



## EPISODE 81: Week Five of Alex Murdaugh's Trial: Maggie & Paul's Last Day on Earth and the Timeline That Traps the Defense

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[00:00:00] **Mandy Matney:** I don't know how close we are to the end of the Murdaugh murders trial. But after the prosecution finished strong last week, the defense has a lot of work to do to convince the jury of any reasonable doubt. My name is Mandy Matney. I have been covering the Murdaugh family for almost four years now. This is another special episode of the Murdaugh Murders podcast live from Walterboro as the Murdaugh Murders trial is still underway. MMP is produced by my husband, David Moses, and written by my best friend, Liz Farrell.

[00:00:51] Well, we are nearing the end of the Murdaugh murders trial. Well, maybe. I don't wanna speak too soon, but defense attorney Jim Griffin told the court that he expects the defense to rest on Friday. We then expect the State to have a rebuttal of some sort but it is possible that this could actually be the last MMP before the jury starts their deliberations, which is crazy and makes me panic just a little. I'll be the first to admit I am emotionally attached to this case in a way that most other journalists covering it just are not. I remember where I was four years ago this week when we first found out about the boat crash and Mallory Beach was missing. I remember where I was when we found out that her mother was suing the Murdaughs. I remember the day Paul Murdaugh was charged in her death. I remember both of his bond hearings. I remember the first time I met Sandy Smith and heard Stephen Smith's story. I remember the moment that I found Gloria Satterfield's death settlement. And of course, I remember waking up on June 8th, 2021 and feeling like the whole world was upside down. And honestly, in a lot of ways, the world has felt off ever since. As y'all know, I'm not a fortune teller and it is impossible for anyone to predict what the jury will do here. There are just so many unusual factors in this case that could work for or against Alex Murdaugh. However, I want to say this. No matter what the jury decides, it does not take away from what we have accomplished so far on this podcast, what you have helped us achieve. Millions of people around the world are now aware of this system hurting so many in South Carolina. They know of the unseen villains who have quietly worked on the access of evil. Millions of people now know more about the law, the media, and how the



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system works against the powerless. Knowledge is power and I'm so proud that we have empowered so many. Our team has truly enjoyed getting to know the MMP Premium fans through Discord and our YouTube chats over the past few weeks. And I have to say this again. We are just getting started. We will be using everything we learned on this case to expose the truth in other cases and teach the investigative skills that helped expose the bad guys in this case. So, no matter what the jury decides, we are still just getting started. And be sure to join us at [mmp.supercast.com](https://mmp.supercast.com) to support us in this next phase. And I also just wanna say again. Thank you for your encouragement and help through these last few years.

[00:03:46] On Tuesday morning, Alex's surviving son, Buster, testified on Alex's behalf. Well, sort of. We will get to that in a second. Buster was the defense's first actual witness. Well, the first planned one anyway. After the State arrested its case on Friday, the defense seemed to materialize two random witnesses out of thin air, seemingly so Dick Harpootlian could delay proceedings just enough to convince Judge Newman to start the three-day weekend early. Neither of the two witnesses who were called on Friday were on the defense list. One of them was Colleton County coroner Richard Harvey, who told the jury that he had estimated the time of Maggie and Paul's death by sticking his fingers in their armpits. I wanna play this clip.

[00:04:35] **Richard Harvey:** My initial processing was that I went and checked both bodies and I simply put my hands in their armpits to determine how warm they are. This is one of the things we do sometimes to try and estimate a time of death is is the body cold? Is the body warm?

[00:05:01] **Mandy Matney:** There was really nothing for the defense to gain from that testimony because as Harvey himself pointed out, armpits or not, he could only give a window of time as to when they died. That window includes the time the State says that the murders happened. In fact, the time the State says that Maggie and Paul were killed is just 10 minutes before Harvey's official estimate of 9:00 p.m. So, if the defense was trying to create doubt about the timeline that night, and they likely were because the timeline seemed to be the hardest thing for Alex to explain, then they failed



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miserably at that. Nevertheless, that was very cringey testimony because the world got to see just how strange our system of electing coroners is. It's just a mess. We elect our coroners in partisan races. Coroners are not medical examiners. They don't have to have college degrees, never mind medical degrees. One of the potential qualifying factors is simply being a law enforcement officer. And coroners have a lot of power to steer investigations in the right or wrong direction. We will talk about this mess in a later podcast.

[00:06:13] The other witness on Friday was a public information officer with the Colleton County Sheriff's Office, who testified that she was the one who released a statement about there being no danger to the public after the murders. The defense has used this several times to indicate that the State had unfairly targeted Alex from the beginning. But again, Alex is the one who told investigators that this was a targeted killing, so the Sheriff's Office statement was appropriate. And a lot of times, PIOs release statements saying there is no danger to the public when they really mean that there isn't a mass maniac shooter out on the loose. So, the other witness really didn't score any points for the defense either.

[00:06:54] **Liz Farrell:** So, let's talk about Buster's testimony on Tuesday. First, a couple of reminders about him and Alex. In our episodes about the jailhouse calls, you might remember how unsettling the conversations between the two were. Not only did Buster seem like a victim of Alex's narcissism, he seemed trapped by it from all angles. Like he had no other options but to do his dad's bidding. Though Alex expressed concern about Buster and frequently told him he loved him, he never really acknowledged the elephant in the room. He never expressed fear on Buster's behalf, never cautioned him about the real killer. He never talked about finding out who did this to their family and he rarely seemed to demonstrate that he understood how much trauma Buster was going through. Some of the highlights from those jailhouse calls are the time Alex got irritated because he wanted to be put in contact with Blanca about some suspicious-sounding bank accounts she needed to open for him but Buster was dragging his feet, even telling Alex that he and Blanca were not seeing eye to eye on things because she was moving items out of Moselle without telling anyone. And then, there's the



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time Alex called Buster in a rush because he needed Liz Murdaugh to put money on another inmate's account. Buster told Alex that this sounded weird and that he hoped that Alex wasn't doing things in jail that he wasn't supposed to be doing. Then, there's the time Alex suggested to Buster that he should go, quote, dove hunting at the site of his mother's and brother's brutal murders. You know? Dove hunting the sport where you use dogs who live in kennels? Or maybe it was, quote unquote, dove hunting. Maybe it was code for something else. Either way, Buster wasn't about to go there and do that. And then, there are all the times Alex harassed Buster to put him in touch with Maggie's parents and the many times Alex reminded Buster about following up on getting back into law school, which Alex had already paid \$60,000 to make happen. Since the start, Alex's family, including Buster and his girlfriend Brooklyn, have come to the courthouse every day to sit behind him and seemingly to support him. On Tuesday, John Marvin, Alex's younger brother, even brought his 12-year-old daughter to a murder trial. It is something that has confused most normal people but those who know the Murdaughs well have not been surprised by it. They have been appalled and horrified by it but not surprised.

[00:09:27] On Tuesday, Buster was the very first Murdaugh to take the stand. Just like the defense has tried to use the spectacle of the Murdaughs being in the courtroom day after day as some sort of proof of Alex's innocence, their main objective with Buster seemed to be to evoke testimony from him that would support their theory of Alex being the blissfully happy family man who could never kill his wife and son. Buster was also there to testify that the family never loaded their shotgun, so that birdshot came out first and buckshot came out second, which is the order of the shots that killed Paul. He was also there to reiterate that Paul was careless with his weapons and to establish that Alex kept his clothes all over the place and to explain the layout of Randolph and Libby's house at Alameda in a way that accounted for Alex's weird little jaunt that he took over to the area of the smokehouse before going home to Moselle that night. Whether or not the Murdaughs had a consistent way of loading their shotguns has been up for debate after SLED agent David Owen admitted under cross-examination that in his testimony to the Colleton County grand jury that he had misstated the specific way the Murdaughs consistently loaded their shotguns. However, he also testified that



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each shotgun they confiscated that night did in fact have two different loads in them, in the sense that each one had two different brands of ammunition. Like I said, the gun that killed Paul had birdshot and buckshot in it but also, the gun that Alex allegedly retrieved from the house that night, Paul's favorite shotgun, the one SLED cannot exclude as the murder weapon, also had birdshot and buckshot loaded in it.

[00:11:14] **Mandy Matney:** But the rest of Buster's testimony was wash. Paul being careless with his weapons can also speak to the weapons being down by the kennels and therefore, readily available for the murderer to grab. Alex leaving his clothes all over the place, including in vehicles, could also mean that he had a change of clothes handy so that he couldn't get blood in incriminating places. And yes, the layout of Randolph and Libby's house does not show a driveway that goes over to the smokehouse, which makes Alex's drive over there that night and later the next week when Shelley Smith testified that she saw him go back there into the woods even more questionable. So, Buster's testimony didn't exactly undo any previous testimony about the evidence. More than that, it is likely that at least some members of the jury can glean from the family's prominence and their presence in the courtroom that the Murdaugh family highly values loyalty. Blood is thicker than water unless it is Maggie and Paul.

[00:12:19] The other issue with Buster's testimony is that everything about his body language seemed to say "I'm here because I have to be, not because I want to be." In other words, he didn't exactly give the impression that he was there to fight against an injustice being done to his father or to his brother and mother. And if that is the case, if Buster did this simply out of loyalty to his father and not because he believes in his father's innocence, then shame on Alex and shame on Jim Griffin for putting him through so much more trauma. We don't know why Buster agreed to get up on the stand, but his father is not the only person he would have to go up against if he decided otherwise. He also has two formidable uncles and at least some of his father's former law partners to contend with. That is a lot of power weighing on Buster. On the stand, Buster occasionally chewed on a nail before quickly pulling his finger out of his mouth as if reminding himself not to do it. He



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gave his testimony from a hunched over position and when answering questions with answers that countered with the State's narrative on what happened that night, he would glance over in his father's direction or touch his face, sometimes even covering his face entirely and rubbing it. Like I said, Buster was there to show us there was a very close and happy family. But for a family that was so close, Buster didn't seem to know anything. He said he really didn't know that his father had a drug problem. He just knew that Alex had gone to a detox center in 2018 and would do-at home detoxes every now and then. He said that he couldn't estimate how often he and his father would visit Libby and Randolph at night, just that they did sometimes. He didn't seem to know that the Blackout gun went missing in 2017 and have been replaced in 2018. And that's funny because it wasn't until SLED found evidence in Maggie's finances of this gun's existence did Alex and his cousin, the gun dealer, suddenly remember — oh, yeah. There was another very expensive gun with very expensive and very hard-to-get ammunition. Right, right. Buster also didn't know where Paul lived in the spring of 2021 before he was murdered. He didn't know at all that his dad was stealing money and oddly, he did not know Alex's birthday. And now before you say, "Oh, my sons don't pay attention to details either," stop. Your sons are not on the stand trying to convince a jury of how super close you all were. Once again, we have the Good Ole Boys telling us what they want the truth to be, not what the truth is.

[00:15:09] Another thing. Buster said he wasn't scared of the murderers coming after him, which again is so strange. Sure, Alex and Buster were telling people that this was done by a vigilante because of the boat crash. But you think Maggie's death would be an apparent indicator that whoever this fictional vigilante is might not be done with their crusade? Nope. Here's Buster.

[00:15:36] **Jim Griffin:** Did you have any discussions with your father about your personal safety?

[00:15:42] **Buster Murdaugh:** Yes, sir.



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[00:15:43] **Jim Griffin:** Did he make any offers to you?

[00:15:45] **Buster Murdaugh:** He did.

[00:15:46] **Jim Griffin:** What offers did he make to you?

[00:15:47] **Buster Murdaugh:** He offered me to —

[00:15:53] **Judge Clifton Newman:** Basis for the objection?

[00:15:56] **Jim Griffin:** An offer is not hearsay. It's an offer.

[00:16:02] **Judge Clifton Newman:** Objection sustained.

[00:16:08] **Jim Griffin:** Did you take any security precautions?

[00:16:21] **Buster Murdaugh:** No.

[00:16:23] **Jim Griffin:** Did you want any security protection?

[00:16:27] **Buster Murdaugh:** No, sir. I didn't.

[00:16:28] **Jim Griffin:** Why not?

[00:16:29] **Buster Murdaugh:** Well, I didn't wanna carry a gun or anything like that and I also didn't want like a private security detail following me around just for lack of privacy. And at the time, the places that I was staying and the places that I were going like I was staying at Rock Hill and my girlfriend's house who has, you know, alarm systems and security cameras and whatnot. And then other than that, I'm staying in hotels, which. You know, I just felt.

[00:17:09] **Jim Griffin:** Did at some point in time you and your father announce a a reward?



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[00:17:16] **Buster Murdaugh:** Yes, sir.

[00:17:16] **Jim Griffin:** I'm gonna show you what I marked as defendant's exhibit 126.

[00:17:22] **Mandy Matney:** Then, oddly enough, Jim showed the jury a press release from 2021 when Buster and Alex offered a \$100,000 reward after the murders. We've talked about this reward several times on this podcast, particularly how weird it was that the press release the media received about the reward included a deadline of September 30th. Well, even weirder, the press release Jim showed the jury today said the deadline was September 31st — a date that does not exist. I hope the jury catches that one. When it came time for cross, the State went easy on Buster, which was the right thing to do. Sure, there was plenty that could be said but there was nothing that could be gained from it. Buster came across as someone who knew better than to question the family's narrative, so the defense's brilliant idea to exploit him for Alex's sake didn't exactly work. And we'll be right back.

[00:18:28] **Liz Farrell:** Speaking of mistakes made by the defense. Before Buster began his testimony Tuesday, Judge Clifton Newman told the court that he had received several emails about something Jim Griffin had tweeted over the weekend. That would be a column written by *Washington Post* writer and South Carolina native Kathleen Parker. Jim copied the URL of that column, put it in a tweet, and included his own commentary. Here's what he wrote: Alex Murdaugh trial reveals a sloppy investigation. Sadly for Jim, the sloppy one here was him. See, there's a rule of professional conduct about that and I'll read it to you. It says a lawyer who is participating or has participated in the investigation or litigation of a matter shall not make an extrajudicial statement that the lawyer knows or reasonably should know will be disseminated by means of public communication and will have a substantial likelihood of materially prejudicing an adjudicative proceeding in the matter. Now, a lawyer may state information that is contained in a public record but the spirit of that rule seems more geared towards, say, a police report or a court filing, not a poorly informed opinion piece in the *Washington Post*. Judge Newman was not amused by the whole thing. The entire





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exchange was super awkward. It was like watching a school bully finally get called out in front of everyone. But, yeah. The bully really deserved the humiliation but also, that bully is probably being bullied at home by his big red-headed stepbrother and it's no fun watching the circle go unbroken.

[00:20:15] Real quick about that Kathleen Parker column. It was infuriating, not because she's siding with the defense or criticizing the State's case, but because she was doing so myopically and with important context missing, which makes it intellectually dishonest, in our opinion. One of her main assertions is that the State told a, quote, colossal lie to the grand jury when agent David Owen testified that there was spatter on the shirt Alex had been wearing the night of the murders. Now, we have said this from the very first minute we reported about the high velocity impact spatter on the shirt — that we were not talking about blood spatter. This might be splitting hairs but we wanna again make that clear. The shirt had a fine misting of brain matter on it toward the top, indicating that, according to the investigation and sources, Alex had been wearing it when he stood over Maggie and shot her in the head. This is important, okay? We've seen a lot of misinformation out there because of Jim's cross-examination, which was super strong and actually quite good. But David Owen did not lie to the grand jury. He did not know at the time of his testimony and neither did the State AG's office that a superfluous test had been done on the shirt after it had already tested positive for presumptive blood. I say "superfluous" because it wasn't a necessary test. As we explained in our latest episode of Cup of Justice on Monday, the misting was not visible to the naked eye. There were a couple of stains on the shirt that could be seen so that was a good indication that there might be more. We're not sure how it was done in this case but typically, crime labs come up with a plan for how evidence will be tested, especially when there are multiple tests that need to be conducted on a single item, such as a DNA test and a gunshot residue test. DNA was found on the shirt in the areas in question, specifically the area of misting was Maggie's DNA, likely the presumptive blood test was conducted after this. That test found 74 areas of presumptive blood. The final test that was done was not necessary because the DNA was already known. It was likely done in an attempt to be thorough but it instead left this door open to the defense because HemaTrace, that test for human blood, can produce a false negative as a result of the chemicals



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used in the presumptive blood test. And as those of you who know who have been following the show since last summer, the shirt had been completely soaked in those chemicals. Again, according to testimony, David Owen did not know about this report but it is not clear why the lead investigator wouldn't have known and generally speaking, this kind of thing would set off our alarm bells. But the context is important. In addition to this test being unnecessary because the DNA was already known and the LCB test revealed the pattern of the spray, there is all this other evidence in the case. The shirt was just one brick in the foundation, not the entire foundation.

[00:23:12] Additionally, Parker made no mention of Owen's loss. His mother had died the day before. Jim's cross-examination of him was rough. It was clear Owen didn't have any fight left in him. Parker seems to mock Owen for leaving the courtroom red-faced and upset. But gee, I don't know. Could that be because he was grieving? If Kathleen Parker was in the courtroom to see that, then it's difficult to imagine that she also didn't know about Owen's loss. The other thing Parker doesn't mention in her column is that though Jim's cross-examination was impressive, it was largely undone by testimony the next day when Jim's own client's words cleared the smoke and broke the mirrors. Jim berated Owen about SLED not treating Curtis Eddie Smith or Walterboro gang members involved in Alex alleged drug trade as potential suspects. Well, it turns out Alex told SLED in no uncertain terms in an alleged confession in September 2021 that he didn't owe any money to any gangs or anyone related to his drug use. He told agents that Eddie was not involved in his wife's and son's deaths. His drug use, he said, had nothing to do with this. How did he know that? How did he know that their murders had nothing to do with Eddie and Company? Wouldn't knowing that require him knowing who did it? Oh, right. At any rate, it would seem that Jim's credibility on that was shot. And yet, Kathleen, who we're told runs in the same circles as the Dicks and Jims of Columbia, points out that SLED dropped the ball on that. Who dropped the ball? It was Alex. Parker also chided SLED for not testing Maggie's and Paul's clothes for DNA but she doesn't mention that earlier testimony from SLED was that the clothes were too saturated with blood to do any meaningful DNA extraction on. And she criticized the SLED for not searching Alameda on the night of the murders. Again, here's the thing about that. Despite what Dick and Jim want the jury to believe, Alex was not



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considered a suspect that night, investigators had no probable cause to search Alameda. Yes, they tested Alex for gunshot residue and yes, they took his clothes and the cars at Moselle that night. That was because he was the one who found the bodies. All of that was done to exclude him. They didn't have any evidence at that point that Alex had done this. Further, what judge in Randolph Murdaugh land was going to sign any warrant to search Randolph Murdaugh's house? We can't think of one. Anyway, that is the column that Jim Griffin shared on Twitter. And just like with Buster's testimony and the testimony of the defense's first expert Tuesday, a forensic engineer who analyzes how car wrecks happen and has very limited experience as it turns out in murder cases, it didn't have the outcome Jim Griffin was looking for. Parker said she thinks the State's theory of motive is, quote, silly as if it is so unbelievable that a man who thought it was a good idea to pretend that a, quote, good-looking and nice man had shot him on the side of the road on September 4th, 2021 might also be the author of this other bad idea that killing his wife and son would make his life easier and keep people from finding out his crimes. You know what is actually silly? Good Ole Boy enabling.

[00:26:41] **Mandy Matney:** As you know, we're not about that life, especially when we have a very clear timeline of what happened the night Maggie and Paul were murdered. And those inconsistencies, as Parker calls them, are going to be really hard for the jurors to overlook. Not only does the timeline outline what Alex actually did that night before and after the murders, it gives us an intimate look into Maggie and Paul's last day on Earth. Let's take a look. At this point, we've heard consistent testimony that Maggie, Paul, and Alex were all prolific users of their cellphones. Cellphone evidence confirms that. This is important because the State has based its estimate of when Maggie and Paul died on when they stopped using their phones altogether. Paul's phone locked for the last time just four minutes after he filmed the kennel video. Maggie's locked seconds after Paul's. The gap between the final locking of the phones and when Alex rolls out of Moselle to go to Alameda is when the State argues that he cleaned himself up, retrieved his cellphone, and left, tossing Maggie's phone on his way to his mother's house.



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[00:27:52] On Friday, SLED agent Peter Rudofski testified not only about everyone's calls and texts, he finally put together what all of those steps mean and he integrated all of that with GMC OnStar data that came in the previous weekend. So, let's set the scene here. According to text messages to Alex and Maggie, Randolph Murdaugh had an appointment for treatment scheduled at 3:45 p.m. that day in Bluffton. Shortly after 8:00 a.m., Alex's older brother Randy texted an update to them and other family members. At some point, Randolph had been taken to the hospital. It's not clear whether if it was the night before or earlier that morning. Randy tells the group that he is trying to find out whether Randolph, who has been battling lung cancer and been given a prognosis of just a few weeks to live, would be seeing a pulmonologist. Alex doesn't appear to respond to that message. In fact, Alex doesn't seem to respond to any message about his father's health. Maggie's sister Marain testified that Maggie was frustrated with Alex's family sometimes because Alex always seemed to be the one to take care of their ailing parents; that he was the go-to person when the parents needed something.

[00:29:11] **Liz Farrell:** But that doesn't actually seem to be the case, at least not on June 7th, 2021. Not only does it appear that Alex didn't have a key to the Alameda house, he was not actually known to visit there too often, according to testimony from his mother's caretakers. Even Buster wasn't able to say how often they visited there. Now, you might remember from a few weeks ago, Alex's paralegal, Annette Griswold, testified that she saw Alex arrive at PMPED and she alerted Jeanne Seckinger, who then confronted Alex, who was standing outside his office and leaning on a file cabinet, about the missing \$792,000 fee. So, when did Alex go to work on that fine Monday morning? He went on that fine afternoon though his phone usage would indicate he was awake, at least on and off starting at 8:23 a.m. when he read Randy's text about their dad. Alex did not leave Mosell until just afternoon. He got to the law firm at 12:22 p.m., driving normal inappropriate speeds, but it took him another 16 minutes before he went into the building. He was either sitting in his car taking calls or standing outside or somewhere else altogether. His car though was at PMPED. During the time between leaving Moselle and walking into the building, Alex either called or received calls from a litany of people, including Paul, Buster, his assistant Kristi Jarrell, his personal attorney and law



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partner Danny Henderson, someone named William Wiley, someone named Jamie Harrelson, and Alex's alleged co-conspirator Cory Fleming, whom he spoke with a few times that day.

[00:30:55] So, Alex goes into the building, right? Annette sees him, she contacts Jeanne, Jeanne confronts him. And in the middle of that confrontation, Alex gets a phone call about his father's health taking a turn for the worst. Here's what actually went down. Now, let's say all that happened anywhere between 12:38 p.m. when he entered the building and 3:30 p.m. because at 4:00 p.m., Jeanie testified that Alex called her surprising her because she thought that he had left for the day to take care of his father. During that time, he got two messages pertaining to his father's health. One was a text message from Randy. Here's that message: "Daddy was just seen by the pulmonologist in Savannah. His opinion is dramatically different from the other doctors. He thinks daddy has pneumonia and needs to be hospitalized to be treated for pneumonia. He thinks there could be an obstruction but is more confident that it is all or mostly pneumonia. If he is right and this is pneumonia, is much more treatable and can certainly give the immunotherapy a chance to work. Although it was not addressed, if this is not an obstruction, the whole prediction of less than a few weeks would not be true. John or I will update as soon as we know more." A few minutes later, John Marvin texts the group and reiterates this message that it might not actually be cancer. He asks whether anyone in the group can put together a bag of clothing and toiletries to take to Randolph. 10 minutes after that, Alex calls Maggie and they talk for about six minutes. We obviously don't know what they talked about but while she was on the phone with Alex, she texted Buster to ask for a mailing address so she could have a prescription of his sent to him at his girlfriend's house in Rock Hill. Also, during that call, Maggie is driving. Her license plate is captured on a license plate reader just outside of Charleston. While talking to Maggie, Alex gets two phone calls from someone named Derrick Moore that he sends to voicemail. He receives no calls from his siblings and he makes no calls to his siblings. On June 7th, the only response Alex has to his brother's updates on their father is one text message sent at 3:31 p.m. Alex wrote "Talk later?" Then a minute and a half after, he wrote "Not sure how that got sent." So, it was an accident. The only acknowledgement of his father's ailing health was a mid-afternoon mistext. Now, we don't know.



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Maybe Randy and Alex talked over Alex's desk phone at work. Maybe Alex relayed information through Paul, who then talked to John Marvin a few times that day. Or maybe he relayed information through Maggie who talked to John Marvin's wife and a woman named Barbara, who might be Randolph and Libby's housekeeper, Barbara Mixon. But we're not going to give Alex the benefit of the doubt anymore. He lost that privilege. So, all of that appeared to be a lie. One of the many that came out on Friday.

[00:33:46] **Mandy Matney:** Other than showing that Alex was on the phone a lot all day, showing his digital footprints before and after the murders, the timeline shows that Paul too had a busy day on the phone with multiple calls to both parents and several of his friends. It seems like Paul Murdaugh's last day was a fairly normal one. He exchanged a bunch of Snapchat messages. He texted someone named Mrs. Moore and told her that he had not received a lease from her, presumably from the apartment he was going to rent with friends, and he sent a friend a screenshot of a used hot tub for sale for \$700. Later that evening before he got to Moselle, Paul received a text message from someone asking if he was coming. It is not clear where this person meant but it could mean that Paul had plans that evening. Paul responded that he couldn't go because he couldn't get off. We haven't heard much about how Paul was lured to Moselle by Alex that night, other than Alex told Paul to be there to deal with the dying sunflowers. Regardless of how he was persuaded to get there that night and potentially give up plans, Paul ended the day with dinner at his favorite place on Earth — Moselle.

[00:34:57] But before we get into what the timeline tells us about that night, let's talk about Maggie's Day. A large part of her day was spent it seems on her family, which tracks with everything we've been told about her. From 7:05 a.m. when Maggie texts Blanca to pick up Alex's favorite flavors of Capri Suns to early afternoon when she arranges to get a prescription sent to Buster in Rock Hill to later in the afternoon when she tells Paul that Blanca made dinner for them — cube steak and mac and cheese. Maggie was busy managing her family amid her own schedule for the day, which included a doctor's appointment. She wanted to stay at Edisto that night but she took her sister's advice and went to Moselle to be with her husband, who was



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supposedly in the throes of grief over his ailing father, who everyone else but him seemed to be taking care of that day. Now, after Randy and John Marvin sent their updates on Randolph around 1:45 p.m. that day and after John Marvin sent a text about visitation being limited to one person at a time and no visitors being allowed at night, Maggie would have known before coming to Moselle that Alex's apparent ruse about going to visit his father was no longer in effect. That might be why she decided to stop and get a pedicure on her way to Moselle that night. She told Paul about the pedicure and apparently he told Alex shortly after getting to Moselle around 7:00 p.m. Alex texts Maggie, quote, Paul said you were getting a pedi — with three exclamation points — call when you done. Now, those exclamations could be telling. They could indicate surprise or alarm or even annoyance. Was Maggie supposed to have already have been at Moselle at that time? If Alex did do this, was Maggie's late arrival time messing up his plans? The thing that gets us is this. If Alex is Maggie's murderer, then her murderer had the audacity to make sure his Capri Sun supply was stocked in the flavors that he liked.

[00:37:10] Alex's defense team is likely going to spend the next few days trying to paint the Murdaughs as the happiest family that ever was. They're going to continue to try to hit back where they can, where they can create doubt, whether it's the quality of SLED's investigation or an unknown male DNA under Maggie's one fingernail or the integrity of the data pulled from the family's phones and cars. But how do they overcome all the lies? Going into the trial, the defense was adamant that Alex was taking a nap at the house. They were adamant that he had never gone down to the kennels. But then, witness after witness proved that that was not the truth. Alex and his cousin, Big John, the gun-dealing DNR officer, told SLED that there was no third 300 Blackout and then SLED found out there was. So, that wasn't the truth either.

[00:38:08] **Liz Farrell:** We'll be right back. Two women testified that Alex seemed to be trying to plant false memories in their heads about how long he was at Alameda and what he was wearing that night. Alex told SLED that Maggie surprised him that night, that he didn't know she was coming to Moselle, and that she only did it because she was worried about him. Did Blanca share with him the text she had gotten from Maggie that day,



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worrying about Alex's sleepless nights and his health and how he was handling Randolph's failing health? Did he learn that from Blanca, and did he decide to use it to his advantage with SLED? Whatever the case, it was a lie. Alex had lured Maggie there and Alex knew that. Alex told SLED he had tried to roll Paul over to check if he was alive and that he had checked Paul's and Maggie's pulses. That too ended up not being true. He said Paul's phone had fallen out of his pocket and yet there was Paul's blood on the inside of his pocket, indicating that someone other than Paul had gone in there to possibly retrieve that phone.

[00:39:14] On Friday afternoon, agent Rudofski finally presented the GMC OnStar data that SLED had sought in March 2022 but had been denied until two weekends ago. That data was damning. As it turns out, Alex did the following: from 9:02 p.m. until he left Moselle at almost 9:07 p.m., he moved around the place at a jogger's pace far faster and with more steps than at any other point that day. He sped to Alameda and, on the way, slowed down right at the spot where Maggie's phone was found. He stayed in Alameda for 20 minutes — exactly the amount of time that Libby's caregiver told investigators. After he left Alameda and got in his car, he did something else. It's unclear what but he drove over by Randolph's smokehouse on the property. It's this guest house-like structure where Randolph would hold his barbecues. And Alex parked there for almost two minutes before leaving. Was that when he quickly stashed the guns and clothing perhaps? Alex could be a tosser. He might have tossed Maggie's phone and he has already admitted to tossing evidence on the side of the road close to the scene of the crime in September 2021 and that was months after he learned that law enforcement was onto him. He tossed the knife he used to stab the tire of the Mercedes literally across the street from where the alleged roadside shooting incident took place. Alex reached speeds of about 80 miles per hour on his drive back to Moselle. When he returned, he drove up to the house and then he drove back down to the kennels, arriving there at 10:05 and 57 seconds. 17 seconds later, he called 911, giving him 17 seconds to do everything he said he had done between seeing that they had been shot and calling for help. 17 seconds. Of course, there are those arguing, specifically the defense, that this is enough time to have done all those things. But of course, these are the same people and the same defense who are also arguing that the 15 minutes





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between when the State thinks Maggie and Paul were killed and when Alex left for Alameda are simply not enough to have cleaned himself up using a pressure hose and changing clothing that was likely in the truck anyway and tossing Maggie's phone. So, their credibility is zero. Then, after he called 911 and before law enforcement started arriving on the scene, Alex called Paul's friend Rogan Gibson five times. He called Rogan Gibson five times before he called his own son Buster to tell him what had happened. Why did he do that? Likely because Rogan Gibson had texted Paul just before 10 o'clock and perhaps Alex was trying to find out what Rogan knew. After law enforcement arrived and with the bodies of his wife and son nearby, Alex took time to read a text from Michael Gunn, Michael Gunn of the real Forge Consulting. That text featured a bikini shot of a woman who was the former director of membership for the South Carolina Association of Justice. When Alex was done reading that text, he then searched for a restaurant at Edisto Beach — all before calling Buster.

[00:42:32] **Phillip Barber:** So, as an investigator, do you think it would be terribly unreasonable that after calling other family members, someone would call the person who is the best friend of the dead son who had multiple missed messages and calls and even a call coming in during the 911 call is calling that person to ask what happened, what's going on. Is that to you as an investigator an unreasonable thing to do after calling other family members?

[00:43:01] **Peter Rudofski:** I would as an investigator I think that would be very odd given the scene and the whole situation that you're on the phone constantly, yes.

[00:43:09] **Phillip Barber:** That you're standing there next to your dead son, his phone is ringing.

[00:43:12] **Peter Rudofski:** Yep.

[00:43:13] **Phillip Barber:** From someone and you call that person after calling other people.



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[00:43:16] **Peter Rudofski:** Yes, because I am standing over my son and wife and it is just witnessing that for the first time, I would think that would be to have someone on their phone constantly like that right after given the scene in the situation. Yes, as an investigator, I would think that is very —

[00:43:32] **Phillip Barber:** Wouldn't be someone trying to find out what happened.

[00:43:36] **Peter Rudofski:** At that moment, that would be the last thing that would probably come through my mind as an investigator looking at the scene is trying to figure out what happened minutes after I discover it. I'd be in a state of shock if that was me personally.

[00:43:58] **Mandy Matney:** Then, at the end of Rudofski's direct examination, the prosecutor dropped one of their biggest bombshells yet: Maggie and Paul, the little detective, were onto him. In addition to all the financial pressures, the upcoming hearing at the boat crash, the millions of dollars in debt, the millions in theft, the Satterfield family still wanting their settlement, the media not letting up in their scrutiny of the family, his law firm running outta patience, and his father dying, Alex's family, his two dependents, have found out his secret.

[00:44:34] **Peter Rudofski:** So, this is gonna be from Paul Murdaugh and it's gonna be to it says voicemail. That's gonna refer to Alex 'cause this is obtained from his phone. It's gonna be the owner. So, that's gonna be Paul to Alex.

[00:44:46] **Creighton Waters:** And what's the date?

[00:44:48] **Peter Rudofski:** The date is gonna be May 6th, 2021 at 10:52:13 a.m.

[00:44:54] **Mandy Matney:** And it wasn't just Paul who was onto him. Nearing the end of the direct examination of Peter Rudofski, Creighton Waters asked him to tell the jury about Maggie Murdaugh's Google searches on May 26th, 2021, just weeks before the murders.



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[00:45:14] **Creighton Waters:** State's 553. See if you recognize this exhibit.

[00:45:22] **Peter Rudofski:** I do.

[00:45:23] **Creighton Waters:** Tell me what that is.

[00:45:24] **Peter Rudofski:** This is gonna be some searched items that I obtained from Maggie Murdaugh's extraction report.

[00:45:33] **Creighton Waters:** Your Honor, at this time, I offer State's 553 I believe without additional objection.

[00:45:39] **Judge Clifton Newman:** Submit it.

[00:45:45] **Creighton Waters:** And tell the jury what this exhibit is please.

[00:45:47] **Peter Rudofski:** So, this is gonna be Google searches. Far left, you're gonna have a timestamp. The source, which is gonna be Safari, that's for Apple. And then, the value's gonna be the searched item. And on May 26th, 2021 at 11:21 p.m., Maggie searched "green gel pill p30." She also searched 11:20 p.m. "green gel pill p30," "white pill 30 on one side rp." And if you look to the right, you're gonna see a column that says "deleted." That one is showing yes as been deleted. And then if you go down to row number four, it's gonna be May 6th, 2021 from Safari "white pill 30 on one side rp" and that's also shown deleted.

[00:46:40] **Mandy Matney:** Then, Waters asked about another exhibit — a voicemail to then-Palmetto State Bank President Russell Laffitte on June 3rd, 2021.

[00:46:52] **Peter Rudofski:** So, this is gonna be a text from voicemail, which is gonna be Alex Murdaugh's phone to Russell Laffitte. It was sent on June 3rd, 2021 at 3:22 p.m. This is from Alex stating "I need to extend farm credit line.



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Another 600,000. My dad will sign also if needed. How much turnaround will that take?" And again, that's from Alex to Russell Laffitte on June 3rd, 2021.

[00:47:21] **Mandy Matney:** This was June 3rd — just four days before Jeanne Seckinger confronted Alex Murdaugh about the \$790,000 in missing fees that he owed the law firm. So, is the jury supposed to believe that all of these coincidences collided at once for Alex and still he had nothing to do with the murders? His son confronting him about pills, his law firm confronting him about missing money, his father, the family fixer, dying, the freight train of Mark Tinsley, and the boat crash lawsuit about to expose his very illegal financial transactions. And as all of these very specific and very stressful problems reach a tipping point on the night of when so few people knew Maggie and Paul would be at Moselle, the defense wants the jury to believe that two apparently very short and very gutsy assailants who we will talk later about on this podcast snuck onto Moselle, stole the Murdaugh's weapons, murdered Maggie and Paul in cold blood, all while Alex was napping but just minutes after he was caught on video with Maggie and Paul at the murder scene. Honestly, is there any room for reasonable doubt here? Because the narrative that the defense is telling the jury, a Colleton County jury, is a hard one for regular folks who likely know how powerful the Murdaugh family is to swallow. The defense has yet to offer any alternative theory that makes any bit of plausible sense and maybe that's because this is all new to them. For the first time in their career, they actually have to do the thing. They can't rely on relationships that they've built over the years or the strings that they can pull in an exchange of power. The truth is not going to bend to the narrative that they want people to believe — not anymore. Alex Murdaugh still seems to think that he can talk his way out of this. And the defense's secret sources are still telling the media that he's expected to take the stand this week before they rest. But the sad thing is that there are way too many people who are still out there willing to bend the truth all for Alex Murdaugh but maybe not this time. Maybe not with this jury. Maybe this time, the truth will win. Stay tuned and stay in the sunlight.



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[00:50:20] **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.

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