



EPISODE 26: Pressure Mounts in Stephen Smith Case and Why Good Ole Boys Can't Help Themselves

[00:00:00] **Liz Farrell:** Good morning, everyone. Cups up.

[00:00:08] **Eric Bland:** Cups up. Good morning.

[00:00:09] **Mandy Matney:** Good morning. Cups up.

[00:00:11] **Liz Farrell:** Mandy, you look like it's a little early for you.

[00:00:16] **Mandy Matney:** I just woke up.

[00:00:17] **Eric Bland:** Mandy, come clean.

[00:00:20] **Liz Farrell:** What have you been doing?

[00:00:24] **Mandy Matney:** Just like Swiftin' out down here in Tampa.

[00:00:27] **Liz Farrell:** Tell us everything. I wanna know.

[00:00:29] **Mandy Matney:** It was incredible. I did not think, you know, like I don't cry out of like happiness that much anymore. And when she came out and was like, Hello, Tampa, Florida, where I'm headlining three sold-out shows in this stadium, I just started crying 'cause I was like — just out of happiness for her. I'm like, good for her, man. That is the coolest accomplishment. And she was like emotional about it and she played for three hours and 15 minutes. Like she didn't stop. It was amazing. I don't understand how she has the energy. It was awesome.

[00:01:07] **Eric Bland:** Sounds like a — concert when he plays for four hours. I mean, I don't understand how they can do it.

[00:01:11] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And like especially her in like heels and she dances so much and like.



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[00:01:17] **Liz Farrell:** That's amazing.

[00:01:18] **Eric Bland:** A lot of costume changes.

[00:01:19] **Mandy Matney:** So many costume changes and they may — like every Taylor Swift song is like a whole theme and a whole thing and they just make a huge production out of it and it was just awesome. I'm obsessed. It was worth every struggle. We got these tickets during the Russell Laffitte trial.

[00:01:39] **Liz Farrell:** I was hoping you were gonna mention that because like literally, they were trying to get these tickets while the trial was happening, like in the media room, like refreshing and.

[00:01:49] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. David and I were yelling at each other because it was so stressful and we had a group of six and like all of us were trying to get — it was just a disaster. I'm sure. I'm lucky. I'm just glad we got tickets at all.

[00:02:05] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:02:05] **Eric Bland:** Was this before they did the congressional hearing stuff?

[00:02:09] **Mandy Matney:** Yes, because the whole thing was screwed up. Like it was supposed to be if you were like in the Taylor Swift club, you could get six tickets. And so all of my friends had like different cities picked out and we had a huge plan and I was the only one that ended up with tickets. But it was great.

[00:02:31] **Liz Farrell:** That's good.

[00:02:32] **Mandy Matney:** And it was a little — been doing a lot of screaming. And we went to Bern's Steakhouse last night, which was like.

[00:02:38] **Eric Bland:** That's great.



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[00:02:39] **Liz Farrell:** What is that?

[00:02:40] **Mandy Matney:** The craziest.

[00:02:41] **Eric Bland:** It's one of the —

[00:02:42] **Mandy Matney:** Oh my gosh.

[00:02:42] **Eric Bland:** It's like you feel like you're back in the fifties. They have these waiters that wear stripes on their arms that if they have like five stripes that says they've been there for 50 years, some of the waiters. And it's a kind of Roman drapes with red drapes. It's real masculine. And then, they have their own separate dessert bar.

[00:03:05] **Mandy Matney:** Yes.

[00:03:06] **Eric Bland:** The famous steakhouse from like the thirties.

[00:03:08] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. You like step back in time. The waiter was telling us that to be a — server there, you have to train for literally a year.

[00:03:18] **Liz Farrell:** I guess they pay them fair wages, huh?

[00:03:22] **Mandy Matney:** They take it very seriously, but they know like everything. Like every little — you can ask where like anything comes from. Our server was fascinating. But we couldn't get in until like nine o'clock last night. So those — it was late dinner. We didn't leave till one.

[00:03:43] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, gosh.

[00:03:45] **Eric Bland:** They're famed for having the largest private wine collection in the country.

[00:03:49] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. You would never know that Tampa, Florida has this like.



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[00:03:52] **Eric Bland:** Yeah.

[00:03:53] **Mandy Matney:** Fabulous restaurant.

[00:03:54] **Liz Farrell:** Tampa's way cooler than you'd think. It is. I have to say that I was far more impressed with Tampa than I thought I would be in general and St. Pete and all that, yeah.

[00:04:05] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, it's really great. But wait. How was Iceland?

[00:04:07] **Liz Farrell:** Iceland was the best. I didn't wanna leave. I was really sad when we flew away because I started picturing myself living there and I got this really cool book at one of the bookstores there, and it was in English, but it's called "Woman, Captain, Rebel" and it's the true story of this woman who was the first fishing captain. She was born in 1777. And it talks about like what she went through in her little village in the south of Iceland. So as I'm leaving, I'm reading this book on the plane. Like now that I know what the landscape looks like and like what the challenge is, I was telling David and Eric, when we got off the plane, it was one o'clock our time, but 5:00 AM their time. And it was dark, obviously. And we get — we bust out of the airport like with so much confidence. Like we're here, this is great. And we're just met with like hurricane-force winds and rain and it was cold. And so we just — I could not stop laughing because I was just like, this is.

[00:05:03] **Mandy Matney:** Oh my gosh.

[00:05:04] **Liz Farrell:** We knew. Like obviously, it's like contained in the name Iceland. It's gonna be like this. But it was like — we're literally in the portico of the airport with our suitcases open, changing into, you know, putting pants over my pants and putting a raincoat on and like a hat and gloves and like scarf and just as bundled up as you could possibly be. But everything is just so beautiful there and so well thought out, you know? So when we get back to Baltimore, we're stepping in gum. You know, I'm in the bathroom at the airport and there's somebody in the stall next to me that's like — like I was always a late bloomer, you know? And like she's like screaming on the phone and I'm like, oh, that's nice that you're a late bloomer, but can we just pee in peace here? So that stuff just didn't happen there. It wasn't — but the, I mean,



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everything was just so clean up there and it's just different. It's like a level of decorum that is just different. But I have to say like I'm obsessed with the architecture there and I want to get a house that's just looks like it's an Iceland.

[00:06:09] **Mandy Matney:** That's so cool.

[00:06:09] **Eric Bland:** Well, it's good. You guys needed a break.

[00:06:12] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:06:13] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:06:13] **Mandy Matney:** And Eric, how are you feeling?

[00:06:15] **Eric Bland:** I am feeling better today. I just sent out a text to my doctor. It's the first day 34th day that I had a decent night's sleep. Kind of only woke up twice, but I woke up and my knee has not felt like this in 34 days, so I'm —

[00:06:30] **Mandy Matney:** Good.

[00:06:30] **Liz Farrell:** That's awesome. You look better. You look so much healthier. There's like a glow to your skin that wasn't there before so.

[00:06:37] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, you look a lot better.

[00:06:39] **Eric Bland:** I'm now down to 185 from 205, so if you —

[00:06:44] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, no. Well, I was gonna say, yeah.

[00:06:45] **Eric Bland:** Go on Opioids. Go on opioids.



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[00:06:49] **Liz Farrell:** Wait a second here. So Alex lost weight when he went off of the opioids. Are you saying that opioid addicts perhaps are on the thinner side generally? Huh.

[00:07:02] **Eric Bland:** I'm opioid-free since Tuesday, but I want everybody to know that I'm —

[00:07:06] **Mandy Matney:** Prescribed medication, we should probably mention.

[00:07:08] **Liz Farrell:** Right. Prescribed.

[00:07:10] **Eric Bland:** Yes.

[00:07:11] **Mandy Matney:** Legal.

[00:07:11] **Liz Farrell:** But we're glad to have normal Eric back. So we have a lot to talk about today, guys, 'cause last week obviously, we had the best guest ever. And we talked about so much then, but we didn't really do any news updates. So what's the latest on the Stephen Smith case, Eric?

[00:07:33] **Eric Bland:** Well, we are getting tips, which is a good thing. Chief Keel told me that they've gotten about 29 tips off the different tips line and people calling SLED and a couple of them are promising. Sandy Smith herself is getting messages that are good from kids that went to school with Stephen that have information. You guys are getting tips. So we're taking all the tips and keeping them in one central repository and we're working our way down. Some are crackpots. You know, last week, that's somewhat of a threatening message, you know, where someone claimed that we are imposters and, you know, this has already been done years and years ago but.

[00:08:20] **Liz Farrell:** Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. Back up. What?

[00:08:23] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, Mandy and I got a kind of a pointed message from someone who claimed voice to Sandy Smith. And Mandy and I are a fake



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because in the nineties, they already did the GoFundMe and they already raised the money in the nineties.

[00:08:39] **Liz Farrell:** I'm sorry. I can't. It is ridiculous, I mean. Oh gosh.

[00:08:45] **Mandy Matney:** I wasn't even sure what to make out of that because it was like hard to, I mean, you could just tell that the person was not well and.

[00:08:54] **Eric Bland:** But there was a little bit of a subliminal, more than a subliminal threat.

[00:08:59] **Mandy Matney:** Threatening. Yeah. The last couple lines got a little weird.

[00:09:03] **Eric Bland:** So we have those things going on. We're gonna get a copy of the autopsy report probably next week. It's going right to SLED. Chief Keel has told me that they've pulled out every piece of evidence and they're going over all the evidence anew. And he said that they have certain tests now that were not available in 2015 to go over this evidence and he's keeping me posted every day. Every time I text him or call him, I get a call back. So we're pretty pleased. We saw that there was an interview given by one of Stephen's cousins in the past couple days. And, you know, I've talked to Sandy about that, and Sandy would prefer that all interviews or any comments by Stephen regarding her family come through her or come through her lawyers Ronnie Richter and Eric Bland. It's just a better way to communicate the family's message and — not that the man said anything wrong, but I'm not sure he's privy to what we are in the investigation.

[00:10:08] **Liz Farrell:** I was looking at the comments on that one interview, and there are a couple things. One: the host of that interview was Ashleigh Banfield I believe, and she said that this is great because Sandy doesn't have to pay for the exhumation now that the state of South Carolina is paying for it. Is that — that's not true though, right? I mean.

[00:10:24] **Eric Bland:** That — that was 100% false.



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[00:10:26] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. So explain that. Explain — because she definitely, I mean, she — I'm not saying she gave the impression. Like she literally said that — that now, she doesn't Sandy now Sandy doesn't have to pay for the exhumation and she can use the money for the reward. But the truth is is that the reward money is in addition to the amount of money that's been spent on the exhumation and the unexpected costs related to reintering him, correct?

[00:10:49] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:10:50] **Eric Bland:** Correct. The GoFundMe money paid for the original funeral home to coordinate the excavation of Stephen. Then, there was the exhumation company that had to be paid. Then, you had to pay the pathologist in Florida. Then, you had to pay the anthropologist in Florida. Then, we had Michelle Smith that gave her time and she had expenses and I gave her a small stipend. We have Kenny Kinsey. Plus there was damage done to Stephen's original vault and coffin, so he had to get a new coffin again in turn. Maybe what Ashleigh Banfield said is that SLED paid costs for the SLED officers to unlock the exhumation and go to the autopsy, but Sandy Smith through her GoFundMe money has paid all of this.

[00:11:39] **Liz Farrell:** I would assume Ashleigh Banfield was told by one of her interns or producers exactly what you just said was that, you know, SLED paid for their agents to go down to Florida and accompany the body for the autopsy. But the actual money is being paid by everyone who donated to Sandy's GoFundMe.

[00:11:57] **Eric Bland:** And we're still getting donations, which is great. And keep it up because the, you know, these things cost a lot of money.

[00:12:03] **Liz Farrell:** And again, you're not taking a fee for this. Just to make that clearer because.

[00:12:07] **Eric Bland:** The escrow account will show that we haven't taken a cost fee any costs at all either.



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[00:12:11] **Liz Farrell:** One thing that's happened — I don't know how much I can actually say about this, but I will say that behind the scenes in Hampton County, things are getting a little gnarly in terms of the people who may or may not know information about what happened to Stephen — and when I say information, I mean direct information — that it's starting to spook a lot of people. It's starting to spook people into hopefully the right direction. So I'm feeling positive about that. And from what our sources are telling us, it's churning things up. So that's good.

[00:12:41] **Eric Bland:** You're not worried it's taken in the other direction, so it's positive.

[00:12:45] **Liz Farrell:** I think that this amount of pressure is something that the people who have information have not had to deal with. I mean, there's one thing having to deal with your peers, making the odd comment on social media, but you're talking about the eyes of the world. I mean, E! News had a story on the Stephen Smith investigation. E! News. Like they took time away from talking about the Kardashians to talk about Stephen Smith. So it's a complete and total — I mean, it's a different this is such a different animal and it's a big deal. So it's bubbling up from the bottom and not to be all Iceland like, you know when somebody goes on vacation and they come back talking in the accent of the place where they went. But it is rather volcanic because you can start to feel the bubbling and the bubbling only has one way to go and that's through the earth's crust, like go up and out. So that's what I'm hoping. That's where my optimism is coming from is that what I'm seeing and hearing is a disturbance in the earth and I think we're gonna see some sort of eruption soon, hopefully. Because, yeah, it's too much pressure. This is not going to go away. And I think that that much is evident when you start to see the amount of effort people in the media have been putting into this and it's relentless. They're not give — they're not stopping. It's a story that the nation I think at this point wants to see solved so.

[00:14:01] **Eric Bland:** What do you think about the investigator Peterson giving that long interview that was released on the news? Why is he still doing that? He's not an investigator for Sandy Smith. I just.



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[00:14:13] **Liz Farrell:** Well, say that again, Eric, because I think that, you know, I was looking at the comments and it seems like people are mistaken. So Steven Peterson was hired by Andy Savage, and Andy Savage is a well-known attorney, very reputable in Charleston, and Sandy hired him. She came to hire him because Mandy — a friend of hers or somebody reached out to Sandy and said, you should hire Andy. He's willing to take your case. So it wasn't this organic sort of relationship to begin with. Sandy was sort of directed to hire this guy and the relationship parted. We've spoken about this many times in the past. But to clear it up because there are so many newcomers, Sandy ended her relationship with Andy Savage after a news station locally reported that Andy Savage had said that this case is likely not going to have anything to do with the Murdaughs. And it wasn't the fact that it wasn't going to have something to do with the Murdaughs that opinion was expressed. It was that he hadn't consulted with her before putting that out there and she hadn't been able to tell Stephen's brothers and sisters and family members. And so she just had this impression and basically was told she says by Steven Peterson that you cannot speak out to the media about Stephen's case — only with permission of Andy. And, you know, it should have worked both ways. So I think that that was what the straw that broke the camel's back for Sandy on that relationship. But Peterson is a former Drug Enforcement Administration officer. I believe he was a case officer. I'm not really sure. But I spoke with him in 2021 and I think it was the summer of 2021 or the fall of 2021, Mandy.

[00:15:47] **Mandy Matney:** I think summer, yeah.

[00:15:48] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. I worked at the sheriff's office and he called me because he was trying to get an unredacted version of the Stephen Smith case file from the State Highway Patrol. And I was willing to give it to him because I wanted — we were encouraged by that relationship that Andy Savage was willing to work with Sandy was such a good thing for us. So we were thinking, yeah, like I'll help you however I can. But during the course of the conversation of this phone call, I started to get a little uneasy because he very clearly told me that it was not the Murdaughs, that it was two individuals whose names now are out there, which is Shawn Connelly and Patrick Wilson. And the evidence he gave me for why he believed it was — and not to laugh, but Shawn Connelly was just like, he faked him out by saying that he had



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photos of his truck damaged like damaged to show that Connelly had hit Stephen with his mirror. It was the way he was speaking to me and the way he seemed so certain. And I like throughout my career have worked with investigators on stories, but also at that point in time was like literally working in the sheriff's office. So I understood how investigators typically talk about a case and they don't talk about it with certitude. They talk about it openly. All things are on the table. But he was very clear that the Murdaughs were not involved. He was very clear that this was going to be Shawn Connelly. It was very clear to me because he believed — because he had lied to Shawn and said I have photos of the damage to your truck and Shawn freaked out at that, allegedly, that that was proof that Shawn was involved. So those kinds of — the way he had expressed himself just made me a little leery. So I didn't end up giving him the unredacted copy of that. And then we had, Mandy, you had a source tell you that something similar happened with Steven Peterson, correct? What happened there?

[00:17:44] **Mandy Matney:** It was the same thing where that person said that they were interviewed and when and he said something along the lines of, well, it's not the Murdaughs, so who else could it be? And he had crossed out Buster and Paul's name in front of this person and said, well, it's not him and it's not him, so who is it? And this person was like, well, I'm here to tell you about how it might be the Murdaughs and let me just tell you what I know, and blah, blah, blah. And he wouldn't listen to that.

[00:18:19] **Eric Bland:** I do have some new news. I was told from a pretty good source that I know that's credible that Randy Murdaugh wanted me to know that he was at the accident scene.

[00:18:31] **Liz Farrell:** He was. He was at — you're saying he was at the accident scene.

[00:18:35] **Eric Bland:** But.

[00:18:35] **Liz Farrell:** But. Okay. But.

[00:18:37] **Eric Bland:** It was not on July 8th. It was not even on July 9th; that it was later on after the funeral of Stephen that he went to the accident scene



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with an investigator from PMPED. Also, Randy said that because he had been representing Joel — that is why he was involved and that the phone calls didn't come from him to the family. They came from the family to him, and that's how he got involved and he continued to represent Stephanie and I think the older brother Chris after Joel died. So that's it. Those are new facts that I never heard of. Have you heard of those facts?

[00:19:20] **Liz Farrell:** No, because that story's changed so much. That has gone through such a genesis from what was originally reported to I believe that Randi Kaye from CNN reached out to PMPED and Randy to verify that he had been at the scene and had made those phone calls, and he denied both things or PMPED did on his behalf. So I guess I'll say this, and it's sort of the same thing with Buster Murdaugh. Like at any point during this, up until now, they could have come forward and cleared that up, so I wish that they would have.

[00:20:01] **Mandy Matney:** There's a point in the investigation file when Stephanie is interviewed and she talks about how weird that it was that Randy called her dad.

[00:20:12] **Liz Farrell:** So that's proximity. That's her right after the accident saying this. This isn't a misremembering situation, you know?

[00:20:19] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. She just says like this was really weird. I don't

[00:20:25] **Eric Bland:** Well, according to Randy, it was the family that called him to get him involved because he was already representing Joel on a workers' comp case.

[00:20:31] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Well, I mean, we've said from the beginning that with Randy, it's hard to draw any conclusion from his presence at the scene regardless because he is a plaintiff's attorney who specializes in car crashes and cases like this. So, you know, it is possible that he was at the scene looking for evidence that it was anything other than what the community was saying, I guess. But it just — yeah, it's so hard 'cause like Mandy and I always say like it's hard to tell the difference between incompetence and



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corruption. But with Hampton County, it's also difficult to tell the difference between the Murdaughs being involved in something and it just being a small community in which the Murdaughs are involved in everything. So yeah, it'd be interesting to see what you find out about that because I will say it again. If somebody's using my name in association with the horrific potential murderer — and at this point we know it's a homicide — of a 19-year-old boy, you best believe that the first words out of my mouth are gonna be like, whoa, whoa, whoa. Let me clear that up for you. So we're talking about eight years later and we're talking about a year and a half after the murders when the Stephen Smith case went into the national headlines in such a big way. So that's my thought on that.

[00:21:46] I do wanna go back to the Steven Peterson thing though because I do — like I can't say this enough that like he — what has concerned me about him was not just the certitude with which he was speaking because I don't care if the Murdaughs are involved or not. It's just if — there's so much in that case file that needs to be reconciled, right? Like you can't you have to answer for that. You have to have an answer as to why these names are in that case file and why Stephen's case went so wrong. There has to be an answer for that. So that's where my mind has always been on that. And for Steven's Peterson to come out of the gate at me and basically — it's. Okay. It's a no-win situation. I'm gonna say this. We are constantly put in this position of people who want to say that the Murdaughs have nothing to do with this. It's almost like this test of whether you have objectivity or not, right? So it's like we have to, you know, I don't wanna say that we have to say like the Murdaughs might not be involved because it's true. The Murdaughs might not be involved. But at the same time, I don't wanna hear like you're not willing to hear that the Murdaughs are not involved because that's where that line is being drawn. So in that conversation with Steven Peterson that I had, it felt like I was walking along that line. Like I've suddenly become this person that now Steven Peterson can write me off as somebody who is unwilling to hear that the Murdaughs weren't involved. Not true. I'm unwilling to listen to an investigator who is drawing conclusions based on a tiny amount of information. He did not have the unredacted case file. SLED was not cooperating with him. He told me himself. He was doing this on a wing and a prayer and he was doing this on his own. And I understand that he was working for Sandy at the time, but he has not worked for Sandy since — was it November of 2021, Mandy?



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[00:23:45] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah.

[00:23:46] **Eric Bland:** That's dangerous when you're going off a wing and a prayer.

[00:23:48] **Liz Farrell:** But Mandy say — like he wasn't he on some show where he said that he was — his ego or something is what allowed him to continue? But, I mean, wasn't he working with he was working with a Netflix production, right? Or is that not true? I don't know. He was definitely on it, but I don't know.

[00:24:08] **Mandy Matney:** I mean, yeah, I don't know if he was working behind. It's just really weird and the other — the longer that he sticks around and inserts himself, the weirder his involvement is at this point. Sandy has reached out to me. She has shown me the messages saying, please stop. Please stop speaking on behalf of my family on about Stephen's case. Please stop it. Stop it. It's not helping anything.

[00:24:36] **Liz Farrell:** So what is he getting out of it then? He's not being paid for these interviews, right?

[00:24:41] **Mandy Matney:** Like the mother, the mother of Stephen reached out and said, you are not helping. You need to stop this.

[00:24:46] **Liz Farrell:** So who's he working for? Who's he — like what's this all about?

[00:24:49] **Eric Bland:** Because he's gonna say, I never worked for you. I worked for Andy Savage, so I'm free to talk. Or I want — now, he's now he's supposedly in the know. I'm gonna reach out to him and just say, look, you know, this thing now is geared up. We got it teed up perfectly. SLED is, you know, started what they're doing. We have a reward out there. We got a lot of good irons in the fire. Let's just give this thing a chance, you know? I mean, it's only been three weeks since we started, you know? Eight years. Give, you know, give it a chance. Let some people talk. Let this die down just a little bit so that people are not uncomfortable.



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[00:25:30] **Mandy Matney:** And I think, too, we have to say that like I don't know with him if it's — there are a lot of people involved in this that just want their face on TV. Like let's just — they wanna be on all these shows and that — it's fine. But the Steve Peterson thing is so weird because — especially after Sandy was very clear like you are not helping this. You are hurting it, and I don't want you speaking on behalf of my family. I don't want you speaking about the investigation. I don't want you in the investigation. I want you out. That is alarming that he just keeps doing.

[00:26:04] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, it's perceptions reality because you look at the comments on that video like I said, and it's clear that people believe that he is on Sandy's side right now working for her. And I think that his, you know, he has said in the past publicly I believe that it's essentially that there's an agenda that — and I think he was maybe even like.

[00:26:28] **Mandy Matney:** He accused Sandy of having an agenda, which is like.

[00:26:31] **Eric Bland:** I'm sick of that word, by the way.

[00:26:33] **Mandy Matney:** I know

[00:26:35] **Eric Bland:** Sandy Smith has no agenda.

[00:26:37] **Mandy Matney:** Right.

[00:26:38] **Eric Bland:** It's a mother that just wants answers for the death of her son. She isn't going to become, you know, the new crime mom about finding dead cold cases. She just wants to be left alone and let the authorities and her attorneys and all the people who are supporting her try to give her answers. She's never once said "I want somebody to be convicted. This is the person I want somebody arrested." She just said, if my son wasn't murdered, fine. I want to know how it happened. If my son was murdered, I want justice. That's it.

[00:27:16] **Mandy Matney:** Right.



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[00:27:17] **Liz Farrell:** Well, and that's where we get murky though because — and going back to the thing like where people think like we don't wanna hear that it's the Murdaughs and that Sandy doesn't wanna hear that it might not be the Murdaughs. It's not that. It's — and I hate when it gets so simplified and boiled down to that. It is the fact that we have to count for that case file. We need to know one, we have a family that pre-murders was known in the community for not being held accountable to the law. Then, we see the trial of Alex Murdaugh and we see what happened on the stand with some of the witnesses who said that he tried to change the outcome of what they told law enforcement, right? So we've seen that influence play out on the stand in front of everyone. And yet, they keep going back to this tired old, like there's an agenda. They just want it to be this. Absolutely not. But we're not going to also sit there and say, yeah, we better overcorrect and just show that it's this other thing; that it's Shawn Connelly and Patrick Wilson because how dare you do that? How dare you?

[00:28:22] **Eric Bland:** Yeah.

[00:28:22] **Liz Farrell:** These two men, I don't know their involvement, but at this point in time, we just don't know, and it's not looking like it's them necessarily. So what are we doing here? Why are people so comfortable saying that as well? So I guess that's where I get sort of frustrated in seeing Steven Peterson being given this platform. But I do think we just need to make it clear that he's not working for Sandy, and the reason is because he just wasn't giving a good objective look at it. That's it in our opinion, in her opinion.

[00:28:56] **Mandy Matney:** And trust them. She didn't trust them, and she had every right not to trust them.

[00:29:00] **Eric Bland:** And by the way, just to clear up this little canard, Sandy's got a brain, okay? She knows if people are using her, and she knows if people are genuine. And if you're not genuine, she will cut you out of her life.

[00:29:13] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, I know. I have seen her messages to people. She does not mess around when she thinks that — when somebody makes her mad, she will tell them and she is very straightforward about it and she's



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smart. She knows. She can always sense when somebody is not trustworthy and she will be completely honest about that and like, Hey, I don't trust you. Like with Steve Peterson, you gotta stop doing this. I'm very hurt of what you're saying. Stop it. And I am so sick of people who just who don't know Sandy at all, acting like she has no brain and we've just taken her. I'm in a hostage situation and that's just the farthest from the truth.

[00:30:01] **Liz Farrell:** She's in Mandy's grass. That's what it must be. Oh my gosh.

[00:30:06] **Mandy Matney:** Like it's like, no. And I legitimately like — like we get along really well. I have this connection to her. And I just really, really — and there's nothing more that I want to solve this case because like let's be honest. There's a lot of like closure for all of us that we want so badly in solving this case. Like this is the part of the chapter of my life that I can't get — I can't. I don't wanna open up other boxes and open up other cases and promise to other mothers that I'm gonna do everything I can until we get this to the finish line win for Sandy. And I cannot be more clear about that — about how aggravating that is — because it's just.

[00:30:56] **Eric Bland:** When this ends and however it ends, all of us, meaning all three of us, are gonna be able to look at each other and say, we did everything we could. And if we do that, I will feel — I will feel okay.

[00:31:10] **Liz Farrell:** It's funny, too, what you were saying about the messages from Sandy but there are also the messages to Sandy, some of which we've seen, which it's funny that people don't realize that they're showing themselves so clearly when they're trying to mask their — I don't know if it's jealousy or what it is because jealousy feels like such a petty word to say, but it's literally, there was a line in one of them from someone who said that he has been working so hard for her — not Liz, not Mandy. Me. That's how it was phrased or not Mandy, not Liz — me. That's what this person said to Sandy. Like and it's like what are you talking about? Like so it's all about — and I've also seen people say that like I'm worried about you or like — what? I forget. Early on, there were people that were trying to like put this wedge between Sandy Smith and us and we were so focused on the Murdaugh stuff. I think that we just didn't really rise to the level of having to respond to it. But I think



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now that we're in it and now that it's just like — I would just be wary of people that I think say that. One, because they're trying to — it just shows what they think. They see her as a commodity, and that is disgusting to us. It's like you're viewing her as a commodity to be had as opposed to a human being who we have known since 2019. And we have an obligation, too, personally, and our hearts have been in it. And but we've also been up against this thing that has seemed so insurmountable before until March 6th when we saw that Alex Murdaugh got held accountable. And that just opened up a whole new world of possibility for this case. And having Eric on board and Ronnie on board, it's just brought it to another level. So yeah. I just I think I'm just done I'm so done with it and anyone who is commenting on that video that thinks that this is a man who's speaking on behalf of the family, you can just — you gotta learn the facts, my friend.

[00:33:18] **Mandy Matney:** It's frustrating, too, seeing that like journalists aren't doing — they're not researching the people. They're like, Hey, you knew Stephen for five seconds. Come on over. Like let's make entertainment out of this. Instead of could this person actually share knowledge that is helpful to the case? They're not asking those questions. It's just like can I make more of a spectacle and stir up more drama? And again, it just — all of this just makes it harder on Sandy. She's tired of it. She's sick of it.

[00:33:51] **Eric Bland:** Does the person who is speaking really know Stephen? And I'm not gonna say anything about the cousin who interviewed yesterday. But they — you're right. Journalists need to really understand. Does that person really know Stephen or just know of Stephen and now is using that as a basis for an interview?

[00:34:11] **Mandy Matney:** Right. And it goes both ways. I feel like in any situation, you're gonna have rogue family members who are just gonna wanna get on TV and say whatever in a situation like this. But it should be on the networks and the journalists to vet the people who they're talking to. And every time I see one of those articles pop up, my stomach like clenches because I'm like these people could — this case is just so fragile and I just am terrified every single time that somebody's gonna say something that's gonna take things in a wrong direction and it's terrifying so.



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[00:34:55] **Eric Bland:** I feel the same.

[00:34:56] **Liz Farrell:** You know, I have counterpoint to that because I agree. I don't wanna say like we were normal people before all this, like but we were. We were just like regular people who no one knew and we just did our thing. So when you would hear as a, quote unquote, normal person like who isn't does not have this platform when I would hear people complain about the media and all of that, I would dismiss it as like, oh, you just don't understand. But now, because I'm seeing just like — I don't wanna say the maybe it's the grasping like the grasping for a storyline and the like, you know, five things that could help the Stephen Smith case or the let's talk to this medical examiner in another state about what's going on with the Stephen Smith case. Like that kind of stuff. You're just like, oh God, that's like, like you said, like your stomach sort of lurches. But at the same time, that's the stuff that might be good in the sense of keeping it alive and keeping it out there. And so I am sort of conflicted about that because I want people to care about this case so that the pressure is put on SLED, so the pressure is put on, like we said earlier, the Hampton County community, the ones who have direct knowledge of this. I want them to feel that pressure. I want that pressure to build up and I want it to explode. So maybe, maybe we just have to put up with that, you know, for now. But I guess what I was trying to say is that we're seeing it from a different perspective now because literally, when you're seeing these like big names talking about the Stephen Smith case, and I'm like, oh my God. Like literally, like we're in it in a way that I've never as a journalist been in before. So in a way they're talking about Eric. They're talking about Mandy. They're talking about Liz. Like there's a knowledge that we have now that we just didn't as journalists before, and it's so interesting getting that perspective from the inside out. But maybe there's a, I mean, maybe there's a bright side to some of this sort of silliness. Maybe it's a good thing that there's a video of a private investigator who says he's just driven by his ego to continue investigating this case no one wants him to investigate so.

[00:37:09] Okay, guys. The next thing I'm gonna talk about is Alex Murdaugh. And he's apparently in McCormick, South Carolina, which is two hours from Hampton. Is that about two hours from Columbia, too, Eric?

[00:37:21] **Eric Bland:** Yes.



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[00:37:22] **Liz Farrell:** It's up in the — so it's north of Augusta where Hakeem Pinckney was. So yeah. His love letter writers are going to have some traveling to do because the nearest airport I guess they would either drive from Atlanta or from Columbia. I don't know which. But yeah. You're gonna have to rent a car, ladies. But so there's a case that I think we sort of — I'm not gonna speak for you, guys, but I sort of forgot about. It's the Nautilus case. It's the federal case in which one of the insurance agencies that covered the Gloria Satterfield settlement is suing Alex, Cory, and Chad Westendorf, who we don't ever say that name anymore. So the judge is Judge Gergel, who is the judge in the Russell Laffitte case, and he put a 30-day stay on the case, saying that we'll pick this up 30 days after Alex is — the outcome of the trial, the end of the murder trial. So we are now in that era and Alex has asked for more time because of his prison conditions are not conducive to fighting this with all his might, so he is not giving up. This was filed by Phil Barber, who you might remember from the Mark Tinsley exchange on the stand. It shows that Dick Harpootlian and his firm are still involved deeply, and it looks like, yeah, Alex is gonna fight the Satterfield, the insurance company with full force and fury from prison from his murder prison. So what's going on, Eric? Like what — I mean, the audacity of that is beyond. Is it just because he doesn't have anything else to do?

[00:39:10] **Eric Bland:** I guess he just doesn't want another judgment against him. But let me explain what the suit is. So Alex had two insurance policies in connection with the Satterfield when she died and the claim was made against him. It wasn't a lawsuit. It was just a demand letter. He had a Lloyd's of London primary policy on his house that provided for \$500,000. And then, you can buy what's called an umbrella or an excess policy above that amount, and that was Nautilus. And Nautilus had a \$5 million policy. And everybody knows that \$4.3 million total was paid out 500 by the primary Lloyd's and \$3.8 million by Nautilus. And so the money was supposed to go to the Satterfields, but we all know how it was diverted by Cory Fleming sending it to the fake Forge account, and Alex had the Bank of America, fake Forge account. And then, he put that money into different checks and gave them to Cousin Eddie. So we know exactly what happened. But the insurance company is saying — and that's why I'm a little upset because I'm starting to see it in newspaper articles and I'm also starting to hear it a little bit from Nautilus that they're saying there was a conspiracy between Alex, Cory, and the Satterfield family to concoct this claim that Gloria was tripped by the dogs. Now, that is the



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furthest thing from the truth. I think everybody saw Tony Satterfield, how genuine he is. And they've seen Ginger and they've seen the brothers, Eric and Scott. That is not true at all. The conspiracy may have been with Cory Fleming and Alex Murdaugh on what they were doing, but these people had no legal background. They had no understanding of what was going on. So I just want it to be clear if there's any suggestion that the Satterfields were a part of this, they're not. Now, what Alex is saying is you had to pay the money regardless whether I stole it or it ultimately went it up went to the Satterfields. Remember this was like in the beginning when I recovered the money from the banks and the other law firms. Alex and Dick got up in court and said, he can't come sue me. He's already collected my money that I stole from other people. It's like you gotta give me credit for getting money from other people. Well, what they're what Alex is telling Nautilus is, you don't have a complaint. You were paying \$3.8 million anyways. So I stole it. It doesn't matter. You don't have a right to get it back. And so what they're — essentially, Nautilus is going to have to prove is that Gloria did not get tripped by the dogs. So they're gonna have to maybe prove was she murdered or how did she fall — I don't know how they're gonna prove it 'cause Maggie and Paul are dead. So there's no witnesses. There's no camera.

[00:42:15] **Liz Farrell:** Could they exhume her body? Could they decide that or have the court decide that rather?

[00:42:20] **Eric Bland:** No, I don't think civilly that would work — that they would have the ability to exhume her.

[00:42:25] **Liz Farrell:** As an insurance company that paid out money because of a specific cause of death, they couldn't?

[00:42:30] **Eric Bland:** They could make a request for it, but I think they're treading very lightly on suggesting anything against the Satterfields because they've been victimized so much. But Alex — look, he's fighting it and he has Dick and Jim again or Dick and his associate on retainer for the rest of his life, it seems.

[00:42:51] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, it seems so. And I have to say, now that you've explained that, that kind of — I'm not gonna say I admire that on his part, but



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it I can understand it now that there is sort of as perverse as that is, it does kind of make sense, which is like if the bad act occurred after the payout, what does Nautilus care if she was — but here's the thing. Like let's all talk about the fact that the only person who heard Gloria say she was tripped by the dogs is who?

[00:43:17] **Eric Bland:** Alex.

[00:43:18] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. And what do we think about his ability to tell the truth?

[00:43:23] **Eric Bland:** Judge Gergel told you that on the last page of his.

[00:43:26] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, yeah. That's right. So Judge Gergel is also the judge, like I said, on the Laffitte case. And last week, he doubled-denied so.

[00:43:39] **Eric Bland:** Double-denied. I love that.

[00:43:40] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. He's got a bracelet for every ankle. He's got a denial for both hands now. So he's got, he's — Russell likes to do things in two, just like his two episodes of Russell TV. So Russell asked again for there to be a new trial, and the first one got denied. They were basing that on the jury and some things that went down with the jury, and judge was like, no. This defense team number two, he also has two defense teams. God, this guy really does like doing things in twos. The second defense team comes in and they're like, yeah, we're gonna throw the first defense team under the bus, too, and we're gonna do it at a time that makes no sense and screw up his chances to do this in the future. So that's what happened there. But the second trial, new trial motion, said that because Alex exonerated Russell from the stand, that means that that's reasonable doubt and the jury might see it that way, and so he deserves a new trial. And Judge Gergel was like LOL. So are you surprised by that, Mandy?

[00:44:46] **Mandy Matney:** No. That was one of the best judges orders I've ever seen. It was just so beautifully worded.



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[00:44:55] **Eric Bland:** He cited Judge Newman, who said in his sentencing, he found him the vote to be most not credible and what he said under Rule 33 to get a new trial, it has to be newly discovered evidence and this wasn't newly discovered evidence 'cause Alex took the Fifth Amendment when Russell during trial. And the judge said, when you take the Fifth Amendment, that means you would've said something that would've been adverse to Russell. And then, he said, for me to grant a new trial, if I was to bring Alex in, it would have to be enough to make you be acquitted of the crime. And he said, ain't a jury in the world is gonna listen to Alex Murdaugh and going to acquit you because he's not credible.

[00:45:38] **Liz Farrell:** Right. I wanna read that for you, guys.

[00:45:41] **Mandy Matney:** The court finds that Murdaugh is manifestly not a credible witness. Evidence offered during the defendant's trial established without question that Murdaugh is a serial liar — I like that term — and fraudster who stole from his clients and law partners. Period. He now stands convicted of the double homicide of his wife and son. Period. It is difficult to imagine a less credible witness under these circumstances.

[00:46:15] **Liz Farrell:** I mean.

[00:46:16] **Eric Bland:** How do you — what is manifestly not credible?

[00:46:19] **Mandy Matney:** And it, it's like, but I've said this all along, it's like, if Alex got up on the stand, your credibility — and speaks on your behalf, your credibility goes down. It does not — it is a negative in credibility if you are affiliated with this man in any way.

[00:46:38] **Eric Bland:** Right.

[00:46:38] **Mandy Matney:** I think that that's what manifestly not a credible witnesses.

[00:46:41] **Liz Farrell:** It's like Goebbels bringing Hitler in for a character witness. Like wow, guys. You guys really do think the rest of us can't see you.



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[00:46:54] **Eric Bland:** So Alex is also — because he's not able to, in real time, get communications and prepare his defense. Guess what, guys? You're in prison. My best friend did a year and a day in prison and his wife kept calling the first three weeks he was in prison and she couldn't get him. And finally, she was telling 'em, when am I gonna be able to speak with him? The lady said, Ma'am, you do realize your husband is in prison and the rules in prison are a lot different than they are in society. Well, I'm sorry, Alex. This is what happens when you are convicted of a double murder. You lose possibly the ability to have real-time email or real-time text messaging, you know? It's maybe two hours a week you get to go to the computer. Those are the rules.

[00:47:47] **Mandy Matney:** So do you think that he is just dragging these cases out just to do something?

[00:47:53] **Eric Bland:** Is there a plea that could come down that could get him some ability to get parole at some time?

[00:48:02] **Liz Farrell:** You're talking about Alex or Russell?

[00:48:03] **Eric Bland:** I'm talking about Alex. But Russell himself, he — let me tell you, this is important to what this sentence is gonna be. Judge Gergel is going to take a pitch that comes right down the middle and he's gonna knock it out of the park.

[00:48:18] **Liz Farrell:** So, Eric, the pre-sentencing report is 63 pages — the first draft of it that's been given to Russell's team. Is that a normal size or is that — what does that — does that say anything to you?

[00:48:30] **Eric Bland:** Now, they are gonna respond to it. They have an ability to respond.

[00:48:34] **Liz Farrell:** They've asked for an extension. So they were supposed to respond by April 10th, and now they've asked for May 10th instead. They need 30 more days because they said in order to file appropriate and fulsome objection — so we can expect it's gonna be good. We can expect their



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objection to be long and varied and I cannot wait for it. It's like waiting for the next Harry Potter book.

[00:48:55] **Eric Bland:** But then the government gets another reply. So I had thought that we were a lot closer to sentencing because the Plyler girls had gotten their victim impact statements where they have to write up anything that they want to give to the government that either they or I will speak about. But now, this tells me that the government's gonna have a reply and then there's gonna have to be a hearing. And we don't know if the Bureau of Prisons has done their assessment on where the best place for Russ would be, but I sure hope it's gonna be in like Duluth, Minnesota or somewhere — Bismarck's out at Dakota, where it's gonna be pretty hard for his friends and his family to get there because that's what he deserves, okay? He deserves what he did to people. But now, it looks like I guess we're looking at something like July or August for a sentencing, which is starting to be a little bit on the outer edge of reasonable.

[00:49:52] **Liz Farrell:** Is that — do you think that's a strategy? Do you think that that's the only thing he can do at this point is delay going to prison? Wow.

[00:49:59] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. That's crazy. I mean.

[00:50:02] **Eric Bland:** Well, look. Alex went today. You know, they didn't take him the next day, but he went to prison. How is it that you're talking about nine months? I mean, come on.

[00:50:11] **Mandy Matney:** Right.

[00:50:12] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah.

[00:50:12] **Mandy Matney:** That's too much. And that's just giving them such a loose leash. Like it's just like do whatever for nine months and to get your affairs in order and stuff. It just does not seem —



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[00:50:26] **Eric Bland:** If I'm on the Laffitte team, I would be telling my client, you should expect that you are going to get the top end of whatever sentence is available because you have said things that made this judge pretty upset, and he has been pretty clear in his orders how he feels about you, how he feels about your attorneys, and what you're doing; and how he feels about when you attacked me on what I did with those three jurors and it was with the concurrence of your lawyers.

[00:50:58] **Liz Farrell:** You know how they say like horror movies are a reflection on the zeitgeist of the time? So you see in horror movies, whether it's that women are being victimized or if it's a societal, racial thing. But I think that when we look back in history at like horror stories of monsters that never die, that just continue to rise from the dead, that continue to, you know, once you think you've stabbed them in the heart, they're like resurrected once again. And they're — I think that there's something to be said historically for men of Alex and Russell's character or their place in society, their wealth, their position or power, whatever it is, that no matter how many times you push them down, no matter how many times you stab that zombie in the heart, they're still gonna rise again. They're still gonna get up, but you cannot kill them. So I can't say that enough times. I just — I really think that there's a lot to be said about we are dealing with sort of an original evil here, something that historically has ruled the roost in South Carolina from the very beginning of this country.

[00:52:09] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah. And I think that he, both of them, they just keep terrorizing. Like they just keep using up — think about all the resources that they just keep using up with their — I mean, with Alex indicating that he's probably gonna fight everything if he's fighting the Nautilus suit, which by the way, like you have a confession of judgment in that suit. What is he — and that's another example of like plans A, B, and C did not work out 'cause I think that he thought that he was gonna be able to like get some sympathy for — I don't know.

[00:52:49] **Eric Bland:** How are they getting in front of my judgment of \$4.3 million, right? My judgment's there where they can't extinguish my judgment, so I don't know what they think they're going to get from Alex,



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where the money's gonna come from. I guess they're hoping that the FBI's gonna find the overseas bank accounts or whatever.

[00:53:08] But switching subjects, you know, there's a name we haven't really talked about in a long time and I want to know if what your sources tell you. You know who we haven't heard up from is Cory Fleming. So that tells me that he's staying low, that your sources aren't hearing anything. Maybe he's cooperating. Maybe he has seen — look, Russ went down. Alex went down. What are your sources? What do you hear? Do you hear anything? Because that's a name we have not heard.

[00:53:41] **Liz Farrell:** I have not heard that he's cooperating, but I also haven't heard that he's not cooperating. And I do think that these guys have a different definition of what cooperating means, and I think it means whatever the little amount that they can say possible to get themselves out of trouble. But for every day that passes, the ante is raised for Corey in terms of what — and I do think that Corey represents the clog in the pipe in a different set of pipes, right? So however the pipe's connected from Russ or from Alex to Cory, there is a clog there that I think is Cory, and there's something beyond Cory as well. So I'm interested to see if he does.

[00:54:26] **Eric Bland:** They say that if Cory waits and continues to wait and more and more convictions come, then if he's ever ready willing and able to talk, it'll be too late because they're not gonna need it. You know, you need to talk if you're gonna talk sooner than later. Like we said, you don't wanna be the fifth person coming in to talk. And, I mean, I don't know, man. I'd like to know what his strategy is.

[00:54:48] **Liz Farrell:** You know, he's — I think he has sort of a sob story going on because he feels shunned in Beaufort right now. But I also think that there's a small group of people in Beaufort who are willing to believe that he's an innocent victim in this and he just got overtaken by Alex. Mandy, what do you make of that video, the August 11th video in which Cory attended a meeting with SLED with Alex? Like what did you feel about Cory in that video?



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[00:55:14] **Mandy Matney:** The audacity. Again, it's like the same thing over and over. They went in there like and I get it. Was Cory his defense attorney at that point? Like why was Cory there? It's just weird, his involvement. I think it's strange looking back on the entire investigation where Alex — and, again, that shows how much privilege and pull he has, where Alex would just literally grab a buddy and that was his lawyer for the day.

[00:55:41] **Eric Bland:** Bulldoze over SLED. We're gonna manipulate SLED and get information. I mean, these guys have been doing this for years. They're not going to manipulate SLED. They're the ones that are gonna get manipulated.

[00:55:52] **Mandy Matney:** Right.

[00:55:53] **Liz Farrell:** Cory goes in there to dressed like a used car salesman, too. Like he's got this like "I'm the cool guy" jacket and.

[00:55:59] **Mandy Matney:** Attitudes.

[00:56:00] **Liz Farrell:** Like it's almost just like his first day after getting like passing the bar where he's like I get to play a lawyer now. Like it was just this smarmy sort of attitude. But I think that's that well fits him.

[00:56:11] **Mandy Matney:** And like here's how this is gonna go, da da duh. And it's like but it wasn't how it went and they both looked like idiots.

[00:56:20] **Liz Farrell:** Did you think there was a moment there though where Cory — there was an a gulp moment for Cory?

[00:56:25] **Eric Bland:** I think there was a moment where Cory said, this isn't going the way I want it to. There's a part of me that should say, we need to get the hell out of here right now, but if we get the hell out of here right now, we're gonna look more guilty. I think there was a gulp moment in there where he said, I shouldn't be doing this definitely.



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[00:56:43] **Liz Farrell:** Mandy, do you think he was there to like monitor it, too? Because knowing what we know now with his involvement alleged involvement with the Satterfield scheme, was he there to sort of —

[00:56:54] **Mandy Matney:** You know this guy goes down who you've definitely committed crimes with or allegedly. You wanna know where the investigation is. Like Liz, if I committed a crime with you and I'm like — I would wanna like — and you were involved in something else, I would be like, well, shit. Like.

[00:57:15] **Liz Farrell:** Gotta protect my interests here, yeah. I gotta find out what she's saying.

[00:57:18] **Mandy Matney:** On what's going on with that because if she goes down, I go down.

[00:57:26] **Liz Farrell:** I wanna talk just real quick since we're talking about the federal and state stuff. We have a couple of listener questions and one of them was about the difference between federal and state court rules. Right after Alex was sentenced, a few people asked me just what you were saying actually about Russell hoping that he gets to serve his time in Minnesota. Somebody, you know, people were asking me like is he going to — I hope they send him far away from South Carolina. But it sort of I take for granted that people understand that if you break a state law and you're found guilty of breaking a state law, you serve time within that state. But Eric, in federal court, you can be sent basically anywhere in the United States. Correct?

[00:58:08] **Eric Bland:** That is correct. And if you're a cooperating witness and you offer good cooperation that yields convictions or brings other charges and the judge recognizes that, the Bureau of Prisons will reward you by making your time close to your family. So maybe in Butner, North Carolina or a place in Georgia that would be within a two-hour drive for Russell's family. But if you are not a cooperating witness and you force the government's hand to try a case and convict you and then you continue to use the judicial machinery to attack the judge and attack the lawyers in motion after motion, the Bureau of Prisons may decide to put you 8, 10, 12 hours away from your family, which makes it really, really difficult.



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[00:58:59] **Mandy Matney:** In this case, I don't have a problem with it because Russell was just so — his behavior was egregious I feel like during the trial to a certain extent of just like you just won't admit to the thing that like there's this much evidence on. You just keep wasting time and time and time and time. And I feel like there has to be some sort of correction for the — there has to be something more than like we're just sending you to prison.

[00:59:29] **Liz Farrell:** There's like no first class section, and I think that that's what they're trying. Like it's — Russell and Alex have really shown us that they believe that they have upgraded. They're like, no, no, no. We're upgrading our experience. We want a different — we wanna sit in a different place. We wanna have a different type of flight attendant and a different type of meal served to us. But that is not something and I think that that's the offensive part is like, no, no. You're in coach with the rest of us, buddy, and that you're gonna just squeeze yourself in.

[00:59:58] The second question we have from a listener is a good one. I think Mandy will really like this one. Can a regular person request that Judge Carmen Mullen recuse herself from their case based on I would suppose what we know about some of the things that have gone on and maybe just the public perception? Like can a regular person just see that she's been assigned to their case and be like, I don't want that judge. I have questions.

[01:00:25] **Eric Bland:** No.

[01:00:26] **Liz Farrell:** You're shaking your head, okay.

[01:00:28] **Eric Bland:** The only way you can recuse a judge is if there — that judge has an appearance of impropriety related to your matter.

[01:00:38] **Mandy Matney:** Okay. So if I got sued hypothetically and Carmen Mullen was the judge assigned 'cause she's like a main judge in the 14th Circuit.

[01:00:47] **Eric Bland:** You have a different story because you may have been critical of her. I'm not saying you have been, but you may have been critical of



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her in some of — if Mandy has been critical of her in her reporting, then Mandy would have a basis to make that motion. But if Mandy was critical of her and I'm in front of her, I can't raise the issue. Well, Mandy's critical of her and I know Mandy. She's a friend of mine. That's not causally related. But Mandy, you definitely could make that motion and should.

[01:01:23] **Mandy Matney:** But like a regular person does not have the right to be like I don't trust this judge. Which I think, yeah, I think our judge, our judicial system could — there's just no power within the people.

[01:01:37] **Eric Bland:** No, I disagree with that. I wouldn't want every judge to be subject to a motion of recusal by every single citizen before with that judge. We would never have justice that way.

[01:01:49] **Mandy Matney:** Let me rephrase that. The problem with our justice system is that we don't have a way of holding them accountable if.

[01:02:00] **Eric Bland:** That I agree.

[01:02:01] **Mandy Matney:** Something goes wrong.

[01:02:02] **Eric Bland:** It's too secret, it's too slow, and we don't know what the outcomes are.

[01:02:08] **Liz Farrell:** Right. And that doesn't serve the judge either because, you know, a lot of accusations have been made about Carmen Mullen and we — it would serve her well, too, to have this not be so secretive because I'm sure her perspective is, whoa, whoa, whoa. There's an explanation for all of this.

[01:02:22] **Eric Bland:** You're right.

[01:02:23] **Liz Farrell:** So if the system were more transparent and there wasn't such slow — if the knee-jerk reaction wasn't always just to cover things up and keep things as low profile as possible, you know, and in a way she could get justice as well so. I think that she's not served by the system either. And I



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— there's a part of me that believes that she would agree with that — that the system isn't serving her well either. And we did worry about that early on, Mandy, that she was being considered like a sacrificial lamb for the Good Ole Boys and that it would be easier to put it all on her than themselves because there are many others that we believe that are equally as culpable when it comes to allowing the system be as casual as perhaps she did, and especially in consideration of the Satterfield case anyway. So that said, great show, everyone. Cups down.

[01:03:18] **Eric Bland:** Cups down.

[01:03:19] **Mandy Matney:** Cups down. Great show.

[01:03:27] **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.

CUP OF JUSTICE