



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

[00:00:00] **Mandy Matney:** I don't know why I keep getting more nervous as the Murdaugh murders trial gets closer. But a recent filing by the prosecution has me feeling a little more assured that the state is giving their all and that this is going to be a trial like no other. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been investigating the Murdaugh family for almost four years now. This is the Murdaugh Murders Podcast written by Liz Farrell and produced by my husband, David Moses.

[00:00:50] Happy New Year from all of us at Luna Shark Productions. Let's start off this episode with some good news. In the last quarter of 2022, we were able to donate over \$13,000 from MMP Merch With A Mission sales. 100% of those proceeds were donated to Gloria's Gift Foundation, which gives Christmas presents to Hampton County families in need and is managed by Gloria's amazing sister, Ginger Harriet. And that, my friends, is a big deal. I wanna thank you for supporting this important cause to honor Gloria Satterfield and to show the people of Hampton County that good can come from this. Someone on Twitter pointed out something that broke my heart. Gloria Satterfield would've had to work 1,300 hours for that money. This made me angry all over again thinking about how evil Alex Murdaugh really is now that we all know he was making an absurd amount of money, \$13 million in nine years, while he was stealing millions of dollars from his vulnerable clients. And then, he had the gall to pay Gloria, the woman who raised his children, just \$10 an hour. And after her death, he continued to dehumanize Gloria by stealing millions from her family, knowing her son was being evicted and struggling. It is hard to comprehend that level of greed and evil, especially when it comes to someone born into so much power and privilege and in a place like Hampton, where poverty is so prevalent. This is perhaps why the world is so fixated and perplexed by Alex Murdaugh and why the upcoming trial in January is likely to be a trial like no other.

[00:02:57] Speaking of, January 23rd, the day that has been set for Alex Murdaugh's murder trial to begin, is less than three weeks away. The trial will be held in Walterboro, South Carolina, a small town about 30 minutes east of the Moselle property and about an hour west of Charleston. Several of y'all



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

have reached out and asked me if the trial is open to the public. It is, but I have to warn you that I can't imagine there being many seats open to the public. And as a reminder, if you're not in the media or an attorney, you will not be allowed to have electronic devices in the courtroom. Court is not a fun place. Trust me. And we promise to have boots on the ground covering the trial live every day so that you don't have to miss a beat.

[00:03:48] And for MMP premium members only, we will have live trial coverage, including Q&As with the team, live commentary, updates, and supplementary documents to help you understand the latest in the trial. Our "Soak Up The Sun" MMP Premium members will be able to watch the trial live on YouTube and interact with our team as every minute unfolds in real time. And our "Pocketful of Sunshine" members will get access immediately afterward. We are so thankful for the current membership that we have and it has already helped us add team members. Ali is doing an amazing job managing our community while Callie is hard at work uncovering all sorts of documents and leads. And we are excited to say that we have three new like-minded, thorough, and fearless journalists who we want to bring on to explore three new cases this year for our upcoming project. And you can help us get there. For every 1,000 members we get, we are hoping to add a new journalist to the team who will help us uncover other cases of corruption and crimes across the country. And we hope to announce the next journalist that we hire very soon. Sign up a friend and the existing community will get richer content as we pull the strings on this wild saga and then start to look at others. So, please share the link in the description with all of your contacts so we can expand our operations and shine a brighter light on this case and others. The link is mmp.supercast.com.

[00:05:45] **Liz Farrell:** Just as we expected, there was no break in the pretrial drama over the holidays. On December 29th, 10 days after Dick Harpootlian and Jim Griffin filed their latest memo, prosecutor Creighton Waters came out with that Big Creighton energy that we love and unleashed hell with two more motions and one very prickly reply of his own. But first, let's talk about the latest order issued by Judge Clifton Newman on December 28th. Judge



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

Newman is strictly prohibiting the disclosure of any information that would identify any of the jurors who are summoned for Alex Murdaugh's trial. He's not messing around either. The basics are this: Jurors will be identified by number only, meaning the prosecution and the defense will obviously be allowed to do what they normally do when preparing for jury selection, which is to say they will investigate the background of each person and determine which ones are ideal for their dream jury, in a process that sounds vaguely like Bama Rush but without the outfits of the day. But Judge Newman has made it a point to specifically bar Alex Murdaugh, Dick, Jim and their team, Creighton and his team, all court personnel, agents, employees, law enforcement, and media from publicly disclosing any personal information about the jurors. This is important.

[00:07:07] One of the things that's been weighing on our minds a lot in the lead-up to this trial is whether it is even possible to get a jury out of Colleton County that would be truly impartial to a Murdaugh. When we were researching the Emmanuel Buckner trial, which we told you about in episode 73, we learned a lot about Colleton County and how small the world is there in terms of the jury pools, even in 2019. So many people had connections to law enforcement and the parties in the case. Also, not for nothing, but the Emmanuel Buckner trial started with a juror suddenly remembering she knew the defendant and Alex Murdaugh moving to have her removed from the jury and replaced by the alternate. Then, the trial ended with a hung jury. Remember in addition to being where Moselle is located, at least the part where the murders happened, Colleton County is one of the five counties over which a Murdaugh has reigned as chief prosecutor for generations.

[00:08:10] **Mandy Matney:** A lot of great things can be said about Colleton County and the people who live there. But in terms of Alex Murdaugh and this trial, we need to look at the relevant context. Historically, Colleton is a county that was notorious for its illegal whiskey stills and rum runners. In fact, it is the same county where the federal government accused Buster Murdaugh, Alex's grandfather, of running a criminal operation involving those illegal whiskey stills and of being the brains behind the operation. As we have mentioned



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

before, in that case, Buster was one of the only defendants out of dozens who was found not guilty. His cousin, a man who was also named Alex Murdaugh, was later arrested and accused of tampering with the jury that found Buster innocent. And after all of that, Buster went back to his job as solicitor like it was no big deal. In fact, Big Buster Murdaugh went on to be such a legal legend in that same county, Colleton, where he was once a defendant. He was so revered that an actual painting of Buster Murdaugh still hangs in the Colleton County courthouse more than 30 years since he retired as a solicitor. Well, it hung there. Judge Newman ruled last month that the painting will come down for the trial to prevent jury influence. But what will be interesting is what Colleton County officials decide to do with the portrait after the trial. Will they hang it back up? Alex Murdaugh has forever tainted the legacy of his family. That is a fact. And at what point do the powers that be decide they've heard enough; that it's time to stop blindly worshiping the Good Ole Boys of yesteryear, especially the ones with very sketchy legacies? The portrait itself and its need for temporary removal shows that historically, Colleton is a land ruled by the Murdaughs, and it is tricky to predict what that could do to the outcome of this case.

[00:10:30] **Liz Farrell:** Colleton is also one of the counties connected to Operation Jackpot. In the late 1970s, drug traffickers used the Edisto Beach area as one of their coastal locations to bring in shipments. Here's an interesting side note to that. Edisto Beach was part of Charleston County, which is the Ninth Circuit Solicitor's Office, until 1975 when Colleton County annexed most of it, making it part of the Fourteenth Circuit. Oh, and then there's the Cowboys, the gang that the Murdaugh camp seemed to be blaming for the murders. Colleton County is home to the Cowboys. Colleton County is also the home of Curtis Eddie Smith. It's where he cashed millions of dollars in checks from Alex. It's also where Alex's purported drug trafficking took place. So, keep all that shady history in mind here. We're not saying that the juries are automatically corrupt in Colleton County. But if ever there was a place that would be sympathetic to a Murdaugh in the Fourteenth Circuit, Colleton ranks second only to Hampton County. And alliances change really slowly in these parts.



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

[00:11:38] Anyway, Judge Richard Gergel did something similar to Judge Newman's order with the jury during Russell Laffitte's trial. And he even went so far as to make sure the livestream of the trial that was being shown in the media room got turned off every time the jurors walk by the cameras. You might remember a couple of weird things that happened during that trial. One is that the defense put Alex's younger brother, John Marvin Murdaugh, on the stand for about 30 seconds. Why? Great question. The strategy on its face seemed to be to have someone vouch for Russell's character. But after John Marvin's testimony of a few dozen words, several people have raised the question of whether his appearance was maybe meant to intimidate the jury in some way because, again, why? Why was the best person to vouch for Russell the brother of the man who Russell was accused of conspiring with? The second weird thing that happened during that trial was that it almost ended with a hung jury. Two jurors were replaced with alternates and at least one juror reported that they felt pressured to change their decision regarding Russell's guilt or innocence. So, that's concerning and definitely has us wondering if we'll see something similar happen in the murder trial.

[00:12:56] For years, we've been hearing unconfirmed rumors of the Murdaughs and PMPED influencing juries in Hampton County. Remember in the early 2000s, Hampton was named a judicial hellhole because of the unusual amount of seven-figure jury verdicts, many of them won by PMPED. In fact, in Creighton's latest response to Dick and Jim, he revealed that Mark Tinsley, the attorney for Mallory Beach's family, had, right before the murders, told Alex Murdaugh that if he, Alex, quote, fixed the boat case, i.e., tampered with the jury in that case in any way, he, Mark Tinsley, would add Maggie and Paul to the lawsuit. That is a big deal. Not only does it add to Alex's alleged motive for the murders, the fact that an attorney would have to make a threat like that in 2021 shows us how normal of a thought that was and how conceivable of a reality it was that Alex Murdaugh had real power over juries still and that the common belief was that he wouldn't hesitate to use that power. Think about that. Part of the pressure Alex might have been feeling on June 7th, 2021 could be related to a threat that was made over his ability to sway a jury. So, we are glad that Judge Newman is trying to protect the jury



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

but we have such little faith in the effectiveness of the rules in the Fourteenth Circuit, especially when the Murdaugh team is involved. Alex Murdaugh was never allowed to tamper with juries. The rules always prevented him from doing that. And yet, we're finding out that as of June 2021, he was being threatened over what one well-schooled attorney believed was a very serious possibility — that he might taint the jury in the Beach case. If jury information is not made public at some point, what does that mean in terms of accountability? I guess we'll be finding out.

[00:15:00] And we'll be right back.

[00:15:05] **Mandy Matney:** Okay. So, let's talk about the two motions that were filed by Creighton Waters the day after Judge Newman signed this jury order. They were both motions in limine, meaning they concerned the admission or exclusion of evidence in the trial. One of them is to exclude any mention of a polygraph. The other is to limit any mention of third-party guilt. In other words, Creighton is trying to prevent the antics we've seen from Dick and Jim over the past few months, specifically when Dick and Jim successfully commandeered the headlines with their outright accusation that cousin Eddie is the real killer. Remember that? When they apparently tried to pin the murders on him? As far as being able to blame another person for the murders of Maggie and Paul, Creighton is asking the court to stop Dick and Jim from referencing anything that specifically relates to the idea that someone else committed the double homicide. And that's going to be very difficult for them because this mythical third party would appear to be a critical component of their overall defense of Alex. It looks like Team Murdaugh has tried to say that it was the boat crash victims, that it was the Smith family, that it was the groundskeeper, that it was the Cowboys and cousin Eddie. It's hard to imagine that there'd be anyone else left to blame, but you never know with these guys. Not only is Creighton trying to stop Dick and Jim from twisting the truth into a shadow puppet for the jury, he is also hoping the court will take away one of Dick and Jim's main pieces of evidence in doing so — the failed polygraph of Curtis Eddie Smith. And I say main piece of evidence because it is the polygraph that Dick and Jim chose to highlight



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

in an October filing because they knew that the true parts of it were just misleading enough to get them a headline that raised the idea that the state was hiding something about Cousin Eddie. Creighton fired back at that in his latest motion, not only pointing out that their October filing was inaccurate and was it ever, but asking the court to sanction Dick and Jim should they slip in any mention of polygraphs in any part of their statements, arguments, objections, or the questioning of witnesses during trial. Here is David reading from Creighton's motion.

[00:17:40] **David Moses:** Because of the exceedingly high probability of a mistrial, in the event such an order is not properly obeyed, the state further requests the court set forth and communicate in advance severe personal consequences for contempt of such an order.

[00:17:58] **Liz Farrell:** So, obviously, he's serious about this and trying to head off any "Whoopsies! Did I just say that?" from Dick and Jim. What's really telling about this request, though, is that to some extent, it shows how effective Dick and Jim's manipulation of the media was when it came to the polygraph filing or at least it shows that the state felt the effect of those headlines and deems their nonsense to be a threat. Think back on that for a second. Dick and Jim know that polygraphs are not fact-finders or lie detectors. They know that polygraphs are rarely admissible in court. They know that the state's evidence against Alex goes far beyond Cousin Eddie's apparent signs of deception in the polygraph. And Dick and Jim also know that there is no evidence that Maggie was having an affair with the groundskeeper. More than that, Alex knows that there's no evidence that Maggie was having an affair with the groundskeeper. And yet, he allowed that to be put out there in the name of protecting himself. Long before Alex was charged, Dick and Jim and the Murdaugh family allegedly conducted their own in-house investigation into the murders of Maggie and Paul. If there were a viable third party defined, true or not, then believe us. They would've found that third party, identified the third party, and then bought out every billboard in Colleton County to post that third party's face on them in the lead-up to the trial. Instead, all they have is a picture of a nervous Cousin



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

Eddie hooked up to a polygraph and a closeup of an investigator's laptop. And I hope we didn't just give them an idea for a billboard.

[00:19:39] **Mandy Matney:** Okay. Now, for the bigger development in Creighton's filings, his bombshell 18-page response to Dick and Jim's opposition to the court allowing the jury to hear information about the pressures Alex was facing on June 7th. To start, we'll have David read the intro.

[00:20:01] **David Moses:** Defendant, having been provided a clear roadmap of the state's evidence, already in his possession protests as he must that he cannot follow said map despite its clarity. Defendant proclaims that no part of the perfect storm looming over him on June 7th, 2021 nor the combination of its squalls could have blown open the scope of his crimes to public view and condemnation. This court should recognize defendant's arguments for what it is: an attempt unsupported by law or fact to divide and hide the factors which drove him to gun down his wife and child, such that he might then declare at trial that he had no reason to kill. Defendant's argument is another attempt to effectuate part of the state's argued motive: self-victimization for gain.

[00:21:11] **Mandy Matney:** As you can see, Creighton got all sorts of poetic with this one. Also, he got appropriately sharp in his filing. Here is David reading it again.

[00:21:24] **David Moses:** The reality for defendant is that he never had to face accountability throughout his life. But on June 7th, 2021, he was simply running out of options to avoid not just accountability, but the certainty of long prison time, financial ruin, and permanent damage to the prominence of his family name from which he had benefited for so long.

[00:21:54] **Mandy Matney:** So, as a reminder, here are Dick and Jim's core arguments as to why Creighton shouldn't be allowed to bring up Alex's alleged and admitted-to financial crimes, discuss PMPED's confrontation with him, or mention the boat crash case in the context of Alex's alleged motive to



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

kill Maggie and Paul. First, they say the state's assertion that Alex murdered Maggie and Paul for sympathy or as a distraction is absurd, implausible, and illogical. They use those words a lot. They deny that PMPED's confrontation of Alex on June 7th, 2021 was enough to cause any meaningful pressure in Alex's life. And they say PMPED's discovery of the missing money certainly was not a threat to Alex. Also, they contend that it was an isolated incident and in no way indicative of bigger threats. Oh, and they deny that PMPED was close to discovering the full scope of Alex's crimes altogether.

[00:23:08] **Liz Farrell:** Likewise, they assert that the pressures from the boat crash case were not enough to cause murderous tendencies in Alex because if the judge had forced Alex to produce his financial records to Mark Tinsley, which they say wasn't even a certainty, Alex could have just continued to falsify the information as he had allegedly been doing for years. That's the gist of it.

[00:23:29] Needless to say, though we'll get into it, Creighton had answers for all of that, but let's start with the newest information revealed in his response. First, Creighton tells us that actually, the Chris Wilson check, which was the subject of the June 7th, 2021 confrontation, wasn't the only financial anomaly discovered by PMPED. Turns out that they'd already confronted him about missing fees in another case — the Hershberger case. Jacob Hershberger was a 27-year-old doctor from Charleston who was killed in a car crash in March 2018. Alex represented Jacob's estate and settled the case in March 2021. The case, which we'll talk about more in a future episode, appears to be another one of those filing anomalies we saw with the original filing in the Gloria Satterfield case in which Cory Fleming and Alex were allowed to withhold documents from the court. It also appears that the settlement was approved without all the particular spelled out. We also want to note that the judge who approved the Hershberger settlement was Judge Carmen Mullen, according to the public index, who, to this day, continues to sit on the bench in the Fourteenth Circuit as if everything is A-OK. We also wanna note that to this day, there's an open case in Charleston County against Jacob's estate for unpaid debts — debts that presumably would've been paid for with that



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

settlement money. That said, in May 2021, Alex deposited a check for \$83,333 into one of his fake Forge accounts at Bank of America. It's not clear if this is the check Creighton is referring to in his filing, but in the memo of the check, it states that the money is for structured fees for RAM — Richard Alexander Murdaugh. The check, by the way, appears to have been signed by Alex. It's also not clear why Alex hasn't been charged with stealing this money if he did indeed steal it, as the state seems to say he did.

[00:25:33] **Mandy Matney:** We also wanna note that it seems like PMPED might have found more than one check on September 2nd, 2021. It appears like they found one made out to Forge and one made out to Alex from Chris Wilson's office. We say that because it's strange. Why is it not clear which check was the one that convinced PMPED of Alex's scheming? And not to get off track too much, but when PMPED sued Alex last year, they only mentioned the Chris Wilson check. In our December 7th episode, we questioned how they were able to make the mental leap from the Chris Wilson check to all the Forge scams in a single day. Well, according to the filing from Dick and Jim on December 19th, the check that PMPED found on September 2nd was made out to Forge. So, which is it? PMPED never mentioned the Forge check before. Why wasn't it in their complaint from October 2021? We have so many questions about the PMPED timeline and their discoveries. At any rate, at the time of the murders, PMPED knew something wasn't right about the Chris Wilson money and the Hershberger money. Also, we should point out, according to Creighton's filing, it was last November when PMPED told the state grand jury about the confrontation with Alex on June 7th. And it still amazes us that this never got leaked.

[00:27:09] But back to Alex. He apparently told PMPED that he was putting money in Maggie's name because of the boat crash. According to Creighton, the partners at PMPED were, quote, extremely serious about getting to the bottom of it because they did not wanna be a party to this defendant's attempt to hide assets because of the boat case, end quote. After hearing, he said that is what he wanted to do. On June 7th, 2021, Creighton said that a PMPED staffer, which we know from Russell Laffitte's trial was Jeanne



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

Seckinger, told him she wanted, quote, proof that you don't have the fees from the case because I have reason to believe you do and I need proof that you don't, end quote. And according to the filing, Alex was like, it's in Chris Wilson's account. I promise you it's all in there. So, there's that. The very first thing that Creighton says in this filing is that he gave Dick and Jim a roadmap to the evidence. So, why would Dick and Jim say that the Chris Wilson missing money was the only problem Alex was experiencing at work when they knew otherwise? Did they not think that Creighton would fire back with the facts and that it would look even worse for them?

[00:28:39] **Liz Farrell:** Creighton's point here is that both inquiries, the Wilson inquiry and the Hershberger inquiry, were suspended by the murders. And moreover, this was no small matter like Dick and Jim were trying to make it out to be. A, quote, plain admission from Alex that he was stealing, quote, would have undone his entire world. Creighton says that Alex would've been very aware that PMPED would've been forced to report him. In his filing, Creighton cited the case of an attorney in South Carolina who was disbarred for misappropriating just \$4,000 in fees. Beyond that, Creighton says, quote, defendant did ultimately admit to stealing money from the law firm and it did undo his entire world. Alex got disbarred in an unprecedented ruling from the South Carolina Supreme Court. And by the way, LOL. Remember when Alex appeared to be fighting his disbarment? Wonder what's going on with that. Anyway, had Alex not sloppily left evidence of his alleged crimes sitting on his desk, where would we be today? It was those checks that were allegedly discovered by PMPED on September 2nd, 2021 that undid his world. In the meantime, everyone seemed content to forget the missing money for now. They were paying deference to the grieving husband and father, giving Alex more time to get together the money he needed to replace the nearly \$1 million that PMPED noticed was missing.

[00:30:15] **Mandy Matney:** One of the things we wanna point out is that Creighton referred to Alex as having tricked Chris Wilson. While we don't yet know all the facts about Chris and what Chris knew and when he knew it, what we gathered from the Laffitte trial was that Chris apparently was



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

covering for Alex, meaning according to PMPED's testimony anyways, it appears Chris was corroborating Alex's lie. While it's possible that Chris feels like he was tricked because he initially believed Alex's lie about structuring this fee, we would hardly call it being tricked if he later corroborated a different lie.

[00:31:00] At any rate, another piece of new information in Creighton's filings, as we said, was Mark Tinsley's warning to Alex that if he, quote, fixed the boat crash case, Mark would add Maggie and Paul to the lawsuit. Dick and Jim have contended that this fact and the fact of an impending June 10th, 2021 hearing in the boat crash case was a pish posh situation. Creighton, however, disagreed.

[00:31:31] **Liz Farrell:** First, he said Alex's assertion that it wasn't a sure thing that he'd have to turn over his finances to Tinsley is, quote, contrary to law. And get this. Creighton, with his Big Creighton energy on fire, cited Alex's own arguments in a case called Laffitte v. Bridgestone, i.e., the Plyler case, as proof that the court absolutely would have ruled in favor of Mark Tinsley and forced Alex to provide Mark with a list of his accounts. This is one of the most satisfying moments in all of this — watching Alex get schooled by a prosecutor using his own case against him, a case in which Russell Laffitte was the plaintiff because of their conservatorship conspiracy, a case for which Alex now faces charges. It was a thing of beauty. Creighton Waters, we salute you.

[00:32:26] We'll be right back.

[00:32:30] **Mandy Matney:** Okay. So, Creighton also contends that any inspection of Alex's books would have revealed his frauds. He said they were immediately evident upon review of any given year of statements. This, of course, makes us wonder how he got away with it for so long. Was PMPED not inspecting his books? Who was doing his taxes? But that is a question for a different day. Now, Dick and Jim's position on this is okay, sure. If the court did order Alex to open his books to Mark though, Alex could have just falsified



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

documents to satisfy that requirement as you guys alleged he did in other ways. Besides, he could just give Mark his tax returns and the alleged financial crimes would never have come to light. In his filing, Creighton said, again beautifully, Mark Tinsley, quote, would never have settled for a mere tax return and cocktail napkin scribbling of defendant's balances as Tinsley was concerned that defendant was hiding assets after defendant's civil council told him in September 2020 the defendant was broke and could not pay the settlement demanded, quote. Tinsley's obtaining of bank accounts would have, quote, quickly exposed Alex's, quote, true financial picture and years of fraud. Creighton calls this an inevitable revelation and therefore, an important factor when considering where Alex was in his life at the time of the murders. Because again, the murders worked, at least until September 2nd. Here is what Creighton said happened in the boat crash case after June 7th, 2021.

[00:34:30] **David Moses:** The order never happened because of the murders, as the hearing was immediately canceled after word of the killings came to the boat case judge and Tinsley advised his clients that the boat crash case against defendant was, quote, over, given that the sympathies against defendant and Paul had completely changed because of the killings. Paul had become a significant liability to defendant and the boat case threatened to ruin him and send him to prison by exposing his true self. Now, it wouldn't. He had exhausted his resources, criminal and otherwise. There were no more helpful lies to tell to buy enough time. There were no more forgeries to give that would draw in enough money or reduce his exposure. The conservatorships were exploited and closed. Liquidating his worldly possessions in real estate interests would take time he did not have and be very public.

[00:35:40] **Liz Farrell:** As to Dick and Jim's argument that Alex could have falsified information to give to Mark and solve the problem that way, Creighton was like, yeah. Okay. And how would that have worked exactly? Alex had told Mark Tinsley in 2020 that he was broke. So, if Alex falsified documents showing his finances to be healthy, well then, Creighton said, that exposed that lie. And if Alex falsified documents to show that he had no



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

money, well, Creighton said that would raise questions about where all the money was, right? At this point, we're used to watching Dick and Jim twirl their flaming batons in defense of Alex but this was a lot. Their argument was basically our client wasn't under any pressure to commit that crime because he could have always just done a different crime instead. So, faced with what Creighton called a grease fire of multiple means and incurable liabilities, Alex, quote, opted to set off a bigger explosion to choke away the oxygen and snuff the flame — that would be the murders — to get sympathy and deference, Creighton said, which Alex did again on September 4th, 2021, according to Creighton.

[00:36:55] **Mandy Matney:** Now, Dick and Jim argued that the state has reversed its position on the shooting incident. Last year, the state charged Alex with insurance fraud for a failed suicide attempt. If he was trying to kill himself as the state charges would indicate, then how exactly was he trying to get sympathy? Creighton's response was like, a.) We didn't change our position, b.) Alex didn't kill himself, and c.) His dumb failure of a plan isn't the state's fault. All the state cares about is that the roadside shooting shows a pattern and the jury should hear about that. Here is David again with Creighton's words.

[00:37:38] **David Moses:** Defendant's desperate resort to shooting somebody named Murdaugh when cornered in order to make himself a tragic figure is not contingent on his own life or death. If the staging defendant intended were believed, namely that he was bushwhacked by some unknown assailant, he would be a tragic victim and potentially delay imminent final judgment. To defendant's chagrin, those responding to the scene and even unaware third parties passing by immediately identified the shooting as staged. Any imperfections in the logic between the defendant's intended outcome and his selected means to achieve it are the result of defendant's own miscalculations in stressful circumstances, not any stretch by the state.

[00:38:34] **Liz Farrell:** Imagine the pleasure Creighton took in using the word "bushwhacked" there. It must have been satisfying. Anyway, the point here.



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

Creighton says the court should allow the state to establish for the jury the persistent problem Alex faced of getting caught and the, quote, temporal proximity of the confrontation and the threat that was Mark Tinsley.

Creighton is asking the court to allow him to tell the jury 1.) What PMPED was confronting Alex about and the crime Alex was allegedly concealing; 2.) What Alex was facing in the boat crash, which he was apparently working on the day of the murders and which he brought into this by immediately telling investigators that the murders were related to the case; and 3.) Additional detail as to what disclosures of Alex's finances would've revealed in, quote, short order.

[00:39:29] Then, Creighton ends his response by throwing down the gauntlet. He tells the court that Dick and Jim's opposition to the state telling the jury all this is just another example of Alex demanding that the court make new law for him and treat him as a, quote, special defendant. And, Creighton says, if Dick and Jim wanna avoid the, quote, mini trials they say they're going to have to have during the murder trials to establish the facts of the financial crimes, then — well, actually, Creighton says it better. Here is David again.

[00:40:04] **David Moses:** If defendant wishes to avoid to find a detail regarding the thefts he has already admitted he committed, he is welcome to formalize his admissions by pleading guilty before this court and thus relieve the state of its obligations to prove the crimes by clear and convincing evidence.

[00:40:26] **Mandy Matney:** Amazing, right? But as much satisfaction as we all get from Creighton using language like "snuff the flame" and "grease fire" to beautifully describe Alex Murdaugh's downfall, I still remain skeptical on a lot of levels, especially when it comes to the Attorney General's Office handling of this entire case. The fact is it's almost been six months since Alex Murdaugh was charged in the double homicide and the state hasn't charged a single co-conspirator since filing those charges. I get it. Dick and Jim have kept us all very busy with their motions and their media antics, but let's be real here. There is a long way to go to fix the system in this state. I wonder and worry if



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

some people have been spared so that they are clean witnesses for the prosecution or if some have traded information to save themselves. But that doesn't feel right either. All along, we have been exposing the truth in this case because we want a better justice system where the rules apply to all. Bending the law for those who have no choice but to help authorities nail a man who faces hundreds of years in prison for financial charges alone, well, that doesn't sound like the system that I want. I cannot be convinced that Alex and the few who have been charged are the only ones in Alex Murdaugh's circle who did anything illegal. Nor can I be convinced that Cory Fleming is the only attorney in this entire saga who should at the very least be suspended.

[00:42:22] Like I said, there's a long way to go. And now, we are entering the hard part where I'm assuming a lot of powerful people involved really hope this goes away quietly. But we are here to tell you we are not going away. We need answers about Carmen Mullen, about Duffie Stone, Cory Fleming, Greg Alexander, and so many others whose names have come up over and over again in this podcast and authorities seem to be ignoring. We need answers about Stephen Smith. And I've said this before and I'll say it again. We will not stop until we get them. We hope that we get a lot of answers at trial. But if not, we promise that we will still be here to keep the pressure on. Stay tuned and stay in the sunlight.

[00:43:27] On Tuesday, we checked with Colleton County courthouse to make sure there weren't any new filings. And surprisingly but also thankfully, there were not any. Like we've said, we think the next month and a half is going to be a wild ride. And speaking of wild rides, I wanna quickly talk about the latest drama in the Russell Laffitte case. We're going to dive into this more in our next Cup of Justice episode as we're also going to talk about the Cristiani case and the latest there. But on Monday, it was first reported by the state that Russell had hired attorney Mark Moore to handle his appellate case. This is not unusual for a defendant and his attorneys to hire a separate attorney to handle their appellate work. But given the heavy criticism of Russell's attorneys, this led to a lot of speculation that Bart Daniel and Matt Austin had



EPISODE 74: Dividing & Hiding the Facts: The Self-Victimization of Alex Murdaugh

been fired. Right now, that doesn't necessarily appear to be the case. But what we can say is this. Mark Moore is Greg Parker's attorney in the Mallory Beach civil conspiracy case. We don't know when exactly he was hired by Russell, but it's worth noting that Russell was deposed in the Beach case last February, the wrongful death portion of it anyway. Also, as our MMP Premium members geniusly pointed out, Mark Moore works for Nexsen Pruet, the law firm that owns NP Strat, which is the PR firm that was hired by the Murdaugh family. All of this just goes to show how small and incestuous the legal community is in South Carolina. And two, it appears that Russell, who is awaiting sentencing right now, could be playing with fire here. How will this fight against Judge Gergel affect his sentencing? Like I said, we will get into all of this on the next Cup of Justice episode, so stay tuned.

[00:45:27] Before we go, we would like to take a moment and thank a very special supporter of ours, David Haskins of Haskins & Company. David was one of the first MM sponsors back when we first launched the podcast and he's now a valued Soak Up the Sun member of the MMP Premium community. My husband still wears his Nerdy By Nature Haskins & Company T-shirt very proudly. Thank you, David Haskins, and thank you to all of the MMP Premium members as you are helping us shine sunlight like never before.

[00:46:17] **Outro:** The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created and hosted by me, Mandy Matney, produced by my husband, David Moses. And Liz Farrell is our executive editor. From Luna Shark Productions.