



## EPISODE 75: Buster Breaks Free? Details of the Boat Crash Settlement

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[00:00:00] **Mandy Matney:** I don't know if Buster Murdaugh believes that his father killed his mother and brother in 2021. But after reading the details of a recent settlement agreement between Buster and those who were suing him for his alleged role in the 2019 fatal boat crash, we now have some hope that Buster is learning from the mistakes of his father. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for almost four years now. This is the Murdaugh Murders podcast written by Liz Farrell and produced by my husband David Moses.

[00:00:51] Wow. So, it's our 75th episode. Is it too early to say that's a big deal? Because truly, 75 episodes wasn't even within the ballpark of my wildest expectations for us. But here we are. As we are prepping for the double homicide trial in two weeks and getting everything squared away for MMP Premium, I have been spending a lot of time looking ahead to what this podcast looks like after the murder trial. We will still be following development related to the Murdaugh cases and the Stephen Smith case throughout this year. But we're also looking for other cases to dive into as we hire more journalists in the next few months. We're looking for complex criminal cases involving allegations of corruption. Preferably, we would like to see cases that have been mostly overlooked by mainstream media where victims would be willing to speak with us; cases that desperately need a fresh look and a whole lot of sunshine on them. If you know a case like this, please visit [murdaughmurderspodcast.com/truth](http://murdaughmurderspodcast.com/truth).

[00:02:02] So, starting off with some sad news, Judge Clifton Newman's son, Brian DeQuincy Newman, died last week at the young age of just 40 years old. According to the state newspaper, he died of a cardiac event. Our thoughts are with Judge Newman and his family as they have had to endure the unimaginable. Their son was laid to rest on Monday. According to our sources, Judge Newman, who was specifically picked for this role to preside over the Murdaugh trial by the South Carolina Supreme Court, is still set for trial beginning on January 23rd, which reminds me.

[00:02:40] In the last few weeks, I have been watching, along with the rest of the country, the latest developments in the horrible Idaho murder case. And I



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have to say, especially since the arrest, I have been particularly impressed with the police work in that case. And I hope agencies around the country use this case as framework for solving other complicated crimes. And I hope they use this case, especially when it comes to communicating with the public and working with multiple agencies to get the job done. The accused killer was only arrested a couple weeks ago. And yet, police and the prosecution have held more press conferences than we've seen in the last year and a half in the Murdaugh case. Our State Attorney General has not held one press conference in this case. He hasn't attended a single court proceeding, which is weird. Why wouldn't a politician want to proudly stand before the public to talk about the biggest and most complex case his office has had in recent history? I also noticed how much more information was released to the public after the arrest in the Idaho case. Last week, prosecutors released an 18-page affidavit stating how and why police came to arrest the suspect. The affidavit beautifully, quickly, and clearly laid out the state's case against the suspect, including DNA evidence, cellphone records, video surveillance, and other evidence. I'm sure they saved plenty of details for trial, but in my opinion, officials did exactly what they needed to do in a situation like this by telling the public just enough to assure them that they got the right guy here and then saving the rest for trial.

[00:04:30] We never got that in the Alex Murdaugh case. In fact, I went back and looked up the documents that were released when Alex Murdaugh was indicted in the double homicide on July 14th, 2022, more than 13 months after Maggie and Paul were murdered. The indictments tell us almost nothing about the murders and why the state believes that Alex Murdaugh is the killer. Instead, they simply state that Alex Murdaugh killed Maggie Murdaugh with a rifle and Paul Murdaugh with a shotgun on June 7th, 2021 and he did this with malice aforethought. I say this as the trial approaches to point out the fact that there is so much unknown about the evidence in this case. We don't know what the DNA says. We don't know what story Alex's cellphone and vehicle GPS will tell us. We don't know what Maggie and Paul's phones will tell us. We don't know how exactly Duffie Stone's investigators were involved in the investigation and we don't know if that can ultimately benefit



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the defense somehow. We also don't know why it took 13 months to charge Alex Murdaugh with the double homicide. And we don't know what would've happened if Alex's shooting incident did not expose his financial crimes. The truth is from the very beginning of this case, officials have not been forthcoming at all with the information. And it really just hit me following the Idaho case how unforthcoming they have been. Even now where they have a gag order in Idaho, it's very clear that the public has been properly informed and can wait for the rest of the information to come out in trial. Until then, the public can better place their trust in the system because the system has done right by them so far. We have been told all along that officials were keeping the information in this case tight because they were up against Dick and Jim — the big bad wolfs of SC law, or so they used to seem. And the thing is a lot of the information we have learned about the evidence has come from the defense. And because of that, it's just really hard to predict the totality of evidence here. I talked to a lot of Lowcountry locals about this case and I've noticed a very common theme recently. A lot of people believe that he did it, but they doubt that the state can prove that. They say things like, "Look. Alex looks guilty as hell. But will the state be able to prove that beyond a reasonable doubt?" They say things like, "All Dick and Jim need is one juror." They say things like, "We saw how chaotic Russell's trial was and how Russell had a pile of evidence against him. Do we really think the AG's office can convict Alex Murdaugh in the double homicide?" And they say things like, "You saw how sloppy the state was with the blood spatter evidence" and "You sure Cousin Eddie didn't do this?" These are things people say to me in restaurants, in bars, in public restrooms. My life is weird. Have I mentioned how badly that I want this trial to be over with? Anyways, from what I've gathered, Dick and Jim, who are highly experienced in media manipulation and have their fair share of friends in the press, have, in my opinion, successfully planted seeds of doubt in the public. All of those Cousin Eddie polygraph and DNA headlines have appeared to work in favor of the defense. By the way, the *Post and Courier* reported this week that Cousin Eddie's attorney says his DNA was compared with the DNA at the double homicide scene and that he was excluded as a suspect — just to put that to rest.



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[00:08:27] We hope that the state's case is as good as the case in Idaho appears to be. We hope that we will be just as impressed in two weeks when the state begins to lay out its case and call witnesses. And let's be clear, too. It's very hard to judge an investigation before trial. But at the same time, we hope that state officials learn from this. We hope that South Carolina learns that transparency matters, especially when public corruption is alleged. We hope they see what we have pointed out with the two justice systems and we hope that things change. We hope that the lack of transparency in this case where we had to constantly scrap and fight for information behind the scenes just to keep accountability at the forefront has not been because of politics. Are the people at the top — the ones who work for us in the public — still afraid to speak out against a Murdaugh? And if so, is it because of all of those who secretly remain in Murdaugh's corner because of whatever those people may be protecting because of wherever Alex's money really went? But most of all, we hope that the double homicide case is one of many prosecuted in connection to this one. We hope that they won't stop until they get all of the answers for Stephen, for Gloria, for Hakeem, for Mallory, for every person who suffered because of the Murdaugh dynasty. Alex was not just one bad egg in a good system. He was the product of a bad system that continues to give the powerful a pass.

[00:10:19] And speaking of not giving the powerful a pass, today, we wanna share the latest in the Mallory Beach case. Liz broke big news this week in the boat crash settlement.

[00:10:31] **Liz Farrell:** Late last week, the Beach family and three of the passengers who were injured when Paul drove his father's boat into a Beaufort County bridge settled their cases against Buster Murdaugh and the estate of Maggie Murdaugh. We haven't talked about the boat crash cases in a long time, so let's do a quick rewind. Buster Murdaugh, as you know, is Alex Murdaugh's surviving son. He is the one he isn't accused of killing. From the very beginning, Buster was named a defendant in this case because on the night of the crash, Paul had used Buster's South Carolina license to buy alcohol at Parker's Kitchen gas station, which was just down the street from



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the Murdaugh's river house. And then Paul used it again later that night to buy shots at this place called Luther's Rare & Well Done in Beaufort. The complaints accused Buster of fraudulently obtaining a duplicate driver's license — in other words, lying on a sworn affidavit at the DMV — so that Paul could use it to illegally buy alcohol, which the plaintiffs allege he did regularly and openly in front of his family.

[00:11:38] You might remember a few interesting things about the license. One is that Paul and Buster, though they both have red hair, looked very different from one another despite what Parker's attorneys try to say. It's funny because Parker's attorneys consistently rely on this one photo of Paul and Buster that was taken at a basketball game in which the boys looked very similar to each other instead of, say, using actual information that was presented to Parker's on February 23rd, 2019 when that decision was made to sell Paul alcohol, meaning it's interesting that they don't show what Paul looked like to them at that time when he purchased the alcohol and what Buster looked like in his license photo. Because in reality, Paul was short and thin and his hair, though it was red at times, tended to be more of a browner red to the point that on the day of the boat crash, it flat out appeared to be brown in video surveillance from Parker's. Buster was considerably and quite noticeably taller. He was around six-foot-two inches tall. And at the time his license was issued anyway, he was about 70 pounds heavier than Paul. And his hair was a much brighter red than Paul's. The Beach family's core argument has been that had the cashier at Parker's Kitchen followed company policy, which dictated that because Paul looked younger than 30 years old, other factors on his license should have been checked, such as height and weight. And had the cashier been better trained on that company policy, Mallory might be alive today. Instead, the clerk scanned the ID, accepted Maggie's credit card as Paul's without hesitation or question — again, countered a policy — and then sent him on his way locked and loaded with two arms full of alcohol. When Paul got out to the parking lot, he held the alcohol above his head in victory — another point at which Parker's policy would have and should have kicked in because Paul's gesture was that of what's called a third-party sale. That is, a person of legal drinking age buying



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alcohol for minors — something Parker's employees are supposed to look out for and prevent. Picture Greg Parker and his team watching that video and the aftermath of the crash. I imagine a lot of hands on faces and a chorus of internally expressed F-words. And yet, here we are four years later with Parker's attorneys locked in a ruthless battle to do anything but face the facts, insisting that they were tricked by Bugs Bunny instead of accepting that one of their chief responsibilities as purveyors of alcohol is to not be trickable.

[00:14:23] Another thing to remember about Buster's license, by the way, is that it is one of the items that went missing in the aftermath of the crash. Unsurprisingly, Paul's family was allowed access to the boat after the crash before it was taken into evidence. And to this day, no one knows where Paul's wallet, phone, and clothes went. These were all items that were present at the scene when law enforcement initially showed up. And poof! They were gone, along with the DNA evidence that was collected by the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office and handed off to the Department of Natural Resources where it went MIA. We don't know for sure because this wasn't the only anomaly with the boat crash investigation, but it's possible that the missing license is one of the inconsistencies and problems that the state grand jury was investigating in the spring of 2021 when they started subpoenaing for Alex's bank records. From what we've been told, they were looking for potential payments made to law enforcement officers involved in the case.

[00:15:24] So, in February 2019, Buster was in his second and, as it turns out, last semester at University of South Carolina School of Law. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Buster was asked to leave the school that spring after being accused of plagiarism. According to several sources, Buster, like his parents, was imminently aware that Paul had been using his ID to buy alcohol. Buster has denied this, of course. But on January 6th, 2020, Paul's ex-girlfriend Morgan Doughty sat for a deposition with attorneys for Parker's Kitchen. 13 select pages of that deposition were filed publicly in June 2020 by Parker's attorneys. That is, the pages that best suited their argument of this being everyone else's fault and not theirs. During the deposition, Morgan,



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who spent a lot of time with the family, even traveling with them, was asked about Buster's ID and Paul's use of it.

[00:16:20] We don't have a recording of the deposition, so we'll just read it. Here's how it went:

[00:16:26] You said that Buster would give Paul his ID to use?

[00:16:29] Yes, ma'am.

[00:16:29] Would he let him borrow it for a period of time?

[00:16:33] Yes, ma'am.

[00:16:34] How long would he let him borrow it?

[00:16:36] I couldn't, I don't know. Until the point Buster got annoyed from using his passport and called, Paul mainly had it.

[00:16:44] Did Paul give Buster his ID back?

[00:16:46] Sometimes. Yes, ma'am. I'm not sure when.

[00:16:49] Was there ever a point in time Paul took Buster's ID without him knowing it?

[00:16:54] No, ma'am.

[00:16:55] Did you ever see Buster's ID?

[00:16:58] Yes, ma'am.



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[00:16:59] Did you look at it closely enough to see the picture on it?

[00:17:02] Yes, ma'am.

[00:17:04] Is that Buster?

[00:17:05] Yes, ma'am.

[00:17:06] Did it look like Paul?

[00:17:08] No, ma'am.

[00:17:12] And we'll be right back.

[00:17:21] **Mandy Matney:** Instead of going to trial and leaving his fate in the hands of a jury, Buster decided to settle with the Beach family, Morgan Doughty, Miley Altman, and Connor Cook. Anthony Cook, Mallory's boyfriend at the time of the crash, has also filed a complaint in the boat crash but chose not to name Buster as a defendant, so he is not a part of the settlement. Also, Maggie's estate settled with the Beach family, Morgan, and Miley. Neither Connor nor Anthony had sued the estate. There are a lot of moving parts here, so we're gonna break this down to the very basics. So, Buster settled the case with what money, right? That's been a hot question for a while now. What money does Buster have exactly? Like we have said before, we've been told that Buster either has already or is expected to receive money in an untouchable trust, meaning that debt collectors can't get at it. We were told that the amount of money was such that Buster would never have to work another day in his life if he did not want to. The money that he settled with is not that money.

[00:18:34] So, that brings us to the very messy matter of Maggie Murdaugh's estate. Let's start with where Maggie's estate is these days. It was originally opened in Colleton County Probate Court in late June 2022. The Chief Justice





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of the South Carolina Supreme Court signed an order disqualifying Colleton County's new probate judge from the case because of his connections to the Murdaugh family and the 14th Circuit Solicitor's Office. The judge used to work for Duffie Stone's office and also is the son of an attorney who used to run PMPED's Charleston office because, of course, have we mentioned that we're very concerned about the Colleton County jury pool? So, Maggie's case was transferred to Georgetown County Probate Court in early July, right before Alex was charged with her murder. Georgetown County is on the coast between Charleston and Myrtle Beach. You'll remember from previous episodes that we have a lot of questions about Maggie's will and how it came to be that Alex's younger brother, John Marvin Murdaugh, would be serving as her personal representative.

[00:19:43] **Liz Farrell:** A quick rundown of that. In August 2005, Maggie had designated Alex to be her personal representative. But in the event that he died before her or with her, she had named her sister, Marian Branstetter, to represent her estate. Marian's name, however, is crossed off and handwritten over it is the name Randolph Murdaugh III, Maggie's father-in-law. Instead of drawing up a nice new, clean, fresh and unsullied will, which as a member of a legal family would seem like an easy thing for Maggie to have done, we're left with this 16-year-old will that has childlike crossouts on it and I guess we're expected not to question that at all. After we started asking these questions, by the way, John Marvin agreed to sit for a long profile with the *Island Packet* newspaper last year. In that profile, he denied that the family had tampered with the will in any way and said his main goal was to show that the family was being transparent in how Maggie's estate was being administered and that they weren't wasting assets as they had been accused of doing.

[00:20:52] Anyway, Alex renounced his right to serve as PR for Maggie's estate, as did Buster. And behind the scenes, it appears that this task had been assigned to John Marvin, who for months prior to his official appointment appears to have been helping Alex liquidate his assets. This maneuvering led the Beach family to ask the court in fall of 2021 to freeze Alex's assets and to sign a receivership to set up an accounting of where all Alex's money was.



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Around December 2021, after it appears John Marvin had already been acting as the de facto PR for Maggie's estate, Marian formally renounced her right to serve as PR, stating that she hadn't even known that Maggie had designated her to serve in that role. In the meantime, the Murdaughs appeared to be moving fast to liquidate the family's assets. They also appeared to be paying down a more than \$600,000 unsecured line of credit that Alex had taken out from Palmetto State Bank with his father. Paying down that unsecured debt was seen as another asset-preserving move on the part of the Murdaughs because the money went back to a bank that had been incredibly generous with the family over the years and it went to pay down a debt that ostensibly would've had to have been paid by Randolph's estate, meaning instead of preserving the money from selling Alex's assets to friends and other family members so that it could go to the growing list of Alex victims to pay for the harm he did to them, the money went to the bank. You know, the place where at least one of the owners conspired to help Alex steal money. Now, because John Marvin Murdaugh is the PR of Maggie's estate, he's potentially entitled to take a fee of 5% of the total value. That puts all of this into perspective a little, right? We said this in an earlier episode, but it's worth mentioning again how recycled the Murdaugh economy is.

[00:22:50] Okay. Remember that part about John Marvin's fee? We'll talk more about that in a minute because it's interesting. Let's first talk about how big Maggie's estate is. The most valuable part of the estate is Moselle, the 1,700-acre hunting property that Alex got from an alleged drug trafficker and later put in Maggie's name and then somehow was able to take out loans against from Palmetto State Bank using it as collateral, even though it was no longer his. Then there's half of the Edisto Beach house, which was co-owned by Maggie and Alex. Half of that money is also part of the estate. Then there's Maggie's car, the brand new Mercedes that Alex was driving in September 2021 when he pretended to be shot by a bald white man driving by as Alex changed a run-flat tire without a spare. Oh. And remember that one phone call between Alex and Buster? We'll play that again for you.

[00:23:47] **Alex Murdaugh:** Did you talk to Blanca?



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[00:23:49] **Buster Murdaugh:** No, I haven't talked to Blanca.

[00:23:52] **Alex Murdaugh:** That's okay. Alright.

[00:23:54] **Buster Murdaugh:** What am I supposed to tell her again?

[00:23:56] **Alex Murdaugh:** Just tell her that I want, that I want to give her a call and explain to her what she has to do and if that's okay with her.

[00:24:06] **Buster Murdaugh:** What is, yeah, with the account?

[00:24:09] **Alex Murdaugh:** Yeah. And will you do that today? I'd like to call her over the holidays.

[00:24:13] **Buster Murdaugh:** Yeah, I'll do that today. Now, me and Blanca ain't been rubbing on the same cylinder.

[00:24:17] **Alex Murdaugh:** What?

[00:24:19] **Buster Murdaugh:** I said me and Blanca — I've got some serious, I've got some serious problems the way Blanca has done some things.

[00:24:25] **Alex Murdaugh:** Like what?

[00:24:27] **Buster Murdaugh:** You know, I mean, I went out to Moselle the other day. She didn't tell anybody. I mean, she's packed up everything at Moselle. I don't know where anything is, so I can't find anything that I want, you know? And she doesn't, you know, she calls grandma and looks for permission to go out there and take mom's clothes with her and stuff like that. And I was like, you know what, grandma? You need to tell her she needs to call me.



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[00:24:47] **Alex Murdaugh:** Yeah. She's just trying to help, though. Remember that. Just tell her. I mean, tell Blanca to call you. She's just trying to help.

[00:24:56] **Mandy Matney:** Maggie's estate also comprises whatever personal property Alex and Blanca didn't take apparently, presumably whatever it is in storage units that John Marvin has been renting for \$1,200 a month and charged back to the estate. All told, as near as we can tell, Maggie's estate could be as much as \$5 million, possibly even more. So, who gets Maggie's estate? Technically, that would be Alex. He is the sole heir. But there are two big problems with that. One is that if Alex gets the money, then also Alex doesn't get that money. It would go to the receivership then it would go to Alex's creditors, which includes his long line of victims. Remember last March when Alex tried to renounce his right to the estate and the receivership was like, whoa, whoa, whoa. You can't do that. Judge, punish him for that. Right? The judge didn't end up agreeing to sanctions but agreed that Alex technically did violate the court order by trying to renounce his right to Maggie's estate. Alex has not appealed that decision. But why did Alex try to renounce his rights to his wife's estate? One theory would be that it would make him look a lot less like a person who killed her for that money. I mean, he did renounce his rights to it from jail at a time when the walls were closing in on him and the potential of murder charges were not only a very real possibility but ultimately inevitable. So, I'm not sure how effective that message was. But it's a question worth asking. Did he try to renounce his rights to Maggie's estimated \$5 million estate to make it retroactively look like he had nothing to gain from her death?

[00:26:51] The second problem with inheriting Maggie Murdaugh's estate is that if Alex did murder Maggie and if he is found guilty anyway, he will not be entitled to that money because of something called the Slayer Statute. I wanna pause here for a minute because this could be important when it comes to understanding the motive of the murder case. All along, we have been looking for a life insurance policy when it comes to motive — a large sum of money that would come to Alex after Maggie's death. But now, it looks like Maggie's estate is a lot larger than most life insurance policies and Alex



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probably would've gotten that money if things worked out the way he allegedly wanted them to, i.e., if he didn't get caught.

[00:27:46] **Liz Farrell:** For all intents and purposes with this settlement though, if everything goes the way it's expected, Alex will be treated as though he is dead, which makes the estate Buster's. And that would've been great for Buster had it not been for Buster's big boy driver's license getting scanned at a Parker's Kitchen.

[00:28:05] Alright. Let's talk about that settlement. Things are going to get a little complicated, so to keep it simple, I'm going to ask you to picture different money teams. The first money team is the Beach team. That team includes attorney Mark Tinsley, the Beach family, Morgan Doughty, Miley Altman, Connor Cook, and Connor's attorney, Joe McCullough. Going into this, their pot of money is empty. The second money team is Alex's team. That includes Alex and the receivership attorneys. Whoa. Why are we including the receivership team with Alex's team? Because of the money. Any money in Alex's pot is money that the receivership can take its contingency fee from. So, the more money in Alex's pot means the more money for the receivership attorneys. The third Money team is Maggie's team. On that team is John Marvin and Buster, obviously, and the attorneys hired to handle Maggie's estate as well as the attorneys hired to defend Buster in the boat crash lawsuits. So, again, the more money in Maggie's pot, the more money for John Marvin, the more money for Buster, the more money for these high-price by-the-hour attorneys.

[00:29:18] Okay. Let's talk about those attorneys because this is important. It's like Ernest Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea*. The old man works himself to death to catch the big fish. But by the time he can bring that big fish back to shore, the sharks have taken it down to the bones. Maggie's estate is the big fish. First, there's the issue of the Moselle sale and whose team gets that money. Does it go to Alex's team's money pot? The receivership sure seem to want it there. Not only did they fight Alex on his renunciation of Maggie's estate, they've accused Alex of committing fraud when he signed the house



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over to Maggie for \$5 and love and affection. As it stands, they've asked a court to undo the transfer of that land from Alex to Maggie back to Alex. Why? Because, again, the more money in Alex's pot, the more money for them. It sounds crass because it kind of is. This isn't to say they haven't done a lot of work trying to find Alex's money and account for everything, but one does have to ask whether finding money includes the sale of real estate that wasn't in any way hidden and therefore, in no way needed to be found. Okay. The second issue is the estate team's attorneys. The attorneys working for the estate have apparently racked up about \$290,000 in billing so far despite, according to the joint motion for settlement approval that was filed this week, not conducting any discovery or litigating the fraudulent conveyance case over the transfer of Moselle to Maggie. What have they been doing that would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars already? Not clear. But it's a safe assumption that until Maggie's estate is closed, that's a spigot that's going to keep running freely for them. And according to that motion, it's this free-flowing faucet that motivated the joint settlement, meaning without this agreement, it's a race against the clock for the victims. The longer this takes, the more of the fish the sharks will get to eat before it can get to shore.

[00:31:20] Alright. So, the terms of the settlement. First, it's not a fully done deal until the judges sign off on it. Some other things have to happen, too, namely Alex will have to officially waive his right to any of it. But because he says he's not a wife killer, we totally expect that he will do that. Also, by agreeing to this deal, Buster is not saying he did anything wrong here. He's not admitting to allowing Paul to use his license. He's simply cutting bait so he can move on with his life. Let's start at the bottom. So, let's say the estate is around \$5 million. 5% of that is \$250,000. As part of Buster's settlement deal, it looks like John Marvin is going to waive that fee. Sources say it's so that Buster can keep more of his inheritance. How much more? Buster will get to keep \$530,000 of the money, which fine, that's why it's called a compromise. As part of the settlement deal, the attorneys on the estate's money team will get paid their frankly offensive fees of nearly \$300,000. Also, it looks like the receivership attorneys will end their battle to get the Moselle money put into Alex's money pot and in exchange, they will get \$275,000 from Maggie's



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estate. Also, Maggie's debts will be paid off. For instance, her interior decorator, the one who put a claim in soon after Maggie's death, will get her six grand for pillows and curtains. John Marvin will get reimbursed for the money he has spent personally on things for the estate. Based on our analysis of the probate documents, this would include the large storage facility bill. John Marvin will also be responsible for making sure the creditors get paid and for auctioning off the remainder of Maggie's tangible assets, the proceeds of which will go to the victims. Also, and this is funny, the estate and Buster will get to keep the rights to their images and likenesses, etc. So, don't be surprised if there's a "My Life" with Big Red Book in Buster's future.

[00:33:19] **Mandy Matney:** Another interesting thing: the Mercedes, which is still in custody of law enforcement because of Alex Murdaugh's little Labor Day incident. It will be signed over to Mark Tinsley and will be auctioned off at a future date. But let's think about that for a second. It is going to be so interesting to see how much Maggie's car goes for knowing that it was the car that ultimately undid Alex Murdaugh. It was those run-flat tires that the public saw and then pointed out. It was that car that told the world that Alex Murdaugh was lying and wow, has it been downhill for him from there. The balance of money — the money not getting paid to attorneys or Buster or creditors — will go to the victims and that is a huge win here. Even though Buster isn't admitting fault, this is still a huge measure of accountability. He is potentially having to pay 90% of his inheritance from his mother because of Paul's crash into that bridge. It puts everything into perspective. Let's say Buster was guilty of letting Paul use that license. That is probably the least of all of the offenses that led to Mallory Beach's death, right? The most passive and least direct of the offenses anyways. Buster wasn't responsible for Paul's behavior the way Alex and Maggie would've been. He didn't sell Paul the alcohol. It wasn't his boat that Paul was driving that night. That small laminated photo of him though was enough for him to say, you know what? I fold. Get me out of this. So, it makes you wonder: 1) Why Parker's continues to hold out; and 2.) If Buster thought the best option was to spend 90% of his murdered mother's money to settle this case, then how will a Hampton County jury regard a billion-dollar business in comparison? Oh. And Alex is



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still a defendant and so is Paul's estate. The court recently ruled that Parker's and the Murdaughs will be tried at the same time, which is more bad news for Parker's. That will be interesting.

[00:35:43] We'll be right back.

[00:35:49] **Liz Farrell:** Oh. And one final observation about the settlement. We saved the worst for last. Guess who one of Maggie's Estate's creditors is. Palmetto State Bank. For years, the boat crash victims have endured the endless grief of losing Mallory, the physical pain and suffering from the crash itself, the scrutiny from Hampton County's gossipers, social media, and the public. They've also been recklessly accused of murdering Maggie and Paul, involuntarily became characters in a sociopath's backstory, and when they fought for their rights and their dignity, got called greedy.

[00:36:25] Speaking of that. Remember last year when Mark Tinsley filed \$25 million claims against Maggie's estate on behalf of his clients? The boat crash victims were so beaten up over that. \$25 million? How dare you? But you can see why that was necessary now, right? The \$25 million was a placeholder. It put the boat crash victims in line and it was a number that was large enough to cover any potential jury award and large enough to prevent Parker's from using it to nickel-and-dime their own potential settlement. That placeholder had a role in preserving Maggie's estate and making it so that all parties got something before there was absolutely nothing to get.

[00:37:08] So, back to Santiago's fish. If the lawyers are the sharks eating the flesh off the fish before can be brought to shore, then Palmetto State Bank is the guy on the beach who just finished eating lobster, who sees the bones at the end of the old man's hook and says, gimme those. I wanna pick my teeth with them. Those guys are unbelievable. Because Maggie's estate isn't a thieving friend of Russell's, in our humble opinion anyway, the bank isn't willing to cut its losses here. It's not willing to say, hm, we sure did make a lot of mistakes loaning this guy money, so maybe we don't try to duck in line with the victims. As part of the settlement, the estate will have to pay up to





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\$25,000 to the bank to cover part of an outstanding balance from the Edisto Beach mortgage. The bank says twice that amount is still owed plus five figures in late fees. Late fees. You know, like the late fees the bank never charged Alex for his six-figure overdrafts and like the late fees that Russell and Alex didn't have to pay when they were late paying back the money they secretly loaned themselves from Hannah Plyler's account. In another world, \$25,000 might be a good compromise. But my god, it is so gross.

[00:38:26] **Mandy Matney:** It is yet another unshocking but shocking move from the bank. And honestly, we're not sure how they have the nerve at this point. But this is the kind of greedy, selfish behavior we're so used to with these guys, doubling down on wrong decision after wrong decision instead of coming to terms with their mistakes. We have to say that we're happy to see Buster settle this case. We're a little skeptical because it does almost seem too good to be true, but we're happy for the victims and we're also happy that Buster has the opportunity to move on and hopefully do better. His decision appears to have solved a lot of problems and puts to rest several small battles and one big one. And I will be willing to bet this decision goes against his father's wishes, which is another huge step for Buster. We're also impressed that John Marvin agreed to the terms of the settlement and he agreed to waive his fee, even though it was likely to make sure his nephew got some money. Nevertheless, it was the right thing to do and much more in line with the John Marvin Murdaugh he wants the world to think that he is. A lot of you have asked if we think John Marvin and Buster will show up for Alex or Maggie and Paul at the upcoming trial. Will they testify? Will they finally publicly denounce their family member, Alex Murdaugh? Will they actually cut their financial ties with him? The truth is we wish we had a better answer because right now, it's hard to tell. But maybe just maybe this shows that they are taking a step in the right direction and finally recognizing that Alex needs to be held accountable. And I guess we will see in two weeks. Stay tuned and stay in the sunlight.



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[00:40:47] **Outro:** The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney, produced by my husband, David Moses. And Liz Farrell is our executive editor. From Luna Shark Productions.

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