



EPISODE 10: What Happened to Gloria Satterfield? Part One

Mandy Matney 00:00

I don't know if anyone killed Gloria Satterfield. But I've learned a lot recently about what happened in the aftermath of her death, and I'm disturbed and disgusted by what I'm hearing that Alex Murdaugh allegedly did to her family who deserved the money in her settlement. My name is Mandy Matney and I've been investigating the Murdaugh family for more than two and a half years now. And this is the Murdaugh Murders Podcast. So I mean it when I say that the last few weeks have been the strangest, busiest time of my entire life. And I'm not saying that to get any sort of sympathy or whatever. I'm just being straight with you. The last few weeks have been hard. And I say that because I know what it would be like, if I was another journalist following somebody like me on this case and wondering, how is she doing all these things. And what I'm doing is not healthy. What I'm doing is not sustainable. Being a breaking news reporter and an investigative reporter and a podcaster all at the same time is absolutely exhausting. And this case is extremely emotionally taxing. And it's okay to talk about these things. I will talk about these things being open about what's going on with your mental health is something that I will always advocate for and wanted to start off this episode and say thank you to everyone who has supported us in the last few weeks to those who defend me to the trolls on Twitter. Those who gave us a five star review and shared the podcast. Those who sent flowers and messages of encouragement. Those who bought me so many mimosas on buy me a coffee.com those who helped make this podcast and number one podcast on Apple and Amazon, which is absolutely insane. By the way, these last few weeks have been tough. I won't lie. But every little bit has given me the fuel to keep going when parts of me wanted to stop. So thank you so much has gone down in the last two weeks with the unraveling of Alex Murdaugh. But we want to focus this episode on Gloria Satterfield because she deserves the spotlight, and people need to know what happened to her and her family. I first reported about the Gloria Satterfield settlement in 2019. As I was investigating the death of Mallory Beach and Stephen Smith, several of my sources in Hampton county made comments along the lines of but did you hear about the housekeeper there were rumors that the Murdaughs were involved in the death of their housekeeper. I'll be honest, it sounded like an insane rumor that to me was just too weird to be true. Then one day I was looking through court records and found a \$500,000 wrongful death settlement for Gloria Satterfield, where Alec Murdaugh was listed as the only defendant. Gloria Satterfield was the Murdaughs housekeeper and nanny for more than two decades. I found that the settlement was odd for a couple of reasons, and again, this was way back in 2019. Alex Murdaugh's best friend Corey Fleming was the lawyer representing the Satterfield family, which would be Corey suing his best friend? Remember Corey Fleming? He's the attorney who's connected to all three of these death investigations. Gloria Satterfield, Stephen Smith and Mallory Beach. In a Stephen Smith case his client, Patrick Wilson was suspiciously injected into the investigation and in the 2019 boat crash. Alex allegedly told



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Connor Cook essentially the same thing he told the Satterfield sons, that Corey Fleming would have his back, that he would be a good lawyer who could be trusted. Now, Connor Cook is suing Fleming and Alex Murdaugh for essentially conspiring to frame him in the boat crash investigation. We will get into all of that in another episode. So the Corey Fleming part of it is weird. But all of this gets so much weirder. Another thing was neither one of Gloria Satterfield's sons are named as personal representatives of her estate, which again, I thought was weird. The third thing which a lot of lawyers told me was the settlement seemed very low for somebody admitting to wrongful death on their property, and only getting \$500,000 seemed weird to a lot of people. Later, I've realized that Judge Perry Buckner who was a well known friend of the Murdaugh family who also recused himself from the boat crash just a few months after this, approved a settlement. I wrote about the settlement when it worked for another local newspaper back in 2019. And I believe I wrote about it again in 2020 and then I wrote about it again after the double homicide of Maggie and Paul Murdaugh. When I was the first reporter to connect the three mysterious deaths to the Murdaugh family now we'll fast forward to last week, September 14 2021. Attorney Eric Bland first told me that he was representing Gloria Satterfield's two sons who say they never received any settlement money. So when I wrote the story last week, the only public document associated with this case stated that Alex Murdaugh's insurance provider agreed to a petition for \$505,000 for personal liability and Satterfield's wrongful death. In this clip where I'm talking to Eric Bland, I'm typing because again, I'm a journalist before I'm a podcaster, and I can't help but take notes.

Eric Bland 05:44

She was a housekeeper there for, you know, almost 25 years, you know, very close to the family raised the kids. Any settlement that may have existed, the boys maintain that they have not received any distribution from any settlement proceeds. Our goal is to get answers for them and to make sure that people who have, you know, represented them and owed fiduciary duties to them have done what they're supposed to do for these boys. That's our goal.

Mandy Matney 06:19

Eric Bland said that the family was told Satterfield tripped on the steps of the Murdaugh's former home on Holly Street in Hampton, South Carolina. In February 2018. They were told that the Murdaugh's dogs caused her to trip causing a fall which resulted in her sustaining a traumatic brain injury. It is not known if any member of the Murdaugh family called 911 after the incident, nor is it clear how Satterfield was transported to the hospital where she stayed for several weeks before she died on February 26 2018.

Eric Bland 06:55



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This woman worked for the Murdaugh Household for 25 years. She was in the hospital for three weeks after, apparently the dog caused her to fall down the stairs and have a closed head traumatic brain injury. You know, the family's a little bit disappointed because there wasn't a lot of visitation from the family when she was in the hospital, only the mother visited not the boys who she raised. You know, the Murdaughs didn't pay for her funeral, which, you know, tells me a lot about them as a family.

Mandy Matney 07:37

Gloria's obituary noted that she loved Alex, Maggie and Alex's parents Randolph and Libby Murdaugh as family, although we don't know who wrote her obituary. So after I wrote that story, things started developing in this case very rapidly, and here's why. Again, this is Eric Bland talking to me on the phone.

Eric Bland 08:11

Yeah, lawyers are coming clean, different lawyers are coming clean. And, you know, because there's this intense sunlight scrutiny on this case, everybody's been cautious not to do lawyer spin, or to skate.

Mandy Matney 08:28

But the truth ended up being very ugly. We immediately started receiving texts from sources that said that the Satterfield settlement was much, much higher, in the millions. It appeared that a lot of lawyers knew about that, and no one said anything until the dismantling of the good ol boy system started to take place. The next day, September 15 2021, Eric Bland and his law partner, Ronald Richter filed a lawsuit alleging civil conspiracy and stolen funds and connections with the 2018 Gloria Satterfield settlement. The lawsuit was filed against Alex Murdaugh, Corey Fleming and others involved in the settlement including Fleming's law firm Moss, Kuhn and Fleming, Chad Westendorf, who was the banker listed as a representative of Satterfield estate and the Palmetto State Bank, which is a financial institution where Westendorf worked. The lawsuit revealed further details and this alleged conspiracy to steal money from Gloria's family. Hours after the lawsuit was filed in this case, the South Carolina and Law Enforcement Division, which is also known as Sled, the same agency investigating the double homicide of Maggie and Paul Murdaugh and the Stephen Smith case confirmed they were opening an investigation into the death of Gloria Satterfield. That is a big deal. Sled not only opened an investigation into her death, but also possible financial crimes related to her wrongful death settlement SLED officials said they opened the investigation based on information gathered during the course of other investigations involving Alex Murdaugh. A couple of things about this that were shocking. The Hampton County Coroner said that Satterfield's death was not reported to the other Hampton County Coroner at the time, nor did officials perform an autopsy and another thing. On Saturday Phil's death certificate the manner of death and natural which does not line up with the story that she fell. The manner of death would be an accident again. Gloria's family was told that she died in a trip and fall



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incident on the front steps of the Murdaugh home. A few days after the lawsuit was filed and SLED opened up their investigation into Satterfield's death, attorney Eric Bland received shocking information in the Gloria Satterfield settlement. I'm going to go ahead and let him explain most of this.

Eric Bland 11:02

So Gloria dies February 26 2018, after falling February 2 2018, right. At the funeral, Alex says to the aunts, uncles and the kids, I'm going to take you to see a lawyer. And that lawyer I know is going to bring a claim against me. Because I am going to admit that I was negligent, responsible for your mother's death, because my dogs tripped her and she fell down the stairs. And he's going to bring a wrongful death claim. And I'm going to turn it over to my insurance carriers. And then I'm going to tell them I'm at fault, and they're going to pay money, and you guys are going to make money. Your guys, you're going to get money as a result of your mother's death. But you can't tell anybody that I'm kind of organizing this because I can get in trouble. So he takes him to Corey Fleming. He doesn't tell him that Corey's the kids, that he's Paul's Godfather, that they were college roommates, best friends and that they work together. Corey signs them up and names Tony as the PR.

Mandy Matney 12:20

So a PR is a personal representative that is a person that is in charge of an estate. Okay, we are now in December 2018. In the Gloria Satterfield case, here is Eric Bland.

Eric Bland 12:35

Brian renounces his right to be a PR, because he's a vulnerable adult. Okay. So Tony is the personal representative of the estate, which means Corey Fleming represents the personal representative of the state, he doesn't represent the heirs, he represents the personal representative of the estate. And so they make a claim against Alex, not because they didn't file a lawsuit, they made a demand, you write a demand letter and you say, look, Alex, you caused this yada yada, he turns it over to insurance companies. And he's telling the insurance companies I am at fault, which really puts the insurance companies in a tough spot, because ordinarily, just because somebody dies at your house, doesn't mean you're automatically liable. I mean, I could be at your house, Mandy, and trip over my feet and come down your stairs, and it's my fault. If I hit my head and I die, but because he was admitting fault, admitting that he was responsible. The insurance companies knew that if Corey Fleming actually filed a lawsuit, and Alex was to go into a court in Hampton County where he's loved and say this is my fault. The jury would not be liable to return a big verdict, but Corey is not telling Tony what's going on. Tony's just a normal, late 20s guy that works for a hospital and likes delivery. And so around December when that petition for \$505,000 was filed with the court. Corey, calls up Tony on like December 13 and says you know what? I don't think you should be the PR anymore. There's gonna be a lot of business issues in this case as this progresses and I think it's better suited that there'll be a bank officer that I know, to be the PR.



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So of course Tony who trusts Corey says okay, if that's what you think. And so they name Tony renounces his right to be a PR and they named Chad Westendorf in the bank Palmetto State bank and by doing that now Corey's duty is to Chad Westendorf, he no longer has to communicate and can communicate with my clients because they aren't his clients. It's the personal representative of the estate.

Mandy Matney 15:13

So basically Fleming convinced Gloria's sons that they needed to have a banker work as their personal representative of their mother's estate. He's saying here that Fleming and Murdaugh did this in their scheme, so that Fleming would only be legally obligated to communicate with Westendorf. They did not have to tell Gloria's sons about what was happening with the settlement money.

Eric Bland 15:38

So on December 18, Westendorf was approved to be the PR. The very next day on December 19. They filed that petition for a \$505,000 settlement. My clients were never aware of that.

Mandy Matney 15:55

So as soon as the Satterfield boys were no longer entitled to communications with Corey Fleming, his petition for a \$505,000 settlement was filed, who was the judge involved in all of this, that would be South Carolina Circuit Judge Perry Buckner, who recused himself from the 2019 boat crash just months later because of his ties to the Murdaugh family.

Eric Bland 16:18

A few months go by. Obviously, a boating accident happened in February of 2019.

Mandy Matney 16:24

Let me be clear here, the 2019 fatal boat crash that killed Mallory Beach changed everything about the Murdaugh family, they were able to do things under the table and under the radar before the boating accident, which pushed them into the media spotlight

Eric Bland 16:41

in March, they have a mediation and they settle with a mediator from Charleston named John Austin. Paul the insurance carriers Nautical, and Lloyds of London. And they were represented by John Grantland. And Scott Walanger and Coreys representing the estate. And obviously Alex is defendant. And they go before the mediator and they compromise or whatever and they agree that total claims are going to settle for \$4,305,000.

Mandy Matney 17:16

So are you following this? That is a big deal.



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Eric Bland 17:20

The money is going to be paid to the ER to Chad Westendorf. It's not going to be paid to Corey Fleming the lawyer. The check is going to be made out to the personal representative of the estate of Gloria Satterfield.

Mandy Matney 17:38

Here is where it gets weird and complicated.

Eric Bland 17:42

He requested that they changed the court caption without court approval to take his name off. The next thing you look at is that petition is there's no Court term. There's no live case. There's no 2020 CP 40-0312.

Mandy Matney 18:08

Yeah, I've never seen that,

Eric Bland 18:09

The next thing you look at on that petition is it's not filed. It's signed by Chad Westendorf but is not filed with the court.

Mandy Matney 18:25

Okay, so this is really weird. I have seen hundreds of settlements and lawsuits and all sorts of court documents in South Carolina. But I've never seen this, it appears it Alex convinced the court to take his name off of the settlement, which is a luxury that most South Carolina citizens do not have when they admit fault and a wrongful death of another human being. But what's interesting about this is that his name was taken off the books right around the time of the fatal boat crash when he was in the spotlight. So another thing about this that is so crazy is there's no docket number. I have never seen a case like this, but no docket number in also every other case in South Carolina that is processed with the court has numbers and basically a stamp of approval running down the side it says the county that is processing and it says the date etc, etc. And that's not here. So you can hear me as Eric is explaining what's going on with these documents. how shocked I am because it is absolutely shocking and I talked to over a dozen lawyers who've looked at this. And they're all very shocked that this actually came through.

Eric Bland 19:42

Judge Mullen cannot hear a settlement proposal unless there's a motion or petition before her because when she comes on the bench, the first thing she's going to say is or if she's in chambers, then there should be a court reporter there is what is for me. And somebody's



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gonna say, Well, we have a petition for you to approve something. And she's going to open up the court file, and she's gonna say there's nothing filed here. I can hear a motion that isn't filed. Nonetheless, she goes forward. And here's the motion. So

Mandy Matney 20:25

Around the same time that Judge Carmen Mullen signed the secret settlement, she also recused herself from the boat crash, due to her long standing relationship with the Murdaugh family. So are you hearing this right? The two judges who recused themselves from one Murdaugh case, which was the boat crash appear to be involved in this one during the same time period, perhaps that's because Gloria's case did not get media attention at the time,

Eric Bland 20:54

He then signs an order. That's the third document I sent you. When you look at that order, the first thing you should say yourself is it's a different caption. The second thing you say to yourself is, what's the Court term? How would this be filed? When there's no number? The third thing you say to yourself is it wasn't filed. The fourth thing you say yourself is I'm going to look at that last page, the settlement disbursement sheet. And you see it signed by Chad Westendorf. And the Judge that was given, Judge Mullen, for her to approve that order. That disbursement sheet shows, there's \$4,305,000 of money coming in. It shows the attorney's fees going out of \$1.45 million. The next thing that should catch your eye is there's \$105,000. Not even 105,130. But \$105,000 Even, quote, prosecution expenses, what the hell is that?

Mandy Matney 22:17

Okay, so \$105,000 worth of lawyer expenses when there's not a lawsuit or a trial, over a period of about a few months is absolutely shocking. And from what I know, investigating lots and lots of expenses in the government, etc, etc. When anything ends and 0000 is immediately sketchy. In an expense report, if something ever ends in 0000 it means that you're not keeping track of your books.

Eric Bland 22:52

This case there wasn't a lawsuit, what expenses were there? If there was going to be a professional PR fee paid to Chad Westendorf from the bank? That's got to be set forth? Itemized? What? What's \$105,000? Even? How was that? How was that approved? The next thing you say to yourself is you look at 2.7 million goes to the client. That's the net from the 4.3. If that settlement dispersed machine was going to be followed, it should have been paid to the PR, who would distribute all of it, but \$50,000 Because that's the survival claim. There's two claims that were brought about by a wrongful death, which is the kids bring a claim for the loss in love of their mother, which goes outside of the probate court. But a survival claim is Gloria's claim. Because she survived for three weeks. And they allocated \$50,000 to that. That money was never paid into the court. It was never distributed through the estate. And



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what else they didn't never disclose to Judge Mullen was Gloria had \$675,000 legal of medical bills to try it in hospital for being there three weeks, and they crafted a settlement that only \$50,000 if it was ever paid, would go to pay off the medical bills. And when you structure something like that, it's Medicaid fraud, because there was enough money in the \$4.3 million recovery to pay off the medical bills for a 670 5000 but the way they structured it and Judge Mullen signed it. Only \$50,000 would be available to pay medical bills because the wrongful death money that would have gone to the kids the 2.7 million, that's not part of the estate and they're not liable for their mother's medical bills. So what happened? The check went straight to Corey Fleming. So you asked me, Okay, how did Alex end up with the money? Alex told Corey, Alex, the defendant, we're gonna do a structure. We're going to buy an annuity for these kids, through a company called Forge consultants in Atlanta. 80% of the lawyers in the state like me, when we get a big lump sum settlement for, let's say, some minor kid or somebody that is paralyzed and has ongoing medical needs, you don't give them the money all at once because it's big tax consequences. But two, you buy an annuity. So that \$2.7 million is paid over 15 years turns out to be worth like six and a half million dollars. The only problem is, Corey never got any documents from FORGE. And he's taking direction from the defendant, who tells him if you take your fees, write the check to FORGE and send it to a PO Box in Hampton, South Carolina, not with him. There's not one single document with Corey's name on it. And oh, by the way, if you're going to do a structure like that, you gotta get court approval. It's got to be disclosed to the judge in the petition. And the order that Judge Mullen signs has to approve that there's going to be a structure and an annuity, and the money is going to be paid out over time. None of that's done. So Corey takes his direction from Alex to do a check in the name of FORGE, not Forge Consultants, which they know about because I've spoken to Michael Gunn and Spooner Phillips at Forge Consultants. And they say, oh, man, Corey knows exactly what we do. Because when you do a structure, you get tons of documents in advance of the settlement, because you have to see what the annuity returns are going to look like over a 10 or 15 year period. And number two, the beneficiaries have to sign off that they're going to get their money over time instead of all at once, none of that was done. So the check is made out of Forge. Alex Murdaugh gives him a PO box, where it's sent to the check goes in the PO box, Alex Murdaugh opened up a bank account at Bank of America under the name of Forge, got the check, cashed it, and walked away with the money.

Mandy Matney 28:01

What Eric Bland is saying here is absolutely appalling. He's basically saying that two prominent attorneys in South Carolina were able to do this scheme, to steal from a grieving hard working family who deserved money from their mother's death, and needed it, but never got a dime due to their greed. So the latest revelations in the Gloria Satterfield case leave us with so many questions about the South Carolina justice system. Did Corey and Alex do this scheme to other people? How did our justice system allow this to happen? And how many people will go down for this?



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Eric Bland 28:47

I think we're only halfway through because I think that this citadel of this Murdaugh citadel is going to fall. And I think at the end of this, I think the Murdaugh firm will not be what it was. There won't be the word Murdaugh in there. I think that the Solicitor's Office is going to be completely different, whether Duffy Stone stays solicitor who knows? I don't see. You know, I'd be shocked if Corey Fleming keeps his law license, but who knows, you know, obviously Alex won't or shouldn't. Yeah, I think there's certain how the I think the Chief Justice of our Supreme Courts going to look at how the court system is run down there and a clerks of court, probate court, how it's all run, make, there's going to be a whole host of disinfecting on that whole town. Because of all this, and you guys keep doing the sunlight you're doing? Nothing he gets swept under the rug.

Mandy Matney 29:55

Before we finish this episode, I want to talk about who Gloria was as a person because Gloria and her families are victims and this and we need to talk about them. So I spoke with Kim Brandt, who is a former Hampton resident who knew Gloria Satterfield.

Kim Brandt 30:15

She was not living the life of someone who worked as hard as she worked. She didn't, you know, she probably entered the workforce right out of high school, or maybe, I don't know if she had a high school degree. But she worked hard. And she was honest. And times, you know, she had she had a good heart, she would, she would help a stranger when she probably needed to be doing something for herself. For instance, here's a Gloria story, My sister's father in law passed away. And I ran over to the house. And one of the neighbors was picking up pine straw in the pastor's yard, and he was handicapped. He couldn't get on the riding lawn mower, but he was in a wheelchair at home. So his lawnmower had gotten too close to the ditch. And he tipped over and was sort of half in the ditch in half out. So I ran and looked for my brother-in-law. Gloria was the only person home so she ran out in her apron, and she and I just lifted him back on his riding lawn mower back onto the road so that he could continue on with his grass cutting. She's just that person. I mean, she didn't hesitate. She just dropped it and ran. And basically, I don't even know, I had my hands on the lawn mower. She said it herself. That's just and that was how she was.

Mandy Matney 31:47

But as kind and sweet as Gloria was, she had a very tough life. I've been told that she was homeless multiple times while working for the Murdaugh family. And I'll repeat that while working for the Murdaugh family who owned multiple homes, while Gloria was raising their children.



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Kim Brandt 32:05

All the family worked there, they just struggled. They never seem to have a vehicle that, you know, we think we take things for granted, like having a job, a consistent job, where you had regular hours, and a working vehicle. And as a safe, comfortable home, you have a roof over your head that didn't leak. And you weren't concerned about whether or not your electric bill was going to be you were, were going to be able to pay your electric bill or, or get gas for your vehicle. It was just there was always a struggle.

Mandy Matney 32:40

Now, lawyers Eric Bland and Ronald Richter, who specialize in attorney malpractice, are fighting for justice for Gloria's family.

Eric Bland 32:49

Think about the type of courage it finally took for them to go see a lawyer and pursue a possible claim against the Murdaughs. Now they want answers, which they've wanted from the start about the money. Now they want answers about their mother. And you know, right now until Alice has proven otherwise she died because of the dogs. But they also want justice. Now, Justice comes in many forms. You know, it comes in getting the money like you said that they deserve. But if somebody you know if a 57 year old woman died prematurely at somebody's hands, well then justice has to be served for that too.

Mandy Matney 33:33

So we've learned a lot more about Gloria Satterfield in her interactions with the Murdaugh family and who she was as a person, and we're gonna save that for another episode. So stay tuned to the Murdaugh Murders Podcasts. And as always check out FITSnews.com. That's fitsnews.com for the latest updates in this insane saga. The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created by me, Mandy Matney and my fiance David Moses. Our executive editor is Liz Farrell,

DAVID MOSES 34:15

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