



EPISODE 18: Actually, Alex Murdaugh WANTS to be Difficult + Cory Fleming Isn't Really Sorry At All

Mandy Matney 0:02

I don't know if the federal government will end up allowing Alex Murdaugh to pull off yet another scheme that uses the justice system for his own gain. But Dick and Jim's latest call for US marshals to seize almost \$2 million meant for Alex's victims feels very familiar. It feels like the world that existed in the 14th circuit before everyone knew who the Murdaughs were and what they were up to. My name is Mandy Matney. This is *True Sunlight*, a podcast exposing crime and corruption previously known as the *Murdaugh Murders Podcast*. *True Sunlight* is a Luna Shark production written with journalist Liz Farrell.

Mandy Matney 1:05

Hello and Happy Thursday, for some reason I didn't expect to be stuck and Murdaugh land still this fall. I was admittedly in denial thinking these cases would wrap up quietly and we can move on to solving other mysteries. But here we are another week with another episode full of updates and important information on the never ending Murdaugh saga. While there is so much more to talk about today, I want to start off by talking about CrimeCon and the concept of accountability. So, CrimeCon calls itself the number one event for true crime. It's essentially a 5000 person convention where true crime fans go to network, listen to their favorite podcasters authors and investigators etc, etc. This year as Alex Murdaugh's trial was likely the biggest event and true crime there were a lot of Murdaugh guest speakers. And to be clear, our team did decline to attend due to a couple reasons. Scheduling was one and the other, not gonna lie, as soon as I heard that Dick and Jim were going to be there the whole concept seemed very icky to me. I don't like to spend my weekends in the presence of evil. However, a bunch of our friends and fans did go to CrimeCon and I was having a good time watching their updates from my couch. I loved seeing Creighton Waters absolutely shredding it on the guitar in front of a cheering crowd. I loved seeing crowds of 1000s gathering to listen to Dr. Kenny Kinsey and Creighton Waters speak. Call me crazy, but it makes me happy to see good people getting the praise and recognition that they deserve. And while John Monk of *The State* newspaper framed the event as if Dick and Jim were on the same rock star level as



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Creighton and Dr. K, firsthand accounts and photos say otherwise. My friend Brandi Churchwell, who you all should follow in her awesome podcast, *13th Juror*, which I was on this week, snapped a photo of Dick and Jim's meet and greet. The photo was taken 20 minutes into their one our meet and greet and it was not something any rockstar would brag about, like ever. Picture Dick and Jim a fancy CrimeCon photo backdrop, lights, cameras, CrimeCon staff and a long empty roped line in front of them. As someone on Twitter said it looked like the TSA line dreams are made of. It was literally my worst nightmare, having a party / meet and greet / book signing, whatever, and then nobody shows up. I worry about this all of the time, as we are still in the process of planning events and book signings for my book, *Blood on Their Hands*, which will be out this November, by the way. Every time I plan anything like that I feel like a little kid again, trying to plan a birthday party and worried that no one will show up for it. And I think about how devastating that would be, because this is clearly a worry so close to my heart. It's really not in my nature to make fun of anyone who puts themselves out there. However, Dick and Jim are the exception because I have been thinking a lot about the amount of time that these two have wasted with their shenanigans. I think about all of the hours I have spent debunking their ridiculous lies. I think about all of the taxpayer money these two men have wasted in taxpayer money in my state, by the way, which could go to so many other things. I think about the sexist and disrespectful remarks the Dick has made. I think about how the two of them are now trying to vilify Judge Newman of all people. And I think about them doing all of this on behalf of Alex Murdaugh, the murderer, and it makes me mad. And then I think, Hmm, this empty line at a meet and greet for Dick and Jim, maybe this is what accountability looks like. And maybe this is why our work is so important. Even if the system won't hold these two accountable for the awful things that they have done, which is way beyond advocating for their client. By the way, maybe this is accountability. Think about it, walking into a room full of true crime fanatics thinking you will be worshiped when in reality, most people want to stay far, far away from you. I wasn't gonna say anything about this little meet and greet. But then two media outlets, *The State* and *Law & Crime*,



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legitimized these lies. *Law & Crime* reporter Angenette Levy, interviewed Dick and Jim this weekend, and Dick said that CrimeCon is its own “microcosm, in this microcosm, as ridiculous as it sounds, we're celebrities.” And then on the video, Angenette Levy, agreed with them and said, "You are celebrities." Now this is a reporter who presents herself as unbiased. And this is an example of why I don't believe there is such a thing as journalism without any bias. Yet, she agrees with Dick and Jim that they are “celebrities” at CrimeCon, despite evidence and not just that one photo, clearly stating otherwise. I don't want to pick on Levy, but reporters have got to wake up and realize that Dick and Jim are making them look really bad. They should realize that when they print Dick, and Jim's claims without fact checking, or adding extremely important context to their stories, like a simple line saying these guys had been caught before lying about this, they are only hurting themselves, their own credibility and the public's trust in journalists. I mean, look at what Dick and Jim have done to Becky Hill, and Becky Hill was nice to them too. Dick and Jim are not rock stars. They are not celebrities. They are well known for poorly representing a family killer and thief, and that is what the world will remember them for. I think Dick and Jim's CrimeCon appearance should show the world that we are too smart to fall for their antics, Dick and Jim should feel alone and like they're up against the world. After all, they are fighting for an evil man, and they should not be celebrated for that ever. They should feel entirely alone in that endeavor. That is where accountability begins. We know now that we can't rely on those who police lawyers in our state to do anything about Dick's gun pointing in court or Jim breaking prison rules for his propaganda documentary, but we can remind our millions of listeners of who these men really are and why they do not deserve to be celebrated. And that is a big deal.

Liz Farrell 8:34

In the past week, it feels like the monsters we thought had been slain were given some sort of elixir and they've powered back up, most of the monsters. One monster finally got what's been coming to him, Russell "Can't Admit Defeat" Laffitte. Again, I say finally has been ordered to report to federal prison



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by noon today. Late Wednesday morning, the Federal Court of Appeals denied his motion to remain free on bond while the court decided his case. We weren't surprised by that. Judge Richard Gergel's sternly worded order last week seemed to predict this outcome is rather funny. So we're going to have David read from part of it.

DAVID MOSES 9:15

The general rule is that a defendant sentenced to a period of imprisonment who has filed that appeal shall be detained unless the court finds that the appeal raises a substantial question of law or fact likely to result in one: reversal, two: an order for a new trial, three: a sentence that does not include a term of imprisonment, or four: a reduced sentence. The district court in Pennington noted that the statute governing release pending appeal does not contain an exception which, quote “allows a defendant to remain on bond pending appeal of a motion to remain on bond pending appeal.”

Liz Farrell 10:04

Remember, Russell's appeal could take years and he wanted to putter around his farm until that day came. He's a tricky one, but not tricky enough. Alas, this so-called gentle giant who has repeatedly denied ever being a co-conspirator in Alex's crimes was dealt a triple blow this past week. First, there was that denial which arrived shortly before he had to pack up his ankle bracelets for his trip to prison. Second, Alex, as part of his plea deal in federal court on September 21, confirmed that Russell was in fact one of his co-conspirators. Say, wasn't Alex expected to testify in Russell's trial last November to proclaim that Russell was not a co-conspirator of his? Weird that he changed his mind on that, right? Now we know why so he could use it to fatten up his own plea deal down the line. Alex will always be Alex-ing. Let that be a lesson to anyone who is doing a favor for someone like Alex or keeping secrets for someone like Alex. People like Alex will always, always, always turn on you eventually. You are nothing but a means to an end for them. No matter how charming they might be to you, how kind, how much they say they love you, no matter how much they do or have done for you or your family, no matter how many



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tombstones they talk about sharing with you. You are not a human being to them, which is why you should do the right thing, *cough* like in the Stephen Smith case, *cough* like federal prosecutors, *cough*. Also, where did all that money go that Alex stole? Third, depending on when you're listening to this Russell is either well on the road to Sumterville, Florida or attending some networking event at the prison or pledging a prison fraternity. I don't know. I'm assuming this is what the white collar criminals do there. So Sumterville is about five hours from Russell's farm in Hampton County. It was not his first choice prison, which we applaud the Bureau of Prisons for that one, but he might end up getting more visitors there. Remember his rich banker friend who spoke up for him during his sentencing hearing? The one who said that without prompting, Russell had driven down a generator and some farm equipment to his house in Florida so that he and his rich neighbors could take showers after a hurricane. And therefore Russell should get a light sentence for helping Alex steal from people who trusted Russell. Seems like that guy's name should be on Russell's visitor list right? Since he's such a great friend. I guess we'll find out. But also, Sumterville is about an hour from Disney World and Universal parks, what a convenient spot for the Laffitte family reunion every year. Now apparently Judge Gergel's sternly worded order allowing Russell to delay his arrival to prison for the second and last time inspired Russell's attorney Mark Moore. On Tuesday, the Federal Appeals Court granted Moore a motion to exceed the word limit on his motion to grant a bond appeal. But it doesn't appear that he ever had the chance to do that before the court rejected the original motion all together. Mark Moore's previous arguments as to why Russell should not report to prison were that a Russell is "not likely to flee", "does not pose a danger to the community" and our favorite is "not appealing for the purpose of a delay." Yeah, okay, Russell and B: they argued that the court is likely going to reverse the verdict based on the removal of the two jurors. By the way, what is with these guys going after the jury? Oh right, juries were their thing back in the day. Russell's order to report to prison will likely complicate his state case, so get excited for that argument during the next hearing in his case.



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Mandy Matney 14:03

In other news, this past week, we learned that SURPRISE!, another one of Alex's co-conspirators and his BFF Cory Fleming was not sorry, as he said he was. Shocker! Just over a week after Judge Clifton Newman sentenced Cory to 13 years and 10 months, Old Cory, who for some reason is still listed as a suspended attorney with the South Carolina and Georgia Bar Associations, filed an appeal not only of his sentence, but of his conviction. He pleaded guilty to 23 charges in August. He did that. Cory did. Cory, the former criminal defense attorney, who looked at the perilous choice and still rolled the dice on it, thinking that the system would protect him like it always had, thinking that he's still got it. And the judge would see how sorry he is and hear from his old YMCA friends and be moved to give them a short sentence that conveniently runs concurrently to his 46 month federal sentence. Boy did his head hang the second Judge Newman said the words 10 years. Before we get into the biggest monster of all, Alex, let's talk about Cory's appeal and the arguments that they are making. One, Cory is arguing that his sentence is cruel and unusual. Sorry, I can't say that without laughing and therefore a violation of the Eighth Amendment, cruel and unusual. His sentence, by the way, is about 7% of what he could have gotten. But sure 7% and I'm being generous there. There's a discrepancy and what Cory's total exposure was, depending on who you ask. The upper limit of his potential sentence was between 195 and 275 years. But one man's lucky day at his sentencing hearing is another man-who-thinks-he's-above-it-all's cruelty. Second, Cory is arguing that the court was biased against him. He calls it "spill-over-bias" from State versus Murdaugh. He points out that Judge Newman called his crimes "unimaginable" and "unprecedented" and "the greatest crime for a lawyer in the history of the state of South Carolina, certainly in the number of years being faced and the impact of crimes on the citizens of South Carolina." Could he have said that because it's true? Here's David with the rest of Cory's argument on Judge Newman being "biased."



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DAVID MOSES 16:51

He then stated that although Mr. Fleming has no prior convictions, when you quote carry on a scheme over a decade, that's a record, a record that did not result in charges or convictions, but a record of his life. Additionally, the circuit court made repeated extra judicial remarks about the co-defendant to Alexander Murdaugh, and the cases not only were those statements inappropriate and evidence to bias against the defendant, but they were not disclosed to plea counsel.

Mandy Matney 17:27

Repeated extra judicial remarks you say? He's likely referring to Judge Newman's appearance on the *Today* show that aired in June. He was interviewed by South Carolina native Craig Melvin. This is what gets me about these guys how they take the truth and completely rely on people only having a vague motion of what they're talking about. So they can inflate the truth and twist it into something that serves their purposes. They meaning Cory's attorneys and Alex's attorneys want you to believe that Judge Newman was inappropriate and some way and therefore has got to go. We'll get into this more next week. But let's talk about that *Today* show interview. I want to give you a rundown of what was said. Melvin describes judge Newman as a "by the book jurist" and at the end of the interview, he noted that Judge Newman declined to answer some questions because Alex's case is still on appeal. In the *Today* show special first, Melvin showed a clip of Judge Newman speaking at Cleveland State, his alma mater shortly after the trial. In that clip, Judge Newman says "I was simply a judge in a trial doing my job." Next, he asked Judge Newman if he was surprised at the attention that the case got. Judge Newman said he shouldn't have been but then listed the elements of potential intrigue. He said that the case involved a prominent attorney, a prominent family, allegations of theft, allegations of drug addiction, etc, etc. So naturally, it would interest people, he said. So there, he's just stating facts. In the interview, Melvin asked Judge Newman if he was surprised by the speed of the verdict. Judge Newman said no, in his experience with long trials, juries typically don't take long to return a verdict.



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So there he is speaking to his experience and nothing specific about Alex's case. Next, Judge Newman was asked if he really believes that Alex will be haunted by the death of Maggie and Paul. Judge Newman responded and said, "Oh, I think so. It has to be. I can't imagine having a peaceful night knowing what he did. I'm sure if he had an opportunity to do it over again, he would never do it." So there Judge Newman is basically repeating what he said during Alex's sentencing. Later in the segment, Judge Newman says of Alex "I felt sorry for him, I felt if there's a hole that he could go into, he would dive into that hole and keep going to the lowest depths. I was trying to pull him out of that hole, but I wanted to give him an opportunity to say something." So there Judge Newman was speaking about his reasoning for saying the things he did to Alex before he sentenced him. And that's it. That is the sum total of the quote, unquote, "extrajudicial" statements that Judge Newman made to Craig Melvin. Of course, Cory's attorneys also might be referencing that interview Judge Newman did at Cleveland State, the only public quote from that event that we could find about Alex was this quote, "I don't believe that he hated his wife, and I certainly don't believe that he did not love his son, but he committed the unforgivable, unimaginable of crimes and there is no way he will be able to sleep peacefully." Again, he's saying what he said at Alex's sentencing. He said this about the jury's visit to Moselle. "It ended up I thought being helpful to the prosecution and not the defense, though it was requested by the defense." Again, that's a fact based on the defense losing. And finally, Judge Newman said this about Alex's decision to testify on his own behalf. "Once a defendant takes the stand and testifies, then almost everything is fair game at that point." That seems like something any law professor would say about any case, ever. Notice how nothing there seems inappropriate or prejudicial to either Alex or Cory, and yet that is the vibe Cory is trying to manufacture. Unsurprisingly, his appeal contains no quotes from those alleged extrajudicial statements of Cory's. Because the only goal of that section of Cory's appeal seems to be to boost the remove judge Newman campaign being spearheaded by Team Murdaugh. Third, Cory argued that Judge Newman failed to read the federal sentencing proceeding. That is our favorite argument of all of them. Because how dumb is that? Can



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you imagine at the hearing where Mark Moore was like, Sorry, can't schedule the trial because I haven't read the federal transcripts that I'm literally paid to read. Judge Newman is now getting called out because he was like, I didn't read Judge Gergel's advice about letting his 46 months sentence stand. On the one hand, you have the most principled man and all of this, I mean, Judge Newman, not Mark Moore. And on the other hand, you have a former lawyer who thought it was a good idea to name Alex Murdaugh, the godfather of both of his children. We have known about Alex Murdaugh for less than six years and even before the murders and the roadside shooting and the revelation of his financial crimes, I wouldn't have trusted him to be the godfather of a Cabbage Patch Kid. And Cory has known this guy since college. Anyway, Judge Newman's declaration that he didn't read Judge Gergel's statement about Cory's sentencing, which by the way, has zero relevance to what Judge Newman's job is, was the part of the hearing that we liked the most.

Judge Clifton Newman 23:28

I don't defer to the federal court system for in making my decisions.

Mandy Matney 23:36

It was the strongest moment yet from South Carolina's justice system. Judge Newman does not defer to the federal government, and none of us should be deferring to trickery. Lastly, Cory argued that his due process rights were violated by quote, a gross sentencing disparity. Specifically, he did not like that Judge Newman brought up a 37 year old sentence for a woman who killed her child. Judge Newman's point was simply that the woman was also deemed a good person, according to her friends and family, but his job is to sentence for the crime, not the person. Cory also didn't like the Judge Newman brought up other defendants who had stood before him on grand larceny charges who had been sentenced to 10 years. Overall, we thought Cory's appeal was weak. It is scraps. It is literally the most that they could do with the very least.



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Liz Farrell 24:45

Okay, so speaking of Cory and his plea deal, let's talk about Alex. When Alex's plea deal with the federal government was filed September 18, we were criticized for calling out the suspicious aspects of it. The criticism was that we were too inexperienced to notice that Alex's plea deal was boilerplate. Boilerplate would mean that it is standard. And if it's standard, then it should basically be the same as Cory's plea agreement right. Save for the finer details. Well, that isn't the case. A side by side comparison of the two shows these differences. First, Cory's plea agreement is eight pages and Alex is 10 which is interesting because Cory only faced one charge and Alex faced 22 charges. In that two page discrepancy we have the following: Cory has a section called cooperation but Alex corresponding section is called cooperation and forfeiture. Now mind you Cory was ordered to pay more than \$100,000 in restitution and Alex's burden is way more than that. Alex's plea agreement is very focused on forfeiture, something we noticed right away as suspect, this is important. The federal government ordered Russell Laffitte to pay restitution not to the victims of his crimes, but to PMPED and Palmetto State Bank who obviously think of themselves as victims. His restitution even covers a large bill for PMPED's investigation into Alex's crimes which PMPED was obligated to do regardless of who pays for it. And Cory was not ordered to pay restitution in the Satterfield case but rather in the Pinckney case, a case he was not charged with federally. Of that restitution \$13,000 will go to Pamela Pinkney and nearly \$90,000 will go to PMPED. Now, here we are with Alex who has not only tried to withdraw his confession of judgment in the Satterfield case, he's appealing the judge's denial of said motion. And remember that confession of judgment was a trick from the beginning. Alex and his lawyer's Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin use the confession as a tactic to try and get Alex out on bond in January 2022. They used it as a way to show that Alex was taking responsibility for his actions. They used it as a de facto apology to Tony and Brian Satterfield. And after it didn't work in their favor, they withdrew it. In addition to that Alex and his attorneys are hard at work trying to get the insurance company that paid out the bulk of the Satterfield settlement off of Alex's back. One of the tactics they used there



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was to tell the insurance company to go after the Satterfield for the money because, oh hey, Alex lied about the dogs tripping Gloria and therefore the money they were supposed to have gotten that he stole was fraudulently obtained. He doesn't mention that the Satterfield's never received that money, but instead were compensated by PMPED and Moss Kuhn and Fleming's malpractice insurance companies for the crimes these lawyers had committed against them. And also I want to note something here. One of the major discussions happening right now is how Dick and Jim are getting paid. This is a question because Alex continues to claim to be broke. But also because Dick and Jim have said they believe in Alex's innocence in the murder case so much that they represent him pro bono. So their continued representation of him is in part attributed to their alleged belief that the government got the wrong guy, which is fine, but that only explains their role in the murder case. It does not explain why they're involved in Alex's financial cases or his Nautilus case or why they're orchestrating this forfeiture plan. It does not explain how extra they are being about all of this. It does not explain all the filings and the strategies and the press conferences in the CrimeConning and the absolute self destructive devotion they have to this case. So back to the plea agreements, Alex starts to diverge quite a bit from Cory's. In paragraph seven of Cory's agreement he agrees to cooperate with the government and that substantial assistance is being provided in exchange for the government moving for there to be a downward departure or a reduction of sentence which Cory did get. Alex's paragraph seven is different. Now, Alex's agreement was filed four days after Judge Newman gave Cory a sentence that was to be served consecutively to his federal sentence meaning when Cory is done with his 46 months in federal prison, he will be transferred to a state prison to serve another 10 years. That is not what Cory wanted. So Alex's paragraph seven in his federal plea agreement seems to account for that. In exchange for Alex alleged cooperation with federal investigators, and I think you know why we're saying alleged there, the government agreed to recommend to the court that the sentence imposed on these charges be served concurrent to any state sentence imposed for the same conduct, meaning of course, at the same time. This is why Alex is likely



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hoping that Judge Gergel loads him up. It basically protects him if Alex is able to get out of this murder conviction before his financial crimes trial at the state level, then he will become a ward of the federal government. And like we said, once they have you, they are not letting you go. So essentially, if things played out in this court, it would cancel out his state sentence. Now Cory's paragraph seven ends by basically saying, look, we can recommend this, but it's not up to us and if the court decides differently, you're agreeing right here that you cannot withdraw your plea. Alex's does not end that way. Instead, his has no such provision that says that if the court doesn't agree to the government's recommendation about his concurrent sentence, he cannot withdraw his plea. Now, on to paragraph eight. Cory's essentially says you already paid back the fee you took from the Satterfield, it's one sentence Alex's is two pages long. His says that he agrees to surrender and not contest the forfeiture of all assets and property in his possession or in possession of his nominees. Then it outlines the specifics, he's agreed to give up around \$9 million in cash. And in light of other investigations, he's agreeing not to contest any element of the federal government's seizure of his assets, including making any double jeopardy claims. The agreement reads, "The United States may use the value of forfeited property for restitution, but is not required to do so." In what world do we believe that the government isn't going to allow Alex to apply this money to restitution, specifically restitution to PMPED who in turn can share it with whoever they want right? Now, paragraph nine of Cory's agreement has the government agreeing to recommend that he not serve any term of incarceration within the South Carolina Department of Corrections. Nice try, right? From this point forward the agreements are a paragraph off. So let's talk about Cory's paragraph 11 and Alex's paragraph 10, shall we? They're both the same, but Cory's contains a provision that Alex's does not. Cory has agreed that if he files a motion in the future, seeking a reduction in sentence he will limit any assertion of quote, "extraordinary and compelling reasons" allegedly warranting a reduced term of imprisonment. Cory has also agreed that he may only assert those reasons set forth in the relevant Bureau of Prisons program statement in effect of the timing of the motion. Meaning if Cory wants to get out early, he would have



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been restricted in that effort. Alex has none of that. He has not signed away his right to seek reduction in sentence for quote, "extraordinary and compelling reasons." He has not limited himself one bit on that front. And there it is. That should give us all some insight into the larger plan to get Alex moved to federal prison, get at the money the state won't let them touch and later make a plea for a reduced sentence.

Mandy Matney 33:00

Now let's talk about that plea hearing last Thursday. So last Thursday, which was September 21 2023, David and I made the very familiar two hour drive to Charleston to watch Alex plead guilty to his federal charges. Since federal court does not allow live streaming, a gripe that I will continue complaining about, we figured we needed to be there to see what they were up to with this federal plea and if they were trying to pull any shenanigans. While the hearing was short, we were glad we went. Alex and his team didn't say much during the short hearing. But what they chose to say was helpful to us as we are trying to figure out the big plan here. In case anyone was wondering, Alex Murdaugh was very on brand in Federal Court last week. It did not take long to catch him in a lie. He told the court he was pleading guilty because he quote "wants to take responsibility." He said he wants his son Buster to see him take responsibility. He said "It is my hope that by taking responsibility that the people I hurt can begin to heal." While I don't know what is going on and Alex head, nor do I want to go there ever, I know that Alex has had years to take responsibility. I know that like his friend Cory it is not ironic that he has only chosen to quote "take responsibility" in the courtroom that carries the best case scenario for him. I know if Alex truly wanted Buster to see him quote "taking responsibility" and if he truly wanted to see his victims heal, he would have admitted fault in the numerous financial lawsuits against him a long time ago and he would have pleaded guilty in state court to the financial crimes at the very least. But last Thursday, Alex did plead guilty to all 22 of the financial charges against him in federal court, but then par for the course Team Murdaugh had some exceptions to make. I want to have David read this



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portion of the transcript, because it gives you a feel of what it was like in federal court. Notice how polite and nice Judge Gergel is with the defense.

DAVID MOSES 35:25

THE COURT: Okay, Mr. Murdaugh, you've heard the summary provided by the assistant United States attorney. Do you dispute any of those facts?

MR. GRIFFIN: Your Honor, there were a few points of clarification.

THE COURT: Well, he needs to speak Mr. Griffin rather than you. Mr. Murdaugh?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir. Like Mr. Griffin said, there are just a couple of points. Not that I think Ms. Limehouse is necessarily wrong. But there's just some issues my attorney is prepared to clarify.

THE COURT: Well, here is the concern. As much as I admire your attorneys, you're the one pleading guilty, not the attorneys. And I need to make sure that we are not modifying factual statements that then eliminate one of the elements of any of these crimes. If you're telling me you're not able to articulate these, I would be glad to hear from Mr. Griffin, but I'm going to need to come back to you and confirm what he says.

THE DEFENDANT: Your Honor, not to be difficult, but in what if you are willing, I'd like for you to let Mr. Griffin address those and then I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Mandy Matney 36:48

That's me signing in Murdaugh exhaustion. First of all, notice how Judge Gergel who was the court in this reading, by the way had to mention his admiration for Alex's attorneys. Reminder, Dick Harpootlian pointed a gun in a courtroom just a few months ago and he joked about shooting the prosecution. What world are we in exactly that a federal court ever wants to admit out loud that he admires that man? Oh, that's right. The world with a US federal system where Dick and Jim have strings to pull. That is the sad reality of it. Second, I could not eye roll hard enough in that courtroom when Alex Murdaugh said he wasn't trying to be difficult. Alex Murdaugh has been difficult since the day I started investigating him in 2019. Imagine how



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different the last four years would have gone if Alex Murdaugh wasn't so difficult. I think about this a lot. Like would Paul have been able to admit fault for the boat crash and give Mallory's family some closure had Alex not been so difficult? I believe that Maggie and Paul would be alive if Alex wasn't so difficult. We know a number of families would have been spared a lot of pain and heartache if Alex was not so difficult. Oh, and South Carolina taxpayers could have spent their hard earned dollars on literally a million better things than fighting Alex Murdaugh in his difficult attorneys in court all of this time. Also Alex saying he's not trying to be difficult is a classic manipulation tactic. He knows he is trying to be difficult, but he wants to create this alternate reality where he is a nice guy and people feel like they should listen to him. Anyway, while not trying to be difficult, Griffin on behalf of Alex raised two issues with the court about Alex's guilty plea. One, Griffin said that Alex did not believe that he was actually stealing from Donna Badger's estate. Instead, Griffin wanted to make sure that the court knew that Alex thought that he was stealing from Arthur Badger. Mark "The Tiger" Tinsley who is also Badger's attorney brilliantly broke this down for us on Twitter Mark said "oh, that means he didn't mean to steal from the estate he just meant to steal from the father of the six children left after a mother's tragic death." Not sure how that makes it any better. But anyways, number two, Griffin said that in the Satterfield case, Alex is pleading to conspiracy. He is not admitting that he ever believed the insurance claim blaming the dogs for her death was legitimate. And this is where I really get mad because it seems like the purpose of this is that so Alex can continue to torment the Satterfield family and the court and so Alex' petty attorneys can continue a war they will never win with Eric Bland. Here Alex Murdaugh is making it clear he always thought the claim was fraudulent. Again, he is not taking responsibility. Remember when he tried to get a redo on his confession of judgment with the Satterfield lawsuit. Alec does not want to give the Satterfield's a dime ever and he wants to continue to torture them in court. Alex doesn't want his victims to heal and these two statements alone show that. The thing that bugs me is that Judge Gergel didn't question this and he didn't get the truth about what Alex was really doing on the record. Judge Gergel just carried on and accepted the



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guilty plea. But of course, Team Murdaugh was not done being difficult. Actually, at the end of court, Phil Barber said "one more thing, your honor," and even Judge Gergel joked back, "why am I not surprised?" The one more thing was a big thing. It was about the assets. I'll have David read what Phil Barber said in court.

DAVID MOSES 41:14

Your Honor, as the Court is aware there are forfeiture provisions within the indictments in this plea agreement. And rule 32.2 anticipates that a preliminary order of forfeiture would issue promptly, and the defendants simply would ask that that the order issue as soon as possible. Today would be excellent. But there is we believe a risk of anticipation which would be voided by the government immediately taking possession of the assets that are subject to forfeiture.

Mandy Matney 41:45

As soon as he said the word assets. My head started spinning. I texted Liz, immediately. I think this is all about the assets. Oh, my God. Suddenly, it all made sense. Not only did they want this guilty plea on the books, because it is one of many steps in a very complex plan to try to get Alex into Club Fed, but they also want their friends in the federal government in charge of the money. The federal government, you know, the people who worked for us, the United States taxpayers, they seemed cool with this plan. Emily Limehouse told the court that while Alex has admitted to stealing \$9 million, they believe it's at least \$10.5 million, which is another thing that we will talk about in a future episode. So at the end of court, they settled on entering the preliminary order of forfeiture of at least \$9 million. Just like that. So we knew something was up before this hearing and during this hearing. It seems so clear Alex was going to make a run for those assets that are in possession of the receivership.



EPISODE 18: Actually, Alex Murdaugh WANTS to be Difficult + Cory Fleming Isn't Really Sorry At All

Liz Farrell 43:04

So a quick refresher because it's confusing. From 2019 through the murders, Alec claimed to have been broke. Mark Tinsley knew this was a lie, because well, because Mark Tinsley has two eyes. There was no way Alex could be broke when Mark could see the cases he was handling and see that those cases were settling. So Mark pulled out that thread of a lie, and was basically like, if you're broke, then show me you're broke. Here's a big fat subpoena for you. Alex pushed off that subpoena as much as he could. In December 2020, Mark offered Alex a way out of the boat crash case he could settle for \$10 million with a payment plan and in exchange, Mark wouldn't sue Maggie or Paul in the future, which was always his ace in the hole. Alex did not want Maggie and Paul being sued and therefore open to discovery. So this was a good point of leverage from Mark. Again, Alex said no to that and kept pushing off the subpoena. Ultimately, a hearing was set for June 10, 2021, which was just three days after the murders. And Alex being a lawyer would have known that the judge was expecting him to come to court with the information that Mark was seeking in that subpoena, or else the judge would have ordered Alex to comply. After the murders Mark suspected for good reason that Alex, his family and friends were liquidating Alex's assets and potentially hiding the money. According to one of Alex's early calls from jail this certainly seemed to be the case. In response to this wasting of assets Mark moves the court to appoint a receivership, lawyers who would be put in charge of managing Alex's finances and account for every penny. Ultimately that receivership found around \$1.8 million. Now this is where it gets a little complicated. Let's start by talking about Buster's settlement. As part of his settlement with the Beach family, Buster was allowed to keep \$500,000. That came from Maggie's estate which Buster would have inherited. Maggie's estate included the full proceeds from the sale of Moselle because Alex had put it in her name, which is something I'm sure he regrets now and from the sale of the family's Edisto Beach House, which Alec owns half of. Half of the beach house is part of Alex's, let's call it his estate. Also in that pot is the remnants of Alex's \$2 million 401K. The plaintiffs in the Beach case had no right to Alex's 401K. But if he cashed it out, then it became fair game.



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Incidentally, that 401k did not include money that Alex had stolen but rather money from PMPED that was deposited as part of the firm's profit sharing plan. In a deal to get at that money, Alex agreed to give the receivership the balance of his account if they allowed him to cash out his 401k to pay for \$600,000 in legal expenses, ie to pay Dick and Jim so they could hire experts for his murder trial, which you remember those experts, right? At least one of them was recycled from when Dick and Jim were representing Paul. Now the rest of the 401k money which was about \$424,000 after penalties for early withdrawal and taxes went into Alex's estate. And then surprise surprise, Alex changed his mind on that deal. Just after the murder trial, Dick and Jim went back to court with their tin cans and their three blind mice glasses on and asked Judge Daniel Hall to give them \$160,000 more from that 401k money because they had overspent their retainer in repping Alex. The judge was like, no girl. Then three months later, after Dick and Jim appealed that decision, the judge was like, again, I say no girl uh-uh. So that's where that was left. Dick and Jim can't touch the receivership money and oh, what's this? Alex agreed to waive his right to appeal the receivership as part of Buster's settlement deal? So that left those geniuses with what would seem like no options. Until now. The federal government has given them an option. And on Monday evening, just days after Alex's plea hearing in federal court, Dick and Jim filed a motion asking for an emergency hearing in federal court calling for US Marshals to immediately seize Alex's assets that the receivership is holding for the victims. The victims remember them? In August, Judge Hall agreed to appoint a special referee, which is a lawyer to decide how to split up Alex remaining assets among the long list of victims. Victims have until mid October to come forward and be considered. Earlier we've seen plays for that money being made by Alex's former partner and loan buddy Johnny Parker, Alex's brother, Randy, and PMPED, who we've already seen recognized as a victim by the federal court. If this latest motion from Dick and Jim is granted, it would mean that the entirety of that money would go to the federal government. It would be snatched out of the hands of victims and given to an entity that has shown that it already believes PMPED to be a priority for restitution.



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Mandy Matney 48:04

Now, would this mean that Dick and Jim would be able to touch that money? It's not clear even though the money wouldn't go directly to them, it would be a fair question to ask if that money would come back to them in another way. For instance, who is paying for them? Now suddenly, they have a lot to say about where that money has been coming from. According to Angenette Levy with *Law & Crime*, the reporter who we talked about earlier in this episode, Dick and Jim told attendees at their CrimeCon presentation that they were paid a quote "handsome fee" in Paul's case, which they then use an Alex's case, along with the money from the multimillion dollar irrevocable trust that Alex inherited from his father. That trust cannot be touched by the plaintiffs in a lawsuit unless it is cashed out, kind of like how it went with a 401K. So they were paid by money that possibly came from the money that was stolen from the Satterfield or if Dick and Jim don't like it put that way, the money that was stolen from Nautilus insurance. And where did Randolph get millions of dollars to pass on to his four children? He was a state employee for the bulk of his life and from what it seems like PMPED had distanced itself from Randolph in the sense they say he wasn't a partner. He just basically hung out at the firm for funsies. On Tuesday, the receivership and others fired back by subpoenaing Dick and Jim and Buster to find out how much money they've made in entertainment deals related to the Murdaugh case. Why? Because it appears that Dick and Jim circumvented Judge Hall's receivership order. One, Dick and Jim are creditors of Alex's meaning Alex owes them money. For them to be paid by Alex they need to, according to the judge's order, ask for that money from the receivership. The receivership is, for all intents and purposes, Alex. His assets belong to the receivership and they have a duty to distribute the money to satisfy Alex's debts. Two, Dick and Jim did not do that, which could be a violation of the judge's order. Three, knowing whether Dick and Jim did in fact receive money from Alex's liquidated trust or from any entertainment deal related to the case, that would appear to be them being paid by Alex, right? So four: that money might be up for grabs by the receivership. In other words, Dick and Jim might



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have played themselves again. And that subpoena means that things are really heating up. Make no mistake, it looks like war is coming and the Murdaugh money is in the middle of it. As we have been taking a closer look into Team Murdaugh recently, we had noticed what appears to be a very strategic PR campaign as a part of this plan to get Judge Newman removed from the case and to get Alex a new trial. We have noticed a very interesting timeline. With this apparent PR campaign and Dick and Jim's little anti-Becky crusade. We hope to have more details about what is going on with Becky Hill and the jury tampering accusations within the next week. Finally, I will be on *Court TV* tonight, Thursday, September 28 at 8pm with Sandy Smith and Eric Bland to make a special announcement. And don't forget to preorder my book, *Blood on Their Hands*. Stay tuned, stay pesky and stay in the sunlight.

Mandy Matney 52:06

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 Luna Shark production. Right, Luna?

EXPOSING CRIME & CORRUPTION