



## EPISODE 37: Who Killed Stephen Smith Part Eight... Red Flags and Red Herrings..

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**Mandy Matney** 00:02

I don't know who killed Stephen Smith. And now it's finally the time that we find out not only who killed him but who obstructed justice for all of these years. My name is Mandy Matney. This is True Sunlight, a podcast exposing crime and corruption previously known as the Murdaugh Murders Podcast. True Sunlight is a Luna Shark Production written with journalist Liz Farrell. Well, it's a new era, the Stephen era starting now. It is the, Alex Murdaugh is over now, era and man that feels good to say again, and more hopeful this time around. To kick off this glorious new era with our lovely South Carolina Luna Shark premium members. We are hosting Capital City Confidential at the Capital City Club in Columbia, South Carolina. Legal superhero Sarah Ford, who represented the victims in the Bowen Turner case will be joining me for an evening of strong cocktails and hard conversations about the problems facing our justice system in the next steps for change in South Carolina. This will take place on February 15. At the Capital City Club overlooking the beautiful city of Columbia, South Carolina. This exclusive in person event is restricted to invited club members and Luna Shark Premium Members only. RSVP today by clicking the link in the description or visit [lunasharkmedia.com/events](https://lunasharkmedia.com/events) Be sure to register soon as there's only a few spots open. And while we're talking about changing our justice system, thank you to every person who spoke out against Solicitor David Miller possibly becoming a judge in South Carolina. The good news, I think the legislator is actually listening to us. Finally, this week, the Associated Press reported quote "the South Carolina Senate ended Tuesday without approving the House Resolution to set February 7 as the date when both chambers vote to fill upcoming vacancies in the judiciary." This means David Miller won't be appointed as a judge anytime soon. But neither will any of the other candidates because the whole process is now at a standstill. A story in the State newspaper, a paper that typically sides

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with the good old boys and the good ol boy ways even said that this move Tuesday to hold off electing judges was quote and move reflecting the growing discontent with the way South Carolina elects its judges. And that folks is a big deal. I'll say this again, changing a system is difficult by design. And progress often looks insignificant to many because it is so small. But we're going to celebrate each tiny step that we take in the fact that the process for electing judges was halted in the media as recognizing that it is due to a growing number of people who oppose this outdated system of lawyer lawmakers and electing judges who helped them in the courtroom in return. Well, that is a big deal. It is difficult to get people to care about the inside baseball of the government and how our elected officials are actually operating. It is even more difficult to get people to do something about it and to get them to make noise for lawmakers to actually do something. I think we are doing that here. And I want to say thank you for being a part of this movement. That said we still have a long way to go for actual judicial reform and South Carolina. According to a source close to the situation. A lot of the people who actually want real change aren't hopeful about this recent move. They feel like lawmakers are simply kicking the can and waiting for the issue to die down before they decide to vote on judges. So y'all please keep making noise. Keep writing your state representatives and keep telling them that we need a better system in South Carolina, not a system that only works for lawyer lawmakers who helped decide who the judges are. Tell them that now is the time for them to be heroes and to change the system for the better. You know, the other day when I was running errands on Hilton Head, a sweet woman politely stopped David and I and said thank you. It was a few days after Alex Murdaugh lost his bid for a new trial. The woman said that she lived in South Carolina for a long time and never believed that anything was going to change until she started listening to our podcast. She said she truly believed Alex Murdaugh would have gotten away with it. If it wasn't for the work of our team. I was speechless and taken

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aback thinking about the meaning behind her words. I've gotten used to seeing fans in public and politely accepting their kindness with gratitude. But this was the first time in a long time when someone said that to me and the dragon was actually slayed for the first time in a long time, when our souls could rest. Knowing Alex Murdaugh and his team were finally defeated. I am truly proud to have contributed to exposing him and his tribe of evildoers who have made a lot of people in this state feel powerless with no hope for change. But now I want to redirect that energy and that momentum to do the impossible and make change in a situation that otherwise feels almost hopeless, to Stephen Smith, and soon again, we also will go back to Grant Solomon. We've said this before, and I'll say it again, Stephen's case is the one that really haunts us, the one that we have been on for five years now that it's produced no real answers for his family. It's what I think about when people say thank you for changing the system. It's the one in a dark spot in the back of my mind questioning if I did enough, if I could do more, and the worst question of all of them. Have I made this worse for Sandy Smith? I was the first reporter to publicly connect Stephen's case in relation to the Murdaugh family. I was the first reporter to mention that the Murdaugh name was brought up over 40 times and the investigation and soon after I wrote that story SLED announced that they were opening up an investigation into Stephen's death because of something they found during the course of the investigation into the double homicide. That announcement propelled Stephen's story into the national media spotlight, which has been an ugly place for Sandy after so many saw Stephen's story for dollar signs and clicks instead of a horrific murder that needs to be solved. I want Stephen's case to be solved more than anything in the world right now. I can't move on to other cases or look more parents like Sandy in the eye and tell them I will do everything I can to solve their child's murder until we have done everything we could to solve Stephen's. No stones will be left unturned. We have carved a clear path for 2024 to be Stephen's year and we will

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not tolerate any distractions whether they are intentional or not. Stephen's death needs to be solved for people like me to truly believe that the system is changing. Stephen's case needs to be solved to write so many wrongs. Stephen's case needs to be solved. And I'm not just talking about the person or persons who killed him, but also of the ones who withheld information obstructed justice and intentionally derailed this case to where it is today. And you want accountability for every person who has betrayed Sandy and treated her son's case like a ticket to stardom. That list of evildoers keeps growing unfortunately.

**Liz Farrell** 08:22

First, we have some quick updates for you all. This Monday was the deadline for the special referee to submit his decision on how Alex Murdaugh's assets will get divided among his victims, the victims who put their names in the mix anyway. Remember, there are a lot more victims out there than we even know about. There are people whose names have not been made public because they were satisfied with the reimbursements they received from PMP D. And then there are people we heard about who said, I don't want any part of that trouble. I got enough money from a case. If Alex stole from me, fine. It's not worth going up against the law firm or the family. Last fall, the court asked that anyone who believed they were still owed money by Alex Murdaugh to come forward. According to court records. 16 people did just that. Here's how Walter Tolleson the court appointed referee, decided to split up the roughly \$1.8 million in Alex's assets which were found by the receivership that was put in place in the Beach case back in late October 2021. 29% of Alex's money will go to Rene beach, the mother of Mallory Beach, who was killed nearly five years ago when Paul Murdaugh crashed his family's boat into a bridge. Two survivors of the boat crash were also on the list. Miley Altman will get 5% of Alex assets and Morgan dowdy will get 11% Arthur Bajor will receive 24% of Alex assets but a survivor of the crash that killed Arthur's wife, Eva Mae

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Marshall and the estate of a man who was also killed in that crash. Charles Harley will receive none of his assets PMPED will get 14% of Alex assets and Johnny Parker will get 15% which is beyond disgusting. According to court documents PMPED has an arrangement to give a portion of what they receive to victims of Alex. We believe that some or all of those victims are represented by Justin Bamburgh, which is why their names were not included in the mix. Regardless, Alex's law firm should have gotten zero, zip, nada. These crimes happened on their watch. They say that's because of the culture of the firm, the brotherhood, the family. They trusted Alex because he was one of them. And that's why this went on for so long. Well, your brother done messed up your family, and now your family is suffering because of it. And that is not the victim's problem. To make matters worse, Johnny Parker, one of the wealthiest attorneys in South Carolina, and one of Alex's partners at PMPED, also should not be receiving one penny of Alex's assets. He loaned Alex that money around \$400,000 In two personal loans, one of those loans was at a time when the law firm was questioning Alex about nearly \$800,000 and missing fees. Johnny made a bad bet on a bad actor. He assumed that risk and it did not pay off a default on a personal loan should equal a personal loss. In other words, that loss should not have to be something that was even considered by the special referee and the fact that it was it's just more evidence of the power that PMDD and Johnny Parker in particular still have. Victims shouldn't be getting less because of these wealthy men who were asleep at the wheel to other victims of Alike tiny amounts of money. Randy Daughtry will receive just point 2% and Manuel Santis Cristiani will get 1%. A man named Henry Henderson will get point 8% of Alex's money. Randy and Manuel were thefts that Alex was indicted over. We're not sure who Henry Henderson is. According to court records he applied for Alex money after the deadline had passed. Now Gloria Satterfield's sons, Tony and Brian will get none of Alex's money. Neither will Elena and Hannah Plyler. Their lawyers, Eric Bland and Ronnie

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Rector have said that they are planning to file a motion for reconsideration. If a judge does allow for any reconsideration. We hope that the money comes out of Johnny Parkers and PMPED's pockets and doesn't affect any other victim. Oh, I almost forgot. Perhaps the best news coming out of this was that the special referee gave nothing to Randy Murdaugh, Alex's brother, who like his brotherhood at PMPED shamelessly stood in line with his hand up. We've received a number of questions about how Alex still has any money. This is sort of a complex question, but I'm going to give it a simple answer. This is basically the change that they found in Alex's couch. Not literally, figuratively. It was money that was cobbled together from real estate sales money from his retirement account and various funds the receivership discovered, I know your next two questions. How has he been paying Dick and Jim, and where did all the money he stole go? The answers are he's a prison trust fund baby and God I wish we knew. As for the trust fund, his dad left him millions in an irrevocable trust that is protected from civil claims. The assumption is that he's using that money to fund his quixotic attempts to escape consequence. Okay, a few more updates. Alex so called co-conspirator Jerry Rivers. The Colleton County man who pleaded guilty to money laundering and drug related charges in August is set to be sentenced next Monday. He faces up to 20 years in prison. This case is still on our list to look into a little bit more because even as he was pleading guilty to charges related to the accusation that he served as a go-between and provided oxy to Curtis Eddie Smith for Alex and helped Alex launder money. He continued to deny ever knowing Alex in another update. Alex legal team has asked the federal government to extend the deadline for them to respond to the Bureau of Prisons pre sentencing report on Alex they say they need 30 more days until March 6th to file objections to the PSR because Alex hasn't received the report yet through prison mail as part of his lame but elaborate scheme to get transferred to federal prison. Alex pleaded guilty in a rush job of a deal to federal charges back in September. He

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was helping to get sentence before the State prosecuted him on identical charges stemming from their investigation which they conducted the federal government basically allowed themselves to be used redundantly by charging Alex now he's in a bit of a pickle because in lieu of going to trial in late November, Alex opted for a last minute plea deal with the state and was sentenced to 27 years in prison. Obviously now that he's denied a new trial on the murder charges is lame but the elaborate scheme is put on hold for a while.

### **Mandy Matney** 15:09

Okay, let's finally talk about Stephen Smith. On Wednesday morning we spoke with Stephen's mother Sandy about her stoic presence in the courtroom during Alex's hearings for a new trial. Sandy wore a bright green shirt and sat smack dab in the middle of the small army of SLED agents and state officials who attended the hearing January 29th. I remember over a month ago when it was announced that the hearing would take place on January 29th. Sandy said to me, "Really, they're going to hold back on Stephen's birthday? How about I go there for a little reminder," she said. I love Sandy's peskiness. And of course, I said, "Do it." It was a genius and symbolic idea for her to sit in the courtroom and remind the world of the case that has been left behind because of Alex and his team of judicial terrorists sucking up all the resources. Here is Sandy.

### **Sandy Smith** 16:07

I'm gonna keep Stephen's story out there. They're gonna see my face and get tired of it. Oh, it's Stephen's turn. Yeah, it was his birthday. And I was going to prove a point Stephen still exists. He's on a shelf, but because it's like he's taken, like all the attention away from all these other cases that need to be solved. And they're just sitting there in the courtroom. You know? It was just frustrating to see SLED. And that was



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the ones that didn't speak to me. They looked at me but didn't speak to me.

### **Mandy Matney** 16:42

It is unfortunate that the SLED agents who were there didn't say anything to Sandy. Maybe it wasn't the time, maybe they didn't know what to say but just a simple hello and we're doing everything we can to solve Stephen's murder would have gone a long way. Sandy is undoubtedly and rightfully frustrated with fled after so many empty promises. This June will mark three years since they've had the case. I asked her this week if she's heard any updates from SLED since Alex Murdaugh's legal shenanigans have been put to rest.

### **Sandy Smith** 17:16

Nothing. Eric messaged us this morning, where he wrote Chief Keel and he says no updates at this time. Now they got the resources because after Justice Toal finishes whatever she's doing, then they can get back on Stephen's case, which is frustrating.

### **Mandy Matney** 17:38

Adding to the frustration is the growing list of grifters who have inserted themselves into Stephens case, you've probably seen over the past two years, the glare of the Murdaugh case and for many the promise of being on television or being seen as relevant to the case in some way has brought out a number of people with questionable motives, some of whom have done more harm than good. Specifically, when it comes to Stephen's case. I say questionable because of how many times we've seen this situation go south with Stephen's case soon after the murders of Maggie and Paul Murdaugh's SLED announced that it was going to take over the investigation from the South Carolina Highway Patrol reportedly because of information they discovered during the Murdaugh murders investigation. Having SLED take the





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case was always the goal for Sandy and it was the goal for members of the South Carolina Highway Patrol who knew that something wasn't right there. Before the murders, no one would listen. So this shift seemed promising. We say this over and over. All Sandy once is answers. In the meantime, while she continues to fight for her son, she has gotten bullied in the most grotesque of ways by people online by people claiming that they want to help her by members of the media who think nothing of using her story as a weapon against her. I think it's important for you all to see how bad this has been.

### **Liz Farrell** 19:12

Here's a smattering of what we've seen happened to Sandy so far. First, a news program, callously ran photos of Stephen's body in the road and when Sandy and the Smith family called them out for not warning them that this would be in the program, people online turned it around on Sandy. One woman, a woman deeply involved in trolling us over stories related to Greg Parker told Sandy to basically get over it. How did those photos get out? At the time, national media and documentary filmmakers had descended on the Low Country with offers for local media to quote unquote consult on their projects. Local media were offered money not only to share their knowledge of the Murdaugh case, but for their assets for documents and other research and photos and videos they might have related to the case. The photos of Stephen were not made public at the time, but they had been leaked to one member of the media who we believed might have shared them with this national news program. You might wonder why we're not naming names here. The reason is because the Stephen Smith case has been such a powder keg. If we name names, we're just going to ultimately distract from the goal which is to get answers. If we name names it then becomes about the people and not the actions. We're not being coy here, we just want to keep everyone focused. So shortly after the murders of Maggie and Paul two private detectives reportedly



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connected to lawyers defending Parker's kitchen in the Mallory Beach lawsuit, went to Sandy pretending to be there to offer their help in finding Stephen's killer. When they left they took Stephen's iPad with the promise of searching for answers. Their main goal appears to have been to find dirt on Buster Murdaugh, who was a co-defendant in the Beach lawsuit at the time. It was heartless, cruel, and inhuman of them to get Sandy's hopes up to use her in such a thoughtless way and for what a right money. We've also seen a high profile lawyer in Charleston offer to represent Sandy for free, so long as she agreed to not speak publicly about Stephen's case, the absolute opposite of what an attorney should have been advising her to do at that time. She was so grateful for his help, she felt like she had to agree to his terms. The attorney assigned a private detective to the case and this private detective appeared to go into the job with an eye toward proving that the Murdaugh's had nothing to do with Stephen's death. At the time, I was not working in journalism, and this man reached out to me for help, it was immediately clear to me that he had an agenda. I've spoken about this in previous episodes about Stephen and I was disturbed because the case deserved an open mind. This private detective admitted to me that he lied to one of the people he questioned and that this person's reaction to that lie, he freaked out, was evidence that this person was responsible for Stephen's death. It was the hokiest thing I'd ever heard. Later, my suspicions about this PI were confirmed when Mandy spoke with someone close to the Murdaugh's, who had also spoken with his private detective. This source told Mandy that the private detective had done the same thing with her, she would try to tell him what she knew about the situation. And he blatantly told her that the Murdaugh's weren't involved to move on from the Murdaugh's. Incidentally, Sandy fired her attorney after he told a news reporter that he had suspects inside were unconnected to the Murdaughs. This, of course, has gotten twisted in an effort to make it look like Sandy wants the person who killed her son to be connected to the Murdaugh's.

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When really this was about respect, her attorney didn't pay her or her family the respect of telling them that he had spoken to the press, they had to find it out from the headlines. After Sandy fired her attorney, he refused to hand over her file at first, which was strange. In addition to that the private detective he hired continued to work on the case, despite the fact that Sandy was no longer a client that private detective has since shamelessly promoted himself on TV shows and in documentaries as someone who knows the truth about what happened to Stephen. Then there was the woman who offered to help raise money to buy Stephen a headstone, which was an incredibly nice thing to do. But soon after she came on the scene, it became clear that this was about her and not about Stephen or Sandy, it became clear that this was about what attention and credit she could get from the media. She began to involve herself in the investigation and she presented herself as a representative of the Smith family in a way that just didn't feel right. Because Sandy valued her help, we stayed out of it. However, when we didn't give this woman the public praise she wanted when we ignored her repeated pleas to appear on Murdaugh Mudders podcast, she joined the ranks of our most vicious trolls and seems to have dedicated herself to that cause. As such, despite claiming to care for Sandy and about the case, she has contributed to lies being told about Sandy and she has stoked vitriol against Sandy and she continues her campaign of harassment often coming very close to the line of defamation. After this came another woman, again out of nowhere, who also claimed to be raising money for Stephen, something we were unaware of until our friend Elena early from the Island News called us about a story she was working on. This woman had a history of fraud. And when she got found out when Elena started asking questions, she skipped town with the money she had supposedly raised. In addition to all that, Sandy has been targeted by members of the press and by other podcasters who behind the scenes have told her that she's been hijacked by us who claim that they're unable to help her

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because we won't let them near her as if we have any say in who Sandy speaks to. As if there's any world in which we wouldn't want every person in the media to write about Stephen Smith's case every day. Those same people have stood silently as online trolls slandered Sandy by falsely accusing her of stealing money meant for Stephen's case. And as they harassed Eric Bland over his representation of Sandy, they stood silently as people spread misinformation, claiming Sandy is out to get the Murdaugh's and not find answers about her son. I can't say it enough, this case has brought out the ugly side of people. And it blows our mind over and over again how Stephen continues to get lost in this push and pull. It has been betrayal after betrayal. And there's a certain amount of cynicism that sets in. What we just shared with you is only a slice of the nonsense that we've seen. It puts us on edge. And sadly, Sandy has become used to it. And that breaks our hearts.

### **Sandy Smith** 25:46

It's frustrating to me. Because when you interfere and you put different names and your theories and everything, then that's something that SLEDs got to look at. But you just wasted time because you don't know what you're talking about. You know, and everybody's like, I read all the reports. No, you haven't. I've seen the phone. That's what Steve said, No, you haven't. You seen a CD. That was not everything on Stephen's phone, that was only what they would allow me to get. And they make it worse. They want to help. They know everything, but they don't know nothing. I think they're using they're using my son story for their benefit, but then they're messing everything up because you're not putting real facts in there.

### **Mandy Matney** 26:34

That said, we want to again, make this clear. This case is not about the Murdaugh's. It is about Stephen Smith, and who did this to him. But again, the Murdaugh's are inextricably linked to the case. Because of





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what investigators were told in the days and months after Stephen's death. It doesn't matter how many times we set the record straight or how many times we explain that the Murdaugh name is all over the case file. It doesn't matter that we've published videos of police interviews showing that in the days after Maggie and Paul's death, SLED was not only asking Buster and his uncles about the Stephen Smith case, his uncle brought up the case to SLED. There is still a contingency of people out there holding on to this narrative that we are the ones who somehow connected Stephen's case to the Murdaugh family. Not only do they falsely claim that we and Sandy want this to be about the Murdaugh's, they take every question we ask about the case as a sign of the lie they want to tell about that. All of this is to say we're going to be asking a lot of questions in today's episode and moving forward about a predominant narrative that has emerged from the toxic minefield that this case has become online. This idea that SLED has developed two suspects and that those two suspects' names are Patrick Wilson and Sean Connolly. First, SLED has not identified two suspects in their investigation. We confirm that with our sources today. Instead, they have identified six people who they believe to have information about what happened to Stephen. Second, when we ask questions about the narrative that Patrick and Shawn are the potential suspects we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. We are calling out red flags and questioning whether something is a red herring. And we're doing that because it's everything we know so far, the most important of which is this. The Murdaugh family, as we keep saying, is inextricably linked to this case. They are powerful, they are connected and according to years of reporting, they have a long history of interfering with cases to steer law enforcement in a specific direction. They have a long and established history of believing themselves to be above the law. So we will say this again. For the record, there is no evidence in the case file that Buster Murdaugh had anything to do with Stephen's death. There are, however, direct references to the



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Murdaugh's being involved in the investigation. The names Patrick Wilson and Sean Connolly also came up in the case file. We don't have time and today's episode to go through the history of how those two names emerged in late 2015. This is going to get complicated. The Premium Members will get access to a diagram soon. But briefly, according to the case file, Randy Murdaugh urged a man to come forward after a story ran in the Hampton County Guardian that all but named the Murdaugh's as being involved in the case. That man's former stepson, now a former police officer, told law enforcement that his former stepfather told him that the son of the former stepfather's girlfriend, a kid named Patrick Wilson admitted to being in a truck with Sean Connolly, and that they killed Stephen by accident. You can see why that would be a red flag right? At the time, Patrick Wilson was a client of Cory Fleming and was facing attempted murder charges that got dropped after the so-called third party confession. And with that Stephen's case stalled. It went nowhere. According to a source who knows Alex very well, that kind of thing is his MO. To misdirect law enforcement toward innocent parties and watch the case go dead in there. We've definitely seen that happen in the murder case. Now, the private detective we told you about earlier, the one who continued to pursue the case after Sandy fired her attorney, his main theory was that it was going to be Patrick and Shawn. So again, it's a red flag, not because we want the suspects to be anyone else, but because it seems like people really want it to be Shawn and Patrick, and they're overlooking a number of facts, which we will get into.

### **Liz Farrell** 31:29

First, we're going to shift away from this for a second because in order to get where we're going, we have to talk about the results of the second autopsy and about a book we recently discovered that was written by Dr. Michelle Dupree, who is one of the consultants hired by Bland Richter to help with Stephen's estimation. That's right. Dr. Dupree



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was hired to help Sandy navigate the ins and outs of a second autopsy and turned around and wrote a book that includes the details from Stephen's case, and it was published when this case is still open. And she didn't just share details, she offered her opinions, including throwing out hints that don't actually make sense when you look at the evidence. According to the book, a portion of the proceeds from its sales will go directly to Sandy and this was something that she was not aware of until we told her. You should also know Dr. Dupree has made several television and documentary appearances about this case, it was and it remains difficult for us to know what to share and what not to share from the results of the second autopsy because this is an open investigation and we do not want to interfere with it in any way. So what we're going to do is, we're going to stick to the things that have already been said publicly by Dr. Dupree. Another thing to note, we're referring to her as Dr. Dupree because she graduated from medical school and she completed a medical residency but we were unable to find any medical license for her past 2007 when she was briefly licensed for training in Florida. Reporter Beth Braden did extensive work this week digging into Dr. Dupree's background. So huge hustle props to Beth for that. And let's just say we have a lot of questions, but we will save them for another day. Now, we first talked about the second autopsy on an episode of Murdaugh Murders podcast on April 5th of last year. And that episode we told you about how the findings were pretty much in line with the first autopsy which was done by Dr. Aaron Pressnell at the Medical University of South Carolina. In Dr. Dupree's interviews her early ones in particular, she was intent on crediting Dr. Pressnell for the report she had written on Stephen. From the reports and emails we've seen it was made clear that both Dr. Dupree and Dr. Daniel Schultz, who is the doctor who actually performed the second autopsy felt that Dr. Pressnell had been done dirty by the media. Ostensibly they meant us. Dr. Schultz even went so far as to say that he felt Dr. Pressnell was owed an apology. But here's the thing they're missing about the

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criticism that we've had for Dr. Pressnell. Her decision to declare on the report that Stephen had been killed by a vehicle because he was quote, found on the road, something that Dr. Dupree repeatedly refers to as an unfortunate statement from Dr. Pressnell was the reason Stephens' case was stuck with the South Carolina Highway Patrol. Stephen's manner of death should have been listed as undetermined from the very start. The reason a highway patrolman went to Dr. Pressnell to ask her to reconsider her findings was because the case belonged with SLED and that couldn't happen because of her, quote, unfortunate statement. That is where we have a problem. And I'm not sorry for saying this, but it's a red flag. It's a red flag that in a case where there have been so many whispers, and where the case file itself is laden with the name of a powerful family known for its influence over law enforcement, a case where the victim's body shows no typical signs of having been hit by a vehicle. There's a medical examiner with strong connections to the 14th circuit who doomed this case from the start with her ruling. Now, that's not to say we don't get what Dr. Dupree and Dr. Schultz mean to say they mean that Dr. Pressnell performed an excellent autopsy and we have never claimed that she didn't. Our issue has always been about her doubling down. her finding that Stephen had to have been hit by a car because of quote, historical information that she wouldn't share with the highway patrolman. And because he was quote found in the road. Okay, so Dr. Schultz of the autopsy doctor in Tampa, Florida performed the second autopsy like Dr. Pressnell, Dr. Schultz found that Stephen's body lacked the kind of injuries you'd expect to see in a pedestrian versus vehicle incident. Here's David with his key finding.

### **DAVID MOSES** 35:27

The first autopsy, the second autopsy and the death scene findings as I have reviewed are consistent with a blunt impact to the right aspect of the forehead by vehicular associated structure leading to scalp flap





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transmitted basal fractures as well as brain and brain stem injuries which resulted in immediate incapacitation and collapse it is my opinion that his found position was very close to where his feet were originally positioned shoes notably left on the overall picture is that of a localized impact to the head whereby Stephen Smith essentially toppled over his situation as a pedestrian was not the typically seen example of a hit and run pedestrian strike whereby the torso or extremities are usually impacted. Those scenarios result in displacement of the entire body often well away from the site of impact via bumper impact to legs throwing over the hood as in a car situation or a grill impact to torso or hips with forward throw or rolling over as in the case of a truck or SUV. It is in those situations where shoes are commonly lost. Here, there is no evidence of any blunt impact to the torso, the neck or the upper or lower extremities, but for the original autopsy identified shoulder dislocation.

**Mandy Matney** 36:59

In his report, Dr. Schultz notes that Stephen was alive and standing at least partially upright when he was hitting the head. Now, there's a lot more to Dr. Schultz's notes, including his opinions, but we cannot share that with you because it is information that is important to the investigation. It has been made public that the second autopsy team agrees that Stephen was indeed hit by a vehicle even though his injuries do not comport with what one would typically expect to see. For instance, His shoes were still loosely tied on his feet. His clothes were not torn. He had no fractures and he was not run over. So that's one question that now has an answer. They do not believe he was injured somewhere else or left in the road to die. However, that's still an opinion and Dr. Schultz's basis of that opinion could certainly be challenged. He simply believes that because there was no blood smearing or droplets around Stephen's body, it means he wasn't moved. However, a law enforcement source of ours who has handled



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hundreds of cases in his career said there was a small possibility that the pooling of blood around Stephen's body could have evidence of him being moved. Okay, back to the vehicle. It's been on the record for almost a year now that the second autopsy team believes Stephen was hit by a vehicle and that is what leads us back to Patrick Wilson and Sean Connolly.

### **Liz Farrell** 38:32

Let's talk about Dr. Dupree again real quick. So in September, she published her book titled "Money Mischief and Murder: The Downfall of the Murdaugh Dynasty...The Rest of the Story." It's essentially a 211-page book report, 99% of which is based on other people's reporting. Dr. Dupree was present at Stephen's estimation and his autopsy, she and Dr. Schultz were hired for the second autopsy by Bland Richter on the recommendation of a well known defense attorney. And as it turns out, a friend of Dick Harpootliann, what do defense attorneys like? Chaos, right? We're not saying that what happened here was chaos. But that recommendation, which we only learned about recently, is a red flag to us. And to be clear, we're not questioning the results of the second autopsy at this point. What we're irritated about is that someone who was hired to help Sandy who seemed to feel empathy for Sandy and who seemed to understand Sandy's plight turned around and appears to have used that position of proximity to the case to write a book while the investigation remains open. We totally understand the value of going on TV and speaking to the press about Stephen's case. So yes, please help keep this story alive. But given the history of betrayal that Sandy has experienced in this case, this is just another disappointment and given that SLED hasn't gotten anywhere with this case, because of Alex foot stomping over nonexistent jury tampering. It's scary to us that we have yet another example of an overzealous person who seems to have been quote, seduced by the siren call of fame. It has whiffs of Becky Hill, frankly to add insult to injury Dr. Dupree's book is filled with



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factual errors, some of which contribute to the false narrative that Sandy wants the Murdaugh's to be behind Stephen's death. Like others, Dr. Dupree conflates the idea of Sandy being told that there was Murdaugh involvement and passing that information on to law enforcement as being the same thing as her being held on to proving it's them. Here's David with a passage from Dr. Dupre's book:

### **DAVID MOSES** 40:23

Sandy Smith, and Todd Proctor, a former South Carolina Highway Patrol detective, who was part of a team that investigated Stephen's death believe the Murdaughs had some involvement, but to have no evidence no one in the family was charged or considered a formal suspect in the case. Despite her tenacity, few think Sandy will ever find out the truth about what happened to her son. As of this writing, nothing has publicly been stated as to what happened. However, stay tuned.

### **Liz Farrell** 40:59

Stay tuned. Now Mandy and I are both optimistic and believe that between SLEDs renewed efforts and the fact that we feel very confident that there are not only people who know what happened, there are people who know the people who know what happened and those people are going to be the ones to crack this case open. But still seeing that a member of the second autopsy team hired with money donated by other optimists who want to help Sandy write the words. Despite her tenacity. Few things Sandy will ever find out the truth about what happened to her son in a book she is selling for partly her own profit is really disheartening. Okay, back to Patrick Wilson, Sean Connolly and the second autopsy team's conclusion that Stephen was indeed hit by a vehicle. Here's David with another passage from Dr. Dupre's book.



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### DAVID MOSES 41:48

During the course of the investigation. Other names came up as well. It is reported that Buster Murdaugh's name was mentioned by several people over 30 times; it's unclear how rigorously this was investigated at the time. However, this author's sources say that at least one person witnessed two individuals identified as Patrick Wilson and Sean Connolly at the crime scene. The next morning, another witness saw the boys rinsing off the front of the blue truck they were driving. Oh, and did I mention that forensics found flecks of blue paint on Stephen's shirt?

### Liz Farrell 42:26

Ah, the blue paint flecks that were found on Stephen during the first investigation. Let's talk about those. In a July 29, 2015 letter to JD James of South Carolina Highway Patrol, Michael Moskal of SLED wrote that no automotive paint was found on Stephen's Nike short sleeve shirt, that no automotive paint was found on Stephen's Union Bay cargo shorts and that no automotive paint was found on Stephen's Airspeed footwear. However, several single layer metallic blue paint chips were found on his clothing that Moskal told James could have been from an industrial tool, a dumpster or a signpost. Moskal noted that Toyota did use this paint on its vehicles from 1982 to 1988. It should also be noted that the chain of custody was apparently broken on the clothing items due to the chaos of the investigation being bounced between jurisdictions on the day after Stephen's death. It's noted in the Highway Patrol's file that Stephens' clothes were left unattended for a period of time at the funeral home, which has always made us wonder if they were planted. Now, notwithstanding the fact that those paint chips could have been transferred to Stephen's clothing from the road. You heard me say no automotive paint was found three times right. But for some reason Dr. Dupree wants to link those paint chips to Patrick Wilson and Sean Connolly. Right? A woman of science who repeatedly





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talks about how science is guided by facts and findings puts it out there that Patrick and Shawn were seen washing a blue truck and oh, hey, blue paint was also found on Stephen without mentioning what the findings actually were. It's bizarre. On top of that, we've also heard that rumor about a truck being washed the next morning after Stephen's death in our rumor it happened in Fairfax, South Carolina. And guess what, Patrick and Shawn weren't there, but the person who was there got a brand new truck shortly after that, according to the rumor, which was passed on to the Smith family shortly after Stephens death and which Sandy passed on to law enforcement might be conflating that with Sandy's account of seeing Alex older brother Randy at the scene the next day, which Randy denies or she's conflating it with Nick Ginn story about Patrick and Shawn, Nick being the former stepson who's now a former police officer who told Highway Patrol about what his former stepfather said, Patrick Wilson confessed to him. It makes you wonder who doctored or praise sources are are they people with actual firsthand knowledge or are they people passing on what they heard happened from others

### **Mandy Matney** 44:59

Because here is what we know. Sean Connolly has been cooperating with SLED for some time now. He has not been asked to testify in front of the state grand jury. He denies that he had anything to do with Stephen's death. Additionally, there is photo evidence showing that Sean's truck at the time around Stephen Smith's death was not damaged. Also, accident reports show that Shawn had a crash in April 2015, in which he totaled his truck, and then again in early January 2016. So any photos of a crash truck belonging to Shawn Connelly, which I have seen floating around the internet, would have likely been from either of those crashes. Those who believed the Patrick Sean theory believe that Stephen was killed by a truck mirror because the vast majority of Stephen's injuries were on his head. We have also obtained



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pictures of the mirrors that were on Sean's truck at the time of Stephen's death, and they would have been destroyed if they hit anything. They were not. In addition to all of this, Sandy Smith has spoken to Sean herself.

### **Sandy Smith** 46:08

Yeah, I messaged him on Messenger. And I asked him if he had had anything to do with Stephen's death. And I said, I'm pretty sure you have children now. And you would be doing the same thing I'm doing if somebody's name come up in your child's death? And he said, No, ma'am, I did not have anything to do with your son's death. And I thank him for getting back to me. He responded right away.

### **Mandy Matney** 46:32

As for Patrick Wilson, if he had anything to do with Stephen's death, or if he knows what happened, or if he would like to clear his name, he should contact SLED as soon as possible.

### **Sandy Smith** 46:46

And I don't really know Patrick Wilson. I know I went in the store in Hampton one time and his grandmother was working. And she said, I just want to let you know my grandson did anything to do with your sight. And I said, my family's never said anything. And I said you just let him know that it's not my family that put his name out there.

### **Mandy Matney** 47:07

Again, Sandy just wants answers. And thus far, all she has gotten is hot nonsense from just about every person who has said that they've wanted to help her. And speaking of hot nonsense, a lawsuit was filed this week in relation to the media superstorm surrounding Stephen's case. Mark Tinsley, who's the Beach family attorney is suing our former employer at FITS News for defamation for publishing content multiple



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times indicating that Hampton county man who was not once mentioned in the 2015 investigation as a person of interest. They did this even after the man's mother pointed out the major factual error to the editor. We will talk about this lawsuit more on an episode of Cup of Justice, if y'all want to hear about it. We are also fine not talking about it. It's just another example of the chaos mucking up Stephen's case in the chaos that is making it so hard for Sandy to get answers. At a time when she needs people to step up. She is having to step back because of the constant disappointment.

### **Sandy Smith** 48:19

Oh, yeah, I'm done with trust. And no, you Liz and David that's about it. I'm not dealing with anybody else when it comes to Stephen's case.

### **Mandy Matney** 48:32

Right now, Sandy's faith lies in SLED, because Alex Murdaugh's attempts to get a new trial diverted their attention from the case. And we do understand that now we all need to make up for lost time.

### **Sandy Smith** 48:49

It's going to pay for SLED to do their job and stop putting him on a shelf. Because the more the years go by, you know, it's like, just like the lady from Denmark witnesses die, you know, so her son's case was thrown out, you know, and it's, it's ridiculous that they wait this long. It's been almost nine years. And I know nothing.

### **Mandy Matney** 49:11

To the people out there who know the people who know what happened, the world is so much bigger than Hampton County. No mother should have to live with this kind of pain and protecting a person who has done harm to others is not worth the price of your soul.



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### **Sandy Smith** 49:31

I want people to know I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to be right here. And I'll fight for my son until my last breath. Please call SLED, please call the tip line. You don't have to reveal who you are. You can do it anonymously.

### **Mandy Matney** 49:52

Dr. Dupree might think that few people believe that Sandy will get answers on what happened to her son but We think it's the opposite. We think Sandy has more people on her side than that. And more people on her side that evidence by those who continue to betray her using our son's case to feed their own egos. Again, to the people who know something, and to the people protecting those people, your cruelty is known, it is whispered about in it's going to be whispered about all the way to Colombia. On the other side of the hardest thing you will do on the other side of talking to SLED is a mother's hope.

### **Sandy Smith** 50:36

Oh my gosh. It made me feel like I needed a block party or something. After waiting all these years, you know when I, if I could just get one to ease my heart a little bit. I don't believe in closure, because this will never be closed because he's not coming back. I believe that knowing something would bring peace to my heart and to my mind, because that's all we got. I want justice for my son. And I want peace. I don't have that yet. I want it.

### **Mandy Matney** 51:13

And please, if there is anything about the Stephen Smith case that you know personally and want us to know, please submit those tips to [answersforstephen.com](https://answersforstephen.com) which is the contact form approved by Sandy that we hope people close to the situation we'll use to contact us with what they know. Stay tuned, stay pesky, and stay in the sunlight. True





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Sunlight is a Luna Shark production created by me, Mandy Matney and co-hosted by journalist Liz Farrell. Learn more about our mission and membership at [lunasharkmedia.com](https://lunasharkmedia.com). Interruptions provided by Luna and Joe Pesky.

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