



## EPISODE 46: Alex Murdaugh's Ground Zero - The Case That Changed Everything

**Mandy Matney** 00:03

I don't know how long it'll be before the boat crash case goes to trial, but the case is ground zero and the Murdaugh murder saga without this case and without the perseverance of the plaintiffs, the victims and this South Carolina wouldn't have the chance it has now to reform its broken justice system. Without this case, the murders grip on the low country might have never been loosened. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for more than three years now. This is the Murdaugh Murders Podcast with David Moses and Liz Farrell. Before we get started, we have some very exciting news. As this saga has so many twists and turns, we decided to add to our episodes with video content, which will give our audience a more immersive experience. We are relaunching our YouTube channel on June 1st. As we roll out all our episodes over the next few months we'll have special Q&A content with Liz and I. Evidence deep dives, forensic profiles and more. Search for the verified Murdaugh Murders Podcast channel on YouTube. And don't forget to subscribe to stay up to date on all things MMP. It's been a long time since we've done a full episode on the Mallory Beach case, as we've been chasing breaking news updates and the insanity and all the other crimes associated with Alex Murdaugh. In the last few months the Mallory Beach lawsuit in cases attached to it had become increasingly complex, and you guessed it more and more shocking. So today we want to take you back to the story that was the beginning of the end of the Murdaugh families 100 year dynasty in the fall of the good ol boys in South Carolina, the boat crash this case is ground zero for everything we talk about in this podcast. The beach case, which started out as a fairly direct wrongful death claim has become incredibly complicated. Because of its intricacies it can become lost in

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all the headlines. But this case is by far one of the most significant aspects of the Murdaugh murder story.

**Liz Farrell** 02:39

For any of you who have watched the show damages this case gives us heavy damages vibes, which is to say that it's a dark and dramatic, tense, ruthless and also highly technical. It's a lot of legal procedure. So it's boring until it really really isn't. We're going to break it down so you can see what we see when we talk about this case. So first, when we refer to the Mallory Beach case or the boat crash case, this can sometimes mean the original 2019 wrongful death claim filed by Mallory's mom on behalf of Mallory's estate, or it can mean the entire collection of cases there are now six boat crash cases all together plus one other I'll explain. The first is the 2019 one which is being litigated by Mark Tinsley. Mark is also representing two other boat crash victims Miley Altman and Morgan Doughty. Those two cases were formally filed this year right before the statute of limitations ran out in February. All three of these cases have included the same defendants which is Parker's Kitchen, as well as its corporate parent for the sake of simplicity. When we say Parker's Kitchen we mean both the convenience store and the corporation it's under Alex Murdaugh and Buster Murdaugh. The estates of pollen Maggie were added in January and were included in Morgan's and Miley's complaints as well. All three of those cases reached prior settlements with Randolph Murdaugh, the Wood family and Luthers which is the bar where Paul and Connor got shots before getting back in the boat. The next case is colander cooks case, which was filed last summer Connors case is the one that officially brought the obstruction of justice and conspiracy accusations against the

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Murdaugh's and certain law enforcement numbers to light Connor is suing Parker's Kitchen, Alex, Buster and Parker's clerk named to Gia Cohen who sold the kids the alcohol that night. Then there is Mallory's boyfriend Anthony Cook's lawsuit which was filed in December. He is suing Parker's Kitchen, the clerk from Parker's that I mentioned and Alex. The sixth case is what we're calling the civil conspiracy case which is also being litigated by Tinsley. This case is connected specifically to the Mallory Beach action, but the plaintiffs are different. In this case, it's Mallory's mom, her dad, her stepmom, her sister and her brother him. While the defendants are different as well, they are Greg Parker, who is the CEO and founder of Parker's Kitchen, his corporation, two of his attorneys, a reporter named Vicki Ward and two private detectives, as well as their investigative agency. It's quite the lineup. This case was filed at the end of last year after a trailer was made public for a documentary by Vicki Ward and People Magazine. The trailer featured photos of Mallory Beach's, dead body and clips from a video that was created by the beach family as part of the mediation process, this case has now become where the central action is taking place. So those six cases make up the entirety of the quote unquote boat crash case. The plus one case that I talked about is a federal case that was filed in 2019 by Alex's insurance company where he had a \$6 million policy. The insurance company was like we're not helping you with this one. We're not covering you on that. And Alex's team was like, wait, but you have to. So in September, a summary judgment was filed for the plaintiff, meaning Alex insurance company one, the significance of that case is this in June 2021, things weren't looking good for Alex Murdaugh. He knew he had four more boat crash cases awaiting him and he knew his insurance company wasn't going to roll over for him this time. This is



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why the quote unquote book crash case has been so important and why it has loomed so large behind the scenes in some way or another. It is the catalyst for everything. So number one, if Alex Murdaugh had anything to do with the murders of his wife and son, the boat crash case could certainly be seen as providing that motive or understandably putting him in such an unraveled state that it was inevitable he'd succumb to the stress of it all in some way. Add to that what we know now and didn't know then which is that Alex had storage units full of secrets that he was trying to keep undercover Alex was running out of time, it was unavoidable. He was going to have to comply with the subpoenas asking him for an accounting of his finances. Number two, this case is the reason the state Grand Jury began looking into the Murdaugh family's alleged actions in the book crash investigation. As FITS News has exclusively reported before the accounts of the victims, as well as others led to state Grand Jury subpoenas of Alex's bank accounts shortly before the murders, which we all know what that would show. Number three, the case provided the first meaningful cracks in the Murdaugh citadel. It provided cover for people who have been kept silent by the very real fear they felt and still fear to finally talk about Stephen Smith, and the injustice suffered by the Smith family. Number four. The case meant more people were studying the Murdaughs which led to Mandy's discovery of the strange Satterfield settlement. Number five cases the reason Alex assets were frozen and the CO receivers were appointed to account for the totality of his worth. There's no doubt in our minds that this work has been absolutely critical to holding investigators and PMPED attorneys and others as accountable as they can. Number six, the case could end up making our roads safer and prevent needless death and injury. If

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convenience stores are held to account for the alcohol sales they make number seven, the case could also end up making our roads less safe because it has prompted the CEO of Parker's kitchen to fight hard for change in legislation that could lessen the liability for the purveyors of alcohol in the state. But there's also a good argument to be made and personal injury lawyers might not want to hear this for the tort reform that Parker seeks number eight the case has also helped expose the sloppiness and accommodating behavior of judges in the 14th circuit and it has helped the public gain a greater understanding of how the juries in the 14th are seen to the rest of the state. Hopefully, this exposure leads to meaningful change.

**Mandy Matney** 08:58

At nearly every turn of the screw in the last three years. Greg Parker of Parker's gas stations in the Murdaughs have attempted to evade all accountability for Mallory's death, those outside of South Carolina tend to forget just how big of a story the bo crash was here locally before the world found out about the Murdaugh family and 2021 because of the local publicity, a lot of people thought it was unusual that Greg Parker in the Murdaughs didn't settle initially to avoid the bad press. And now that the saga has turned into an international news story, it's even more bizarre for Greg Parker, especially to continue to drag the beach family through this very public lawsuit, especially when Parker's has settled similar and less public cases. Why would Greg Parker one his business which has gas stations throughout Georgia and South Carolina, in the middle of the most well known and empty In this low country murder case and decades, we all know why Alex Murdaugh really wanted to avoid a lawsuit that would lead to his finances being exposed. But why

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have Greg Parker fought the beach family so aggressively and so publicly for the past three years?

**Liz Farrell** 10:20

We'll be right back. So the civil conspiracy case has sort of morphed into the quote unquote, nightfighter case, because this is the central conflict right now. And plus, no one doesn't pay attention to the phrase social media knife fighter let's talk about that phrase for a second and where it came from. It first appeared in emotion from Mark Tinsley in the original 2019 case, it refers to Wesley Donohue, who is a political strategist and a consultant. He and his two companies the Lorentz Group and Push Digital, which are basically marketing agencies of a sort were hired by Greg Parker and his camp in January 2021. According to Wesley, he stopped working with Greg and his team sometime in April 2021. I talked to Donahue about the accusations from the Beach family that Parker had hired Donahue and his agencies to in part bullied them out of continuing with their lawsuit against Parker's he completely denies that he wouldn't tell me why he stopped working with Greg in April, but attributed it to a difference of opinion in the direction they wanted to go with the account. Here's what he said about whether he helped target the beaches, David will read that:

**DAVID MOSES** 11:32

I can damn well tell you it wasn't us that is so beneath anything I'd feel comfortable with. I don't even know how to describe it in words, it would damn my soul to hell forever.



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### **Liz Farrell** 11:41

So Wesley is a former Marco Rubio guy and the term social media knife fighter came from a BuzzFeed article written about the Rubio operatives during the 2016 presidential campaign. It's not exactly clear what that means. But we're told aggressive social media can include the use of fake accounts to spread tactical messages that are favorable to a particular person or company and detrimental to whoever that person or company is going up against. To be clear, we're not saying the Lorentz group or push digital did this on Parker's path, we're just sharing the origin of the phrase. Now Wesley Donahue, as part of his strategy engaged the services of a Charleston Area private detective named Sarah Capelli. We'll get to her in a second and what it appears she was hired to do on behalf of Parker. But it's important to understand this part because it can get confusing. Neither Donahue nor Capelli are parties to the civil conspiracy or the knife fighter case. They both produced work for Parker that the Beach family believes will show the lengths Parker's might have gone to in fighting their case to include a strategy that eventually led to a tax on them, and to Vicki Ward getting the confidential court materials and those photos of Mallory's body.

### **Mandy Matney** 12:54

So I want to pause here and comment on a few things. I first learned about Vicki Ward parachuting into the Murdaugh story back in September when she sent me what I think was a condescending email about how she was coming down south with quote two camera crews and a podcasting team from Audible. In her email, she mentioned her work on the Epstein story, and I immediately figured out who she was.



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Vicki Ward is the opposite of everything I wanted to be as a journalist. In summary, she got famous from the Epstein story, and I'm really not sure why Vicki Ward knew about Jeffrey Epstein's horrific crimes back in 2003, and she wrote a puff piece about him and instead of telling the victim stories. She blames her editors at Vanity Fair for this instead of blaming herself after Julie K. Brown, my personal hero, exposed Epstein's crimes finally, in a way that no one could ignore it anymore, Ward appeared to swoop in and reap the benefits of Brown's phenomenal reporting. You know, early on in the story I was accused of being protective of the story. And this is exactly what I was afraid of not because of the competition, because when ruthless reporters like Vicki Ward parachute into a story after a local reporter has already done the messy work in the trenches. It's obvious they're desperate for an exclusive angle and they have dollar signs on their mind. And that is scary and not fair to victims. The thing is reporters like Vicki Ward never do the work that puts pressure on authorities and actually helps victims. They do self-serving things like this. I want to stress this. Vicki Ward released a trailer for a Murdaugh murders documentary on Vimeo that was available to the public, which contain graphic photos of Mallory Beach's dead body when she was found in March 2019. The lawsuit filed by 10 Flee included a link to the trailer and Liz and I watched it before it was quickly taken down soon after FITS News posted a story about it. I remember that morning very clearly. And I was so horrified. I personally contacted the Beach family before our story went up to warn them about it. The video was tasteless and salacious. And the photos of Mallory beach used in that trailer served zero journalistic purpose whatsoever. Think about it. It was never a question about how Mallory died. FITS News filed a Freedom of Information Act

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request with the sheriff's office for a list of anyone who might have received this specific set of photos including law enforcement agencies. Turns out they were not released to any member of the media general public or any other law enforcement agency. They were released to only two people one was the Beach's attorney Mark Tinsley and the other person was E. Mitchell Griffith, an attorney who was representing Parker's and the wrongful death case. This is why Tinsley is accusing Parker's of providing Vicki Ward with confidential information. And right now I feel like I have to mention this Parker's is also arguing that Tinsley showed me a confidential video back when I was covering the case and 2020 but I just want to make this clear. Tinsley never showed me any videos. FITS News published a quote from Mallory's mother, Renee Beach, which tensely gave me when I asked for a response to the story of his writing that quote, which was basically Renee saying that she hopes Parker's is held accountable apparently was also said in a video. But despite what Parker's attorneys like to claim, we did nothing wrong here. And one last thing about Vicki on May 16. Her attorneys argued to have her dismissed from the civil conspiracy case, they basically compared her work on the Murdaugh case to the Pentagon Papers. You know, when the New York Times and The Washington Post expose reports that showed four presidents had lied to the American people about the Vietnam War. On Tuesday, we found out that Judge Bentley price ruled against her so she's still going to have to be a party in this case, that could be a big win for the Beach family.

**Liz Farrell** 17:22

So Tinsley subpoenaed both Donahue and Capelli for all the work they did for Parker's including all correspondence between them and Parker



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or his attorneys. And that is when all hell really broke loose because Parker sees all of that work, or most of it anyway, as fitting the definition for attorney client privilege, which means to their mind, Tinsley should get none of it. And that seems to make Tinsley even more suspicious that there's something pretty bad in those files. I'm going to try to summarize this hell that is broken loose, so we don't get lost in the details. But first, I think we should hear from the Parkers team.

### **Mandy Matney** 17:56

Prior to an emergency hearing that was held earlier in May, we reached out to Parker's marketing agency to get a statement about the court battle over the nightfighter documents. The marketing agencies sent us a statement from Columbia attorney, Deborah Barbier, who was representing Greg Parker, you might remember Barbier from earlier episodes. She also representing Corey Fleming and his bond hearing we're going to have David re Barbier statement on behalf of Parker's Parkers:

### **DAVID MOSES** 18:26

Denies any wrongdoing against the Beach family. Parker's involvement in this case stems from a completely legal transaction conducted by two g a Cohen with no citations issued by SLED following investigation. We have filed an emergency motion because plaintiff's counsel is attempting to obtain documents to which he knows he is not entitled and which do nothing to prove his case he has done so before an order was issued by the court and before Parkers had a chance to object as is our right the documents are protected by well established doctrines of attorney client privilege and work product. This is yet another attempt



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by plaintiff's counsel to cynically influence the media in order to harass and intimidate Parkers, and it will fail.

**Liz Farrell** 19:16

Okay, to summarize the back and forth over the nightfighter documents. Now this didn't happen as such. But imagine Donahue and Capelli, standing in the middle of a courtroom with an absurd number of boxes in their arms, waiting for the court to tell them what to do. Mark Tinsley is on one side and Parker's team is on the other. Now picture everyone looking at that the judges bench Tinsley is like, I need those to prove what they did to the beaches and Parker's is like nice try and absolutely not Donohue and Capelli. Start to tentatively hand Tinsley the boxes, but Parker's is like no do not give those to him. He can't have them. They're protected by attorney client privilege, etc. Judge help us out here and the judge is like I don't agree with you sorry, and He motions to die. Donohue and Capelli, and they start to hand the boxes to Tinsley again, but then the Parkers team throws themselves in front of Tinsley and screams now, wait, wait, wait, stop, stop. You got to reconsider this, your Honor. He just wants these documents to help them in the bookcase. This is ridiculous, then the judge is like, okay, okay, how about this, you give me all the documents and how about give Parker's team all the documents and I'll look over them to see what's what and whether I think they qualify as privileged. And they can look over them to and figure out which parts are privileged everybody cool. Okay. So Donohue and Capelli, go home. The judge goes into his chambers and goes through 6000 pages, the videos, the photos, etc. After a while, and in reality, it took weeks, the judges clerk comes back out and she tells the attorneys, he's decided Tinsley can



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have them. Once we see what parts of this Tinsley thinks he wants to use to prove his case, then we can discuss whether it's privileged, okay, have a great weekend, everyone. The Parker's team was like, but also woohoo, it's the weekend and they pack up and they leave our pretend courtroom. In the meantime, Tinsley is like, cool. It's the weekend, huh? Didn't notice. And so he reaches out to don a US Attorney. capellini doesn't have an attorney. And he's like, FYI, the judge ruled in our favor on the docks. And sometime over the weekend, Don, a US attorney was like ding dong. Did somebody order boxes of knife fighter documents? Actually, I think she put them in a Dropbox. According to the emergency hearing that happened after this. Anyway, the Parkers team comes back to the office Monday. And they're like, Hmm, what should we do about that thing that happened Friday, let's appeal it, even though it's not a thing. We can actually appeal. Wait, let's do a petition for a writ of mandamus. And they all high five and late Monday night. They're like, Hey, everybody, regarding the judge's ruling for the plaintiffs thing from Friday, we're going to be objecting to all that the next morning. So it would seem they find out that well, maybe they should have acted a little faster because Tinsley already has the files, they're like, What so then they call an emergency hearing. And they're like, judge your law clerk telling us about your ruling is not the same thing as you filing an order. And also we object and also we're filing an appeal. And also we were supposed to have time to object to all this before this maniac got arm knife fighter docs. I mean, our attorney client privilege work product. So let's pretend for a moment that these documents were a giant three tiered chocolate cake. At the emergency hearing. The judge is like, Okay, I hear you. Let's find out how much of those documents Mr. Tinsley looked at over the weekend. Everyone in



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the courtroom turns to mark Tinsley and his face and both his hands are covered in frosting. There's a pile of crumbs everywhere. And he just shrugged like, I mean, what am I not going to eat the cake.

**Mandy Matney** 22:42

That sent Parker's team over the edge because this is the exact opposite of what they wanted to happen. Recently, Parker and his team of high priced attorneys have gone even further. This week, they filed a motion saying that they might try to remove Mark Tinsley, the Beach's attorney from the case. So there's two ways to look at this one from the perspective of Parker's they believe that it was a violation of the judge's order when Tinsley got the nightfighter documents, so of course, they're going to fight this one hard, however threatening to remove Tinsley from his own case from a case he's been invested in from the very beginning from relationships of trust he's built with the victims honestly feels like the same bullying tactics that the beaches say they were using in the first place. The idea they would move to disqualify Tinsley from his own case is mind blowing. Can you imagine we live in South Carolina where lately things haven't been all that great for attorneys and the old trust our profession department in the beaches have an attorney they trust because that relationship conflicts with the agenda of a multi millionaire gas station owner, who once publicly stated that he was within reach of becoming a billionaire that they might lose their attorney, the one they chose in America. We'll be right back. Tinsley has accused Parkers of using extremely aggressive tactics to decrease their liability in the case before Maggie and Paul were murdered. It appeared like Parker's strategy was to villainize the Murdaugh family. In fact, Greg Parker is accused of hiring a private



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investigator to follow Buster and Paul Murdaugh to collect information that could lessen his business's potential liability in the boat crash case, the private investigator was allegedly tasked with gathering details of Buster's sex life and Paul's underage drinking escapades. According to transcripts from a recent hearing, I know it's a lot but there are at least three private investigators to keep track of here there are Max for Tati and Henry Risotto. Who are the parties to the civil conspiracy case. And then there's Sarah Capelli, who again is not a party to the case, but someone who was allegedly hired by Wesley Donohue as a part of his strategy with Parker. So the first few private eyes, it's not clear who their client is, they will not say they apparently signed a nondisclosure agreement, and they appear to be sticking to that, but according to multiple sources, and as we've reported, in fits and starts, these guys were allegedly hired by Parker or his attorneys to find anything they could tie Buster Murdaugh to the death of Stephen Smith. So why would they do that? Because no one likes a murder. Least of all juries who are assessing what percent Buster contributed to the boat crash with the alleged loaning of a spare license to Paul as part of this PI's plan. They allegedly presented themselves to Sandy Smith, Stephen's mom, as good guys who wanted to help solve her son's murder. Think about it. Think about that moment. And this was back in 2022. Guys might be able to find her answers who have impressive credentials, show up one day and actually listen to her after years of fighting for someone with any amount of power to listen to her. In the course of their investigation. She gave them Stephen's iPad, and they allegedly took it and when it didn't have what they were looking for, apparently they destroyed it and didn't give it back. If this is true, it definitely seems dangerously close to getting in the way of law enforcement. Remember, this was still an



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open case with the South Carolina Highway Patrol. Now the third investigator in the civil conspiracy case is Sarah. She was apparently instructed to get pictures and video of Paul Murdaugh drinking and acting like a fool. She was also tasked with uncovering details about Buster's sex life, which feels really wrong and invasive. Here is David reading as Mark Tinsley from a March 16 hearing:

### **David Moses** 27:13

They had this narrative that they were pushing out that the Murdaughs were terrible people, and they may very well be terrible people, but because they are terrible people, then a jury ought not find against him in the boat crash.

### **Liz Farrell** 27:27

In a hearing in March, Tinsley told the court that Capelli has quote diarrhea of the mouth and told him everything she was hired to do.

### **David Moses** 27:34

We've asked for the time and the billing records because those records will indicate when these activities started parts of what they did. And significantly. One of the things that Miss Capelli did was she bought alcohol for some underage people in Columbia in order to get information about Paul Murdaugh. And we believe that Parker is reimbursed her for those charges. There's a photograph this happened in November 2020. This is Miss Capelli at a bar and I've got copies I'm willing to hand up.



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### **Liz Farrell** 28:04

So in the course of her investigation for Parkers, Sara Capelli apparently tried to ingratiate herself with Paul's underage friends by buying them drinks at a bar. You got that right. The alleged strategy for Parker's fighting this lawsuit in which they're accused of not following their policies to prevent underage kids from getting alcohol apparently included more minors and plying them with alcohol. It's crazy.

### **David Moses** 28:29

So this photograph and I apologize, I thought when I printed it, this is Miss Capelli in the striped jumpsuit there with her mouth open. In the foreground you see there is a camera with a selfie. This underage girl took this photograph because this is a signed copy of Miss Capelli's card. She bought this girl alcohol. She then went and followed another girl to a gas station who was also underage and bought her alcohol. And so we've asked for the billing and the time records and the receipts for reimbursement because we think that Parker's reimbursed her for buying alcohol for minors to get new information about Paul.

### **Liz Farrell** 29:07

A gas station guys. We should also note by the way that at the same hearing, Tinsley also mentioned that capelli claimed she had mounted cameras at the driveway to Moselle and that everything she collected in this case has gone to SLED we haven't heard any indication that her video so shown anything worthwhile to investigators, but you never know. So the question is, why is Tinsley bringing all this up? Why is he telling the court about Parker's apparent strategy to get dirt on the Murdaugh's wouldn't just be an enemy of my enemy is my friend



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scenario, it seems like they should be on the same page about the Murdaughs. Instead, it seems like he's trying really hard to show the lengths Parker's was willing to go to and proving that the Murdaughs were awful, which seems like something Tinsley would also want to show. In looking at all this we think Mark Tinsley is trying to show that Parker's was willing to do all this and allegedly expend all these resources to vilify Paul and Buster to lessen his liability, but then his PIs say they can't find anything that definitively links Buster to Stephens death, and Paul gets inconveniently murdered. Let's say our theory is true. This means Parker's would need a new legal strategy. What was left? The Beaches were.

**Mandy Matney** 30:21

However, it's possible after the double homicide last June, Parkers switched their strategy specifically to target the boat's passengers, including Mallory, and therefore lessen any liability Parker's might carry. Have you paid attention to social media chatter following the Murdaugh case in the last 11 months, I'm sure you've seen some really vicious posts about the kids who were in the boat that night. I'll tell you that there are two groups in particular that have allowed and encouraged this incredibly heartless and pointless discussion about the victims in the boat crash. And if you are still a member of any of those victim bashing groups, I encourage you to leave anyways, those awful Facebook groups who shall not be named have promoted a narrative about the Beaches, Mallory, Miley Anthony Connor and Morgan and we hope to find out through this knife fighter lawsuit which social media users if any, were paid by Parker's to push this victim bashing narrative, but of all of the horrible posts I've seen about the boat crash victims. I



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think Morgan has gotten the worst of it. Not only did Morgan lose her best friend Mallory and her life was forever changed by that night, but full grown adults have trolled and harassed her online and in person in the last year. They have posted photos of her in a bikini on Reddit. They've called Morgan who was 23 and again, who was recently lost both her ex boyfriend and her best friend to unforeseeable tragedies. A gold digger in Morgan is one of the many victims in the saga who has been gravely misunderstood by both the good ol boys and those watching this case for the sake of entertainment. Morgan is brave and Horrigan is so strong. And unlike so many of the awful people judging her online, she is not afraid to do the right thing, no matter how terrifying it is.

**Liz Farrell** 32:34

As we said, one of the elements of this case that makes it so significant is the co-receivership the co-receivers helped put a stop to the wasting and hiding of Alex assets which seemed to be occurring even as he was in jail, and the co-receivers have undoubtedly helped investigators on not whatever it is that Alex was up to. Earlier this month Alex's attorneys state senator Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin argued for an end of the receivership. Their argument was that the boat crash case wasn't showing any signs that it had enough merit to win in court and that what they termed the quote Murdaugh loophole, meaning that the court froze Alex's assets and appointed a receivership would set a dangerous precedent. The weight Dick made it sound was as if lawyers all over South Carolina were running straight to their nearest courthouse to take over their opponents finances. It is so fun to watch them pretend that their client is regular guy who had a hiccup a slight



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stumble a temporary fall from grace instead of the potential mastermind of who knows what at any rate. Clearly, their argument about the boat crash triggered Mark Tinsley who seems to have squirreled away a mountain of receipts in this case, because he came out of the gate with a doozy. He was like, Oh, you think this case won't go anywhere? And that's why we should stop looking into Alex dodgy records. Let's ask Morgan Doughty for her thoughts.

**Mandy Matney** 33:50

I want to tell you a few things about Morgan Doughty, a heroine who has emerged in this tragedy. Morgan dated Paul Murdaugh. For several years they both attended Thomas Hayward Academy where they both graduated in 2017. Their relationship was on the rocks in February 2019. And they technically work together on the night of the boat crash if you ask Morgan. That night was not the first time Morgan was abused by Paul, but it was the last time because Morgan ended their tumultuous relationship the morning Mallory died. Like myself, and like many of you listening to this podcast, Morgan made mistakes as a teenager, she partied and she drank. She dated a boy who was wrong for her. She got caught up in an abusive relationship at a young age and didn't listen to her parents when they told her they didn't like Paul in before anyone judges Morgan for staying with Paul as long as she did I want you to stop and think about this for a second. For years more had a front row seat to the Murdaugh family, one of the most powerful and feared families in the region. She went on vacations with them, Morgan saw their worst and most intimate moments. She knew their secrets. And she knew that was scary. It's hard enough to leave an abusive relationship as a teenager. Imagine having to come up with the



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courage at 19 to not only leave Paul but his family to that takes a whole lot of strength. But Morgan broke up with Paul for good on the morning, her best friend Mallory died. The second thing I want people to know about Morgan is that she truly wants justice for all the victims related to this case, justice for Mallory, justice for Gloria, justice for Stephen, justice for Paul and justice for Maggie. And instead of taking her insider knowledge to every sleazy news organization in the country, who's begged her for an interview in the past year, Morgan has been working diligently behind the scenes with law enforcement and lawyers. If Morgan wanted fame or fortune out of the story, she could have gotten it. Instead, she has chosen to do the right thing. So earlier this month when Dick and Jim tried to get the court to remove the receivership, arguing that the beach case didn't have a chance. Morgan had no choice but to play all of her cards, and she became a heroine in the story and another woman who was underestimated by the good ol boys. Like any other Gen Z girl Morgan has a phone full of photos and videos documenting her first relationship. She has proved to counter the lies made by the Murdaugh camp, especially when it comes to Paul's excessive drinking and his parents encouragement of it something else to know about Morgan, she is hard on herself. And she's quick to admit to their mistakes. Morgan has never denied that she participated in illegal drinking with the Murdaugh family. But the thing is that now she's 23. Now that she has lost her best friend, now that she has seen how wrong it all was. She wants the Murdaughs to be held accountable for the damage that Paul's drinking has caused others. As we said before, Morgan has been targeted and harassed so many times and the fact that she has allowed her attorney to publish screenshots of these videos knowing just how vicious people can be. That is heroic.

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**Liz Farrell** 37:45

Morgan's affidavit included short descriptions of around two dozen videos she had on her phone. And this is the tough part. The Murdaugh story is obviously very surreal. And unlike anything we've seen before, it's everything all at once they are a multiverse unto themselves. And as such, they don't always seem real to people, right? Well, Morgan's affidavit, which included still shots from each video was sort of a gut punch because you realize how young Paul was and how young all the kids were, and honestly, the adults in their lives failed them. It is sad to see a baby faced boy drunk no matter what kind of jerk that kid might have been. In the affidavit. Morgan told the court that Alex and Maggie and Cory Fleming and John Marvin Murdaugh, were not only aware of Paul's drinking, it was a fully incorporated thing. Yes, Paul drank to troublesome excess in front of them, but his parents often provided the alcohol and every time Paul gotten to an alcohol related scrape, they cleaned it up and thus began the cycle again. Morgan's videos included examples of when Alex Maggie provided the alcohol for minors to drink, such as at a fourth of July Boat party on a family trip to Guatemala at a New Year's Eve party at Moselle at a party for Buster and for games of beer pong. One time Alex and Maggie gifted her with a sleeve of fireball. The videos also included examples of Paul's repeated bouts of gross intoxication in front of his parents to the point he couldn't speak or stand up. She told the court about how he crashed Alex truck which he was driving with Alex permission into a friend's car after one of the videos was taken and how Alex paid cash to have it quietly fixed. How Paul shot gun to beer at the Beaufort Water Festival. How a year before the boat crash Alex and Maggie had helped load alcohol into that very same boat so that kids could drink how Maggie sometimes had to pick

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up Paul because of how drunk and crazy he was acting how Paul would get into fights and once in the Bahamas on their senior trip had to be escorted back to their cruise ship by police. All of this stuff she says happened with Alex and Maggie's knowledge and with busters knowledge reading her affidavit makes it so clear that these kids were being encouraged by Maggie and Alex and other adults to drink in excess from this distance. And considering everything that's happened. It actually feels very close to child abuse. Who would Paul Murdaugh have been had his childhood not featured so much binge drinking?

**Mandy Matney** 40:08

A lesson we keep learning is that the good ol boys never give up. They will continue to cover the facts. And they will continue to seek every avenue to get themselves, their family and their friends out of trouble because they want to hold on to their power, and in most cases, their money. Alex's motion to end receivership is proof of that attitude. After everything that has been revealed about what he was allegedly up to. It seems crazy, he would think he ever had a chance of ending that receivership. But this is South Carolina. And we're never actually sure and always surprised when the good guys win, because honestly, there's always a chance they won't. What's been so interesting to watch over and over is how smartphones and social media, particularly when they're being used by women seem to be the only weapon that works against Alex Murdaugh. There was a day when all he had to do was say something was true, and everyone around him had to agree. But not anymore. Morgan Doughty was like any other teenage girl when she documented the moments of her friends and her first love and His all consuming family who welcomed her with open arms and held on to



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her tight. She had no idea at the time her videos would one day help put an end to the old way of doing things to the time when people accepted whatever Alex Murdaugh said was true. And in the end, the judge ruled against Alex. Ruling that the receivership stays in place in large part because a teenage girl had turned into a very brave young woman. Mallory Beach loved animals in her dream was to see that every animal was loved and cared for. Mal's Pals is a 501 C three nonprofit created to keep Mallory's dream alive by raising money to build a new animal shelter for her community. Part of our mission is to be a voice for the victims and that's why we will donate 100% of our merch with a mission sales through the end of June. All funds donated to Mal's Pals go directly to building a new animal shelter in Hampton County in supporting local animal shelters. You can learn more about this great organization at [malpals.com](https://malpals.com) That's [malpals.com](https://malpals.com). Or go to the [murdaughmurderspodcast.com/merch](https://murdaughmurderspodcast.com/merch) to show your support for our show while helping communities in need. Thank you for listening. Stay tuned. The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created by me, Mandy Matney and my fiance David Moses. Our executive editor is Liz Farrell.

**DAVID MOSES** 43:31

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