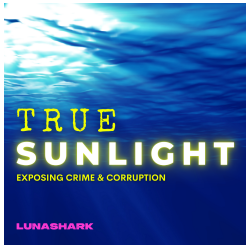


EPISODE 11: 'A Monster Like My Father': What Happened To Grant and Gracie Solomon? Part 2

[00:00:02] **Mandy Matney:** I don't know what happened to Grant Solomon on the morning he lost his life, but his death remains in question because law enforcement failed to look at the situation critically. Now, the LUNASHARK team is working our way through thousands of documents in an attempt to get justice and answers for Grant and Gracie Solomon. My name is Manny Matney. This is *True Sunlight*, a podcast exposing crime and corruption, previously known as the *Murdaugh Murders* podcast. *True Sunlight* is a LUNASHARK production and written with journalist Liz Farrell. Are you ready for it?

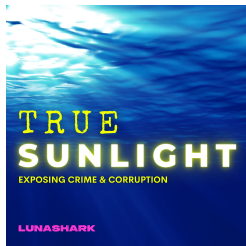
[00:00:58] **Mandy Matney:** While today's episode is focusing on the Solomon case, with the hope that our coverage leads to answers and accountability and Tennessee, I want to update you all on a few important things. Let's start with the happy news. I recently did two really exciting crossover episodes with two brilliant women. And also, I had one amazing interview with an incredibly bright, 11-year-old girl who gives me hope for a better future. The first crossover was with my favorite lawyer on YouTube, Emily D. Baker. Emily, an attorney and former prosecutor, has been a supporter of our show for years, and we have both been wanting this crossover episode to happen for a long time. In our episode of *The Emily Show*, we talked about everything, from the future of reporting and journalism to ADHD and Taylor Swift and of course, the Murdaugh trial. I loved every minute of talking with Emily. Check the link in the description to listen to that show and LUNASHARK premium members, y'all get access to a special crossover premium episode just for you where I asked Emily a series of great questions. Look for that in your premium feed. I also did a crossover with Laura Richards of *Crime Analyst*, and that episode dropped on Tuesday. Laura is a former New Scotland Yard criminal behavior analyst. She's from the UK and she is known around the world for her expertise related to domestic violence, stalking, homicide and crimes against women. She approaches investigations a lot like I do—with empathy and putting the victims first. Y'all will love her and her beautiful British voice. Check out the link in the description for that show, and premium members, y'all get another special crossover episode with Laura Richards too, where she gave me some fascinating insight about the Murdaughs that I've never heard before. Look for that episode coming soon on your premium feed. And last but not least, I had the privilege and pleasure of interviewing 11-year-old Josie Duda with permission from her mom Elizabeth. In October of 2022, Josie saw the South Carolina Supreme Court hear a case at Winthrop University as the Supreme Court was traveling around the state giving students and community members exposure to the law and the justice system. She stared at the bench where



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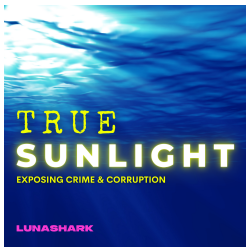
five older men and robes stared at the audience and litigants. She asked her mom after she left why there weren't any women up there making the decisions, and later she wrote a letter to District 16 State Senator Michael Johnson asking why South Carolina is now the only state without a single woman serving on its Supreme Court. I talked to Josie about this and we talked about Johnson's response to Josie which was kind of shocking. But Josie inspired me and gave me hope for a future here in South Carolina as a kid who saw a problem and did something about it. I can't wait to share that inspiration with y'all soon. We will be sharing short versions of these conversations with the public feed but only LUNASHARK premium members will get the full scoop. Learn more at lunasharkmedia.com/membership, and thank you to the thousands of members supporting our mission to expose the truth wherever it leads, get the story straight and give a voice to the victims.

[00:04:45] **Mandy Matney:** Now, kind of unfortunately, we need to tell you about some news happening and Murdaugh land. Fresh from the whirlwind of Russell Laffitte's federal sentencing last week, we're now preparing to cover Cory Fleming's federal sentencing next week on August 15th in Charleston. I'll be honest, I'm concerned. If Judge Gergel was so lenient with Russell Laffitte, who showed practically no remorse for his actions, and his lawyers wasted the court's time with their offensive nonsense, what is Judge Gergel going to do with Cory Fleming? Cory Fleming has played by the rules, admitted to some guilt and followed the guidance of his lawyer, who has made no mistakes so far. In other words, if Judge Gergel went so easy on a privileged defendant who seemed to do everything wrong during this trial, what will he do with a privileged defendant who seemed to do everything right during his court proceedings? For a reminder, in May, Cory Fleming pleaded guilty in federal court to a single count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud relating to his actions in the glorious Satterfield case. And it feels like the wrongdoing of this all gets lost in terms like "conspiracy to commit wire fraud," so let me remind you of what Cory actually admitted to doing. Cory's official story is that he knew Alex was going to steal some of the Satterfields' money after he agreed to represent them. Specifically, just about \$100,000 of it. He claims that he also took \$26,000 in fake legal expenses. Oh, and he claims that he knew nothing about the fake forge account, which okay. Let's not lose sight here, helping someone steal \$100,000, taking \$26,000 and fake expenses he did not incur that was supposed to help a grieving family, and using his position as an officer of the court to let his friend steal from his dead housekeeper's family who desperately needed that money, well, that is bad. Think of all the people in prison for stealing so much less. But the thing is, that Cory is walking



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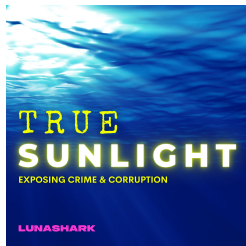
a tightrope here, as he is facing 23 charges in state court, and he's set to go to trial for those charges in September. He's admitted to a fraction of what the state believes that he has actually done and from what we've heard, and hopefully, thank God, Big Creighton Energy is preparing for war in September. And what we've heard is that he does not plan on backing down like apparently, the feds have. Remember when Cory claimed that he was, quote, "simply another victim of the fraud and other professional misconduct of Alex Murdaugh" and that he was duped by the superduper himself in his sad and failed attempt at getting his Georgia law license back? Remember that? Well, like Alex Murdaugh's appearance, Cory's story has morphed and changed several times since the \$4.3 million dollar Satterfield heist was first exposed by Ronnie Richter and Eric Bland in the fall of 2021. And also like Alex Murdaugh's appearance, his story is still very confusing and hard to stomach. From what we've seen so far in federal court this month, Cory Fleming is set to skate by with a light sentence in federal court. We hope that the AG's office means it when they say they intend to fully prosecute all of Cory's charges despite what his sentence is in federal court next week. According to the Federal Court Sentencing Calculator, his charge could get him a sentence of as little as 12 to 18 months or even less than that, and a fine between \$3000 and \$30,000. But as we learned last week, the judge can deviate from that. Oh, and Judge Gergel, who has seemed to be going easy on the good ol' boys this August, signed an order this week to allow Cory to seal his sentencing report and character reference letters. Not only is this just another blatant example of how much deference privileged defendants get in federal court, but it's also a reminder to all of us, that federal court really isn't the public's court. We should start calling it secret court. They don't allow live streaming, they don't allow journalists to record audio of what is happening, and most Americans, especially in this economy, can't afford to access full federal court transcripts in a timely manner. It is the opposite of a transparent government. Cory Fleming used his position of power to help Alex Murdaugh's evil empire that hurt so many people. Why shouldn't the public have the right to know what exactly is in his sentencing report and who in our society is still standing up for this man? How are we ever going to get to the bottom of what happened to the money? What was Alex really doing this entire time, or who all was involved if the federal government continues to pave an easy exit for these co-conspirators? I am not expecting a showdown next Tuesday. I'm preparing myself to be disappointed again by Judge Gergel and be disappointed by the system that I started to have some hope for. However, on the bright side, we will be covering Cory's sentencing and we will be doing our best to expose all of the dark corners that the bad guys don't want us to see, because we believe this is important.



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We believe that the public has the right to know what happens in court next week and the public has the right to know the reasoning behind Cory's sentencing. As we talked about in COJ this week, the federal court system's outdated rules must change to allow recording and video because transparency is the only way to restore the public's distrust in its government. But for things to change, we need people like Judge Gergel, who are in power, to speak up and take action. We need more lawyers willing to stick their necks out to fix a corrupt system. We need more people to fight the good fight. Again, we need transparency, and we need accountability if we want the public to believe in our justice system.

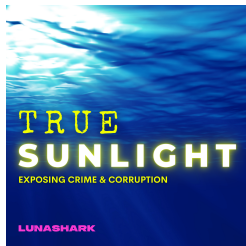
[00:11:45] **Mandy Matney:** So as we dive deeper into the Grant Solomon case, we have found a few similarities to the Murdaugh case. Namely the 911 call we shared with y'all two weeks ago. So many of you seem to hear what we were hearing too, meaning some potential setting the scene of the story vibes. That was our first red flag. In the Murdaugh case, we knew the potential for corruption, and actual corruption existed long before the murders. We knew the players, we knew the history, we had encyclopedias worth of backstories about all of them. When the murders happened, we knew two of the most relevant facts: Maggie was killed by someone using a high-powered rifle and Paul was killed by someone using a shotgun. We knew how they died. We did not know who killed them, though we both immediately suspected Alex had something to do with it. And we didn't know why exactly they were killed. Although again, we had our suspicions. In Grant's case, we really don't know any of these things. We don't know how he sustained the injuries that killed him. We don't know what happened in the moments before his death, and if he didn't die in an accident, we don't know the why of that. We are starting at the literal beginning of this case. Here is what we do know: nothing about the injuries Grant had or the condition of his body, including his clothes and skin, seem to suggest that he was dragged by a truck across the asphalt as his father suggested. We know that Grant's father is Aaron Solomon, a well known former TV personality in Tennessee who is now a financial advisor and who belonged to a politically-connected church, which is affiliated with a private school that Grant and his sister Gracie attended. We also know that everyone who hears Aaron Solomon's story about what happened to Grant sees the photo of the truck and seems to say, "Wait, what?" Everyone, except for the Gallatin Police Department, who was on the scene that day in the Sumner County District Attorney's office apparently. We know that there was turmoil in the Solomon family and that Aaron had been accused of sexually abusing Grant's younger sister Gracie. We know that Grant had just turned



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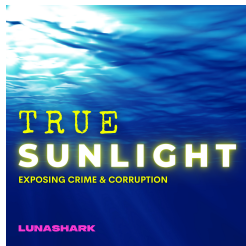
18 and not only was he no longer legally under Aaron's thumb, he, according to his girlfriend, sister and mother, regarded his 18th year as when he would finally seek custody of Gracie and get her away from their father. Now, when we start to look into cases where we believe important questions did not get answered simply because of one or more players involved held a position of power, whether it's simply because they're a member of an influential family or simply because they're a man who people immediately characterize as credible on that merit alone, we start by accepting the story being given. Meaning we start with the assumption that everything the police were told is true, and everything the person telling the police has no reason to lie. From there, it's a game of *Chutes and Ladders*, but instead of a roll of the dice determining how many squares we have to move forward, we are propelled by facts. You are on the *Chutes and Ladders* journey with us. You are putting your player piece right next to ours on the very first square.

[00:15:51] **Liz Farrell:** So let's do this. Let's talk about July 20th, 2020, the morning Grant Solomon took his last breath. The word of the day for today's episode is going to be velocity, or if you're in the baseball world, VELO. Now, baseball is not our area of expertise, so if we sound like we don't know what we're talking about, it's because we literally just learned some of the stuff today. Velocity, as you might remember from high school physics class, is speed with a direction. So, your speed might be three miles per hour when you go on your morning walk, the velocity of that walk would be three miles per hour toward Starbucks so you can get that iced americano that makes you not want to scream at everyone around you throughout the day. So, VELO is an important statistic if you're a baseball player. It's something you want to gain, something you want to work hard at to increase. YouTube has a ton of videos on how to gain VELO, specifically how to gain VELO in high school. It's a lot of talk about tailoring your workouts and a lot of sharing of tips. And if you're Aaron and Grant Solomon in 2019 and 2020, there's a lot of texting back and forth about it. That's where Ward Performance Institute, the place where Grant was killed, comes into play. But first let's talk about Grant and the family dynamic in July 2020. Grant Solomon was a six-foot-three-inch tall, 180-pound star baseball player for his high school Grace Christian Academy in Franklin, Tennessee. His dad, a former sportscaster, seemed to have high hopes for Grant when it came to his future in baseball, according to more than 2000 pages of text printed from Grant's phone after his death. A year and a half before his death, Grant had injured his shoulder and according to reports from his mother and girlfriend, while he loved baseball, he wasn't planning on making it his life. In the nine months leading up to Grant's death,



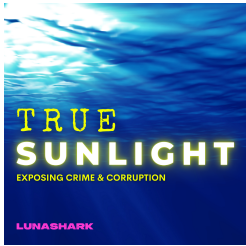
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a few things were happening. One is that Aaron was regularly checking in with him to see whether Grant had done his physical therapy and his prescribed workouts, whether he had time to practice throwing and hitting and sharing memes and tweets about perseverance and fast pitching. The other is that things were tense between Aaron and Grant's mother Angie. In our last episode about the Solomon case, we told you about the contentious custody battle between Aaron and Angie, and how something referred to as the quote, "shower incident" led to Angie being kept from her kids for five months in 2013, led to a judge ordering a mental health evaluation of Angie, and led to Aaron getting primary custody of Grant and Gracie. After Angie's mental health report came back, she was allowed supervised visitation with Grant and Gracie. The court ordered that it be with a neutral third party and at Angie's expense. Angie continued to fight for more time with her kids after that, and according to the court records and transcripts we've read so far, she seemed to take care that she was operating according to the very precarious parameters put in front of her by the court. Remember we told you about the judge in their custody case, Judge Phillip Smith, and how his ego seemed to be dangerously bruised because one of the mental health professionals who submitted an affidavit about Angie's mental state had the audacity to offer his opinion that the court was being manipulated by Aaron into believing that Angie was a danger to herself, and by that rationale, also her children? Judge Smith did not like that one bit, and from the transcripts, it's not hard to believe that this affidavit colored his attitude toward Angie. In looking at this case, we can easily see how those initial interactions with Angie and the messiness of her relationship with Aaron compounded over time. One ruling led to another led to another, and each one was influenced by the presumptions brought forth by its predecessor. We also told you how Angie's father offered example-free testimony about her allegedly unstable behavior, which Judge Smith noted. He literally noted that her father's testimony was vague, while also proclaiming her father's testimony to be, quote, "credible." It defies logic. Angie's father literally could not say why he thought Angie was a danger to herself or her children, could offer no other instance then Aaron says so, and the judge was like, "You noble squire. That sounds most accurate to me." Anyway, the same judge issued some strongly-worded orders expressing the court's fear for the children if Angie were to have custody, even in a supervised setting, condemning her behavior as disturbing and calling her a liar. The strongly-worded orders were reiterated in a 2021 federal defamation claim filed by Aaron against Angie, her friend, Grant's friends and two bunches of John Doe's yet to be named. We'll talk about that case in a future episode because it's fascinating. But it's worth noting now that according to the



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complaint, Aaron very strongly denies every accusation that has been made against him by Angie and by the Freedom for Gracie movement, to include: that he tried to kill Angie prior to the divorce or otherwise physically abused her, that he sexually abused Gracie, that he physically and or emotionally abused Grant and Gracie, that he murdered grant and use his quote, "influence" to see that no investigation was done, that he bought grave sites for Angie and Gracie without Angie's knowledge as part of some quote, "murder suicide plan," that he was banned from participating in activities sponsored by the Williamson County Sports and Recreation Department because he was abusive to his wife, children and others, that he stole money from Grace Christian Academy and JCA quote, "covered it up," that he has filed quote, "multiple bankruptcies," that he has quote, "swindled unknown and unnamed people," that he was fired from Channel 4 because he had quote, "inappropriate content on his computer and phone," that he was a diagnosed narcissist, sociopath and or sex addict, that he abused some unnamed ex-girlfriend, and that he quote, "drugged" certain unnamed women. He denies all of that. According to the documents we've gone through so far, Aaron maintains that he has been publicly accused of murdering Grant and molesting Gracie as part of a commercial scheme to raise money and sell products, and to quote, "extort, intimidate and harass Mr. Solomon into giving up his valid custody rights." Let's talk about those custody rights. In 2018 after Gracie accused Aaron of sexually abusing her, Grant and Gracie began to live with Angie full time. In August of that year, according to court records, Angie accused Aaron of sexual, physical, mental and verbal abuse, as well as providing an unhealthy atmosphere for Gracie and Grant, including controlling what they ate and when they could use the bathroom. She told the court that Gracie was terrified of Aaron. In October, the court dismissed Angie's claims, finding that the sexual abuse claim was not proven and that the same claim had previously been made in two other counties and had already been investigated and dismissed. According to Aaron's defamation claim, the court ordered that the children quote, "be returned to him" quote, "however, Gracie's counselor recommended that Mr. Solomon not enforce parenting time immediately, and instead allowed Gracie to stay with Miss Solomon while Mr. Solomon improved his relationship with Gracie through counseling." Mr. Solomon followed the counselor's recommendation. In the meantime, Angie appealed that decision. Let's pause real quick here. So, in her mission to get justice for Grant and freedom for Gracie, Angie has produced the good, the bad and the ugly. The Freedom for Gracie site is loaded with receipts, like loaded. There are court documents, forensics reports, text messages, timelines, and not everything is always flattering to her. So, we just want to take a moment and

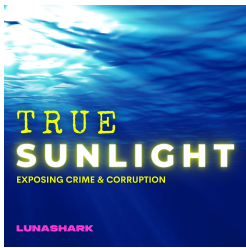


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commend her for that. It's clear that she wants answers. In December 2019, just nine days before Christmas and almost seven months to the day that Grant was killed, Aaron filed a motion with the court to have Angie's appeal to be declared, quote, "an abusive civil action." We're going to dive deep into this motion, what the court did and why it might have done it in a future episode, but now we're going to summarize. The Court granted Aaron his motion and in February 2020, barred Angie from filing any legal claim against Aaron for six years. That order was signed by Judge Deanna Johnson, the wife of State Senator Jack Johnson, who is a member of Aaron's church.

[00:24:51] **Mandy Matney:** Like we said, we will be getting into all of that. This is where the Solomon family stood on July 20th, 2020. According to friend and family accounts, Grant was deeply concerned about his sister's safety and was planning to take action. He was nursing a sports injury and routinely citing concerns about his health as to why he might not be able to throw with Aaron or a particular coach. According to texts with his father, the two had what we would characterize as a very careful relationship. It was seemingly respectful on both sides from what the texts show. Grant felt comfortable enough to ask Aaron for gas money from time to time, Aaron checked in with Grant daily, and didn't seem to hesitate to tell him how much he loved him. But there's a message found in Grant's iPhone *Notes* app from January 28th, 2019, titled *Thoughts*. We'll have David read this, we're editing it for brevity and to maintain the privacy of Grant's girlfriend, Hannah, whom Grant mentions throughout. We're sharing this because we think it gives insight into how Grant's mind worked, what he valued, and what challenges he was facing.

[00:26:09] **David Moses:** "Thoughts. I'm depressed. It's 1am. Sports and Hannah are my only purpose. What more do I have? Every time I see her I am refreshed. She kept me strong through the hardest time in my life just being there. Her face brightens up my day. Her smile is contagious. Helping people lets me get out of my state of mind. Depression is closing in. I feel heavy up to my mouth. Breathing is concise. I'm 16 but I'm wiser than my age. I want to be with her forever. Travel the world, start a family, impact the world positively, but this is too far. I'm 16. Things come and go, especially at this age. That's too good to be true. My friends think I'm better than them. Am I a bad friend? They helped me forget, they helped me get out. I want to resort to something to ease the pain, but that's the easy way out. My future is too valuable, or so they say. I hope she's in it one way or another. I feel so down, I can't escape. Please let me return tomorrow. I want to see her and hug her and watch her

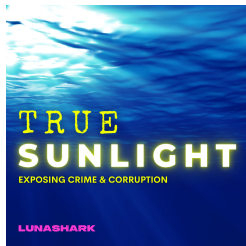


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enjoy life. Do I know happiness? Is it real? After all this pain and suffering, what is real? Is life a figment of the imagination? All my friends see signs from God. Where was he when my life fell through? I grew up on my own. No father figure and my best friend was removed. No role models, no one to look up to. My biggest fear is growing up and becoming a monster like my father. There is a place in me that loves him. Hopefully he can be helped, but it's not my place. I am not stable enough. My head hurts. I can't sleep. Nothing will bring me peace. I have to help people. I must go on. I feel like I have a purpose. I feel like what I'm doing is right. I feel reassured. Talking to those I care about most makes me feel good, but I still have a hole and it's unrepairable. But what I do with that whole will define my life. Thankful."

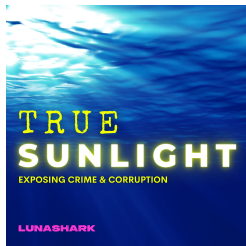
[00:28:24] **Mandy Matney:** We should note that this message was found in a forensic investigation done of Grant's phone by a private investigator hired by Angie. We should also note that Angie wanted us to have this information, and that we're not revealing any private information that she or Gracie wouldn't want to release. There is a thick file of evidence that has come back from this investigator, including a forensic report of Grant's truck, thousands of text messages, hundreds of court documents, and yet, so few answers. I have never had a case with this much material to work with so early on the investigation. We have so much to talk about in this case, but let's get back to Aaron and Grant. He regarded his father to be a monster, according to this late night collection of thoughts, but he also loved him. Aaron's texts to Grant don't seem particularly egregious when it comes to the idea of him pressuring Grant into baseball. There is no "do this or else" that we have seen. We have not seen name calling or belittling, but there is support, or what looks like a father attempting to show support at least, in the way of sharing tweets about how many Vanderbilt baseball players were in the teams that made it to the World Series, in the way of relentlessly asking about throwing or workouts or physical therapy, in the way of sharing aphorisms about working hard and walking a righteous path. The pressure comes in many forms. On July 19th, 2020, just one day before Grant's death, Aaron texted him and his sister Gracie this at 7:03am:

[00:30:15] **David Moses:** "Each day we are bestowed 86,400 seconds of unique opportunities. Do we use this time to give or take? Love or hate? Smile or frown? I can or I cannot? Respect or disrespect? Be a friend or an enemy? Be a solution or the problem."



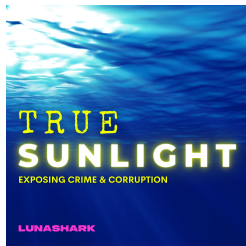
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[00:30:47] **Liz Farrell:** Aaron had scheduled an evaluation of Grant's pitching to be done in Gallatin, Tennessee, just over an hour from their town of Franklin and directly on the other side of Nashville. Ward Performance Institute is owned by a father-son team, Turner and Tucker Ward. Turner played in Major League Baseball for 12 seasons and later served as a coach for the Diamondbacks, Dodgers and the Cincinnati Reds. Tucker was drafted by the Diamondbacks right out of high school, and then again out of college. He is also an MLB agent. Essentially, it's a highly-specialized gym for baseball players that analyzes the athletes and offers them programs that get them where they want to be. In Grant's case, VELO seemed to be the area of improvement that they wanted to focus on. Now, from what we've learned, the MLB analyzes VELO based not on how fast the ball is going when it leaves the pitcher's hand, but how fast it's going when it's a certain amount of feet from the plate. If you are interested in learning more about pitchers and their VELO, I suggest watching *Major League*, starring Charlie Sheen and Tom Berenger, who is one of Hilton Head's most famous and well-liked residents. Well, part-time resident. Shout out to Tom and Laura by the way. According to a timeline put together by Angie that is posted online, five days before Grant's death he had an x-ray done of his lungs because his asthma had been acting up. Later that evening, he asks Aaron for his bank account information because he's decided he wants to take up DoorDash to earn some money. Aaron writes back, "It's only for them to deposit/pay you, right?" Aaron gives him the information and Grant writes back, "Sweet. Thanks, dad." Four days before Grant's death, Aaron texts Grant at 3:14 in the afternoon, "yo." Grant asks him, "what's up," and Aaron asks him, "how you feeling today?" Grant doesn't appear to answer right away according to the text files we've seen, which we are not sure if they contain every text between the two. Aaron texts again, "What about throwing, but not hitting later when it's not quite as hot?" Grant answers back 25 minutes later that he thinks that could be good. Aaron texts back, "I'm thinking that shouldn't test your breathing thing that's been going on," and then he writes, "just hold off on hitting until we get more information about what's going on with the lungs." Grant writes back, "Sounds good." Aaron writes back and suggests that the two meet up at 6:45 or seven o'clock. "Cool," Grant writes back, then Grant writes, "okay, idk why my texts are weird." Aaron responds, "hmm," an hour and 15 minutes later, Grant texts his father, "Hey, I think I'm gonna let the inhaler work a day and see how it feels. Tomorrow, definitely throw. Maybe earlier in the afternoon," then a second text, "I'm sorry." Aaron responds, "Okay. Just didn't want your arm to go down before Monday. Maybe go tomorrow and Saturday and rest arm Sunday." "For sure," Grant writes back, "I'm not gonna let it go. It will be good. I'm just trying to see how this feels." Aaron responds, "K. And



EPISODE 11: 'A Monster Like My Father': What Happened To Grant and Gracie Solomon? Part 2

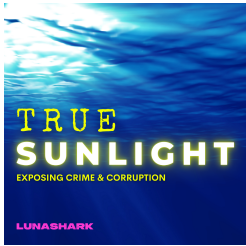
then you should probably at least do bands tonight." "For sure," Grant writes. Then he changes the subject, "that Weathers thing is really interesting." "Yes," Aaron writes, "I thought so too." The next day, which was three days before Grant's death, Aaron texts Grant, "Hit at seven?" Then he wrote, "I mean throw lol." Grant responds, "Sure." Aaron asks, "You feeling better?" "Some," Grant replies, "still getting used to the inhaler." Then Aaron texts Grant a tweet from Perfect Game Scout. It's a video of a pitcher throwing a ball, quote, "Chase Petty (2021 NJ) sitting 97-98, touched 100 once, just humming along here. Stupid fast arm with a hammer slider too." This text seemed to be a theme in their relationship. Aaron sending texts to Grant about other pitchers and their pitching arms. Grant writes back, "crazy." Aaron continues to send tweets of pitchers with comments and the two talk sports back and forth for a bit. Two days before Grant's death, according to the timeline, Angie texted Aaron, "I do not think Grant needs to be working out until his lungs are more stable. My opinion is on the record. You are playing with fire." According to texts between Aaron and Grant, just before noon, Grant asks for some gas money to be transferred into his account so he can try and DoorDash a little that day. "I spent some of the other on food," he writes, "I apologize." Aaron writes back, "okay." A short while later, he texts a tweet to Grant about a player named Cade Coffin, who was hit with a ball. Kade had his nose broken, four stitches, and according to a person who might be his mother, was quote, "Back behind the plate the next day and sliding headfirst for a hit. Going to have to make sure that CT scan was truly all clear." Cade retweeted that tweet and said, "Cade Coffin takes 88 off the face," quote, "I'll be good to go tomorrow. Today: plays, picks up two knocks and goes all out for a hit here." In other words, Aaron texted Grant an example of a player who pushed through the pain, as documented by his proud parents. Grant writes back, "wild." Aaron responds, "how about throw a little earlier tonight? was getting dark toward the end last night." "Maybe seven?" Grant writes back, "I was late last time. I'm trying to dash. Shift ends at 6:30." Later that night, the two exchange texts about a football player being swole and cut. On the day before Grant's death, according to the timeline, Angie texted Aaron and told him not to come to Ward Performance Institute. Grant reportedly asked Aaron to change the time of the appointment at WPI to 1pm. Aaron texts Grant about a pitcher having 54 pitches in two innings. Grant responds, "Yeah, I was kind of listening. Sounded rough." Just after midnight, Angie texted Aaron, "Grant does not want you staying during his workout tomorrow. He assumes you'll be there at the beginning, but he wants to do this on his own. He's a man now." The next morning at 7:20, Grant texts Aaron, "Yo, could you send me the address? Just making sure I got the right place." Aaron responds with just the address. "Sweet," Grant replied, "You



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coming?" Aaron responds, "Yes. I wanted to see the eval." Grant writes, "That's cool with me." Then Grant texts again, "Also helps in case something goes wrong with the lungs. I'm not saying it will, just saying I don't really know how they'll react today." "Right," Aaron says, "I think today is just eval too." "So just my pen?" Grant asks. "Well, the pen and then he said they want to take some baseline measures with some strength stuff. So maybe a few workout things, but I don't think it's a true workout." Grant replies, "Right."

[00:38:51] **Mandy Matney:** According to Angie's timeline of the day Grant died, Grant left the house at 7:38am and before he left, Angie says that he announced that he doesn't want to die in Gallatin. Angie texted Aaron, "If you're up Grant has a change of mind and 'doesn't want to die in Gallatin', so one of us needs to be there. Will you? If not, I will go and sit in the parking lot. Let me know ASAP." According to Angie's timeline, Aaron texted back, "Yes, of course." "Okay," Angie wrote back, "if he has any trouble, I told him just to sit down and use the inhaler again. I'm just telling you this part. If that doesn't work, next call is 911." We recently learned after reading thousands of text messages provided by Angie, that Grant meant there that he was worried about his breathing when he said that he didn't want to die in Gallatin. Now, COVID complicates a few things in this case, starting with fewer people out on the day that Grant died, meaning less traffic, which made it possible that no witnesses saw what happened on the morning of July 20th, 2020 in the parking lot on the side of the highway that led to Grant's death. Also of note, Grant died of cardiac arrest and blunt force trauma. Could Grant's breathing problems from asthma and possibly COVID symptoms, which sounds like he had in the weeks leading up to his death, according to his texts, could that have led to his cardiac arrest? Or somehow could that have complicated his injuries? But then, that doesn't explain the blunt force trauma. So, what happened there? These are questions that could have been answered if Aaron had agreed to an autopsy, but he didn't. He knew his son had health issues, and he claimed that he didn't know how Grant ended up under the truck, and yet he did not elect to have a medical examiner look at Grant's body to determine if he was already in trauma at the time of his death. About an hour and 20 minutes after Angie's "Grant doesn't want to die in Gallatin" text, Aaron would call 911. And soon after, Angie would receive the call that is every mother's worst nightmare, telling her that her son had been in an accident. Aaron would later tell a story that Angie wouldn't accept about how her son died that day.



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[00:40:52] **Aaron Solomon:** "Because the truck had actually set up—just like the truck came down through here, and then it was actually the front end was against that side of the ditch and the back end was almost sticking up, and 109 is right here. The shoulder of 109 is like right there. So..."

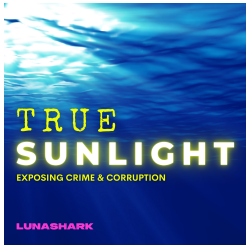
[00:41:12] **Speaker:** "Aaron, would it be okay if I start the truck and let it roll? I don't want to overstep my bounds. I just, I just can't understand how this, I mean I can because my truck does it too, but I just want to feel it. I just, I just want to understand."

[00:41:37] **Aaron Solomon:** "Well, I know (inaudible). Like, I mean, I don't..."

[00:41:39] **Speaker:** "Nobody—nobody understands."

[00:41:41] **Aaron Solomon:** "No, I know. I can't either. There's, that's what—none of it..."

[00:41:51] **Mandy Matney:** Now, the main criticisms Aaron has faced about his account about what happened in the minutes after they arrived at the baseball facility center around three things. One is that he was and continues to be quick to give an alibi, to tell people that he immediately called 911, and to tell people that he was inside his car answering a work email when it happened. Those three things might be facts of this case, we don't know. And that is why we're looking into this. The second criticism is the nature of Grant's injuries. In his defamation suit against Angie, Aaron mentions this: that Freedom for Gracie was reporting that Grant's injuries did not appear to be those of someone dragged down a parking lot into a ditch with a truck on top of him. Aaron states in his complaint that he was told by physicians that Grant had in fact sustained major internal injuries. However, this assessment is not reflected in the medical records we saw. Aaron declined an autopsy, so there is no autopsy report to refer to, and there is no affidavit included in the complaint from doctors attesting to this assessment. The third issue is the position of the truck. Two friends of ours, one of them an attorney who specializes in vehicle wrecks, visited the WPI parking lot recently. They did not see how it would be possible for Grant's truck to have rolled backward from where Aaron says the truck was parked and landed the way that it did in the ditch. They also noted that if they forgot to put their car in park and tried to get out of the car, the parking lot was so steep that the car starts rolling before you've even opened your door. So Aaron's assumption that Grant's truck had slipped out of gear doesn't make any sense.



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Additionally, a forensic report of the truck's data shows that its parking elements were in full working condition. So far in this case, we have found alarming inconsistencies like all of the cases we have covered in MMP, every question leads to 100 more questions. There are a number of possibilities as to what cause Grant's death and who could be responsible. But like with Stephen Smith and Gloria Satterfield's death, a lot of these questions could have been answered early on, and maybe even easily, if police had investigated properly from the get go. If Gallatin police officers weren't so quick to accept that Grant was simply killed by his 2015 truck rolling into a parking lot, maybe we would know more about what his father did or didn't do. What if Gallatin police officers had given Aaron's story about what happened to Grant as much scrutiny as Judge Smith gave Angie when she said Aaron tried to strangled her to death. If police had done their jobs that day, at the very least, we would have an autopsy report to rule out some of these questions, at least the ones that we have about asthma and COVID. It is stunning when you think about it. Even though there are a plethora of documents in this case, what we don't have right now is a full digital forensic report showing cell phone location, cell phone orientation and usage for both Grant and Aaron Solomon on the day of July 20th, 2020. Remember that timeline SLED showed us in the Murdaugh trial showing when Maggie's phone was in use, when it was moved, and how that correlated with Alex's vehicle movements? That information alone could have answered a lot of questions in this case, like who arrived first? Were they there long enough to interact? Does Aaron's cellphone and car data match up with his story? As we continue to look into this case, we will examine relationships, talk to the main players and tell you more about the legal proceedings over the past 10 years before and after Grant's death. We'll also tell you about the church Aaron belonged to, the investigations that happened and the investigations that did not happen. And we will talk to the people who continue to fight for justice for Grant and freedom for Gracie. For now, you're pondering the age old questions. Was this incompetence or corruption, or could it just be an accident surrounded by a series of unfortunate events? Since Gallatin Police apparently didn't bother to ask the hard questions here, we will.

[00:47:10] **Mandy Matney:** Stay tuned, stay pesky and stay in the sunlight.

[00:47:31] **Mandy Matney:** *True Sunlight* is created by me, Mandy Matney, co-hosted by Journalist Liz Farrell and produced by my husband, David Moses. *True Sunlight* is a LUNASHARK production, right Lana?