



EPISODE 67: What's Next For Alex Murdaugh After Retrial Denied + An Update On Stephen Smith

Mandy Matney 00:03

Cups up everybody! So let's start the show. How was your birthday?

Liz Farrell 00:08

It was great. I had a great birthday good it's actually really nice to have a nice birthday for once.

Mandy Matney 00:15

That's good, what did you do?

Liz Farrell 00:16

Yeah, I just hung out with friends, I went out to brunch, I went out to dinner and yeah actually felt free this year so I don't know what changed. I don't know what changed from last year.

Eric Bland 00:30

Have you met a lot of friends there?

Liz Farrell 00:32

I've adopted a lot of friends here through...I have two friends who live here Chuck and Robin and I've adopted their friends so far.

Eric Bland 00:44

Okay, good. Do you miss the southerners?

Liz Farrell 00:46

No, I don't. Do I miss it? I miss living in the South. I miss the low country because it's freezing here. I'm cold all the time. I don't know how to get warm except to be under blankets and that is not very conducive to



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working. But I do not miss feeling like...I don't know just like not to say that you know...people, they say like not everyone's against you. Down there just got to a point where it just felt very hostile. So I think that part I don't miss. I like being here.

Eric Bland 01:21

Does Newberry have a blanket on every time he goes out?

Liz Farrell 01:25

Does he have a jacket to go out, Eric? Every time he's inside, he's covered in a blanket. He's right now he's down there. He's literally got like a little spout for his snout and the rest of his body is covered. He's right there.

Eric Bland 01:42

What were you saying, Mandy, when you go to a new place?

Mandy Matney 01:46

Oh, I just believe, I moved to a place in Missouri not knowing anyone and then Illinois and then here and as long as you have like one person to help you make friends. That's like the key like when I moved here I had my friend Bailey, who she wasn't even my friend. I just barely knew her. But thank God she was like, I went to Kansas, you want to come watch some games with us and hang out and then I made a bunch of friends that easy. And as long as you have one because it's it's just really hard as an adult to like, make friends outside of work and everything when you don't know anybody.



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Liz Farrell 02:23

Do you know how when you read old, like old novels, or you watch shows that are like set in the 1800s. And they come to like the new town with a stack of letters and their introduction letters. And they like can like...do you know what I'm talking about? Like in old times. So okay, in old times, they would bring stacks of like introduction letters with them to whatever town they visited. So that they could go to like so and so's house and be like here. I'm a friend of, you know, Larry's, here's, here's a letter from him. And it basically was like you, you traveled with your recommendations, just so people would accept you in their friend group. Yeah. And then it's even like in the 1920s. Because I think the reason I know this is because of Hemingway. I think that he had recommendation letters basically, or letters of introduction. I think they were called when he went to Paris the first time. So yeah,

Mandy Matney 03:13

Interesting. So you're not just some weirdo?

Liz Farrell 03:18

Yeah. No. So you're not just some weirdo who showed up because they don't, they can't google you. That background. Yeah, no, Facebook.

Eric Bland 03:27

You're right.

Mandy Matney 03:29

That's interesting. That's, it is interesting.



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Eric Bland 03:32

You know, when you move to a new place, you know, you start making friends with work, but you don't really want people at work to know your personal business. So there's still a part of you that's longing for that person that you could talk to freely. You know what I mean?

Liz Farrell 03:47

Yeah, I don't have any friends at work. Other than my dog. So I work from home. It's a little bit of a problem. And you know, a guy, good coffee shop here. Well, yeah, of course. I mean, but you know, as far as like, are we going to grab dinner tonight? No. But yeah, I've had a really hard time finding a coffee shop here. And if anyone knows me from the low country, they know that I like to work out of coffee shops, and I like to be around people while not talking to people if that makes sense. So I don't have that yet. I went down to Baltimore on Saturday to visit the third time I've been to this one coffee shop that I'm really trying to see if this is going to be the one vibe vibe. Yeah, this is the one for me. It's just Yeah, and I'm on a tour. So if anyone out there has recommendations for coffee shops in Maryland, please let me know.

Eric Bland 04:39

We were in Colorado with our friends Danny and Cindy, Big Danny and Cindy, his wife and they're Starbuck fans, but we took them to this coffee shop called its core search but they serve Illy coffee I guess that's what it is, Illy or whatever and they just absolutely loved it. And so now they're getting off a Starbucks and going to do Illy so they really liked it. It tastes a bit...



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Mandy Matney 05:00

I've seen Illy. Maybe it was in Colorado when I saw it last.

Liz Farrell 05:04

So you guys, it's been a year. And I don't just mean like a year as in like a lot happened. But it's been a year since we went official with CO j. So congratulations and happy anniversary to both of you, Mandy, you reminded me and some people online reminded me that when we debuted, we were ahead. We debuted at number one nationally, which is no small feat. And we debuted two slots above Jason and Travis Kelce. My boyfriend's who I remember you explaining to me who they were then I had no idea who they were. And now they're like, number one in the world. Like they're number one everywhere.

Mandy Matney 05:48

Yeah, they're ever Yeah, that is they will not be beat. And that's okay. They have a great podcast, though.

Eric Bland 05:55

Nor should they. Yeah, good people.

Mandy Matney 05:58

They're really good people. And also, I just remember at the time of being like, whoa, they're both gonna be in the Superbowl next week. And we're ahead of them. That's amazing. Because Philly and Casey were in the Superbowl last year. And I think their podcast, I don't know how old it is? I feel like it debuted around the same time, right?



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Liz Farrell 06:20

Yeah, as of now a fan of theirs and the fan of their show. I do have some insight into that. So yeah, they did. They're, they're fairly new.

Mandy Matney 06:27

They are so good at podcasting. And that's a difficult thing to do. Like they're engaging, they're funny, they talk about things that not every like, they obviously have a niche audience with football and now with a Swifties. But they talk about things in a way that like engages and entertains a huge audience and their football players, like football athletes are not used to that type of entertainment and that type of having that kind of talent and it's extremely impressive. And also I'm just really sick of people being incredibly jealous of their success. And I'm all for it. I hope that Kelsey is get a reality TV show. I will watch it every week. I hope. I love seeing all the sponsorships that the Kelsey family is getting like every time I open up Instagram mama Kelsey is like got a new, here's a Ziploc bag. Like you go girl, you're doing great.

Liz Farrell 07:23

This is Ziploc imposter.

Eric Bland 07:27

Jason stole the Pro Bowl this weekend. The Pro Bowl was Jason, you know, with all of his outfits stole it. I mean, he's just, he's an everyday man. You know, you could see him just drinking in a corner bar, stopping his car and playing a pickup basketball game. And, you know, certainly last night, Taylor Swift just stole the show at the Grammys. And Travis wasn't there, which was sad. I mean, he, you know, he's preparing for the Super Bowl. And, you know, somebody's gonna say, well, he



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should have been there or whatever. I mean, she's making sacrifices, obviously to go to all of his games and come back from Tokyo, but they're trying to make it work. And it's good. It's good for football, it's good for society. It's good for the NFL, you know, podcasting of football players is a new thing. I mean, Kelsey is are doing it, but Micah Parsons, the middle linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys has a very popular one. And, you know, I like to think that they're kind of doing it because we were doing it. You know what I mean?

Liz Farrell 08:23

Yeah that's definitely what it was. Cool.

Mandy Matney 08:26

That's step one. Yeah. I'm for one. I'm glad that she didn't, I'm glad that he didn't go to the Grammys, because they would have blamed her if he dropped a pass or did or the Chiefs didn't win. Anything that could possibly have gone wrong. In the Super Bowl, they will blame Taylor Swift for which I'm getting really annoyed at.

Eric Bland 08:51

The point is we've been on for a year, we've had, you know, obviously, good, I would say great success, but you would say good, some could say good success. I think our podcast is educated. A lot of the people who listen to us regularly, I think we've had an impact. Certainly, there's a lot of judges that listen to it. politicians listen to it. You know whether I say something positive or negative, I know it's getting to people, because I'll hear from them to say, hey, you shouldn't have listened to it. I think I've learned so much from you guys about how to speak in front of a camera, which I know, was a new phenomenon. With the start of



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this and you know, the voice you have to have and you know how to interact with you guys when you're speaking or we disagree. And I think the future's bright for us. We're very grateful for our audience. And I'm great. As I said, I'm really grateful for you too.

Liz Farrell 09:46

Thank you, Eric. I feel the same. Speaking of our audience of just a little bragging point, because I think that this week, I truly began to understand the size or the amount of our reach even No, no, there are a lot of people out there listening and just can picture it sometimes, it didn't really occur to me just the power of our words, just what that impact looked like. So I'm really now more grateful than ever for it. And it really feels like we have people who have our backs. And I just want to say thank you to the people who do have our backs out there. And it's just a nice thing. I didn't ever let it resonate with me before just because there's been so much going on. But this is our first week really, without having Murdaugh breaking news like Murdaugh constantly like us constantly feeling like if we don't speak up, if we don't get on the phone with sources, if we don't, you know, think hard about this and make connections that Alex is gonna get away with something. And this past week, we didn't have to spend the week doing that. I don't know. Did you guys feel that? Like I could, I could really feel that, that it just, I didn't have to spend every day thinking about this person. And what what tricks even though we know it's not fully over, it just felt good. It felt really nice to have that.

Eric Bland 11:07

For me, it felt like processing where Team Murdaugh is right now. Not so much Alex. But where Dick and Jim are and the spin machine that is



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now working about, "Oh, we're so excited about our appeal." And what's next for them. And you know, you sent an email to Mandy and me about well, it doesn't look like their plan that they've hatched last spring is going to bear any fruit. And so what's their next move? So when I was out west, I was thinking, Okay, what's their next move? Is there a move anymore? They almost checkmated you know, I wanted to talk to hear from you guys. Were they...you think they're checkmated? Or they're losing at the chess match, but they still may have a couple moves that we don't see. What do you think, Mandy?

Mandy Matney 11:53

I'm really tired of people saying, "Oh, they're playing chess." Checkers did it? No. We've seen enough. They've lost and lost and lost and lost. And they wanted to win this month, really, really badly. This month was their big chance. And they blew it. And instead of admitting that they blew it, they will do what they've always done. They changed the narrative. They say we didn't really mean to blow it. We're just setting it up for the big appeal. It's really hard to get a murder conviction overturned in the appeals court. Am I right about that, Eric, like, people are acting...

Eric Bland 12:30

It's less than it's less than 2%, under the best of circumstances. And Alex's those odds even produce another 50%. But let me get this straight, you would rather win down the road, six, seven years from now in federal court. And all that time, Alex is going to be a murderer in jail, a convicted murderer with all the repercussions of being a child killer, rather than you winning this motion and possibly getting a trial next fall. So your strategy is I don't want the trial now closer to possibly win it.



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So he could be a not guilty murderer, and only a financial crime convicted person. You'd rather wait six or seven years down the road. Come on, man.

Liz Farrell 13:16

It's funny. You know, I think in our last episode, I was grateful that so many people liked it, because I felt like I was just existing on adrenaline at that point. I couldn't form my thoughts clearly. But in looking over this past week at people's reaction, and watching the people sort of trying to save face, we have to remember that a good deal of media and you know, not necessarily stake their careers on their their prediction, but certainly are trying to double down on that because they want people to believe that it's still in play. That justice toll was a good pick for the defense. And it's bearing fruit now, because justice toll has preserved the record, seemingly, I guess, from their perspective in Alex's favor down the road, just because she did acknowledge that Becky Hill wasn't completely credible, and that Becky Hill did speak to one or more jurors out of turn, though she did downplay those comments by by calling them fleeting and foolish. They do, they're holding on to that and can just see them holding on to that so tightly. But can you imagine? Let's look at the opposite.

Eric Bland 14:24

Wait a minute, wait a minute. Liz, are you..you are posting that they knew they were going to lose? Yes. And they're happy that there's an appellate record?



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Liz Farrell 14:33

No, I'm not positing I'm not positing that. That's what they said during the press conference. That's what they indicated.

Eric Bland 14:39

They're not, it's just take corporately and thought he I know from many sources that Dick are poorly and told people inside the statehouse and throughout the judicial community since August, they were going to win this motion.

Liz Farrell 14:52

Yes. Thank you for saying that. Because that is exactly what we are hearing they he thought they had it. Yes. But then in the press conference, they were like, this is exactly knew going in that this was going to be and we're doing. Yeah, exactly. So we have to talk about that press conference a little bit, but because it was something, especially if you watch it more than once.

Eric Bland 15:13

Yes. "So what do you want?" That's what it started off with? Yeah. "What do you want? What do you want?"

Mandy Matney 15:19

"What do you want?" And then it was almost like a press conference of like a basketball team or something after they lost and they came out and we're like, Yeah, well, we did that on purpose.

Eric Bland 15:35

So we could say to ourselves, "Oh, well, they're very..."



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Liz Farrell 15:37

They're saying that because they had the state. So let's look at it from this perspective, if the state had won their city, or the state had I'm sorry, if the defense had won, the state would have appealed is that is their argument. Right. So this would have been caught up in appellate court no matter what. But like you said, Eric, we know that's not what they were saying behind the scenes. We know that they were saying basically, that this was a sure thing. But I will say they knew they lost at the status conference, right? I mean, they knew that they needed the law to be completely interpreted the way they saw it in order for them to get any traction on this. So let's look at that. Let's say okay, how Dick and Jim had they won their motion. What will we be looking at? Like, what would we be talking about today? Right. What would their next move have been? Wouldn't it have been trying to get Alex out on bond again, in some way wouldn't like what could they have done? Well, he could well, because of the 27 years?

Eric Bland 16:26

Right. Right. But they would have tried to have a bond set. You're right. But what they would have done is Dick probably would ask for another speedy trial. And I'm not sure he would have, you know, invoked his legislative immunity, they would try to get it on the docket as quickly as possible. And remember, Dick said, Oh, no, we can't do the financial crimes until way into 2020 for next fall. But somehow he would speed up the murder trial. No, I mean, this is just irresponsible. For these newspapers, journalists to go there and say, Oh, this is a good thing for the defense. They got it wrong, as did a lot of other journalists. You guys didn't get it wrong. And you're getting no credit for getting it right.



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Mandy Matney 17:11

Well, that's not you, our listeners have given us a lot of credit. Our listeners realize it and our listeners are it's that's a lot of credit. Right. And I threw out last Monday, I was getting a lot of messages from our listeners saying like, I just turned into court TV just turned into whatever. And they were like everybody else is saying that this is a guaranteed that they're absolutely going to get a new trial. And you guys are the only ones saying that they're not like what is going on here. I also think that people, the journalists who are fooled by decarb, Puli, and refuse to wreck recognize that they were played and fooled, and so they just double down and double down and like a perfect example. I don't know if y'all saw the Washington Post yesterday, but old Kathleen Parker, The Washington Post, she's Louise pad, another column very pro Murdaugh about the hearing. And Kathleen lives in Columbia, South Carolina. And it's very well known that she is friends with Dick and Jim. She doesn't say that in her columns ever. But it's well known.

Eric Bland 18:19

I saw her court there. She was there.

Mandy Matney 18:23

Yeah, she's very chummy with the elite of Columbia.

Eric Bland 18:28

And which I'm not.



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Mandy Matney 18:30

I don't want to be. Who wants to be? She said that jury tampering did happen, which is a weird thing for her to say. And she also said that this work part really bothered me. She said, Listen, no one besides the defense wanted another trial for Alex Murdaugh to happen. And that's when I was reading it and like, wanted to throw my phone and just lose it because like, You are lying. You're lying right now. Look around you. The whole press is hungry for another trial. They are foaming at the mouth to get another Murdaugh trial. They don't care what it means to this system. This isn't their system. They don't care. Like, don't tell me that nobody else wants this. They want it and they wanted it.

Liz Farrell 19:20

Sid already named it Mandy, that retrial of the century.

Eric Bland 19:23

One of my closest friends. Rob Levine calls me Monday night and says, Hey, I just heard the ruling. I'm really sorry. You lost. I said, What? What do you mean? He said, Oh, you're going to be upset because now there's not going to be another trial. You won't get to do more talk about Alex. I said, Rob, have you been listening for a year or since August? We've been saying we don't want another trial. We think justice was done. It's not good for South Carolina. It's not good for the legal system. And quite frankly, I don't want to live anymore with Alex Myrtle and my life, saying to people not listening.

Mandy Matney 20:00

Well my thing like Liz, you're saying, Do we? Do you feel a big difference? And it's weird, but like so many times I've like gone into a



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panic in the last six months, because I've just started to go through, like, how many charges does he have left after the like, Okay, if the murder trial, if the murder charges are actually dropped to where do we sit there, and just picturing down the line of like 1020 years of the possibility of Alex getting out and then starting to panic about that, like, that is a real thing that we all were going through for the last six months and in the victims, all of the victims of Alex Murdaugh, the many people who have stood up against him. They didn't want this overturned at all, like it would have just caused so much unnecessary panic and grief for so many people. And for what and the other thing is that, like, Alex has no further along proving who proving his innocence and he was a year ago, they've made zero headway with that.

Eric Bland 21:02

According to Dick, they're real close. Real close.

Liz Farrell 21:06

Let's talk about that in a second. We'll be right back. So Eric, do you think that there's any chance that they actually were like they've actually done any work in looking for the quote unquote, real killer?

Eric Bland 21:24

No, absolutely. Not. All it is, is just self aggrandizement by Dick to stay relevant to say that he's got the secret, and you're gonna have to wait for me to win. I'm going to deliver it. Look, originally it was cousin Eddie. Then somehow it turned to the farm worker who was there when Gloria Satterfield was killed. You know, one of the farm workers, there's nobody. Listen, guys, don't you think that somebody would be brokering that information to the FBI to say, look, here, I got this



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information. I can give it to you. What are you going to give me in return? Remember, two people can't keep a secret forever. So there had to be, over the last two years somebody said something. There's nothing guys. The reason is, they got the guy and they got the guy because you can look in his eyes and know it. He doesn't sit there screaming. I'm innocent. He doesn't look like I'm innocent. Let me tell you something, guys. If I was innocent, and did kill my wife and kid, I would have stood up and screamed. I am innocent. I don't belong in jail. But he doesn't ever look like that. He walks into court, skipping around shaking hands. Listen, you would be screaming if you were innocent.

Liz Farrell 22:38

Signing documents. Did you guys notice he was signing all those documents at the beginning of the hearing with Holly, Dick's paralegal. Yeah. What is that? Is that more transferring things?

Eric Bland 22:49

And I guess maybe for him to get permission to get documents given to him. Look, I've looked into that guy's eyes for a long time. These hearings. Now. He is a dark guy. And let me tell you something. He is hearing about our podcasts. He knows a lot about what we are saying. Either he's listening, somebody's listening or feeding it to look, dip knows what we're saying. Everybody has their little spies listening to our podcast. Why? Because they want to know what we're going to say. Because it's important that scary stuff. And no, I don't want Alex Murdaugh coming out. He's going to harbor a hell of a lot of ill will towards us three over the next 10 years. Don't kid yourself.



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Liz Farrell 23:32

He probably doesn't know Maryland as a state, though, to be fair. I mean, I think anything outside of South Carolina in the Caribbean, he's not real keen on. So you wouldn't even know how to get here, I think.

Eric Bland 23:42

But you're fine. Mandy and I and David aren't Yeah, you're okay.

Liz Farrell 23:46

Yeah, you'll be good. Right. So I think one thing we should mention, though, is not just like you can tell by looking at it like that he's guilty. It's more that the evidence was clear. And Justice Toal pointed that out as did Judge Newman. But I also want to mention that in their press conference, they didn't just bring up like Dick wasn't bringing up the murder investigation to be like, by the way, I've made some headway. And here's what I know. It was a reporter holding him accountable to him saying that earlier. So thank you to that reporter, whoever that was that asked that question because it put him on the spot. So of course, he's going to make it look like you know, get the little glint in his eye. And there's something going on there. Did you two notice that Jim Griffin seemed to be personally hurt by people making fun of the fact that their theory on Becky wanting to tamper with the jury was that she wanted fame and fortune. It seemed to me of all the things that was where his vindication was on Monday. He got a little bit of indication from that.

Mandy Matney 24:42

Yeah and what an odd thing to focus on.



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Eric Bland 24:44

Right. Don't focus on the real meat of it, which is that the jurors looked you in the eye and said, This is my verdict. They've resoundingly rejected Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin. They said this is my verdict. Sure he had Juror Z. She was a You know, vacillating as Justice Toal said, but you have to live with jurors, look them in the eye, look Alex in the eye and say, That's my verdict. Yeah.

Liz Farrell 25:07

That's why it was funny that he glommed on to that, because it showed that like, it almost made me think like it was Jim aware of the ridiculousness of that theory. And it's just now celebrating that somebody validated it in some way by saying that Becky was answering the siren call of celebrity, you know, is it just like, in his mind, he was like, Oh, thank God, thank God, they said she sought to she because because it really was, I mean, I know that Becky likely made a lot of those comments write, you know, about wanting to write a book about wanting to get a lake house or whatever. And those comments like I agree with Toal were fleeting and foolish. They're just a small town clerk, thinking about the big city never having been there, never having been, it appears anywhere. You know, it was exciting to her. We've said this a lot. This was so exciting to her. So those you have to look at like, can you assign meaning to those comments, because she wasn't sitting there plotting out if I don't get this than that. This is just This is somebody who can't spell certain words, having this theory that, you know, you need a guilty verdict, to sell books or whatever, like, it's not somebody who you can put a lot of weight on what she thought was going to come after the trial, you know.



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Mandy Matney 26:24

And that's what was so ridiculous about it. And that's obviously what Jim wasn't understanding what we were making fun of him for. We were never saying that, like she wasn't attracted by the siren call of celebrity. Like we've said that all along. We've noticed this time and time again, attention really changes people. And the opportunity to get attention really changes people, and it makes them do really weird things. And Becky was definitely swept up. We all saw it. But that's different from her writing out a list that's like, step one, get a guilty verdict. Step and do and manipulate all the jurors into voting guilty. That's where we were like, no, that didn't happen. Yeah, she wanted a book. And maybe she was convinced that her book would have sold more if it was a guilty verdict. Honestly, I don't know who told her that because it would have been a much better book if it was a hung jury.

Eric Bland 27:29

Right? For sure. Because then you talk about the evidence, and how could they not see it?

Mandy Matney 27:33

And what was going on behind the scenes? And what like, yeah, I mean, that would have been an interesting verdict for her perspective, but I thought it was just sad again, and not even sad. It was pathetic of Dick and Jim to be like, Oh, we're validated because she also said that Becky wanted to be a celebrity. And it's like, we've all known that. Who cares?



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Liz Farrell 27:56

Yeah. And we were calling it popular, like she wanted to be in the popular crowd. And that was pretty obvious, just from when we were there. Who she was appealing to?

Eric Bland 28:05

Yeah, but again, you know, they wanted to win this motion. They didn't want to lose this motion. And, you know, we talked about it from an appellate standpoint, there's not going to be a rush for this appeal for justices to do this there. If they do, sooner or later, people are going to say no, wait a minute. What about all these other people that have their cases up on appeal? And I don't think Alex has gotten his last court favor, on having his matter pushed to the forefront. And I think, you know, the more Dick says the stuff that he says, I think the more judges are gonna say, you know, what, I've had enough a harpoon Lee into, he could be on the Judiciary Committee. But so what?

Liz Farrell 28:47

So Eric, one of the accusations that's floating out there right now by people who don't know better is that the fix was in that the state wanted to preserve that, like the courts were motivated to protect the verdict because of, you know, not wanting to disrupt the system or not wanting to have egg on their face, or what have you. What are your thoughts on that? Just this idea that Justice Toal went in with, an idea of what she was going to do, because we did see that, you know, when she came out, she obviously had pre written some of her order, though much of it was easy. I'm gonna say this, Mandy and I, if we were working in a daily news organization, at the time of the hearing last week, we would have had two stories written or two beginnings to a story like as



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journalists, we would have anticipated what the outcomes were, and we would have had stories prepared so that we could be the first to have it published. So we would just leave exes where details go and we would update the first paragraph, we would have a quote in the second paragraph, we'd hit publish, and then we would continue to update this document. Have a little Editor's Note at the top saying this story is going to continue to be updated, like we would be prepared. And it would look like to the outsider probably that we knew what the outcome was going to be or that we're really quick writers. But the truth is, there's a lot of what we call B matter which can be written ahead of time. So it felt like a lot of what Justice Toal had on her order was matter stuff that could be written ahead of time. And then she filled in the blanks with what her decision was.

Eric Bland 30:23

You're 100% correct. And because she went in chronological sequential order, she started with the status conference, she started with the telephone calls, she started with what we were going to do in this hearing, she then went to juror X on Friday, and then she went through Jersey, and then she just went down. And so I know for a fact that when she would take breaks, she would immediately run back to her office, and she wasn't on the phone. She was working. Okay, that's a working judge. The fix, are you saying the fix? Look, there's no question that our court system wants to preserve jury verdicts. It's not a good thing that you overturn jury verdicts. We have a jury system, you get a jury by your peers. Certainly they wanted to preserve Judge Newman's legacy, not necessarily the verdict, but his legacy. He had to recuse himself whether they wanted to make sure they appointed a judge who was going to vote against Alex Merle. I do not believe in that. I believe that she is a



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senior judge who would have faced less backlash as opposed to a sitting every day circuit court judge. So I think it was given to Justice Toal because she was a senior judge. And if she was to rule in Alex Murdaugh's favor, she would take the heat, she's a judge that you saw can take the heat. So she wouldn't care what anybody said. But another sitting judge, that's a different story. So I think she was picked, because she was a senior judge, not because she was going to give a prefixed result.

Liz Farrell 31:55

How about you Mandy? What are your thoughts on that one? You heard people say like, the fix was in because how are they saying on the one hand, the fix is in. And on the other hand, they're saying this is what Dick and Jim wanted?

Mandy Matney 32:09

That I feel like the same people who say the first thing or saying the second thing, right, and they're also the same people that were predicting that he was going to get a new trial? And it's like, okay, well, that's the fix. And then you think that the one person that would be in charge of the fix would have been in on that. And so that, I mean, they they're just talking in circles, and it's really frustrating to see and to watch and to see people that like I used to think were smart. And now it's like, What in the world? What are you even thinking like? How are Dick and Jim, how do they have this hold over you so much that you're literally talking in circles. And with journalists, it's like, I've been really disappointed in a lot of journalists, because they don't even care about their own reputations anymore. Like they are so on Dick and Jim's side that they don't care about it further. I mean, we have a really big



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problem right now with the public, not trusting journalists and the public's trust in journalists are eroding further and further every year. And they're getting worse and worse. And the way that I've watched these journalists operate, it's like, oh, my gosh, you don't care if anybody trust you, you're just gonna keep writing what they want you to and I don't get that at all.

Eric Bland 33:25

What is the board left? What is the board? Is there a board anymore for Dick and Jim and Alex? Is there a board that they're playing on? Or whatever? The public thought that these spins were working on since last April? Is there a board left? Or was there never a board?

Liz Farrell 33:42

I think it's a Twister board. Honestly. I think they're playing Twister, not checkers or chess. They are spinning the card and they're like, foot on red. Yeah. Got it. Yeah. I want to just say something a little bit about the journalism part of this because Mandy and I can attest to this when we're reporting on a story, particularly one like the Murdaugh story where there's just so much misinformation out there. When you're talking to a source who says what you're just excited to hear, because it's an affirmation of what you might have put together in your head, you still go that second step to find out if this person is part of that echo chamber, right? So even though they don't necessarily have to tell you where they're hearing it, depending on your relationship with that source, you do want to get down to that so that you can understand that this person is saying independently of maybe you putting that idea out there and asking other people and then the game of telephone happens and sources are talking to sources and it just comes back to



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you that way. So you always want to be careful of that. And then the other thing is even when you're you can't say why you know something or who said something to you, you still I've engaged in conversations with people like a Okay, are we is your source somebody that got their law degree? Like we're just trying to like, make sure that we had different sources saying this? And do those two sources know each other without saying who those people are, if that makes sense, right? It's been so interesting to me that there's been this...such an echo chamber within the media, and it's not all media there. There certainly have been great reporters on this who have stepped to the side and stayed out of the fray. But among the key ones, I think, who are, as we say, carrying water, or advocating for Dick and Jim without maybe even understanding that that's what they're doing. That echo chamber, I've seen it repeat itself. And I think we talked about this before, where they will say, Well, this has been widely known. This has been widely known. And it's like, how is it? Like, you have to look at the people that you're having conversation with during the breaks, and are those people getting the same information that you're getting from the same people. And I don't know that there's that critical thinking happening. And then the second thing I want to say about journalism is that I have been so disappointed in Kathleen Parker. I was an opinion columnist for a very long time. And she was somebody who I looked up to, didn't always agree with her, but I always liked her reasoning. I liked her light tone. I loved her use of language. And I had just seen that fall apart. And so in this past year, I have lost maybe a hero of mine, like right up there with Maureen Dowd. Somebody that I held into such high esteem when I met her for the first time at the courthouse. I just was so excited to meet her that I think I probably came off as a little off putting but because I was so...

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Eric Bland 36:40

She was at the trial, I met her at the trial.

Liz Farrell 36:43

Yeah I just, I mean, I wanted Kathleen's I wanted her life. I wanted to work for the Washington Post and live where I want and, you know, that just, that just was my goal for so long. And I, I just, I'm just so profoundly disappointed in her because I think that when we're talking back about the echo chamber, and that's this isn't to say like, obviously, she can have an opinion that differs from ours, we're not not saying she can't. But the foundation of her opinion, I found, is so flawed. And so that's, that's where my disappointment lies. And I think that she has become a, maybe has always been and I just didn't see it, just shoulder to shoulder with maybe some of the wrong people here.

Mandy Matney 37:20

And I think I and I'm with you. I really wanted to be a columnist and an opinion journalist. I was a columnist in college for my college newspaper, and there really weren't a lot of female voices in Hearst. To that, on that level. Most columnists were males when I was in college, and Kathleen Parker, I've also looked up to her for a long time, and it's just been another emperor has no clothes situation, kind of like you, you, you actually see what they're doing. And you peel the layers back and you're like, Oh, that's really not something that I want to look up to. And it's not the kind of work that I ever want to do. I think my biggest problem with it is she never...she's never honest about where she's getting her viewpoint from.



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Liz Farrell 38:18

She's never honest that like she moves in the circles. That's what bothers makes you moves.

Mandy Matney 38:22

Yeah this is she's a part of these circles, right? And to the rest of the country, it looks like most people don't even know that she lives in Colombia. So like, it looks like she's this outsider that's just been interested in this Murdaugh thing and comes into chime in. It's like, no, she's a part of this machine. And a lot of ways, and it's just incredibly disappointing.

Eric Bland 38:46

Well, you know, you see Dick, for instance, and you ask, okay, how can they, these reporters still, you know, fish in his pond all the time. The reason is, like last week, I mean, Biden was in town, and they showed a picture and who's sitting there, two seats down from Biden, next to Clyburn, is Dick Harpootlian, and so they feel like that they got to be close to him because he he must still be that powerbroker? Well, I think politically he's a power broker, but he is dangerously close to becoming irrelevant as a go to lawyer or a big time lawyer that when he talks you should listen. Because, you know, he's talked like he has a paper mache. You know what? So many times so as a politician, yes, he's close to Biden, and he's close to the power of the Democratic Party, but as a lawyer anymore, I think a lot of people are starting to see that emperor, like you said, without clothes on, and they're hitching their wagon to Dick and maybe they're hitching their wagon because they sees a politician more than a lawyer.



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Mandy Matney 39:54

I want to talk about that in a minute. But Eric, we will be right back. I think I forgot to tell you guys this. And I'm gonna make sure I can say it on air. But do you? Do you guys know that there's going to be somebody running against Dick in the primary? Somebody's good heard.

Eric Bland 40:16

That I had heard that. I didn't hear that it was somebody good. I just heard that he was going to have an opponent, who is it?

Mandy Matney 40:23

I really don't know.

Liz Farrell 40:24

Somebody good.

Mandy Matney 40:26

Somebody good in the primary. So who would be who would that be? I don't know. It's a man.

Eric Bland 40:34

It would have to be a Democrat that has a name.

Mandy Matney 40:36

It would really, really bother me. If Dick Harpootlian was elected again, and like that would just kind of crush my soul. And I know that he also is a separate person, kind of, I know that he's done good things in the Senate, some good things, but I have to admit that and I get crap for



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this a lot. People say you are personally you personally just don't like him. And that clouds your judgment against him? Well, I think he's a terrible person. And I don't think that we should have terrible people representing us in the state house. I think that he represents a lot of bad blood that has been around for way too long. And he is a part of a powerhouse that I do not agree with. And I think him being voted out of office would be a significant thing for South Carolina and him not having the power politically, like you were talking about Eric. His power is definitely dwindling within the courtroom. I mean, we've all seen it. If he had magic before, he doesn't have it anymore. But for him not to have those Statehouse connections and to not have those powers as a state senator, that could be a really big change and I would be happy to see it depending on who runs against him.

Eric Bland 41:56

But you know, don't lose sight of the fact that you started this Mandy, not because you wanted to become a superstar. You started this to change the system. That's what you two did if you read if anybody read your book, or they listened to you guys, from the start, you felt that this system need changing the 14th Judicial Circuit, starting with murder all and and what's going on in the solicitor's office with Duffing stone on different cases and the judges judge Moen and, and judge Buckner and everybody down there, it started with that. And then you've started to really examine not only the court system and the legal system, but our political system. That's what you wanted to do. You were an outsider who didn't have the connections and the relationships that would prevent you from doing what you've done. You being an outsider let you do what you wanted to do. Yes, it was dangerous. It was career reckoning, if it didn't work. But that's been your whole goal is to change



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the system. So it makes natural sense. When you say I don't want Dick Harpootlian to be elected. And people say Well, it's because you have animus towards him. Yeah, I do. But it's the right kind of animus. It's good trouble, as John Lewis used to say, I'm doing good trouble, right?

Mandy Matney 43:13

I don't like bad people. And I don't want bad people representing the state of South Carolina any longer. And I'm tired of that. And I'm tired of people saying, well, Dicks just gonna be Dick and murmur. And did you guys notice how much reporters laughed with him last week, not only in his press conference, but in court. Ah, and every time I just get a sick feeling in my stomach, like they're still doing it, they still don't get it. It's just representative to me of literally, they're laughing along with them.

Liz Farrell 43:50

It's just so indulgent.

Eric Bland 43:51

I hate it. He makes a joke on every single thing. And it's almost like you're up in the Catskills with any young man and he makes a joke and you go, but up bump. I mean, it's every single thing if he's handing a document to Creighton and it's a joke to Justice Toal, it's a joke. I mean, he doesn't you know, lawyers don't have to be comedians. We just have to be lawyers. And he wants to be both.

Liz Farrell 44:15

Eric, can lawyers get away with being comedians? I mean, I can you know, lawyers, like most lawyers in South Carolina can't be yucking it up in front of the judge like that.



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Mandy Matney 44:25

No, no, it's not going to be some it's not going to be some nobody according to my source, which is a good thing. It's like actually somebody that's going to compete with Dick.

Liz Farrell 44:36

Well, that's cool, because he's going to have to raise some money for his campaign and journalists have none so good luck with that buddy.

Eric Bland 44:44

Or she is going to have to get dirty. And they're going to have to play dirty because Dick will get dirty Dick will play dirty. Don't forget what Dick said in 19. I think 85 when he was running for county council and they asked him about the minority after An American vote and he said, I don't care about the black vote, I just want to rent it for a day. So, you know, he'll play dirty, they need to play dirty. And we may hear things because if, if the Democratic Party doesn't really want to kick, and they may feed this new candidate with information, we may hear things about tick that we didn't know. So it could be one of the most interesting races ever.

Liz Farrell 45:22

Well, that would be nice, because we've gotten a lot of information about Dick that we can't run because we can't verify it. So maybe they can.

Mandy Matney 45:27

Right. I was gonna say whoever it is, call us because we got lots of files.



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Liz Farrell 45:33

Starting claims...

Eric Bland 45:36

Guys, like Jane Edgar Hoover, you guys, Jane, Edgar Hoover, what's going on here? You've got files? You got files? Do you have files on me? Are you good?

Mandy Matney 45:44

Oh no, I've never had a reason. If I don't have a reason to go after somebody, I leave them alone. I don't have the time or energy to dig up dirt on random people. It's just people who have given me a reason to and Dick Harpootlian has given us plenty of reasons to look into him. And I just don't. It's disappointing that he has been able to have the amount of power that he's had over the last few years, but it would be incredibly representative of a changing system if he was voted out and have a new South Carolina because people are really tired. I think I was the only one who didn't see a lot of other journalists commenting about Dick being at the table with Biden, but people were shocked by that. And that would be another thing? I I don't think I think that seeing that was incredibly disappointing, because it's like, wow, he still has that kind of power. But it also makes me feel less crazy, because showing people in that picture, it's like, look, this is the kind of Power Team Murdaugh has. He is at the dinner table with President Joe Biden, not a lot of people get anywhere near him. And that is what we're dealing with here.



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Eric Bland 47:15

And his wife is an ambassador and a middle of a war zone that's very important to American interests in Europe. You know, it's no accident that his wife got that Ambassador ship. They didn't just pick his wife out of, you know, the thin air. There's a reason why, you know, Deke Deke made it happen. His wife wanted an ambassador ship. And Deke is that second or third phone call away from Biden and has been for a long time. He has, I think, more power nationally almost now than he does statewide. Believe it or not.

Liz Farrell 47:51

Yeah. So with Dick, I mean, I think again, like what you guys were saying, he, this isn't just about personally disliking him, because I honestly don't even know if I personally dislike him. I don't even think of him in that way, you know, a positive or negative, I don't like the things that he's done. I think he's a foolish person. But it's a recognition of this arrogance that I think in South Carolina, like, I think as you become like a senior. Like, if you start to hold a senior position within your career, right, people look at you with the scheme because you've earned it. You decide what to do with that, are you going to use that for good, helping other people in terms of their careers and, and making them become better at what they're doing? Or do you use it to flaunt your air, like your arrogance at the system to show that I can get away with what I want to get away with because of who I am. And that I think Dick has chosen that latter path. And that's what I find so offensive about him is just the sort of, unfortunately, correct assumption that he can get away with things in the courtroom because even with somebody like justice tol, who set better boundaries, and we've seen this entire time with Dick. She still was permissive in a lot of ways. And you know, what she said to



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John matters, you know, why are you pacing back and forth, you don't need to put on the show. You don't need to. That's essentially what she was saying to him like he was doing like a trial courtroom like it was To Kill a Mockingbird. And so that was a great, that was a great quote, 100%.

Mandy Matney 49:27

Except isn't some drama, Mr. Meadors, what are you doing? You don't have to walk around like that?

Liz Farrell 49:37

And I wish that she had said, because I think Dick had some of that too. He wasn't strutting of course, but there was definitely some peacocking happening in the courtroom, much less than happened during the murder trial, of course. One thing that I wanted, I did try to talk about this last time, but I don't think that we really got to the heart of it. So I want to bring it up again. But one of the criticisms out there, I guess if people who did not want this new trial to happen, and it goes back to what we were saying about what Kathleen Park, what Kathleen Parker said, which is that there was jury tampering that occurred. It's sort of this bipolar way of looking at it either. People look at what Justice Toole said, as affirmation that there was jury tampering, just because she says that Becky wasn't completely credible, and did acknowledge that she made some foolish statements. But the other I would say, 75%...

Eric Bland 50:31

Whoa there's a difference between jury tampering or jury speaking.



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Liz Farrell 50:36

Okay, that's what I want you to answer. But let me get the second part out first. So the second part is that, so you had the first part of the argument, which is that there was jury tampering, they were looking at the same thing that we're looking at. And our way of looking at it is just that there wasn't jury tampering. And the reason we know that is because she didn't grant a new trial. So Eric, how would you respond to that?

Eric Bland 50:55

I would say they're incorrect. There wasn't jury tampering proved. There was jury speaking proved. That a jury was spoken to. Jury tampering is you have an intent to change the jury's verdict. That was not proved. And it wasn't proven that there was the intent that the jury's verdict was change what they did prove she spoke to her. She spoke to the jury. But I don't think they proved that she had the intent to tamper with the jury to make them lose their independence and vote. Guilty.

Liz Farrell 51:30

No, that's important, right, Eric, that's important for the appeal. Even so, people who are looking at this like, and they're saying to me and Mandy, you guys don't want that. If you think what happened to Alex is okay, we think Alex guilty. But if you think what happened to Alex is okay with Becky, then you are losing, you know, a big freedom of being an American, a big part of being an American, you are denigrating the system by wanting Alex not to have a new trial. So the response to that would be just what you said, right? This was jury speaking, it wasn't jury tampering, right. We're not looking at saying jury tampering was okay, because jury tampering didn't happen.



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Eric Bland 52:11

So I'm never gonna say jury tampering is okay.

Mandy Matney 52:13

Yeah, and I'm really tired of people saying like, you want this kind of system, and they're not stopping to think about how crazy of a world it would be if after every conviction, we call the jury back in a year later, to ask them a series of questions about how they came like, and then they can change their mind. Like, that would be insane. And that would just, we would have people in and out of prison. Boopity boop. Like, there's a reason why it's so final and why Justice Toal kept saying that this is such a unique situation. And I absolutely believed that there. They did not prove jury tampering, or come anywhere close to it. And yeah, that whole thing was insane. Let's talk about Stephen for a second. Liz. We are going to be digging back into the Stephen Smith case this week. How do you feel?

Liz Farrell 53:10

I feel good, I'm really happy. And you know, sort of looking into the Stephen Smith case, again, it's kind of the same way I feel about maybe doing taxes in the sense that like, there's so much that I put off. And so we have like a year of two years of conversations, tips. You know, hearing their research that we've done, things that we've read, you know, lies that we're seeing mischaracterizations that have been out there. And now going back and like you have this pile of paper in front of you where you're like if only I had been keeping up on this every month be much easier because it's very frustrating to look back and say I mean it's there's something satisfying about being like Oh, that's right, this connects to that and now I know better now I have a better vantage point for that. So I'm excited about that part. But there's just been so



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much and now it's time for us to really put our focus and I think that this is why it's just so great that he was not granted a new trial because we don't have to constantly be like this waiting for the breaking waiting for the next thing that Dick and Jim file constantly so I'm happy about that.

Eric Bland 54:28

I also think it's going to give accountability to SLED and Chief Keel who had at their in their quiver to be able to say look, you know, our manpower is being deployed again by Murdaugh's machinations and we got diverted away from the Stephen Smith investigation because we had to do all you know, devote the manpower for interviewing jurors and collecting information. Look, I wrote Chief Keel this week for another update. I will tell you I am frustrated. It pains me to see Sandy Smith, sitting in Alex Murdaugh's hearings, and she was there on the 15th. And she was there this past week. She deserves answers. And I am really growing frustrated that I'm starting to get down and think this has gone on for a year since they announced it was almost in March that his death was by a homicide, and we have a reward out there. And I'm really upset with SLED, that we're not getting more progress. Although I'm not gonna say that they're not working on it. I'm just, you know, I'm upset.

Liz Farrell 55:49

We'll let's be clear, the entire look like the entirety of the Murdaugh cases, SLED agents were in the courtroom this past week, last week. So I wonder, you know, I want to give them a little bit of grace, just because of, I know what it's been like, from our perspective, when we have much more heart in it than they do. And much more. We're much more, I



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think, hard on ourselves maybe about not having that focus that we need to have on it. And so I think that again, Alex you know, some people have said to me, do you think that Alex and Dick and Jim, create such bluster to keep SLED agents away from the Stephen Smith case? And I obviously don't know the answer to that. But those are the kinds of things that we hear. So SLED now should have the time to handle this case. And I think Sandy sitting there isn't just, you know, an important message to SLED. But it's an important message to those who know what happened. You might think that I mean, if you've lived in any sort of stress over the past two years that the secrets might come out, get ready, because it's going to be worse for you.

Mandy Matney 57:01

Yeah. And I think that finally we're going down the mental space that we just did not have last year, Liz and I operate very similarly, where we just don't want to open another box until the first one's closed. And that Murdaugh box would never close last year, and it was just in. But Stephen is something so close to our hearts. And that just lingers on in our minds every single day. And we want to, we want to know what happened. And we're going to do everything that we can and that's all that we can do. And we're going to keep making noise about it. We're going to keep talking about it. In we really no more excuses of Stephen being shoved to the side. It's time to have honest conversations with sources and find out what happened.

Eric Bland 57:56

Well, what about the fact that we still have a hanging chad, a couple of them one the labor day shooting with Alex, do you ever think that'll be tried? And then also Judge Gergle's sentencing in federal court coming



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up? And Liz, you told me this morning that the presets report is done, which we hadn't heard. And lo and behold, Alex is objecting to it. What could he be objecting to? He pled guilty to every single charge what...

Liz Farrell 58:22

He's not just objecting to it, he needs 30 more days to be able to object to it, because he says that he hasn't received the report yet and in the prison mail system. But I would, you know, I would question whether or not that report was available maybe last week and whether he was handed it in the courtroom there. So I would want to know the answer to that. If I were the US attorney working on this case, though, I suppose it doesn't matter. So I guess in March or April, we will be well, in March we'll be getting March 6, I believe is the date when we'll be getting there. If Judge Gergle grants them that extra time we'll be hearing their objections to the peace. PSR is and unfortunately, that's the only way we'll know what was in the PSR. Right. It's their objections to it so that they might even try to you know, get that sealed and I hope judge gurgle. doesn't do that. I hope he keeps yeah, I hope he keeps that open. It's important.

Eric Bland 59:21

What about the Labor Day shooting trial? You think we'll ever see anything about that? Or cousin Eddie? Are they just gonna let that hang? What are your thoughts on that?

Liz Farrell 59:29

So Jerry Rivers is set to be sentenced next week next Monday. He is one of the so called co conspirators in all of this and we're still waiting to find out all of what the drug trafficking that Alex supposedly was. He was



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charged with drug trafficking Alex was but that was dropped as part of his plea deal, which is really irritating, because right the labor day shooting, we just you know, Mandy has said from the beginning, those are not strong charges. They fall apart really easily. Once you start to look at exactly what he is accused of doing, because you can't really have insurance fraud if you didn't actually commit insurance fraud, and you can't have insurance fraud if you didn't have an insurance policy. So that is the other sticking point there. Beyond that, so what are you left with? You're left with a false report to police. And that's a misdemeanor.

Eric Bland 1:00:23

So what about discharging a weapon on a public highway? Is there a crime with that?

Liz Farrell 1:00:27

Yeah, yeah, that would be any. Yeah. I mean, Eddie will probably face more than I mean, unless, I don't I mean, I just saw that his lawyer said that she is upset, you know, that there? He hasn't gotten due process in this. And she's correct. He hasn't. But now that the new trial has been denied, I mean, like, we always felt like they were holding on to Eddie, for some reason, right with the murder trial, just to keep him on satisfied. So now, now, what did they have?

Mandy Matney 1:00:57

You know, and like a lot of Eddie's charges are going to be Alex's word against Eddie. And that's a wash. I mean, so. I don't know. They've always been very weak. I would love to know what actually happened and what went down there and how it was connected to drugs. Exactly.



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I want to know what SLED found in Alex's car on the day of the shooting because I've heard some things about that.

Eric Bland 1:01:27

We would like to know that they're getting to the bottom of breaking up whatever drug source was down there.

Liz Farrell 1:01:34

We'll we're told that there are several cartels operating in the low country so which one was Alex supposedly operating with? We don't know. And what do you call a cartel? I mean, I don't know.

Mandy Matney 1:01:45

So well, we got a lot we got a lot going on.

Liz Farrell 1:01:50

We sure do. So with that said guys, great show as always, cups down.

Mandy Matney 1:01:55

Cups down guys. Cups down everybody. Cup of Justice is a Luna Shark production created by me Mandy Matney and co-hosted by journalist Liz Farrell and attorney Eric Bland. Learn more about our mission and membership at lunasharkmedia.com. Interruptions provided by Luna and Joe Pesky.