

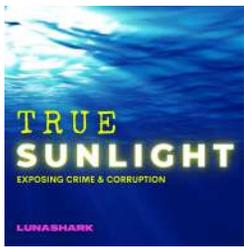
EPISODE 26: Sunshine On A Mountain Mystery - What Happened to April Jones? Part Two

Mandy Matney 00:05

Hello and happy Thanksgiving. For starters, I didn't make the New York Times bestseller list, but that is okay. It was a crazy goal and a long shot dream. But missing out on making that list does not take away from all of the wins we have already gotten from this book, like the guy who told me he was getting a book for his daughter for when she's old enough so that she can learn how to stand up for herself at work and trust. Her instincts are the woman who told me that the book inspired her to go back to therapy and start prioritizing her mental health again, or all of the people who told me that they hate Charles. And Holly reminds them of horrible men in their lives. Y'all read it, you really did. You absorbed all of the pain and emotion we poured into it. And that is what matters here. I'm going to take the advice from Taylor Swift on this one. And remember the scene from Miss Americana, when she found out that reputation was not nominated for a Grammy. And she just said, Well, I have to make a better album. Maybe just maybe this is just the beginning of my author era. Maybe I didn't hit a homerun on the first swing and that is okay. There is beauty in the process. And I just want to say that I am thankful for all of you for giving me the bravery to even say the New York Times goal out loud in getting me here. There are no words to express that gratitude. So much happened in the Murdock case over the past week. It is honestly mind blowing. The twists and turns this story continues to take. I promise. We will be picking the story back up after the holiday because we have a lot to say about what is going on. For a preview of that. Make sure to listen to the latest episode of cup of justice, which aired on Tuesday. I will tell y'all never in the history of Team Murdaugh's machinations has this case required more sunshine on it. Even with the world watching the good ol boys haven't given up on their mission to exploit the system and minimize and control every aspect of the consequences. Alex Murdaugh faces worse than this. Team Murdaugh is willing to ruin ordinary people's lives to get there. We will get into all of this later on. For now, I just want to say this

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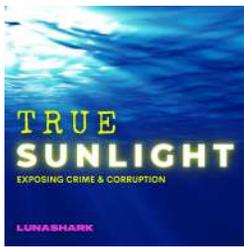


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between Judge Newman stepping down the plea deal struck by the state and a smirking Alex Murdaugh, as well as the announcement that clerk of court Becky Hill's son was arrested and charged in relation to accusations he recorded conversations with a county employee. It is clear to us that this case has turned a dark corner in that there are so many new questions that need to be answered. What new pathways does this plea deal open up for Alex? What does this do to his quest for a new murder trial? What happens now that Judge Newman is off the case? And is the investigation into Becky's son politically motivated? Is it a ploy or some sort of legal workaround to get it Becky, in a world where there are no coincidences? There certainly seem to be many connected to this new development that are beyond belief. There's one thing I know for sure, in Alex Murdaugh's world, no one is more important than him. And everyone is expendable when it comes to protecting his interest. But this is why we do the work that we do. Everything that is happening right now is what has always made this case and Alex Murdaugh a different sort of true crime story. This is why the Murdaugh family has been able to hold on to power in the low country for so long. This is why the good ol boys seemingly act without fear of repercussion. This is why they keep on ticking. I think Dick and Jim are proud of themselves for wearing everyone down. But the cold hard truth is that the sun will continue to rise and shine on them every single day until the nonsense stops. That said, I'm really excited and so thankful that we can share episode two of our friend Eric Allen's podcast, A Mountain Mystery what happened to April Jones with you this week while we take a breather and spend some time with our friends and family. Eric's rate boarding is not only thorough and fearless, it is compelling, and we'll have you on the edge of your seat as he grapples with the unexpected and confronts the challenges we have all experienced in our reporting on true crime stories. In this latest episode, he has invited all of us behind the scenes on his journey to get at the truth about these mysterious deaths and disappearances in Oconee.

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County. It's been a while since we first introduced a mountain mystery, we invite you to return to true sunlight episode 15 to re listen to part one, and find Eric Allen's YouTube channel where he has published a number of video episodes on this spellbinding saga. Thank you to all of you for listening and helping us shine the light on this important case. Stay tuned, stay pesky. And stay in the sunlight. Here is Eric Allen.

Eric Alan 06:15

Hey, man, that's true.

06:16

Yes. Drug overdose in prison. Really? What do you mean, I was just sitting here?

Eric Alan 06:27

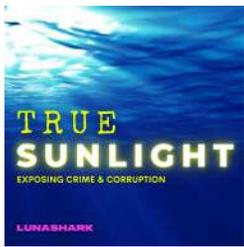
That's wild. Do you think there's any chance it has anything to do with the letter? of

06:34

I guess? Yeah. Coincidence, but yeah, everybody that's in this case.

Eric Alan 06:43

I'm in a county County, South Carolina and I feel like I've been thrown into a new world. While this is a beautiful place to spend time there's breathtaking mountain views, winding rivers, and the trees are bursting with colorful red, orange, yellow and green leaves. This place also harbors some dark secrets. Last episode, we talked about the first of three cases we're going to be looking at April Jones. A week after April was found dead, 26 year old Faith Roach disappeared. She was last seen at a home that April was at just a few days before her death. Two months later. 32 year old Kevin Craig dies under suspicious circumstances. Investigators believe He died because he had



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information about face disappearance. A name that's been brought up in connection with all three cases is a man named Kevin Mahler, aka Boston. At the time, he was a drug dealer in the area and at one point he had murder charges written up against him for the death of Kevin Craig. My initial working theory was that Kevin Mahler killed April and had to get rid of faith and subsequently Kevin Craig, in order to keep these murderers covered up. They knew too much. I got my hands on a letter that was from a man in prison named John Evans, who wrote to a family member of his he explained that Kevin mailer told him he was going to kill April Jones, and that sometime after April's death, he got a hold of a phone from Kevin mailer that he found out was April Jones's phone. I wanted to speak with John Evans. But before I could get to him. No, you're good.

08:22

Okay, so, remember, he was asking about John Evans. Yeah. He's dead.

Eric Alan 08:29

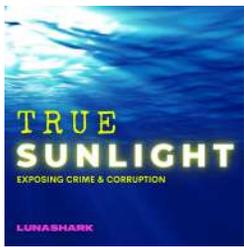
We'll talk more about John Evans later. As you continue to listen to this story. You're going to hear about more murders, deaths, people going missing and homes burning down. All of these cases we cover occur in Walla Walla, South Carolina, among the same group of people. And at the foundation of all of this mayhem lies one common thing, drugs. I decided to reach out to a former county County Sheriff's Office investigator to learn more about this scene and try to wrap my head around it. And I couldn't have found a better person to speak with David Mack. Mohan is 57 years old. He was born in Akoni. County and has seen how drugs has affected and changed this area over the years. I

Former Oconee County Sheriff's Office Investigator 09:11

was born and raised in Oconee. So I decided to get into law enforcement because I wanted to help people. And that was my way of

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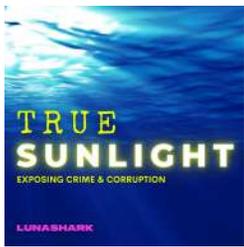
doing it. I retired in November of 2020. Here I am still heavily involved in thing that's going on, you know, I want to see things finished. What I saw in the mid 2000s, may have really took off in this area, methamphetamines. It was a thing to go on the internet and figure out a recipe to make meth and now all of a sudden people were doing it everywhere in the rural areas up in here, and I will go and get records of this drugstore and this drugstore in this drugstore who was buying Sudafed. And I would lay them on the table and I would say these guys are matching their binary stuff. And I knew that guy was gonna be making meth that night. So I busted 10 meth labs one year, just by doing that. It was like a puzzle and you're doing it because I hate math, you take that first hit of math, and you always are chasing that same high from then on, because I've interviewed people who are addicted to meth. So it results in, I need more math. So I result in stealing, stealing results later on into possibly violence. So it's a, it's a downhill spiral. All your math now is coming from Mexico, time you make it and in the effort that you put into it, you can buy hotter quality of meth from Mexico.

Eric Alan 10:32

So it's all coming in from Mexico now. Yeah. And, and how what is it like battling debt kind of traffic into the area? Is it difficult to figure out where these sources are coming from or where these people are getting it? It's very

Former Oconee County Sheriff's Office Investigator 10:44

difficult, because in this part of the South Carolina, we have Atlanta, Greenville, and then we have Charlotte. And guess what, slap dab in the middle. So County County on 85, the trafficking of meth and other heroin and fentanyl is steadily coming from South up into this area. And with law enforcement doesn't have all the resources to sit there and just constantly work those areas. We're starting to lose law enforcement



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now because of the environment today. And young folks are not wanting to go to the Academy because that is a dangerous job. Now, why would a young man want to risk his life in today's environment to become a police officer, you've got to have it in your heart to do this, not just pay us a job anymore. We have a little small war in our in our country and the police officer is that taking the brunt. One

Eric Alan 11:37

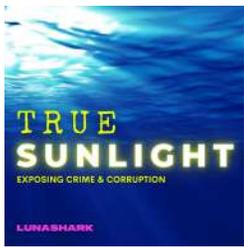
of the missing girls who I won't actually be covering in this season is a woman named Tammy, David new her.

Former Oconee County Sheriff's Office Investigator 11:43

This, again, is personal labor, because we're a small community and I went to school with Tammy newer, and I watched her decline. And I lost contact with her. Gradually over the years, you know, I had a family and raise a family and you know how you kind of lose contact with people. But yeah, but Tammy did decline into that drug world. And, you know, it's sad. I mean, I don't know really what to say. But yeah, there was a decline. And like I said earlier, sometimes that the math is so powerful and addictive, is that ultimate high is what I've been told, as I interview folks that are addicted to meth, and heroin, you're always chasing the next time, you know, and so you'll do whatever you may be self defeating, get back to it don't have that willpower to resist and others do.

Eric Alan 12:32

I had a really interesting perspective shift while creating this podcast. I had never known anyone go from clean to a drug addict. I think I subconsciously saw these types of drugs, only affecting certain types of people. A weaker type of person, like someone who has already kind of lazy, probably lived in an unkempt house, generally unproductive who would easily give in to whatever desires they felt. So when drugs came



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along, they were the prime type of person to do them. But that's not the case. I was able to see photos of various people throughout the years, and watch them in photos go from good looking well dressed and put together people to completely wrecked by a drug addiction. And there could be various reasons people would initially turn to drugs from a desire to be more productive, and a person recommending a little meth now and then to someone just wanting to escape the emotional weight of some incredibly tragic things that have happened to them. And before they know it, their whole life has changed. A few quick caveats here. One, I'm not saying every drug is bad. And two, I'm not saying I know how to fix the drug problem or the right or wrong ways to do it. But it is a big problem that needs attention. David solved this problem in his community, so he was happy to help. He even went along with me as I went to some of the more dangerous areas for this podcast. He asked for nothing in return. He said this when I mentioned that I wished I could pay him.

Former Oconee County Sheriff's Office Investigator 14:07

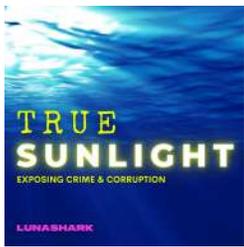
You don't owe me nothing. How come? I'm glad you're doing this. Okay. Okay. I'm a big. I'm a big advocate for the war on drugs. Yeah. And I feel like you're helping with the war on drugs. So I'm helping. I'm glad you're here. And there's no there's no money can

Kevin Maler 14:25

pay for that. Well, I really

Eric Alan 14:26

appreciate that. I do. He seemed to know everybody and everybody seemed to know him and people felt comfortable around him. They saw him as someone who could and would help. For example, at one interview later on in the series, the lady I was there to speak with chatted with David for about 30 minutes before we got started. David



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was just giving her helpful advice on how to deal with some overdue tax bills on her property. Anyways, remember from last episode, David actually knew John Evans. Knowing what we know now this next clip is tougher to listen to

Former Oconee County Sheriff's Office Investigator 14:59

you Maybe he's always trying to give people the benefit of the doubt. Maybe he's gonna have a turn around his lap. I hope he does. He's got some really good people in his family. He wasn't raised that way. You've heard that saying before he wasn't raised that way. He really wasn't raised that way. Yeah, it just something happened. Drugs, I'm sure.

Eric Alan 15:17

Yeah, got it and got into the wrong circles. Just one month later, John Evans was dead. So let's talk about John Evans. I was in Wahala, driving somewhere when I got a call from a source. I had no idea what it was about. So I pulled over and turned on my recorder. Hey,

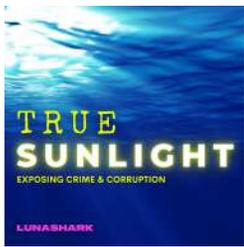
15:37

I hope I'm not bothering you. No, you're good. That's what I tell you. Okay, so do you remember he was asking about John Evans? Yeah. He's did what? Yeah, like I just found out. It's all over Facebook. Everyone's posting. John Evans. All this stuff. Like, I don't know. What happened. Trying to find out. Soon as I do, I'll let you know. But yeah, just now seeing the post on there. I'm kind of freaking outside my head a little bit.

Eric Alan 16:06

I thought I thought he was in prison. Did he? Did he get out?

16:11



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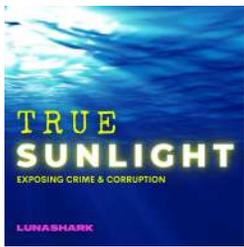
I don't know. I'm trying to figure out. Find out what happened to him. I'll let you know.

Eric Alan 16:17

Please do. Yeah, I'm, I'm kind of in shock, too. Yeah, let me know if you find out more information. And I'll do some digging, too. And and I'll let you know what I find out. Wow, thank you for calling me seriously. After the call, I set and recorded some of my thoughts. The timing of this call. And John Evans death was suspicious to me, like faith may have and like Kevin Craig may have John Evans had information that could potentially implicate Kevin Mahler for murder. And I had just spoken with Kevin Mahler for the very first time that week. So I just got a call maybe five minutes ago, saying that all over Facebook, people are posting about John Evans being dead. That's the only information I have. I don't know how. I don't know what's going on. But I spoke on the phone yesterday, was yesterday, the first day, or was day before yesterday, I can't remember but with Kevin Mahler, and we started going over everything. I never mentioned John Evans, though, may not even close. I was stressing out pretty badly in this moment. I couldn't find much information on John Evans death, other than the fact that he was in prison and died of an overdose. I've had people tell me that one thing they believe Boston does is get information about people and hold it over their heads to get them to do things for him. If Boston had heard that John Evans wrote this letter, accusing him of killing April, could he have had someone give John Evans a deadly dose of drugs. After I got the call about John Evans death, I needed to confirm the information but couldn't find anything online about it. I'm going to introduce him in a later episode. But through investigating these cases so deeply, I'd gotten to know the two lead investigators for the Acony County Sheriff's Office. I texted one asking if it was true that John Evans had died and he texted back. It's absolutely true. I turned on my recorder and called him immediately. Hey, man, that's true.

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18:33

Yes, drug overdose in prison.

Eric Alan 18:36

Really?

18:39

Juvenile was just sitting here.

Eric Alan 18:43

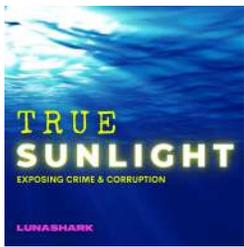
That's wild. Do you think there's any chance it has anything to do with the letter?

18:51

Of I gotta be looked at? Yeah. Coincidence, but yeah. Which is everybody that's in this case is dying.

Eric Alan 18:58

Yeah. It seems like one coincidence after the other. Yeah, exactly. Was there a chance that because of something I did, Boston found out about the letter, and I'm indirectly responsible for his death. This thought initially terrified me. But I realized it was very unlikely. While I only knew of a few people that knew about the letter, information like this can spread like a wildfire, especially in this area that I've been in. And the more I thought about it, the more confident I was that I had absolutely nothing to do with it. I even went back and listened to all of the conversations I had with Kevin Mahler, and there's no point where it's even alluded to, but the initial thought was terrifying. Anyways, here's me recording my thoughts right after getting off the phone with the investigators. You'll hear that I'm cut off by a phone call. There's a little part of me that that is worried that I might have had something to



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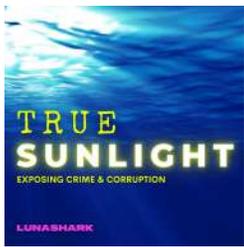
do with it. But the more I think about it, I just can't imagine that I do. I mean, I had the letter, and just seems so much more likely that if he died because of that letter, it was someone else. Kevin's calling me right now, globally telling please prepaid call from an inmate in South Carolina Department of Corrections. So just moments after hanging up with the investigator, while I'm recording my thoughts on at all, I get a call from Kevin Mahler. My mind was racing. Should I bring up John Evans? Will that help or hinder the investigation? The last thing I want to do is hurt an investigation. I had to make a split second decision. Hey, Did you know John Evans, I decided to mention it. Here's why. It's much harder to fake a reaction to hearing news like that for the first time. And at that time, I was likely the first person he spoke to since John Evans died. There's a whole process the investigators have to go through to speak with an inmate in prison. Boston speaks with people from the outside regularly. So by the time the investigators got to him, the news would have made its way to him already. And he'd be able to say, Yeah, I heard about that a long time ago, that's that I had an opportunity to get his first reaction to the news. And I took it, I'm going to play a section of our talk without any edits, no arms or pauses are cut out or shortened or lengthened. So you can really feel what the conversation was like. Keep in mind, I'm processing if I should tell him or not in real time, and processing how to tell him without him knowing why I even know who John Evans is in the first place.

Kevin Maler 21:47

To be honest, I mean, I don't want you to just up and disappear. My wife and I am a person.

Eric Alan 21:58

Yeah. Oh, for sure. For sure. So hey, did you know John Evans so I, cuz I've just been getting to kind of know, like, all the whole, like circle and Wahala really, you know, kind of everyone around there. And, you know,



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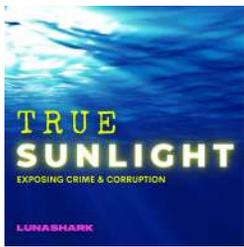
kind of everyone's names come up, so I'm really trying to get to know everyone but I guess he I just found out that he he overdosed in prison and died yesterday. Oh, yeah. Yeah, no, I'm sorry to break that to you, man. Oh, yeah. And again, man, I'm sorry to break that to you. It's just you know, I figured, you know, maybe hearing it from me as opposed to just

Kevin Maler 23:06

really, really, really close. Was it was another one that was always there for me. Yeah.

Eric Alan 23:33

Called you is Big Brother, which time I'm going to be honest, I didn't really think past what to do or say after I told him, I found myself in a really odd situation. I was either listening to a man who was responsible for the death of John Evans, acting out fake grief. Or I was listening to a man who was genuinely grieving because he lost a close friend. What do you say to that man, when you don't know which one is true? One thing I did note in the conversation is, when I bring them up, I say Did you know John Evans, from speaking in the past tense because I already know he's dead. Boston replies with Yeah, I know John Evans. He doesn't use past tense. I saw this as a little evidence supporting the idea that he didn't know John was dead, and didn't have anything to do with his death. Anyways, my plan to speak with John Evans was derailed. I had to accept the fact that if you had more information than what was included in the letter, it was lost forever, but I did still have the letter to go off of. So let's investigate John Evans claims to see if they fit into what we know about April's death. In the letter, John Evans says that Boston said he was going to use a certain substance in order to kill April. I'm assuming he was going to do this by putting the substance in drugs he would sell her. I'm going to call the substance John Evans speaks about in his letter substance A, it's very unlikely they would have

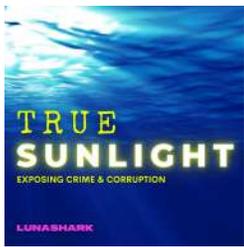


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tested for the presence of substance a during the autopsy. Substance a has very little research on what happens if it's intravenously injected into the bloodstream, but one published research paper studied two instances. In one instance the person survived with medical treatment, and in the other the individual died about 48 to 72 hours after the injection, though this person had also injected other substances into his body, in addition to substance a, all that to say, if Kevin is telling the truth about when he last saw April, he could still be responsible for her death, he could have given her drugs with substance a mixed in and if she took them that night, she would potentially be dead within the next 72 hours. And we know that April was found a little more than 48 hours after Kevin Mahler last claims he saw our substance a can also cause kidney and liver failure, which can lead to easy bruising and bleeding, which may explain why she had so many bruises on her body. But those are all things I found with my initial research. Months later, shortly before recording this podcast. I did a really deep dive on substance a and spent hours trying to find as much information as I possibly could. By the end of my research, I do not think substance a was used to kill April. This stems from issues in getting enough of substance a mixed with the drugs without April knowing and other red flags that should be obvious during an autopsy if April had died as a result of substance A. If Kevin killed April, I do not believe that he used substance a the one mentioned in the letter from John Evans, the revelation that it's extremely unlikely that substance a was used to kill April does not mean Kevin Mahler is not responsible for her death, he could have simply used a different substance. But as I'm doing my research and forming my opinion on matters, I like to think of information as weight on a scale. Like the old school scale balancing with two plates on either side, I'm continuously adding weight to one or the other side of the scale. as new information comes in the amount of weight being proportional to the significance of the new piece of information. My belief in something is proportional to the unevenness of those scales, which are rarely

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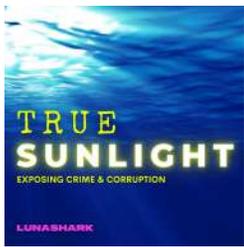


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completely weighed down on one side. If the scale is even, or level, the odds are 50/50 way or the other. If all of my research had pointed to substance A being the cause of April's death, I would have added a large amount of weight to the guilty side of the did Kevin kill April scale. Finding that the substance John Evan mentions is very likely incorrect, doesn't cause me to put a ton of weight on the non guilty side as Kevin could have simply changed his mind after he spoke with John Evans, and used another substance. But it does cause me to put a little weight on the not guilty side. And as I dug through all the information I gathered, I found more and more weight to put on that not guilty side of the scale, and even reason to take some weight off of the guilty side. I take creating these podcasts seriously. And the last thing I want to do is make an innocent man look guilty. I wouldn't be able to sleep at night. I'll speak more on this later. But one of the biggest struggles I had when creating this podcast was the fear of letting people down to the point that I honestly thought about not creating this podcast at all and leaving the true crime world behind. I got to know Kevin Mahler. I spent time with him. I spend time with his daughter who believes he's innocent, and desperately wanted my help defending her father. I also spent time with the families and loved ones of April Jones face Roche and Kevin Craig, many of whom believe Kevin Mahler is responsible for their loved ones deaths, and desperately wanted to expose Kevin Mahler find answers and find justice. I'll get into more of that in later episodes. But right now we're talking about some of the things that led me to doubt whether Kevin Mahler was involved in April's death or not. There's a lot to cover, so let's break things down one by one. First, I want to consider why John Evans would write the letter if Kevin did not tell him he was going to kill April. Like we've spoke about earlier, drugs make you do things you wouldn't normally do. And I don't mean just being high on drugs. But if you're addicted, the lack of drugs will push you to do things you never would have considered doing before you were into drugs. This is why drugs fuel so much Crime, people will do

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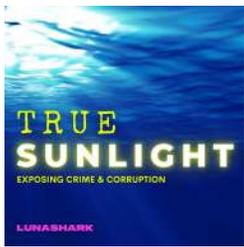


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anything to get to the next high, whether that's violence, theft, or even lying about a good friend of yours, you can get drugs in prison. But it's not nearly as easy as when you're out on the streets. If John Evans was going through withdrawals, he might have been trying to figure out a way to get out of prison sooner, so he could have easier access to drugs. He was friends with a man who was a suspect of various deaths. And maybe he thought he could leverage that. If he said he had info about a murder, could he cut a deal with the police and get out early, maybe write an official statement for them or testify in court. And the fact that he overdosed in prison would fit this idea? Well, it's not uncommon for people who haven't had access to drugs for a while to overdose. When they are regularly using drugs, they build up a tolerance and gradually increase the amount that they use to get the same effect. But when you haven't done drugs in a while, you don't have that tolerance anymore. And if you take the amount that you're used to when you did drugs regularly, there's a significant increase in risk of overdose. Next, I want to look at Kevin ending up with April's phone. This felt like pretty big evidence against Kevin Maler. If April was murdered. Kevin ending up with her phone does not look good for him. Here's what Kevin says about the phone situation. Last time

Kevin Maler 31:26

I saw it was two days before they found it. What happened was, they had picked me up gave me right next door neighbor. And I left my phone in my phone, very nails on the for the neighbor gave me a couple phone because he couldn't find my phone. He gave me a couple phones, but I don't know what happened. They had walked on him so they weren't used to me. She went she went through all her bags and everything and couldn't find like six or seven volunteers.



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Eric Alan 32:02

So Kevin says April and Tom gave him a ride in Tom's truck and Kevin left his phone in the truck. I would later get a little more clarity on this when I got to know Kevin better. So did you go anywhere with Tom and April when they came? No, no. So they just parked outside of the house that you were at in other

Kevin Maler 32:19

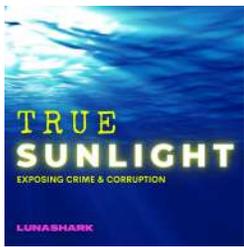
parts of the world. I walked up the room

Eric Alan 32:27

you know what I was doing? Yeah, we don't need to explicitly say that. But you didn't go anywhere with them. They parked up the road. You walked down there and gotten gotten a truck with them for a few minutes. Okay, gotcha. So Kevin says that he met with April and Tom and he accidentally left his phone in their truck. When Kevin realized his phone was missing. He got his friend Barry Neil to take them over to Tom Smith's house, April's next door neighbor to get the phone. When he couldn't find it. Tom gave him a few phones he had lying around. Two days later is when April was found dead. Originally, this story felt suspicious to me. If he couldn't find his phone, Why would Tom just give him some phones he had lying around. I didn't quite understand this and kind of felt like he may have been making this story up to try to portray a legitimate reason as to why he would have wound up with April's phone after she was found dead that maybe he never lost his phone and had April's because he killed her. But person a story of Kevin saying that girl's got my phone actually corroborates Kevin's story that he lost his phone and believed April had it.

33:33

It's about this goes. She's got my phone and runs out of the house runs out.



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Eric Alan 33:37

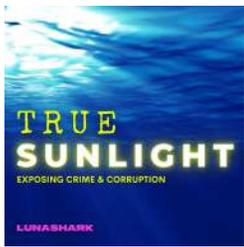
The Kevin story still felt a little off. Why would April give up her phone just because Kevin couldn't find his two things to touch on here. One after getting to know Kevin better. He clarified the situation involving getting phones from Tom in April. But Tom gave you a few phones, phones and iPad. why did why did he give you this?

34:00

I told him I wasn't leaving without something. I mean, yeah, I just I knew he knew where my phone was. And he wasn't giving me you know. Gotcha.

Eric Alan 34:09

So you felt like he was just trying to keep your phone and you're like, well listen, if you're not gonna give me my phone, you're gonna give me something. Kevin believed they had his phone and we're lying to him about not having it so he essentially strong arm to Tom into giving him a few phones to I think Kevin might not have actually had April's phone. Let me explain. The reason we believe he wound up with April's phone is because of the John Evans letter and a few people I spoke with who saw this phone. But why did they believe it was April's? Well they actually couldn't get into the phone because it was password protected. But there was an SD card in the phone with pictures on it and April and her family was in many of those pictures. Remember last episode when I mentioned that during the days leading up to April's death. She had stolen her mother's Phone. I think this might be the phone that Kevin wound up with. wouldn't make sense for April just to give up her phone since Kevin lost his but wouldn't surprise me if they gave him her mom's when he was being pushy about it. Moving on, let's look at person A's story, some



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35:17

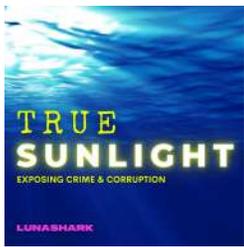
pluses oh, by the way, I said you're gonna leave. Don't go that way. Because I should take her down there. This motherfucker swear to God looks like this goes, she's got my phone and runs out of the house runs out. Even Barry did not come back until 7am.

Eric Alan 35:30

When I really thought about this piece of information, much of it could be explained by other things. Let's suppose for a moment, Kevin did not have anything to do with April's death. If Kevin did leave his phone with April, and then she died, he should freak out about it. He's a drug dealer, that phone would incriminate him on some serious drug charges. If April had it on her when she died. Well, now the police had Kevin's phone. And I actually think if this moment is true, it could point to his innocence, or at least be a little weight put on the not guilty side of the scale. Let me explain. When April was found she was cold to the touch. She had been dead for roughly six to 36 hours. Are we supposed to believe that Kevin killed her but only realized that leaving his film with her was bad news for him after Person A brings up her death that he had known she was dead or going to die for a few days and had known that she had his phone, but didn't make the connection that that was a bad thing. Until after she was found. seems more likely he didn't know she was going to die. And when he found out she did, he freaked out because he knew she might have his phone on her. But what about Kevin knowing it was April when Person A said there's a dead girl down the road. This could be explained by a few things. One, Kevin is a drug dealer who was connected to everyone in that area. It wouldn't be surprising at all if he had heard about April's death before person aided Another possibility is Person A could simply be misremembering parts of the story. And I actually know this to be true for some parts of it. I looked up historical weather data for the night April was found and it did not rain. January

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37:17

28 is when April got killed. You had something to do with that shit that happened April because you left your lender. And I'll never forget this. It wasn't raining when he left when he came back was it was 230.

Eric Alan 37:28

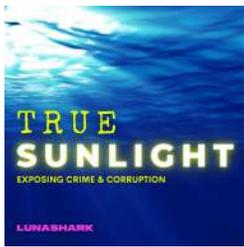
We'll talk more about Person A in future episodes. But this was not the only instance of information from person A that simply was not true. And the more I spoke with Person A, the less credible they became in my view. I want to be clear in my saying right now that I believe there is no chance that Kevin Mahler had something to do with April's death. No, I'm not saying that. But what I am saying is we need to take off some weight on the guilty side of our did Kevin kill April scale in place some on the not guilty side. Speaking with Kevin, he mentioned there are scenarios involving April's death that no one is talking about. There's

Kevin Maler 38:08

a lot of things that weren't being told he was having an affair with her next door neighbor, because that's the last place I seen him when I went to the neighbor's house. And she finally came out of the woods. She was scared to death. And it was the first time I mean, I told us it was the first time I've ever seen a Carolina gun. And a lot of a history of abuse between them too. I don't know if he knew a vote or in the neighbor but it isn't gone for a long time. And I'm not saying nothing. Because I'd like to go look. I don't want anybody saying anything. Because she really was a good girl. She was an addict like the rest of us.

Eric Alan 38:54

With this information, let's consider a few other theories in regards to April's death. Allegedly April was having an affair with the man next door, Tom. He was actually the last person in the timeline who claimed



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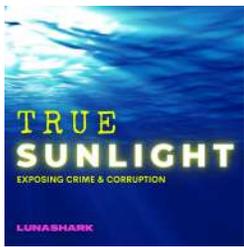
to see her. The police report says that Tom said she left to go to the neighbor's house across the street. I spoke with that neighbor and he told me April was never at his house that day. Now I don't see this as a huge red flag. Yes, Tom said she went across the street to the neighbor's house. And that neighbor says she never showed up. But that doesn't mean she didn't leave Tom's house with Tom believing she was going to the neighbor's house. She could have told him that and went somewhere else. Actually don't have much to say about Tom, because the people who I spoke with about April's case didn't have much to say about Tom either. Looking at his record, he doesn't have any violent crime charges, mainly traffic in DUI charges with one drug charge. I did attempt to speak with him and he politely declined. Really all I have to go on here is nobody else seeing Tom as a suspect, and him being polite. When I briefly attempted to speak with him next theory, when there is a suspicious death, the first person to always look at is the significant other. Let's talk about Andy a bit. Here's what a few different people had to say about him and April's relationship.

Debbie 40:15

I always tell him that they had a fatal attraction because they loved each other that they hated each other. They said I'll have to go over there and get between them thought and I will have a golf club at the swing get at him. Yeah, that's me and that they physically fault either

Hannah 40:35

get the good side or you get the bad side was all I gotta say. I've watched her run after Andy with a shovel before Oh, yeah, it was bad. I watched her I watched her T bone Andy and then just when the rains are like you ain't going nowhere.



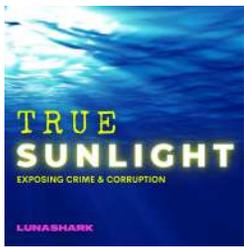
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Eric Alan 40:50

So Indian April had a pretty toxic relationship, but from what I could gather, both of them played a major role in it. But then I kept hearing from different people that the days leading up to her death. April was acting paranoid about Andy specifically. This sounds pretty damning for Andy. But there could be an explanation for this. Here's a quote from Cornerstone healing center.com. Meth affects its users brain chemistry, often resulting in symptoms such as psychosis or paranoia. Paranoia is a mental health disorder where an individual is unaware of their surroundings. meth users often fear that everyone around them is out to get them after using they feel they're being lied to, or even the closest people to them have malicious intentions. Meth induced paranoia also involves psychosis, a mental disorder that affects a person's emotional and logical state, the individual experiences hallucinations or delusions, or they often claim to experience an event that never occurred. They experienced a lot of confusion and will be emotionally reactive. And quote, If April was having an affair, the worry and paranoia about Andy finding out would be massively escalated because of what she had in her system. Additionally, the neighbor Tom Smith called Andy when April was in the worst of her drug binge on Sunday morning. Here's what the police report said about this. Thomas had called her husband Andy Jones, who came over seeing the victim and her state. Thomas Smith told investigator that Andy told him to just call the police and let them handle it. Tom says that he didn't call the police because he didn't want to do that to April, Thomas stated that the victim was tearing up his bathroom and his bedroom. Thomas stated that she was acting paranoid also due to the drugs she was on and quote. So even the neighbor Tom described April as being paranoid. And he told me that when April gets on drugs, that's when she can get physical and he would wind up in trouble for it. He learned it was better to just let the police handle it. I don't fault him for this. And I think this account that is told by both Andy and Tom gives credence to

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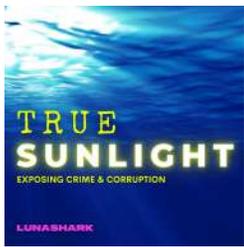


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the idea that Andy wasn't in a state to kill his wife. He was actually trying to make sure they didn't get into an altercation. Lastly, I want to talk about the possibility of the coroner being correct in April dying of an overdose and hypothermia with no foul play involved. Here's an excerpt from the police report. I Sargent Rohleder, along with Lieutenant Williams have both observed former inmate APR on several occasions when she was brought to jail to be in what appeared to be an intoxicated state on some type of unknown substance on these times that she was brought in. She had bruising to multiple parts of her body. When we would ask her about her bruises she would tell us it's none of your business. We observed her to be in a paranoid state and would not let some officers get close to her with her saying y'all are trying to kill me. Y'all are trying to do something to me. She would be sweating profusely and talking out of her head. This would hinder us in our duties to book her in for up to two to three days. While under observation, we would see her stripper clothes off and would lay on the floor. Oftentimes she would be on her knees with their shoulders down with their head also down on the floor. She would hit her head on the glass on the tank door as well as hit her head on the concrete floor. Even after she was booked and processed she would continue to be in a type of paranoid state. This would continue to last from two to three days during her incarceration. A different paragraph from the report says quote, after an investigation of this case, the investigating officer is closing this case as a drug induced death. There was no evidence at the scene to indicate that the victim had been assaulted. The autopsy was performed by Dr. Woodward just after 11am on January 29 2019. Dr. Woodward stated from the results of the autopsy, there was no evidence of the victim being assaulted or tied up. The victim had been exposed to the cold causing the color of her bruises to be a red color. Dr. Woodward stated that Some of the injuries were healing from a prior date being scabbed over. Dr. Woodward stated that it appeared that the victim had been passed out for a period of time, where she was in

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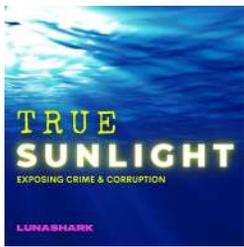


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the dog down position, causing the red bruising on her arms, hands, knees and her forehead. The victim had rolled over on her back at some point in which this is a position she died. Dr. Woodward stated that it appeared to be a drug induced death. The toxicology report that we received on four 320 19 did confirm that the victim did die from a drug induced overdose. The investigating officer also spoke with a County Detention Center employees who stated that the victim would lay in a dog down position on the floor. And it would take two days sometimes for them to be able to complete the booking process due to the victims behavior when she would come in to the akoni County Detention Center while on drugs. This case is closed and quote, when I look at the photos of April's body, there seems to be much more going on than just some bruises from being in a dog down position. But I'm not a medical doctor. And I do believe there is a chance that there was no foul play in April's death. I want to note here a bias that I noticed in myself when creating the section if the initial police report is correct, this is still an incredibly tragic event, but also relatively simple, leaving me without much of a story to tell. I have an incentive to downplay the initial thoughts on the case. To make other theories more interesting. I also felt there was some bias or maybe self imposed pressure to downplay this police narrative because the family doesn't believe this narrative to be true. And presenting things that run counter to what April's loved ones believe, can feel uncomfortable, I guess. April's life was a roller coaster and she seemed to be a real life. Jacqueline. Hi. She spent time in and out of jail. She lost custody of her kids. She stole from loved ones to buy drugs. When people die sometimes it seems as if they're talked about through rose colored glasses. Their good deeds are amplified far beyond reality. I didn't get that feeling from people when I spoke with those that knew April, when she was good. She was really good. She was genuinely loving and caring and would often put others before herself. Oftentimes, she was the type of person you just wanted to be around. You were happier when April was in the room.

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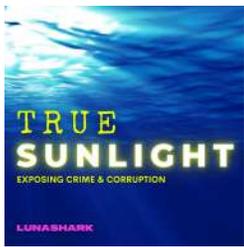
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Hannah 47:47

I go to sleep at night. I got woke up at four o'clock that morning. I walked through the living room. And there's my friend Bella she she lived in central at the time. I just thought it was wrong. No one was in the kitchen and Andy was sitting there. My stepdad and like you seen a ghost? Like yo, do not tell me that my mama is not as soon as I was saying that my name is a baby. Your mom was gone. Then I lost a piece of me that I'll never get back. And somebody's selfish and it's dark and as twisted. As it gets. I did that to my mom. They're directing. Their judgment night is going on calm. You took my mom, daughter to go wife, a sister, an aunt. For what? Now? My mom is not going to be at my wedding one day. She's not going to see my reverse good you took that away from me. 17 years old. You took my mom after my view everybody's took everything else for me. I had nothing and you still doing everything for me. It's not fair. I'm telling you right now this past four years has been the most fucked up years of my life. I went through so many changes as a person. I'm screen cried. Literally went and laid on my mom's grave all night. drunk, went into late and cried like I feel there with me all the time. But it's not the same.

Eric Alan 49:49

While we've gone over all the counter arguments to the theory that Kevin killed April and the other theories surrounding her death. We haven't been able to rule out the theory that Kevin killed April either are in the timing of her death with face disappearance one week later, makes it hard for me to believe there isn't some sort of connection here. Remember, two days before April was found dead. She had met with Kevin Mahler at the White House. You know,



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Debbie 50:17

people would tell me that she was at the end of my dirt road at the White House. Meeting Kevin Mahler out there getting drugs. I have been told that fight was out there.

50:32

I'm really that those that same time with art. Can you say Who told you

Debbie 50:38

that? No, I'll never know. I was some good. Some good solid.

Eric Alan 50:44

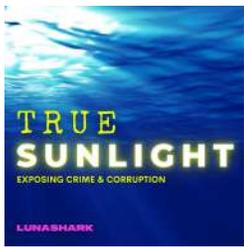
When I asked Kevin about this, he didn't say that how specifically but described exactly where that house was at. Warren Yeah, you don't have to tell me why. But where did they meet you? Down the road? Down the road. Okay. You can't get into where? Downtown dirt road from school. Okay. I gotcha. This is where faith was last seen about a week later. Not only that face aunt told me about a conversation she had with faith shortly before she disappeared. In this next clip she says the name of the guy who lives at the White House and I redact that name, but know that she is referring to the White House.

51:30

They were I suppose out. Faith went to the bathroom. She heard two men beaten they should not have a female in the back room. The next day they found April Jones dead

Eric Alan 51:47

this is one thing that led me to believe Kevin may have killed faith. Was this woman getting beat up April Jones? Were the two men beating her Kevin Mahler and Barry Neil. in good faith see this next on a mountain mystery. Very Neil, do you know him?



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Former Oconee County Sheriff's Office Investigator 52:04

I did a search warrant on his house knife we found vice now really? Explain it I believe very Neil's knows where her body is. I believe that some do with it. But yeah, you just need to know how you're that close but yet you're so far Yep. I haven't found bones underneath this bed. I've gotten word that she's in a barrel and acid up there on the site

Kevin Maler 52:25

property. I'm a

52:26

nervous wreck right now because none of it makes sense to me. And I try to make it make sense but I can't bear in Boston come up there with face phone. And Barry wants to lean shit off of Mary says hey, never gonna find her. It was a bloodbath.

Eric Alan 52:41

Eric here, I want to cap off every podcast reminding you not to form strong opinions. There is so much more in this story to be told. If you enjoyed this episode, there will be a condensed video version with interview footage, footage of Wahala the workshop April in her family published on my YouTube channel. Depending on when you're listening to this, it may be a few weeks before that is released. But in the meantime, I've got videos on other cases that I think you will really enjoy. I'd be honored if you checked it out. Simply go to youtube.com/ericallen videos or search Eric Allen on YouTube and my channel will show up. That's e r i c a l a n. see on the next one.