



EPISODE 50: Silence and Leaks in the Stephen Smith Case + Why Cory Fleming's Mysterious Absence Could Be Significant

[0:03] **Mandy Matney:** Sun's up, y'all. On last week's episode of true sunlight podcast we told you about how Alex Murdaugh's best friend and criminal co-conspirator Cory Fleming seem to be missing for almost two weeks. Shortly after we published that episode, just like that, the Bureau of Prisons updated its online database to show that Cory was imprisoned in Atlanta. I feel like we could have predicted that sudden update. That's always the way. We ask the questions and instead of getting straight answers, we get more strange twists. We don't know if our hunch is right, that he was at an undisclosed location finally talking to law enforcement. But Eric, Liz, and I discuss what Cory's help in the ongoing Murdaugh investigations could actually mean. Also on today's show, we talk about serious media leaks coming apparently from the South Carolina Grand Jury in the Stephen Smith case and how they could hurt the case. Also, Eric gives us an update on where things stand with SLED. We also discussed the latest filing and Alex's federal case and how Dick and Jim's sinister plan is getting thwarted again. It doesn't matter how much nonsense these guys put out there, we can always rely on three things: one, the court will keep letting it happen without sanctioning them. Two: the media will see their lies called out again and again and still treat them as though they're honest people who should be listened to. And three, they'll do it again. Lastly, and my favorite part, premium members will hear us get into Taylor Swift's new romance with a player from my hometown team, the Kansas City Chiefs and why people are so scared of powerful women. This Wednesday, October 11, we will broadcast true sunlight's 18th episode on YouTube at noon. And our pre-recorded Happy Hour and live chat with Sandy Smith will broadcast this Thursday, October 12 at 7 p.m. for soak up the sun premium members. I'll be in Charleston for a few events October 26 that I look forward to but for now, let's get into it. Happy 50th Episode, everybody.

[2:35] **Liz Farrell:** Cups up, guys. How are you doing?

[2:37] **Eric Bland:** Cups up, happy Friday night from Rome, Italy.

[2:40] **Mandy Matney:** Happy Friday night.

[2:41] **Liz Farrell:** How are you doing, Eric? You look good.



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[2:44] **Eric Bland:** Thank you. That's very kind. Just, It's been a magical trip. You know, Renee and I are celebrating next month, our 35th. And so it's just been a wonderful romantic trip learning a lot. You know, I usually don't do too well on, you know, going from painting, to painting to painting and hearing the backstory, but I was able to convince our tour guide to give us the Cliff Notes. So just the high points. So it's been pretty good. And I've had a pretty good attention span when my attention span normally for this stuff isn't great. And the food's been wonderful.

[3:18] **Liz Farrell:** Of course you're not even interested in, like, the Caravaggios? Those seem to have good backstories. Have you seen any of those?

[3:36] **Eric Bland:** No, we went to, so far we've been to Venice, and we saw you know, the Dolce palace and St. Mark's and learned about how basilicas has come about because they have to have a relic of the saint to become a basilica. And then we went to Bologna, which is a university city where there's 70,000 students and there's so many archways, 40 miles of archways all throughout Bologna and red roofs, and then we went to Parma for just insane food and learn about you know how they make the parmigiano reggiano and the prosciutto and how it's very competitive and getting the stamp of approval from the FDA of Italy, and then today we went to Ravina, which is just an amazing history of mosaics and all their churches. No frescas it's just mosaics. And now of course we're in Rome for the last three days. So we're on the back end of our trip, looking forward to coming home and excited to do the podcast tonight. Thank you.

[4:21] **Mandy Matney:** That's so great.

[4:22] **Liz Farrell:** Cool. You should stop at McDonald's and get the McItaly. Do they still have that?

[4:26] **Eric Bland:** They do, and I learned that McDonald's here, they use real beef. It's a different beef in Italy than they use anywhere else in the world.



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[4:35] **Mandy Matney:** When we were in Switzerland, I think it was yes, Zurich like the restaurant with the biggest line and like the biggest crowd outside of it in all of Zurich, I swear to god, was McDonald's.

[4:46] **Eric Bland:** No question. No question. No question.

[4:49] **Liz Farrell:** That's crazy.

[4:50] **Mandy Matney:** It was insane. They end like at every airport like McDonald's was always the busiest that we went to in Europe like they loved themselves some McDonald's in the United States, we're like, ugh.

[5:02] **Eric Bland:** Right.

[5:03] **Liz Farrell:** Sad to say, whenever I come back to the United States, I do go for a little McDonald's. So I there's something about the predictability. It's gross. I know. But you know.

[5:11] **Eric Bland:** I've had gelato every day, guys, every single day, just a small cup, small cup, but everything.

[5:18] **Liz Farrell:** My favorite dessert is affogato, and I think I have Mandy and David hooked on that too, now. So have you had that yet? It's espresso poured over the coffee or the gelato? It's so good. You should get it.

[5:27] **Eric Bland:** I don't drink coffee. So I'm not a big time coffee.

[5:30] **Liz Farrell:** That's crazy. How did I know that about you?

[5:32] **Eric Bland:** It is.

[5:33] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[5:33] **Mandy Matney:** It would be nuts to see Eric on coffee.



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[5:35] **Liz Farrell:** That's true. That's a good point.

[5:38] **Eric Bland:** My best friend, my best friend, Danny, drinks seven cups in the morning and then two espressos before he goes to bed. It's crazy.

[5:46] **Liz Farrell:** I love it.

[5:47] **Eric Bland:** Seven cups

[5:47] **Liz Farrell:** It's delicious. It's so good.

[5:50] **Mandy Matney:** I'm drinking coffee right now.

[5:51] **Eric Bland:** Well, tell me about what I missed this week. What did I miss this week, Liz and Mandy? Tell me what's — other than I saw some article about Stephen Smith that it seems like they're lining up on two suspects. Or at least that's what the article said. Not just people that have information, but they use the word suspect. So I found that to be very interesting. But anything else that popped up this week?

[6:14] **Mandy Matney:** I think about that what kind of upset me is from last weekend. I just heard so much from Sandy about how frustrated she is that SLED isn't telling you or her anything at all. And it's frustrating that the media is getting leaks from the Grand Jury situation, apparently, and Sandy has no idea what's going on.

[6:38] **Eric Bland:** And neither do I. I haven't heard back from Chief Keel. Remember I told you I texted with him last week. And I was a little disappointed that I didn't hear back and I never heard back.

[6:47] **Mandy Matney:** Right. Like I just don't, I hope that they're making progress. I just really worry with leaks what that could do. And I worry that and I also don't want to get Sandy's hopes up with just it looks like they're zeroing in on suspects and they aren't. What do you think, Liz?



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[7:06] **Liz Farrell:** Sort of the same thing? I you know, my whole thing is that I felt like there might have been some resistance like prior to you getting involved in the case, Eric, there felt like there was a lot of resistance when it came to this case. Still, when we're talking about law enforcement and sort of the resolve to go after who did this and get answers. I just want to make sure that ... I feel like I rely a lot on that disturbing conversation that I had with one of the private detectives before I got back into media. Before I got on the podcast, I had had a conversation with the private detective who was involved in the case through Andy Savage's office. And I just felt like he was being conclusive in a way that felt preemptive. And I also felt like he was getting involved in a way that did not comport with how I know that private detectives should be working with law enforcement. So it just felt a little off to me. And we've subsequently spoken to sources who he questioned, and you sort of got that same sense of offness, right. Overall, I would just urge caution at this point and drawing any conclusions because ultimately, yeah, we haven't heard from Chief Keel and in my opinion, he's the guy to listen to on this. So...

[8:17] **Eric Bland:** I agree. I agree that it's dangerous that somebody is one quoting from a Grand Jury proceeding because that is extremely unlawful. There appears to be a leak if that is true, which is troubling. But most importantly, as Mandy and I have said, it's unfair to Sandy Smith. It just puts her formulating thoughts in her head that that may not be true. Are they coming to a decision on someone's guilt or responsibility? Did it happen the way that it's being portrayed in the Fits News article, and I'm not questioning their accuracy. But until we hear from reliable authorities, I think we all should just pause. Now with that said I am disappointed in Chief Keel. I can say publicly, he has not responded to my text from last week. And if there is a leak, I would expect him to be fully investigating where that leak is coming from about a Grand Jury that hasn't reached its final conclusions.

[9:14] **Mandy Matney:** A Grand Jury leak is illegal, right? Like you can get charged and go to jail for that, right? Correct. That's what's crazy to me. I think that was a plot of The Wire. They had a leak on the Grand Jury who was like selling Grand Jury information to people, I think that was it. But yeah, it's very concerning. And the other thing is just Sandy last weekend expressed to me just several times how many people reach out to her and kind of blame her for being quiet about this. Like they're



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like they think that Sandy is withholding information from the public and Sandy gets accused of that and it gets worse when Will has articles coming out that just makes it look like there's no reason whatsoever Will Folks should be getting more updates on the Stephen Smith investigation than Sandy Smith. That's absurd. And that's horrible. And whoever it is needs to get their shit together, because that's just wrong.

[10:12] **Liz Farrell:** Well, on top of that, I also think that there's sort of this weird one-sided competition in this coming from not our direction in terms of wanting to get that story out there quickly. And I think once you, I think sometimes when you have that mentality, you do reckless things. And that's all I'll say. So I don't know, obviously, anything about the truth of what what was reported, but I'm certainly not going to ... I'm going to consider the source on that right now.

[10:36] **Eric Bland:** Fair enough.

[10:37] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[10:37] **Eric Bland:** But I can tell you that, I can tell you though that Kenny Kinsey, Our expert, I believe is going to meet with SLED over the next week or two and tell them his theory of what may have happened to Stephen that night.

[10:55] **Liz Farrell:** Excellent. That's good to hear.

[10:56] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, just again, I hope they're making progress. I urge SLED to reach out to you and Sandy, and at least at the very least, give an update that you two cannot share with anybody else to at least reassure her that they are still with her still doing this. She's just kind of been in the dark for a while, and we need to get that back on track.

[11:19] **Eric Bland:** Just so the listeners know and follow up with you said, Mandy Sandy's being quiet and not voicing any concerns because she's doing that at the request of SLED to let them do their investigation. So that is why we have been quiet.



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[11:36] **Liz Farrell:** Well, it completely undermines their investigation when the names of potential suspects are being thrown about in the media. And it because at the end of the day, like if you are a SLED agent, you don't want those names out there because you're trying to, I would presume, arrest them, bring them in for questioning, something like that. So by putting those names out there, what are you doing other than warning them that it's coming for them if they don't already know that at this point? So, reckless all around. But what can you say?

Eric, since you've been gone, we finally got a response from the government.

[12:17] **Eric Bland:** That's a song, Since You've Been Gone. Isn't that a song?

[12:21] **Liz Farrell:** It's Kelly Clarkson. Yeah, since you've been gone.

[12:26] **Mandy Matney:** I can breathe for the first time.

[12:29] **Liz Farrell:** Since you've been gone there's been, Okay, so Eric, while you were gone, the government filed its response to Dick and Jim's motion to have US Marshals immediately seize Alex's assets from the receivership and within that. Okay. And their response is basically like, No, we're not going to even try that. We're good. Let the state deal with that. So completely like Dick and Jim's plan got completely thwarted by the government — we hope. We, obviously Judge Gergel still has to rule on that. But what was most fascinating were the exhibits that the government included with this response. There were several of them, starting with an affidavit from I believe his name, is it Walter Tolliver or William Tolliver?

[13:31] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, he's the new court appointed receiver, that Judge Hall has approved.

[13:26] **Liz Farrell:** The special referee, so he was, he was approved to basically look at all the claimants and all the creditors and have them stand shoulder to shoulder — not pick winners or losers, but to divide the assets equitably. He has a lot of it looks like he has a lot of experience on this front federally and in the state. One of the arguments that Dick and Jim made was that this guy was going to charge hundreds



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of thousands of dollars to do this job. And they're basically saying that the government — this is their argument to the judge — the government should seize the assets now to protect it basically from this predatory guy who's going to be charging all this money. And guess what it turns out? That's a lie. So his affidavit is essentially saying Dick and Jim lied when they said that my fees were going to be this high, they're actually going to be between \$50,000 and \$75,000. So that was the first in a long list of what looks like lies and thwarted schemes that the receivership was able to sort of ferret out and put a stop to. It was a really good overview of the things that we've been talking about episode after episode. This is our 50th episode. So for 50 different episodes we've been talking about Dick and Jim and Alex put doing these schemes. At what point does it stop? Like at what point are Dick and Jim stopped from being able to do the things that they're doing? Because it's just constantly wasting our time.

[14:58] **Eric Bland:** Well, it's gonna stop soon when judges start to say enough is enough. One it's going to happen. Obviously when Judge Gergel sentences Alex Murdaugh. Two, it's going to happen when Dick and Jim make the motion to continue the November 27 Satterfield state court criminal trial. Three, it's going to happen when Judge Hall tells them "Mo, Alex, you're not going to get at the \$1.8 million of money that the receivers have recovered." So that's kind of what I see as their horizon for Dick and Jim, but I'm sure they're going to file some kind of lawsuit to stop the proceedings or appeal. You know, now they, they seem to believe that their best forum is the appellate courts. And that's why everything is getting appealed. So we'll have to see.

[15:54] **Mandy Matney:** I was just thinking out loud. There's been several times in the last couple years when I've been like, why doesn't Judge Newman sanction Dick and Jim for their shenanigans? Why hasn't he? And now I'm kind of realizing that if he sanctioned them at this point, they would use that against him as evidence that they were hurt, that Judge Newman's against them, and that they he's not a fair judge. So it's like a, it's a trap. It does... Am I crazy for thinking that?

[16:25] **Eric Bland:** He could have done it earlier. No, I think you're brilliant. I think it's perfect on point. I think he could have done that earlier. But since Dick has already



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telegraphed what he believes Judge Newman being prejudicial towards Alex Murdaugh, I just think the judge Newman's hands are tied right now. And he can only make decisions based on notions but I don't think he's ever going to sanction Dick and Jim.

[16:50] **Mandy Matney:** Right. But I wonder if Judge Newman, like foresaw that. I wonder if he was, like, for instance, a lot of people when Dick pointed the gun in the courtroom during the trial, a lot of people were like, "Why didn't Judge Newman, actually do something about that with Dick and Jim?" and like that, that was a serious, that was a crime. If you're not allowed to point and present a gun in a jokingly way and joke, you're not, you cannot do that. But now I'm wondering if he knew that like, this could be a possibility. And it's just all kind of hitting me that Judge Newman is in a really, really tough spot.

[17:31] **Liz Farrell:** Well, even the way he handled Jim Griffin's thing.

[17:33] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, he publicly excoriated Jim, he just doesn't seem to want to do it to Dick.

[17:38] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, but not that bad.

[17:39] **Mandy Matney:** Not bad. Yeah.

[17:40] **Liz Farrell:** I think I think with Jim, but it was embarrassing, but I think it was embarrassing for Jim, obviously. But I also think that there was a lot more that Judge Newman could have done in that moment. So I think he went soft on him. And I think it's probably for the reasons that Mandy is saying, but also when you say the thing about Judge Gergel that we're going to start to see Dick and Jim's and in particular Dick's, shenanigans, sort of come back at them. And we're going to start to see more strong rulings, I guess from the court. Dick has a relationship with Judge Gergel. It even feels during Alex's plea hearing that Judge Gergel acknowledged that in some way, like he seemed to almost be I want to say deferential to Dick, but it did seem like he was paying a little bit of respect. And granted, you guys were in the



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courtroom. I was not just read the transcript to you. Yeah, I won't put you on the spot. Eric with that one, but

[18:32] **Mandy Matney:** He was a lot. Yeah, respectful is the word. And I think he even said the point, "I respect your attorneys."

[18:40] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, I want to just, you know...Dick and Judge Gergel have a close relationship. Dick was instrumental in getting him appointed to the bench, and they were co-counsels with each other on many cases in the 90s and early 2000s, having to do with the video poker industry, and then on, I believe, some medical malpractice cases.

[18:59] **Mandy Matney:** You know, it's funny you said that because a friend of mine texted me the other day and said that Adair — It's a well known fact in Columbia that Adair Burrows, the US attorney, that Dick Harpootlian was instrumental in getting her into that position. And I did not know that. And that's, again, as the US Attorney's Office is just so connected with Dick. I was not aware of how much power this guy had until we start going through all of these people. And then it's like, well, he got he got that person there. He got that person there, and it, oh, my gosh, it's overwhelming. But that said, That's what made this whole thing so surprising that the US Attorney's Office said no.

[19:47] **Eric Bland:** Well, I think it's Emily Limehouse. I think she wants to not have this perception that she's favoring the defense or giving them any leeway. And I spoke with her. And she wanted to make it clear that look, they're going to defer to the state on all these victim compensation issues. And that, you know, there's no special deal that she cut with Alex or Dick or Jim. And then her goal was just to get Alex sentenced properly based on him pleading guilty to those 24 felony crimes.

[20:27] **Liz Farrell:** Eric, do you feel like that was always going to be the government's response?

[20:33] **Eric Bland:** I don't. I don't, I think that there was such a backlash by you and others and confused about, well, why is all these victims' money going to go to the



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federal government? \$9 million? And do we trust that they're going to distribute it to the right victims? Not necessarily PMPED because they're gonna stand in front of the line and say, they've spent, you know, over a million dollars in investigative cost or Palmetto State Bank. And you know, for all their investigative costs, I don't view them as true victims. I don't view them as victims whatsoever.

[21:13] **Liz Farrell:** Neither do I. Mandy, did you notice in the Emily's filing, that she sort of threw Dick and Jim a bone, saying that by keeping the money with the state, it puts them in a better position to get paid from Alex's estate. And then second, it seemed like she was saying or indicating, and I don't know if I'm reading into this, or if I'm misremembering, but that PMPED. Or victims like PMPED I don't think she actually said their name specifically, but she was indicating that they'd already been made whole by previous cases. So it was almost like she was, in my mind. I wonder if you are saying that, like, our criticism of the government, maybe doing this to help PMPED in some way, wasn't actually valid, because they've already been made whole, as victims. Did that strike you any sort of way?

[22:09] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And I, I really want to believe that Emily Limehouse and I also want to back up that like I've heard all good. I've heard lots of good things about Adair Burroughs, too. And I think just because like, I don't want people to think that I said, just because Dick Harpootlian got her...Dick Harpootlian just got all sorts of people into their position. And but I've heard that, like when it comes down to it, she will do the right thing. And I hope that she, I hope that she does in this case. But Emily Limehouse has been hard because I feel...how have you felt, Liz? Like, I feel like sometimes it feels like she's going really hard on this whole thing. And that she's all in. And then other times, definitely, I did feel like she was throwing them a little, a little bit of a bone. And I was wondering why in there,

[23:03] **Liz Farrell:** I can sometimes have a lot of great empathy for Emily and the situation that she's in, because I can't imagine what it would be like to work in a sort of a pressure cooker like that, where you want to do the best job that you can, especially knowing the spotlight that has been on the cases that she has been handling. And probably knowing internally what her capabilities are. And this is really her time to shine. And I think there have been really good moments where you can



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see that. I know she's highly respected. But I also know this is South Carolina and even though this is US Attorney's Office, it is completely subject to the same amount of good ole boyism that you see and that we've been fighting against, you know, in the lowcountry, but it's almost worse to a degree in Charleston. I feel like you know, Charleston like has puts a spin on things so well. The good old boyism in the lowcountry may be trended a little bit more like redneck riche. I don't know if that's a word or phrase. I don't know if it's an actually phrase like redneck riche, but like, just people who have money, who might be a little bit more rough around the edges. Charleston is another ball of wax altogether. Like it is almost like Days of Our Lives when you start to get into the lives of these attorneys there. It is so dramatic. And so like you hear. I've heard so many stories about the Ninth Circuit and what their prosecutors do after hours. And I've heard so many rumors about the attorneys that all went to the same private schools coming up in Charleston, all went to the same law school, and sort of all have the same connections and there's just behaviors that they have that are just actually morally repugnant, honestly. When you start to look at like their personal lives, and I'm just saying that this is just like 20 years of knowing about Charleston attorneys, there's just a different sort of politics that happens there. So I feel for Emily Limehouse in that she's part of that ecosystem. Plus she's, she's married into the Limehouses and so I think that she is in a very difficult position sometimes. And I want to believe that she's making the best of it. But I do wish and I think we were asked about this. Eric, we did a happy hour last night for Soak Up the Sun members. We were asked what made us brave. And one of the answers that we have for people is just that we didn't really have anything, we don't have anything to lose, because we don't have the social connections that we have to sort of maintain in South Carolina. And I think that that's not the same for Emily, I think that there is a lot to lose there. And I think that every move she makes is scrutinized for what she does after the US Attorney's Office, right? What what firm she's going to end up going to, right? So that I feel for, but it is disappointing when I see the door not being closed on Dick's face, I want the door to be closed on his face. For once in his career. He would not do the same. I know that he does favors for people. I just want to see the door slammed on Dick's face at least once by somebody, particularly a woman.



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[26:12] **Eric Bland:** Well, I think it's gonna happen. I think it could happen on this jury issue. And if it happens on the jury issue, and he does not prevail, I think it'll be the end of Dick Harpootlian, believe it or not, it was been it's been so public, and he's invested so much in it. And he's putting it all on the line with it. And if he comes up empty it sound and fury signifying nothing, and he he's going to be the idiot. I'm telling you.

[26:39] **Mandy Matney:** I don't think so. I think the core I think the court has to do something for the door to be slammed, because the media is gonna buddy up to him forever. And they have been so clear that Dick Harpootlian can lie to their faces, and then they will take him seriously the next week about some, about the same thing. I was just thinking the other day about like, how he told so many people that Alex had an ironclad alibi. And that's the press he told the press that and how if I had a source tell me something that was that big of a lie. I would be mad, mad, mad for a very long time. Because to me like as a journalist, that makes me look stupid if I'm just putting out your lies, but I don't think they care. I think all they I think a lot of these media companies, especially in the way that media is now in the way that it's designed is they just want the crazy Dick Harpootlian drama wheel to keep spinning and they're not going to stop him.

[27:52] **Eric Bland:** You make a good point. I think we need to do a list and I'll work on it on the plane. Of all the misses that Dick has had, from the start in this thing, starting with, you know, the opioids, and we're going to actually show you who the killer was like the Mark Geragos Scott Peterson thing we're going to, we're going to show you who the killer was. Am I dreaming that or I remember that too. Right?

[28:18] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, he said that. But also, conversely, during their press conference after the trial, or I think it was one of their press conferences. It might have been the jury press conference. They he literally said I don't "it's not our job to find out who the killer is." That's what he said. So he goes from this big production of showing us that they have their own private investigation. They have a reward they're doing they're they're getting somewhere on that, and they've narrowed it down to some suspects to it's not our job. So why was it your job then? And not now? Which seems like if I personally am ever held, if I got charged with a murder, I did not



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commit. It would be my job to find the real killer because I wouldn't trust a single person out there to do it other than me, because they clearly, you know, so why wouldn't it be your job at this point?

[29:06] **Eric Bland:** Sounds a little bit like OJ saying he was going to find out who killed Ron and Nicole, right?

[29:10] **Mandy Matney:** Right, and it's it and again, I just think it goes back to he is just so used to lying in the faces of people. And then just coming back for more is law. I think that one thing Dick Harpootlian has done and I'll say this, again, I think he's pretty brilliant at it is, he's he's figured out all the weak spots in the press, and he uses the crap out of that. And as long as the press continues to operate the way that it is Dick Harpootlian is not going to be the door is never going to be shut on him. And unless, again, the Court steps and does something official, then they really would have to start treating him different. What do you think was?

[29:56] **Liz Farrell:** I think that it's important for people to know how Dick operates when it comes to the media. It's, you know, there are figures like Dick that you have to go to, you have to call them up, you have to approach them. And you're careful about how you question them or what have you. But with Dick, he seeks out the media. So you could be sitting in the courtroom, and he'll come up to you casually and then start dropping bombs on you. And as a reporter, when you get that kind of insight, and he's telling you things on the record, and and Joe McCulloch is like this to a certain extent, to where they say things that seem off the cuff or seem like things that are, you'd be kind of brave to put on the record. Or you know, that you don't normally have sources put on the record, that in and of itself feels like a reward to reporters so they feel like they've done their job without actually having to do their job, because they've gotten these great quotes and they've gotten, but they think that they're not looking at it. You know, I don't it seems I should say, it seems like they're not looking at when they get these quotes is why am I like why me? Why are you telling me? Are you now using me to get forth your message? And I go back to what you said, Mandy, I have a source that I think is pretty good, generally speaking, but he's wrong sometimes and factually wrong on things. And I have to take that into account with things that he tells me, I can't just get excited about something



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that he tells me because I've had experience in the past with him being incorrect. Not that I've reported, I've never reported what he said without fact checking, by the way. But that that, you know, that said, once you have a source that has proven, it should have started without the ironclad alibi, once every reporter heard that in court once and for all, that that alibi was not ironclad, at all, not even a little bit. That should have been the moment that they were like, wait a second, you told me and I think that this is something that we need to explore so that people can hear more about it. But that filing by the government with all its exhibits is truly a list of disproven, like lies that they told. And I think it's important that we we put that out for people so that they can see because the lie, the list of lies not only gets longer, but we get more details of what was involved in those lies. It wasn't just a simple, I said something and it was a lie. It's there's a whole schematic in place to to make their lives sort of come true, I guess.

[32:23] **Eric Bland:** I just feel like that if the jury issue does not get resolved in Alex's favor, simply because there's just not credible evidence to prove that Becky Hill did what Dick said and that it had that kind of effect on the jury. I think the media will turn on him and say, You're really quiet. You really cried wolf, you tarnished the clerk of court, you tarnished Judge Newman, you tarnished the jury giving their time of six weeks to this case. I think there was going to be some backlash. I may be wrong. You guys may be right. But I think this will be a lot of backlash if they're not successful.

[33:18] **Liz Farrell:** So one thing that we mentioned in our episode of True Sunlight podcast this week, is that it was pretty noticeable that Cory Fleming was missing, we could not find him. So on September 22. I know. He was like in Abu Ghraib or something. He was gone. We don't know where he was.

[33:41] **Eric Bland:** To a foreign country or something?

[33:43] **Liz Farrell:** I know that it's unusual. I know on September 22, he was checked out of Hotel Charleston County Detention Center. And he was supposed to check in with the Bureau of Prisons. So his name started to appear on their database. But it said that he was not in their custody. And after his September 14 hearing, where he



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got sentenced his name, their profile was created for him with the South Carolina Department of Corrections. And it said that he was he was in federal custody. So we reached out to the Bureau of Prisons, and basically they said that he wasn't in custody, but that during transit, you don't ... to protect the prisoner, they don't say where they're being held, which is unusual. I think in America, you have to say where the prisoners are, I don't think you can just take them off the map like that. But we had heard that there were instances of this happening where prosecutors have done this before where they've sort of taken them off the map so that they can question them, sort of like in the in the case of a jailhouse snitch type scenario. So, we had sort of surmised that this could possibly be a sign that Cory was finally talking to investigators. What do you think Eric?

[34:49] **Eric Bland:** I think he filed his appeal against Judge Newman. The question is, is he talking to the state or he's talking to the feds? At this point, I would think with Debbie's connection of being a former Assistant US Attorney, and how shell-shocked she was at Creighton Waters. And what happened in Beaufort, if he's talking, it's on a federal level, state level,

[35:23] **Liz Farrell:** What would be the benefit to talking on the federal level?

[35:25] **Eric Bland:** I don't know. I mean, he's still staring down the barrel of that 13-year sentence and unless they can get Creighton on board. And Judge Newman, who's going to have to reverse the sentence, remember, it's Judge Newman reversing a sentence that was given to the people of South Carolina were the victims. So I don't know if he's just kind of get a clean conscience or there he's trying to get some kind of post-sentence cooperation. I'd never heard of it, how it would work. I need to investigate it. After your sentence, you know, can you come back in and now all of a sudden cooperate and get further reduction? I just don't know the answer that so that's something I'll look into when I get back.

[36:12] **Liz Farrell:** Well, isn't that the Jeroid Price thing, the law that got changed in 2010? For substantial, it's like rewarding prisoners for substantial assistance. This could have been I mean, it really could be his final card on the table and and terms of



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[36:26] **Eric Bland:** — but that's the state level. Remember, that's, that would be Creighton having to play along with that. And from what we've seen, Creighton is not doing that. He's, he has said that he hasn't gotten good cooperation from Cory Fleming. He believed that he was not truthful, and I I'm not sure there's a workable relationship right now between Debbie and Creighton.

[36:51] **Liz Farrell:** But don't you think if he has, I mean, there's got to be some cornerstone piece of information out there that the AG's office is waiting for, or hopes to get. And it would feel like if anyone in this situation would have that information, it would be Cory. And for him not to provide it to the state...

[37:11] **Eric Bland:** For what purpose? On the murder case or on the financial crime cases? Remember —

[37:15] **Liz Farrell:** — Stephen Smith.

[37:17] **Eric Bland:** Right. His connection there, but definitely was involved in it in an interview with law enforcement with David Price, and, you know, maybe he has information on the murder.

[37:28] **Liz Farrell:** Why would he give up all his—? I mean, he's a smart person, why would he give up all information that he had, when he could try to he was trying to get away with giving as little information as possible to get the least amount of sentence? And now that blew up in his face. So I don't see Creighton turning his back on good information. And if anyone out there had good information, it's going to be Cory, right? Mandy? Your thoughts?

[37:55] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, I think, I think something was up. So how many days in total was he like missing from both systems?

[38:02] **Liz Farrell:** So what's funny about this is after the episode aired yesterday, and after Drew Tripp, tweeted because he was on the same track as we were and shout out to Drew Tripp because like you said yesterday, if this was any other reporter who found this information at the same time that we did, we'd be annoyed. Yeah, we



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would have been suspicious that one of the people that we were questioning about it said something, but that said, he's now in the system. So Bureau of Prisons is now saying he is in their custody and that he is in Atlanta.

[38:38] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And I mean, I was texting around to a few lawyers and former prosecutors, and they had never heard of somebody been missing being missing from the system for that length of time. And I feel like, again, it's just kind of a lightbulb kind of clicked for me that like yet again, there's something weird happening, and it's probably weird. I'm, There's been so many times where it's like, Could it be the weirdest thing? And it usually is in this case? So I think there has to be some sort of meeting and I think also, we just know how Cory and Alex operate and til their back is absolutely against the wall and it's in they have nobody else to blame and it's just them and their time to serve ahead. I could see Cory talking at that point because I think he honestly believed that his plan was going to work, and he was just gonna get a couple years and in club fed, and then everything's fine. You could go back to whatever he was doing, running marathons in Beaufort and whatever. I think him and Debbie were absolutely shocked by that and Yeah, I'm with you, Liz. I think that unless I don't see him giving up any information whatsoever unless he absolutely had to. And think about it like, Eric, really think about it. This guy kept the Satterfield entire thing, secret until you absolutely, until you figured it out and blasted it to the world. Like, think about just going to bed every night and knowing that you helped steal millions of dollars from your own clients and in the knowing that that the person that you helped steal millions of dollars with is in the middle of this international media storm and the largest murder investigation in South Carolina history. And I mean, if I was Cory, and I look back on that August interview, where Alex came in Alex and Cory came in and Cory was like acting as his lawyer. And I just blown away at the gall, like Cory should have known from June 7, the minute that he found out like, Okay, it's time to come clean about everything that I know. That's what a normal person would have done. But...

[41:25] **Eric Bland:** Let me tell you how, how dark Cory is. He found out supposedly on September 3, remember how shocked he was that the firm found out that Alex was stealing money, and he realized, "Oh, my God, he's been doing this on the Satterfield case and everything." He never called the Satterfields, he had a full seven days to call



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the Satterfields to say, Oh, by the way, I am your lawyer. And now I know what happened to your money. He didn't do that. He was still trying to keep it under wraps. It was only after I went public.

[42:01] **Mandy Matney:** Right, because I think that that entire time, I think that he thought that PMPED was gonna f keep, I thought, I think that he just believed that it was just going to stay contained. And again, like he's believed, until the very last moment that he's going to be able to get away with things. And then so I could see him really being afraid of a state sentence and really, that really shaking him up and finally being like, okay, Creighton, let me tell ya. And I hope I hope that he finally is there. And I hope that they're ... because I do believe that Cory is the key to a whole lot of this. And I believe that he has so much information. So the rest of us could stop banging our heads against the wall and stop running into. We're just running into brick wall after brick wall in this investigation. And I feel like Cory, could it. It makes me angry that Cory could help a lot of things, but I don't think he is or maybe he just decided and then I would at least give him props for that.

[43:10] **Liz Farrell:** We need to mention, too, that Cory represented one of the two people that was named as a potential suspect in the Stephen Smith case. So there's also maybe some, you know, correlation in that information as well. And not only that, I mean, Cory was just a very clear and present part of Alex's life and his interior thinking and who knows even his indoctrination, you know, we all asked like, when did this start for Alex? well, maybe Cory knows the answer to that. And more than that, Cory was involved. He was he represented Dennis Gerwing, who is the person that they suspect killed John and Elizabeth Calvert in on Hilton Head Island in 2008. And as part of that, like, law that goes on with the Calvert case, one of the questions was always well, what did Dennis do with that money? And also, was he involved in some sort of captive insurance offshore situation or embezzling money offshore? So it was interesting that Cory came from north of the broad to represent Dennis, with this potential murder charges on his hand, before Dennis took his own life, and just sort of the, you know, the buzz around offshore money laundering that that surrounded that case. So there's there's two little nuggets that I feel like I need to point out.



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[44:36] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, yeah. I mean, I hope that I hope that our instincts were right, but who knows. I just think that Cory could help the state out a whole lot. And they put on the right amount of pressure, I think, so. Let's see what happens.

[44:56] **Eric Bland:** Well, we had some Russell Laffitte news this week. On the civil end you know, we still have our Plyler sisters claim civil claim against Russell Laffitte. And Russell now has another new lawyer. Cheryl —

[45:12] **Liz Farrell:** Cheryl Shoun?

[45:13] **Eric Bland:** Yep, in addition, to Andy Hazelman and we were supposed to go to trial on October 9, this week, actually on the civil case, and they went to the judge and said, look, it's going to be so difficult to transfer Russell from Florida to come back to trial this week. And so we're trying to get the week of November 27, which is the same week of Alex Murdaugh's state trial. And Judge Carmen Molen was the presiding judge. And so my partner Ronnie wrote her and said, Look, we need to get this designated for November 27. And she said, I'm recused, you know, from hearing anything having to do with you guys. And Ronnie wrote back and said, Look, you're the scheduling judge. We're not asking you to do anything except, you know, schedule, this trial in front of everybody agreed was going to be November 27. And then she wouldn't do it. And she sent us to another judge. So we're hopeful that we can get Russell's trial for November 27, which would give him enough advance notice in the Bureau of Prisons, to be able to transfer him back. So that's a bit of news as well.

[46:27] **Liz Farrell:** That's a good bit of news. But can I just point out something? That shows that Judge Mullen sees the scheduling as an act of politics like a political decision to make not just a rote decision you make as a judge ministerial. Right. Yeah. It's it's, it's something that she feels like she can control and mete out and therefore doesn't want to be involved. Like, if you really understood your role to be completely impartial, you would understand that that very little act of scheduling your trial should not be seen as favorable or unfavorable. And that's why she's recusing herself, because in her world that that power means something over when your case gets scheduled, doesn't it?



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[47:11] **Eric Bland:** It does, it does. And it's her job as the scheduling supervisor judge to move cases along. And this case came up and it was Russell, who's asking for the continuances, side, and it was granted. And I understand it because of his, you know, recent admission into the federal system. But like you said, this is a ministerial test. It's not a discretionary test. The parties agree on November 27. We just have to get it signed. And she wouldn't do it.

[47:42] **Mandy Matney:** But her so here's my problem with that. If you are recusing yourself, you should have absolutely nothing to do with any of these cases. And I feel like her inaction is still involved. Like shouldn't she get somebody else to schedule? Like why-

[47:59] **Eric Bland:** I think her recusal is us. Her recusal was Bland Richter because of the complaints that we made. She recused herself from hearing anything having to do with Alex. But I don't know if she's ever recused herself anything on Russell Laffitte has she?

[48:18] **Liz Farrell:** No not that not to my knowledge.

[48:20] **Mandy Matney:** It's just that it shows how small this whole world that we're involved in is because it like it just circled straight back to Judge Mullen. And what did she ultimately do? Something against you.

[48:35] **Liz Farrell:** It's interesting to me that you're saying that Cheryl Shoun is now one of Russell's represe—one of Russell's attorneys because he has now taken this would be I believe his second attorney that he's taken, who is also working on the Parker Greg Parker case, the one that Mark Tinsley and the Beach family brought against Greg Parker himself not Parker's kitchen for civil conspiracy. Mark Moore and Cheryl Shoun are both involved in that case, but Russell, really, it seems like he, likes he likes to see who the dirtiest person in the room is and ask them for lawyer recommendations. Just that there must be some sort of Craigslist for that. I don't know.



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[49:20] **Mandy Matney:** I would love to know how much money that guy is spending on lawyers because he just keeps adding them.

[49:26] **Liz Farrell:** He's the richest one of all, by the way, like when you look at the actual assets that he has versus what Alex that could trace from him and what Cory had.

[49:40] **Eric Bland:** Mandy, and on that note, what do you think about this exciting budding romance between Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce being a Chiefs fan, and a huge Swifty?

[49:52] **Mandy Matney:** I mean, I'm beaming right now. I've been like a high school kid like excited over little nuggets of their romance, looking the internet for every little development and thing and I mean, I as a Chiefs fan, like I didn't know if they would be great together and it seems like he's treating her great. It seems like she's having a good time. I love seeing her having so much fun, and I just love the world is suddenly again aware of just how powerful the effect of Taylor Swift is. She can drive huge numbers to the NFL, which is like the center of the patriarchy. I love it. I saw a video this weekend of just the entire section turned around to look at Taylor Swift and they weren't even watching the football game. And I just, I love it. I'm into it. Liz. Liz has been into watching it too.

[50:54] **Liz Farrell:** Super into Tik Toks.

[50:56] **Eric Bland:** Really?

[50:56] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Because, I mean, I like Taylor Swift. Not as much as Mandy likes her. Like, I mean, I'm, I'm like a normal level of, you know, appreciation. But she, the thing that is really interesting to me this week is seeing how vilified she's getting by certain portions of the population, and they're making it out to be you know, as Mandy said, you're getting messages like informing you that she's a Satanist. And when you look back in history and see how women are depicted as like, a Satanist, or witches, or what have you, once they sort of gained some sort of power or authority or independence from the patriarchy, it's weird that in 2023, we're still seeing that



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same pattern of like, that's where the human brain goes, when they find somebody to be—when either they're jealous at the power that person run, you know, is able to command or simply they just don't like that she's taking attention away from the boys or whatever it is, for them to go into this mode of then she must be, you know, doing making spells and against Jesus or something. Because that's the only explanation for it, I guess. So I find that so interesting. And just like I'm very much eating that up. Also, I found Travis Kelce to be ideal looking. Very much into the mustache, very much into the dancing, very much into the physique, all of it. And then, bonus, he has a brother who's hot in a different way.

[52:26] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, he's married with kids with my birds, the Eagles, the Center for 13 years. He's awesome!

[52:32] **Mandy Matney:** They —

[52:34] **Eric Bland:** He's got a podcast!

[52:36] **Mandy Matney:** Their podcast was like number two when we were number one or number one when we were number two. It was like with Cup of Justice.

[52:45] **Liz Farrell:** That's who that was?

[52:45] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, back in March. I remember that. Yeah. New Heights is their podcast. And it's it's actually really good. I've watched some of it now that all of this is going on, and they're just really they're funny. They they both seem like really down to earth guys. And I just again, I liked the way that he I saw a tweet that was like he seems like the first man to date Taylor Swift is actually aware that he's dating Taylor Swift in his treating her like that. He's renting out restaurants. And he's like, doing the whole getaway car scene they did and just all these little cute things. I love it. I'm into it. And I hope that they're working out, but it is crazy how they're vilifying her in the media. I mean, come on. Like she



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[52:58] **Eric Bland:** Are they saying that she's like Stevie Stevie Nicks? Now like she's got a coven and she's a witch. Is that what you were saying? Or she just Satan worshiper or what do they say?

[53:53] **Liz Farrell:** Yes, Satan worship

[53:54] **Mandy Matney:** I've gotten several when I've made pro-Taylor tweets or whatever. And an Instagram post I got like two or three people saying, "Mandy you're better than that. You should research her. You have to know that she's a Satanist."

[54:11] **Eric Bland:** Oh come on. It's insane. Why is she not playing at the Super Bowl though? I'd love to see her play at the Super Bowl.

[54:20] **Mandy Matney:** She's bigger than the Super Bowl. Why? Why would she like she can sell out any--

[54:25] **Eric Bland:** What if Travis gets in? What if the Chiefs get in? Wouldn't it be cool if she did play?

[54:30] **Mandy Matney:** She probably just wants to party in the stands and have a good time. And that's what was so crazy. Is that like, I don't think people realize that and she's just so bigger than so many artists and I don't And again, I think because of a lot of the media's sexist that's covering her isn't really capturing the things, the record-breaking things that she's doing and like when you are bigger than the Super Bowl and when your fans would be competing would be literally competing for tickets to the Super Bowl with with football fans just to see you, because that's what would happen if Taylor Swift was in the Super Bowl. And like, What has she done at the NFL? She's boosted their numbers. She's just a, she's an economy booster.

[55:22] **Eric Bland:** I think it's a great story.

[55:24] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, I mean, it's just showing the power of a woman.



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[55:28] **Eric Bland:** I also want to give a quick shout out to Stephanie Truesdale's daughter Anna Truesdale has had a little bit of, under the weather hasn't been feeling good. And I think she's on the mend. And Stephanie, and Anna are great friends of the show. They've made us, you know, our dolls, our knitted dolls. And I just want to give a shout out to Anna to, you know, feel good. And we're thinking about her.

[55:50] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, and Stephanie just texted me right before this. She's actually out of the hospital, Anna just got out of the hospital. So that's really great.

[55:57] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, that's great.

[55:58] **Mandy Matney:** She's on the mend. They're really excited.

[56:00] **Liz Farrell:** That's so good, yeah.

[56:02] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And yeah, she sent me a picture of her smiling. She's so happy. So and Stephanie's like, so excited to get regular showers and she's been in the hospital with her daughter all week poor thing. But yeah, shout out to Stephanie.

[56:16] **Liz Farrell:** Well, yeah, I hope I hope that she's feeling better and it sounds like she has so that's good.

[56:21] **Eric Bland:** Cups down.

[56:22] **Mandy Matney:** Cups down.

[56:22] **Liz Farrell:** Cups down, guys.

[56:31] **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.

[56:44] **David Moses:** From Luna Shark productions.