



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

[00:00:00] **Mandy Matney:** I don't know how we've made it this far, but it's been an honor having you along this 99-week journey for 93 episodes. This is the last episode of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast, and that is a big deal. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for more than four years now. This is a very special episode of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast produced by my husband David Moses and written with journalist Liz Farrell.

[00:00:48] First of all, we aren't going anywhere, so please don't freak out. We are simply changing the name of the podcast while the mission stays the same. Our podcast will only get better from here, with more cases to cover, more journalists to work with, and I love this part, more time to do these podcasts. Covering breaking news on a weekly podcast is tricky and stressful, and it usually resulted in a lot of rushed work, sleepless nights, and last-minute cranking. I can't tell you how many times the plan for the entire episode changed less than 24 hours before publication. It was too many. We will be planning ahead with a more cohesive work schedule focused on Premium members. MMP Premium is going to change for the better, too. The platform is getting a facelift, becoming more user-friendly, more exciting, and more informative. MMP Premium will transition to Luna Shark Media, and it will be the platform for all of our podcasts, news articles, case files, and exclusive video content. We want it to continue to be a space where you can connect with a supportive community, learn from others, and do some good. The podcast will still be free on this same feed, and if you subscribe to this feed on Apple or Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts now, you will continue to get alerts for new episodes when we change the name.

[00:02:22] That said, before we make the switch, we all wanted to take some time going down the twisted, complicated memory lane of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast. MMP has been so much more than just work for our entire team over the past two years. Before we worked up the courage to publish this first episode, this was a story Liz and I particularly were caring for years. And when the murders happened, the weight of this story became the lump in my throat that I knew I had to get out. I was a different person when this podcast started in 2021. And in these 93 episodes, you've heard me grow from a self-conscious and uneasy 31-year-old unsure of what she wanted to a confident journalist driven by a clear mission of speaking the truth. And you cheered us on as our team has grown and expanded. You supported our work



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

when it felt like the entire world was against us. I want to start by saying thank you for believing in us. There would not be 93 episodes of MMP without you and your unwavering and powerful support. There were so many times when I wanted to quit, but y'all kept me going. So for this episode, before we start tackling other complicated cases, we want to take some time to reflect on the last two years; to remember the good, bad, ugly, and straight-up strange things we have revealed on MMP; to remember where we started and see how far we've come; to remind everyone that if we can do this, you can do it, too.

[00:04:00] In the beginning — and that would be June 22nd, 2021 — this pesky little podcast started with these words:

[00:04:12] "I don't know who killed Paul Murdaugh. I don't know who killed Maggie Murdaugh. I can't say who killed Stephen Smith. I don't know who, if anyone, killed Gloria Satterfield. But I think I know who killed Mallory Beach, and I know that her family will never get justice in her case, and that keeps me up at night."

[00:04:34] Oh, man, I have so many mixed emotions listening to this. But ultimately, pride overshadows all of them, and I will tell you why. The first episode, which was only 10 minutes long, took dozens of hours to produce. Some sentences literally took me an hour to get through. I have always hated the sound of my own voice, and I assumed everyone did, too. All of the true crime podcasts I had listened to before had entire production teams and took months to make a few episodes. I knew we weren't going to sound like that, and I thought it was silly to even try to sound like we could compete. Essentially, we didn't know what we were doing. We just knew that so few people understood the real story of the Murdaugh family. And we knew if we didn't do something big, a different narrative would take over. So I know. It sounds rough listening to these beginning episodes. And I've thought about this many times about re-recording those first few episodes. But I want people to hear the progress that we've made. I want people to know that it's okay to publish something that has all the pieces but doesn't look or sound completely perfect. It's okay to sound like you have a lot to learn. And I'm proud of this because ultimately, the reporting was accurate, which is what I



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

thought people would focus on. There were a few things I said in that episode that I listen to now and think, "Dang! If I only knew what was ahead." Like this:

[00:06:09] "I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for the better part of two and a half years now, and it is by far the craziest, most twisted saga I have ever written. In the last two weeks, I've seen national media swarm in on this saga, and many of them are just not getting it. This is just not a case where you can parachute in and get right. Like I said, it's twisted, and every turn takes you down a very dark rabbit hole. You don't know who to trust, you don't know who you can talk to, and the rumors are just as crazy as the truth."

[00:06:42] Oh my gosh. I truly thought it was crazy then, and it was when there was only one ongoing lawsuit against the Murdaughs, no criminal charges besides Paul in the boat crash, but so many rumors to sort through and pull strings at, particularly in four cases: the boat crash that killed Mallory Beach, Stephen Smith's murder, Gloria Satterfield's death and death settlement, and the double homicide. In that first episode, we told you a little bit about what happened to Mallory Beach.

[00:07:16] "Evidence suggests that 19 year old Paul Murdaugh was drunkenly driving a boat that crashed just outside of Parris Island, South Carolina around 2 AM."

[00:07:24] **Anthony Cook:** What bridge — Paul, what bridge is this?

[00:07:26] **911 Emergency Dispatcher:** 911. What's your emergency? Hello?

[00:07:41] **Anthony Cook:** We're in a boat crash on Arthur's Creek. There's six of us and one is missing.

[00:07:48] **Mandy Matney:** "19-year-old Mallory Beach was ejected into the dark water during the crash. Her body was found a week later. Mallory was a bright, bubbly teenager who lit up every room she walked into. She was the embodiment of a sweet Southern girl. Mallory had long, blonde hair and a stunning smile. Most of all, she was the type of person who was genuinely



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

kind to everyone she met. She suffered a horrific death on February 24th, 2019, and so many lives were forever changed by her death."

[00:08:18] We told you about what happened to Stephen Smith, where the investigation went wrong and how the Murdaughs were never named as suspects. But their names came up more than 40 times in the investigation files.

[00:08:31] "We have to go back to 2015, to the shocking, horrific death of Stephen Smith. I will be clear here: the Murdaughs were never named as suspects in Stephen's death. But like the 2019 boat crash, the 2015 investigation into Stephen's death was chaotic from the beginning, clouded by jurisdictional confusion and suspicions of investigative interference. Smith was found dead in the middle of Sandy Run Road in Hampton County around 4 AM on July 8th, 2015. He was 19 years old at the time of his death. Crime scene photos are horrific. Stephen's face was covered in blood. There was a 7-inch gaping hole on the right side of his forehead. His head was misshapen by blunt force. Officially, Stephen's death was classified as a hit-and-run, and that decision skewed the entire investigation off course. The theory was that Stephen got hit by a truck mirror, which is hard for anyone to believe, especially those who know Stephen. Also, there was no evidence at the scene that would lead anybody to believe that a vehicle did this to Stephen. Police found virtually no evidence at the scene — no tire marks, no debris from a vehicle, nothing. In the aftermath of his death, investigators with the South Carolina Highway Patrol received multiple tips linking Stephen's case to the Murdaugh family."

[00:09:52] **South Carolina Highway Patrol:** I'm not saying that the Murdaugh boy did it because I don't know yet, but if we're going to start throwing out names, I'm not withholding his name, you know, because of who he — his name's going to be out there just like anybody else's name that is on my radar.

[00:10:07] **Mandy Matney:** We told you about what happened to Gloria Satterfield, what little we knew about her death and death settlement.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

[00:10:14] "Just a few months before the fatal boat crash that killed 19-year-old Mallory Beach, Paul's father, Alex Murdaugh, settled a separate wrongful death claim. In that case, 57-year-old Gloria Satterfield died after a trip-and-fall in Hampton County on February 26, 2018, according to court documents. Documents do not say where Gloria fell or how she knew the Murdaughs, but several sources close to the case have said that she's the Murdaugh family housekeeper. Gloria left behind two sons. She liked tennis, loved kids, and her favorite color was purple, her obituary said. Most of all, she will be remembered for her laughter and her outgoing personality."

[00:10:55] And we told you about the double homicide investigation, the tiny pieces of information we knew at the time. But from what we knew, all of these cases seemed inextricably linked somehow, which is how we stumbled on our first catchphrase that came very naturally.

[00:11:14] "That is a big deal."

[00:11:16] We ended the episode on this promise.

[00:11:20] "We're not sure where this podcast is going, which is produced by my fiancé who has been sitting with me at our kitchen table all through the weekend, nights and weekends. And we don't know where the investigation is going. But every week, we're going to publish an episode on this saga, not only about the double homicide investigation, but about Stephen's case, and about Mallory's case, and about Gloria's case."

[00:11:48] And here we are, 99 weeks later, with some answers, some accountability, a couple convictions, but still a very long way to go. Now, a few things happened after we launched that first episode in June 2021. One, we had more listeners than I imagined. Well, people besides our friends and family were actually listening, which was exciting. And two, a lot of those listeners were not very nice people. And turns out, they hated the sound of my voice. A couple hours after publishing our first episode, I got the first of many, "You should fix your vocal fry" emails. This bothered me because I was so focused on my reporting at that time, and getting interrupted every few hours by someone who, quote, isn't trying to be mean but suggests getting a



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

better-sounding host. It was getting distracting and exhausting. I kept asking myself, "Would they say these things to a man?" And the answer was no, they wouldn't. And honestly, I didn't know what the term "vocal fry" meant so I looked it up and realized that it is essentially another tool that people use to police women's voices and bully them into silence. Against the advice of literally everyone who I talked to, I did something about that, and I addressed the vocal fry emails on the next show. I did this because people should know that their behavior is hurtful, and if we don't correct bad behavior here, then what are we doing exactly?

[00:13:33] "Also, this week, I learned what vocal fry was for the first time. Ugh, I hear it. Thank you, commenters. I am a journalist, not a podcaster. For the last three weeks, I have been on the phone all day, every day, chasing down leads in this case. Unlike the YouTubers and the other podcasters out there, literally all of the other podcasters working on this case, I'm actually doing real reporting here. It's exhausting. My voice will not be perfect. But the information will be accurate."

[00:14:06] Yes, I sound bitter and tired and angry there, and that was the first time I was truly, completely my authentic self on this podcast. I didn't think it was a big deal at the time, but it ended up being a crucial moment that made our podcast so different from the rest of true crime. It was a moment that a lot of fans have told me hooked them to the podcast. And it caught the ears of a lot of big names. A lot of women told me that they loved hearing a woman standing up for herself and how it was so important to hear a woman calling out bad behavior. And there were also plenty of people who told me that they stopped listening after that. So really, that little moment and the very polarized feedback we got from it helped shape the tone of MMP going forward. I wasn't going to just be a reporter but also a human whom my listeners could relate to and trust. When we first started the podcast, I was sitting on two years of reporting about the Murdaugh family, the Stephen Smith case, the boat crash, and the Satterfield settlement. David and I had a simple goal: to complete 10 episodes diving into the Stephen Smith case and the boat crash while we waited to get information in the double homicide case. Just about the only substantial piece of information that was publicly released that summer was the 911 call Alex made. And even in that redacted



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

phone call, Alex Murdaugh managed to tell the world who he really was and what he cared about.

[00:15:45] **911 Emergency Dispatcher:** Okay, do you see anything? Do you see anyone in the area?

[00:15:50] **Alex Murdaugh:** No, ma'am. No, ma'am.

[00:15:53] **911 Emergency Dispatcher:** What color is your house on the outside? What color is your house on the outside?

[00:15:59] **Alex Murdaugh:** It's white. You can't see it from the road.

[00:16:01] **911 Emergency Dispatcher:** Okay. Is it a house or a mobile home?

[00:16:04] **Alex Murdaugh:** It's a house.

[00:16:05] **Mandy Matney:** Can I just say the audacity of that man to be offended when asked if he lives in a mobile home after murdering his wife and son? And something else a listener pointed out to us in the early days of the podcast, in this clip, it sounds like Alex says, "Paul, why did you have to get involved?" under his breath as the 911 operator questioned him.

[00:16:31] **911 Emergency Dispatcher:** Okay, and was anyone else supposed to be at your house?

[00:16:35] **Alex Murdaugh:** No, ma'am.

[00:16:36] **Mandy Matney:** The 911 call was a big moment in the investigation. The tone of Alex voice, the inauthentic crying, the muttering about Paul — it all told me that we were on the right track looking into Alex. Liz and I had a gut instinct from the moment that we found out about the double homicide that Alex had something to do with it and that it had to do with the boat crash somehow. But tying that all together and trying to figure it out felt like putting a puzzle together in a hurricane: impossible, exhausting, and it felt



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

ridiculous, especially with the amount of pushback I was getting from people online calling me a conspiracy theorist and other names. But with the encouragement of David, Liz, and so many others, particularly hearing from the people of Hampton County reach out and say thank you for saying what finally needs to be said, I kept going, or at least I tried. After running into so many brick walls, trying to pull strings in the double homicide investigation, I spent a lot of time filing FOIAs and talking to sources to better understand what happened the night Mallory Beach died. I figured understanding the boat crash, this monumental event in the Murdaugh family dynasty, we could start figuring everything else out.

[00:17:58] **Anthony Cook:** Do y'all know Alex Murdaugh? That's his son.

[00:18:04] **Then-Beaufort County Deputy Sherriff Stephen Domino:** That's who was driving the boat?

[00:18:08] **Anthony Cook:** Good luck.

[00:18:08] **Then-Beaufort County Deputy Sherriff Stephen Domino:** Well, it don't matter who you know.

[00:18:10] **Mandy Matney:** "Here, Domino rejected this assumption that Good Ole Boy politics would play a role in this investigation. He said, "Well, it don't matter who you know" to Anthony. Here, Domino asked Anthony one more time who was driving the boat.

[00:18:27] **Then-Beaufort County Deputy Sherriff Stephen Domino:** Hey, the driver is the one with no clothes on, correct?

[00:18:33] **Anthony Cook:** To be honest with you.

[00:18:33] **Then-Beaufort County Deputy Sherriff Stephen Domino:** The one you were getting mad at back there, he had — he was in his drawers.

[00:18:37] **Anthony Cook:** He was the last one driving whenever I got down in the floor of the boat and held on to my girlfriend. Yes, sir.





## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

[00:18:43] **Then-Beaufort County Deputy Sherriff Stephen Domino:** Let me know if you need another cigarette. He's got still got clothes on, correct?

[00:18:52] **Anthony Cook:** Yeah.

[00:18:52] **Then-Beaufort County Deputy Sherriff Stephen Domino:** Alright. That's what — yeah, they're good. Everybody's good physical-wise. Okay. But I just wanted to — we need to know exactly who's driving and that's you said that was the last one you saw. So that's why I told them 'cause his ass will be responsible, okay? You hear me? Don't worry about that. We're gonna handle it on that end, okay? Alright?

[00:19:15] **Mandy Matney:** Anthony said it. "Y'all know Alex Murdaugh? That's his son driving the boat. Good luck." Anthony knew that the mess was ahead of them. He knew there would be nothing normal about the boat crash investigation. He knew local cops didn't stand a chance up against the Murdaugh dynasty. He knew that the Murdaugh's justice system was different from everyone else's. And Anthony was right, and what he said that night was so important to understanding this story. After publishing that seventh episode about the boat crash, I remember looking at David and saying that I don't want to do this anymore. I was proud of the work, but it was August at that point. Days, nights, and weekends were merging together, and I was starting to resent the work we were doing, even though I knew how important it was. I was planning on taking a break for a few weeks or maybe forever. Then, something happened that changed the entire course of this story. We'll be right back.

[00:20:27] **News Reports:** "A shooting in Hampton County this evening." "Breaking now — a prominent South Carolina attorney at the center of a murder mystery found shot in the head." "Alex Murdaugh, whose wife and son were shot to death back in June, was shot in the head himself." "This morning, a South Carolina man whose wife and son were brutally murdered in June now recovering after someone shot him this weekend."



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

[00:20:50] **Mandy Matney:** "I don't know who shot Alex Murdaugh, but I will tell you everything I know in this special breaking edition of the Murdaugh Murders Podcast."

[00:20:58] In that episode, written two days after the shooting, we pushed back against the narrative Team Murdaugh was pushing out. I'm really proud of this clip I'm gonna play because I remember going back and forth about questioning the Murdaughs at a time like this when the public seemed overwhelmingly sympathizing with Alex. I felt crazy because my gut was telling me something was clearly wrong here, but 99% of the media seemed so convinced that Alex was an innocent bystander struck by two recent tragedies, which is exactly what he wanted.

[00:21:34] "However, a powerful attorney named Jim Griffin, who works for the Murdaugh family, told the *Hilton Head Island Packet* that Alex Murdaugh stopped on the side of the road after experiencing car trouble while traveling to Charleston from his home in Islandton, which is also known as Moselle. But here's what's weird: the location of the shooting is out of the way from the direct route to Charleston from Islandton. While the Murdaughs' attorney made it look like this was a drive-by shooting, it's telling to me that SLED did not include that narrative in its release nor did they include any information about the alleged suspect vehicle. Also, they never called Alex Murdaugh a victim in their news release. And that same attorney told several news outlets that Alex was taken to a hospital in Charleston, and that appears to be incorrect information. How could he get that wrong? That's very basic information about his client that shouldn't have been released to reporters if he wasn't positive about it. And if he was wrong about that, what else was he wrong about? A spokesperson for the family issued a statement Saturday night and said that Alex Murdaugh was expected to recover from his gunshot wound. Quote, we expect Alex to recover and ask for your privacy while he recovers, end quote. So while we don't know much about the shooting, the timing is noteworthy as recent headlines have not favored Alex Murdaugh at all. Two weeks ago, news broke that Solicitor Duffie Stone, who has a long list of conflicts of interest in connection to the Murdaugh family, quietly recused himself in the double homicide. Stone's recusal made a lot of people believe that the investigation was pointing toward Alex. Before Stone recused himself, he basically said it was because there were no suspects named in the



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

case. And then when he suddenly recused himself and didn't tell any media about it for weeks, Stone cited developments in SLED's investigation that made him step away."

[00:23:30] After that episode published, everything changed. The podcast soared from the bottom of the charts to number one on Apple and Amazon on September 16th, 2021. We went from thousands of listeners to hundreds of thousands of listeners in just a couple weeks. I couldn't believe it because things like this never happened to me. At that point, my work accomplishments on paper were just a few small-scale journalism awards. Like I said before, from the beginning, I knew that we didn't have the manpower or time to compete with a bigger podcast, and I didn't ever think that we could. Yet there we were, beating the very podcast that I had been so envious of. For the first time, I actually saw that there was a future for us in this podcasting thing. But maybe, just maybe, I was pretty good at it. I wasn't used to being good at things. But there really wasn't time to celebrate. Every day was a new, fresh hell in the world of Alex Murdaugh. Surprise! He's a drug addict. Surprise! He stole millions from his law firm. Surprise! He actually hired a man named Eddie Smith to shoot him, but Eddie apparently missed, and now we have to figure out if there was an actual shooting at all.

[00:24:43] In all of that chaos, what I really wanted to find out was what happened to Gloria Satterfield. She was the one victim that at that point, we knew so little about. We hit several dead ends that summer trying to figure out what happened with Gloria's death settlement, and this is when Eric Bland flew in like Superman in a time when this story really, really needed a hero and a lot of energy.

[00:25:09] "Now, we'll fast forward to last week, September 14th, 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 this 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 in 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.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

[00:25:48] **Eric Bland:** She was the 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 maintained that they have not received any distribution from any settlement proceeds. And our goal is to get answers for them and to make sure that people who have, you know, represented them and have duties to them have done what they're supposed to do for these boys. That's our goal.

[00:26:25] **Mandy Matney:** It's crazy looking back at all of this knowing that Alex is now trying to get out of an insurance fraud lawsuit by once again throwing the Satterfield family in front of a Mack Truck with literally no concern for anyone but himself. It was around this time in September '21 that I started to hear that the Satterfield settlement wasn't just the \$505,000 listed in the single court filing that I found in 2019, which I wrote about twice before the murders. Even knowing that it was going to be a bigger number, I wasn't prepared to hear that Alex somehow managed to get his insurance companies to pay out more than four million dollars and that the Satterfields didn't see a dime of that settlement. I remember Eric's utter shock at what we were finding that not only Alex stole this money, he had done so in spite of there being mechanism after mechanism to catch him; to stop someone like him from doing this. What I was hearing at the time was so hard to believe and yet so easy to believe. Alex Murdaugh had helpers. We knew this about him. We knew that he had people willing to look the other way. We knew he was super close to judges in the 14th Circuit. We just didn't know how far those judges were willing to go for him. And take Judge Carmen Mullen, for instance, who is still on the bench. After it became clear that Judge Mullen had allowed Alex to take his name off the Satterfield case and after she had approved the settlement despite the multiple red flags right in front of her face, Eric did something that we hadn't seen done before in this state. He threatened to depose Judge Mullen. And then, he was quickly slapped for it by Judge Mullen's mentor, Judge Casey Manning — the same judge who recently approved the secret shady deal that allowed convicted murderer Jeroid Price to be released from prison 15 years early. What a mess, right? We have been screaming about this since 2021.

[00:28:34] "So around the same time that Judge Carmen Mullen signed the secret settlement, she also recused herself from the boat crash due to her



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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, appeared 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.

[00:29:04] **Eric Bland:** She then signed an order. That's the third document I sent you. When you look at that order, the first thing you should say to 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 to yourself is, "I'm going to look at that last page, the settlement disbursement sheet." And you see it's signed by Chad Westendorf and judge — that was given to Judge Mullen for her to approve that order, and 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 even, not \$105,013, but \$105,000 even of, quote, prosecution expenses. What the hell is that?

[00:30:26] **Mandy Matney:** Eric caught up with the chaos of the Murdaugh story very quickly. He knew this was much bigger than one case, and it was so relieving to have another voice, particularly a male attorney voice, calling out the corruption.

[00:30:48] **Eric Bland:** I think we're only halfway through the — because I think that this citadel of this Murdaugh, the Murdaugh citadel, is gonna 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 gonna be completely different, whether Duffie Stone, you know, stays solicitor, who knows? I don't see — Cory Fleming keeps his law license. But who knows, you know? Obviously, Alex won't or shouldn't. I think the chief justice of our Supreme Court's gonna look at how the court system is run down there and clerks of court and probate court and how it's all run. I think there's gonna be a whole — of disinfecting on that whole town because of all this. And you guys keep doing the sunlight you're doing. And, you know, nothing can get swept under the rug.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[00:31:50] **Mandy Matney:** As Alex's financial crimes were finally being brought to light, Team Murdaugh's narrative about the alleged shooting incident fell apart.

[00:31:59] "Two weeks after Alex Murdaugh appeared injury-free at his bond hearing in a suicide-for-hire scheme, one big question remains in the made-for-Hollywood Murdaugh murder saga. Was Alex Murdaugh actually shot? The disgraced attorney appeared without a scratch at his Hampton County bond hearing 13 days after the alleged shooting, raising major questions about everything we heard from Murdaugh's attorneys Jim Griffin and Dick Harpootlian this month. Is he actually in rehab? Was he ever shot? Where did all of his money go? Did he really have a drug problem, and what are they trying to distract us from? To recap, on September 4th, 2021, which was the Saturday of Labor Day weekend, Alex Murdaugh was allegedly shot. The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, which is the same agency that is investigating nearly all of the alleged crimes associated with the Murdaugh family, released a statement the day after the shooting that said that Alex's head wound was superficial. They never called him a victim. They never gave any suspect descriptions of the shooter. And they kept their statements simple, which, to me, was a hint that the story that the Murdaugh camp was feeding the media was false. Around the same time, Alex Murdaugh's lawyers Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin started to embark on a week-long spin campaign in an attempt to control the narrative and make Alex appear like the victim. They repeatedly fed the media a story that did not make sense: that Alex was changing a tire on the side of a rural Hampton County road when a man drove up to him and shot him."

[00:33:40] And way back in the fall of 2021, we started connecting the dots between the shooting and the double homicide. Not gonna lie, it felt good listening to 2021 Mandy say this.

[00:33:53] "Three months before the shooting, Alex Murdaugh's wife and son were found murdered on the family's 1,700-acre property in Colleton County, South Carolina. Now that we know that Alex was stealing money from his own law firm and he had a hearing coming up in the boat crash lawsuit that would force him to reveal his financial situation, it's clear that Alex was facing an immense amount of pressure around the time of the double homicide. The



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

question is whether that pressure has anything to do with the double homicide. And keep in mind, Alex Murdaugh is a person of interest in that investigation, and he has been the only one that law enforcement has referred to as a person of interest in the double homicide."

[00:34:34] After Eddie Smith and Alex Murdaugh were both arrested in the alleged shooting, we saw for ourselves the kind of system in Hampton County that Alex Murdaugh was used to. It was essentially kangaroo court, with a judge who is, of course, a close relative of Alex's buddy Greg Alexander at the helm.

[00:34:56] "Dick Harpootlian, who is Murdaugh's high-priced attorney, argued that his client is not a danger to the community, but only a danger to himself. He painted Alex Murdaugh as a desperate, broke drug addict, while failing to mention how this desperate, broke drug addict could afford him as an attorney. But anyways, he asked for a low bond and argued that his client didn't have any money. And guess what the judge set Alex Murdaugh's bond at? \$20,000. The exact amount that was online several hours before the bond hearing, which is not how it's supposed to work. Was there a fix-in before the bond hearing? And while the prosecutor asked for a GPS monitor, the judge denied that request also. So while Alex Murdaugh's bond was set at \$20,000, Smith's, on the other hand, was set at \$55,000 cash."

[00:35:52] So round one was a win for Team Murdaugh. We forget about that moment sometimes, but it was important. I think the rest of the story would have played out just like that if there wasn't so much sunlight and pressure that finally made the South Carolina Supreme Court step in and have Judge Newman take over the Murdaugh cases. I honestly don't want to know how differently things would have played out if they kept the cases in Hampton County with local judges. It is scary to think about. The good news, though, is that we learned that sunlight works, and we kept a harsh spotlight on our judicial system. And that is when Eric Bland and his endless energy really brought the heat.

[00:36:39] **Eric Bland:** He needs to eat from the same trough of justice that every other citizen in our state eats from. And it's patently obvious exactly what happened through the documents that are now in the public domain



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

that he stole \$3.6 million dollars from my clients. More importantly, his own law firm, in a public pleading, has said he did it to other clients through the same exact method. So I gotta believe in our state, in one system of justice and not two systems of justice. But the longer this guy gets to sit in the treatment facility and try to get himself better and could possibly still commit more crimes by getting rid of some of the money or figuring out a way that it can't be traced or found, then sooner or later, somebody in our state's going to say, well, if you commit a crime with a pen, it's not as bad as if you do it with a gun.

[00:37:40] **Mandy Matney:** We got brave in the fall of 2021, and we got mad. We asked the questions that no one else was asking, like particularly, why hadn't Alex Murdaugh been arrested for the Satterfield crime?

[00:37:56] **Eric Bland:** You don't have to prove every single crime that was committed before you arrest somebody and charge them with serious crimes. Prosecutors all the time add additional counts. It's called supersedeas indictments. It's done all the time. But it will send a strong message to all those that he may be working with to get rid of this money or whoever is — commit these crimes that our state is serious and we're arresting and gonna hold these people accountable. But it's starting to be a joke. I mean, what more do you need? People go to jail when they — Is \$3.6 million not enough? Is \$10 million from the Murdaugh firm not enough? When is it enough if their goal is to get all these different co-conspirators or whatever? Well, then, you arrest somebody and you put pressure on them and you make people roll. That's what they do, right? You charge them with everything you can possibly do that's lawfully permissible. Alex Murdaugh, I could sit down with a law book and come up with 15, 20 crimes that he's committed that are serious felony with law, tougher jail sentences. The eyes of the nation are on this case.

[00:39:17] **Mandy Matney:** And little by little, we started to see some accountability in the system.

[00:39:23] "On the morning of October 14th, agents with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, also known as SLED, arrested Alex Murdaugh and charged him in relation to the Gloria Satterfield case. Murdaugh was charged with two felony counts of obtaining property by false pretenses. He faces up





## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

to 10 years in prison for each charge. According to a statement from SLED, the charges stem from a SLED investigation into millions of dollars of misappropriated settlement funds in the death of Gloria Satterfield."

[00:39:56] It turned out, Eric Bland was really good at the whole podcasting thing, and he said things that no one else was saying about Alex Murdaugh. And he reminded the world what these crimes were doing to the victims.

[00:40:28] **Eric Bland:** It's a tremendous betrayal they're feeling. And then they went to — They want to know — they want to believe that their mother died accidentally. They don't want to have to live with the thought nor does the family that their mother or their sister was murdered. So they believed the explanation that the dogs caused the fall. And then today, it was this dark reality that this is a really bad person. Alex Murdaugh's a really, really, really bad person. That's the bottom line, and that's a tough pill to swallow when you've, you know, seen this man walk around town like he's the cock of the walk. He's just a really bad person. There's no bottom to him.

[00:41:03] **Mandy Matney:** So Judge Newman was picked specifically by the South Carolina Supreme Court after that first round in Hampton County embarrassed the bigwig judges in Columbia. When Newman stepped in, the game changed. The scales were finally no longer tilted in the Murdaughs' favor.

[00:41:22] "After a short recess, South Carolina Circuit Judge Clifton Newman officially denied bond for Alex Murdaugh. He said that Murdaugh presented a danger to both himself and the community. He said he couldn't provide a bond at this time with safety of others in mind. Newman also ordered a psychiatric evaluation for Murdaugh while he's behind bars. Now, this decision was shocking to many of us in the courtroom, especially the few of us who have been following this story since 2019. I've seen Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin represent the Murdaughs at four different bond hearings — two of them were for Paul's DUI charges in 2019 and two for Alex's recent charges. In three of those other times, the judge gave them exactly what they wanted and no questions asked. But this time, the judge took these two lawyers and many of us completely by surprise. It is not typical for a judge to deny bond in a non-capital case. But then again, this case is anything but typical. As we



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

were driving back from the hearing in Columbia yesterday, Eric Bland called me."

[00:42:27] **Eric Bland:** I just think it's a good day again for our justice system and I'm confident that he will be charged with that third check. Now, I'm confident that that may not be the end of it for him. Today was the day that Alex starts to get comfortable getting uncomfortable; that if he looked around the corner and there wasn't a friend in sight for him; that he's going back to that jail cell and he's gonna have a lot of thinking to himself. Who's there for me now? No one. That's what happens when you, you know — there's nothing worse than somebody who steals from the family of the very woman who raised your children. It's just — it's despicable. He's just a bad, bad person. This judge listened. He was very deliberate, and he recognized that — I said to him, I said, "Look. The eyes of the world are on this courtroom today." He wasn't gonna be a Dick Harpootlian lunch special, you know? \$2.99 you get a turkey sandwich and fries and you're out of there. He's served a full meal of justice.

[00:43:27] **Mandy Matney:** Of course, Dick and Jim fought Newman's decision, and Judge Newman denied Alex's bond twice. That is when Eric Bland said the phrase, "Cup of justice" for the first time.

[00:43:39] "Bland told me that he thinks Judge Newman's decision should stick. And on a broader scale, Eric believes that Newman's decision shows that the wheels of the South Carolina justice system are now spinning in the right direction."

[00:43:52] **Eric Bland:** I think our justice system is now working as fully intended; that you have a judge that, based on his background, views these crimes seriously. Two, that they're not treating Alex Murdaugh or his high-powered lawyers any differently than any other charged criminal in this state; and that Alex now realizes he's drinking from the same cup of justice that every other charged criminal in this state must drink from. And that has to scare him because he can't manage his defense from a jail cell. And he can't manage his finances anymore because they're now in the hands of a court-appointed receiver who is, in real time, you know, taking actions based on what Alex is doing. Like last Friday, they filed a motion to say the



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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enforcement of those confessions of judgement. The noose is tightening around Alex's neck. That's the noose of justice.

[00:44:55] **Mandy Matney:** And while Alex was finally behind bars, we kept asking questions about the shooting and the double homicide. Turns out, they were the right questions to ask.

[00:45:06] "And what was the point of all of this? Was he trying to end his life? Was he trying to get drugs at the hospital? Was he trying to do something to get the public to feel sorry for him? Or did he want people to believe that drug dealers were after him and his family? Or was all of this just a big distraction from the double homicide investigation?"

[00:45:27] At this point, everything became so overwhelming. I felt like I was constantly drowning in breaking news, and the cases were multiplying at a rate that I couldn't keep up with. I am a competitive reporter. At that point, I wanted to be the first and the best to every Murdaugh scoop out there, which honestly became impossible. But I was disappointed in myself when I wasn't first or best. Liz, who has been my best friend for years and my partner in helping figure out this Murdaugh mess behind the scenes even when she wasn't working in journalism, gave up her career in law enforcement to work with us on the podcast. She could see me drowning and she did what good friends do. They step up to help you when it's really, really crucial, and it really matters. I love this clip when I introduced Liz for the first time. I can hear hope in my voice.

[00:46:19] "Live from the kitchen table studio, I want to introduce you to our new Murdaugh Murders Podcast co-host Liz Farrell. Liz is my best friend, role model, former work wife, and forever partner in true crime. Liz taught me everything I know about investigative journalism. She was there with me at the beginning of the story on day one, which was February 24th, 2019, the day that Mallory Beach died. Together, we started pulling at strings as we investigated the tangled web of the Murdaugh family in Hampton County. Liz was sitting across from me on the day that we now know was so important — the day that I found the one public document connected with the Satterfield settlement."



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[00:47:05] I've looked back and found Liz's first words on the podcast, and they were incredibly supportive and kind — a reminder that teamwork makes the dream work.

[00:47:16] **Liz Farrell:** "We had heard a lot about the Murdaugh family and their influence. We were told by our law enforcement sources — yes, there are good cops in the Lowcountry — that it was already looking like the fix was in on the boat crash investigation. When Mandy first found that filing, the words "wrongful death" obviously rang alarm bells. And it was exciting from a journalist's perspective that our team had discovered a new angle. But more than that, it was another example of why Mandy is such a good journalist and stands apart from most. She will go the distance and look under every rock to make sure she is getting to the truth of a situation. Mandy's immediate instinct was that something wasn't right with the filing. As we learn more about Alex, there was a clear conflict of interest in who was representing the Satterfield family — Alex's friend, Cory Fleming. But we had no idea at that time just how much this one document would end up changing the entire course of Alex Murdaugh's story. Without that moment of Mandy discovering that filing and writing about it, this past Friday never would have happened."

[00:48:16] We'll be right back.

[00:48:21] From the second I got the phone call in June 2021 that Maggie and Paul had been murdered, it was really hard for me to sit and watch from the sidelines. Though, I guess you could say I didn't exactly sit and watch. Even though I was no longer working at a newspaper, I was very much reporting the story from behind the scenes and passing on information to reporters because I was so scared that this investigation would get swept under the rug. I was so scared that the Murdaughs' narrative would win out in the headlines and then that would be that. It wasn't just hard to not be a journalist during that time though. It was harder to watch everything that was getting dumped on Mandy. She was shouldering so much and was in such unfamiliar territory for that entire summer and part of that fall. None of us had had any experience dealing with a story that had this level of national interest. And frankly, I don't think many stories even compare at this point. So when I joined the podcast, it really felt no different from driving through the night to get to a friend or family member in need. It was just this really big



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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rush of adrenaline and it was like, okay, I'm here now. We got this. We can do this.

[00:49:32] **Mandy Matney:** During that 19th episode with Liz's and Eric's voices in it, I felt something I have never felt in over a decade of working in journalism: validation. Like I was doing something that mattered. I still get messages from first time listeners telling me that they cried hearing Eric saying these words. So I want to play it again with the same message in mind — that you can do this, too.

[00:49:59] **Eric Bland:** But you did it! You! You uncovered the petition. You wrote the article. You were the spark that lit the fire. Eric Harriott saw your article and went to his sister, Ginger, and started asking questions. And then, the family asked questions, and then they went to Mark Tinsley, and then Mark Tinsley sent them to me. But Mandy Matney, you lit the spark! You took down Alex Murdaugh.

[00:50:29] **Mandy Matney:** "I couldn't have done it without you."

[00:50:30] **Eric Bland:** I helped. I helped. I helped.

[00:50:32] **Mandy Matney:** "You definitely helped a whole lot."

[00:50:37] With that motivation and momentum, piece by piece, week by week, we started to learn more about each case. But the rabbit holes kept multiplying and getting deeper. There seemed to be rounds of indictments every month with new victims and new horrible stories.

[00:50:57] "On the night before Alex Murdaugh's scheduled bond hearing for the 27 charges he faced in November, the 53-year-old was hit with 21 more charges, bringing his grand total to 53 charges. Alex Murdaugh has been behind bars on charges related to the Gloria Satterfield case since October 14th. Soon after, the South Carolina Attorney General's Office announced the seven indictments against Alex Murdaugh. We heard from several sources that the bond hearing scheduled for Friday morning was delayed."



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

[00:51:29] That is when Justin Bamberg descended like an angel from up above just when we needed him to help out Alex Murdaugh's financial victims and be a voice for the voiceless.

[00:51:45] "On December 16th, Justin dropped a press release where he pretty much went for the jugular. In his news release, Justin attacked the Good Ole Boy system that enabled Alex Murdaugh's bad behavior. He said Murdaugh literally PMPED-ed people's pockets, and he asked victims to email him at [pmpedmypockets@bamberglegal.com](mailto:pmpedmypockets@bamberglegal.com)."

[00:52:10] **Liz Farrell:** What Justin did here, it might be hard for people outside the state to understand just how bold of a move it was. He not only told the victims in the state that he was willing to go up against the great and almighty firm, he sort of did the unspeakable in his press release by openly using the let's call it alternative pronunciation of PMPED, which is pimped — pimped people's pockets. And then, he created a dang email address for it.

[00:52:37] **Justin Bamberg:** People's access to justice or being made whole, people's access to having someone fight for them should not be contingent on who's on the other side. And there are individuals in that office that, you know, I know. I respect. This is about the entity, and this is about the fact that people were done wrong. There's an underlying context associated with the practice of law, in my opinion, that is hanging in the balance here. And South Carolina has been known as a Good Ole Boy state for a very long time. I mean, that doesn't matter, whether you're talking law, politics, or what. And I've never really been in the Good Ole Boy system here. It is what it is. At the end of the day, Alex Murdaugh was a member of the firm. He presumptively put money up to help fund the operations of the firm. And quite frankly, the firm profited from Alex's misdeeds. They're on the hook here.

[00:53:56] **Mandy Matney:** And soon after Justin got involved, just when we thought things couldn't possibly get worse with Alex Murdaugh, that is when we found out about Hakeem Pinckney.

[00:54:07] "We need to talk about Hakeem Pinckney. Out of all of the Murdaugh stories that have come to light recently, this one hit me the



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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hardest. As attorney Justin Bamberg showed me a paper trail of evidence that appeared to indicate that Cory Fleming, Palmetto State Bank, and Alex Murdaugh stole from Hakeem's family, I got really sad and taken aback. Who steals from a deaf quadriplegic man's family, and just how evil are these people? Hakeem Pinckney was an inspiration. He spent his whole life overcoming the odds."

[00:54:44] **Pamela Pinckney:** He just was very energetic, very determined, very smart, intelligent, very bright, easy to catch on to anything.

[00:54:56] **Mandy Matney:** "That's his mother, Ms. Pamela, who was kind enough to talk to us about her bright and beloved son, Hakeem."

[00:55:04] Before Russell Laffitte and Cory Fleming were charged in the financial crimes, we aired this episode, which painfully showed the victim's perspective of Alex's crimes. How the crimes were so beyond stealing someone's money. They were crimes that truly traumatized people.

[00:55:25] **Pamela Pinckney:** I mean, to totally be honest about it, the way I feel is like, I just got the news that my son just passed away and I'm just going through the motion all over again. That's just how deep the pain is. But it's two times harder because I'm going through it on a second phase again, you know? I never thought I would have to relive this again. I thought I could just put my past behind me and press forward and move on with my life. But it's just so complicated to know that you put your trust and your emphasis in someone that says they have your best interests, look you in your face, tell you and your entire family that you have our best interests, we don't have anything to worry about, you got us 100%. And then, you go and you steal from us. Even though you got paid through legal fees and all this to work the case, you turn around and you steal on top of that from the family. And my son is deceased. That really — it tears me apart a little every day.

[00:56:38] **Mandy Matney:** And Justin Bamberg, he said exactly what all of us were thinking.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

[00:56:44] **Justin Bamberg:** Just think about it, right? Like, Hakeem dies on October 11th of 2011, okay? These checks that were payable to Palmetto State Bank were written after that. Everybody knew he died a horrible death. Can you imagine being Hakeem — and this is what makes me angry — can you imagine being Hakeem and your ventilator is unplugged and you're sitting there and you can't talk and you can't move and you can't hear but you're suffocating. Y'all it gets me so upset to think about and put myself like, put myself in his body in that moment. And then, to know that his mom has to think about that, too. And then, you steal her money, you know? And then, in 2017, you've got more money that's supposed to go to her. Not that money fixes any of this, right? Money doesn't fix any of it. These people — she would rather have her son than have a penny of money, right? All these people who went through these horrible, horrible accidents and got hurt and — Yeah, I had to have my back fused. I'd rather have a good back than have money. You see what I'm saying? And in this situation, Mandy, she has to come to grips with the fact that my son will never be the same, and now my son is gone, and all I can get is money. And she's gotta come to grips with that. I've done wrongful death cases, right? And it is hard as the lawyer to talk to the client about the value of life in terms of settling a case or in terms of a defendant paying money, like it actually makes things better. It doesn't make things better. It's the system that we have, right? It's our only option. For Cory Fleming, Alex, Palmetto State Bank to know all of this and not do things the right way — to give them every penny of what they're supposed to get — it is infuriating. It is disgusting. It is heartbreaking. It's cold. It's callous. Like people forget that at the end of the day, right — and I don't, you know, people believe different things. Me personally, I'm a Christian. I have strong beliefs in that regard, and I try to live my life a certain way. Every knee shall bow at the end of the day, and it feels like people ain't thinking about that, you know? Thou shall not kill. Don't steal. Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you. And even if you don't believe in anything, you still want to be a decent person, you know? And if you would steal money from somebody in Hakeem's position, what wouldn't you do? That's what I've been thinking about. What wouldn't you do? Because that's cold. That is cold as hell to do that.

[00:59:54] **Mandy Matney:** Cold as hell describes so many of the crimes that we have uncovered in the past few years. There were countless moments





## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

when Justin and Eric said exactly what needed to be said. Like this time, when Justin called out Palmetto State Bank.

[01:00:11] **Justin Bamberg:** You know, Palmetto State Bank has foreclosed on people's property before, you know? So obviously, they know how to count money and determine how much money they're due. They don't know how to keep up with how much money other people are due? Russell Laffitte doesn't know how to keep up with how much money the subjects of his conservatorship are due, you know? Something in the milk is not clean. You know, an old country saying. Something in the milk ain't clean either.

[01:00:37] **Mandy Matney:** There was a lot in the milk that ain't clean. As Alex's crimes came to light, we started digging into his past. We got a better sense of who he was and how he became this criminal who got away with so much for so long.

[01:00:54] **Justin Bamberg:** It was kind of like if you were in his group and he was buddies with you, then it was all good. But if you weren't, he just thought he was better than everybody else. I mean, he would be like, "My name's Alex Murdaugh. I can do what I want to" or "My daddy's Randolph, you know, he's the solicitor and my granddaddy was, too." And he was very much so from the get-go. And I met him at freshman orientation, which is before you start school, you know, in 1986. So I knew him the whole time I was there. He was like in my little group and I could tell then. You know, like, who is this guy? I think anybody that you talk to that is, you know, our age would say the same thing at school that was in school with us. I mean, he just had that reputation of being arrogant. Didn't — he would, you know, no, you know, just no compassion or whatever. Like he just didn't care. He didn't feel bad about it. And he was just very, you know, he just — he was Alex Murdaugh. He'd do what he wanted. So everybody knew who Alex was. Yeah, he just never got in trouble and knew that he could get away with. I mean, he would blatantly say we can do whatever we want to because we won't get in trouble.

[01:02:03] **Mandy Matney:** During this time, as we were trying to figure out who Alex was and how he became this horrible, Liz had a genius idea to FOIA for his jailhouse tapes. And wow, they were telling. This is when we all learn for ourselves just how manipulative Alex could be and how he continued to call



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

the shots from behind bars, especially when it came to liquidating his assets. Here is one of his calls with Buster.

[01:02:35] **Alex Murdaugh:** Where are you gonna be tomorrow?

[01:02:39] **Buster Murdaugh:** Here. Be here.

[01:02:41] **Alex Murdaugh:** Hey, please stay on John Marvin's ass to see about that stuff from Mark Ball and any of those other funds to put on that thing.

[01:02:48] **Buster Murdaugh:** Being taken care of in the morning.

[01:02:50] **Alex Murdaugh:** So Mark's gonna do it?

[01:02:51] **Buster Murdaugh:** Yep, they're writing the check in the morning. The check will be ready at 8:30. John's sending someone to pick it up and then simultaneously running it over to Palmetto State to apply it. And I'm driving to Charleston in the morning to pick up the check for the boat.

[01:03:04] **Alex Murdaugh:** They're gonna apply that, too?

[01:03:05] **Buster Murdaugh:** Correct.

[01:03:07] **Alex Murdaugh:** I mean, I don't see how they fuss when everything's being applied to the bank.

[01:03:10] **Buster Murdaugh:** Yeah, I mean.

[01:03:12] **Alex Murdaugh:** 10-4.

[01:03:13] **Buster Murdaugh:** So all that'll be done by lunch tomorrow.

[01:03:17] **Alex Murdaugh:** That makes me feel better. That'll be 3.50. How much has been put on it so far?



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:03:23] **Buster Murdaugh:** Dad, I don't have an exact figure. You know, a couple tens of thousands maybe, you know? Just selling pieces of equipment.

[01:03:31] **Alex Murdaugh:** Alright. Well, I love you and.

[01:03:35] **Liz Farrell:** The calls are also where we learned that Alex had paid Columbia attorney Butch Bowers to help him get Buster back into the University of South Carolina School of Law — something that might have worked had the public not found out about it.

[01:03:49] **Buster Murdaugh:** Is Butch paid all the money that he was owed?

[01:03:52] **Alex Murdaugh:** Yes. Up front, and he — it was up front, and it was 30 grand up front. 30.

[01:04:00] **Buster Murdaugh:** I mean, if there was a contingency on if it was successful. I'm just making sure. I don't want to call him if he doesn't have the shit he has. It was straight to hell.

[01:04:08] **Alex Murdaugh:** Nah, he knows he's totally paid.

[01:04:12] **Buster Murdaugh:** I mean, would he be willing to do something like that, you think?

[01:04:14] **Alex Murdaugh:** Absolutely, but I would do it yourself first.

[01:04:19] **Liz Farrell:** We also heard about Alex's amazing workout routines in jail over and over and over again.

[01:04:26] **Alex Murdaugh:** I'll tell you what I've started doing. You'd be proud of me. I really started exercising pretty dang hard. I mean, like, I mean, I was like almost 2 hours and 40 minutes today. Just 'cause we were shut in the room this morning. But, I mean, I've been like an hour and 15 or 20 minutes a day.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:04:49] **Buster Murdaugh:** Hey, man. That's good. That's very good.

[01:04:51] **Alex Murdaugh:** This is the start of my — I started on Friday the 12th and, I mean, I can tell a distinct difference already, you know? Well, I hadn't exercised in 25 years.

[01:05:07] **Buster Murdaugh:** Hey, me either, actually, you know?

[01:05:10] **Alex Murdaugh:** And, you know, I mean, and both laying around in rehab and then really from the — so for 38 days, I did very little. The last about the last about seven, I was up a lot more, but I still wasn't doing anything strenuous. So that was a month and a week. And then, when I came in here, I obviously thought I was getting out on the 19th, so I didn't do anything, and then I thought I was getting out shortly after that with Donna Maddox, you know? So I didn't do anything for about two and a half weeks in here. It really is longer than that. And then, I started doing a few push-ups. But for some reason, it made my head hurt after about a few days. But now it's not doing that. I guess I've gotten better.

[01:06:00] **Buster Murdaugh:** You told me that.

[01:06:01] **Alex Murdaugh:** I've gotten in better shape.

[01:06:03] **Liz Farrell:** And let's not forget the moment when we learned that not all lawyers paid attention in law school or watched *Legally Blonde*.

[01:06:10] **Alex Murdaugh:** They at least told me Dick came to see me yesterday and told me that the Supreme Court, you know, they filed a — I've heard of this, too, but I didn't know what it is. You know what a habeas corpus, a writ of habeas corpus is?

[01:06:22] **Buster Murdaugh:** I know it's something directly to the Supreme Court. But other than that, no, I don't know.

[01:06:28] **Liz Farrell:** And one of our favorite moments — when Buster told us all that he knows exactly who his dad is.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

[01:06:34] **Alex Murdaugh:** I get what you're saying. But, I mean, I made a deal with somebody I'd give them \$15. See, I can only do \$60 on my account.

[01:06:43] **Buster Murdaugh:** I understand. I'm just saying, and I'm not saying you are, man. I just really hope you're not in there doing anything you shouldn't be doing.

[01:06:49] **Alex Murdaugh:** Oh, no. I'm not doing anything. I promise you that's not the case.

[01:06:53] **Buster Murdaugh:** Alright, well, let me call her real quick and tell her to be on the lookout, and I would — do you have an idea of like time in there at all?

[01:07:01] **Liz Farrell:** Our release of the jailhouse calls made a lot of people angry, namely, Alex and his apologists. Immediately after our episode ran, Alex filed a lawsuit in federal court to stop his other phone calls from getting released. That strategy worked until we finally forced the issue and called them all out.

[01:07:22] "What's a good way to keep Alex and his attorneys from misrepresenting the truth? Invite the public to have a listen. Alex and his attorneys never expected that anyone would FOIA for those calls. Therefore, we were able to show the public Alex in his most authentic form, or at least as close to it as we could get. Those phone calls showed a man who seemed to think nothing of breaking the rules in jail and who clearly didn't get the message that he was impecunious. Those calls also directly contradicted many of the claims that Dick and Jim made to the judge to get Alex out of jail, which is important to know. Remember when they told you Buster had no money?"

[01:07:58] **Alex Murdaugh:** Do you want me to get him to give you just — I don't know, \$4,000 or \$5,000 so you just have and you don't have to worry about expenses?



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:08:06] **Buster Murdaugh:** No, because I've got that money. I've got, you know, I've got, I mean, right now, my bank account, I've got \$10,000.

[01:08:12] **Mandy Matney:** "Remember they said their client had no money."

[01:08:17] **Alex Murdaugh:** Jim's supposed to come by and meet with him. I'm trying to get the finances straight with him. And I gotta talk to John and see whether we gonna do a loan, and then I'm gonna pay it back out of an account later or we gonna have a letter from an opinion from a lawyer who does retirement accounts that rolling it over because, I mean, if you pay interest on something for — let's see — six years, then you could end up being more than the penalty. But we got to make sure the penalty doesn't open it up to creditors. I mean, you're gonna need that money.

[01:08:54] **Mandy Matney:** "And if Dick and Jim ever wanted you to believe that they were doing this work for Alex out of the goodness of their hearts because their poor, poor client could not afford them, the jailhouse phone calls said otherwise."

[01:09:07] **Alex Murdaugh:** I've got to get this finance stuff straight with Jim and Dick. I put some thought into it.

[01:09:13] **Liz Farrell:** Predictably, the rest of Alex's calls, the ones made between the time we FOIAed for and published the first round, not only gave us more insight into how awful Alex is as a human being, but how single-minded he is when it comes to getting this system to work in his favor or in Buster's favor. Remember his protracted effort to get Buster back into law school?

[01:09:36] **Buster Murdaugh:** Yeah, I mean, if I don't hear from him, I'm definitely shooting the phone up.

[01:09:40] **Alex Murdaugh:** Tomorrow?



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:09:41] **Buster Murdaugh:** And if I don't hear from him, I might get in touch with Butch. Just see if you can call him and say that I've been trying to get in touch with him.

[01:09:49] **Alex Murdaugh:** Alright.

[01:09:50] **Buster Murdaugh:** Is Butch paid all the money that he was owed?

[01:09:52] **Alex Murdaugh:** Yes.

[01:09:53] **Buster Murdaugh:** Okay.

[01:09:54] **Alex Murdaugh:** Up front, and he — it was up front, and it was 30 grand up front. 30.

[01:10:01] **Buster Murdaugh:** I mean, if there was a contingency on if it was successful. I'm just making sure. I don't want to call him if he doesn't have the shit he has.

[01:10:09] **Alex Murdaugh:** Nah, he knows he's totally paid.

[01:10:12] **Buster Murdaugh:** I mean, would he be willing to do something like that, you think?

[01:10:14] **Alex Murdaugh:** Absolutely. But I would do it yourself first. I'd just say, hey, just following up, you know, at the holidays. — That's what I'm saying. When do classes start?

[01:10:32] **Buster Murdaugh:** January the fifth.

[01:10:33] **Alex Murdaugh:** Fifth? Yeah. That's why really you need to send it tomorrow. And if you haven't heard from him by Friday — and I'd say something real nice, just like, hey, just following up on my email. I know this is a busy time of year, but was hoping we could meet soon. Just like that. Just —



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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or we could get a meeting set soon or a reset soon is what I'd say. And then say just say thank you for your attention. Something real nice like that.

[01:11:04] **Liz Farrell:** After the county jail finally released the calls we had FOIAed for, the calls basically stopped. It was very obvious to everyone that Alex had found a new way to communicate with his family, a way around the jail's phone monitoring system. Almost all of his calls moving forward were made to Jim Griffin's office, which automatically classified them as attorney-client privilege. To this day, we still don't know for sure whether he was having Jim's office make three-way calls for him, and we still don't know whether the Sheriff's Office, Attorney General's Office, and Office of Disciplinary Counsel ever looked into this. While the fight over the phone calls was happening, we were in a constant state of waiting for those murder charges but also for charges against Alex's alleged co-conspirators. That was one of the many tests. Would South Carolina's legal system be willing to finally police itself and send a message about what behavior is and what behavior is not tolerable? Or was this just going to be yet another thing that got swept under the rug? Starting in September 2021, it was obvious to us that Alex's best friend Cory Fleming should face charges for his alleged role in helping Alex steal the settlement money from the Satterfield family. But each month passed without any indictments. Finally, in March 2022, we got our golden day for justice, as Eric Bland put it back then. The state grand jury took on Cory Fleming.

[01:12:29] **Eric Bland:** Cory played a fundamentally important, material, absolutely imperative role. Could not have happened if you had an attorney who did their duties according to the rules of professional conduct. If they said to Alex, "Don't you talk to my client. That's my client. Don't you do disbursement sheets. That's my job. Don't you talk to the structure insurance company. That's my job. Don't you pick the personal representative for my client. That's my job." And he's the last — he's one of the last clear chances. Alex could have been like he is, the biggest thief in the world, but it could have been stopped by Cory. And like I've told you before, if Cory's asleep at the wheel or he wants to stay ignorant or willfully blind or too trusting — huh. I'm not sure I believe that — then Chad Westendorf. All he had to do was say, "The check's made out to me. I want to see all these documents because that's what I'm supposed to do as a PR. Show me the structured settlement





## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

---

documents from the insurance company, the annuity company, and Forge." Chad could have put an end to this. And then when Chad, if you want to say they picked a dunce like Chad is, well, then, Judge Mullen. She could have stopped all this. She could have simply asked, "How is it possible that there's \$11,500 in expenses in December of 2018 when there's no lawsuit?"

[01:14:05] **Liz Farrell:** After Cory was indicted, we then found out that he was fighting really hard to hold on to his law license in Georgia, where it had also been suspended. In an epic letter to the Georgia Bar, Cory admitted to making professional mistakes, but he denied knowing that he had been helping Alex steal his client's money.

[01:14:23] "So this letter needs to be bound and printed and distributed to every debate club in America. It's like one of those TikTok videos of cats delicately maneuvering their way through a cobweb of string. It is so epic that it reads like satire. You guys know how worked up Eric Bland gets when he's talking about what Cory allegedly did. That's because what Cory allegedly did in this case is so obviously and egregiously wrong and against the rules of professional conduct. Cory's lawyer trying to claim that here in South Carolina this was basically cool to do is as ridiculous as trying to return a box of Cheez-Its to Bloomingdale's. We know you didn't buy that here. You know you didn't buy that here. Plus, you ate all the Cheez-Its, so what are you doing?"

[01:15:07] In Cory's letter, we found out something else — that Alex had contacted him after the so-called roadside shooting. Alex's messages to Cory felt oddly intimate and overwrought, almost like a Civil War soldier's love letter to the woman he had left behind. That led to one of our favorite David reads and one of our favorite production moments.

[01:15:28] **David Moses (as Alex Murdaugh):** Dear Cory, Happy Thanksgiving to all of you. I'm so sorry for all the damage I have caused you and your family. You were the last person I would want to hurt, and I know I did. I'm still not sure how I let all this happen. I think about you all the time. I miss you more than you could know. I hope you are doing as good as you can under the circumstances. Let Jim know if I can do anything at all to help you in any way. Love and apologies to Eve and the children as well. Just wanted to say hello. I hope I get to see you or talk to you soon. I miss Mags and Paul so bad, but I



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

am more proud of Bust than ever. He has been so strong. Not sure how he does it given all I've put on him. Check on him if you get time and feel like it. All my love, Alex.

[01:16:30] **Liz Farrell:** In this whole Alex Murdaugh saga, there haven't been a lot of big laughs. But we'd be lying if we said that making that episode wasn't entertaining for us. We could not stop laughing at how ridiculous these men were. Alex actually introduced us to a bunch of ridiculousness. Remember when we found out he had bought a funeral home?

[01:16:50] "It obviously raised questions for us, such as this one: why did Alex Murdaugh buy a funeral home in Georgia? I swear there was one brief moment where I pictured grabbing my dog and my passport and moving to New Zealand where Alex could never find me because he probably doesn't know that's a country. Another important question it raised: is this where some of that allegedly stolen money went? So get this — it might have been. Here's why. Within the hour of me publishing this story, I got a text from Mandy. She was like, "You're not going to believe this. The funeral home guy is the father of one of Alex's victims, allegedly." It appears that Alex Murdaugh loaned money to a family from whom he is accused of stealing nearly \$600,000 from. And, as we found out a day later, that family, the alleged victims of one of Alex's schemes, says they paid back the money to Alex, the alleged thief. I mean, how perverse is that? Okay. So twist number one: Alex purchased a funeral home on behalf of someone else. Twist number two: that someone else is the father of Deon Martin, who was a teenager in 2013, when Alex represented him in a personal injury case. And Alex is literally facing felony charges for taking almost \$600,000 from him in 2015 and in 2016. Twist number three: after not answering the subpoena or the follow-up letter, John Martin hopped to it. The day after we published this story, he contacted us at FITSNews and gave us a whole bunch of paperwork that he said proved he and his wife had paid back Murdaugh. But soon after we received that email from Mr. Martin, the receivership team withdrew their motion. Now, twist number four: turns out, the Brunswick, Georgia business is not the first time Martin's Funeral Home has had a secondary location. And honestly, you guys are not going to believe this, but here it is: in 2009, after years of people whispering about this, an investigation was opened and the rumors turned out to be true."



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

[01:18:56] **Mandy Matney:** "Five years earlier, this man, James Hines, died at 60 years old. He died of skin cancer. He was a preacher and even a guitarist in a funk band. He lived in Allendale. So this funeral home called Cave Funeral Services, which no longer exists and you'll understand why in a second, handled the arrangements. At the funeral, Hines' body was displayed only from the chest up. He was in a regular-sized casket, which was notable because Mr. Hines was a big man. He was six feet seven inches tall. How did they get Mr. Hines to fit in his casket? An unlicensed employee who turned out to be the father of the funeral home director used an electric saw. Yes, I'm serious. He used an electric saw to cut off Mr. Hines' legs between the ankle and calf. And then, he put Mr. Hines' legs back in the casket with him. So it took five years, but finally, the coroner exhumed Mr. Hines' body to verify this, and sure enough, it was real."

[01:20:10] We'll be right back.

[01:20:14] **Liz Farrell:** And remember Ernie the attorney and Judge Carmen Mullen's highly unethical handling of his case? Ernie was a disbarred attorney on Hilton Head Island with apparent mental health issues. In 2017, his landlady called the sheriff's office to have him removed from her property, but deputies had no grounds for his arrest. They didn't have probable cause. But Judge Mullen, who lived in the neighborhood, decided to take matters into her own hands, even offering to sign a bogus warrant to have Ernie arrested. She all but ordered those deputies to do her bidding. In episode 65, we played audio from the deputy's dash camera so you guys could hear it for yourselves.

[01:20:58] **Carmen Mullen:** Okay. Do you mind coming with me to the door and let's knock in. Let me talk to her. Let me figure out. Take him in. That's not the right thing and you never heard that come from my mouth but.

[01:21:10] **Liz Farrell:** Again, nothing seems to have been done to address this with Judge Mullen. She continues to rule on cases despite this evidence that she appears to have abused her authority and despite the many questions that have been raised about her conduct from the bench. It is really frustrating to see the state supreme court repeatedly look the other way when it comes to judges' behavior. To keep ourselves from screaming, we have to find some light in the dark, meaning we need to laugh.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:21:38] **Mandy Matney:** That is where Liz comes in. We've made a lot of serious points on the show that have resonated even more with people because we delivered them through Liz's hilarious takes. Here is one of my favorites from episode 66.

[01:21:53] **Liz Farrell:** "First, we have to tell you something funny that we didn't mention before. A woman apparently fell asleep in the courtroom while Jim Griffin was giving his arguments. We have no idea who it was or why, but Judge Newman stopped Jim so that the sleeper could be escorted out of the room. And guess what? A woman falling asleep on Jim was, in addition to being the least surprising event, also not the most hilarious thing to occur in those two hours."

[01:22:24] **Mandy Matney:** Then, there was this unforgettable line.

[01:22:28] **Liz Farrell:** "You know that part of your brain that kicks in when you're about to do something bad? The part that says, "You might not want to do that because there could be consequences. And also, I'm being recorded." I don't think Alex has that. Alex has lived his entire life believing he was the prince of the country gingers, and it is well-established in Lowcountry lore that the Murdaugh boys could get out of whatever nonsense they got themselves into."

[01:22:51] **Mandy Matney:** And there was her response to a joke told during Russell Laffitte's state bond hearing. Matt Austin, Russell Laffitte's attorney, quickly responded to Justin's speech. And he made jokes?

[01:23:04] **Matt Austin:** You know, Mr. Laffitte likes to hunt and there may be some danger to local turkeys, but there's no indication that he is a danger to anybody else in the community. He hasn't been charged with doing anything that's physically violent.

[01:23:18] **Liz Farrell:** "I know we sometimes make jokes on this podcast, but we're not the ones sitting on a remote screen in a courtroom with handcuffs on and in a jumpsuit that makes us look like Kermit the Frog mechanic."



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

[01:23:30] Alex also introduced us to a wild cast of characters. There was Cory, Eddie Smith, Chad Westendorf, oh, and Gregory Alexander, the Yemassee police chief who Alex had given a \$5,000 check to just weeks after the double homicide. Now, Chief Alexander says that check was a loan to his father. But the Greg Alexander situation still bothers us because one: he's still the police chief, and with that, comes a whole lot of authority; two: he was previously indicted for public corruption but was found not guilty in Hampton County after Alex Murdaugh and his father, former solicitor Randolph Murdaugh, sat on Gregory's side of the room during the trial; and three: why did Alex give Alexander \$5,000 at that point in time? At a time when he owed so much money to so many people? He owed \$792,000 to his best friend Chris Wilson for another crime he allegedly committed. So what could have possibly been that important for Alex to give Greg \$5,000 in July of 2021 when he was in a lot of debt? How did that check not bounce? Just kidding. None of Alex's checks ever bounced. But in all seriousness, at the very least, Greg Alexander will be remembered for one thing and one thing only, and that is this quote.

[01:24:56] **Greg Alexander:** Don't get it mistaken, citizens of Hampton County. Understand what I'm telling you right now. Just 'cause I sit as a police chief or sit as a sheriff of Hampton County, we gon' hear about it because we're human. We gon' hear about it. But we gotta be held accountable when we do hear about it. And I've had officers that hear about it before. And I ain't no cap. I don't try to cover no doo-doo up. Nothing up. If it's wrong, it's wrong. If I've done it and it's wrong, I'm gonna be transparent with the citizens. Let them know I've done wrong, and what we gotta do to make it right.

[01:25:27] **Mandy Matney:** He's not a cap. He doesn't cover up doo-doo. Oh, and remember this moment?

[01:25:40] **Eric Bland:** Did you understand that as a personal representative that you were a fiduciary? Do you understand the term fiduciary?

[01:25:47] **Russell Laffitte:** I did not.

[01:25:48] **Eric Bland:** Okay. Do you understand it now?



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:25:50] **Russell Laffitte:** Not really.

[01:25:52] **Eric Bland:** Okay. That you owe duties not only to the estate who you were a personal representative for, right?

[01:26:00] **Russell Laffitte:** Yes, sir.

[01:26:01] **Eric Bland:** But did you realize that you are an officer of the court? Did you realize that?

[01:26:04] **Russell Laffitte:** I did not.

[01:26:05] **Eric Bland:** Okay.

[01:26:05] **Liz Farrell:** We had lawyers who had never heard of habeas corpus, and we had bankers who could not define the word fiduciary. We also had Russell Laffitte, king of the fiduciaries, who was indicted by the state grand jury in May 2022 and by a federal grand jury in July of 2022. Remember when Russell's wife stood before a federal judge to plead for her husband to have one of his two ankle monitors removed? We had our friend Maggie Washo read Susie Laffitte's speech, and boy did Maggie capture the tone of it.

[01:26:37] **Maggie Washo (as Susie Laffitte):** Misconception number one: that we live an extravagant lifestyle. We do not live an extravagant lifestyle nor do we have access to a mountain of cash. We presently live in a vintage, at best, double-wide trailer on our family farm. We have lived a comfortable life because we work hard. Most importantly, Russell Laffitte is not a danger to society. He's not cold or callous. He is kind and caring. He has never once been accused of any act of violence. He is a hero to his children and many of their friends. He is the person who anonymously purchases football practice clothing for the kid who's running laps holding up his pants because he does not have a belt to keep them up. He is the person that our friend, who is a single mom, calls when she is out of town and her car breaks down and she does not have a family close by. He is the boss who drives to Augusta in the middle of the night to support an employee whose son has gotten into a very serious and later fatal car accident. He is the friend that drives to Florida and



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

back in a day to attend his friend's mother-in-law's funeral, not his mother but mother-in-law. He is the son-in-law that granny brings her cell phone to anytime she has an issue, and that's pretty often. In fact, he is a gentle giant.

[01:27:54] **Liz Farrell:** For that episode, which aired in September 2022, we spoke to one of our favorite people, Alania Plyler Spohn, for context. We knew that she would put Susie's speech into perspective for all of us.

[01:28:07] **Alania Plyler Spohn:** That word sympathy has always gotten me. Like, don't feel sorry for me. And not in that aspect. Like, your husband did what he did, and I feel like he needs to take responsibility for his actions. And Susie as his wife needs to take responsibility of her husband's actions and say, hey, he's not as perfect as I thought he was going to be. Like, people do make mistakes. Honestly, through this, and this is totally my opinion, reading this transcript of Susie, I don't think she knows her husband as well as she thought she did. It's very bland, and it's very like, there's really nothing really personable in it. So reading about that she sympathizes with them, but it's really that next line where she talks about that she's upset that her family has been victimized and all, that's pretty shameful that you went to that level to begin with because she has no idea. She has no idea what it is to be victimized by her husband, Russell.

[01:29:03] **Liz Farrell:** Alania first appeared on MMP a month earlier when she told the world about what Russell had done to her and to her sister, Hannah, in the years after they were in a horrific car crash that killed their mother and their brother. Alania's interview was deeply honest and truly heartbreaking. We will forever be honored that she chose to share her story with us. It was important to hear her voice. Alex's alleged financial crimes weren't just about moving around columns of numbers at Palmetto State Bank. Alex and his co-conspirator Russell treated their clients like they weren't human, as though they were just means to an end. Here's Alania in that August 2022 interview with us, talking about the time that Russell seemed to actually step up in his role as conservator and help her purchase a home at age 17 so that she would have somewhere to live. Here's how that went.

[01:29:56] **Alania Plyler Spohn:** He came to Columbia one day after we closed on the house and we went and bought furniture and, you know, things that



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

you would need to start a house basically to make it somewhat of a home. So we went and bought couches, beds, furniture, you know, those — your typical home items. That was by far the coolest thing ever. I really enjoyed that because I never really had anything that was mine. To know that those couches that I'm picking out are going into my home, like my safe place, and that was the feeling I don't think I'll ever forget.

[01:30:36] **Liz Farrell:** We saw the receipts from this shopping spree, which cost around \$18,000. Russell put the items on his credit card and got reimbursed from Alania's conservatorship account. In the files, we found a single receipt for a sandwich at Charley's Grilled Subs in Columbia. Russell, as it turned out, was like Alex in that he saw no problem in charging a child for his meal.

[01:31:01] **Alania Plyler Spohn:** I was blown away by that. Not — the reason why I was blown away by that is I had spent all day with him, probably paying for his time as it was. And when my attorney Eric told me that I ended up paying for this man's lunch, the man that was in a fancy suit and just presented himself wealthy, and I'm a 17-year-old girl. And when I found out that I bought his lunch, knowing that he was already getting paid to be up there. I don't think — he wasn't shopping for his house, so I don't think he had the best time like I did. But that bothered me in a lot of ways because it would have been different if I would have said, "Hey, I'll pick up the check." But then technically, I wouldn't have been able to do that because I was only 17. I would have needed a judge's approval. So even if I were to offer to, and I didn't, but I'm just even saying, if I would have offered to buy his lunch, by what Russell's always told me, I always need court approval. So that was kind of a slap in the face to me, that you put your food on my bill. I don't know. I just — I was kind of — I was bothered by that. Like, that wasn't even right, knowing everything that I've been through. I told Russell that I have been in and out with the — not me being a criminal, but I had to call the police, tell my dad numerous times like get my belongings. Like, I had been through a lot so just even in those few weeks and he couldn't take the time to just sit down and let us be normal people and let me buy you, you know, him say, "I've got lunch this time." Like I just — it's bizarre to me.





## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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[01:32:58] **Mandy Matney:** In Russell TV, the video interviews Russell did with his cousin that aired before and during his trial, he made an offhand joke about that sandwich and how he would have paid for his own meal back then only if he'd known it would become such a big thing in the future, showing once again that these guys simply don't get it.

[01:33:24] Speaking of people who don't get it: Bowen Turner. In the midst of the Murdaugh mayhem, another horrible case was brought to our attention, one that put a big spotlight on how broken our system is. Bowen Turner, a teenager who was accused of raping three girls at three different parties in three different counties. We first heard about this case in 2019 when he was arrested. We were told back then that this was just another Paul Murdaugh case — a privileged boy protected by a system that was built for people like him. And Bowen Turner's case was not only an example of the kind of treatment we saw the Murdaughs getting from law enforcement. It was an example of how hiring a legislator-attorney in South Carolina is basically a getting out of jail free card, no matter how guilty or how dangerous the client is. For the Bowen Turner story, we interviewed family members of Dallas Stoller, one of Bowen Turner's victims who unintentionally took her own life after years of harassment from the people in her own community, from adult members of their community. This was one of the hardest interviews we have ever done. We just kept looking at each other during it. Neither of us could contain our tears.

[01:34:46] **Michelle Stoller:** She had a big enough heart, saying that he was sick and he needed to get help; that she didn't want to ruin his life. Even though he ultimately ruined hers, she did not want to ruin his life. But she knew he was sick and that he would hurt someone else, and she just wanted him to get help. They were friends. They were friends before all this. And I will never — I have chills on saying that, and I will never forget that because she was so good at, you know, trying her very hardest and being so kind to everyone and just being that bright, you know, shining star that she was.

[01:35:21] **Karl Stoller:** And she always tried to see the best in people and she loved everybody. And I always — I know she asked me a few times. She said, "Dad, I don't understand when all this was going on." And the people were talking about her are adults, other kids, etc. She said, "Dad, I don't understand



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

how I can love people so much and they don't love me back." And that's heartbreaking to hear that as a parent, and you don't know how to respond to that because she sincerely believed that's how it was supposed to be, regardless of who you were. And I will say this and I want this to be public for sure that even after this happened to Dallas, that she didn't — she said, "Boy's my friend. I don't want him hurt. I just want him to get help because he's got something going on. I don't want him to go to prison. I want him to get help because he's my friend." I think that kind of maybe tells you a lot about what her character was, you know?

[01:36:20] **Mandy Matney:** Bowen Turner's attorney, State Sen. Brad Hutto, did not like our criticism of the super cushy and secretive plea deal he was able to secure for Bowen. In response to an email from one of our listeners, Senator Hutto defended his record, and we let him have it.

[01:36:41] **David Moses (as Brad Hutto):** I regret that you have been a victim, but I have been there fighting for your rights. I will not slow down in that effort, and when the next battle arises to protect women or victims, I will be there, like I have for the past quarter of a century. I appreciate your passion and truly thank you for writing. Too many of the uninformed have merely yelled, but you responsibly reached out.

[01:37:12] **Mandy Matney:** Here's the thing. I think I can speak for many of the women in South Carolina when I say we are tired of men who believe that we need them to fight our battles for us. We do not need any more pseudofeminists who stand up for women only when it suits their political agenda and then turn right around and stomp all over victims when they're getting a fat paycheck and when we need them the most. Brad wants the women of South Carolina to feel like we owe him something, and he wants us to feel sorry for him because he's getting yelled at right now. This is manipulation.

[01:38:01] **Liz Farrell:** The Bowen Turner story gave our listeners a real-time example of what we're up against in South Carolina. It was proof positive that we were not making any of this up. The bottom line is that a certain group of South Carolinians get treated differently by our justice system. And it's such a regular occurrence that those at the helm of the legal system don't even



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

seem to realize just how transgressive it all is. Instead, they all try to normalize their own complicity, and it's been really hard to watch because when you pair that complicity with the likes of Alex Murdaugh, you get a complete and total lack of accountability. From the second Maggie and Paul were murdered, we worried incessantly about this; that this system of red carpet treatment would end up with Alex not being charged for the murders we felt certain he had committed. From the get-go, multiple sources — multiple good sources — helped us keep this story in the headlines because it was a way to keep people honest on all sides. Meaning we continued to put out information that we knew could paint the powers that be into various corners that would force them to follow through; to let them know that we knew what was happening out there, and if they were thinking of doing X, Y, or Z to get out of having to hold a Murdaugh accountable, well, they better think again.

[01:39:19] Early on, we knew that Maggie had been lured to Moselle by Alex, and we knew that there was a video showing that Alex was with Paul and Maggie at the kennels shortly before they were killed. Here's an excerpt from episode 42, which aired in April 2022.

[01:39:33] "According to our sources, Maggie told others that she was hesitant to go to Moselle that night, but ultimately she decided it was the right thing to do. It's not clear whether any of this information was found on Maggie's iPhone, which appears to have been tossed in the woods near Moselle. It was found the next morning by Alex's co-workers at the 14th Circuit Solicitor's Office with some help from Alex's younger brother."

[01:39:57] **Mandy Matney:** "We don't know exactly what happened after Maggie and Paul arrived at Moselle, but we're told there is another piece of evidence that places Alex at the dog kennels on the property before they died, which is contradictory to what he told law enforcement from the get-go."

[01:40:15] In January 2022, we first put it on the record that there was physical evidence tying Alex to the scene of the Murdaughs at the time Maggie and Paul were murdered. By April, we were able to report that that physical evidence was referring to spatter on Alex's shirt. At that time, we couldn't be



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

more specific about what that spatter was, but it was important to signal to the powers that be that we knew they had more than enough evidence to arrest Alex Murdaugh, and yet there he was, still not facing murder charges. With every new revelation, we put it out there. We caught a lot of heat, something we'd become very used to at this point. But over and over again, our reporting would bear out, meaning over and over, we were proven right. This might seem like a braggy thing to say — and it is, to a certain extent. But for us, this notion has truly been a guiding light in our journalism. Every time we have started to doubt ourselves or felt discouraged by the venom online, this has been what we've turned to to keep going. We're good at this. We are good at it. It was emotional for me to write these words earlier because as a woman, I feel like we're especially taught not to think this way. It's unbecoming to note your own skill out loud. But I hope every person listening to this episode right now not only knows in their bones that they are particularly good at something, but they aren't afraid to acknowledge that; to say it out loud and truly believe what they're saying. For us, it has been beyond validating having you along with us, seeing what we're seeing and calling it out.

[01:42:00] **Liz Farrell:** By the time Alex's trial was in its second week, it felt like the whole world was watching along with us as the truth began to reveal itself in epic fashion. And we found so much comfort in that. We could do a year's worth of flashback episodes on the trial's most notable moments alone, but we don't have to. Because for us, it can be boiled down to two short sentences.

[01:42:23] **Mandy Matney:** I now know, beyond a reasonable doubt, that Alex Murdaugh murdered his wife Maggie and his son Paul after a Colleton County jury found him guilty on all four counts. He was sentenced to life in prison, and that is a big deal.

[01:42:49] I think the worst part about looking back is that there is still a lot that we don't know in this story. Particularly, we still don't know what happened to Stephen Smith. But, we have learned a lot about who he was and the legacy he left behind.



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

[01:43:09] **Sandy Smith:** He was amazing. He was intelligent. He was a clown. When he walked in the room, all eyes were on him. But he loved trying to help people. He loved trying to make his own medication out of herbs 'cause he didn't trust anybody — that I'm putting on my body. But yeah, and he was — he loved books. His room was a library. We had to put shelves on all four walls to hold all his books. And he would not put that book down until he was finished. He wanted to be a doctor, but he said that he didn't — because it cost so much money to be a doctor, that he would start out in nursing. After he finished the nursing, he could get a job and then put his self through medical college and become a physician for needy children that doesn't have insurance.

[01:44:09] **Mandy Matney:** We have been honored to have Sandy's voice of reason and integrity time and time again on this podcast.

[01:44:17] **Sandy Smith:** If anyone knows anything, big or small, about Stephen Smith's homicide, please, I beg you, to please call CrimeStoppers and just tell us what you know. The people who do know something, by now, they're probably mothers or fathers. And how would they feel if it was — the same thing happens to their child? If people don't talk, then you can't stop the violence.

[01:44:49] **Mandy Matney:** Sandy has reminded us, even when things seemed really dark, that there is still good in this world and to always hold on to hope.

[01:44:59] **Sandy Smith:** I'll be here no matter how long it takes. I'm still gonna fight.

[01:45:06] **Mandy Matney:** We mean it when we say that we will continue to fight for Stephen Smith until Sandy gets answers. It's a promise we made in 2019 and it is a promise that we will stick to. These 93 episodes have shown us that together with our listeners we are a force to be reckoned with. And over the past two years, both of us have learned so much. I know that I have learned to take time to listen to victims and put them at the center of the story where they should be. I've learned that work is so much better and easier with your best friend and your husband at your side every day, and that



## EPISODE 93: End of An Era And Brighter Days Ahead: The Best (And Worst) of MMP + What's Next

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is a blessing that I will never take for granted. I have learned that fighting the good fight and changing a system that is broken is really hard work. But all of you have shown me that it is possible and absolutely worth it.

[01:46:06] **Liz Farrell:** I learned that we don't have to agree with people politically in the fight against public corruption; that there is common ground in saying enough is enough; and together, we can demand change in how our government, specifically our justice system, operates. I also learned that there's a lot to be said about not giving up. It's something I think we both learned from Sandy Smith, and it's something that I hope will continue to carry with us as we see this story through until the end, and as we take on these new fights for justice.

[01:46:38] **Mandy Matney:** Stay tuned because it's about to get even peskier. MMP Premium members, get ready for Happy Hour this Friday at 5 PM Eastern Time with Liz and I, the pesky podcast girls, to talk about plans for our future show. And again, reminder, MMP Premium is about to get so much better and you'll want to sign up soon. Go to [mmp.supercast.com](http://mmp.supercast.com) to join the very pesky party. We will announce plans for the next chapter early next week to MMP Premium members and then on the Murdaugh Murder social media pages. We will be back next Thursday on this feed that's about to get a makeover. So stay tuned, stay pesky, and stay in the sunlight.

[01:47:58] **Outro:** The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney, produced by my husband, David Moses. And Liz Farrell is our executive editor. From Luna Shark Productions.