



EPISODE 80: The Red Flags in Mica Miller's Death + Sandy Smith Meets with Investigators, Colucci Trial is Almost Here

Mandy Matney 00:03

Hey y'all. For starters, Cup of Justice has a new Instagram account at COJPod. So be sure to follow COJPod for all the latest updates on exciting new guests, the Colucci case and more. On today's episode, we will talk more about the Colucci case. We have less than a week before the trial begins on May 13th. If you're interested in this case, and haven't already listened to last week's True Sunlight podcast, I highly recommend that you do we have uncovered a lot. Now it's just a question of whether the prosecution can do the case justice this time around. We also talk about the very disturbing and heartbreaking case of Mica Miller, a 30-year old woman from Myrtle Beach, who was found dead a week and a half ago in a state park in North Carolina near the South Carolina border. Mica had just filed for divorce from her pastor husband, John Paul JP Miller who has a history of violence. There are so many strange things with this case, but mostly there are red flags. Mica lived in fear of John Paul and even told her family members that she'd ever been found with a bullet in her head that JP did this to her. We've put out a bunch of FOIAs in this case, and we will be talking about it more on this week's True Sunlight. But today, you're basically getting our raw reactions to the case and what we think needs to happen to protect women after their untimely deaths. Premium Members will get a little something extra today. Eric talks about those pesky liability waivers we all have to sign from time to time. Do we have to sign them? What happens if we don't? What happens if we were to scratch out part of the agreement before signing out? All that and more. Let's get into it.

Eric Bland 01:57

Cups up partners. How you doing?



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Liz Farrell 01:59

Cups up. Wow, is that a grape soda?

Eric Bland 02:01

That is called Zevia with zero sugar. Grape. Have you ever drank Zevia?

Liz Farrell 02:07

Yes I have. And grape soda it that's a throwback to like, you know birthday parties back in the day.

Eric Bland 02:13

Or Kool Aid. When I was a kid. We only got cool pops in the summer. Do you guys ever remember Kool Aid pops? The long skinny ice Kool Aid pops?

Mandy Matney 02:23

No, that sounds good. My husband is a connoisseur of all things popsicles. Fun fact. He absolutely loves popsicles. And every time he gets the opportunity, like if there is any sort of popsicle truck or shaved ice truck anywhere, he's all over it. If David needs to decompress, he'll go down to the general store and get a popsicle. He bikes down there.

Eric Bland 02:49

He'll run after the Good Humor truck holding a \$10 bill?

Mandy Matney 02:51

He will. He loves a good popsicle. Also fun fact of the day, my husband loves popsicles.



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Liz Farrell 02:57

Where does he fall on Italian ice? Mandy? Yes or no? Is that like a deconstructed popsicle?

Eric Bland 03:03

Well, is it just the flavor popsicles? Or is it chocolatey? Eclair? He just likes the straight flavored fruit flavor.

Mandy Matney 03:10

He likes the fruit flavored ones. And he makes his own sometimes too. He we got them little ice. One of those things called ice trays. ice trays. Yeah, that he puts the popsicle sticks in and makes this little juices and flavors. And yeah, it's and it is popsicle season. Now it's really hot outside here in the low country.

Eric Bland 03:34

Does he have house clothes on right now? Matching shirt and pants?

Mandy Matney 03:37

Actually had a meeting right before this. So he's wearing a collared shirt. But also gym shorts underneath that because party on bottom business on top, whatever.

Eric Bland 03:53

So what have you been doing Liz?

Liz Farrell 03:54

Well, just to update people, the car has been moved.



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Eric Bland 03:58

Yeah. What's the neighbor situation?

Liz Farrell 04:00

Yeah, so I didn't, I didn't so many people reached out and told me don't do it. Don't confront him. So I didn't do that. I didn't slash his tires. I didn't, you know, send a telegram to his house or anything like that. So it's been moved. For now. My friend was able to park in front of my house so we could go for a walk this morning. So that felt like a victory. I don't know. I don't know what's going to happen. We'll see. But I did call. I did call the police. I did call the fire not in a Karen way. I called for informational purposes. And I called the fire department and I also called the Department of Safety. And I was essentially told there's no law that prohibits him from parking there. And if there is an emergency, a fire emergency or something at my house, they will try to get him to move the car or push it out of the way. So I told them that I like to push it out of the way solution. That's how I've been doing Eric, how are you?

Eric Bland 04:56

I'm good. I had a good week. This morning Sandy and I met with Attorney General Alan Wilson and some of the Assistant Attorney General's and SLED. So that was a pretty enlightening meeting. It was so good to see Sandy. So we'll talk about that. But you know, just working in, you know, enjoying the nice weather that we're starting to have every day now.

Liz Farrell 05:20

Nice. How about you Mandy? You must be exhausted.



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Mandy Matney 05:23

I am home and happy to be home and excited because we have a lot of new work. We have a new case that we're getting into, I felt rejuvenated, coming home, and ready to dive in. And we have an upcoming trial, just a lot of good things coming up a lot of exciting things. So yeah, life is good. And it's basically summer here. When I left two weeks ago, it was, you know, a little chilly mid spring weather and got back, got off the plane and was like, Oh my gosh, it's that low country, suffocating heat that hits you. It's overwhelming, but also kind of feels like home. So it's good to be back.

Liz Farrell 06:08

Oh nice. So Eric, I wanted to start by asking you a question. Not about me, just general interest. I saw on The Today Show Instagram that there was a post about a mom who was an attorney. And she was talking about how for like school field trips, things like that, where there is a live release from liability that they sent home with the kid, she'll cross out some of the language in that agreement, and then sign it and write declined next to that agreement. And I personally, you know, we were joking last week, Mandy and me, like we don't read the fine print. But I will say like, I was really into Pure Bar about five years ago, six years ago, I can't remember are super into it. But they ruined it for me, because I don't want to be photographed and like videotape, when I'm sweating and like, gross. And like I just I just want to exercise. I just want to go to your establishment and do the and do the work not be part of your marketing campaign. So when I signed up for it, I put across outward said that you had permission to use My photograph and video and what have you. And they were so cool about it. They're like, yeah, no problem. But of course, that didn't end up happening. And they didn't, you know,



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so I just wanted to know, if you could just like illuminate a little bit like what kind of control people have over those kinds of agreements.

Eric Bland 07:25

You'll see them on the back of a ticket, if you go to, let's say, an amusement park, or you go into a birthday party for little kids where there's bouncy trampolines and different things like that. And it's called a release and waiver of liability. And if you read it, your eyes are going to start getting crossed. But what essentially they say is, they're absolved from any bit of negligence that takes place any bit of injuries that occur. You're at your own risk. It's called assumption to the risks. So you come onto our premises, and they try to get you to sign away, that they don't have any duties to you. It is somewhat enforceable, not all enforceable. And that means that even though you sign away the waiver of intentional everything, the only thing the law will let you release them from in advance is negligent conduct, which is the failure of due care. So what does that mean negligence is, you know, it's not intentional, nobody's trying to hurt you. It's not grossly negligent, where they should have seen that there's a rip in the seam of the trampoline, that had been there for days on end, and it got worse and worse and worse. It's a situation where, let's say a kid is jumping and another kid pushes the kid and he hits the wall and flies off and injures himself. That could be considered ordinary negligence if they have the right number of people that are supervising. So if you sign those waivers, even though they may have wall to wall release of everything fraud, intentional conduct, the law will only let you be released, lit releasing the proprietor of the establishment for ordinary negligence, not gross negligence, not intentional conduct. So I kind of gave you a half and a half answer half in half out. Obviously you want to never agree to those things. And I do

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try to strike them out. What you will find though is if you strike them out, you won't get on the premises. So like in Augusta, if you were to strike that out, you get hit by a golf ball or tree falls or whatever you've released Augusta National and you strike that out. You won't get in. So you should try it. You know obviously when you take your Kids to a daycare center or to a summer camp. I wouldn't sign that release away. But when you go into a sporting event, like a hockey game and a hockey puck comes over and you know hits an audience, Hitchin, as spectators, you can't sue for that unless they were grossly negligent and not having high enough glass walls or, you know, a net for a golf course, if there's a driving range. So the the short answer is, yes, you can strike them out. If you do, the odds are most likely you won't get in because they'll say I have to run it by legal and we can't get in touch with legal. But be comforted by the fact that even though you do sign those, it does not absolve grossly negligent conduct or intentional conduct.

Liz Farrell 10:47

That is really interesting. I always wondered. So essentially, but like you're saying, with daycare, you're saying that somebody could alter some of that language or strike some of that language out? Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. The daycare might negotiate with them or?

Eric Bland 11:03

The law has statutes that deal with daycares that impose duty statutorily and through regulations. But I'm just talking about, you know, a lot of times I have to draft a release and waiver for people that are having a birthday party in a park, or they're doing, you know, some kind of festive occasion and they have people coming on and they're drinking, and you have the social host situation where somebody's you



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know, you're supplying alcohol, or people are bringing alcohol, they drink too much, and they drive off and hurt somebody. So there's waivers that you can ask for those. But again, the law will not let you release gross negligence or intentional conduct.

Liz Farrell 11:40

Have you ever hosted a party where you had your guests sign? One of those?

Eric Bland 11:45

No, but I do for my corporate clients that have Christmas parties and things like that, you know, they're, you know, it's a real dangerous thing. When you supply alcohol at a Christmas party or some kind of holiday get together. You know, people can drink a lot. And then God forbid, they drive off and they hurt somebody that happens all the time.

Liz Farrell 12:05

Yeah, for sure. Well, thank you for answering that. That was very helpful. So Eric, tell us what happened at this meeting that you had with the attorney general. And Sandy, that's been a long time coming.

Eric Bland 12:17

Yeah it has, I guess the genesis of it was at the victims rally that we were at, I guess, in early April. And the Attorney General saw Sandy and David and Mandy and Sandy, you know, mentioned something, the Attorney General, he said, I'll be glad to meet with you. And I guess it was one of those offhand comments, you know, that people say like, Hey, let's go do lunch next week. And you call the guy and you say, hey, let's have lunch. He's like, I don't want to have lunch with you. But, you know, the



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Attorney General said, he'll be glad to meet. And we certainly held him to it, because we immediately notified him and said, Hey, we would like to meet. And so this morning, we met at the Attorney General's office, and there was a significant number of important people there. I don't want to name who was there, in addition to the Attorney General, but we were told that that is an absolute active investigation, and that they are actively pursuing answers for for Sandy, they both they all to a person said, they want to give her peace. And Sandy said it the same way, I want to just find out what happened. I want to have peace for what happened to my son. The Attorney General was very serious about finding an answer for her. He does not like the fact that Stephen was killed in that manner and that they don't have an answer. They were clear to tell us that, you know, when they took over meaning SLED in the AG, it was essentially a cold case, because the highway department had it for six years. And they released the file. And, you know, they they reiterated the same concerns we had when they released the file to the public that that was a chilling effect, in essence, for the potential investigation. They didn't share much of the granular details of their investigation. Other than that, they believe that they will come to a point that they will have an answer as to what happened and may not be enough for criminal prosecution, but they believe that they will get an answer and I saw a list of 11 things you know that they're going to do and I take them at their word and and they were receptive to what Sandy was asking them you know, I did ask them for some some pointed questions about the laptop about the tablet and different things like that. And I'm not sure what they found off the tablet but it wasn't enough they would have yielded anything and you gave me some suggestions. about, you know, Craigslist and different things like that, that I passed on and, and they were very welcoming to any



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information that we can give or any information that the public can give either through you through, you know, through sunlight, or directly to the AG, they're, they're committed to getting answers. And when they said that it was a homicide in March of 2023, that word connotes a number of things, it could mean a murder, it could mean somebody who was grossly negligent, so under the influence of alcohol, and, and cause the death, or could have been somebody who was inattentive and didn't mean it at all, that they were just looking the other way and didn't see Stephen, and something happened. So it's a broad spectrum of definition of death. When we hear the word homicide, we all are mag fake homicide occurred, that's a murder. And they wanted me to understand and Sandy to understand that they're not reaching any conclusions regarding the word homicide.

Liz Farrell 16:07

Well, I don't think we ever did. I think we were pretty clear that homicide can also mean a vehicular situation. But did they mention? So there's been a lot of confusion because it's been reported that there were two people of interest that had been developed in the case? And of course, those are the two people who appear in the final pages of the case file where the case file ends. Did they mention that there's any person like, did they say that they're they have people of interest? Or what did they say about that?

Eric Bland 16:37

They did not say that. They did not say that they have any persons of interest in?



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Mandy Matney 16:41

Yeah. And I might have said I did I believe, over a year ago, I took it as murder with the way that it was being said in the way that it was being reported. Yeah, I'll be the first to admit, because it wouldn't have been in development, if it was still a homicide. And that context, you know what I mean? So this is just all been very disappointing and confusing, because a year ago, it seemed like they were on a on a track. It seemed like there was more developments a year ago than there is today. And that is highly, highly concerning. I mean, I guess we have to take the positive here. And it's it's a great thing that, Eric, you got that meeting to begin with. For Sandy, I think Sandy definitely deserves that kind of FaceTime with important people. And I have not talked to her following up. But I'm sure she's greatly greatly appreciative of just that, because that's all that she's wanted just basic updates of what they know what they don't and what they're doing.

Eric Bland 17:48

It was definitely not a blow off meeting, Mandy, because there was 12345, there were six very important people in that meeting, some that came from across town. And if it was a blow off meeting, it would have been five minutes with just an assist, and I just didn't, I had been in blow off meetings, and you've been in blow off meetings, too. I didn't take it as such. But I did take it as a meeting that they don't have a lot to say or show at this time.

Mandy Matney 18:19

Right and I think that it...I still believe that this case can be absolutely cracked with one to two people talking. And I believe that one to two people out there, maybe three who knew what happened could



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absolutely change the game. And so we are still begging people to contact SLED, contact us. If you don't trust SLED, contact us. But please, please, please contact less than the SLED and the Attorney General's Office. This case is still ongoing. I also want to be clear that the people out there who knew what happened and who are bearing these secrets, they are not in the clear by any means. And the fact that all of these important people showed up to this, that shows that I mean, this is still ongoing. And that is the good news. The bad news is that it just seems like we just had the it's not bad news, but we just got to keep pushing.

Liz Farrell 19:20

I have to say this. And I think that this is something that I hope makes it back to the AGs office and to SLED but you mentioned that there was a chilling effect when the State Highway Patrol released the case file, right. So we talked about that before on the show, and how that could be seen as a strategy that was done on you know, was that done on purpose to create that chilling effect, right, because it was a very unusual move at the time. And it has actually had that effect. I do think that the AGs office and SLED need to change their tactic a little when it comes to the investigation. So we say oh yeah, there's people No, no. And those people, you know, you might think that like, the rest of your life is going to be lived. And you're gonna get away with this. But you know, I'll say this, like cases get solved every day that are 50 years old. So it's not going anywhere. Somebody's going to talk at some point. But that said, Why aren't the ag and SLED looking at the like, do an investigation of the investigation? Okay, so let's, let's look at it this way. When the boat crash happened, there was there were accusations of obstruction of justice, right? And just how things were diverted, how



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decisions were made, what have you, that same thing seems to have happened with the State Highway Patrol, right? They're in, we're just I'm just going off with that decision to release that case, file unredacted. With witnesses names out there with their interviews out there, recordings of their interviews, why doesn't he like he is Office inside? Why aren't they looking into the potential of obstruction of justice, and go that route? And find out? Because if you start at the top of something and I'm saying if there was obstruction of justice here, won't that leave a breadcrumb trail? If it did exist, what happened that night?

Eric Bland 21:13

It could absolutely, you know, obstruction of justice is really a great charge when you're trying to figure out the main the main crime, right, because it, it says that people are actively trying to suppress information, whether they're threatening others, whether they're bribing others, whether it's a quid pro quo, not to talk or say this, that could happen, and it very well may be, you know, look, Creighton is running this investigation, and he's a smart dude. And, you know, we have to trust him that he's going to see this through the end, because, you know, he said, one thing, you know, they work methodically, and it may not be in the sequence that you and I and Mandy want them to work. For instance, they brought the financial crimes against Alex, for the Satterfield case. And they waited a long time, before they brought the murder charge. And it's incremental. And we were very critical in the fall of 2021, through 2022, of the pace of what they were doing. And he said, basically, trust in the process. They have a process that they follow that's different than the timelines that we want and the sequence that we think they should do. I did say, and I named some names of people that I believe should be asked, Do you know anything?

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What may have happened to Stephen and not have you having a relationship with them? Not did you kill him? Or were you in a car where, but, you know, this is a small area where that was a big time, death. Okay, that wasn't just an 88-year old man that fell off a tractor and died. That was a 19 year old kid that was a seminal death. If there's such a word as seminal death, Paul and Maggie were seminal deaths. Mallory Beach was a seminal death. Gloria Satterfield turned out to be a seminal death, but not when it happened. But a 19-year old kid is a seminal death. And I think in that community in that school, remember, he was just out of high school just about, you know, Technical College. There, there's a close knit group of people, he may not have been in that group of people that knows, but enough of people talk. And I, I honestly believe that there are people carrying around the knowledge of what happened to Stephen, and they're just not sharing it.

Liz Farrell 23:46

I think there are law enforcement officers who are carrying the knowledge of what might have gone down in terms of decisions that were made behind the scenes to further investigate not further investigate to release the whole case file to the public and expose the witnesses. So I do think if they're not already looking into that, I think that that's a tactic that they should explore. Start from the you know, the start from the other end, it's not necessarily an expectation, I have a timeline. It's just obviously the old way isn't working. So let's come up with a new way. Right? Let's look at let's try a different trail where breadcrumbs can lead us. And I think if we're going to trust anyone, it's great and water. So I don't think it's really a trust issue. It's just more a question of whether they're going to approach this from a different angle. Right. There are plenty of law enforcement officers who have



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retired since Stephen died nine years ago. Plenty of law enforcement officers who have retired.

Mandy Matney 24:41

There are also plenty who have gone on TV shows saying that something was wrong with the investigation, but not specifically saying like, who was pressuring them what was going on? Like, start there, start with those officers who have gone on all the documentaries and see the pressure of what was going on in the investigation.

Eric Bland 25:03

Here's the reality, though, by defining it as a cold case, it's not at the front of the list of cases that they're going to probably devote all their resources and time. You know, we have a drug problem in our state. We have fentanyl coming into the state. We have environmental polluting going on things that are touching people today, right now, Stephens death, touches us touches our listeners and touches Sandy. But it's a death that already occurred. But when we have things like fentanyl taking place, and, you know, current investigatory crimes, you know what I'm saying. And even though they didn't say Stephen is not number one in the list, I think by nature of being a cold case, it's never going to be number one on the list, like Alex and Maggie and Paul.

Liz Farrell 25:58

Ordinarily I agree with you on that. But here's the thing. This case is one they chose to take. They chose it, they said that this was important to them, they have taken a bow before they had something to take a bow about. And in some ways, I'm not talking about necessarily the AGs office alone. I think that this is a case that yes, it's just one boy one one



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case, one situation, this case is here now because of a failure of the system. So that I think that this is different, I don't think it's just a cold case, I don't think it's just your ordinary, they ran into a brick wall, the brick wall was built in front of them. And that's that's always going to be my position on it. The brick wall was built in front of them, they didn't hit a wall, the the wall hit them. So I think they have an obligation they have an obligation to to follow this through. Right.

Eric Bland 26:50

I hear you, Liz, what is the definition of a cold case?

Liz Farrell 26:53

So a cold case is generally seen as an old case, right? Because when you hear about in the news, it's usually these cases from you know, 1980 1950s whatever. But a cold case it's just simply means when law enforcement officer or sorry, an investigator has run out of leads. So a case can go cold almost right away. If you if you don't have you know, once you get your forensics back once you have interviewed all the the witnesses and what have you.

Eric Bland 27:18

It loses it's pulse is what you're saying.

Liz Farrell 27:20

Yeah, essentially.

Eric Bland 27:21

You seem upset, Mandy. Well, you're not upset. You're frustrated. What's your frustration about?



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Mandy Matney 27:28

The whole thing is just frustrating. I think everybody in journalism, and as in police work, and lawyers, they all have the one case that haunts them. And this is it. For me. This is the one that like I feel stuck in I and I feel like I can't move on from into anything else without getting answers in this case. And a we have tried and tried and tried. And it's just extremely frustrating. And it's extremely frustrating with how much we know, this hurts Sandy and how much we know that this hurts the family. And I don't want to go too hard on the Attorney General's office. But I will say that it is frustrating when I'm seeing his Twitter account. And he's clearly prioritizing a lot of political aspirations and a lot of political endeavors over just straight up murder cases and over public safety. And we'll talk about that in a minute with the collusion case and his office's handling of that. But yeah, I'm just really frustrated. And we'll talk about Colucci after the break.

Liz Farrell 28:55

So Eric, yeah, we're frustrated. I mean, it's I don't want to hurt people's feelings. And obviously we trust Creighton, we know if anyone's going to follow through, it's going to be him. But like Mandy said, the Attorney General, I get it like the attorney general position is a political one. And you know, that's, that's they're kind of all for one on one for all when it comes to the party lines. But it's it's sort of hard for us to understand how that's justified when it comes to your you're trying to solve cases outside of the state almost or like your ear, like get jumping in these fights that are that are national instead of at the state level. So I don't know.



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Mandy Matney 29:32

Right, and I don't think it should be a political position. I think that it's really weird that an attorney general has to decide I absolutely agree with you. Right. I think that and will and I think it's very weird that our Attorney General has to be either Republican or Democrat, because the law should be the law and they should be focused on things happening in our state, not things that are aligning with national political parties that have no interest of what is going on in the state of South Carolina. and it's just extremely frustrating. And I think that that's an example of that right now we're just get we we just keep coming on coming across cases where and the other thing I'm frustrated with, I'll continue this thought the other thing that I'm really frustrated with is just the system as a whole, like, I'm very frustrated. I know that they're trying I know Creighton is trying really hard, and I'm very, very thankful for his work. But I also understand that there are not a lot of resources in the Attorney General's office, I think there are enough in and I don't know how they're being dedicated. I don't know how many are being dedicated for all of these national lawsuits, because every other day, we see that Alan Wilson is suing Joe Biden for something etc, etc. And it really doesn't have to do with the local core issues and the crime in our state, the Attorney General should be managing the crime in our state. And I don't think that the position is doing that it's just way more political.

Liz Farrell 31:00

Or how about manage prosecutors? Because you look at the Colucci case was...the AGs office will tell you over and over again they don't do murder cases, right? They don't do homicides. They do more child exploitation, human trafficking, like larger scale issues that involve



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multiple counties. So why are they taking I mean, fine, you have to take a case because the prosecution in the circuit is recusing itself. But it would seem to me that maybe that's the problem if the AG has authority over these individual prosecutors, offices, if they can't handle these murder cases, for instance, like the 14th circuit can handle Stephens case. So obviously, it has to go to the AGs office, but maybe maybe it's time for a special prosecutor to I mean, maybe that that maybe they give it to David Pascale are something you know, somebody who can have a little bit more focus on it or to to follow through with it. I don't like the idea of Sandy being told that there's more important cases.

Eric Bland 31:59

They chose to take cases that are more urgent.

Liz Farrell 32:03

Okay, so urgent, and I just don't like her being told. I mean, if that was the sense that she walked away from that meeting is that there's more urgent cases than Stephen's. And that's not the message.

Eric Bland 32:13

I like coming from that urgent to come up out of the woodwork that that you don't anticipate. Oh, gotcha. That's what they were saying. They're not pushing Stephen's case off. I don't want that to be the what you walk away with it from. But there, there was a realization that this is an older case. And that, you know, there are emergency things that pop up that require a lot of different things. This was a cold case. That's how they're defining it. And you know, there's a lot of people don't want it to be soft. I'm sure there's a lot of people that don't want this case to be



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soft, right. I mean, in the low country. But I didn't find in that room that there were people that didn't want that to be solved. I found in that room, that there was a genuine intent that see a resolution to this case.

Liz Farrell 32:59

Yeah. It's just hard, Eric, because there's so much going on, I think with the agency's office in our realm right now. So you know, we last week we had sort of maybe the most disappointing, disappointed I've ever been in Alan Wilson's office. We have been reporting for quite some time that the issues office didn't seem to know where Michael Colucci was meaning that his bond conditions, as they stated them to us could not possibly have existed that way because he didn't live where they told us he was under house arrest. And right as we're finishing up the opposite of true sunlight last week, we found out from a source that Michael is not on house arrest. And it is in fact on an ankle monitor, which is something that we came to the chief's office with, and asked in several different ways because we believed him to be on an ankle monitor. So for them to give us misinformation, and then let us run with it for weeks on end.

Eric Bland 33:58

Was his bond modified? They didn't know.

Liz Farrell 34:01

So his bond was modified in 2008. Teen during the trial, he they put instead of having him in the holding cell overnight, they gave him an ankle monitor and allowed him to stay at a nearby hotel with Andy Savage, which that must have been a fun night at the bar. Fun. Fun room service. I don't know what that must have been like, right? out



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again, imagine a worse scenario is getting stuck with your client and vice versa.

Mandy Matney 34:31

But would you do that, Eric? No. Would you stay with a client? Yeah, no, I don't.

Eric Bland 34:36

I just Yes, I've had clients that are my friends and civil cases. Yes. But in criminal cases. Now. I think you got to have a line of demarcation that you don't break you. You don't want to let your shirt down in front of them and they shouldn't let their shirt down in front of you. There has to be some clear wall between the two. Two of you. So Andy's a pro. Yeah, you know, maybe They were staying at the same hotel, but I'm not sure if they were staying in the same room or doing that.

Liz Farrell 35:04

Why am I picturing Andy with a big long sleeping cap on and tucking Michael in at night. But I guess the question I have for you, though, is, is it normal for an attorney to be seen as sort of the I don't want to see babysitter but sort of like in charge of where their client is staying? No. And I asked that because No, right, because Ivo Colucci, from what I understand what sources tell me is he called up Andy's office. According to my sources, and said that he wanted Michael Colucci out of his house. And this is in 2016. And I just don't know what Andy, why is that Andy's responsibility, you know, I get that, you know, he's being paid. But that just doesn't seem like a lawyer's responsibility. So like, you're not held personally accountable if your client doesn't adhere to



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bonds, conditions, or doesn't, you know, where the ankle monitor regularly or things like that?

Eric Bland 36:05

Oh no, unless, you know, and a client does have the right to always meet with an attorney, even if he's under or she's under house arrest and can come to the attorney's office, and then there's exceptions for counseling and medical appointments. I will I will say this that Andy is an unusual lawyer and that he invests a ton of himself. In his case, he's not a guy that takes on a lot of cases. And when he takes it on, like the Michael Slager case, that was a case that certainly wasn't popular. And he he fought so hard for Michael and he genuinely liked Michael and genuinely liked his wife and was so scared for the family because they were getting death threats. They, there was death threats coming everywhere, from every angle on lawyers on investigators on the family. And I, I know that Andy cared enough that he he made sure that Michael and his family were safe. So Andy is that unusual lawyer? He really because he takes on these difficult cases. He he he has strong feelings for his clients in a good way.

Liz Farrell 37:19

That makes sense. Yeah. Yeah. This makes sense. I know that that case affected him deeply when he didn't get the sentencing that he had hoped for his client federally.

Eric Bland 37:29

No, not from Judge Norton. No, not at all. Yeah, yeah.



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Liz Farrell 37:33

So with Colucci, though, I, you know, the disappointing thing is that we were given misinformation after we came to them with correct information, because our what we were being told was that the bond conditions that were set during the trial, which is that he would be on an ankle monitor, that those still stood that he had an ankle monitor currently. And we were told by the police officer, that that wasn't the case, and that he was on house arrest and that he was at his parents house. And so this whole time we've been, you know, those are facts that were easily disproved. But just to find out like, a week before the trial, that this person was on ankle monitor, I guess people might wonder why that is significant. And why that's important. If you're a victim or a member of a family, who's had somebody die violently, and the defendant in that case is out on bond, he is in jail waiting trial, you are always waiting for the other shoe to drop, because there is violence involved. Granted, Michael Kochi says he didn't do this, that he's innocent, what have you, but the victims very well may believe that he did. And to live that way for so long. We're talking about nine years now. It's six years since the first trial without knowing what the conditions of his bond or her without understanding that he was being kept track of ostensibly, because we know that system sucks. That's just not that's not the way it should be for victims.

Eric Bland 39:02

Well there's a big difference between house arrest and ankle monitoring house arrest, you're assured that somebody is in their hands, but somebody who's on an ankle monitor you're going to shop at Whole Foods are you're shopping at Publix and you've walked down the aisles and there is so that's scary. You know, Charleston's not that



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big it's yes, it's a big city in in terms of South Carolina, but you can run into people twice in one day, both in West Ashley and in Mount Pleasant or downtown. And, you know, so that's scary for victim's family.

Mandy Matney 39:37

Well, and I think the scary thing that we have found over and over again was a Bowen Turner case and with this case is that there really isn't a system monitoring these people and monitoring these ankle monitors. Like there's no just because there's a piece of plastic on somebody's ankle doesn't mean that there's somebody 24/7 other than making sure that they're not at the victim's house or making sure that the victim is being alerted when they're near. There's really nothing like that going on. It's just, it seems like a protocol.

Eric Bland 40:11

It's a company, right?

Mandy Matney 40:13

It's a company, right, private.

Eric Bland 40:15

It's not private department.

Mandy Matney 40:18

Right, which is insane.

Liz Farrell 40:19

Right and profit from it.



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Eric Bland 40:20

Right. They contract with local law enforcement in Solicitor's Office to provide a service. And it's one person, probably in that shift, let's say it's a 10 o'clock to six o'clock in the morning monitoring, you know, 300 people.

Liz Farrell 40:36

Right. But there's also no incentive, they have no incentive to call it out when somebody's violating their bond, because then they lose that guy goes to jail, and they lose a customer.

Eric Bland 40:49

\$135 a week? What is it? \$175 a week or something? It's about is that right? A lot. For some people, it's a lot of money.

Liz Farrell 40:57

Yeah, so they're customers. Like, of course, they're not gonna want to lose a customer.

Mandy Matney 41:03

Yeah, right. Like when Bowen Turner violated his 60 different times. And it was only after Sarah Ford and Chloe Besses' parents and several people made several complaints that they realized how many times that he would just because people kept seeing him in public. And people kept seeing him in these different spots that they noticed, like, no one's really looking at this. And he was vile, he violated it over 60 times. And even after that they didn't, they gave him a plea deal and did nothing with that, like there was no repercussion for that whatsoever. And I just think I mean, I, we keep screaming about these things over



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and over, because we just keep seeing like these big flashing lights with the justice system. And this is a huge one of there is a giant disconnect between the ankle monitoring system and the justice system and actual public safety and people keeping people safe. I feel like it's almost a huge it is it's a huge disservice to victims, to tell people Oh, they're out on bond, but they're on an ankle monitor. When that's just a piece of plastic, that doesn't really mean anything at all, except for the only the only thing that it could do is that if that person committed a crime, they might be able to walk back the GPS and see where where that person was during the crime maybe.

Liz Farrell 42:27

But it's definitely seen it Mandy, where a guy on an ankle monitor was in the area of where a murder happened on Hilton Head. And I mean, that seems like a slam dunk. Right? You're like, Oh, we got the guy who's out on bond for murder. And now there's another murder and they had beef and, and it was not enough to get prosecutors interested in that.

Eric Bland 42:49

I mean, I see him all the time you go in the summer, you know, to a convenience store pumping gas, or you go to a fast food restaurant, and you're waiting in line and people are wearing shorts. You know, somebody's got an ankle bracelet, monitor on what is that mean? You know, some people like when Greg Leone had an ankle bracelet, it was to house and to work. And, you know, he wasn't allowed to go to Chick fil A and stand in the line, you're not allowed to do that. You when, when you are under house arrest or with exceptions for work. And your attorneys. You can't make a break for Dunkin Donuts. You could call up



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and say look, I got a flat tire, I gotta go to noddles and get my tire plugged or whatever, but you just can't stop and get ice cream at Pelican see, you know, but you see people do that. And you wonder how are they doing that?

Mandy Matney 43:41

But if you if you do, I think like Greg Leon, he obviously had attorneys who were like, you cannot do listen, you could not do this, it could compromise your entire case, blah, blah, blah. And I'm sure he was smart enough to understand that what the problem is, is there's lots of people that just like bone Turner who just they hear one thing a set of directions, and they do what they want to do. And I have never known anybody who was on an ankle monitor PolyMet and I didn't know a whole lot about the system until the bill and Turner case. And silly me I thought that it would be something like Oh, if you go to McDonald's, then it's going to be like beep beep!

Eric Bland 44:26

And then the police station right?

Mandy Matney 44:29

Before the police station, beep, beep beep and then the police dispatch somebody and then they come and get you and put you in jail. That's what I think like that at all, unfortunately, and again, the technology exists for that to be possible. The technology is all there.

Liz Farrell 44:50

We have AI Mandy. Like let's get a robot on this. Like let's get somebody to analyze if I can tell where somebody just from their phone had lunch



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yesterday. We should be able to have an a, you know, an AI tell us that this is the printout of this person's GPS coordinates. And these are not within the scope of where he was supposed to be.

Eric Bland 45:11

I had a case in Greenville, where a guy and I was an ankle bracelet on Columbia couldn't leave Columbia proper, went to Greenville and murdered somebody. How did that happen? And he was there in Greenville for two weeks. He was in Greenville for two whole weeks. And he was not supposed to leave Columbia proper.

Mandy Matney 45:29

But we asked how that happened. I mean, it's because there's no system in place to stop it. Like, how does it happen? They all these guys talk to each other. And they're like, oh, yeah, I was able to go to McDonald's. And I was able to go to Greenville. And I went to North Carolina last week, and blah, blah, blah, and they haven't done anything. And that stuff gets around. And it's it's very obvious why this is happening. The problem is, do we have legislators to fix it? And do they care enough?

Liz Farrell 45:54

No, because they're the ones who created it. They're the ones who prioritized private profit. Right. And they're making money off. Gross. It's just so gross. But I guess with Colucci, I mean, I think he's getting off easy, because he has just one ankle monitor. You know, poor old Russell, he had the two. Yeah, double and he had double. But do you remember Russell talking about like, what a headache it was to charge both his legs? I was thinking about that. Because, you know, from what I



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understand about some people who are on ankle monitors, is they might use that charging time to go to someplace where they shouldn't be like a bar or some sort of transaction that might be illegal, that kind of thing.

Eric Bland 46:38

Don't you have to charge it by plugging it in the wall and then plugging it into the monitor?

Liz Farrell 46:43

Oh sorry. Yeah, they sorry, they let it die. Yeah, sorry. Yeah. So let it die that, yes, yes, there are some people who let their monitors routinely die.

Eric Bland 46:54

And they wait to see if that phone call comes in from the monitoring company. And if it gives you an hour or two hours before they call, I've seen this, then they know they have that window, and they go do things during that downtime. It's not an instantaneous phone call that you get like, hey, Mandy, your monitor just went off, you know, and I'm calling you 30 seconds later, right?

Mandy Matney 47:20

And it's also not like we were talking about, it's not like there's an alarm and the police that are called and immediately dispatched to your house, it's a phone call that you can probably not answer for a while and still get away with it being off for a while. And that's, again, it's just it's worthless. And until we we fix it, and until we have actual repercussions to if you violate your your ankle monitor. And if you are, if you're caught,



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it should just say you go back to jail. straight to jail, if you're caught. If you're caught doing anything that we told you not to do, you go back straight to jail because you're on bond here. And it is a privilege that you are on bond and we can revoke that at any time. And I feel like our government just does not use that enough.

Liz Farrell 48:17

They shut down. There's just such a dichotomy between what legislators say they want they want to be tough on crime, they want to protect the public, but really what they want is to help their friends profit and to pretend that the system is working just fine the way it is.

Eric Bland 48:33

And with that, we'll take a break and be right back. So are we going to talk about the wacky preacher I think?

Mandy Matney 48:50

We have to, yes. Also known as the Mica Miller case, we have to talk about it. It's really really sad. I mean, I I've been diving into this case for all of seven hours, so bear with me on details here, but I've already gotten a couple sources and already have my bearings about it. And it's just a really horrifically sad situation. Her name was Mica Miller. She is like me from Kansas and eventually moved to South Carolina. She was 30 years old. And she was married to a preacher named JP Miller, who was the preacher at Solid Rock Church and Myrtle Beach and on April 27, a couple weeks ago, she was mica was found dead of at least one gunshot wound that we know of in a park in Lumberton, North Carolina, which is a little bit north of Myrtle Beach. And I think the biggest red flag is that authorities this is there's also breaking news In



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this case, the medical examiner has said that her wound was self inflicted. And that's why we're involved here. Because it seems like there needs to be a lot more than a wound to tell if somebody else was involved. By all indications if somebody was leaving breadcrumbs, saying this is the person who is going to murder me, that is what Micah did. She left a trail of breadcrumbs, including she was filing for divorce already. And that was official. Both of her siblings have filed affidavit saying that there was abuse in the marriage a that he was an abusive husband, and that she was worried for her safety. She was worried for her life. And she even went to the extent to saying that if I'm found with a bullet in my head, it is not me. It is him. And it's just heartbreaking that this woman left so many crumbs and did so many things. And still, it seems like authorities are pushing back a bit. The narrative is, it doesn't look like a suicide and all surrounding evidence points to a murderer and points to him being the number one suspect.

Eric Bland 51:18

Well, let's let's break this down. I mean, to suicide, they would have to say that she had gun powder residue on her hand. And that's how they must have determined it was self-inflicted, because I can put a gun, God forbid up to your head and shoot you and drop the gun and I have a rubber glove on and then I put it your fingerprints on it. But you won't have gunpowder residue on it, or I could hold your hand up and do it, then you could have gunpowder residue on it. The thing that really stuck out to me was he proceeded from the pulpit to talk about her alleged mental problems, that the no one in the you know, in the parish knew that she was, you know, God forbid, he said she committed tried to commit suicide, a number of times that she was committed, what husband would publicly talk about that about their wife, I mean, that to



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me was fitting into the narrative that it was a self inflicted killing because she had all these mental problems.

Mandy Matney 52:22

Right. And I mean, I think the biggest thing that I the biggest red flag that I've seen so far is that he announced the entire church the next day, that his wife was dead, because of suicide, and that she had all these mental health problems. And that was very, not only strange to do to announce it in that way. But at that time, it seems like authorities have not ruled it as a suicide. So what husband, if you truly care about your wife in any way, shape, or form? would be so quick to announce that it's suicide and not be worried? Say? I don't know why she was up there. I don't know what. I hope that they investigate this. And I hope they find out what happened to her. I'm not sure if it was a suicide or if she was murdered. But I want it. I want answers, right.

Eric Bland 53:16

Let the investigation take place.

Mandy Matney 53:19

Right. But he did the opposite of that, which is and then Liz, what did he say when he stood up? Before everybody?

Liz Farrell 53:27

He told everyone to say so he said that he had an announcement to make and that he wanted everyone to be quiet and that they should stand up. And he said that he wanted to say this and then have them leave and not talk about it. So essentially, it's he didn't want any reaction



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from them. You instructed them that as well. And then he went on to announce her death. And there's a couple of things here.

Eric Bland 53:54

If my wife God forbid, took her life yesterday. I'm not on the pulpit tomorrow, guys, I'm sorry, I'm going to have to ask a junior preacher to take over. I'm going to be with my kids. And I'm going to be mourning. I mean, it's the strangest reaction to lose your wife like that. To say, I'm gonna pitch baseball the next day, you know what I'm saying? Right?

Liz Farrell 54:15

So I think it's hard because, you know, I think obviously our first like our entry into any case is just like how the person reacted after something like this happened is and comparing it to how we would or how the normal person would and I'll Alex right all that Alex and we're and I think a lot of people are right in their assumptions about people sometimes like that's an odd thing to do after you found out that your wife died, what have you. But I think there's some bigger issues that we need to talk about. Because obviously like the medical examiner has now ruled it a suicide or you know that he should take our own life. Like you said, Eric, gun, shot residue, like on your hands, could be telling but like you said, it's not also telling like if somebody's holding a gotten to your chest or to your head or something? And, you know, making you do that. It makes you wonder if they jumped? I don't know, like, it's I hate to say it because I don't know enough about the case to say that I believe the husband did this. But what worries me is that generally speaking, in cases where there is a pattern, or at least an inkling that there was some sort of domestic violence occurring, that there's a divorce in the works, anything like that, I feel like there needs to be



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some measure for investigators, no matter what state it is, that they need to stop what they're doing. And look at this case as any sort of other investigation not just immediately say suicide, because with the Colucci case, I think what we lost in the investigation comes from Michael Colucci being able to just say that my wife killed herself. And then law enforcement comes onto the scene with that in mind, and very key things don't get done, because in their mind, this is they've been told it was a suicide. So when you know that there's a history of violence, or that there's a divorce in the works, or in Michael Colucci's case, at least some evidence that there was a some sort of struggle or perhaps a fight before, no matter what he says happen, at least you look at the evidence that's there and can say something might have gone down here. You have to stop as investigators and say, Well, you need to treat this case differently. And the husband, God help him if he's innocent. God help that any husband who's interested in who gets blamed for his wife's death, they need to just understand that in this this case, you I'm sorry, but this is what it looks like from this angle, something more needs to be done to protect women after death, after they've been killed, or they die at their own hand, whatever it is, the case needs to be classified as something different. And investigators need to treat it differently and not go. Because what do they say? Like the first 48 hours is like the most critical and then the investigation like, right on the scene, it's the most critical and I don't know.

Mandy Matney 57:07

But we got the probate file. And from the facts. I mean, she filed for divorce a April 15, I want to say, and then he was served the papers two days before she was killed. And that's a big, that's a I mean, there's just a lot of red flags. But I agree with you, Liz, something else has to be done.



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Because we just see this over and over and over again. And I'm not fully convinced just because the medical examiner said based on the wounds that it is a self inflicted, it was a self inflicted wound. I we've all seen movies, people can set up a some a murder to look like a suicide. And in this case, I just really hope. And the other thing is that this is the Robeson County Sheriff's Office who seems like it is pretty busy. I think quite a few murders happen there. And it's just really unfortunate that some cases, and not saying that it's going to happen with this one, but it's just much easier for everybody to say it was it was a suicide, and then to write it off as a suicide and move on and check that box. And it's one less open case, and I'm sure, I'm sure they're like everywhere. I'm sure they're overworked and lacking resources, but a couple things. This could be within the FBI jurisdiction if there was any sort of crossing of borders if he murdered her. And if and I'm saying if and again, I am not positive 1,000,000% that he murdered her. I'm just saying that there's a lot of signs that she was very, very scared of him and that there's enough there for motive in itself.

Eric Bland 59:10

Very strange the way he gave a full description to his flock. You know, you could say, you know, you may have heard that my wife passed away last night. It's very traumatic for my family and me i I don't want to talk about it. But please, you know, say your prayers for me. But why go into the granular detail on that when you just found out 12 hours earlier and you don't know if what it was like Mandy said, you know, it could be that she was abducted or somebody you know, did this? Why go into that granular detail like that and get into her background and give a cause of death?



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Liz Farrell 59:47

It's hard to say because if you angelical churches have very distinct relationships with their pastors, and their pastors have very distinct relationships with their flock. There's more of a cat I'm not in every church. But I think in more charismatic ones, there's there's a, there's a sort of an open book kind of mentality. I think like I'm transparent and here so it's hard to say whether that's a sign of anything. When you look into his history, he does have violence. He has been in gotten in trouble for being violent before he was charged with assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature. That's a serious felony. This is a serious felony, it means somebody got hurt. And so you're very seriously hurt. And so listen to this, though. So in October 2021, he applied to this, this assault battery occurred in the 90s, the late 90s. And he pleaded guilty to it and I believe in 1999. And he was sentenced to I believe it was like four years suspended, that kind of thing. Okay, so Eric, when you commit a felony admit to a felony? What are the things that you lose as a citizen?

Eric Bland 1:00:58

Right to vote, right to hold a license? Can't be a plumber, can't be a barber can't be an accountant.

Liz Farrell 1:01:03

What kinds of things can't you maybe purchase can hold a gun can't hold a gun, right? So in October 2021, this is now 22 years after he pleaded guilty for assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature. He submitted an application to be pardoned for that crime. And he was granted it five months later, six months later, something like that. I think it was in May 2022. He was granted and we have the application



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that he put in force pardon. And along with the recommendation letters. There was a federal pardon.

Eric Bland 1:01:37

SC state governor McMaster gave him the pardon, apparently.

Liz Farrell 1:01:42

I mean, he the board agreed and yeah, Governor McMaster must have agreed but and he wrote in his reason for requesting a pardon. And again, this is in just two years ago, I am seeking a pardon to restore my civil liberties in the community that I serve daily. As a husband, father and Pastor the right and ability to protect my wife and children, as well as my congregation is imperative. So he hasn't said fire arm here. But it sure does seem like the reason he was seeking a pardon was so that he could purchase a firearm, right? Am I crazy? So two years ago, he put in an application to get rid of his very serious felony, which was a violent crime for this, so that's disconcerting.

Mandy Matney 1:02:36

And that's something that I'm hoping that the sheriff's office is looking into.

Eric Bland 1:02:42

Who's the lead investigator and Chair of agency Mandy, is it the local or is it the North Carolina ones that we have to find out?

Mandy Matney 1:02:49

It's in North Carolina because she was found in North Carolina at a state park, but Robeson County Sheriff's Office is in charge of the



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investigation, as far as I know, but state police could take over the FBI could take over if we find out that across state lines. I think the the problem that we're seeing right now is that breaking news on this, as we were talking about this, the case is already derailed. When the enemy says it was suicide, it just makes it incredibly hard for a proper investigation to occur. And I just again, I want to win an Emmy. So suicide based on wounds, I really want to ask a million more questions.

Eric Bland 1:03:35

Just like when a pathologist says it was an auto accident that took Stephen Smith's life and you go down that rabbit hole.

Mandy Matney 1:03:42

You're down that rabbit hole in its it could just be a completely incorrect rabbit hole. And instead, I mean, they need to be getting GPS data of not only her phone of his phone, they need to be again, make it who whose gun, is it? When was it purchased? And what happened with that and whose fingerprints are on it. I mean, there's a lot of things, but the scary thing is if this was a murderer, and if he did it, it sounds like he had been planning this for a very long time. And he knew where to place evidence and knew how to point to direct the investigation in the wrong direction. And that makes it a whole lot more difficult. But I don't think that this man like Alex Murdaugh anticipated the entire internet coming down on him and looking up every moves that he's made and carefully watching him and carefully combing through his life and looking through all of his very alarming past.



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Eric Bland 1:04:49

Why do you have to have a Why do you have to reach a conclusion so quick?

Liz Farrell 1:04:52

That's what I'm thinking like, what is that all about?

Eric Bland 1:04:54

What about a toxicology report on her? Let's take that. Let's find out have, you know, so execute a search more go look in their house, see what is in there? Is it part? You know, is that a prescription that's in the house? Find out little things. I mean, just what's the what's the rush to reach a conclusion that somebody committed suicide?

Liz Farrell 1:05:17

Well, I think it's easy. It's easy for the medical examiner. He's just going on the information he's gotten what what do you see is in front of him, it's easy for the police department because they can close the case. It's certainly easy for a potential if this was a murder for the potential murderer. But let's just say this, I if there is a woman, legislator in North Carolina and one in South Carolina, and you're listening, I think it would be a very good thing to do to write some legislation that puts a hold on any suicide case. Any see me any case where it seems like a woman has taken her life, where like I said earlier, there's question about her relationship where there's some sort of indication that her not all was well in her home life. It's not to say that women don't take their own lives. But when you complicate when you have this complicating factor of this was a fraught relationship when she was actively worried about this happening to her. I don't think you could because how many cases



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now? Are we going to talk about this where a medical examiner or a coroner or what have you has put and has put down a cause of death or manner of death, that then screws everything up for the case itself. And when we're dealing with the saralyn Colucci use case? It's a Situ was a situation with Stephens case. It just seems like we're constantly talking about this.

Eric Bland 1:06:40

We had three different death certificates in Stephen's case.

Mandy Matney 1:06:44

Right. Right. Three, right. I think first of all, we're supposed to find out more about this on Tuesday, the Robeson County Sheriff's Office is supposed to come out with some sort of a report or some sort of statement saying what they have found. And I hope that they're either investigating it thoroughly, or they have some really, really, really convincing information that points to suicide. And I'm not even sure if I can imagine what that could be. Because every piece of information that I'm imagining, could also be placed, if you know what I mean.

Eric Bland 1:07:19

Are they being coy? Or are they is it possible, that they're going along with the suicide thing to watch the preacher to see what he's doing? And see if he lets his guard down? Is that a possibility?

Liz Farrell 1:07:33

I mean, they'd have to be pretty cunning to come up with that idea in Robeson County, because it is tarnishing our name. Well, kind of I mean, there's no shame i i know that it's shameful in certain religions and



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what have you, but I don't think we want to shame people who make the decision to take their lives.

Eric Bland 1:07:48

But no, but I'm just saying, you know, for him to get on the pulpit and say, Oh, she tried to a number of times to commit suicide, and she had mental problems. And we've committed her I mean, the stigmatized her there.

Liz Farrell 1:08:00

He's weaponizing it. And that's really frustrating . It's so hard to articulate how upsetting it is when you see a man weaponize a woman's mental illness. Because it's it is a stigma it is, it's still no matter how many Instagram posts no matter how many times we put it out in the public, it's still it's a badge that somebody wears where they they sort of feel like they have to, I don't know, maybe like compensate for it. Or in certain lights, it looks different, right? Like you can you can have depression and anxiety. And that's a normal thing. And most people I know have some form of it. But when you start to talk about like, somebody took their own lives.

Mandy Matney 1:08:40

Right, and a couple other things, I want to say it seems like they start they at least met when she was underage, and he was a some sort of a youth pastor, I believe she was 14-15. So he could have it's the that's another giant red flag. But the other thing I want to say before we wrap this up, is that with this case, what is different is that the family seems to be very, they already out of the gate, seem to be 100% against the idea that it's the suicide and in very, very, very skeptical of him and the



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relationship which sometimes in abusive relationships like this, the abuser controls her family as well. And so sometimes the person who's being abused family just kind of stays quiet and stays down but it's been good to see that they are taking their power back. They have a lawyer they're filing probate documents his sister gotten is in charge of got a special appointment.

Eric Bland 1:09:49

Well, under our state law, she would be appointed as personal representative to pursue an investigation or any wrongful death claims regarding the death of her sister.

Mandy Matney 1:09:58

Special administrator really okay.

Eric Bland 1:10:00

All right. It's just I guess she is has Investigatory Powers. And they're not pursuing any legal claim yet. I mean, usually it's a PR special administrators a little different. But then obviously, you're right there, they have questions and they're going to demand answers and they're gonna hire their own investigators and they're gonna have a lawyer that's going to have, you know, his ideas and possibly, hopefully there could be a coroner's inquest.

Mandy Matney 1:10:25

It's extremely important and they did the smart thing with putting the family putting in writing, what they knew about the abuse of the relationship and what they were questioning with her death so it doesn't get all skewed within media and it does the message doesn't



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get conflated by and or it's it's a solid document showing what they knew and what they believe. And that's super helpful and important when it comes to covering cases like this for sure.

Eric Bland 1:10:54

Well, that was a big episode. Cups down everybody.

Mandy Matney 1:11:08

Cup of Justice is a Luna Shark production created by me, Mandy Matney and co-hosted by journalist Liz Farrell and attorney Eric bland. Learn more about our mission and membership and lunasharkmedia.com. Interruptions provided by Luna and Joe Pesky.

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