a scholarship fund in Stephen's name. Soak Up the Sun premium members will get a special pre-recorded Happy Hour and live chat where we dive deeper into this topic and more on October 12th, but you can click the link in the description to see and hear Sandy's request for support of this new fund. And there is still a \$30,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of whomever killed Steven Smith. If you know something, please say something. And also this week, Liz and I are excited to talk about my new book on Thursday, October 5th at 7pm Eastern Time for Soak Up the Sun premium members. In other news, 'ol can't-admit-defeat Russell Laffitte is finally in federal prison after months of procrastinating, and that is a big deal. But when Liz started to look at what life would be like for Russell, it's basically bougie prison for men who steal large amounts of money and defraud taxpayers. Also on the show, the good guys subpoena Dick and Jim to find out just how much they've been making as they sell Alex's story to Hollywood. On a serious note, South Carolina lost one of its good guys this week. Shockwaves rippled across South Carolina as we learned of Stanley Meyers' tragic passing. A very close friend of Eric Bland's, we would like to dedicate this episode to Stanley and his family. Here's EB with how he's going to remember his dear friend Stanley Myers.

[00:02:26] **Eric Bland:** Stanley is a veteran, fought in Iraq. He was a four year starter quarterback at the Citadel, he was on the Citadel Board of Trustees. He went to the NFL Combine. He was becoming a general in the JAG corps. He became a judge in the JAG corps. A tremendous lawyer—just an unbelievable athlete—and he was a wonderful husband and he had two beautiful children. And it is a profound loss for our state.

[00:03:03] **Mandy Matney:** A lot to unpack. So let's get into it

[00:03:22] **Liz Farrell:** Cups up guys.

[00:03:24] **Mandy Matney:** Cups up everybody.

[00:03:27] **Liz Farrell:** It's been a busy morning, yeah, so far. Before we get started talking, I wanted to, I was talking with Eric about this, Mandy, before you popped on and we, you know, we've been joking for the last, I don't know, what? 12 hours? About the commissary at Coleman Low Security Federal Correctional Institute where Russell Laffitte is currently. I looked on the Bureau of Prisons website this morning. He is physically there. They do not have, he's in. They do not have his release date. I looked for Cory as well. Cory is in the system,



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but it doesn't say where he is, so I don't know if he's physically with them yet. But back to Russell, so I started reading the Bureau of Prisons guide yesterday just to see what his orientation—because that's what he's doing right now—was like, and there's a commissary list in the booklet, right? And we were all looking at it, and I don't know, Eric, you don't get beaten up about this, but I get beaten up whenever I make jokes. I make a lot of jokes in my life. But when I make jokes specifically about prisons and prisoners, it seems to be like I would say maybe, maybe one to three people come out of the woodwork to let me know that it's not funny, that people in prison are human, and you know? And I understand that from the perspective of if your cousin, your brother, your uncle, your father, or somebody is in prison that you love, and it isn't funny that you know they have to eat beef sticks and Cheetos or whatever. Like, I get that. But when we talk about this, I just want to make it clear to people we're not making fun of your relatives. We're not making fun of the idea of people in prison having to live like this. We're making fun of Russell Laffitte. We're making fun of Cory Fleming. Yeah, very specifically, we're making fun of Alex Murdaugh. It's because these men lived lives of privilege and they did everything possible to not go to prison. They will, and look at what Alex's doing now. Just throwing people under the bus left and right to go to a federal prison instead of the state prison. So I just want to make that clear, because I don't know, Mandy, if you see that too where, yeah, people kind of get on. Yeah, I don't, Eric, why don't you get that from people?

[00:05:32] **Mandy Matney:** I actually saw somebody said something to Eric, like, this isn't funny at prison. I did see that today. But like, I mean, I also think we're making fun of the federal system and how it's an easy out for these embezzler-type white collar criminals. It's really funny, because for the last couple of weeks I've been getting several messages from people saying, "Can you explain on *Cup of Justice* why federal prison is better than," like you guys keep saying, "Club Fed". And I just don't understand why is club fed better than a state prison. And this is like a concrete example, this list of their commentary, of how it's better. And like, they're just like, I don't get it. It's still a prison. That sounds like it sucks. And it's like, no, this is bougie prison. This is...

[00:06:23] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. I posted a photo this morning of their bed accommodations, and it really looked like my freshman dorm of bunk beds. There's no cells, there's a, you know, a cinderblock wall that goes up probably halfway, he may be in a just a bigger bunk room where there's just lines and lines of cots. And, you know, I'm not making fun of prisoners, I'm making fun of Russell. Because Russell went back to court after he was convicted and he wanted to be able to have some kind of mobility so he could go to his farm and do different things. He did everything he could not to begin reporting to Coleman, or he wanted to go to Jessup in Georgia, but he did everything he could to procrastinate going to prison. He chose to go to trial. That's the choice he made. He made that decision. That's his sixth amendment right. I don't fault him for that. But he gambled and he lost. And then he took a course of conduct where he blamed his lawyers, he blamed Judge Gergel, he then tried to traffic



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because Alex said that he did nothing wrong. Now all of a sudden Alex is saying he's a co-conspirator. And then we have Judge Gergel who granted three, at least three, extensions for Russell to report, and the Fourth Circuit came back resoundingly like they should have been said, "No, you're not going to stay out on appeal while your appeal goes through the system. You're going to begin to report." And it's just this sense of privilege where everybody's been trying to fight to get to federal prison. Well, now you get to see why federal prison is easier. You're not in a six-by-six cell. It's not just beef sticks, tuna fish and mackerel. You got a snack list that, you know, rivals any college kid's ability to go to a general commissary. Or like I said, it's like at Pebble Beach when you do the turn, I mean, there's everything and everything, from stool softener to shoe polish to, you know, if you have dry eye. And I'm not saying these people should live like animals, but the fact of the matter is prison needs to have some kind of corporal punishment to it, and this is the stark contrast. And now you see why Debbie Barbier, and Dick Harpootlian, and Mark Moore are cutting flips to get their clients into this kind of federal prison. It is a safer lifestyle, it is a more enjoyable lifestyle, for a prisoner. Again, their liberty is restrained, they don't have the ability to move, they have to do with, you know, what their daily schedule is dictated to them, but this is it. Now we weren't making it, we made a joke, but the joke was meant to be serious. And now you're seeing why we're having this constant fight for these state court criminals to want to become federal prisoners.

[00:09:14] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, and I think the other thing that we need to make clear is that, as we've always said, there literally should be one system of justice, and this shows the example of two. Why is one prison that happens to have a lot more privileged white collar criminals—a crime's a crime—like, why is there this system of this easy out and like bougie commissary and all these other things? Maybe they should have these things in SCDC if they have them in federal prison, but it just shows the contrast, and that's what we're trying to say. yeah, you steal

[00:09:48] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. You steal with a pen, you still with a pen you get a great commissary, you steal with a gun, you sit in a six-by-six cell and eat mackerel.

[00:09:56] **Mandy Matney:** Right, and as we've talked about before, like how many cars would have had to have been stolen to make up the money stolen in these crimes? These were very serious crimes and this federal list just kind of shows how ridiculous this whole thing is, because I mean. Or maybe like they should all, maybe all prisons should have more options and they would be nicer, but it just shows the very big contrast. Liz, what was your favorite item on there? Let's all go around and say their most shocking.

[00:10:28] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, scissors. I didn't understand. So that right off the bat should tell you something. I visited Allendale, Department of Corrections in South Carolina has a prison in Allendale, which is in the 14th circuit, and it's a low—I think it's a medium security, maybe



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low security, I can't remember—but the prisoners there have clubs. I think I've talked about this before. And it is a lot like a community college in the sense that like they get to take classes, they really truly seem to be wanting to better themselves, at least from what I saw, and there's a great group of volunteers that go and help make those clubs happen and make sure that prisoners have clothing when they leave the prison so that they can sort of dress for success.

[00:11:06] **Eric Bland:** And that's good. I'm okay with that.

[00:11:08] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, I love that.

[00:11:09] **Liz Farrell:** It's excellent.

[00:11:10] **Eric Bland:** Rehabilitation.

[00:11:12] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. That's the point of it, right? But here's the thing, when I was there, they did not have a guard assigned to me, so I was literally being led around by prisoners. It was, I'm not gonna lie, it was terrifying. Because the murderers, like I've said before, were completely nice, because they'd been in there for a long time, they've been institutionalized, they were calm, they were religious, and they, I felt protected by them quite honestly. But the sexual offenders, I did not. They were lascivious. Like it was just, it was gross. But that said, a prisoner asked me if I wanted to see the grooming room where they learn to groom animals and I was like, "Sure, that that would be cool." And then he opens up, he takes a key out, and he opens this cabinet and it's all scissors and razors and he's like, "Can you believe they let us have this?" And I have never felt fear go from my head to my toes the way it did in that moment. I was like, "Oh my god, yeah. That is that, they must really trust you." And like, I'm backing out of the room to like go back. Oh my god. And like, I don't know what the, you know, you don't ask the guys what they did. Honestly, I was keeping, picking down their badge numbers and names I could look later and I was dead on accurate about who the murderers and who the sex offenders were. I think this guy was in for assault. But anyway, scissors. This shows you how much, I mean a low security prison—and I want to make that distinction because people are coming at me with like horror stories about Coleman, which again is where Russell is—Coleman has a high security element of it, okay? And I believe Whitey Bulger was there, my favorite gangster from Boston. That's not where he was killed, but that's where he was for a minute. Larry Nasser is there, the disgusting pig.

[00:12:46] **Eric Bland:** He got stabbed there. He did get stabbed there.

[00:12:49] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, and then there's a number of white collar criminals, including a dude who like stole billions of dollars and got sentenced to 100 years in prison, by the way. So the low security, so think of it like a compound, like think of it as the Kennedy compound. Ted



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Kennedy's house would be the high security where stuff's gonna go down, you know, and maybe Caroline Kennedy is the low security house. That's where Russell is. So he's in a different wing. He's not with the guys that are throwing, you know, warmed up baby oil in each other's faces. This is a different thing. So when we talk about this too, we're also talking about your neighbors. So your cubicle neighbors in this prison where Russell is are not going to be as violent or dangerous as the ones that Alex is with, right? So they're not going to be, the idea of the flight or fight constantly in prison, that constantly fighting for your life and survival, is a completely different situation in low security Federal Prison. Everyone sort of has a mutually agreed upon social contract that they're just there to get through it and let's make the best of it, right? So that's different.

[00:13:52] **Eric Bland:** Because they know if you, with one infraction, you get bumped up. And everybody knows that. They know you get bumped up to higher security and nobody wants that. Nobody wants that.

[00:14:05] **Liz Farrell:** That's a good point. So Eric, what was your favorite item on the commissary list?

[00:14:09] **Eric Bland:** Well, you know fiber stool softener. You know, we all have issues, you know, whether it's, you know, due to travel and we're in a strange place. We all have issues and we all need a little bit of Metamucil or fiber stool softener. So that was my favorite.

[00:14:28] **Liz Farrell:** It's considerate. Yeah, I would say, to offer that to Russell. Yeah. It's in case he gets the nervous johnnys. Mandy?

[00:14:31] **Mandy Matney:** I'm with David. I was, I just thought it was very funny that they could get straw hats, and I just pictured Russell checking into the commissary saying, "One straw hat, please."

[00:14:45] **Eric Bland:** Florida, you know, it's sunny. It's Florida.

[00:14:49] **Mandy Matney:** And like, I got to be in my element as a farmer. I also just thought it was funny they could basically make like a prison charcuterie with like Spanish olives and, what was another one? They just, I mean, the snacks were, as you said, and as a lot of people said, a lot of the items were cheaper than like Publix. So what's going on there?

[00:15:10] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, you get it less than cost.

[00:15:12] **Mandy Matney:** How are they getting these deals?



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[00:15:14] **Liz Farrell:** That always surprised me about Alex's commissary list, because we were always that the privatization of prisons and sort of these vendor contracts that they have are bilking prisoners for their money. And I don't know, that just hasn't been my experience. But that's a good point, Mandy, because we should also note that like most prisoners, I would say a good portion of them, do not have somebody putting the full limit of their money on their commissary, right? I would say, I wouldn't, I don't know the statistics, but let's just say I mean, I'm gonna guess it's like 90 something percent do not have somebody who's putting, you know in Alex's case, \$65 a week or whatever it is now that he's in prison. Russell is going for 40 years, and Russell is probably going to have somebody putting the full amount of his commissary, whatever the limit is each week, so that he can buy what he wants, but that's not the case for most prisoners. So then the economy becomes, you know, he's a banker, so you know, maybe he'll assign like scissors are worth more than, you know, he'll make a profit on it or whatever. Even though in the prison...

[00:16:15] **Eric Bland:** He gets interest. He'll get interest. Scissors, and in return you give me, you know, a bit of honey, couple bit of honeys every day till you pay it off.

[00:16:24] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, or your phone, your phone privileges, which is you know, Alex took somebody's bone badge and used it. So who knows what he traded that, you know, what he traded for that. But I could see Russell, he's not—so according to the prison policy book, they cannot conduct business. And I think that's a really funny rule to have in the prisoner. Because these guys get in there and they want to decide who's the king of the hill, and how do you do that? You create your little business and its not allowed—but it seems like he's going to have a coffee hour, he's going to have a lot of physical movement time.

[00:16:57] **Eric Bland:** How about the upgrade to Charmin toilet paper, Mandy? You get, if you don't like the institutional issue, which may be a little hard and cause some chafing, you can upgrade to Charmin double ply.

[00:17:09] **Mandy Matney:** I also loved the amount of skincare products that were available to them. I mean, it was impressive. And again, I'm not saying that people don't deserve this, I'm just saying I'm shocked at the difference because we all know all the commissary because of Alex Murdaugh. He was obsessed with talking about commissary when we heard those phone calls. It was like, Liz, how much, like he talked about like, it's frickin beef sticks in his trading of, he was so obsessed with it.

[00:17:40] **Liz Farrell:** He was beside himself. He was so happy to talk about it. And I know again we got criticized because we were making fun of that, and people were like, "Well, prisoners don't have a lot to talk about. There's not a lot going on. They can't talk about a lot of things." Fine. We're talking about Alex specifically. He was, it's not because we think it's funny that this man only has commissary in his life, though it's well deserved. It's funny that



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he got into a prison, he got into a jail rather, and immediately figured out what, how to make himself the guy in the jail, right? He immediately figured out commissary is the economy, now how do I, how can I exploit it to my benefit? So that's what he was excited about, because he was figuring out the ropes. And I think, Eric, didn't, wasn't there some sort of notion that like, Alex really liked jail? Like he didn't mind. it? He really...

[00:18:28] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, yeah. I heard that from a number of inside people. That it was for him, I wouldn't say almost cathartic, but the stress of not having, I guess, to live the lies that he was living and be able to just relax in a way. Not relax, because it's a different kind of fear that you have in prison, but relax from the stress of his life that he, that was self-induced and self-inflicted. And he didn't seem to complain. He never complained in the phone calls about the conditions, he didn't say, "Look, they don't let me go to the bathroom. I'm starving. I'm this. I'm that." I mean, the guy looks like now he could put on a pair of pads and be the defensive end that he was 40 years ago. So you know, he's lean, mean fighting machine from stripes.

[00:19:15] **Liz Farrell:** It is striking though when you see these, the footage in documentaries, like what he looked like before he went to jail. He looks like a completely different person.

[00:19:22] **Eric Bland:** I think it's that was an alcohol-induced. I'm a big believer in that it's not so much the pills—and I'm not downgrading the fact that he did take opioids, I don't believe and none of us believe it was to the extent that has been portrayed—but I think he definitely had alcohol weight in his face. You know, every photo you see of this family, and that's one thing that was never really discussed, is what effect the alcohol had on Alex's life. You know, every photo was a beer. They have a cooler, they have a Yeti or it's a little beer holder. So I think alcohol was a big factor in his life, as much as the opioids were.

[00:20:01] **Mandy Matney:** But yeah, I mean, I think in general, and somebody said this the other day on Twitter and this is another thing, is just there's this, it's like the trolls have come alive again to defend Alex Murdaugh. Like they were hiding for a little bit, and I don't know if there's new ones, but I've getting all sorts of like Alex Murdaugh defenders on my twitter again. And one of them said something like, "Well, it doesn't matter. It's not like money matters to Alex Murdaugh anyways, he's in prison." And it's like, money still matters when you're behind bars, it matters so much. It matters with the defense that you have, it matters, you have power through commissary, like, and that's the thing with this list, too. It's like, yeah, money will always help even when you're behind bars, and I am just, I'm just blown away that I never I never realized the clear difference between federal prison and state prison until I looked at that list and some other things. And I've been like, wow, no wonder these guys are fighting so hard for this



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[00:21:08] **Eric Bland:** Money can pay guards, money can pay inmate family members, money can get people jobs on the outside. Just because you're on the inside doesn't mean you can't benefit from using money on the outside. It doesn't directly benefit you, but indirectly, it helps others, which helps you on the inside. What if Alex has three or four people that are just tormenting him because he is a child killer? He is a son killer, he killed, you know, his son. And that is a real problem in prison. If you kill, you know, your child, it's one thing to kill a wife, it's another thing to kill another man, or you know, a sibling. But when you kill your own child, that sets you apart. And what if he's having difficulty down the line and he, and you know, a guard says or another inmate says, "Look, I need you to take care of my sister. She needs a car," or whatever, "and then we'll give you protection?" I mean, protection and power in prison are the two most important things. Power in the sense that what can I do for you? What can I give you that you're gonna want to be friends with me? And then the protection aspect of it. You know, in state prison, you have people that break up by ethnicity, it just happens. There is the Caucasians, there's the African Americans, there's the Hispanics, all different kinds of people gravitate to their like. In federal prison, it's not so much, but Alex has issues that he's going to have to deal with in the coming years. Right now, you know, he's protected. Everybody's watching him. Nobody wants to, you know, the state doesn't want to make sure that Alex gets hurt. That's not what they want to happen in prison right now. So but in, you know, when this all dies down, and it will, it may be three years, maybe four years, but it'll die down, then Alex will be out of the news, and he won't be that person that the state is going to go out of its way to protect.

[00:22:59] **Liz Farrell:** So do you think Russell is gonna have the same? So, you know, Alex goes in not just a criminal, but like, a murderer, you know, a potential murderer? Russell's going in as the guy who helped him. Like it's, it's the least, you know, it's not that, it's still bad, but it's the least of the bad stuff, right? So it's not like Russell, in his mind, I don't think, I don't know, obviously, for sure, but he doesn't strike me as someone who is like sitting at home thinking of all the ways that he can steal money. It seems like he more took an opportunity and allowed it to happen, right? I mean, how's this, how's this man gonna fit? How's he gonna do in prison?

[00:23:37] **Eric Bland:** I think he's gonna do fine. I think he's going to be a guy that's going to teach other inmates about financing. I think he's going to give advice about investments. He's going to certainly keep up with the economy and interest rates and the forecast, and I think he's going to do just fine. Look, let's not kid yourself, he built a swimming pool on the backs of the Plyler girls money. He paid off a seven and a half percent interest rate home equity loan down to two and a half percent off the Plyler girls money. So he's, he wasn't just helping Alex, he was helping himself, but I think he's going to do just fine. Remember, he may end up teaching the class. He may teach a class on, you know, economics or banking. And, you know, the banking system is really strange. Nobody really understands the Feds and how the money gets into the economy, and when they tighten the money supply, or they release cash



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or they buy back treasury bonds. You know, I've had all economic classes and I don't really understand. Maybe he'll teach the inmates. He could be a value add.

[00:24:37] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, and like, think about the people who are in federal prison. Like, I feel like it's gonna be people who give Russell more of a path than your everyday average person. Like these are people who made COVID scams and embezzled money from companies and I feel like they won't be like shockingly offended by what Russell did, because they all kind of seem to be in the same boat.

[00:25:05] **Eric Bland:** My best friend's a felon, I always tell you guys that, and he served a year and a day. And what he did tell me is that they lay off of, if you're like post 55, or in your 60s, you hit 60 years old, they don't touch you. Young guys will not go after an old older man. It's just not cool. They won't do that. If you know it's different if you're 20 in prison, but the older you get, even in state prison, the older you get, they do lay off of you. And truthfully Russell does look older than the 53-years-old that he is. He does look like a 60-year-old man. Now Alex looks younger now than his age. So we already know he's scrappy, you know, in the second bond hearing he had a cut on his face and he had scraped up knuckles, so you know he's willing to scrap.

[00:26:05] **Liz Farrell:** So going back to what you said, Mandy, about the Murdaugh trolls coming out, it seems like we're seeing not just like the push that we thought we were seeing for a sort of the public relations aspect of Alex's case. That was happening anyway. Ee're seeing sort of like a reinvigoration of it happening with the fourth episode of Fox Nation, that sort of surprise episode about the clerk of court. And then with sort of these interviews that Dick and Jim are giving, I don't know if they realize that they're giving away more than what they think they're saying, but one of the interviews recently, they referred to how they were getting paid. And they mentioned that they were getting paid from Alex's trust fund, which is problematic, right, Eric? Do you want to explain that to people so that they can understand why it is subpoenas were issued to speak by (inaudible) and Mark Tinsley to find out where Dick and Jim, how much they got paid by Fox, like why that matters and what this, how they're being paid, why that matters?

[00:27:08] **Eric Bland:** Sure. So one is they're making representations to court in many different courts about payment and what they've received. And I objected to their request when they wanted \$160,000 for the appeal from the murder conviction. Mark Tinsley and I and the receiver caught up and we were strident that it should not be granted. These, this is victims money. He wanted to take \$160,000 from the money that the receivers recovered over the last year and a half, which is about a net of \$1.8 million after all fees and costs that came out of it. And Jim Griffin represented to the court that they were paid a total of \$600,000 for representing Alex in the murder case. And that was by agreement with the receiver that in return to be able to pay \$600,000 to Dick and Jim, Alex agreed that a certain amount of



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money would go to, you know, Mark's clients, the Beaches, and then a certain amount of money would be set aside for the victims. And this is what the agreement was, and then they were coming in the court to try to change that. We prevailed. But in that, Jim said that they only made \$69,000 between Dick and Jim for a fee for the murder, that the rest of it went to experts and court costs and investigations and in lodging. What they didn't say is, "Well, we got paid \$500,000 to represent Paul in the DUI boating case." That never came out. But now we find out in an interview that they gave a CrimeCon that money came from a trust. And we always had heard that when Randolph died he left \$16 million, 4 million for each of the four children. And that's untouchable. Trust money is untouchable. The creditors can't get at it, the government can't get at it, and so, it was never confirmed. And what slipped down in that interview was we got money from a 401(k), which is different than what Jim had said in court, and we got trust fund money. Now, why is that important? Well, representations are being made to court the Dick and Jim aren't getting paid. Well, we don't know now. Now we want to find out how much total money have they been paid from all these different sources, from representing Paul, from representing Alex, the agreement that was made with the receiver, now money coming from a 401(k), money coming from a trust. And we saw this week that they now made a motion to get the \$1.8 million that is set aside for the victims. That they now want that money, that it shouldn't go to the victims, that it should go to Alex. Ultimately to Alex, it's going to go to his lawyers, maybe to Buster, whatever. The other issue is, we want to find out how much were they paid, if they were. And I'm not, I have no knowledge that they were paid for the Fox special, but Alex can't benefit from that because of the Slayer statute. But if he indirectly shifted money over to Buster or to Dick, that is something that everybody's going to want to find out. And what we're seeing now is the mad scramble dash by Dick and Jim to grab as much money as possible because they know that they now may be facing a retrial. And they're quick to say, "Oh, we're going to represent him for free in the retrial if we get it." No, they're not. No, they're not. They're trying to get all the money in the world. They have the civil cases coming up. They have the case in November on the Satterfields, which Dick already is going to be making a motion to have that continued. So there are so many unanswered questions now, so many situations where I think Dick and Jim are going to have to answer to a court, finally, as to what they've been getting paid, because they're making representations to a court that may not be true. And that is where we are.

[00:31:02] **Liz Farrell:** So essentially, you can sue Dick and Jim and go after them if they did misrepresent to the court how they—is that, is that right?

[00:31:13] **Eric Bland:** Well, one of, one of the things I'm contemplating is, I think they possibly have been paid with Satterfield money. I've said this from the start. Remember, if they got \$500,000 from Alex to represent Paul, Paul didn't have \$500,000. His parents did. And he was charged in the spring, May or the May area of 2019 for the DUI boating accident. If you look at the timeline of the Satterfield money, Alex got \$405,000 in January of 2019 and then he got 2.9 million on May 13th of 2019. Now, somebody's going to have to show where Dick and Jim's



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money has come from, because if they say, "Oh, we got 401(k) money," that's not, you can't steal and do drugs and live on that money and have a W-2 job and then put your W-2 money in a 401(k) and say, "Well, this is legitimate money over here, this 401(k) money," when you've lived on ill-gotten gain money. All of its ill-gotten gains. Because if you didn't have the drug money and the theft money, you would be living on your W-2 money. So even though retirement money is usually sacrosanct and you can't get at it, in this particular case, and that's why there has to be a real forensic audit done, if Alex was paying them was stolen client money, the Satterfield money and other ill-gotten gain money paying lawyers, that money may need to be called back. Look, Dick's trying to claw back from the Satterfields their money that they got. It's time that they have to answer to the piper and come clean on where they get their money. You can't just have a drug dealer like, you know, Manuel Noriega, that you know makes money selling heroin and cocaine and he comes in and pays you a million dollars to represent you. I know that happens and I, yes, I'm a lawyer, but we all know that Manuel Noriega never had a W-2 job. He's paying a lawyer with drug money. It's almost the same with could be. I'm not saying it is and I'm not saying they did, but now they're gonna have to answer for that because they've made inconsistent statements to court.

[00:33:30] **Mandy Matney:** I'm really excited about this, because I mean, Liz, we were saying going into this week that we were kind of preparing for war, because it seems like there's just so much going on. And, again, Dick and Jim seem to still have the media on their side. And the subpoena, for me, was a pretty big moment and all of this, that I think it's a big sign that they could be held accountable, and that we could actually get answers, and they can't just keep making these inconsistent statements and doing all of these things. And I think my biggest problem is that like all at the court's expense, all of the time that these guys wasted on behalf of Alex Murdaugh, that's the part that makes me the most mad. I keep saying this, but as a South Carolina taxpayer, and as we talked about on Court TV last night, I'm very angry that all of these jury tampering accusations are now taking up so much of SLED's time. And I mean, it's just a circus directed by Dick and Jim that we're seeing over and over again. It's like, as soon as we, as soon as it seems like resources can go to Stephen Smith and be dedicated to investigating that, Dick and Jim have another thing that's like, "Over here! You got to do this right now! Me, me, me," and I'm so tired of it. So I'm ready. Let's do it.

[00:34:56] **Eric Bland:** Do you remember what Dick said in his 2013 interview? He likes to lay smokescreens. He likes to do something over here to bring your attention over here, and then he moves you over here. And that's what he's doing. And there, I am very, very interested in SLED's investigation into the knowledge that Jim and Dick had about potential jury issues at the trial, or the week after the trial. If they held this in their hip pocket, this is going to be a real problem.

[00:35:27] **Liz Farrell:** Well, I think there's evidence that they might have. I think this is the case.



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[00:35:31] **Mandy Matney:** And I mean, the headlines that we've seen this week, Liz, we were talking about a couple of them, what was one? It was like, Alex Murdaugh slams biased clerk of court, Becky Hill. It seems like there's this other push to vilify Becky Hill in the media and they just keep going.

[00:35:53] **Eric Bland:** That's why I went on episode four of the Fox Nation thing. And you know, a lot of our listeners didn't like that I went on the Fox Nation thing, but like I said, any chance I get that can tell the opposite or countervailing narrative, usually it was just that the prosecution was doing well during the murder trial, and everybody was saying how bad the prosecution was doing and how good the defense was, I take advantage of that. In this case, I wanted to champion Becky Hill. Based on my investigation and discussions that I've had with those, you know, I felt that there's a different narrative that Becky Hill should be told, and that's why I went on it. And I thought they gave both sides a good opportunity in that episode four and, you know, I thought I was just gonna get, you know, one clip. You know, it was a couple hours, but usually they take one little snippet, but they did give me a lot of airtime and I thought I put out the best I could, the other side of the Becky Hill story. I mean, did you guys see it? What did you think?

[00:36:54] **Mandy Matney:** A couple things. I thought episode four was drastically differently told, I thought. Did you think that, Liz?

[00:37:04] **Liz Farrell:** Kind of, I guess.

[00:37:05] **Mandy Matney:** I was wondering if they took feedback from the first three, because I did see a lot of the comments under Martha McCollum's Facebook and Twitter and Fox News's Facebook and Twitter. They were like, "Why are you guys a mouthpiece for this guy. This is so one sided," blah, blah, blah. So I'm wondering for episode four, if they kind of decided to pull back a little bit. And they did. I was really glad that they included Eric, I was really glad that Eric's voice was on there, because it was it was the voice of rationality and of just like, hold on before. And I also did not like that they used footage of Becky before to continue to tell this story. It felt like they really did her dirty.

[00:37:51] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. And I'm wondering why, you know, we haven't heard from Justin Bamberg or Will Lewis and they're holding their powder dry. I think we're going to hear from them, but I think they're waiting for the state to do their filing. Quite frankly, I don't even know what the status is. I don't know if Dick ever filed the affidavit from Alex like he was supposed to do that the state suggested to really start the process. And quite frankly, I don't know whether they filed their 240 motion that the appellate court one of them the file. I just don't know the status of where we are right now. Are we moving towards any type of ruling by the appellate court? I mean, Liz, do you know where we are with filings? Have you seen any?



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[00:38:30] **Liz Farrell:** No, I haven't, and we stay on top of it. So the second there is one, we'll let you guys know, but I disagree about the fourth episode.

[00:38:38] **Eric Bland:** Why do you think they're waiting? Why do you think?

[00:38:41] **Liz Farrell:** Smoke and mirrors, it's complete smoke and mirrors. It's a distraction. They just needed the headlines and they got what they wanted. They got the headlines, and they got the fourth episode of this Fox Nation docuseries. So it goes back to like, okay, could it be that they did this fourth episode because the ratings were so magnificent for the first three? Possibly, right? Or was this always the move? Was this always the plan? And I asked that, Eric, do you know, did you know when you were filming for that that you were filming for the Fox Nation docuseries, or did you think it was just like an affiliate Fox station?

[00:39:12] **Eric Bland:** I knew it was going to be for the Fox Nation doc series, but I didn't know it was going to be an episode that was just solely dedicated to the jury tampering. I thought it was just going to be some continuation of the story. And like I said, I really thought it was going to be one blurb, you know, I have a one-tenth second appearance. Yeah, I didn't take it as seriously as I really thought I probably should have. I mean, I didn't, that wasn't a joke, but I just didn't think it was anything.

[00:39:40] **Liz Farrell:** I didn't find it journalistic, you know? I didn't. I think, this is the thing, the premise of it alone was suspect. I get that there needs to be a story told about this alleged jury tampering and I get how it looks to people outside of the 14th circuit who are covering this and maybe not used to the shenanigans that come from team Murdaugh, even though I feel like there's been ample evidence at this point to show you that this is all, like you said, smoke and mirrors. It's all just a more, more antics coming from Dick and Jim and their strategies. So right off the bat, because the premise is flawed, because I feel like that was less of an episode that was to inform us about the situation and more to vilify Becky, and I think some of the words that were said by perhaps people who are meaning to defend her could end up coming back to bite them in the butt again, because it's all about this perception that Becky—let's just be, okay. When Becky did that interview with Fox Nation, she had already—this was long past the trial was over—she had already spoken to some of the jurors, she traveled with them, in fact. So of course she had the perspective, at that point, of what they were talking about, what their thinking was, when things shifted for them. And Fox Nation presented it like these were Becky's thoughts during the trial. So she's sharing with them the thoughts that she's had since the trial, and it's being presented to people as if like during the trial she's sneaking around the corridors, and she's like, "Oh, I could tell in their eyes that something changed, and my women's intuition told me that." She's reflecting back on that time and she's got far more information about what the jury was up to at this point, simply because she traveled with them. So it bugs me. And then the other thing is, I feel like there was some creative editing in there. There was a part where they said that, and we go back to



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this part in her book where she uses the pronoun “we” and Dick tried to make it look like she meant her and the jurors, that she was counting herself amongst the jurors. And as somebody who was making a judgement here, that's not at all what she was doing. I don't know how much we have to take that page that's in the book that they included in their motion. That is absolutely not what it is. She's talking about her and the courtroom staff and the security that she was traveling with in the other car. So the fact that Fox Nation took that pronoun thing and said she doubled down on it, and then they use a non-related clip of her talking to sort of bolster that like idea that she was doubling down...

[00:42:03] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, that was terrible. Yeah.

[00:42:04] **Eric Bland:** The jurors and her were looking at each other, correct.

[00:42:08] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

[00:42:10] **Eric Bland:** I said the “we,” I did the “we,” as you just stated, Liz, I said the “we” is her staff, the court security, bailiffs, whatever. And she may, she said something from a different context and it created the contrast. Eric is trying to help her and she's sinking her own ship when she talked. And I think that was splicing. And I think we'll hear from, we'll hear from her lawyers at the right time, and her, hopefully. Now you may not hear from her, but you'll hear from her lawyers.

[00:42:40] **Liz Farrell:** I hope so because this whole thing now, she has a headline saying that she had a book tour planned for the library and it's because they didn't cancel her. Like at what point do her lawyers say to her, “Hey, is there anything coming up that might not look good for you? Can we talk about that?” Because that's foresight, and that's needed now. They're not, this is not some small town issue that's happening. This is a major, major statewide issue with the nation's eyes on us. It's important that she conducts herself in a way that comports to who she is and what in the job that she did. And rather, that rather than leaving these wide open doors to people to just use these words and twist them and use the sort of, the idea that she wants to sell her book as being showing that she wants fame and money at the Pickens Library of all places. Like come on. It's so dumb. It's so dumb.

[00:43:29] **Mandy Matney:** And I want to go back. I like want to clarify, I don't think that it was more, I think it was more journalistic. I think episode four was better than the rest of them, but it was still...

[00:43:41] **Eric Bland:** I love it when we disagree. I love disagreement. Go ahead.

[00:43:45] **Mandy Matney:** But it, but it was still not, it was not ethical. And it was sneaky about that. It was sneakier.



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[00:43:51] **Liz Farrell:** Which makes it not journalistic, yeah. Yeah.

[00:43:53] **Mandy Matney:** Exactly. It was sneakier, and it gave the appearance of it being a lot more journalistic, if that makes sense. And one of the things I want to point out is that throughout the documentary, there's a journalist on there, his name is Dana Kennedy, and Dana Kennedy works for the New York Post, and Dana Kennedy is really saying all the things that Dick and Jim—she is making all of the points, I mean, straight on—and she even says at the end of episode three, I think there's going to be another twist soon. And then what happens a couple days later, oh, Dick and Jim dropped this Becky bomb. And it's like, ha, did you know about that? And then you look at where Dana Kennedy works, and it is the New York Post. Who is the New York Post owned by? Rupert Murdaugh. What else is Rupert Murdaugh own? Fox News. So this seems like a propaganda. It seems like a very sneakily done propaganda machine where it appears like they're using this journalist from the outside who has just gone into this whole thing unbiased and just happens to have all the same opinions that Dick and Jim have, and then also happens to have this strange prediction that works very well with the arc of their documentary and what's, and what's happening in this whole case. And it just seems, it did not rub me the right way at all when I started to really stop and think about that. Dick and Jim weren't even in the last episode and I thought about it and was like, they didn't need to be. Dana Kennedy said all of the points that they said in their press conference.

[00:45:30] **Eric Bland:** That was excellent analysis.

[00:45:32] **Liz Farrell:** Again, that is propaganda. That is not journalism. So I need to really correct myself. And I don't think it was more journalistic. I think it gave the illusion of being more journalistic, which is almost worse because, or maybe it is worse, because it appears, and again, it's the appearance of two sides. And it's not providing full transparency of their intentions and where the two sides are coming from and how they're, and the way that they did Becky was bad. I mean, the amount of people who were like, didn't watch it and just saw Becky being in the headlines, and all they said was, "Oh, Becky's in another documentary?" And they had no idea it was old footage. They had no idea. It's just wrong, man. It's just really, and they presented it like an exclusive interview with Becky Hill, like it was brand new, and it was it several months old.

[00:46:28] **Liz Farrell:** Thank God for that plaid suit, because otherwise we would have been wondering.

[00:46:32] **Eric Bland:** We're seeing a lot of plaid suits lately.



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[00:46:36] **Mandy Matney:** The other thing that makes me really mad, is like, Becky, I don't know. They're just steamrolling her, man, and I feel really bad.

[00:46:45] **Eric Bland:** She can't speak for herself.

[00:46:56] **Liz Farrell:** So going back to what you're saying about Dana Kennedy, Mandy, not only was she an avatar for Dick and Jim in the fourth episode of that documentary, she tended to make these points that were very defense-like in that, in the (inaudible), like sort of the simplicity, the oversimplification of something. I remember, I think it was in one of the earlier episodes, she was talking about the difference between Alex saying they did him so bad or I did him so bad. And she made the point that, "Well, if he said 'I did him so bad,' then why didn't they arrest him there?" Case closed. And she's like all smarmy and like, you know, they would have had their guy right then and there and this would have all been over. And it's like, girl, I can see how old you are. I can guesstimate. I assume you have experience in journalism and therefore have had a lot of police reports and a lot of, talked to a lot of detectives in your life. You know dunwell that that is not how it works. You know that they want to keep him talking until they get the physical evidence back from the phone, until they get the physical evidence back. Him admitting to do it. They know.

[00:47:57] **Eric Bland:** It takes months, Liz. That takes months.

[00:47:59] **Liz Farrell:** And it's Alex frickin' Murdaugh. He's not sitting there admitting to a crime. They know that they got him, they got him on the cycle lot like slip of the tongue, and they could check it in their little box. It's just like when Jim, the only recourse they had, and when that whole thing came up and everyone gasped in the courtroom like, "Oh my god, he confessed to it." The only recourse they had was to make it look like the detective didn't take it seriously then. And they're like, "So, did you write it down in your notes? Did you?" And I remember thinking like, why isn't this guy saying, "No, it was recorded dummy. I don't need to write a note about it. I have it on a recording. I have it videotaped. I don't need to write down in my notes, 'Alex Murdaugh said I did him so wrong.'" So she made points like that, like a defense attorney who is just oversimplifying something to the point of misrepresenting it. So seeing her again in the fourth episode was no surprise. I don't know what she gets out of it, because I do see where she tries to say, "Okay, and this is where the defense goes wrong," but I don't know if that's just lip service to make it look like she's not charmed by Jim's, you know, phone repartee or Dick's jokes, because I feel like so many of them are like that. And then I want to talk real quick. We were talking earlier about the headlines, Mandy, and I don't know if you saw this, Eric, but poor old John Monk. He wrote a headline about Russell going or getting his last final, the motion for the bond appeal denied officially by the Court of Appeals. And the headline was "Bad Turn of the Screw for Russell Laffitte." He has to now report to prison, or something like that. And that's the kind of language that I don't think that a lot of reporters realize that they're using when they're describing something that perhaps



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they don't view as bad as maybe like, you know, a serial killer or something. But why is it a bad turn of the screw for a man who has put off again and again and again, and was continuing to try to put off going to prison, which he was sentenced to and should be at and should have been at a lot earlier than he was, you know, that aside, do you guys think that Judge Gergel came out of this? And maybe, Eric, you don't want to answer that, but Mandy, do you think Judge Gergel came out of this looking like a fool?

[00:49:58] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, I mean, he doesn't look great at all right now. And he had a decision. I feel like he made a decision somewhere between the trial, I don't know. He just acted like a different guy between the trial and the sentencing period. And I don't know what that was and I don't know what changed him, but yeah, I mean, I think he's also gonna go down as the guy who could have done something, but didn't. They're providing an easy out and I don't like that.

[00:50:32] **Eric Bland:** Do you think, Mandy and Liz, it's because he has his own internal concerns about the jury issues?

[00:50:39] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. 100% I think that's what it is.

[00:50:41] **Eric Bland:** That it's kind of pulling him back to the middle. The other thing I wanted to say is, and I may not know this because I'm just, but something in my head says isn't screw something to do with jail? Isn't a screw somebody in prison? Look that up, David. Isn't there something that's, I don't know whether John was trying to be cute with that, but I don't know.

[00:51:02] **Liz Farrell:** He might not have even written that headline to be clear. It could have been somebody in another state even, that's how McClatchy works. But yeah, jokes like that don't work in this market anymore. Just I think that a lot of newspaper men need to hear that, but going back to what you said, Eric.

[00:51:18] **Eric Bland:** It was sensationalizing.

[00:51:19] **Liz Farrell:** No, it's sympathizing. It's using, it's like we get accused of being biased because we're honest about our opinions, but these reporters who tried to say that I'm the, I'm completely unbiased, I'm completely objective, and it's like, you're not though, because look at the language you're using. It's sympathetic and it's, it's, it's qualifying it. You're saying that this was a bad luck for him. It's not bad luck. He had good luck. He got Judge Gergel to agree twice to allowing him to suspend it by a week. And what's really frustrating is when you read the order from Judge Gergel that finally said, look, man, I'll give you another week but this is it. Like, we're not doing this again. In that order, Judge Gergel made it clear that it is unlikely for the court of appeals to allow you to stay out on a bond during your appeal.



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There's really not, this is not what they do it for. You do not have, it is not likely that you're going to win your case on appeal. So he knew that. You know, if he knew that then, than he knew it before. So what, why allow those? How does that help him even though he might be protecting his record, even though he might be a little bit concerned about the second juror situation? How does that actually help him? I don't know. I don't have the answer. I'm just asking it rhetorically.

[00:52:23] **Eric Bland:** I don't know. I don't know. It's, I mean, I guess it's just showing that he, you know, maybe he doesn't want to put the foot on the throat as hard as he did during the trial. I just looked it up, by the way. A screw is a guard in prison. So that's what a screw is.

[00:52:37] **Liz Farrell:** Ridiculous. Well, okay, guys.

[00:52:39] **Eric Bland:** So switch switching gears to Sandy Smith.

[00:52:42] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, let's switch some gears.

[00:52:43] **Eric Bland:** I was so excited last night. Mandy, Sandy Smith and I appeared together on Court TV, on Vinnie Politan. Love Vinnie, I'm on the show a lot. And, you know, constantly implore Mandy because she's got such a good voice that needs to be heard. And, you know, she's busy all the time writing books, and doing her podcast and so many other things, and running this media empire that they're building. But she, she finally got in front of the camera. She talked a little bit about her book, but we talked about Sandy Smith. And so Mandy, tell us why you and Sandy decided to go on Court TV. What was the, what was the announcement?

[00:53:17] **Mandy Matney:** Well, the big announcement that has been a long time coming is finally the Stephen Smith scholarship is up and running in memory of Stephen, and we're really excited about it. There's already \$25,000 that has been donated from the GoFundMe into that, and I mean, that money alone is going to make a difference in a lot of kids' lives. It's gonna go—a long time ago Sandy, Sandy's always told me her dream was to have a scholarship and Stephen's name. She said that over and over again, that Stephen when he was in nursing school really struggled with money and struggled to pay for books and she wants his memory to go on and help other kids that were like Stephen that need help—and Lunashark will be donating \$5,000 to this scholarship from our merch with a mission money. Yeah, all that merch that you guys bought. So thank you guys so much. And again, this is, this is really great.

[00:54:16] **Eric Bland:** You guys are so charitable. Really nice. I mean, seriously.



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[00:54:20] **Mandy Matney:** It's gonna help kids that were like Stephen. Maybe you're debating if you want to go to nursing school and you don't have the money and this is going to help kids like that. So I'm really excited.

[00:54:32] **Eric Bland:** Is there any good cheer, Liz? You know, tell me what's going on with you.

[00:54:36] **Liz Farrell:** Well, Mandy and I will be on Lunashark Happy Hour for Soak Up the Sun members on October 5th at seven o'clock. And it's gonna be a lot of fun because we haven't done one together—when was the last time we did one?

[00:54:48] **Mandy Matney:** Long time, like the spring?

[00:54:51] **Eric Bland:** I'm heading to Italy tomorrow for 10 days and I'm going to be doing a *Cup of Justice* with you guys next week from Italy, kind of like what Mandy did. So I'm looking forward to it.

[00:55:00] **Mandy Matney:** Oh, that's so fun. I'm so excited to see all of your travels.

[00:55:05] **Eric Bland:** And my friend Danny and his wife Cindy are going with us, so it'll be great.

[00:55:09] **Mandy Matney:** Oh fun. Oh my gosh, it's gonna be so much fun.

[00:55:13] **Liz Farrell:** Well cool, Eric. I'm glad and you'll get a good vacation there.

[00:55:17] **Eric Bland:** Thanks guys.

[00:55:17] **Liz Farrell:** And I say cups down, guys.

[00:55:20] **Eric Bland:** Cups down. Great show.

[00:55:29] **Mandy Matney:** This *Cup of Justice* episode is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney, with co-host Liz Farrell, our executive editor, and Eric Bland, Attorney at Law, aka the “Jackhammer of Justice.” From Lunashark Productions.