



EPISODE 24: No Apologies: Stephen Smith Exhumation and What's Next

[00:00:00] **Liz Farrell:** Good morning guys. Cups up. Eric, you are filming, I guess, from Spencer's gifts this morning. What is that bright light that you have there? That black light?

[00:00:17] **Eric Bland:** It is a up lighting in my bedroom. We put this blue string light around the tray ceiling, and it looks like the old Spencer gift stores, you know, remember where they had the velvet Elvis and the lava lamps, and they even have waterbeds in the back. Do you remember the waterbed?

[00:00:33] **Liz Farrell:** No, I don't remember a waterbed.

[00:00:37] **Mandy Matney:** I remember those. Yeah.

[00:00:38] **Liz Farrell:** What?

[00:00:39] **Eric Bland:** Yeah.

[00:00:39] **Liz Farrell:** Really?

[00:00:40] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. Yeah.

[00:00:41] **Liz Farrell:** I guess I wasn't allowed to go to the very back of the store like you guys.

[00:00:45] **Mandy Matney:** Didn't it get—didn't it have like sex stuff?

[00:00:48] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, it had sex stuff.

[00:00:49] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:00:50] **Liz Farrell:** All of it.

[00:00:51] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. It was like, it was where you would go and giggle.



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[00:00:53] **Eric Bland:** A friend of mine put it—'cause I've been spending obviously so much time in my bedroom and he said, "Hey, this will look pretty cool. You'll enjoy it." And it's pretty relaxing. Listen to some meditation music. And take me back to the days when we all used to walk the malls on Saturday. Remember the guys used to walk on one side, the girls used to walk on the other, and you'd look over at each other and then you'd stop maybe at the pizza shop, pizza place to get a slice. And, you know, it brought me back to my youth.

[00:01:24] **Mandy Matney:** Simple turn. We did not have gender-divided hallways in the mall.

[00:01:30] **Liz Farrell:** No, we were always together with the boys.

[00:01:34] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:01:34] **Liz Farrell:** I didn't understand that one. That's funny. Hey, progress, I guess.

[00:01:39] **Eric Bland:** That's right.

[00:01:40] **Liz Farrell:** Speaking of crazy things guys, what is going on on the internet when it comes to the Stephen Smith case because I got off Twitter just for a few days there, probably for a week actually, because I just think that there's no upside to me arguing with people. And I get in this point where I see things and I just wanna argue and because I hate being misunderstood and I hate when my friends are misunderstood and I want to defend, especially you guys, but then it's like, I get caught up in these no-win situations where I don't even know if I'm fighting with a real person. So—

[00:02:16] **Mandy Matney:** Troll traps.

[00:02:18] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, troll traps. So maybe why are people being so weird about the Stephen Smith case and the exhumation and all of that? Like, what do you think is guiding some of those negative comments that we're seeing?

[00:02:32] **Mandy Matney:** I hope that we find out. It just seems like there's something guiding all of these awful, the worst of the worst of humanity or



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it's a bot army and it's like a couple people that are just, that's their full-time job. But that is very weird to me too. But it seems like somebody powerful enough to get a troll army or to get this messaging campaign out against the Smith family does not want us to get to the truth and us to get to the bottom of what's happening. And that's just kind of my takeaway. And then the other thing that I was really talking to Sandy a lot about this weekend, people need to know when things are their business and not their business. And I feel like with the Murdaugh story, they have just come to claim everything as theirs and they forget that it's actual human beings. And this is an actual investigation. This is not a game. This is not a fun time. This is not a movie. This is an actual investigation where there are major, major consequences to the things that are revealed. And that is what I've been seeing. But I'm kind of the same. I've taken a step back from Twitter. I just get so mad when I can't—I know that it's a troll trap and I know that it's—but it's just way too frustrating. So I'm just kind of like, let the fire rage and I'll deal with it later if I have to or maybe it'll put itself out at this point.

[00:04:22] **Liz Farrell:** Well, there's some real people, I think, that are involved in this too. I think initially there were people that wanted to make sure that everyone in the world knew that they had nothing to do with the GoFundMe and raising the money for the exhumation. I don't understand that because people who claimed to care about Stephen and claimed to care about Sandy would understand that this is something that she's wanted for a while. And the second thing is, Eric, I don't really appreciate when we see people putting you down either. And I know that I'm better. I was telling Mandy Powers Norrell and Sarah Ford this during Palmetto Primetime. Remember, Mandy, it's like I'm really good at putting people down. Like I'm really good at the comebacks. I can really hurt people if I wanted to.

[00:05:06] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:05:07] **Liz Farrell:** And I'm very aware of that power and it is so hard to sit here on my hands and especially a couple of individuals that I just wanna come back at and just put them away. There are people that I just know that I could cut with a knife with my words and I really am holding back because no good will come of it. But, Eric, going back to this idea that the exhumation itself wasn't worth it. What happened on Friday?

[00:05:37] **Eric Bland:** Friday we had an opportunity that began basically late Wednesday night into the morning of Thursday that there was a window



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where we could get this exhumation done. And obviously the sooner we got it done and get the process started with the autopsy, the second autopsy, the better it would be for Sandy. You guys have to understand that I represent Sandy Smith. Yes, I do podcasting, but I'm a lawyer first, Bland Richter, and we're client first lawyers. If you look back at the history of the Murdaugh case, we've always been client first, whether it's been for the Satterfield, whether it's been for the Plyler girls, whether it's been for Jordan Jinks. Every client that we have represented, we've put their interest before ours. That's what we have to do. And yes, the media has been very, very good to us, meaning me, Ronnie, and our clients. But we've also given back to the media. It's been a two-way street. They've gotten information and stories from us. But if you look at what we've done, we got the confession of judgment against Alex for 4.3 million, which got him disbarred. We got the state to bring criminal charges against Alex for the Plyler sisters. We got them a recovery and we resolved their differences with Palmetto State Bank. Jordan Jinks, we got him money. Every single one of our clients, including Sandy Smith, we've met the goals of why we were retained. So I'm not here to give everything to the media that the media wants. I am here to represent Sandy Smith. My whole goal, I told two weeks ago when I got retained was our retention was to get the exhumation of Stephen and get the second autopsy done. That is what Ronnie Richter and I did. So early Thursday morning, we had an opportunity of a window to get Stephen exhumed and to get him to the place where he was going to be examined and the pathology would be done, and we'd have all our experts examined Stephen and then get him back so he could rest. So my number one goal was how do I accomplish what I want to do, but recognize that this is an extremely traumatic time for Sandy Smith. No funeral, no exhumation is a media event. This is a private affair. So all I asked was, I'll speak as to what happened, but my client has a right to grieve and she has a right not to have the exhumation of her son and then him being transported across our country to be examined, not to be a media spectacle. And so we had this very small window and I've told the media and everybody that we are working with SLED and Chief Keel was amazing in how he mobilized his deputies and his agent to assist the process. We contracted with a funeral home. We were able to get DHEC approval for the exhumation of Stephen and also the permission from the coroner, which negated us having to go to court. So we had this very small window, and we wanted to do it so that Sandy Smith could sit there by the graveside and make her own peace and her own time with her son without cameras being there, without microphones being there, without food trucks being there. This was not gonna be the Murdaugh trial. And so we scheduled it. We got it done Friday morning. It began at 06:30. Mandy was there to comfort Sandy, my associate



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was there and that was it. We had the protection of SLED and thank God the word didn't get out. Stephen was able to be exhumed. Our expert, Dr. Michelle Dupre, was there and accompanied him where he was examined all the way to Florida, and now Stephen is reinterred and Sandy has a little bit of peace. That was what I was charged to do. I'm not charged here to make sure that the media's satisfied. My charge is to make sure that my client is satisfied, and that is what we did. And I make no apologies for it, but I did it because it was in the best interest of my client. Look, I know sometimes when I'm getting interviewed, I'm getting used. I get it. It's a two-way street. It works. And we have done very well together, the media and my firm, and I hope we will continue to do so. But please don't get mad at Sandy Smith for not letting the public come in when her son is being brought out of the ground and no one knows what the condition of the vault was gonna be or what the condition of the surrounding ground was gonna be. You know, for all we knew when we dug it up, the crypt could have cracked and the coffin, pieces of the coffin could be there. That is her son. And no, I make no apologies for this. People, obviously, some are upset about that, but look, you know, always in America we build people up and once they're built up, we tear 'em down. Now that's starting to happen with me. That's fine. But Sandy Smith, everybody is applauding her, 99% of the people. But now they're almost mad because she was unwilling to share the most serious time that she could ever have with her son. Remember, we're not a society where children die before parents, we're not in the Roman wars, we're not in World War I or World War II where kids are going off the war and we're losing 30,000 18 and 19 and 20-year-olds a day. So this is a big deal when she has to confront again the death of her son, relive the death of her son. And our whole purpose, meaning Eric and Ronnie, started because you guys wanted an investigation for the last five years, meaning Mandy and Liz. That's what you've been screaming. It's time that the death be investigated, and I got that done. Chief Keel and SLED are now investigating the death and circumstances surrounding Stephen, and that should be the number one thing. What more do we want? I'm not law enforcement. I don't have the ability to go subpoena, I mean search warrants or put people in an interview room. We accomplish what we wanted, which was the exhumation. We're gonna find out the cause of his death and we're turning it over, passing the baton, so to speak, the proverbial baton to SLED to do their investigation. Are we done? No. We are gonna continue to do what we have done. We've hired investigators. We're gonna provide information to SLED as it comes in, but we're not usurping SLED's jurisdiction.



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[00:13:35] **Liz Farrell:** So, thank you, Eric. And Mandy, I wanna ask you first, how did it come to pass that you were by the grave site for this exhumation? Explain to people just how that happened and a little bit about your relationship with Sandy, because I think what I'm seeing is words like exploitation being thrown out there by people who have no idea what they're talking about and frankly need to question what they're driven by when they say those words. So I just want to give you the opportunity to explain that.

[00:14:08] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, Sandy asked. Again, I think people really have to take a step back and realize that this, the Stephen Smith investigation is so different from everything else. This is a woman who, nobody believed her for years and years and years, and they ignored her and they made fun of her. They made rumors up about her that she was taking money. They were just horrifying to her for years and years, including the media. The media, as soon as Stephen's case was reopened, a lot of the media was really horrible to Sandy and the amount of times that she's been betrayed and maligned and God, kicked around in the last couple of years. And we've both just clung through each other in the last couple of years because I've been dealing with the same people, but I didn't lose a son and I wasn't here for four years before four or five years as she was in this fight alone. So I am constantly just extremely careful with everything about Sandy and protective of her because she is just, I know how much she's been through and it's horrifying. And I can also say that the majority of people, 99.9% of the population has no idea, cannot even possibly fathom the things that Sandy Smith has gone through, and how dare them to say anything about how she feels or how she should feel or who should be included in her—this is grieving and suffering in a horrific process. The woman's just trying to get answers and of course it just, she said this weekend, like, I consider you and David family at this point, and that meant a lot to me. And I'm gonna be there as a human being before I'm gonna be there as a journalist. And that's just kind of where I was on Friday. So I am at the point where nothing really matters besides getting answers and justice for Stephen and his family at this point. No scoop, no exclusive, no whatever. I don't care anymore. And when Eric and when SLED is telling Eric, this is what's best and the media does not need to be included in this, and I'm gonna take that very seriously and I'm not going to do anything to compromise the investigation. So I was there as a friend, as Sandy, and so was David to support her. Sandy didn't even tell her children because she was so terrified of word getting out and did not want a circus happening on Friday, and I just can't imagine the type of, I don't know, the hurt that she's gone through and she's really good about blocking out all the noise, but she keeps



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just saying like, it's none of their business. These people have got to understand that this is my struggle. And as far as the

GoFundMe, that does not give the public the privilege to stick their nose in everything. And I feel like I speak for a majority of the people who donated to the GoFundMe, they also don't want anything to compromise the investigation. They also don't wanna make this into a circus. And if that means waiting a couple of days for hearing the official word that the exhumation happened, then I'm pretty sure most of the people who donated to that are completely fine with that 'cause they wanna support Sandy.

[00:18:41] **Eric Bland:** There were two things that happened this weekend, which caused a lot of traffic on Twitter. Twitter, obviously the exhumation, and that it was able to be accomplished smoothly, quickly, and without incident. The second though was I would not comment this weekend on there were reports of who are persons of interest in the potential investigation and death of Stephen Smith, and I was questioned a number of times through phone requests as well as text message to give a comment on a couple of people who were named as—allegedly named as persons of interest not by SLED, but by gleaning their names from the investigative file that was released by South Carolina Highway Patrol. And we'll talk about why we thought, why Liz and I, Mandy think that that was a really bad idea for that file to be released when it was after South Carolina Highway Patrol. But the only thing I said to that was I think it's reckless and dangerous to start naming people as persons of interest while a criminal investigation is going on. Because one, it endangers the people themselves who may be wrongfully outed or named, but also it interferes with the potential of people wanting to come forward. Remember, that's what we've been saying all along. It's now a right time for people to come forward. The Murdaugh conviction happened. People stood up and, you know, raised their hand to tell the truth and they did. And there's been no repercussions. All that's gonna happen when we, if media starts naming people that they're persons of interest or their witnesses. Our people are gonna go back into their own worlds and under their rocks and back into their houses, and they're not gonna cooperate. We know that the only way this investigation is gonna proceed and be successful is if somebody comes forward and gives some credible information and leads that SLED could then take and find out what happened. So those were the two major things this weekend. And I seem to be getting some pretty good criticism, and it's fine, you know, if you want to compare me to Kim Jong-un, I don't think it's appropriate, but I think exactly what, Mandy, you just said is, can we just give this woman two days, two full days to grieve and let her son get back in the ground? His Stephen needs to be put to rest. He needs to go back and his



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spirit and everything that he represents needs to go back in the coffin and back in the ground.

[00:21:42] **Liz Farrell:** So, Eric, let's just—was it worth it? Was the exhumation worth it?

[00:21:49] **Eric Bland:** Absolutely.

[00:21:52] **Liz Farrell:** Are you glad that there was an exhumation?

[00:21:55] **Eric Bland:** Yes. It's not only important to Sandy Smith, but the investigation. To prove that Stephen was not murdered by a hit-and-run car or a truck, you have to exhume the body. That has to be done. You have to be able to show the chain of evidence when somebody is going to ultimately, if they're ever gonna be charged, you have to be able to show that there were no markings of fractures on the leg, that there were no fractures on your chest or your back or shoulders. And I don't know what the results of the autopsy were. I haven't gotten them yet. But if we're gonna show that he wasn't hit by a car, we have to be able to show medically that he had no fractures from shoulder down. So it had to be done, SLED had to be there, and they were there. They did an amazing job, guys. Transporting with the funeral home, Stephen to Florida, guarding Stephen. They did a great job. Everything Chief Keel promised me he would do, he did. And in return, he wanted me to do an immediate embargo over the weekend. And why would I not honor that after the kind of money the state of South Carolina spent from Friday to the time that they got Stephen into the ground. And it had to be done, this information is now in SLED's hands and SLED is allocating the manpower and resuming the investigation. Isn't that what we all want? We just want answers. Look, if it comes out that the answer is that Stephen wasn't ultimately murdered, that's fine by Sandy Smith. But a mother deserves to know how her 19-year-old son died. Isn't that it at the end of the day?

[00:23:55] **Liz Farrell:** Very much so. And I think we're only having this conversation right now because of how that investigation was conducted and how unusual the circumstances were in how the investigation was conducted. So I think we have to all keep that in mind that we wouldn't be here having these conversations had things been done normally and thoroughly and by the appropriate agencies. So, Mandy, what was it like being there during that exhumation?



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[00:24:25] **Mandy Matney:** A couple of things that I wanna say, I was extremely impressed with SLED's presence there. I watched all of the agents individually come up to Sandy, hug her or shake her hand and say, "We're doing everything that we can," look her in the eye. And I was just impressed and moved by that. That's another step that Sandy really wanted all of these years is just the validation of people, of all of these SLED agents telling her that they care and that they want to solve her son's case and that they are a pro and giving her a car—I saw several of them say, "Here's my card if you have any questions." That was just amazing to see. It was a very—Sandy was a lot happier than I've seen her in years. You have to understand. And she kept saying this over, "And this is just all I've wanted. I've wanted this for eight years." And she fully believes that it's the first step in really getting on the path to getting answers. And there was a couple of moments where—I mean we all cried, but it was intimate too, and I cannot imagine how stressful and different it would've been with media cameras. And again, knowing the things that the media has done to her.

[00:26:13] **Liz Farrell:** So let's start with the murders. No one knew who Sandy Smith was basically prior to, you know, the boat crash brought attention, but after the murders, this situation that happens with Alex Murdaugh's family becomes the situation that is happening to everyone else too. So the boat crash victims and the Smith family. So what happens to Sandy Smith after the murders?

[00:26:36] **Mandy Matney:** So right after the murders, I started to get word that they were reopening Stephen Smith's case. And I called Sandy one day and was like, you might wanna call SLED and see if they're reopening Stephen's case.

[00:27:03] **Liz Farrell:** And when you say reopening, it's really actually—

[00:27:07] **Mandy Matney:** Or opening. Opening.

[00:27:09] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, because it—So it was an open case? Yeah. It was never closed.

[00:27:12] **Mandy Matney:** It was never closed and it was never SLED's case.



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[00:27:14] **Liz Farrell:** Right. And so that's an important distinction just because basically every case stays open until an arrest and that's why we have cold cases. So it's important to understand that Sandy wanted SLED to take over this case and that's what they did after the murders.

[00:27:29] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And Sandy called SLED and SLED called her back and said, no, we're not opening a case into Stephen's death. But we do want you to come in because we have some questions about if you and your family—basically we wanna make sure you and your family have nothing to do with the double homicide. And that was horrific. It was one of the worst days I've—I mean, she was crying. I felt horrible 'cause I felt like I walked her into a trap and I did not want that by any means. And it again, and Sandy was just, and she was right, she was like, how come they are dedicating so many resources to this case? And my son's been in the ground for six years now and nobody's done anything or care. She was like it's great that they're looking into everybody for this case, but how come nobody ever did that for my son? And she had a great point. It was like two systems of justice. here it is. Like the people like the Smiths get questioned for the double homicide when they had nothing to do with it. And then my son's case gets put on the back burner yet again

[00:28:53] **Liz Farrell:** And notice what the Smiths did. I mean that happens, right? They get asked about the murders and they answer those questions, right? I mean, it's not that hard.

[00:29:03] **Mandy Matney:** Right. We weren't, we had nothing to do with it.

[00:29:05] **Liz Farrell:** The same courtesy was not paid to the Smith family when Stephen was killed. So people who were asked questions, you get asked if you had anything to do with someone's murder and you're horrified that someone has been murdered and you have nothing to do with it. You will tell law enforcement, you'll come and talk to them to help them figure things out. And that didn't happen for Sandy. Instead, people were not forthcoming if they talked to law enforcement at all. So I think that also shows the two different approaches.

[00:29:36] **Mandy Matney:** Right. But then a couple of days later, they made the announcement. Sandy called me and was crying again, but happy tears this time and said they're opening an investigation into Stephen's case. And



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SLED made a statement saying during the course of the double homicide investigation, we came across something. And we're opening up a case into Stephen Smith's. We're opening up an investigation into Stephen Smith's death. That invited the media. That was like, just put Sandy in this, in the middle of this media super storm where she'd never been before. And some of the people that were calling her and almost to the point of harassing her years before, she was trying to get their attention and trying to get them to care about Stephen's case, and they didn't call her back. And so she's just been through a lot. And they would camp out in her driveway. She'd come home from work and there would be a reporter on her doorstep like it was invasive. One reporter knocked on her door in the middle of the night, like it was crazy. Or called all of her neighbors and all of her friends and every one of her Facebook friends, another reporter did that. Like, they were just horrible and they were not sensitive to the fact that like she has been waiting a really, really, really long time for answers and she's been trampled. Oh, like the system has just crushed her time and time and time again, and the media has just made it worse for the most part. There are some media members who are not me and Liz, who Sandy loves and adores. But some of them have been awful. And so she didn't want them there and SLED didn't want them there because it just complicates things. And again, the main mission is to get Stephen out, to get him exhumed and to get his autopsy done and to get him back into the ground safely. That is what is best for the investigation and it adds so much more complications and so many more headaches and it makes it more traumatic. It was a peaceful, beautiful experience, honestly. And I was honored to be there. Everyone there was just moved by Sandy. Dr. Dupre, who is the pathologist, she's awesome, she hugged Sandy and just said, "I'm just so inspired by you. I can't imagine what you've been through," and looked her in the eye and was just like, "We are gonna do everything that we can to find answers." Even down to the man who was helping dig up the grave. I think he worked for the funeral home. He even looked at Sandy and said, "I hope you find peace in all of this." Like he was even moved by her. Every single person who was there was there for a mission and they just wanted the best for Sandy and that was a beautiful thing to see.

[00:33:04] **Liz Farrell:** Can I just say one thing? Mandy and I had talked about this, and maybe I did with you too, Eric. I can't remember, but it was so important for those SLED agents to be there and they will never forget this day as long as they live. The best part of them being there, I think, is that it's now personal to them and every investigator needs to look at cases this way, that it's personal to them, and a lot of them do. So many investigators take it



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so personally. But this case never was, even for the best intentions of this, the highway patrolman who understood that this wasn't a hit and run and who understood this to be something else, investigators seeing this as a personal mission is, and an exhumation is something that stays on the heart of an investigator for the rest of their career. And the next thing I wanted to say too, I just, I think it's really, I don't know if we've said this before publicly, but for Mandy especially, and for me, when we met Sandy in 2019, we drove home basically in silence the entire hour and a half drive because we were so, I don't know how to explain it, like just floored, like the rug was taken out from underneath us because of the conversation we had with this woman who had not been getting answers and who had tried so hard. It was really upsetting to both of us that we weren't able to do that job for Sandy until after the murders. So that's something that we bear on our shoulders every single day, that it took the momentum of Maggie and Paul's deaths to be able to do something for her. And that's our shame to bear too. And I think when people make these criticisms, especially if Mandy, sorry, it's heartless and it just gets, it really gets me, and I've seen messages to Sandy from people in media who have said things to her like she has been hoodwinked by Mandy or hijacked by Mandy or is being manipulated by Mandy. And what upsets me, there's two things, not only because it's my friend that they're saying that about, but Sandy is a smart woman and she's not somebody to be taken advantage of. She will tell you straight up to get out of her face. If for one second she had a problem with Mandy, David, me, Eric, Eric, the two Erics, she would tell us. She would not hesitate to say. This is where we look at these two systems of justice, when we look down upon people who don't have power, she has agency, she has power when it comes to dictating what she wants in her circle. She couldn't get the most powerful agencies in the state to see that. It is disgusting what I see online that people say, and it's disgusting to see jealousy about it. Look at yourself in the mirror, that you are jealous that somebody is helping a woman try to find answers about her murdered son. Just look at yourself in the mirror and that's my anger coming through. And I'm sorry I knew it was gonna happen, but that's the third thing I wanna say is that—

[00:38:21] **Liz Farrell:** Well said.

[00:36:23] **Mandy Matney:** Thank you. I'm sorry I get emotional, but I do. And the third thing is that we did have cameras there, Eric Allen was there. And I want to explain that to people so that they understand that this was to help Sandy. And this was David's and Eric Allen's way of helping the media and doing it in a respectful and managed way. So I just wanted to put that out



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there in case we wanna mention that, just so that when people see that, that they'll understand what that was about.

[00:36:54] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Eric Sandy wanted to document it. She doesn't want secrets with any of this, and it was important for her that it was documented and she's developed a relationship with the Eric Allen too, he's one of the sweetest. I mean—

[00:37:13] **Mandy Matney:** One of the best people out there.

[00:37:14] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. He really is. I mean, we have met some awful, horrific people. Like I've met people on all sides of the scale, like from the worst of the worst to the best of the best in the last couple of years. And Eric is right up there. Best of the best. He's sweet, he's kind, talented. And he cares. He really legitimately cares. And she wanted him to be there and she trusts him. And again, it's a way of, like Eric said, of working with the media and being like, hey, you guys couldn't be here, but I know that you need B-roll to get your job done. So here's how we can do that for everybody.

[00:38:01] **Eric Bland:** Which means that we are going to release royalty-free. We're not trying to capitalize on that filming, nobody's selling it. David isn't out there on the street, you know, calling Today's Show or calling 2020, who's gonna pay for what?

[00:38:20] **Liz Farrell:** It sounds ridiculous, but you have to say that because that's where people will go with it.

[00:38:25] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah they will, they want it.

[00:38:25] **Eric Bland:** It's being released so that they could see exactly what happened without it being a circus. We're not trying to hide anything. Remember when I got up in the press conference, I said I was gonna be totally transparent on what we find. I'm gonna share it with SLED. I have been transparent. The only thing I was misleading on was I just didn't give the specific information on when the exhumation would be. Don't apologize one bit. This was for my client. My duties under my rules, rules of professional conduct are to be 100% fidelity to my client. I did what my client asked me to do and I make no apologies for it.



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[00:39:16] **Liz Farrell:** Nor should you.

[00:39:17] **Mandy Matney:** Can I just say that it's just a couple of days. It's not like you—people and it's the weekend. Like calm down. All these people are acting like we're all hiding this big secret for like months. No, it's just a couple of days. And also this is how investigations work. Like the public is kept out of some things because the media does complicate things. And again, there are repercussions to everything that the media releases. So, I just could not believe, and I was so disgusted and seeing these people online, and I know that they did not have permission. And I know that they did not go to Sandy posting pictures of Stephen's empty grave. Shame on you. Seriously, shame on you. You have no right. That is so grotesque and horrific.

[00:40:10] **Liz Farrell:** Well, they claim that they care about her on the one hand. And then to do that on the other, like it's a public play, like—

[00:40:16] **Mandy Matney:** Hashtag Justice for Stephen Smith. Go—

[00:40:22] **Eric Bland:** Everybody's saying there's exploitation going on. That's exploitation.

[00:40:26] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And I would never in a million years ever think that I had the right to take a photo of somebody's son's grave and post that everywhere and also at the same time claim that I care about the Smith family. No, you don't. No, you don't. You care about getting attention.

[00:40:54] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, exactly. And like, it's one thing. I understand that the grave is visible from the street and everything, and that makes it—people do have a right and I don't want to cloud that. But at the same time, that's not what we are seeing, right? We're not seeing a news agency doing it. We're seeing private citizens who sure have big mouths behind the scenes. That's what I'll say. I think one thing I wanna just say, because I've been on both sides of the fence now with working for the sheriff's office and working with deputies, understanding how they view their job and all of that. As media people, of course, like media, Mandy and I were always pushing for more information. And early on, I think when social media started to really become the factor with investigations because obviously people talk and they do it publicly like that, I think there was a lot of misunderstanding with law enforcement agencies that to be transparent is to compromise an investigation. That is very true. But there are things that investigators can say



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that law enforcement agencies can say that promote transparency in other ways when it comes to investigations. One, they can give updates. Generally speaking, we just did that at the beginning of the show. There was an exhumation. There will be an autopsy with results. We will not talk about those results, by the way, because it's part of an investigation. And I was talking with Eric, Mandy, and Sandy and David last night, and one of the things we all have to realize is that for eight years, all we've had is speculation because this investigation had no answers, right? And all it had was rumors around it. And then we got leaked the investigation unredacted, and we sat on that. We did not publish any part of that because of how important and how dangerous it was as we've said in MMP, because you want people to be able to talk to law enforcement without feeling punished by it. You know, especially when we talk about in communities of people of color, you have these murders that end up not being solved because no one wants to talk. And it's because law enforcement does very little to assure people that their privacy or that their identities will be protected. So to put out and you'll notice in the earliest episodes of MMP when we had recordings of some of those interviews, it was done with a voice to cover people's voices so that they wouldn't be found out. But in 2021, when the Highway Patrol releases this investigation, which we said before, it was very unusual and highly unnecessary in our opinion. Oh yeah, again, I wanna point out, we also changed the names of the people and openly said that, but we protected the idea. Very careful. And unfortunately, that wasn't the case for all media agencies because these people's identities were able to be found out. So that said, you know, this is something completely different. So that investigation gets released in 2021, and now everyone is on the same page when it comes to being able to speculate using the case file, how many times you can see, how many times the Murdaugh name is in it. You can see who was asked questions and what the things that they said and where they went in the investigation. You can see that there was issues between Highway Patrol and the medical examiner. All of those things, it's all we had. It's all that was out there, but now it's not speculation anymore. And I understand the irony of me saying this because everyone, we're gonna be in the dark as well, by the way. SLED is running this investigation, not Eric planned. It's important because we want people to be able, we want stories to be able to be corroborated if people, when people come forward. And it's just, it's important. So I think we're just in a new phase of this. It's no longer speculation in the Stephen Smith investigation. It is actually investigators working to get hard answers for the first time in eight years so it looks different. It's a different situation now. And I think it would help if people understood that, and I think most people do understand that. Smart people



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do get that. So, Eric, you were asked about people of interest in this case that was published over the weekend. Do you think that that was published as sort of because the speculation on the exhumation had picked up? What do you think the motivation was there in putting these names out there?

[00:45:34] **Eric Bland:** I don't know. I don't wanna speculate. I think it was because I wasn't given answers on the exhumation. Something had to drive the news on the case. It isn't a breaking story when you do that because it isn't SLED who's saying that they're persons of interest.

[00:45:54] **Liz Farrell:** Have you heard those names from SLED, those names given to you?

[00:45:57] **Eric Bland:** No. Chief Keels' not sharing that kind of information. And he called me on the phone and we discussed it and he said, "Look, Eric, that is really a dangerous thing to do because it impedes the investigation." And he said, "I'm never gonna tell you who our targets are because you're not law enforcement. I'm gonna share with you in a general sense that the investigation is proceeding, that we're getting closer, that we're getting favorable responses," but that's about the level that he's gonna share with me. Now he wants me to share what our army gets. Sandy Smith, for instance, got an email from somebody last night that was very relevant and provided some very relevant information. And I provided it to SLED. That's all I can do. He loves that. You know, they, they welcome the input.

[00:46:58] **Liz Farrell:** Even the smallest amount of information too. I think a lot of people don't understand that they know something when they don't even think they know something.

[00:47:05] **Eric Bland:** Correct.

[00:47:05] **Liz Farrell:** So if they have a little inkling in their heart where they think, ah, I should share this, but maybe it's nothing, you should always say yes to sharing it. And if you feel more comfortable sending it through Eric Bland, that might be a way to go. Or if you wanna talk to him first before saying anything, that's another thing. I've heard that there are people out there who are talking to lawyers about sharing information so you can always do that. And you could send tips to tips@sled.sc.gov. You can call 803-737-9000, or you can go to justiceforstephen.com.



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[00:47:42] **Eric Bland:** The point is, isn't it better for all of us, the journalists, Sandy, that I maintain that relationship with Chief Keel? That he will share general information from me or he welcomes getting information from me. How would it benefit all of us if I was to cut off that relationship by something that I did? And Chief Keel would never answer the phone for me. I mean we all want answers

[00:48:09] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And I think it depends on the person's motivation. And so like everyone here, their motivation is justice for Stephen. That simple and that include, and we know that you being able to work with SLED and not have this—if you guys butted heads and Keel cut you off for some reason, that could lead to a lot of problems. And so like the mission here is justice for Stephen. It's not to serve the media. It's not to serve the circus. It's not to provide news outlets with salacious stories, it is justice for Stephen. So that is something that we have to realize. And I would urge everybody, please, God, be cautious of what you even click on because when you click on a story, it encourages the monster behind that machine to continue this behavior of exploiting, exploiting someone's death and possibly interfering with justice. So ignore, ignore, ignore when it comes to these salacious stories that do not come from Eric. 'Cause Eric is the one who wants justice for Stephen.

[00:49:36] **Eric Bland:** Right. And justice, also justice may turn out to be that we never know. You know, Chief Keel said to me, "We are going to do everything we can. And that's all I can promise you. I can't promise you a person or persons that I'm gonna be able to produce for Mrs. Smith, but what I can promise is I am going to give a hundred percent. We all want to find out what happened." It's what happened and who did it. And at the end of the day, if it wasn't a murder, if it wasn't this, then Sandy's okay with that. She just wants answers. That's it. All goes back to that word answer. You say it over and over and over again. She never heard Sandy Smith say, I want a guy to hang from the flagpole in town Square. She's never said that.

[00:50:30] **Liz Farrell:** And I would also note those names that were released. I know that you guys care about Stephen and you care about Sandy. Do not reach out to those people. And we're hearing that some of them are getting death threats. We're hearing that there's been threats of violence against them, and that is completely wrong and you do not know what their involvement is. If anything you don't know if they were sources for law enforcement. You just simply don't know because that is not something that came from SLED. And it's just, it's not right. Just stay out of things until it's



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time to celebrate. Hopefully, when we do get answers. So at this point, it's just like, I think because the trial was such a point of entertainment universally across the country, just turned into this other thing where everyone was sort of cheering on. Whether it was, you know, just justice. However you saw justice, whether you saw justice was Alex getting off or Alex getting convicted. So it's almost like that, like you were saying earlier, Mandy, the high from that. People are sort of — conflating this other case and thinking that they have a right to go into the crevices with it and they just, they don't, and it causes more problems than I think they're aware of so.

[00:51:52] **Eric Bland:** We all respect SLED and we all at different times will criticize SLED or have criticized SLED, but the reality of the situation is they're the only agency that can investigate and ultimately prosecute through the AG's office responsible parties. We can't. I can't. I'm just a citizen. I don't have the power of law enforcement. So I'm not selling out by cooperating with SLED. I'm doing the best that I should be doing for my client, and it's in my client's best interest that we maintain a dialogue and a cordial relationship with the agency that is investigating this case. I make no apologies.

[00:52:46] **Liz Farrell:** This is also SLED building trust. I mean, we've talked about this over and over again about there being two systems to justice, where we talk about there being a lack of trust in the state's institutions when it comes to law enforcement. And this is them saying we hear you and we're going to show you what we're made of. And I think we need to respect that as well. I have great respect for that. And I will also say this as a critic of SLED, especially as a columnist when, you know, I'm used to criticizing people in print, the measure of a person's integrity has always come in the form of them still talking to me. And I will say that I've never been caught off by them because they're angry at something that I've written or said. So I'm just saying that there's integrity there and I'm just happy to see this. And I hope people see that too, that this is our system telling us that they've heard us and that they're trying to rebuild trust with the public. So, I hope people recognize that too.

[00:53:50] **Mandy Matney:** I was thinking back to August of last year when we all filmed for the CNN documentary. You guys remember that?

[00:54:00] **Eric Bland:** With Randy Kaye?



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[00:54:01] **Mandy Matney:** With Randy Kaye. And we went out to dinner with Sandy in Columbia afterwards.

[00:54:07] **Eric Bland:** Black Rooster.

[00:54:09] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:54:10] **Liz Farrell:** Was that where we went?

[00:54:11] **Eric Bland:** Mm-hmm.

[00:54:12] **Mandy Matney:** And Sandy was—and we all could feel just how defeated she was because she was the only one at that table without anything. Like no lawsuit, no answers.

[00:54:27] **Eric Bland:** No sense of urgency.

[00:54:29] **Mandy Matney:** No sense of urgency. Just her case was just shoved to the side. And Eric felt that and he really talked to her the whole time. And I think that that's kind of really that started to get the ball going on. Sandy developing a sense of trust with Eric too because you saw how defeated Sandy was and you saw that you could help and do something for this woman. And look where we are now. Like I said, I've never seen her this happy before. And she's also just really—I'm learning from her because she is able to just be like, "Those people are idiots. Don't even worry about it, Mandy. Screw it and screw them. They have no idea what they're talking about." And she's just really good about keeping focused and just blocking out all of that noise. And I just urge all of us to keep doing that and not to fuel the fires of these evil people who are trying to stop her or trying to malign her.

[00:55:37] **Eric Bland:** Listen, I was called a carnival barker this weekend, which it was funny and I laughed about it, but it's not appropriate because if I had been out on the TV for the last two weeks barking and nothing has happened, then you could call me a carnival barker, and Ronnie and my associate Scott Mongillo. But we are not carnival barkers. We did exactly what we set out to do. We developed a relationship with SLED in two weeks. I had not communicated with Chief Keel before two weeks ago. I didn't talk to him about the Satterfield matter or the Murdaugh murders. I didn't talk about that. And in two weeks we produced an exhumation and an autopsy, and



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that's production. What we do for the Satterfields, we got recovery for that. I'm not trying to pat myself on the back, but a carnival barker is somebody who bullshits and we are not bullshitting here.

[00:56:39] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. The people who say that are, and I think most people see through it so.

[00:56:44] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And again, yeah, the—

[00:56:46] **Liz Farrell:** Just grow up. That's all I have to say. Yeah. It's like, I don't even wanna include some of these parts in here because I know what's out.

[00:56:52] **Mandy Matney:** Like fuels the fire

[00:56:54] **Liz Farrell:** I bet you think this song is about you.

[00:57:00] **Mandy Matney:** On that note.

[00:57:01] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. So I just—do you guys wanna talk real quick about Alex in his special treatment in prison? I'm a little floored by this whole thing that there's like a secret group. It sounds like the beginning of a really terrible tv show, like a secret group of 28 prisoners who have been set aside in a secret location in South Carolina and it's mostly—I mean, I did not know this existed. So apparently—

[00:57:26] **Mandy Matney:** Who are the other ones?

[00:57:27] **Liz Farrell:** I don't know. There's no list. So the Post and Courier, Thad Moore at the *Post and Courier* asked for the identities of the other 27 secret agent men in prison. And apparently, it's not a public list. So that's very—

[00:57:45] **Mandy Matney:** We need to know if they're all white men though, because that would—

[00:57:47] **Liz Farrell:** You know what I'm gonna say this. No one in any state in this country should want there to be a secret list of prisoners being held in an undisclosed location by the state. So you're telling me that we're cool with the government saying we've squirreled away this little group of people, we're not



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gonna tell you who they are or where they are for their own safety. Their issues are in the prison, not outside the prison. Like we can't get in there to be like, oh, he is at Kirkland. I think I'll just show up. No, that's not how that works. So I don't understand this at all.

[00:58:22] **Eric Bland:** The reason is that some of these people can be very, can lead to prison. Rioting could cause a lot of violence. What if it is somebody who was a policeman who, you know, helped arrest people and now that policeman's in jail. I could see that person being in protective custody because people are gonna want to be a retribution.

[00:58:49] **Liz Farrell:** 100%.

[00:58:50] **Eric Bland:** So there are probably those people that it's not so much for their own safety, but the warden doesn't want an uprising to take place where people are ganging up together to get that person. So with Alex, I'm not sure what the reason is. Is Alex suicidal right now? I don't know.

[00:59:10] **Liz Farrell:** No.

[00:59:12] **Eric Bland:** Is it because he's getting special treatment because he's Alex Murdaugh? Or they're afraid that they've already heard rumblings? Oh, we're gonna get this guy in his 14th circuit solicitor office, you know, convicted me of this crime.

[00:59:26] **Liz Farrell:** I don't know, Eric, I feel so cynical about this. I just, I think yes, I agree. Like you, we don't want—

[00:59:33] **Eric Bland:** Sound like great. I mean, to spend your day in an eight-by-eight cell with a bed, a table and a toilet. That was the three things that they say.

[00:59:41] **Liz Farrell:** No, he has a television. You're forgetting that Alex has a family that supports him and puts money in his account so.

[00:59:50] **Mandy Matney:** He has a television?

[00:59:51] **Liz Farrell:** He has a television. There's like a plexiglass television that apparently you can buy. Yeah. Yeah, I mean, I have no doubt in my mind that



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he's getting everything. He's getting the full-service treatment in prison. That said, from what I understand about—because I have friends who like keep saying like, oh my gosh, he's gonna get it real bad in prison because of who he is or what have you. But A, he's a lawyer and he can help other people with their cases, or at least other people could believe that he could help them with their cases even though he doesn't know what habeas corpus is. But two, he is always going to be able to put money in people's accounts, and he has that trust fund from Randolph. And I know that he is saying that he can afford his appeal. We all know he can.

[01:00:35] **Mandy Matney:** And he's a manipulator

[01:00:36] **Liz Farrell:** And he's a manipulator. So you know, he's good with people and even terrible ones. So, I don't know, I don't like the idea of the state being able to spirit away a handful of prisoners we don't know anything about. I mean, it would be one thing if they said, here's who's under this protective custody and it's within the ex-prison. Fine. Good. Now we know where they are, but this isn't Guantanamo Bay.

[01:01:03] **Eric Bland:** Right. And that's the Colorado's Supermax prison where they keep, you know, El Chapo and all these other people in Colorado underneath the ground. Nobody knows where that Supermax Prison is. I mean, do we have one of those, I don't know.

[01:01:18] **Liz Farrell:** In South Carolina, could there be?

[01:01:19] **Mandy Matney:** And what does that mean for FOIA? Like, where are we supposed to FOIA for Alex's phone calls and things like.

[01:01:28] **Liz Farrell:** Or any of his stuff. I guess the Department of Corrections. But at the end of the day, I mean, it's just not something that I think we should be promoting is having—I'm not saying he shouldn't be in protective custody. I have no idea what the circumstances are, the threats that have been made against him, but it sure does look like, I mean, when we're saying that for years now that this guy has been getting special treatment by law enforcement and here we are again.

[01:01:51] **Mandy Matney:** He gets whisked away to some special—Yeah, it was weird.



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[01:01:58] **Eric Bland:** Let's talk about Alex the victim, who now he's saying, I'm a victim. I've had to spend all this money and I need money, so I sold all these personal goods. I should get either some money from that, or the state should give me some money because they turned a three-week trial into six-week trial and I saw something where Jim Griffin put out a request for defense cost and defense funds for Alex's appeal. Now that is rich. Alex stole \$8 million from his clients and now he's asking for money like a GoFundMe to help me with my appeal. And there's probably wackos out there that will send money.

[01:02:50] **Liz Farrell:** I almost did. Are you kidding me?

[01:02:55] **Eric Bland:** So, you know, Alex the victim when he says, "I should be able to tap into my IRA money because that's legitimately earned money." Well, really? Is it legitimately earned money? What about the \$8 million? So you're saying you lived on the \$8 million that you stole and you had that great lifestyle going to the College World Series and your boats and your guns, and your moselle and your Edisto beach house. Why does that make that funds that go into your IRA legitimate funds is just a crazy argument and I just think it's amazing that he's trying to wear a victim hat when he's the one who caused all these problems. What are your thoughts?

[01:03:39] **Mandy Matney:** I think, again, it's yet again the audacity. Like how many times do we have to say this? Like, I don't know what planet these people are from, but I don't know how they were raised. I don't know how they sleep at night. Jim Griffin, just give it up, man. You are digging yourself into a hole that is harder and harder to get out of it. And even saying like send funds this way for Alex Murdaugh's defense is so horrifying and disgusting when there are a long line of people who Alex owes a lot of money too. He should be very, very lucky that he got the defense that he did because I question if his retirement money is, even though it was made legitimately, like Justin Bamberg said, well because he stole from other people, he was able to put that money away from retirement. So he should be freaking lucky that he should be grateful that he got the money that he did, and he needs to sit down and shut up and enjoy prison because that's all I have to say about that.

[01:04:49] **Liz Farrell:** Do you guys think, I know I bring this up a lot, but I mean, it's just a matter of time before one of his sycophantic fans out there gets a marriage proposal from him, right? I mean—



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[01:05:03] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, like the Mendez brothers, Menendez. And then Scott Peterson got married in jail. I'm sure there's gonna be a pen pal and, you know, I'd love to be a pen pal with Alex.

[01:05:19] **Liz Farrell:** Really?

[01:05:19] **Eric Bland:** Oh, yeah. Yeah. I mean, I'd love to have some—I'm telling you, I am gonna try to see him when all this dies down. I'm gonna, you know, put my name on a visitor's list and see if he wants to see me. I'd love to be able to talk to him.

[01:05:30] **Liz Farrell:** Interesting. Yeah. Well, I have no interest in talking to him, but I would like that letter from Jim Griffin. I thought about donating \$10 just so I could get that letter back from Alex.

[01:05:42] **Eric Bland:** Well, you could have bought it, you know, it was used underwear at the auction or you could—

[01:05:46] **Liz Farrell:** No, no, no, no, no.

[01:05:48] **Eric Bland:** It's white t-shirts that may have arm armpit stains. Why wouldn't you want that for \$550, you know, stuff that, you know, a Tumblr goes for \$2,000. You could have paid for that if you wanted an artifact like that.

[01:06:01] **Liz Farrell:** I do have to say one thing that came from Jim that I thought was pretty nice was somebody gave Paul's visor and gave it to Buster. That was sweet. It's really just kind of hard to see that stuff being sold like that because it's just such a tragedy regardless. I mean, everyone there's human and you just see these things that are like really just artifacts from their life and when before all this happened, and it's just, yeah, it's sad.

[01:06:28] **Eric Bland:** Maggie wouldn't want stuff like that sold. How do you know that that wasn't a couch that came from her mother or something that was given to her as a gift? I mean, hawking off all the items. Some of those things may have been very personal to Paul and Maggie.



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[01:06:47] **Liz Farrell:** Maggie and Paul got done real dirty. That's one thing that Alex was right about. I mean, just really, really dirty and hopefully they can find some peace too.

[01:07:00] **Eric Bland:** Mandy, were they really skilled at how they used that backhoe? I mean, 'cause you know, you can't just go in there and dig. I mean, were the operators really like gentle how they take up the dirt and—

[01:07:13] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. It was more of a science than I thought that it—I mean, and it got complicated because the two, Joel's vault was very, very close to Stephen's and yeah, they got cables to kind of cut between both of them and it was fascinating to watch, but yeah, I mean, in God—

[01:07:32] **Eric Bland:** And there was water, right? Like, was that a problem?

[01:07:38] **Mandy Matney:** Not initially. It became a problem later when they cracked into the vault, but there wasn't water when they were digging. But I was surprised how it was a lot more shallow than I would've expected. It was four feet, not six feet.

[01:07:55] **Eric Bland:** Oh, okay.

[01:07:58] **Mandy Matney:** And yeah, I mean, the process was very amazing, precise, yeah. I was extremely impressed in the man who was there to move the headstone. He stuck around just in case with his machinery that moved the headstone and that ended up being so helpful when they were moving the vault and everybody was just there to help and everyone was just extremely supportive and kind. And it was, I've never been to an exhumation before, but it was a weirdly beautiful process just to see all these people that were there for this woman and trying to do the right thing and just being extremely respectful and yeah. And it took probably three hours from beginning to end, but—

[01:08:57] **Eric Bland:** It's a long time.

[01:08:57] **Mandy Matney:** I was extremely, yeah. I was impressed by Heather. We were able to do that. And I didn't know vaults weigh like between twenty-five hundred and thirty-five hundred pounds with a car.



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[01:09:09] **Eric Bland:** Wow. He's buried next to his father.

[01:09:12] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, he's buried right next to his father, and they were—Sandy kind of thought it was cute how the vaults ended up touching and she kept saying like, Stephen, hang on, hang in there. You're gonna go to Florida. Oh, this is something I wanted to share. I didn't know this, but Stephen was buried in scrubs. The family buried him in scrubs, and on the pocket it says Dr. Stephen Smith.

[01:09:39] **Eric Bland:** Wow. Now that is cool.

[01:09:42] **Mandy Matney:** Isn't that sweet. Yeah, Sandy told me that this weekend, and I've never heard that before. She was saying that she wanted to make his dreams come true and, you know, that was what she knew that that was what he always wanted to be called Dr. Stephen Smith. So they did it for him. They buried him in scrubs.

[01:10:06] **Eric Bland:** That's a good way to end it. That's a real good way to end it.

[01:10:10] **Mandy Matney:** Well guys.

[01:10:11] **Eric Bland:** Cups down.

[01:10:12] **Mandy Matney:** Cups down. I know. Our dogs have to go for walks.

[01:10:15] **Liz Farrell:** That's right. Great talk today, guys.

[01:10:18] **Mandy Matney:** Great. Yeah.

[01:10:18] **Liz Farrell:** Cups down.

[01:10:19] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, cups down.

[01:10:20] **Liz Farrell:** Thank you for everything Eric. Thank you for all your hard work on this. And thank you, Mandy, for being there for Sandy and for making the process bearable and all that we will persevere.



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[01:10:30] **Mandy Matney:** I appreciate it.

[01:10:31] **Eric Bland:** Thanks for all.

[01:10:32] **Liz Farrell:** Alright. Take care guys.

[01:10:42] **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, our executive editor, and Eric Bland, attorney-at-law, AKA The Jackhammer of Justice. From Luna Shark Productions.

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