



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:00:06] **Liz Farrell:** Happy Tuesday everyone. This is Liz, I know some of you get my voice confused with Mandy. So I thought I would throw that out there from the start. Today's *Cup of Justice* episode gets pretty deep, so get ready for some heavy topics. But also we have some really great news to share. The first good news is an update to our last episode. When we talked about the harassment Mandy has been getting from a party to a frivolous defamation lawsuit that had been filed against her last year for a story she had written for another news agency about a University of South Carolina professor who is being sued for harassment. Mandy has officially been dismissed from that case. It's great news not only because having that stressor removed means Mandy gets to focus on more enjoyable things in life now, but also because it's really ignited a fire within me and especially within Mandy. There is a fight that needs to be fought when it comes to the filing of slap lawsuits, which are complaints that are designed to shut someone up and we are going to take on that fight. No journalists should be subjected to bogus litigation or targeted online harassment that is meant to discredit them simply because they were reporting news that someone didn't like. You know how we feel about trolls and the strategic online terrorism that goes on against victims of crimes and those speaking out against bad acts. And even influencers and bloggers who are just trying to share their perspectives with those who want to hear those perspectives. Well, we're done with them. We're teaming up with other recipients of targeted harassment and somehow all of us are going to make a change happen here. The other great news we have to share with you today, the family of Mallory Beach and the boat crash survivors settled their four year long case against Parker's Kitchen and Alex Murdaugh. We are so so so happy for the Beaches and for everyone who fought so hard in that difficult case. There's so much to discuss here. So let's get into it.

[00:02:10] **Liz Farrell:** Cups up guys. How you doing?

[00:02:12] **Eric Bland:** Cups up. Everybody's all in different places? Mandy's out west.

[00:02:17] **Liz Farrell:** We are.

[00:02:18] **Eric Bland:** You're on the east. I'm in the South.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:02:20] **Liz Farrell:** I'm in Connecticut this week.

[00:02:21] **Eric Bland:** Oh, you're in Connecticut, wow.

[00:02:23] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I'm in Westbrook. Yeah, I'm at my sister's vacation home.

[00:02:26] **Eric Bland:** Oh, wonderful. Cool.

[00:02:29] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. So far, so good.

[00:02:30] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, everyone's all over.

[00:02:31] **Eric Bland:** Yeah summer's supposed to be for vacations. You know, there was a segment on *Morning Joe*, I think it was on Friday, that said you will not be productive if you do not take vacations. They really have studied that vacations are absolutely necessary for productivity both personally and professionally. And so companies are making people take vacations and they're actually giving more because there's been a study that, you know, if you have more vacation, you become a more productive employee. So it makes sense. Gotta get recharged, recharge yourself.

[00:03:06] **Mandy Matney:** Totally. And I just like to see different parts of the country and it just makes me happy to go around, explore. David had never really seen the Rockies and we that drive between Denver and Breckenridge and I did that every year when I was a kid and...

[00:03:20] **Eric Bland:** So great.

[00:03:21] **Mandy Matney:** We used to drive from Kansas to Colorado, and that but the stretch from Denver to Breckenridge is just so beautiful and awesome. And David, David's not impressed by much.

[00:03:32] **Eric Bland:** Oh, yeah. Cisco. Cisco is a great area there. Cisco right outside of Breckenridge is cool.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:03:37] **Mandy Matney:** Right and yeah, it's just just so we saw my friends in Golden yesterday, that's a beautiful area. Just a very happy place. We really love it.

[00:03:47] **Eric Bland:** Tell us about TS What was she like? Give it to us straight Rocky.

[00:03:51] **Mandy Matney:** It was amazing. Round two was even better than the first time mostly because I wear comfortable shoes. That was the big difference. I made a bad mistake wearing heeled boots the last time and I mean, I had a great time but and this time I did something different. I actually responded to people on Instagram when they were like are you because I had a story that I was going to Taylor Swift and several people or two women particularly—at least that I saw, I do a really bad job of responding to messages—said I'm a huge fan of you and *True Sunlight* and *Cup of Justice* and I would and I'm going to Taylor Swift and it would just make my whole life if I met you, yes people said that, and I was like I was really scared because I was without David I was just was my friend from high school and he's like, usually my bodyguard type. And I you know, in the last few weeks that we've had I've just been nervous to meet with people but I was like, you know what, meeting fans gives me joy and it gives them joy and let's just do it. So I found like a tequila spot meet up outside of our seats and I met up with two fans and one of them made this bracelet for me. It says Karma and then TLS for *True Sunlight* and Taylor Swift.

[00:05:19] **Eric Bland:** Oh man, so cool. Good for you.

[00:05:13] **Mandy Matney:** And I cried. I've literally like I hugged her and I cried so thank you Claire. You made my, it was amazing.

[00:05:20] **Eric Bland:** So tell me what it's like, Mandy Matney at a TS concert. I mean, do you sing? Do you sway? What do you do? Does David stare at you? Does David stare at you like who am I married to? I mean tell, do you just lose it? Tell me what you do.

[00:05:35] **Mandy Matney:** Well, every like era, this is the Eras Tour. So every era you remember like the lyrics and the time of your life or at least at least me and I was



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

with my best friend Heidi from high school so we remember I could look at her and remember the song that the remember the boy she was with we went when he sang "Back to December" back in late 2010. And it was just really special like you sing every lyric you, but everyone it's a very just kind atmosphere everyone and...

[00:06:04] **Eric Bland:** No issues? Nobody's throwing beer or anything like that?

[00:06:07] **Mandy Matney:** Oh god, no. It is sparkles everywhere. Sparkles, pink and sunshine and rainbows everywhere you look. And lots and lots and I love this, lots and lots of little girls.

[00:06:18] **Eric Bland:** Cool.

[00:06:19] **Mandy Matney:** Like there's a song that she sings called "If I Was the Man" and it's about, you know, sexism in the workplace. And it is it's just the coolest feeling to look around and seeing 12 year old girls singing that song and like "if I was the man," it's just wonderful. But she's just I'd love to see how much she's inspiring the future generations and oh, my god, she is an economy in itself. Like between here and Breckinridge, there's Swifties everywhere.

[00:06:47] **Eric Bland:** Like a third world country.

[00:06:49] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, like, everywhere that we're going people are in Taylor Swift shirts and it's just crazy. David's looking at me like...

[00:06:55] **Eric Bland:** Is she bigger than Madonna was at her height? Or Britney Spears?

[00:06:58] **Liz Farrell:** I think so.

[00:07:00] **Mandy Matney:** I believe so. Yeah.

[00:07:02] **Eric Bland:** Is there anything like her? There's nothing like her, right?



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:07:05] **Liz Farrell:** She makes \$9 million per concert, right? Something like that. And I was talking to a friend about that and she was just like, you know, maybe like what it is too much money to earn for doing something. And it's that's such an interesting conversation to have when you're talking about Taylor Swift just because you know that so much of it was hard fought. You know that she writes her own songs, you know that she re-recorded most of her music. It's just, she's a hard worker. And I don't know, when you start talking about what how much somebody should make for what they do I guess as creative sorts, you just as much as people will pay I guess it's the right answer, so.

[00:07:38] **Eric Bland:** Whatever market commands.

[00:07:40] **Mandy Matney:** Right.

[00:07:41] **Eric Bland:** Well, you look happy Mandy. You look like you're rested and you're just feeling good.

[00:07:46] **Mandy Matney:** The mountain air is really good.

[00:07:47] **Eric Bland:** And you should feel real good because you got the paper order that finally solidified you're home free. Free at last.

[00:07:55] **Mandy Matney:** Yes. The day before the Taylor Swift concert I finally got the paper that I've been waiting for a very, very long time to come through and say that it's official, you're dismissed from this lawsuit. And yeah...

[00:08:09] **Eric Bland:** Dismissed with prejudice, meaning they can never bring it again. Now you do have the right, Mandy, to bring a motion under the Frivolous Civil Proceedings Sanctions Act, or being wrongfully sued. Or you can bring a suit, or what's known as abuse of process or malicious prosecution. That is if somebody brings a lawsuit against you, and they don't have grounds, they don't have it has no merit, it doesn't pass what's known as the Rule 11 test. So there's three different things that you want to do. Now, obviously, you know, you don't want to kick up a hornet's nest, but you are in the clear now, and you should talk with your lawyer about at least making a motion to get some of your costs back because you were dismissed at a very, very early stage in the proceedings on a motion to dismiss stage,



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

which that is almost unheard of. Because all somebody has to do is meet the pleading requirements of a complaint. And a judge cannot pass decision on the merits of that complaint as long as the elements are pled. And you're basically stuck in a lawsuit through discovery until somebody can make a motion for summary judgment. But you got out early on because Judge Newman viewed those claims against you as not even being grounded in fact and not even being grounded in law. It's an in your face slammed the door shut against the people that brought this lawsuit against you. And I think you have a basis to make a motion in the case for your costs and expenses because you spent a lot of money and then if you decide you wanted to do an abuse of process or malicious prosecution, you could get your emotional distress damages for having to live with this bullshit claim over your head, questioning your professionalism and, you know, what it did to you at a time when you were, you know, supposed to be, you know, getting married, enjoying your life. And you know, as a young person, you have this this suit over your head and it's, it's unnerving. I mean, talk about what it's like to be sued, you know, you, you're not a lawyer. You know, I deal with the suing business all the time, talk about what it's like just to be sued.

[00:10:26] **Mandy Matney:** Well it's terrifying. And it's also terrifying when I have a very loud mouth against the justice system in South Carolina, and a lot of the people who are still a part of this system could have been a part of those decisions and keeping me in the lawsuit. Does that make sense? Like, I just always felt like everything that I was doing could come crashing with a lawsuit and a bad judge that had it out for me. And I and I knew that it was a frivolous lawsuit. But again, I also know this is not a perfect system, and you never know what could happen. And you kind of have to expect the worst and that was just terrifying. And I also just really hope that I hope that my motion, or I hope that my dismissal leads to all the other journalists who've been sued, they need to be dismissed, the victim in the case needs to be dismissed. And then I am going to, I plan on taking those next steps of really seeking accountability in this because after going through all of this, it's just wrong for people to abuse the system in this way. And it's like we talked about slap lawsuits, they should not be happening. And this is a perfect example of someone just re victimizing people over and over again and using our system to do that. And that's not right. So now that I'm out of it and that stress is alleviated, I plan on fighting the good fight and making sure this doesn't happen to other people.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:11:56] **Eric Bland:** You know, I've had a lot of victories in my career, but I think one of the most satisfying is I represented a female owner of a gym that I worked out at. She opened a gym, she was a USC soccer player, and she opened up a big iron powerhouse gym, which was pretty amazing for a woman to do that in the late 90s. And she had a lady sue her who was a tenant in her old gym, she took over the lease, and she ended up suing my client. So we countersued for abuse of process. I got the main claim dismissed like you did yours actually was on a judgment on the pleadings, which is the same early stage and I got the claim dismissed. And then our counterclaim went to trial as if we were the plaintiff under abuse of process, and I got her a verdict. And you can be in that same position. I mean, we we should not have a system where people could just frivolously sue others and take a shot at somebody in hopes that they're just going to pay me some money so that I can get out of the lawsuit without any repercussions and good for Judge Newman because there are many judges, Mandy, that won't make that early call on a frivolous lawsuit. They'll let you stay in it through a lot of discovery and you gotta spend money on depositions and court hearings and maybe it's two years down the road where you get out of it. So good for Judge Newman.

[00:13:18] **Mandy Matney:** Right and I again, I hope that this puts an end to and not only was the financial part of it very stressful, but the whole my reputation being on the line and my having all these comments from people related to this lawsuit, trolls related to this lawsuit, that they use it as ammo to attack me as Mandy's being sued for defamation so don't believe anything that she says. And I want to, I want to fight back against all of that. I'm tired of this.

[00:13:50] **Eric Bland:** I mean, there's some really crazy people that I'm seeing this weekend. Somebody has been sending me stuff. There's a somebody who's saying some horrible things about me, that I'm somehow too protective over you and fighting too hard for you and it's sexist that I'm sticking up for you, you should be sticking up for yourself, and she's saying some crazy stuff. I mean, what are these people doing, man? You really really that warped that you just want to make shit up? I mean, come on.

[00:14:18] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, they need a vacation as we...



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:14:22] **Eric Bland:** No they need an attitude adjustment. Somebody needs to really sit them down and say you need some help, not a vacation. You need some help.

[00:14:31] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, totally.

[00:14:31] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, she does need some help. I don't know what kind of help though.

[00:14:34] **Mandy Matney:** Right, I know when you're that warped and you're that like, I don't know, they all need help. And I just hate that they're all able to like connect with each other and kind of create this false world that their crazy views of victim shaming and victim bashing and just being horrible, horrible people. They're all like trying to combine their little forces and...

[00:15:00] **Eric Bland:** Look how much you two are right: you were right on Murdaugh. You are right on prevailing on this lawsuit. The Mallory Beach, look at Mark Tinsley and the contributions that you guys made in reporting that I mean, so much good is happening. It's all around us, that there's good happening. And, you know, I always believe that truth will out over lies, you know, in the end, and I always believe that good will happen over evil sooner or later.

[00:15:34] **Liz Farrell:** That's the sucky thing though, Eric, because it shouldn't be sooner or later, it should be immediate. Like good should win over evil right away. It's just, you know, I do believe in that famous quote from MLK, "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." And that's a good feeling, of course. But at the same time, there's sort of some fatalism there because it shouldn't take that long for people to do the right thing. And I think if anything, we've said this so many times, but it's like, you just continue to learn that people don't think the way you do when it comes to what's right and what's wrong. And I'm not talking about these like large moral issues that we all grapple with, I'm just talking about in general of how we conduct ourselves with each other. So I think over the last week, we learned specifically with the person that you mentioned, that there's really I mean, I guess going back to what you said about Alex, there's no bottom. There's no bottom to some of these people, because they've dug in, I think they found their community online. And I also think that there's probably some other incentives there for them to



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

act the way they acted. But in the case that we're talking about with the dismissal that Mandy has gotten just so much, there's so much good there for the rest of us, because it shows that the court, like journalism matters to the court. It also just shows that like, it's not just about this lawsuit, right? The claims that are being made in the complaint, these people took their fight outside of the courtroom. And if you notice, Mandy you didn't really comment on this case too much over the past few years, if at all, other than to acknowledge that yes, there is one. But just the defamatory comments I think that were made in this particular case are such that you have to fight them, you can't let this just go because of what it means for the larger picture with journalists. And especially as we go into these new models of how journalism works, because you are not just the agency you work for you are now on your own, you are yourself, you are your name, your name becomes a brand and that brand becomes a business and that business has to be able to earn money to put food on the table. And when somebody does what they're continuing to do, by the way, this dismissal hasn't stopped the vitriol and the accusations like I've seen Mandy accused of being a murderous, homicidal maniac, that you're that you're capable of murder, which is insulting but hilarious.

[00:17:44] **Mandy Matney:** They really mischar... It's very funny because they the mischaracterization of a lot of these things that they accuse me of all the time, like anything from like the other day somebody accused me of talking to a random attorney in a bar about the Murdaugh case. Nate and Brandon, I don't know but I was and I was like, I don't go out guys. I am doing everything, you guys think I'm this like bubbly personality who's hopping around town. I am not. I am on my couch watching *90 Day Fiance*, not talking about the Murdaugh case in my free time. Bopping around town being like ooh got the hot goss. No, I don't want to talk about it. I am introverted. I'm also not a murderer.

[00:18:33] **Eric Bland:** So are you saying Liz that you have to fight back because like my strategy has been up to this point in time I don't fight back. You know, Will Folks for instance, said some things Friday night that weren't true about Greg Leon and me and we'll talk about that. How can I fight back at a guy that owns a media company? He's said some bad things about me in a text message to somebody I know or this stuff on the web, this misinformation, am I supposed to let it go? Or when I fight back, am I engaging and I can't win? I mean, is there a balance? What



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

are you advising me to do? I'm listening to what you're saying. I'm trying to figure it out.

[00:19:09] **Liz Farrell:** I think that probably there is it's like pornography, you know it when you see it. I think you know that when something has crossed the line from just somebody having a poor opinion of you versus they're setting out to ruin your career. And in my opinion, that's what these people connected to this case did with Mandy and by proxy me who had nothing to do with the case. So dragging me into it, you know occasionally, it wasn't like some overwhelming thing where they dragged me into it, but I get like, there's I have a few pet peeves and, I actually have a lot of pet peeves in life, but one of them is I don't like being misunderstood and I don't like being mischaracterized. And so my knee jerk reaction with these trolls sometimes is I can't help myself. It's before I've even thought I'm defending Mandy, I'm defending myself. I'm saying because I'm just like, you got it wrong. You don't know what you're talking about. You're absolutely...but that may be just the hobby part of it. I think the hobby part of it is just to feel good in the moment of I stood up for myself. But at the end of the day, what they were doing online was seeking to discredit her during the time in her career when she needed her credibility, because it's what set her apart from a lot of the coverage. So at the height of I mean, we could argue at the height of your career, Mandy, like they set out to defame and discredit you and did so in such a nebulous way that it allowed it to be seized upon by others who are looking to do the same.

[00:20:35] **Mandy Matney:** I mean, I understand that you're concerned about that, Eric, and rightfully so. Because again, it's the same position of you've been very outspoken, so you have a target on your back. It's different for you than it is for a lot of people and that's how I felt in this lawsuit where like, things could go really, really wrong and that's terrifying. But back to your question, I've been thinking about this a lot with there's really no right answer with how to navigate people who are spreading false information about you how...and I think it's a case by case, it's a situation by situation, and it's honestly, whatever makes you feel better at the end of the day. I definitely don't, I don't recommend because I've done this before of getting in a mud fight with the trolls. They just bring it down and then your whole day, you're not going to change these people's opinions and you could offer all the proof in the world and they're committed to misunderstanding you. So, but with correcting the record and protecting your reputation, I think that that is something that all of us



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

should do. And I think in all of this, I was a little too quiet about this lawsuit this entire time. I think that things would have moved a lot faster if I was outspoken about it from the beginning.

[00:21:43] **Eric Bland:** I'm sure your lawyers told you to keep your powder dry.

[00:21:47] **Mandy Matney:** Right which, you know, I paid them a lot of money to tell me that. But things have been changing in a good in a good and very positive direction. Like we talked about last week, I got bird pooped on and things were just really not going in my way. And people say that bird poop is good luck and then a couple days later that case was dismissed. The Luna Snark group was shut down like and the other thing that I've noticed in the past week is man I've so many women have reached out to me who are going through something similar. Women in very different professions, mommy bloggers and influencers on Instagram who have hate groups about them too on Reddit, and have dealt with very similar things. And all these women are tired of this and we are getting ready to combine forces and do something about it because everyone's had enough. And it's time that our laws change to protect people like these influencers, like me, like all of us who aren't doing anything wrong. And I mean, a lot this one case that I found this girl bought a gun and she almost killed herself because of these hate groups on Reddit and that's not a far fetched thing. I don't think anybody understands what it's like when you're constantly like at the mercy of this hate group online and you don't know what they're gonna say or do or it's just awful, but it's time to stand up against all this. And that's something that I've realized in the last week and I said this on last week of *True Sunlight*, but a lot of times with Will and you, it's like letting a mosquito bite you over and over and over again and then you just go you're just gonna go nuts instead of just sometimes you just got to squash the mosquito and that's all I have to say.

[00:23:29] **Eric Bland:** Well think about what the world would be like, think about just this whole world if there wasn't Mandy and Liz involved in the Murdaugh matter. What, would it have been differently, I think about that a lot, Liz, without Mandy and you fighting this fight on Murdaugh and on Steven Smith and some other matters. Would the Murdaugh matter have been different?

[00:23:51] **Liz Farrell:** Yes.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:23:52] **Eric Bland:** Probably yes.

[00:23:53] **Liz Farrell:** I say that confidently without even needing to feel humble about it because I just know how it would have been covered otherwise and we were strategically covering it in a way that would force people into being accountable for the investigation. So it wasn't just about the Murdaughs, it was about the people protecting them and that that we made that more difficult, and I know we did.

[00:24:13] **Eric Bland:** You never made it about you guys you always made it about the subject the story.

[00:24:19] **Liz Farrell:** They've, people think we made it about us and they continue to think they continue to think we made it about us.

[00:24:24] **Eric Bland:** You covered the trial, you forced the charges, you know in the fall of 2021 you guys were really the only ones that were covering week in week out the financial crimes before we ever got to the murders. I mean, this story was the story and you guys kept reporting the story. Sure you were the reporters of it, but you didn't make the story up. And you didn't make the story about yourselves. It was always about Alex, it was about the theft. It was about the victims, it was about justice, it was about sunlight. It's about Steven and all these other people, Mallory Beach, all these other people, Gloria Satterfield. Without you Mandy, getting me on that (inaudible), there wouldn't have been traction for Gloria Satterfield. I mean, she was an indescrpt person in this story. You know what I'm saying? Not that she wasn't important to the people around her, but she didn't have the the level of notoriety that Alex had or anybody else.

[00:25:19] **Liz Farrell:** So I think the thing that made what we did a little bit different, not only because we were looking at it from the perspective of we had to hold the people conducting the investigation accountable on a completely different level from a normal like, this side says this, and this side says that, and that side says this, and you guys can decide for yourself. It was the fact that we didn't look at the story as something, and I know we get accused of this too, like exploiting like, you know, we've exploited it because we have these podcasts or what have you. But the idea of us reporting something just to have it first, or just to have it at all, versus knowing that it was important to judge accountability or to justice or to particular



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

cases that certain things don't get reported right now. And I know that that sounds so manipulative and so shifty, but it's really hard to explain it. It's more just like, a good example is the Greg Alexander paternity claim. We knew that there was no DNA test. We knew that there's no way to prove that he, without that you don't know if he he's the father of Stephanie Smith's daughter. And yes, we knew about that story and we caught a lot of flack because we spoke out when that got reported. And people didn't really understand what we were saying, which is that it wasn't important to holding anyone accountable in that moment. Again, we can't just report things because we hear them you know, and we didn't have...

[00:26:39] **Eric Bland:** It was pure embarrassment.

[00:26:40] **Liz Farrell:** Well, it's pure, it's a pure embarrassment for sure. It was cruel, it was putting the family in danger. And you know, you don't know the politics of somebody's family and who thinks who's their father and what, like that that is it was unfair at that time, especially because the Smith family got no phone call. But that's the kind of thing I'm talking about, like in lieu of because you just because you know some sort of salacious information, for instance, in the Greg Leon, in your friend's death this weekend, you know, is that the most important thing to put out there before you have all the facts—I don't know that that's for for other people to decide, I guess, but.

[00:27:14] **Eric Bland:** *The Lexington County Ledger* reported he was dead at like four o'clock in the afternoon. He he was in the hospital. We didn't make a death decision until 11:58 that night. I mean, how is there not standards of reporting, you know, you want to be right.

[00:27:31] **Mandy Matney:** I was just gonna say, I've come across this several times in my career. And it's something that really defines like Liz and I, makes us different from a lot of reporters, unless I have confirmation from a coroner or family members that it is okay to report somebody's death I will never do that. I will never do that to a family because I have heard of so many situations of very close friends and family members finding out that their loved one died through a news report. And that is a horrible thing to do to somebody. That is, that will make somebody hate reporters for the rest of their life and I don't blame them for that one bit.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:28:10] **Liz Farrell:** Especially as somebody who's had a family member die where you have to get there, you know, they might be on life support, or they might be on their last, you know taking their last breaths, but you're trying to get there before they pass so you can say goodbye.

[00:28:23] **Mandy Matney:** Right and making loved ones fight with have to deal with the misinformation which was going on on Friday night and on top of everything else, it's just it's just cruel to do that to people. And I have never understood and I've seen it in every city that I've worked in. I've seen it with everywhere I've worked, reporters just rushing and rushing to get the confirmation of a death before somebody else. And I don't, I don't do it man. Like if a coroner tells me the next of kin has been has been notified, you're good to go there. But...

[00:28:57] **Liz Farrell:** That's not to say Mandy and I are not competitive. Like when we were working for the newspaper, once we knew the coroner had I mean there were times where we would have a source on the phone telling us you know, whether it was the coroner telling us or whatever, and one of us would be feeding the other person the story so they could publish it like or have them on speaker so that they could type you know. Like we definitely, we're good at breaking news we just don't think it's the most important thing, especially when you're looking at the kind of journalism we want to do and that we think is important.

[00:29:25] **Eric Bland:** Getting it right is better than breaking the story, being the one that broke the story. Getting it right, because your credibility is a snowball and it gets bigger and bigger and bigger. And the more credibility you have the bigger voice you have. Like I always tell my kids, you only have one and if you lose it you never get it back. If you lose your credibility, it's real hard to get it back, right?

[00:29:48] **Liz Farrell:** Oh it's over, it's completely over. I mean, as a journalist, once your integrity has been put on the chopping block, you're just you're done for the most part and there's really no way to come back from that unless you're Geraldo Rivera or something like that, I don't know. But yeah, and the same thing goes for the Beach case because, you know, we obviously we knew that talks were being had yesterday with the mediator and when it got posted online that there was, that they had a settlement, we knew that that wasn't the case yet that that had not that was not accurate. And unfortunately, when I posted, it was not accurate. It was made



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

accurate soon after that, but there's still the sticking points out there. And there was a reason.

[00:30:27] **Eric Bland:** Could have blown up.

[00:30:28] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah and that was, exactly. That's the thing, like, why is it so? I mean I get it. I mean, I get it. That's, you know, certain business models that's what they're based on or whatever. But it's just in this case, I think it's just when we're talking about what we value and what kind of reporting we want to do, it's just that's not the kind of reporting we want to do. And, yeah, we just want a different world, I guess, a better world.

[00:30:55] **Mandy Matney:** Eric, do you have anything to say about what happened this weekend?

[00:30:58] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. So I lost a client and a friend. The allegation is he took his own life by strangulation, hanging Friday afternoon, he tried to and he was discovered. And he was given artificial treatment and intubated and started his heart but essentially, you know, there was little or no brain activity. And so, you know, decisions had to be made, family members had to come. For me it was it really hit home because I met with Greg the day before. I met with him for two and a half hours. And, you know, we talked business, we made some strategy decisions on his restaurant, but the thing for me is, I never expected that he would do this now. If you would have asked me, do I think Greg's gonna serve out the full 30 years? I would say no. I think Greg was willing to go through his appeals. He met with his criminal lawyer before me, and there was some optimism about some appellate issues. And he he told me he was going to wait to make any decisions regarding his future on the appellate decisions. And he, I told him I would be back Monday, today, I had to get him to sign some papers today. And he asked me to bring glasses, four packages of salt, a wristwatch. They wouldn't let me bring in my smartwatch, my Apple, but he wanted a wristwatch. And he wanted me to go to his phone and get all the phone numbers because I dial Mandy or I dial Liz, I don't know your phone number. I dial your, you know, the open contact, but I never memorized your phone number, so he needed the phone number. So that's him telling me he had no present intent to take his life. And it was about four o'clock at, 3:30 in the afternoon on Friday and I got a call from Brian Sterling, who's a friend and a client of mine who's the director of



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

corrections who said, Eric, I got some bad news. Greg Leon tried to take his own life. And I was like, how's that possible? One, I just spoke to him, but two, he's in an evaluation. So when you're being evaluated by the Department of Corrections, they're supposed to watch you. He was 24/7 in his cell with three other cellmates. And I said, Brian, how's that possible? If he's confined to a cell somebody would have had to been there. And, you know, he told me that well, the other two cellmates were at lunch and another one was walking the halls. But you know, this is not a good look for the Department of Corrections that somebody's convicted of murder and six days later he's able to hang himself, maybe. And I'll tell you why maybe, because we're evaluating him. We, they they have to be on the vigilant, on the lookout that somebody that just got convicted and got 30 years may self harm themselves and we have to watch out for them. And how do you go about, you know, I don't even know if there's sheets on the bed when you're being evaluated in that situation. What did he use? And so I said to Brian Sterling, I want the videos of the hallway, I want to find out who came in and out of his cell. And he's like, well, you know, do you think, do you suspect that there could be foul play? I said well, let's eliminate that. You know, let's eliminate that possibility. One, he testified against Sheriff Metz and took him down and Greg testified that he was being extorted by Sheriff Metz. He also killed Arturo Bravo, who was alleged to have been a member of a Mexican gang. So there's the possibility that there was retribution for that, or retribution for judgment, or did Greg pipe his mouth off to somebody and then somebody said, I'm gonna hurt you. But I am troubled by the fact that there was nobody watching out for him. And I'm mad at Greg, I want to tell you, I I'm not judging him for taking his own life. But he didn't get, he never spoke to his children since the sentence because he wasn't able to make a phone call. And he didn't leave a note. I since researched and found out that most people, believe it or not, who commit suicide don't leave a note. I would have thought that it was the other way around. But they don't leave a note. And so I want for peace of the children because, you know, now they have to live with the fact that their father got convicted of murder and their father took his own life. I mean, this is not easy stuff and I am hurting tremendously because he was a close friend, but my hurt pales in comparison to his children and his wife. And, you know, this stuff started to be reported on Friday like it was fait accompli. Nobody knew that Greg couldn't pull through, you know. Nobody knew he was on life support. And I just want to talk a minute and then I'll stop about the hospital and the Department of Corrections. The Department of Corrections officers that were in that room, in that hospital room, were kind, professional, warm. The hospital staff was amazing. When



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

we got there, they said we're only going to let two people in the room at the same time. Two became four, four became eight. When we made the decision at the end of the night to terminate Greg's life, every one of his workers came from every one of the restaurants. Grown men on the floor with rosaries crying when the decision was made to terminate his life, the correctional officers in the hospital let 100 people in his room guys when the medical equipment was disconnected. 100 people in the room, people in the hallways. It was extraordinary, I've never seen such a thing. But they saw how much Greg meant to a lot of different people. And over the weekend, I got emails from different business leaders who who said how much Greg helped them in their businesses, that if they were doing a fundraiser and they didn't call him on the phone, he would call them on the phone and say I want to contribute. Families who he had had their house painted or helped rebuild when they had a fire wrote me and said how much Greg Leon means. I mean, I laugh about it that I can't get six people to carry my casket. I really doubt that if I was in that hospital bed, that 20 people would show up for me but people that he helped drive from Beaufort and Charleston to come to the hotel room. Yes, he is a murderer. I get it. Yes, he took his own life and he's a Catholic and it's against the principles of the church. But let's not let five seconds of somebody's life, and I'm going to give his eulogy next week, but let's not let some five seconds of somebody's life define them. Yes, it's part of the equation. It's got to be part of the equation. But let's let's look at the whole life. So I said what I said, but thank you for asking.

[00:37:46] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I was really sorry to hear that Eric. And I know that that's just another another blow on top of everything else.

[00:37:52] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, you guys were kind. Thanks. Yeah, I mean, I like to say, well I've had this bad year, you know, I had my knee, Coco, Greg, or whatever. But, Renee, I love my wife so much, because she looked at me and said, get out of your funk. Look at your life. You got me, you got your friends, you got your podcast, you got your law practice, you got your health now. Yes, it sucks, but life sucks much worse for so many other people than you and I'm not going to let you wallow in it. So right now I'm done grieving for the loss of Greg, I'm now focusing on all the happiness that I had with him. And so when I give a eulogy, it's going to be about the happiness that I've experienced with Greg and I'm gonna just focus on that. So I know I gave you a downer last week when I didn't give you a good happy, happy birthday. But I'm now going to give you that I'm okay and that I'm focusing on the

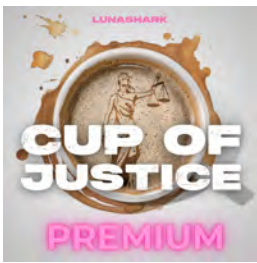


EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

positive and not the loss. Because you know what George Bernard Shaw said, "you write your sorrow in sand, you write your happiness in stone," and so I'm writing it in stone.

[00:38:58] **Liz Farrell:** Good Eric and, you know, again, this case, I think, one it shows again just how unusual South Carolina is like there's never a dull moment. There's always something six degrees of separation, not even among people but also just twists and turns that you can't even believe. And then the second thing is that this, maybe this is gauche of me, but it stood in stark contrast to I think Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin tried to present this sort of image of Alex as making this ultimate sacrifice for Buster, when he the roadside shooting happened. And it shows you that you, you know, the criticism at the time that we had was Alex would never do that, like he would never end his own life. He would never sacrifice himself for another person, regardless of whether it was Buster or not. And this, I think, kind of paired up with what you had said last week about Greg Leon, what you said today, just about his reputation and how it stood in stark contrast to Alex once again, when there's no I'm not trying to I don't want to sign any nobility to self harm I just but in this case, I, you know, I think that perhaps what he was doing, maybe was saving his kids a lifetime of having to visit their father in prison.

[00:40:10] **Eric Bland:** He said that to me on Thursday. Believe it or not, he said, I don't want my kids coming in every Sunday, Christmas, Thanksgiving, you know, it's a five hour ordeal when they have restaurants to run, you know, because it takes a long time to get through security, and you got to drive there, and then just to get in and meet and leave. And he also said, I don't want my kids and my grandkids seeing prison. He said, Eric, you will not believe how dangerous prison is. And he said, look, I came to visit him when he was in Richmond, Virginia to federal prison for six months when he had his probation revoked after he was charged with murder. And it was bad, that was a 1951 prison, no air conditioning. And he said, Eric, life in here is an absolute jungle. And there was a room next to me, and a prisoner piped off. They came in with riot gear, and all you hear is the night sticks on the guy's head. And Greg said to me, this happens all the time in here, and prison should be bad. But it is a bad place and I don't know how anybody could survive unless you get institutionalized. It's just, it's a bad place. Bad Place. But he did say that to me that he didn't want to burden his children, which, you know, again, suicide, and by the way, you know what I watched last night? *Otto*, the movie with Tom Hanks. Did you guys



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

see that it came out in January. He's an older guy that he loses his wife and half the movie is him about contemplating and trying different ways to commit suicide. And he finally his neighbors give him a reason to live. So I mean, God, I'm like, Renee, can we just turn this movie off, but it turned out to have a good ending. But, you know, there are a lot of people out there that view suicide as an option and it's real. It really is real.

[00:42:03] **Mandy Matney:** It really is. And that's why I've, especially in the last two years, I make a big deal. I really like to do lists every day, they make me feel better. I have ADHD, I gotta focus. But really in the last year, everything at the top of my to-do list has been having to do with taking care of myself and my mental health. And that is because like, and this is a horrible thing to say, but suicide is one of the biggest threats against me and a person that is going through all the things that somebody like me is gone through.

[00:42:34] **Eric Bland:** No Mandy please.

[00:42:35] **Mandy Matney:** No no no, I don't. I'm fine.

[00:42:38] **Eric Bland:** No I understand, but just even talk about it.

[00:42:41] **Mandy Matney:** To even talk about and say those words is horrible, but I realized that and when we have to take care of ourselves and that is the biggest priority before anything else. Like I in the last year, I've been like, you know, work will always be there, the podcast, I'm going to do what I can, I'm going to try my hardest, but what's important is taking care of me and making sure that I don't lose like a sense of joy in life and lose that spark and lose that ability to get up in the morning. And it is really hard to explain to people and it's a really tough conversation to have. But when you say but when I when I think of it as a prioritizing and this is and the best thing that you can do for your work, the best thing that you can do for your family, the best thing that you can do for everything is take care of yourself first and then everything else.

[00:43:30] **Eric Bland:** So glad that we, I think, we are maturing in a society where we can talk about mental health and it's not a sign of weakness or a badge of dishonor. It's, you know, you're seeing athletes talk about their depression or you



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

know, there was a baseball player that tried to commit suicide and knocked his eye and he talked about it. But I think we're moving and progressing to a place where people that really, you Eric? You suffer from being down? I don't think I've ever been depressed but I have, I am down right now.

[00:44:01] **Liz Farrell:** Are you even allowed to say, though, that you're depressed Eric as a member of the South Carolina bar? Because I feel like they're rather restrictive when it comes to people dealing with mental health issues. And we've seen Jim Griffin sort of touch on this in some of his tweets, which I fully appreciated coming from him. But you see it out there that I think for lawyers to speak openly, lawyers in South Carolina anyway, to speak openly about their mental health struggles, to share it with anyone rather than getting the help they need it, doesn't that become a professional hazard for them?

[00:44:33] **Eric Bland:** It can, it can it can become either you have to self-report or someone else if they see it affecting your practice they have a duty to report you. No, we're not like Tony Soprano when he saw, you know, his therapist, you know, we're not, you know, he could never admit to his men that he was seeing a psychiatrist because of the requirement that you have a (inaudible). You know, that you never share your secrets. I think we can seek therapy without us reporting. I think our bar is more concerned about substance abuse related to that depression, whether that depression turns into drug use or alcohol abuse. But yeah, I mean, listen, I applaud lawyers that whether it's the stresses of practice or the mixture of home and practice seeking therapy. You know, this is the first time I've been down. And I think it's because of my knee and Coco and now Greg, it's I'm not debilitated with depression where I can't sleep or I can't function, but my friend turned to me this weekend, just like Renee did, and said, look man, snap out of it. Look where your life is. And that's why I did, I snapped back pretty quickly and said, you know what, this is part of life. You know, Greg made his own decisions. I don't agree with it. I can understand it. And I and I do understand it, but I don't agree with it. But so that's it.

[00:45:55] **Liz Farrell:** Well, I think one of the things making you depressed is probably having to look at Alex Murdaugh's breasts. That can't, not to change the subject so abruptly but maybe we do need this sort of break, but...



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:46:07] **Eric Bland:** Somebody needs to tell him selfies don't don't you do them low or is it high? How do you do a selfie where you look good?

[00:46:15] **Mandy Matney:** High.

[00:46:15] **Eric Bland:** High? Okay.

[00:46:17] **Mandy Matney:** Because the chin.

[00:46:18] **Liz Farrell:** He wanted that underboob look. Well, so...

[00:46:20] **Mandy Matney:** He must have stopped doing his up down.

[00:46:24] **Liz Farrell:** Oh, God.

[00:46:25] **Mandy Matney:** He calls burpees up down.

[00:46:26] **Eric Bland:** Is the prison food that caloric? High in caloric and fat or carbs or something?

[00:46:31] **Liz Farrell:** Well, help me understand something. So what are those photos from? they're from his iPad I know that which a, why does he have an iPad? That's that's a question that's out there. Do we have an answer for that? Why does he have an iPad?

[00:46:42] **Eric Bland:** Yes, Greg Greg wanted one too. He can apply for one. Greg told me that he wanted me to fill in an application because if you're going to interact with your lawyer over your legal case, you are entitled to an iPad. So he was, even as a murderer, entitled to an iPad, just like Alex.

[00:47:01] **Liz Farrell:** And how much does that cost and like what limitations are put on them?

[00:47:04] **Eric Bland:** I don't know if you have to pay for it yourself.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:47:07] **Liz Farrell:** Right, I would imagine.

[00:47:08] **Eric Bland:** That I didn't get to the point to find out.

[00:47:11] **Liz Farrell:** Well I would imagine you have to pay for yourself, I guess we need to look into that. But the other question is like, I mean, that's a glass that's an item made of glass and steel, I guess. So why are we giving murderers glass and steel? Like what I'm not saying they shouldn't I think I mean, I think...

[00:47:26] **Eric Bland:** But why does he get to post those photos? How would that photo be released?

[00:47:30] **Liz Farrell:** Well, did he post them? I don't are those, what were they? Mandy did he take those photos?

[00:47:35] **Mandy Matney:** I think it's a login. Like it takes a picture and it just came out in the FOIA of iPad use. So every time he was logging in to like check his little love letters I think it just automatically so it's like when it's like when you have your cell phone and you it takes a picture to unlock it. And then I think because it's FOIA'd I guess became public record. And yeah, this weekend, every 10 minutes somebody was tagging me in that and like, it was funny, but it was just like the amount of people that were like I thought you would enjoy this hahaha. I do not enjoy that. I was trying to enjoy Taylor Swift and my phone kept...

[00:48:19] **Eric Bland:** That's the creepiest photo I've seen in weeks guys. I gotta tell you, man that was creepy.

[00:48:27] **Liz Farrell:** It's like *Silence of the Lambs* creepy like Buffalo Bill posing in the mirror.

[00:48:32] **Eric Bland:** Yeah like like he like when Hannibal had the face mask on and...

[00:48:36] **Liz Farrell:** Oh I'm thinking about like Buffalo Bill being in the mirror being like, I look I'm pretty or whatever it is he's saying.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:48:44] **Eric Bland:** Who wouldn't want this?

[00:48:43] **Liz Farrell:** Exactly.

[00:48:44] **Eric Bland:** Puts the lotion in the basket.

[00:48:48] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, it was it was a lot. I don't want to body shame him. I mean, I would think that prison, you know, food would make him maybe not revert to his former shape, but who cares like?

[00:48:58] **Eric Bland:** Maybe it was just an unflattering position. We'll give him the benefit of the doubt.

[00:49:02] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I like chunky Alex. I think chunky Alex tells me that he's exactly who we thought he was. But yeah, those photos were shocking and we don't need them sent to us anymore. I mean, we got it, we get it. I can literally like I can literally take the shade of his nipple and make it my wall color at this point. Like I can just bring it into Benjamin Moore and like, that is how much I've seen it so.

[00:49:25] **Mandy Matney:** It's way too much. It needs to, it needs to come with like a warning. There needs to be a graphic content ahead, your life will be scarred forever.

[00:49:38] **Liz Farrell:** I'm a little horrified that those photos exist for all of us. Why did they need to save the, I mean, I guess it'll help if we ever got murdered, but okay.

[00:49:45] **Mandy Matney:** I think it's just prison.

[00:49:47] **Liz Farrell:** Okay. Well that's great.

[00:49:49] **Mandy Matney:** It's not all of us. It's just prison. I was shocked that Alex settled the Beach case because of his narcissism. And because I thought that he was just going to string everybody along for as long as he could to play his little game.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

And that's a great transition. Let's talk about what happened on Sunday, because that was a very shocking...

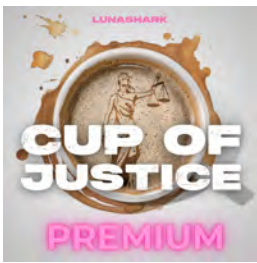
[00:50:22] **Eric Bland:** Huge.

[00:50:23] **Mandy Matney:** Big day. Liz?

[00:50:25] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, so I wouldn't like, I guess shocking. I would hide hope for this outcome, because I think it just, there's two things. One, it obviously saves the survivors and the Beach family, a whole lot of heartache and online harassment that can sort of come to an end. But the second thing is that it better positions, in my opinion, the family in their civil conspiracy case and that really is very difficult to say when the first one's a wrongful death case. But the second case is a more malignant case in that the first one is involving a crash, an accident, something that wasn't meant to happen. The second case is involving some very strategic and purposeful and deliberate acts. So I think that ultimately, when it comes down to like what our mission is starting, you know, one of our missions is sort of pivoting to be which is to stop this harassment of people who are seeking justice, in particular, that is the perfect case for that. Because the civil conspiracy case is all about the harassment that they received. Now, when we talk about Alex settling the case it wasn't Alex who settled the case, really, it was his insurance. So or his his insurance attorney, I guess Dawes Cooke.

[00:51:36] **Eric Bland:** Do you think they paid as well?

[00:51:40] **Liz Farrell:** The money that Alex has now, whatever that amount is, plus the amount that was collected by the receiver plus the amount from his 401k plus from the Edisto beach house, all of that will get totaled up. And then I think, Eric, if I'm gonna have this correct, that you are part of the line here, a judge will decide how all of that's allocated. So they'll come up with a total. And so basically, the settlement is that that's enough. Whatever that ends up being, we'll take that. The main concern, obviously, it was Parker's and Greg Parker, who owns Parker's kitchen, did not want to get out of this lawsuit. He's fought it for four years to great destruction, he was gonna burn down the village and his insurance company was like, alright enough. We've had enough we're gonna settle this with or without you.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:52:26] **Eric Bland:** Well they had enough when they lost the ability to sever Alex away from Greg Parker, the defense table.

[00:52:33] **Liz Farrell:** Again, they you know, they asked that twice, right?

[00:52:35] **Eric Bland:** They couldn't get a venue change. So the insurance company, and there's always a conflict between the insurance company and the insured. The insurance company doesn't want a \$50 million verdict. And I told you guys from the start, you know this Liz and you know it Mandy, Mark is a legal terrorist. And he was going to ring the bell, okay. It was going to be much more than \$15 million when Mark Tinsley got done with them in that courtroom. And so the insurance company knew that, they forecasted it out. Don't kid yourself, they did shadow juries, they did a jury trial where they brought common jurors in and they asked them what would happen. They gave him a lot of the facts and I guarantee you they saw that verdicts were anywhere from \$25 to \$50 million. So they made a business decision and they may have said to Greg Parker, you have a duty to cooperate under these policies to settle the case. And I'm sure he went down kicking and screaming because he's been the Tasmanian devil for four years. And for Mark Tinsley, for the Beach family, and good for Mark and good for the Beach family, I'm glad that they got this settlement. There's no price you can put on that, that crown jewel of a daughter, but Mark still has a second bite at the apple, which is extraordinary. And the facts in this case, could inflame the jury even more.

[00:53:59] **Liz Farrell:** And it'll come out of Greg's pocket. And that's the bigger issue here, which is this there's two things that this can all get very confusing, but there's Greg Parker, who's the human man and he owns Parker's Kitchen. Parker's Kitchen was sued in the boat crash case so they're the ones that settled. Greg Parker is being sued personally in the civil conspiracy case for the accusations include that in an effort sort of erode at the Beaches' resolve in this case, they allowed materials, confidential court materials, plus, Mallory's pictures of her body when they found her in the water to be leaked. But I think more and more it's obvious that there there are these strategic campaigns that are in place to help people like Greg Parker outside of the courtroom that can pay their way out of lawsuits by creating these public relations strategies. But that said, the Beach family wants Greg Parker to feel pain for what he's done because they want accountability. He is not going to change his business practices. And he's not going to change his legal practices without having



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

to endure some sort of financial dent in his pocket. And so the money wasn't really the issue with the, with the Beach family, they really wanted accountability here. They did not get the accountability they wanted in the settlement for the boat crash case in the sense that yes, there's a lot of positive in this being settled, but they they agreed to the settlement because they know what they have coming down down the trail. And that really is their mission. And when you talk about two parents and a stepmother, Mallory's stepmother as well and her sister and brother in law, you talk about people who are like us in the sense that they really, it's not about the things that everyone thinks it's about. It's not about the personal gain, it's not about any of that. Because I was talking to Patrick Carr, who is Anthony Cook's attorney, last night and he said to me, if you went to any of these people, the survivors of the boat crash, Mallory Beach, her family, the day before the boat crash, or the day of the boat crash, and you said, hey, I'm going to make you a millionaire many times over more money than you'll be able to earn in your lifetime but one of you has to die tonight in this crash. Zero of them would take that deal. Nobody wanted that outcome in any way, shape, or form. So you know, again, it's not about the money. But it's also about in Connor Cook's case, for instance, and Miley Altman's and Morgan Doughty's case, this is a good point of closure for them when it comes to you know that it's never going to go away for them, they're always going to have this in their history, they're always going to relive it to some degree, but at least it allows them to move forward, I think, right? I mean, and that's really maybe the best benefit.

[00:56:32] **Eric Bland:** What do you think, Mandy?

[00:56:34] **Mandy Matney:** I'm just really not happy is the word but I'm proud of the Beach family for sticking it out this long. And I don't think a lot of families would have endured all the things that they did, especially in the middle of their case, their case just blew up into this whirlwind media storm that was a whole other layer of lots of harassment and things to deal with and people constantly calling them greedy, and just horror and accusing and accusing all those kids on the boat of just being these brats that like wanted to make money off of this. And that is just so beyond cruel to say that a, but just not true. And I don't think I know for a fact that none of the money is not in any way replaces Mallory Beach, or it's just a step to real accountability and I'm just glad that they got there. And I'm glad that all of them did not have to endure the trial because I think that that would have been really hard.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[00:57:40] **Eric Bland:** This is what we do in a civilized society, money judgments. I mean, I make no apologies and the Beach family and Mark shouldn't and there's going to be some people on the internet who are going to say oh my god, \$15 million is too much. How could they be rewarded like that? No parent would trade their child for \$15 million. If you gave Mr. Beach the choice of a room alone with Greg Parker and the other people who caused their daughter's death or \$15 million, and he would say give me the room. Let me in there for 30 minutes. I mean, but in a civilized society, you can't do that. So money judgments are what what our founding fathers have determined that's what justice is. So no apologies, do not denigrate the Beach family, don't denigrate Mark Tinsley because Mark Tansley is a warrior. He is a Praetorian guard for the Beach family and good for him and good for the Beach family.

[00:58:40] **Liz Farrell:** Mandy, what are your thoughts on the fact that like this was available to Greg all along? Parker's Kitchen could have settled this in 2019. We get we get this question a lot online. People ask us constantly about Luther's, where the kids had their where Connor and Paul went right before they got on the boat that last time. Luther's settled the case in I believe it was 2019, almost immediately they settled it. Randolph Murdaugh settled it because it was their house that they had left from that day, the Wood family, they settled it. It was their house where the oyster roast was, and the Murdaugh Family Trust, which also owned the house, settled it so they got an early settlement in this case. So when people were like why is Parker's being held accountable and not Luther's or not the Wood family or not, they were held accountable. And they tapped out immediately because it wasn't they knew the facts of the case, their insurance covered it and they were done. Parker's never offered, as far as I know, any sort of settlement offer until now. So they were willing to take this to, again, to burn down the village. What are your thoughts on that?

[00:59:43] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, they did it the insurance company settled against the wishes of his attorneys, his (inaudible) and also Parker himself.

[00:59:52] **Liz Farrell:** I don't actually know about that boat crash attorneys, where they stood on that matter, but the civil conspiracy attorneys, this doesn't look good for them, right Eric?

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



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[01:00:01] **Liz Farrell:** It's, this makes their case much harder. Right? Because regardless of whether Parker's kitchen has admitted wrongdoing, it looks like they've admitted wrongdoing because that's such a big number.

[01:00:10] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. Well, the question then becomes how do you choose the jury at that point for the next case? You know, how many people have heard about this and my money is on Mark Tinsley, if I'm Greg Parker, I need to reach into my pocket and somehow settle, but there may not be an amount of money that he can offer to Mark Tinsley.

[01:00:29] **Liz Farrell:** That's what I'm thinking too. I think that this is, I think that this is where...

[01:00:32] **Eric Bland:** It gives Mark a free shot.

[01:00:33] **Liz Farrell:** The Beaches want to see, they want their pound of flesh. And I think, you know, I've heard that said over and over, and I think this is when it's coming. Another point that Patrick Carr, Anthony Cook's attorney made last night was that he hopes that he called them material participants, I think in the case, but he meant I mean, it's Greg Parker and Parker's Kitchen and what have you. He was hoping that they wouldn't use the amount of the settlement as a vehicle to get the legislation that that tort reform that they want to get through, do you know?

[01:01:04] **Eric Bland:** Joint and several liability.

[01:01:06] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah. Do you want to just quickly explain that, Eric?

[01:01:08] **Eric Bland:** Sure. So, we have a rule of law that's called joint and several liability. And that means if there's six people that contributed to the accident, meaning a party at the Smith House, they drank at the Public House, they drank at O'Hara's, and I'm not saying I'm just naming names here in Lexington or Columbia, or they drank at Joe's Bar, and all six got sued. If there's a \$50 million verdict, you can collect the \$50 million from one or from all. The jury is not required to apportion responsibility between all six defendants. Greg Parker and his lawyers want that law changed so that if there are five defendants, the jury has to apportion fault between all five defendants because Greg Parker said, I think I'm the least responsible for



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

what happened to Mallory Beach and I think I should only be held 10 percent responsible if I'm liable at all, and you gotta go find the other 90 percent from the other defendants or other culpable parties. But the way the law exists now is that he could be held responsible for everybody. And all he would get would be some kind of mathematical deduction by the judge after the verdict comes in against him. Well, Mark's already recovered \$3 million from this one or \$2 million from this one or \$1 million, and the jury never finds out about those settlements. Parker wants the law changed to be the jury has to be told he settled with X he settled with Y, he settled with A, settled with B. And you jury determine am I only responsible for 10 percent, not the 100 percent.

[01:02:54] **Liz Farrell:** So basically, what you're saying is that this law change would benefit the people with the deeper pockets, obviously. And on its face, I think like we can look at that and say like, well, that doesn't seem very fair that the person with perhaps the least amount of responsibility, but the bigger ability to pay would be responsible for all of it. But in talking to some of our friends who are attorneys, their point of view on that would be it is a tool for people who have been harmed and most people don't have these settlements that are eight figures or what have you. They have smaller settlements and if you get into a car crash with two different cars and you have lost your leg and you have these massive medical bills, you have this challenge of a life ahead of you, the person who hit you directly can't afford to pay the bill, the other person that was involved in the crash might be able that kind of thing, right? Like it's a way that so that you can get be made whole.

[01:03:43] **Eric Bland:** Yeah, I mean, there's many accidents, there's many accidents. I have a couple of clients now that have been killed, I represent the estate. The person who killed them had the minimum limits of liability insurance \$25,000 and they live in an apartment that's rented. They don't have assets. And so the insurance company immediately says, here's your \$25,000 and I'm like, wait, I gotta go look, are there other potential culpable parties? Was there a bar? Or was there an employer or something? But otherwise, I've had many cases where somebody dies and all they get is \$25,000.

[01:04:17] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, and that's insane. So, Greg Parker wants that law changed, for obvious reasons and I think also it helped convenience stores that sell



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

alcohol, it would make their lives probably a lot easier moving forward, given how popular it is to go to those stores.

[01:04:31] **Mandy Matney:** It just one one thought on that entire thing. You asked about Greg not settling for so long and it's really weird thinking back to it. Because in 2019, like you said, a lot of the parties just started settling in and people also need to understand that it was already the most well known lawsuit in the low country and probably in South Carolina before the murders, like a lot of people were...

[01:04:57] **Liz Farrell:** And the motivation for the murders most likely.

[01:04:59] **Mandy Matney:** Yes. And a lot of people were following that case. And so I remember back in 2019, we were like, Greg Parker has gas stations everywhere in this area and this is a really bad lawsuit to be wrapped up in. Why is he not settling? And it's just weird. It was him and the Murdaughs. We all know why the Murdaughs didn't settle, because everything that was going on with Alex's finances and all the problems that he had going on, but Greg just turned into this mini little monster, a big monster, that just want it to be greedy this entire time, had wanted to fight tooth and nail this grieving family makes things so much worse. And I'm just really glad that that's at an end and we're going to talk about that a lot more on *True Sunlight* this week and all the details of it's kind of complicated settlement and Liz is still getting a lot of the details. But yeah, it's overall a it's a very good step and I think, and I'm glad that and a long time coming.

[01:05:59] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, I'm excited. And hopefully, we'll be talking to Mark. Alright, so Eric, one of the questions I had for you, I've been seeing these commercials where it basically offers a hotline and it encourages people to call in to find out the value, the quote unquote worth of their case, how much their case is worth. Can you just talk a little bit about that, because I think we don't really as non lawyers, we don't really think about cases having a value. And I know, in watching *The Good Wife* or the sequel to *The Good Wife*, I can't even remember what the spin off is called, *The Good Fight*. Watching legal dramas, you see how there's this whole mechanism in place when the partners are deciding what cases to take, what its potential value could be for them, and then having to perhaps borrow money against that future value to be able to fight the case. So when you are looking at



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

cases, is that one of the first things you're looking at is just what money it can bring in possibly?

[01:07:07] **Eric Bland:** Uh no, I mean, I want to know that there's a path to get a remedy for the client. The first thing I'm not thinking about, contrary to popular belief, is not what is my fee gonna be, but I want to make sure that there's a path to getting a result for the client that that will satisfy them, whether it's monetarily or it's getting a piece of property. So no, I don't think about my fee first, but I do quickly think about how much money the case is going to cost us. Because if it's a contingency case, and we have to lay out money for medical experts, and damages experts, and you know, mechanical engineering experts, if it's a products liability case, we have to think about the costs. Two, I have to think about the time commitment that I'm going to make to the case, is there a statutory limit on what we can recover? Remember, on some kind of deaths, you can only get \$300,000 under the cap, the tort claims cap. So you want to think about the value of how much is my contingency fee going to be and how much of expenses I'm going to lay out. And I usually go through that mathematical equation with the clients so that they could see it, it's not done in the dark, I do it with the clients so that they can make their own decisions. So on TV, I, you should always be leery of a couple of things. One is the company that will call themselves, you know, Jerry Schumer Law, and we're interested in Johnson baby powder cases. And if you come to us, you know, we'll do it. But if you read the disclaimer at the bottom, what they'll say is we don't actually try the case, we refer it out to other lawyers and all they are is a conduit or broker for a lawsuit. Stay away from those. The other component you see on TV is people that fund lawsuits, they buy a piece of your claim. And you can either sell all of it or sell a part of it. And don't let lawyers do that. If you want to choose a medical malpractice lawyer, make that lawyer advance their own money. The problem is you'll sell your a large portion of your case for a relatively small amount of money. And you know, there are people that need that money because they're out of work and I don't fault them for that. But if somebody's offering you something it's just like the house in Vegas, if they're offering you insurance against the dealer pulling a blackjack, don't do it. Whenever somebody is offering you something at the casino, never take it because if they're offering it to you the odds are it's in the house's favor. Well it's the same way when with these litigation funding, if they're offering you a piece of the to buy a piece of your case, they're going to offer you too little and get too much in return. Or if you do get it, the interest rate is so high, kind of like the



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

Palmetto savings bank interest rates that we talked about during the Plyler cases and the other cases, that, you know, they're getting 26 percent interest every six months. And you could end up giving away a lot of your cases. But I do understand people's need for money, I do understand that. But let your lawyers negotiate it, let them negotiate the interest rate down, or if they want 40 percent of your case, and they'll give you \$50,000 now, make sure your lawyers negotiate down to 20 or 15. So they are out there, they're predatory lenders, remember that's what they are. They're not in the utilitarian business or to help you out. They are in the money making business at your expense. So if anybody's offering you something, run. It's just like at the casino, run.

[01:11:01] **Liz Farrell:** Good advice, Eric. Once again, I like that. And then for our newsroom question I'm going to ask you, Mandy, a question that came up last week when we were reporting on the Andreacchio case and that is about autopsy photos. Obviously, we're big proponents of public information that, you know, anything the government does should be for the most part public in our opinion. But one of the things that came up back when, who's that NASCAR driver that died? I can't, God I hate my memory lately.

[01:11:34] **Eric Bland:** Dale Earnhardt.

[01:11:35] **Liz Farrell:** Yeah, Dale Earnhardt, who died in a crash and his autopsy photos became a point of contention, because in the state of Florida, believe it or not, it's very sunshiny when it comes to their Sunshine laws, a lot of things are public information there. But they were not released, they were sealed and reporters fought that. But in the Andreacchio case, which is out of Mississippi, 21-year-old Christian Andreacchio's autopsy photos were released by law enforcement to the public. And obviously, the public had a heyday with them and did what they did and the Andreacchio family was able to get the law changed making it a felony for anyone to release autopsy photos. Just, what are your thoughts Mandy on that? Just in terms of like, because I was trying to explain this just like it sort of flies in the face of us being proponents of the FOIA and, you know, government information being public. But also there's sort of a line, right?

[01:12:35] **Mandy Matney:** There's definitely a line and it's interesting that we brought up that we brought that up last week and around the same time in the



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

Gannon Stauch case, who's a little boy who was murdered, there was a big thing in the true crime community about a couple of YouTubers who had Patreon accounts, I believe, had people pay had people pay to to see these autopsies of this little boy autopsy photos of this little boy. And it was just really, again, does not shock me with how gross the true crime world can be but it's just gut wrenching, especially for the family. And again, one of those moments like what have we become when there are YouTubers trying to make a buck off of a child's autopsy photos? And again, I think it goes back to like, we've had Steven Smith's autopsy photos for years. I have not and will never do anything with those besides I've, I have asked a couple experts to look at them and with Sandy's approval, and that's the way to do it. Because sure, when you release something that is so cruel and hurtful to a grieving family, you have to weigh okay, what will this do? And you also have to weigh does, what does the family want? In some cases, like Emmett Till, for example, that was an autopsy, but they wanted people to know how bad his face was because nobody was telling the story in the right way. But in cases of a lot of autopsy photos, releasing them to the world does nothing because it's a bunch of idiots who are going to look at those photos and draw their own weird conclusions. And they have, like, I've seen autopsy photos, I can't do a lot with them because I don't have expertise in that area. And I don't really know what I'm looking for. And I can have somebody walk me through it, but that doesn't need to be public information and that's not necessary. And I just really worry for the world that we are entering in where autopsy photos are becoming this hot commodity that media wants to blast across the internet and all these sleuths want to search through, I think that's disgusting and wrong.

[01:15:06] **Eric Bland:** Didn't it start with like Diana, when she that was kind of they were fighting to get out the photos of the car wreck and her in the wreck and all that I remember there was a big stink then, then that kind of started the whole market of who gets the photos first kind of thing.

[01:15:24] **Liz Farrell:** Right, reminds me of those faces of death videos that the guys in my college would watch, which were basically just a collection of accident videos and autopsy photos and autopsies are gross. And it's, you know, they're not gross to the medical examiners who perform them, because that's fascinating to them. But it we're not used to seeing a body deconstructed like that, and peeled back and all sorts of things. So they're very, very graphic and shocking to begin with. And like Mandy said, we just don't, I mean, very few people, the people with the expertise to



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

be able to determine what those photos are telling them are not the ones that are on Reddit, like looking through like, ooh, let me see you, or let me pay for this Patreon account so I can see them. It's that's just you're not reaching that audience. So I think in South Carolina, it's up to when we talk about autopsy reports, that's obviously something different and family members are able to request the autopsy reports themselves, which I think is important for people to know that if you have a loved one who has deceased, you're able to get that autopsy report if one was performed. And it's up to them to share that with reporters or the public or anyone however they want. If it helps their case, what have you, but it's really gross. I like I don't I don't understand it. The entitlement.

[01:16:47] **Eric Bland:** It is, it appeals to people's (inaudible) interest and it's almost like they're voyeuristic. There's something really fundamentally wrong if somebody wants to see an autopsy photo ID. There's no there's no value of it. You're not a scientist, unless you're scientist is one thing and you whatever, but a normal true crime sleuth we don't know what we're looking at Mandy, you're 100 percent right. So anybody who wants to see it is, you know, like, Dexter, they're, they're freaked in the head.

[01:17:19] **Liz Farrell:** I don't even think Dexter would look at it. I think Dexter has more couth than that. But that said, yeah, go ahead.

[01:17:26] **Mandy Matney:** Sorry. And just the lack of purpose. It's like a lot of these cases there's no mystery behind and like when Mallory Beach's family went through all of that with her photos, we all know how she died. That was not the mystery. There's just nothing there's nothing further that you can gain or any case can gain by the public seeing those besides the fact that it's just cruel and awful and it makes the world worse. And it makes us all worse.

[01:17:53] **Liz Farrell:** And upsetting to the family, which was the goal, right? Because what if they're willing to do that, what else is coming down the pipeline? It's just harassment at its finest.

[01:18:03] **Eric Bland:** Shouldn't the lasting memory of Mallory be that beautiful blonde haired photo of her high school graduation or Clemson in a sorority? Not



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

some bloated photo of god forbid after five days in the water or an autopsy photo. I mean, with her face all bruised up. That's not the lasting photo you want.

[01:18:24] **Liz Farrell:** I think at this point, they want the lasting memory to be that Parker's follows its rules and that other convenience stores will look at this case and follow their rules and better train their employees so they're not giving alcohol to people who don't have a fully formed brain to make good decisions that you know behind the wheel, whether it be a boat or a car. So I think that hopefully will end up being Mallory's legacy after the settlement. I think with that we should close with something joyful. What do we have that Mandy, what do you have that's joyful? What do I have that's joyful?

[01:18:57] **Mandy Matney:** David and I's favorite thing is traveling so we're always just happy when we're gonna leave here and go on a hike, we're gonna go explore the town. And that's just our favorite thing in the world to do. But as far as joyful, I mean, I think that we all it's been kind of a tough summer for all of us in different ways and a tough few months for all of us in different ways, but we're really crawling our way out and seeing the sunlight and seeing that things are getting better and I just love sharing the joy of like the good guys do win sometimes and keep trying to do what you're doing and keep going. And that was the thing with that's was my conclusion yesterday when we heard that this case was finally settled. It's like this, this is the good guys winning and they're gonna keep winning. So this is this is a movement. It's not just a moment.

[01:19:52] **Eric Bland:** I got good joy. I got good joy I want to share. Stella had a good first meeting with Splash the English Mastiff. We're gonna have one more meeting this week, and then we're going to give it a shot. I think she exercised some discretion and said you know what, I don't think I want to take on this horse right now. So she was a little bit laid back which was good. And then I just got notice that I am going to see Sheryl Crow at Beech mountain. That is just a cool way for the middle of the summer.

[01:20:28] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah I'm so excited.

[01:20:29] **Liz Farrell:** I'm very jealous and yeah, I have a lot of joyfulness here but I'll share it in the future. Alright, guys, cups down once again, good show.



EPISODE 38: Mandy Speaks Out on Defamation Case, Greg Leon's Prison Death + Mallory Beach's Family Settles for \$15M

[01:20:39] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, keep us updated on that one.

[01:20:42] **Eric Bland:** Yeah. Cups down. Good job.

[01:20:52] **Mandy Matney:** Yeah, cups down. This *Cup of Justice* episode is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney with co-host Liz Farrell, our executive editor, and Eric Bland, Attorney at Law aka the jackhammer of justice from LUNASHARK Productions.

CUP OF
JUSTICE