



EPISODE 12: What evidence will be allowed in the murder trial? + What the new charges could mean for Alex's victims?

[00:00:00] **Mandy Matney:** Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from Luna Shark Productions. Since it is a holiday week, we are switching things up to give our team a little bit of a break, but also give y'all your Wednesday podcast fix. So, today, we bring you Cup of Justice 12, and we will be back to regular scheduling next week with MMP on Wednesday. Also exciting: Liz Farrell, Eric Bland, and I will be on the MMP Premium Discord Channel tonight at 5:30 PM East Coast Time, that's Wednesday December 28th, to discuss this episode and take questions from y'all. We have a lot of new fun things in store for this growing MMP Premium community. We are beyond thankful for every person who has joined this community and supported our work to change journalism and the justice system for the better. We hope y'all had an amazing time with your families and loved ones this week and we hope y'all are as excited for the new year as we are because January is going to be crazy. We could not let the year end without talking about the state's decision not to pursue the death penalty against Alex Murdaugh and what that could mean for his upcoming trial. Liz Farrell, Eric Bland, and I also will be talking about Alex and Maggie's marriage, the likelihood of Judge Newman allowing the financial crimes to be entered into evidence, and the reasons that PMPED's confrontation with Alex on the day of the murders remained so secret for so long. Something isn't right there, so let's get into it.

[00:01:52] **Liz Farrell:** We wanted to pick your brain about the memorandum in response to Creighton's motion to include evidence of motive. Mandy and I were sort of wondering like what your thoughts were. Do we think that Judge Newman is going to exclude the financial crimes?

[00:02:09] **Eric Bland:** No.

[00:02:10] **Liz Farrell:** In the murder trials. No. Why not?

[00:02:13] **Eric Bland:** Because they do I think pass the acid test of Lyle. I think the proximity of a lot of this happening right around that June 7th date, especially him being confronted by his law firm on that date, especially on



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June 8th, where he was supposed to the collateral was supposed to be given for the beach house and then June 10th where Mark Tinsley was gonna have his hearing in front of Judge Hall on making Alex disclose his financial information — I think all of this is motive that they should be able to get into. I think otherwise, it becomes a very isolated, scientific, sterile case of just looking at the circumstantial evidence that existed in Moselle at the time of the murder. I think he's gonna let it in, whether he lets every single one of the financial crimes come in. The problem you get into is if you open that door — and I understand Dick's concern — if you open that door, then you have a mini-trial on every one of these financial crimes. Now, I think the judge is going to have to balance it. It's such a, he has to be Solomon-like to make this decision because Liz, you can end up with 10 different trials before you ever get to the murder trial.

[00:03:41] **Liz Farrell:** Holy cow.

[00:03:42] **Mandy Matney:** Which would really confuse the jury, too.

[00:03:44] **Eric Bland:** Really confuse the jury. So, where do you come down on that, Mandy? Where do you think?

[00:03:48] **Mandy Matney:** I think that Newman will rule the financial crimes can be let in. I think it does pass the acid test and everything, but a part that Dick and Jim's recent most recent motion that I think that they actually made a good point about, it has to do with the shooting — alleged shooting, whatever — the suicide for hire. Basically, Dick and Jim said in the state's theory, in Creighton's latest response, he is saying Alex did all of these things for sympathy; that Alex did not want to die on September 4th. He just did that for sympathy and distraction. But in the meantime, there's still Alex has been indicted by the state for staging his own suicide.

[00:04:38] **Eric Bland:** And insurance fraud.

[00:04:39] **Mandy Matney:** And insurance fraud.



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[00:04:40] **Eric Bland:** I think Newman may not let in every financial crime, but he's gonna let in financial pressures. So, whatever can fit in under financial pressures that doesn't create a complete trial within a trial, he may try to thread the needle.

[00:04:57] **Liz Farrell:** That's interesting. That actually makes a lot of sense to me.

[00:05:01] **Mandy Matney:** That does make sense. Eric, do you think that if the, you've always said that they should have done the financial crimes first. Would it be easier for Newman to make this decision if trials were already, if the financial cases were already tried?

[00:05:18] **Eric Bland:** Absolutely. 100%. No question. He would be able to already say he got a fair trial. He was convicted. It comes in; he's already convicted. Now, he's not convicted of this. Now —

[00:05:32] **Liz Farrell:** Wait, though. But conviction doesn't matter. Conviction doesn't matter.

[00:05:36] **Eric Bland:** I understand. But it goes a long way. What we do have is the confession of judgment to Gloria Satterfield where he admitted he stole her money. Now, that is something that's strong. We have some of the confessions that he gave his brother and Johnny Parker. But as to the other charges, he's not admitted he's done anything wrong in Pinckney. He's not admitted he did anything wrong in Badger.

[00:06:01] **Liz Farrell:** Eric, see, what I'm not understanding here is State v. Lyle, it does not matter if you were convicted or not because —

[00:06:07] **Eric Bland:** It does not.

[00:06:07] **Liz Farrell:** The issue is the prior bad acts, which means even if you had a long history of being convicted of, you know, similar type crimes, regardless of whether he was, if he was found guilty of all those financial



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crimes, the judge is still going to have to decide whether it's relevant and whether it's admissible. It's the same two tests.

[00:06:25] **Eric Bland:** It is and it isn't. A way to break down State v. Lyle is just to say, we want to be very careful that we're not convicting somebody of this crime because he's done all these other crimes. We want to make sure that if we're convicting him for this single crime, it rises and falls on what his criminal intent was, did it meet the elements of the crime charge. However, to show his propensity, to show that he had the mens rea, these other acts are evidence of a habit or pattern to show that it fits into him doing this crime. It's a very, you know, it's not an objective thing. It's very subjective, State v. Lyle. It's not like, you know, I mix zinc with magnesium and I make this drug. It's sticky, it's icky. I can't define it, but I know it when I see it. So, State v. Lyle kind of feels that way, too. Hey, this seems like it would be really relevant. It's not totally prejudicial. It's very probative. Or, you know, what if I let it in that he raped this person in this particular crime, boy, it's gonna override his presumption of innocence. It's kind of a balancing test. I mean, it's gonna be a tough decision.

[00:07:42] **Liz Farrell:** Well, it's funny. So, with State v. Lyle, it's not as simple as like, okay, this is a rape case and this guy's been convicted of rape before or been accused of rape before. It's not simply the act. It has to show that not only was he accused of rape before but in this case, he raped a woman in the woods and in the other case, he raped her in the woods. In this case, he went after a 15-year-old with blonde hair. In this other case he went after a 15-year-old with blonde hair. There has to be something that —

[00:08:08] **Eric Bland:** Causal connection.

[00:08:10] **Liz Farrell:** Right. So, but here's the thing with Alex that is confusing to me. We're not talking about a financial crime right now. We're talking about murders. So, his financial crimes are not necessarily or his alleged financial crimes, we're not looking for a pattern of behavior there. It seems like it's something different altogether. It's trying to show that what, like you said, like the financial pressures existed. It's not that there was a pattern of behavior or a common scheme in these financial crimes that had a bearing on how he allegedly perpetrated this current crime. It's that they existed in



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the first place. So, is that something completely different than State v. Lyle or is that the appropriate avenue? 'Cause that's what's been confusing me is that —

[00:08:52] **Eric Bland:** You're like my professor at law school, Flanagan, talking about State v. Lyle, Liz. You're an, he was my evidence professor. It is right. You're right. It's how much is he gonna open the door. Remember once you crack that door, it could get busted wide open. And then, what Newman doesn't want to do and what Creighton doesn't want to do is just create a total appellate mess; that if he's convicted, it's going to be reversed because too much went in and he was unfairly prejudiced by all these other charged-but-not-convicted crimes. That's the fear that I have as a lawyer. We always want a clean trial. But if you make this such a clean, sterile trial only on what happened on June 7th, it doesn't give any context on what was Alex thinking about. What was breaking, driving him to that breaking point?

[00:09:49] You know, one of the things that we haven't talked about is, and everybody says, well, Maggie never saw a divorce lawyer. I am getting private communications from some of our listeners. They're emailing me and messaging me that Maggie's sister knows who she saw and she saw supposedly a female lawyer in Hilton Head to go over what her options are. Now, whether that's true or not, a lawyer can come forward at this point. If it is true that Maggie did consult with a lawyer, a lawyer can come forward. That's not breaking the attorney-client privilege. Two, is there, did the state look into Maggie's checkbook to see did she write a check to attorney, to an attorney. Does somebody know who gave her a recommendation on go see lawyer X? So, I'm starting to get these messages and I don't know whether you guys are or I'm completely off base and the people that are texting me and communicating with me. Do you think that Maggie was contemplating some kind of marital event, whether it was seeking advice, a separation, or a divorce? I'm asking you guys that.

[00:11:11] **Liz Farrell:** Personally, no. But.

[00:11:12] **Eric Bland:** Okay. Mandy?



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[00:11:14] **Mandy Matney:** No. Well, I don't think so. But because everything that I know about Maggie Murdaugh, I do not think, I think that she would be miserable and I think that she would be separated from her husband. But as far as drawing the papers and being officially divorced from the Murdaugh family, the status, the money, everything, I don't think she would do it.

[00:11:40] **Eric Bland:** I tend to disagree. I think that putting aside whether there was marital discord over fidelity or what, and I don't know whether he was, you know, faithful to her or she was faithful to him, but I do believe that money does create pressure — a different kind of pressure. And a man that is constantly taking money and putting the family at financial risk, especially when some of that money is Maggie's or a property is Maggie or making Maggie sign on to something or pledge her assets — makes a woman rightfully nervous. So, I tend to think there may be something there and then, and I'm sure the state's exploring it.

[00:12:22] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I think they have. I would say with the family that she came from and from the Murdaugh family, divorce is super frowned upon and it's not something that was even in her lexicon. But what I would say is with Randolph on his deathbed and Libby, she has dementia, Libby Murdaugh, you know, Alex's mom, there maybe would've been an avenue for her to suddenly seek that divorce and not feel that pressure from because that family loomed large in Maggie's life.

[00:12:53] **Eric Bland:** Well, I'll tell you this. The person I think, I think the person that holds more keys than anybody is Buster Murdaugh. I think if Buster ever decides he's going to talk, I think Buster knows a lot if there was marital discord between his parents. I think Buster knows a lot of the answers on Gloria Satterfield. I think Buster knows a lot of the answers on Stephen Smith. I think he holds the key. And one day, he may decide I want to no longer be associated with my father.

[00:13:29] **Mandy Matney:** Well, but I mean, I think, I don't think there's a question of whether or not Alex and Maggie had a rough relationship. I've heard that from sources since 2019 and very good ones who were very close, like they had a bad relationship. I'm fine with saying that.



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[00:13:49] **Eric Bland:** They had enough that they were living separate apart. Yes or no?

[00:13:52] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, Maggie. But I think we have to understand that —

[00:13:56] **Eric Bland:** Maybe he didn't like that.

[00:13:57] **Mandy Matney:** I think we have to understand the world, which, like last year I remember specifically talking to someone who really knew Alex and knew the world that they were in, which is small town but also very elite, small town. And it is their ideas of divorce, their ideas of marriage are completely different from what we think of the ideal marriage, the what's grounds for divorce, etc. This source that I was talking to specifically said in that world, like you don't kill people because — how do I say this? You don't kill your spouse because of an affair because it's just so normalized. They just all have accepted that everybody has affairs and they've, there's no passion of like, you cheated on me, so I'm gonna murder you. However, I think there's enough to show that Maggie was aware that things were, that the kingdom was crumbling and —

[00:15:11] **Eric Bland:** Unraveling.

[00:15:12] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. Her checks were bouncing in those months before.

[00:15:16] **Liz Farrell:** Russell was covering those checks. So, why those few checks that Maggie did bounce? Like why were those bounced?

[00:15:25] **Eric Bland:** Why didn't it concern her?

[00:15:26] **Liz Farrell:** Well, I'm just saying like this whole time they were just covering the bounce. They paid them. They honored them. Why were, why all of a sudden were they not honoring them?

[00:15:33] **Eric Bland:** That's a good point.



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[00:15:33] **Mandy Matney:** And I think that that's the point of this — that all of a sudden he had all of these systems of covering up this and that and this and that and they all just kind of started to collapse in the months before the murders.

[00:15:55] **Eric Bland:** I think the most important thing that happened is actually what was revealed in Russ' trial and that is the law firm confronting him on June 7th. Everything else he can deal with. He could talk Maggie down off a ledge. He can deal with Paul. But the law firm, if they turn on him, that is his source of earning money, either legitimately or stealing. That's his lifeblood. His whole existence is that law firm. It provides him with his legitimate source of living. It provides him with his theft source of living. And he was confronted in a big way. And I'm telling you, he went in a full state of panic. To me, that is the most important fact that I've heard about that would trip his wire and make him do something crazy.

[00:16:49] **Liz Farrell:** What you just said is really interesting, Eric, because we were talking about this earlier. Dick and Jim's response to the motion that Creighton had put forth on the motive, entering the motive into the record, it seemed to me like they were comparing apples and oranges because they were saying that that was, that's what the state was saying was that Alex was afraid the law firm was about to turn on him and that's absurd and illogical and what have you. And you're saying, obviously, no, that's not absurd and illogical. That makes perfect sense.

[00:17:17] **Eric Bland:** Makes perfect sense.

[00:17:18] **Liz Farrell:** The state also isn't just saying that the PMPED thing was what motivated the murders of Maggie and Paul. The state is also saying that he was under an extreme amount of pressure beyond just PMPED. Like this was the final straw. PMPED was the last, you know, straw to be on the camel's back. That's what broke him. But all this other stuff was piling up as well. So, it's interesting to me that Dick and Jim chose only to highlight the part about the law firm and say that this is absurd. This doesn't make any sense. And you're saying, isolated or not, like that little piece of information — that says it all right there. That's enough right there to understand the murders.



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[00:18:00] **Eric Bland:** To break him. Remember to trip his wire; that he loses his temper in a way that it just goes crazy. She could say something that could trip his wire. Yes, I do agree that Mark Tinsley being able to discover his finances three days later and the cat's out of the bag. Mark Tinsley would've been able to tell the world Alex is in so much hawk and has no assets or whatever. But to me, it's the law firm because that is his entire existence. It provides his entire legitimate and illegitimate way of earning a living.

[00:18:31] **Liz Farrell:** I don't know if this is putting you on the spot or not, but Mandy and I have a question for you. We did not learn about, obviously we've said this before, but we did not learn about the June 7th confrontation from PMPED until Russell Laffitte's trial. And like we've said many times before, like we've heard it all. We've heard, nothing is usually surprising because we've heard it. Even if it's years before, we've heard it in some form or another. Going back and talking to all of our sources, they hadn't heard it either. So, why do you —

[00:19:02] **Eric Bland:** Why haven't we —

[00:19:02] **Liz Farrell:** Right. Why haven't we, Eric? Like, what, how did PMPED keep that quiet when it seems like, I mean, Hampton's so small.

[00:19:10] **Mandy Matney:** Can I add to that with I was going through —

[00:19:13] **Eric Bland:** That came from Emily. Why did Creighton never mention that at bond hearings?

[00:19:18] **Liz Farrell:** We're asking you. Why didn't he?

[00:19:23] **Eric Bland:** Are you suggesting it was made up?

[00:19:26] **Mandy Matney:** I'm suggesting that there's a reason why it was kept under wraps for so long, and we're trying to figure that out. The other thing that I —



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[00:19:41] **Eric Bland:** Okay, wait. He was charged with murder in July. Russell Laffitte's trial was in November. Russell's trial was in November. I get it that they don't want to bring it out before he's charged with murder. But why was the Russell Laffitte trial the stage that they would put that play on?

[00:19:58] **Liz Farrell:** It's not just that they wouldn't want that out. It's that we want, we know stuff that they don't want out. Like we know that stuff like or, you know, some of at least the major stuff.

[00:20:07] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, of course you do. You guys know a ton of stuff.

[00:20:09] **Liz Farrell:** Nobody did. And so, I guess the question is, would there be, and I'm just gonna throw this out there. Let's say it's true that there was a confrontation on June 7th. Let's just accept that it's true. Is that something that, because the PMPED did not find the check until September 2nd, they did not allegedly find this check that —

[00:20:31] **Eric Bland:** They were covering up for his murder. Is that what you're saying?

[00:20:34] **Liz Farrell:** I guess what I'm saying is that the ODC —

[00:20:36] **Eric Bland:** Is that you're saying?

[00:20:37] **Liz Farrell:** It seems like.

[00:20:38] **Mandy Matney:** Do they have any, like did they have any obligation? 'Cause if we find out that they did not tell that to SLED —

[00:20:46] **Eric Bland:** Disclose that.

[00:20:47] **Mandy Matney:** But I also have to say this. I was looking through —

[00:20:50] **Eric Bland:** Guys, you're going to a real dark place here, what you just said.



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[00:20:53] **Mandy Matney:** I was looking through a lot of stuff from last summer and stumbled on the press release when in the weeks after the murders, when the Murdaughs were putting up a reward saying we're asking people for a hundred or anybody who has information on these murders a hundred thousand dollars and it will be administered through PMPED. It says that on the press release, which is weird first of all. But second of all, it's really weird when you think about it that the most important information surrounding the course of the double homicide is information that PMPED had in that very moment and they were a part of this reward.

[00:21:43] **Eric Bland:** Right. What you're saying is, I think what you're trying to say is why didn't PMPED on June 8th call SLED and say to SLED, 'cause you would've heard this from your sources over the last year and a half, why didn't they call and do their civic duty on June 8th? Look, we need to give you a bit of information that we confronted Alex yesterday morning before the murders happened and then questioned him on a check that should have come to the law firm. I don't know if it's relevant, but that's our civic duty in telling you. And if they had done that, you guys would've heard about it. That's what you're telling me in this podcast. And you didn't hear about it.

[00:22:28] **Liz Farrell:** We would've heard about it.

[00:22:29] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, I think we would've heard about it. And I also think the financial crimes would've been discovered a lot sooner if, 'cause it did not seem, from my sources, nobody was looking into financial crimes until September 4th.

[00:22:44] **Liz Farrell:** And, you know, this isn't to sound arrogant either. Like we're not saying that like we're the end-all be-all. It's just like I said, like we, nothing is surprising to us usually because we have heard it in some capacity. And in this case, you know, it's just it, I find it wild that no one knew. But going back to the ODC aspect of it, when they discovered this at first in May, I get it that like they wanna give their partner the benefit of the doubt and sort of get to the bottom of it before they report it. But do they have an obligation at that point to tell the ODC that there's missing fees in their law firm and one of their partners, they're having trouble getting him to prove that it's in the place that he's saying it's in?



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[00:23:31] **Eric Bland:** Absolutely, they do. We have a rule of professional conduct that lawyers have a duty to supervise each other in their law firms. That duty to supervise requires us in dispensing our duty to report conduct that violates the rules of professional conduct. And if he diverted fees that belong to the law firm to himself personally, that is a violation of the rules of professional conduct.

[00:23:59] **Liz Farrell:** Sure, but giving the benefit of the doubt, so they give them the benefit of the doubt. They wanna look into it themselves.

[00:24:04] **Eric Bland:** Okay, fine. That gets you to May to June 7th. Please get me from June 7th to September 4th, Liz.

[00:24:11] **Liz Farrell:** Okay, so that's the question then. So, if you know that you've confronted him on June 7th and if this is kept under wraps due to perhaps a lack of reporting of other things or knowing that they're in deep doo-doo with the ODC based on some of the things that are coming out to them —

[00:24:28] **Eric Bland:** What do you mean deep doo-doo?

[00:24:30] **Liz Farrell:** I guess my question is did the June 7th thing get brought up out of desperation? Perhaps. And this is just speculation on my part, but to cover the story or fill in a gap in the story when it comes to the ODC and protecting the firm and all of that because I don't know how that wasn't right out of the gate known and perhaps we're wrong about that. But it seems to me that that's newer information that was shared strategically when it needed to be. Does that make sense what I'm saying?

[00:25:02] **Eric Bland:** It does. So, you're saying it's almost made up?

[00:25:04] **Liz Farrell:** No, not made up, but shared strategically. Like no one know, we're not telling anyone about the June 7th confrontation until we need to.

[00:25:13] **Mandy Matney:** Until they had to.



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[00:25:15] **Eric Bland:** When do you think they told Emily Limehouse?

[00:25:17] **Liz Farrell:** They had to tell somebody, whether it's the ODC investigators or whether it's —

[00:25:22] **Eric Bland:** They told Emily. They didn't tell Creighton?

[00:25:24] **Liz Farrell:** I'm not saying they didn't tell Creighton, but my question is just is it possible, I mean, I guess anything's possible, but I, and I don't mean to like put myself in a knot over this, but is there any benefit to saying that? Like we did confront Alex. We were on top of this. In fact, on June 7th, we confronted him. So, is it not until they need to pull that out of their pocket and be like, well, actually we did confront him and actually we were doing the right thing and we were giving him the benefit of the doubt to prove this to him. And in fact, it happened on June 7th. So, I guess that's what I'm saying is that is this possible that what we're seeing and not really understanding right now is the late revelation of that information — that June 7th confrontation — is actually representative of something possibly, potentially more corrupt, which is that that information was kept secret until it was needed to be pulled out to protect the partners at the firm?

[00:26:16] **Mandy Matney:** Could it have been a trade of information?

[00:26:18] **Eric Bland:** But you don't know when they told them. We don't know the date that somebody from the law firm.

[00:26:23] **Liz Farrell:** We don't, but we also know that these places are very leaky sieves and we've never heard that and sources we know have never heard that. It came out for most people during the Russell trial so.

[00:26:35] **Eric Bland:** Which is stunning to me because I would think that SLED immediately on June 8th, 9th, would've gone to the law firm to question a managing partner, whether it would be Johnny Parker, Ronnie Crosby, or Mark Ball, to say, "Tell me about Alex's behavior on the seventh." That, to me, that would be a normal investigative question. They would send an investigator to his law firm, his friends, whatever, and this SLED agent



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would walk in and say to Ronnie Crosby, "Hey, man. What was June 7th like? Was it a normal day for Alex? Did anything happen?" You would think they would say, "Well, it was an unusual day because we actually did confront him." I would like to know if SLED is ever gonna reveal the date.

[00:27:22] **Liz Farrell:** I wanna know that date.

[00:27:23] **Mandy Matney:** Is this possible or is this the movie? Like 'cause the movie situation of this would be somebody at PMPED goes to Emily Limehouse or Creighton and says, "I have good information that'll help you on the murders, bro. But we need protection."

[00:27:39] **Eric Bland:** I can't comment on that.

[00:27:41] **Mandy Matney:** Could that be a thing?

[00:27:43] **Eric Bland:** To me —

[00:27:44] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. I mean, it could. That's, I mean, that's realistically that's what happens in these worlds, right?

[00:27:50] **Eric Bland:** It's scary. It just seems to me the natural evolution would be the first place they're gonna go to, SLED, the day after the murders is his law firm. And they're gonna ask did Alex act unusual on June 7th, did anything happen, was he confronted by a client, did something happen. And they're going to have to say, "Well, to be honest with you, we actually confronted him about a missing check." Correct?

[00:28:15] **Liz Farrell:** That didn't happen, though. I mean, I will say obviously I don't know 100% whether that happened.

[00:28:20] **Eric Bland:** Why didn't that?

[00:28:21] **Liz Farrell:** But just going back.



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[00:28:22] **Mandy Matney:** I don't think it happened, yeah.

[00:28:23] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, the likelihood of us not hearing that is —

[00:28:26] **Eric Bland:** It's crazy to me.

[00:28:27] **Mandy Matney:** I also don't think Chris Wilson said a word until September, which that guy should have said a lot.

[00:28:33] **Eric Bland:** Do you believe SLED on June 8th went to that law firm? I do. Don't you?

[00:28:37] **Mandy Matney:** I think, I would guess, yeah.

[00:28:39] **Liz Farrell:** Yes.

[00:28:39] **Eric Bland:** Of course, they would. It's the first place they're gonna go to. And you're telling me that you don't think they told him that?

[00:28:45] **Liz Farrell:** It doesn't appear. That's what I'll say. It doesn't.

[00:28:48] **Mandy Matney:** It doesn't appear.

[00:28:49] **Eric Bland:** Okay. Doesn't appear.

[00:28:50] **Mandy Matney:** And it's very interesting that Creighton is, that all of this came out in the Russell Laffitte trial.

[00:28:57] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, the first time Creighton talked about it was after that in the last hearing.

[00:29:01] **Liz Farrell:** But why did it come out in the Russell Laffitte trial? It came out because they were trying to show like they needed it. They needed that fact to be there to show that like the walls were closing in on Russell. And then PMPED needed that to be out there because it showed them as being



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this responsible but clueless group of people that were like, what is this? Oh, no. We better look into it. So, that's why it came out.

[00:29:28] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. I mean, from Russ' standpoint, he needed to know that because that showed that he wasn't gonna get repaid 'cause the income source was drying up.

[00:29:54] **Liz Farrell:** I think we've learned what a very delicate dance all of this is because you've got so many elements. You've got the bank, you've got PMPED, and you've got Alex, and you've got Russell. You've got all these people who could harm each other through mutual, you know, self-destruction or what have you. And then they've gotta be careful about how far they go with one point because of where it takes them on another point, you know?

[00:30:16] So, going back, I mean, this is probably a good point where we could talk about the latest things that are happening in the Russell Laffitte case. Eric, do you wanna kind of give us a run, a rundown of where we're at with the Russell Laffitte case?

[00:30:28] **Eric Bland:** Yep. Emily Limehouse just filed a large opus response to the motion for a new trial. And she hit head-on the three subject matters that they're focusing on and that is the impropriety of Judge Gergel in seating two new jurors, Judge Gergel not charging the jury and letting evidence come in on the reasonable advice of counsel defense, and number three, that he limited the ability of the defense to show that Russell was a victim by not letting Bart Daniel show how PMPED was fooled by the Forge scandal; that even his own lawyers that he practiced with didn't see it coming. So, if they didn't see it coming, how'd he expect Russell? So, those were the three major subject matters of her brief. And she did a resounding job in showing that there's no way that Judge Gergel is going to grant this motion for a new trial.

[00:31:31] **Liz Farrell:** So, I mean, obviously we don't think we're gonna see a new trial for Russell Laffitte under these six charges, but do you think we'll see more charges coming his way?



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[00:31:39] **Eric Bland:** I can't imagine that you're not gonna charge him with income tax evasion. I would do it right now. I would impanel a grand jury. There is no question that he didn't report \$450,000 worth of conservator and PR fees and the only time he amended his returns to do that was when the FBI and SLED was knocking at his door. It's clear, it's the easiest low-hanging fruit, and it'll put more pressure on Russell to finally turn and talk. I don't know why they're not doing that.

[00:32:12] **Mandy Matney:** This is a stupid question, but I take it that means if you don't pay your taxes and then years later you were like, oopsie, and then pay them that you can still be charged? I'm just thinking here.

[00:32:29] **Eric Bland:** To me, or you can't be charged. I mean —

[00:32:32] **Mandy Matney:** Is there a difference, though?

[00:32:33] **Eric Bland:** I think it's two rules of law. I just, I don't understand it. I have so much respect for our US Attorney's Office and God knows how much respect I have for Emily. I don't understand. To me, it is blatant income tax fraud and that is a lot of money. There are people that listen to our podcasts that don't make \$450,000 in five years or 10 years, let alone to have that be discretionary money that you don't even have to report.

[00:33:03] **Liz Farrell:** Well, to be clear, first of all, it wasn't — sorry, Eric, to correct you here — but it wasn't 450 and this is important because he reported some of it. He reported the Plylers money it sounded like, which, you know, was a good portion of the 400 and some odd, but what he didn't report was the money that they allegedly — and I think some would argue, clearly — were intending to steal all like just outright steal. So, with the Plylers, he didn't outright steal it in the traditional sense. It was more that, you know, what is the nature of these loans and what have you. But with Arthur Badger, with Pinckney, with, you know, the other cases, these, Thomas, Natasha Thomas, these are people of color, and he didn't report the fees that he took for doing nothing, to quote Emily, in these cases, but he knew better. And I think the point is that showing that you knew to report your fees that you were getting because you did it with the Plylers but you didn't report it with the Badgers, the Thomases, the Pinckneys. You didn't report those fees because why? And



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that I think is such a core question when we're looking at, like back to Russell, whether he knew what he was doing or not. That money gets just allegedly outright stolen by Alex. So, were those payoffs to look the other way? And that's been the core question. So, yeah. Why aren't they charging him with income tax fraud evasion or whatever?

[00:34:23] **Eric Bland:** And why has it taken so long to charge Alex? I get it that on the state level, on the federal level, they don't want to do it 'cause they don't want him to march down and plea. But why did the state wait so long in charging him on the eight and a half million dollars of unreported income? That's an easy charge.

[00:34:40] **Liz Farrell:** That felt like Creighton was like twisting the knife a little on Dick and Jim, so maybe he was saving that.

[00:34:45] **Eric Bland:** It could be. Yeah, that's a good point.

[00:34:46] **Liz Farrell:** To be like, yeah. Like Merry Christmas, jerks.

[00:34:50] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, well, there's more where that came from. And the other question I had about the tax evasion, a couple listeners asked me this and I wasn't sure what does that do as far as the victims who want money from Alex when now that Alex owes officially on the record like 400 and some odd dollars in taxes? What does that do?

[00:35:17] **Eric Bland:** Federal government takes, government takes precedent.

[00:35:20] **Liz Farrell:** Is that right Eric?

[00:35:20] **Eric Bland:** Unfortunately, it does. Yeah.

[00:35:22] **Liz Farrell:** Oh my God.

[00:35:23] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, they do.



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[00:35:24] **Liz Farrell:** So, you're saying that the Beach family, who got this receiver appointed to go through Alex's finances to make sure that the assets were preserved and not wasted, you're telling me that the government can then come in. So, they went through all this trouble, John T. Lay, Amy Hill, rack up hundreds of thousands of dollars in billable hours and now, the government can be like, tap them on the shoulder and be like, actually —

[00:35:52] **Mandy Matney:** Ours first.

[00:35:53] **Liz Farrell:** Thank you for collecting it.

[00:35:55] **Eric Bland:** As long as they get their lien in judgment and priority first.

[00:35:58] **Mandy Matney:** Oh, okay.

[00:35:59] **Eric Bland:** So, he has not been convicted yet of anything. Alex, there's not a judgment, I'm, I hold the judgment, I hold the only judgment so far. But there is a solid argument that the government's obligation to collect tax takes preference over a private judgment creditor in collecting their judgment. It's gonna be a fight. It complicates it.

[00:36:21] **Mandy Matney:** Which is maddening.

[00:36:22] **Eric Bland:** It's maddening.

[00:36:23] **Liz Farrell:** Makes me so angry because it —

[00:36:25] **Eric Bland:** It's just victimizing victims all over again. There you go. Again and again.

[00:36:29] **Mandy Matney:** And if the government did their jobs to begin with we wouldn't be in this scenario so.



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[00:36:33] **Eric Bland:** Well, wait a minute. Wait, are you saying that the government should have known that he was committing income tax fraud? How are they gonna figure that out? He does file —

[00:36:42] **Mandy Matney:** I think they should have figured all of this out a long time ago. I don't think that it should have —

[00:36:46] **Eric Bland:** Who? The law firm or the government?

[00:36:47] **Mandy Matney:** The government, everybody. That should not have taken 10 years.

[00:36:50] **Eric Bland:** He's filing tax returns on \$6 million income.

[00:36:52] **Mandy Matney:** Not just, not just the taxes. Everything. Like Alex Murdaugh wasn't this mysterious two-character person that was like everybody believed was a legitimate lawyer. Everybody knew he was sketchy. Nobody said anything 'cause they were afraid of him.

[00:37:06] **Eric Bland:** Wait a minute, he was president of the South Carolina Trial Lawyers Association.

[00:37:10] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, okay. Look at that list. What? I'm just gonna be honest. Look at that list.

[00:37:15] **Eric Bland:** Wait a minute. I didn't know him, so you guys are educating me. I didn't know him up until July, September, so you know facts that I don't know. So, tell me. All these people knew that he was not a legitimate lawyer all along the way? I didn't know that.

[00:37:32] **Liz Farrell:** No, not to the extent where he was stealing from clients like that, but I think —

[00:37:36] **Mandy Matney:** I think they all had reasons. I think everybody this entire time had plenty of reasons to be like, to do all the same things Liz and I have been doing, which is, huh, there's something up here. Maybe this guy



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should be looked into, or maybe we should take a step back from this guy. And instead, a lot of people ignored it and they enabled his behavior. And I don't think that —

[00:38:02] **Eric Bland:** Oh, I agree on that. I agree on that.

[00:38:04] **Mandy Matney:** And the reason why it got to the extent that it did and he lasted so long was because he knew that he had the protection of law enforcement, of his father, of the 14th Circuit, of — he had layers and layers of protection and.

[00:38:20] **Eric Bland:** Well, let me ask you two of these questions 'cause you know the answers and I don't because I didn't again know of Alex Murdaugh at all until September of 2021. Was he considered a joke as a lawyer or a non-serious lawyer from 2005 to 2020? Or was he considered a good lawyer? I'm asking you.

[00:38:39] **Liz Farrell:** I think he was considered a lazy lawyer who did the absolute minimum. I don't think he was seen as smart.

[00:38:46] **Mandy Matney:** Lived off of his dad's name.

[00:38:47] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, he lived off his dad's name. But I think what Mandy's saying is that like, it's a death by a thousand paper cuts and you can look back and say like, oh, there's, you know, we should have reported all those paper cuts and but maybe we just didn't see them. But it's you don't see the individual acts that led, you know, that sort of revealed this big one. But in the Lowcountry, you did see those individual acts. You did see each of those paper cuts, whether it's Alex cutting a corner over and over and over again, whether it's Alex asking a law enforcement officer, you know, allegedly to look the other way over and over and over again. There are smaller acts that happen in a corrupt system that add up to the larger corruption, right? And so, what I think we're saying is that, yeah. The government can't obviously know somebody's just, you know, filing, they're filing their taxes, but they don't know. They're taking you at your word for the most part. But I would say that people down here, down in the Lowcountry knew that Alex



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was somebody who cut corners and pushed the limits and did things in a way that no other person could get away with perhaps.

[00:39:54] **Eric Bland:** No question. No question.

[00:39:56] **Liz Farrell:** And that stuff should have been called out. That stuff should have been mitigated as it was happening. But instead, because of the power and because of his connections and because it's just the way things are, they didn't and here we are.

[00:40:09] **Eric Bland:** Amazing.

[00:40:09] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And I think that if the government treated Alex Murdaugh like they treat a lot of people of color, a lot of people with no power, with the same amount of scrutiny, there's no way that Alex would've gotten away with what he got away with.

[00:40:24] **Eric Bland:** Well, let me ask you this question, guys. What do you think about the decision of the state not to seek the death penalty? I think it was a smart decision.

[00:40:32] **Liz Farrell:** I'm not pro-death penalty generally, but there's a small part of me that wanted to see him scared for his life and to be housed with, you know, the alleged worst of the worst. Those were two things that were very appealing to me. But I can see the expediency of choosing, I mean, I think the death penalty needs to go anyway, so it's, I think it was smart overall.

[00:40:58] **Eric Bland:** Mandy?

[00:40:59] **Mandy Matney:** I think it was smart ultimately. And the reason being is because every day I realize how much, how complicated this murder trial is and is going to be. And I think the death penalty just takes that to another level of complication. And that worries me with jurors. I think this keeps a very complex case a little bit more simple. And I think that that's the right decision.



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[00:41:34] **Eric Bland:** I think you guys have hit it on the head. I think if you look at the Russ Laffitte trial, we had three jurors that almost didn't even reach a deliberation on a civil case. So, now, you start to deal with life behind bars, an LWOP, with life without parole, or you get into the death penalty and then you start getting in religious situations. For me, though, it's just complicates a very circumstantial evidence case because it triggers a whole bunch of funding that the state has to do for Dick and Jim to give them money for experts. It creates a whole bunch of hearings that have to take place before a trial that you don't have to have those hearings. It creates a whole bunch of different appellate situations. And these victims, and the victims now are Maggie's family and Alex's family to an extent and Buster, live this forever with, you know, the constant, you know, hearings before habeas corpus, bringing me before federal court and, you know, the liberty and goes up before the Supreme Court and the countdown's on yada yada. To me, this is not a clean-cut murder case. If it was a clean-cut murder case, absolutely. No, I'm not an advocate every day of the death penalty, but if somebody's gonna do a direct crime and kill a wife and kid, then possibly there is that the basis for it. But in this case, it's so circumstantial. And look. We're acting like we're Judge Newman and we're trying to fit this Lyle argument. And we've kind of rested and come to the conclusion, well, we're gonna admit pressures. We may not admit all these other crimes, but we're gonna try to fit everything into what the pressures Alex were under. Just look how hard that was to reach a conclusion on it. When you add the death penalty to it, it just further complicates it. I think it's the one smart thing that Attorney General Wilson has done.

[00:43:33] **Liz Farrell:** You know what? He actually is dead. Like when we think about the death penalty, that has occurred through accountability already. So, the Alex Murdaugh who existed before is dead.

[00:43:45] **Eric Bland:** The Alex that he thought he was or anybody associated with him or his law firm, he managed to single-handedly kill himself, kill his family, kill a legacy, and kill a law firm. He did it all. So, I think you're right. I think the death penalty's already been put in place.

[00:44:05] So, now that we're closing and we're coming into the holidays and we're talking about good cheer and we're coming into the new year.



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Obviously, you're coming into a new year as a married woman. And Liz, you're coming in, you got a whole new career that you're starting. You're writing books, you're doing podcasting, you're branching out, and obviously I'm doing this. Let's all talk about what our new year cheer is gonna be. Liz?

[00:44:34] **Liz Farrell:** I'm gonna speak for Mandy really quickly here for both of us is that, you know, we do need some cheer because I think, you know, we try as much as possible to be, you know, joyful and what have you, but it does take a lot out of you when you're covering something so dark, you know, and it's been a really dark year for me. So, I think my cheer is I wish cheer for Mandy because I know how, you know how like with your sibling you know, only you and your sibling know what it's like having your parents as parents, right? So, there's like something that you share. I think Mandy and I in some ways are like Murdaugh siblings in that we both know what it's like to do the story and the way that, you know, it's been for us for the last few years. So, I just, I wish, my good cheer's for Mandy to feel good cheer and for me to feel good cheer. Just to, I know it's so selfish, but it's just, it's been a dark year and I just, I see some light at the end of the tunnel knowing that there's gonna be some justice no matter how it turns out. So, I'm just hopeful for that. I'm hopeful that, you know, there's so many good things that we have in our lives and so many good things moving forward and, but we have so much work that we wanna do moving forward. And Alex isn't the only bad guy out there.

[00:45:52] **Eric Bland:** Mandy?

[00:45:52] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, and I'll add to that. Liz, I wish for you cheer as well because you deserve that, too. And I think that January could be the end of a dark chapter and the beginning of a brighter chapter for us and a lot of people. I think for the last year and a half I've just been waiting and waiting for like a moment that I've would feel different and would, I've kind of just been in this dark place and I've wanted a moment of relief and happiness and change. And we're still in this, I mean, it's still going. I thought the murder charges would be more validating. Everything has been validating and things, but it's all building to this. We've just been in it for so long and I'm just, but that's also to say that we're not done. I mean, nobody's walking away, so we have to all realize that like, we've done our jobs, the Alex Murdaugh that the world knew is now dead and that's because he's been exposed. And so, I have



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to find some peace in that. Also, looking for a new puppy still. So, that will be cheer. Hopefully a puppy. David doesn't want a puppy. He wants a dog, yeah. What's your cheer?

[00:47:10] **Eric Bland:** Well, I can say as a casual observer, I do wish you guys peace because the audience doesn't realize it and I take it for granted at times, you guys are embedded journalists. You still are. And it's not like you're just getting your story from court filings. You're still talking to people on the inside and you really are living this drama every day. And Mandy, you can't really enjoy be in a newly way because you're trying to get the story and get it out and make sure it's being told correctly and educating the public. And we have an obligation now to our listeners to give them objective journalism and objective opinions. And so, I do wish you guys peace. I also wish nothing but great cheer to the listeners that we have to our army of MMP and COJ people. You motivate me. You've given me a new lease on life. You've given me a new hope. You make me feel good about myself. You make my wife feel good, and I'm so grateful that you stick up for us and that you tell us things that are provocative, that we want to talk about. So, I just wish everybody health. I wish happiness. I wish financial security. I wish physical security for everybody. And just, I wish everybody nothing but a happy new year and great blessings.

[00:48:40] **Liz Farrell:** Thank you, Eric.

[00:48:41] **Mandy Matney:** Agreed.

[00:48:42] **Eric Bland:** And David. David, thank you for all you do, David.

[00:48:44] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I'm very thankful for David. And yeah, it's, we couldn't do it without him. And that's my cheer for him, too. One cheer for everybody.

[00:48:52] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. Happy New Year's to everybody and we love you and we'll see you next year.

[00:49:06] **Outro:** This Cup of Justice bonus episode of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney, with co-host Liz Farrell,



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our executive editor, and Eric Bland, attorney-at-law, AKA The Jackhammer of Justice. From Luna Shark Productions.

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