

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

The justice system can be intimidating, but it doesn't have to be.

Join us to hold public agencies accountable because we all want to drink from the same cup of justice, and it starts with learning about our legal system.

With tales from the newsroom and the courtroom, Liz Farrell, Eric Bland and I invite you to gain knowledge, insight, and tools to hold public agencies and officials accountable.

If you liked our Cup of Justice bonus episodes, you will love Cup of Justice shows on the new feed.

Together, our hosts create the perfect trifecta of legal experience, journalistic integrity, and a fire lit to expose the truth wherever it leads.

Search for Cup of Justice wherever you get your podcast, or visit cupofjusticepod.com.

I don't know if the Beach family or any of the survivors of the horrific 2019 boat crash could ever possibly be made whole.

But I believe that the \$15 million settlement reached this week by Mark Tensley and other attorneys was a massive step toward accountability, and that is a big deal.

My name is Mandy Matney.

This is True Sunlight, a podcast exposing crime and corruption previously known as the Murdoch Murders podcast.

True Sunlight is written with journalist Liz Farrell and produced by Luna Shark.

Well, we are back after another whirlwind of a week.

I wanted to start off by sharing some really good news.

The defamation lawsuit filed against me has been dismissed by Judge Jocelyn Newman, and that, also, is a big deal.

I feel like a huge weight has been lifted from me, and now that this nightmare is over, I'm ready to take on more battles and keep fighting the good fight.

I've learned a lot from this lawsuit about the justice system and how unfair it all can be, and I'm ready to work really hard to change that.

No one should ever be able to use the justice system to terrorize truth-tellers.

As I mentioned on Cup of Justice this week, I've been having a hard time with a lot of different things going on in my life in the past few months, especially online harassment.

And I've been taking more time to myself and more time away from the cruel virtual world of my work.

I'll say this again, there is no shame in taking time off, which I did a lot of in the last week.

David and I visited our friends in Colorado and I got to see Taylor Swift and Denver, and it's crazy what just a few days away from Twitter and the ugliness of the internet can really do for a person.

So while I was away, Liz was able to carry a majority of the load for this episode and I just want to give her some major props and say thank you for always being up when I'm down and always being there to help carry the enormous weight of the Murdoch story dating back to 2019.

Which brings me to the next good news that we got in this last week, the boat crash settlement. This settlement means a lot of things, starting with the fact that the highly anticipated beach case civil trial will not take place in August.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

After the trial of Ellick Murdoch, it was hard to imagine that there would be another dramatic character driven and quotable case like that ever to be televised again.

But as perverse as it may sound, there was a reasonable assumption that the Mallory Beach boat crash case could come close.

Not only because it features some of the same players, but because this has been a monster of a case.

It is a case that has come to symbolize the effects of profiting from the sale of alcohol to minors.

It is highlighted, the bottomless lows that the rich and politically connected will go to for self-preservation.

It has exposed the inner workings of a powerful family, a powerful law firm, and a powerful gas station owner.

It has led to the discovery of millions of dollars in stolen client funds.

It has also given us an inside look into South Carolina's very broken legal system and system of justice.

It has put law enforcement agencies, including the state's Department of Natural Resources and State Highway Patrol in the hot seat.

It has created all sorts of headaches for other attorneys who have been forced to preemptively defend themselves with clients to assure them that they, quote, aren't like Alex.

Over the past few years, the case has been surprisingly and wildly adversarial and included seemingly unprecedented defense tactics that often cross the line.

The past few months have been even more intense because the widely anticipated civil trial against Ellick Murdoch and regional gas station chain Parker's Kitchen was set to begin August 14th in Hampton County, South Carolina.

But then things changed and changed fast.

This past Friday, the Beach family scored yet another win in pre-trial decisions with Judge Daniel Hall once again denying Parker's Kitchen's second motion to move their case out of Hampton County and their second motion to sever themselves from the case, meaning they wanted their own trial without Ellick being a co-defendant.

Two days later, the Beach family had settled with Parker's Kitchen for \$15 million and they thought with Ellick Murdoch for whatever portion of his assets a judge decides they are due.

According to the Beach family's attorney, the agreement with Ellick came after the Beaches agreed to waive a payout from Ellick's \$500,000 boat insurance policy in exchange for Ellick not gumming up the works with the Parker settlement.

Then on Monday, the attorney for Ellick's boat insurance company ostensibly after consulting with Ellick himself or perhaps with Ellick's other two attorneys Dick Harputlian and Jim Griffin apparently said, wait a minute, you misunderstood me because, of course, everything Ellick Murdoch does seems to defy logic.

The boat crash that killed 19-year-old Mallory Beach in 2019 turned out to be the beginning of the end for the Murdoch family's legacy or, I should say, the beginning of the end of the legacy that the family wanted to have.

The story they told themselves and the story that they trained others to tell about them

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

over the years.

Their real legacy, of course, the one felt deeply by those who had no choice but to exist among their rubble of deceit and to quietly accept their subservient role in good old boy society, had already been tainted by four generations of unchecked power.

But no one knew then just how much this family had been rotting from the inside.

No one knew that February 24th, 2019, the day a member of their fifth generation would drunkenly plow his father's boat into a Buford County bridge with five friends on board would end up being a day that would eventually lead to double murder.

The day of the boat crash, what we call the ground zero of the Murdoch murders, represented a cultural fork in the road for residents of the low country.

The Beach family and the boat crash survivors, as well as some members of law enforcement and the press, could have taken the road to the right of the fork, the road that the Murdochs had long ago paved for moments like this.

On this road, the Murdochs get to be oblivious to the damage that's been caused.

The hardest and most confronting parts of consequence fade away.

Accountability gets deleted from the docket.

Their downplayed version of events gets recorded into the history books as fact.

On this road, they get to passively write the script, the playbook, for how those hurt by them will react, which is to say, like them, as if nothing happened at all.

The script is generally this.

Someone gets assigned the blame temporarily, and without conclusion, everyone just moves on.

It's an arrogance that has worked for them for all of time, to the point that some could successfully argue that the younger members of the family just don't know any better.

Maybe now they have a chance to learn, because this time was different for all of them.

The beach family and the boat crash survivors, as well as some members of law enforcement and the press, decided to take the other fork in the road, the unpaved portion of road.

Needless to say, that road has been a challenging one filled with unexpected darkness, new and sometimes worse villains, bureaucratic lethargy, heads in the sand, and more uncharted territory than can be contained on a two-dimensional map.

But this group, grounded by their faith, their belief that justice should not be for sale, and their desire for change, so that no one else will be hurt by such recklessness in the future, carried on for four difficult years, and at the very front of this caravan for justice was one man leading the way, Mark Tinsley.

You may know him by the nickname Zero Dark Tinsley, as the internet calls him, or Tinsley the Tiger, as Judge Clifton Newman referred to him, or if you're Alec Murdoch, you might know him as Beau.

Here's Mark on February 6, 2023, when the world first got to meet him, testifying in an aimed camera hearing about a confrontation he had had with Alec about a year or so before the murders.

Yeah, I think, I'm not 100% certain that it was a fundraiser either for Mr. Harputlian, or it was a fundraiser for Lindsey Graham.

As you come in to the hotel, there's a gathering area.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

It's in the evening before everyone goes to dinner, or it's immediately after.

I'm not 100% certain.

But the room's full of lawyers, and Alec sees me, and he comes across, and he gets up close in my face and says, hey, Beau, what's this I'm hearing about what you're saying?

I thought we were friends, and I replied, Alec, we are friends.

If you don't think I can burn your house down, and that I'm not doing everything, and I'm not going to do everything you're wrong, you need to settle this case.

Okay.

And so what was the point of that conversation?

What was, if you can explain to the court what y'all were talking about, what is Alec upset to as you understood it?

That he was going to have to pay was what he was hearing.

That's what the point of it was, we're friends, I took it as he tried to intimidate me, he didn't intimidate me, and sort of bully me into backing off.

Mark's candor and confidence on the witness stand and his unforgettable presentation of receipts showed the world the force of nature that existed behind the scenes in Alec's world.

Alec is just one part of the boat crash case.

He is just one side of a gold coin.

He is heads.

Tails is billionaire wannabe Greg Parker, owner of Parker's kitchen.

No matter how that coin flipped, Mark had his work cut out for him.

Until now, the very complex story of the boat crash case has only been told in bits and pieces, and because of the case's many tentacles and technicalities, it can get confusing.

Today, we have Mark Tinsley himself to help us put it all together.

Let's start at the beginning.

You know, I remember getting a call that there had been a boat crash and Paul Murtic was involved.

It was a girl that was missing.

I remember it was Sunday.

I remember, I don't remember what the weather was like here, but for whatever reason I was in the house.

And in the moment when I heard that there had been a boat crash, now it was the same sort of immediate reaction that when my mother called me and told me that a plane had hit the World Trade Tower, I just thought it was a single-engine plane, you know, just some person had flown into the World Trade Tower and not that it was, in fact, what it turned out to be.

And this is a lot like that.

Mark took the case immediately after the crash.

He thought it would be a simple one because it seemed so clear-cut.

Yeah, you know, I mean, you come into something thinking one thing, you come out of it thinking something completely different.

And, you know, one of the things that Parkers like to do and Parkers' shoals like to do is just talk about how early on I said, look, this case will be resolved.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

They're just investigating people.

I really thought the case would be resolved all the way around.

I never imagined that there would be the personalities in this that over four years later we'd still be fighting about it.

Now we should mention Mark is an attorney at Gooding & Gooding, a small firm in rural Allendale County, which is one of the five counties that make up the 14th Circuit in South Carolina, meaning he was a lawyer deep in the heart of Murdoch Country.

When we saw that he had taken the case, we weren't sure what to make of him.

We immediately wondered whether he was there to actually fight for the beaches or if he was there to protect the Murdoch family's interests while having the appearance of fighting for the beaches.

For one, he knew Alec.

I thought I knew Alec Murdoch.

I mean, I knew the people involved.

I didn't know the people necessarily, or I didn't know all the people.

I didn't know any of the kids involved in the blood crash, other than Paul.

But yeah, it's a small area and you know lots of people and I thought I knew Alec was and I thought I knew that Alec had to wear with all to realize just how serious it was and take it seriously and not try to Alec Murdoch it.

But pretty quickly, it was apparent that he was trying to do that.

As you know by now, from the second law enforcement arrived on the scene, an intentional muddying of the water seemed to ensue.

That royal police department allegedly forgot to turn on their body cameras.

A Buford County Sheriff's Office deputy filled out his report with his own opinion about how the crash might have occurred and he introduced the false narrative that no one would say who was driving.

Paris Island's military police recorded incriminating statements against Paul that were made when a DNR officer was present, yet those statements weren't included in DNR's own reports.

Even worse, a DNR officer was ordered to administer a field sobriety test to both Paul Murdoch and passenger Connor Cook, the person the Murdochs immediately blamed for the crash.

But DNR, whose officers had close connections with the Murdoch family, only gave that test to Connor.

I knew about the things that were happening.

I knew about the DNR connections and the law enforcement connections and I knew the things that the beaches and other people may have been telling me that had been done.

I was assured early on by General Counsel for DNR that changes had been made after the first day.

You know, little did I know what all had happened in the first day.

But you know, from then on, from where I sat, watching, overseeing, making sure the parts that I could see, you know, I told law enforcement where the alcohol would come from.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

They told me where the alcohol would come from.

So we secured the video.

I mean, you know, there was a concerted effort of which I was a part of and I was overseeing it.

I didn't know how anything then toward could be happening.

I didn't know what had happened before.

I got involved.

So no, for a long time, no, I didn't.

It wasn't until I get the copy of the file that I realized what had happened.

And when I said the file, I'm talking about the prosecution file materials from the criminal case.

Mark was seeing the corruption at hand and knew that the Murdochs considered him to be a friendly attorney in the case and that others were starting to think that same thing about him.

He wasn't mildly.

He wasn't going to stand for that.

The case is different for a lot of reasons.

I mean, the first probably reason was the one that you pointed to and you were suspicious of in the beginning.

You know, I didn't appreciate that specter when I agreed to get involved that there would be a contingent, a group that would think, oh, he's in the area.

He's in the network.

He's in the good old boys group.

Remember, whatever click it is, and somehow this is a friendly lawsuit.

I didn't appreciate that and I didn't appreciate the significant impact that that would have in the moments when I agreed to do this.

So I felt compelled.

Not that I would.

I mean, you've looked at a lot of the cases I've tried and been involved in.

I don't really pull punches.

I mean, I have a lot of cases, but your case, the moment that I'm working on it is the only one I care about, whether it's a little fender bender with no damage or it's as significant as you lost your daughter.

But in addition to that, I mean, I have a daughter about and she's a little younger than Mallory.

So it's easy to put yourself in that position and then the beach family themselves is just the most wonderful people.

They really are.

And as you spend this much time with someone, you really feel like you're a part of their family.

They're a part of your family.

And that's the way they've treated me and received me and prayed for me when I had cancer and prayed for me when I get attacked and prayed for me, you know, all the way along.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

And I've said it many times, I don't feel for them the way I do because of what they've been through.

I feel for them the way I do because of who they are in spite of what they've been through. They're just fantastic people.

Speaking of the beaches, we asked Mark how they feel now that the case is settled. You know, before Sunday, they've always had this determination that they had a sense of what it was going to be like, you know, in terms of the trial and the victim blaming and all of the things that were going to come from that.

And then when you have to relive it, they had an idea what the trial was going to be like.

In the moments when they realize they're not going to have to do that, there's a sense of relief.

But I mean, there were a lot of things that went into settle in the case, even on Friday when we had our hearing in the courthouse in Hampton, the sheriff came up after the hearing and was talking to me and told me he said, the chairman can't afford a trial. You know, I had concerns about Ellick having a platform to spend whatever narrative or lie he wants to spend now and having a break or providing or allowing this video deposition to be taken and how it may be used and profited from.

So there were those factors.

The video deposition would have taken place this week had the case not settled.

And it was a point of contention for Mark.

The deposition was organized by Parker's attorneys, but Mark felt that the Murdoch camp, which is behind an upcoming docuseries from Fox Nation, might be planning to use Alex Dubious testimony from prison as well as a potential appearance in court for the trial itself as vehicles to make more money for themselves and further spread Alex's unreliable narrative. And it was going to be deposed on all occasions and was going to be idiot and Parker's lawyers were sent to do it today in fact, just Tuesday.

And Alex's lawyer had moved for protective order to make sure that no one could use that and if the lawyers could use that release it to them, you to give it to Netflix or anyone else.

And so that video would would have been video of him in jail saying who knows what.

So it was it was important.

I mean, you know, there was a press release just last week about Fox Nation's program that was coming out and their exclusive nature of access to Alex in the jail.

And so it was just a concern how it plays out.

I don't know.

But I didn't want to create some value for someone where they shouldn't be receiving some benefit.

For a long time, the quote unquote boat crash case referred to the wrongful death complaint filed by Mallory's mother, Renee Beach, in 2019.

In December, 2020, a different kind of case emerged for Mark.

So the boat crash case, obviously, is related to the boat crash, the sale of alcohol that occurred and then and then the boat crash and the injuries as a result of that.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

And then out of that case, spawned this conspiracy case where it's alleged that the people involved or some of the people involved in the boat crash case did things intentionally just to victimize each family, go after, harass, not the least of which included the release of photos of Mallory's body when it was recovered eight days after crash.

So the first time I filed suit, in the boat crash case, I filed suit in Beaufort County.

I sued Luther's, I think.

I sued the people who owned the home where the oyster roast was.

I sued the Merdick Trust that owned the River House where the boat was launched.

I sued Randolph Merdick, who would have been the trustee, one of the trustees of the trust that had allowed the usage of the house and then pretty quickly thereafter, I dismissed that case and then I refilled in Hampton, also suing Ellicott Buster.

And so there's first of the first parties in the lawsuit,

Luther settled, the oyster roast people settled, Randolph Merdick settled, the trust settled, and which left parkers, Ellicott and Buster.

One person not included among the defendants at the time was Paul Murdoch.

There were a few reasons for that.

For one, Paul, along with his mother Maggie, was Mark's ace in the hole.

He knew Ellicott did not want this crash attached to Paul's name.

Paul was charged with three felony counts of boating under the influence in April 2019, but at the time of his death, the charges still had not been adjudicated.

The Murdoch's plan seemed to be to wait out the press and the public and law enforcement on this to delay the criminal case as long as they could.

And as far as the civil case, Ellicott had one way out that would not involve a settlement.

You might remember this stunning moment from Mark's testimony in the Murdoch trial.

But if I think that Ellicott has fixed the jury, that he's done anything to affect the outcome of the trial, that I'm going to sue Paul and Maggie the next day in Buford.

It was just another average day in South Carolina,

a seasoned attorney taking the stand and talking openly about how jury is getting fixed in Hampton County could be a possibility.

Something that everyone seems to know exists, but won't put on the record, and something that no one, including the bar, the South Carolina Supreme Court, and insurance companies, seemed to want to do anything about.

So there was that reason for not immediately including Paul in the suit.

But also Mark and the Beaches considered Paul to be a victim in this as well.

Like Mallory, like the other boat crash survivors, Paul was, in their view, harmed by Ellicott's permissive parenting, meaning Ellicott's facilitating of Paul's underage drinking and his covering up of the problems that emerged from that drinking.

They also believed Paul was harmed by Parker's kitchen, meaning he was sold alcohol that day because of a known and preventable issue, which is Parker's alleged lack of training and the cashier's alleged failure to adhere to their own policies on alcohol sales.

I remember getting a call from David Leslie, who's over alcohol enforcement in SLED when we were arranging for Morgan to meet with one of the SLED agents.

And at the time, he said, you know, from my perspective, I view all of the kids as victims.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

And I know that people out there, I know they're 19 or they're 18, and they have to have responsibility. You might not like it, but the law in this state is, is it illegal? Because people under the age of 21 do not appreciate the bankers. And, you know, I mean, I have a bull mastic, you know, this and it kills small animals. And if I leave it along with a small animal, it will kill the small animal. Is it, is it the master's fault? Is it going to do what, what's in its nature? Or is it my fault? I think it's my fault. But there's a little bit of that. But, you know, what the Beach family wanted was they wanted to affect some change. And if you think that blaming the drunk driver, blaming the person who gets behind the wheel is somehow going to scare someone in to doing the right thing, you are wrong. No drunk driver's ever gotten behind a wheel and thought, tonight's the night I'm going to, I'm going to cross the same line and hit somebody. The people who enable the behavior is the only place in statistics. Yeah, I mean, Sled's got a program called PrEP program, the Palmetto Retailers Education Program. And the very first introductory paragraph in the participant manual explains that. I mean, prevention is the way. Not, not blaming the kids. I'm blaming the drugs. I mean, that may have its place. But what the way you're going to stop it is you're going to stop it by the people who allow it to happen, whether it's from indifference or whether it's a part of a commercial enterprise. So technically, they're in the, in the book crash case, there were two claims. There was the claim to the sale. It's illegal in this state to sell alcohol to someone under the age of 21. Period. And so when you sell alcohol illegally, you violate a statute. And there's, in the civil realm, that violation could serve as what they call negligence per se. And, and you're presumed to have acted negligently by the violation of that statute. They still have to prove that the alcohol that was sold contributed to causing whatever the damages are. But, but that's the long and the short of the legal side of that. And then the Alec Burnock side was the negligent and trustee claim. And that's a claim that you have a responsibility when you know that somebody has propensity to drink too much, get drunk, and you entrust them with a vehicle. And you can be liable for that under a negligent entrustment theory. And it's not just negligent parenting or bad parenting. Although a lot of people would say that probably is bad parenting, if not child abuse. But those were the gist of the civil claims. For the past four years, and particularly since the murders of Maggie and Paul, there has been a steady group of critics online, some possibly paid for, others merely expressing their own opinions, who point out that the Boat Crush victims, including Mallory, deserve the real blame for their own injuries and her own death. Here's Mark's take on that. I was asked that question, I mean, early on, talking about Mallory. And to different degrees, all those kids, assuming that were the law, assuming that was a consideration that they had somehow contributed to causing their own injuries, this death, they've all paid their share. Mallory paid the ultimate price. But the other people who contributed to causing hadn't paid anything. So, you know, legally, I don't really think it's a consideration. If you want the world to be safer, you'll hold the people who enable this bad conduct, this foreseeable bad conduct. I mean, we know that when you allow underage kids to drink, bad things are going to happen. Nearly two people a week die in the state of South Carolina alone from underage drinking. 11% of all alcohol consumed in the United States is consumed by underage drinkers. How on earth does that happen? Well, when the Supreme Court addressed the issue of underage

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

drinking and claims, whether it be a third party claim, someone injured or killed by an underage drinker or what they call a first party claim, you are in fact the underage drinker, or you're in the group of the underage drinker, then the law didn't go, the statutory law didn't go far enough. And so, the Supreme Court decided it's a matter of public policy that they could recover. That they are not held to the same standard as an adult as it relates to whether or not they have a claim. You know, I think maybe a good example is dogs. It used to be, at some point in time, there was this idea that a dog got one free bite. The owner wasn't responsible for the dog bite until you knew that the dog would bite somebody and maybe it bit someone. We changed that. We decided that was not acceptable because a child gets bitten by a dog.

It could be a bad thing. And at the time when the statute got enacted and we changed the law, no dog gets a free bite now. And the idea is to incentivize people to put their dogs up. You don't allow your dog to be around a young child because we don't want anything. We don't want to take the chance that something bad is going to happen. And I think that's exactly what our Supreme Court rightly did with underage drinking. We're going to incentivize you to do the right thing. And if you don't, you're going to be held to account for it. You cannot like it, but you shouldn't sell alcohol to minors. We'll be right back. Thank you for supporting our mission to expose the truth wherever it leads by listening to Luna Shark podcast, Cup of Justice in True Sunlight. I get messages all the time from people asking how they can help us with our mission. And now there is a great way to do that. If you want to go the extra step, we invite you to learn more about Luna Shark Plus for ad-free listening on Apple podcast or even better. Join Luna Shark Premium, a membership community for all Luna Shark content powered by Supercast. Join Luna Shark Premium at [lunasharkmedia.com slash membership](https://lunasharkmedia.com/membership). And I am so excited for the next bit. Are you

ready for it? Our higher soak up the sun members will soon get access to playlists, audio and videos that match chapters in my new book, *Blood on Their Hands*, which releases November 14th. Visit [lunasharkmedia.com slash membership](https://lunasharkmedia.com/membership) to learn the best way you can stay tuned, stay pesky, and stay

in the sunlight. So a question we've been asking since the beginning and that we wonder if Ellick Murdock and Greg Parker ever asked themselves is why didn't they settle from the beginning? Just think about it. Think about how much could have been avoided had they done that. We asked Mark the same question. Why didn't Ellick settle?

Why don't you tell me the answer? Because I don't know the answer. I mean, you know, if you were a criminal mastermind who'd been stealing for over a decade and you had three and a half million dollars that you'd just stolen from the Satterfields in your pocket in May, you would think of a rational criminal would say, I'll pay for it with stolen money. He had to have thought he was going to get away with it. He had to have thought that for at some period of time

that I wasn't going to go after him. And he in fact called that which was the whole guy in my face and said, hey, what's this? I've been hearing comment. And why didn't Parker settle?

I think the same reason. I don't know. You know, it's mind boggling. It defies logic.

It's nonsensical. Maybe he wanted to use this case to try to make a statement.

How unfair he thinks the law is when you sell alcohol to a minor who then calls a serious

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

injury or death. You know, the idea that joint and several is somehow some draconian law that makes it unfair and is going to drive all the convenience stores out of business where they can't sell beer and wine is really ridiculous. The law has been this way forever. And in 2005, when the legislature changed joint and several, the legislature decided that it was not in the best interests of the people of the state of South Carolina or really anybody to allow someone who causes harm as a result of a sale of alcohol or the intoxication of drugs or alcohol to not be held jointly and severally. And so it's only in those instances where they've made an illegal sale to a minor that joint and several does not apply. I don't understand how anybody could think that that's not fair or right. Another thing to note, this was not Parker's first rodeo when it came to this. There's been a case in 2016, two people died, a drunk driver and then a young man had also died in the crash and there was a lawsuit filed in Buford County and David Savage was involved in representing the plaintiffs and had deposed some Parker's employees. And the testimony in my case was that David had offered Parker's general counsel to provide him with some resources because obviously the training program seemed to be ineffective based on the testimony. The testimony was essentially, they weren't worried about it. And so that would have been in, I believe that was in 2017 when that conversation occurred and then 2018, the cashier in my case goes through that same training program. It appeared in 2019, just a month and a half after or about a month after the cashier has moved from the kitchen to the front, they sell alcohol to Paul and Miley Altman. And the Miley Altman ID was a Georgia ID, but it didn't have a hologram and they didn't scan that ID. So that purchase happens right before Paul's Parker's wouldn't produce the video for a long time. Ultimately, we got it after filing the motion to get it. But I told Parker's, we sometimes lawyers send preservation letters in a letter immediately after the boat crashed that one or more underage patrons had purchased alcohol in the store and saved video footage. So the footage had been saved, but they didn't want to produce it and they didn't produce it because it showed the cashier didn't scan that ID. And I'm told that it wasn't scanned because it was a concern that the scanner would reject IDs from Georgia. That makes a lot of sense, right? The thing that's always struck us as weird about this case is how Parker's kitchen supporters and critics of the beach case in general could not seem to wrap their heads around why Parker's wasn't considered the victim here. They depicted Mark and the beaches as simply being greedy people who were suing Parker's kitchen for the sole reason that there were deep pockets there. For its part, Parker's has maintained that it had been tricked by Paul Murdoch, that the sale was lawful because they were not cited by slide for it. And that Paul's ID, meaning Buster's legitimate driver's license that Paul was using as ID that day, cleared the scanner. But the bottom line is this, the law puts the responsibility on the sellers of alcohol to prevent the sale of alcohol to minors. And there are plenty of ways for businesses like Parker's to meet that responsibility. She may suggest keeping a log of alcohol related incidents. And that's not just something that actually contains the alcohol. That means that someone come in and try to buy alcohol with a safe ID. They try to use a borrowed ID because underage kids can only buy alcohol with either a fake ID or a part ID. There's really no other way unless they don't get carted at all. Well, Parker's doesn't keep a log. And the cashiers that were deposed in the

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

fake crash case, none of them had ever seen a fake ID. None of them had ever seen a borrowed ID. None of them had ever turned away a sale because someone had tried to use a fake ID. Now statistically, that can't happen. It's just the only way it happens is they've been told they could rely exclusively on that point of sale scanner, which really just checks the birthday. And we filed an affidavit from a young lady who had for years purchased alcohol with either her stepmother's or her aunt's ID. I think that's what the affidavit says. But they weren't looking. The standard is not just the picture bear no resemblance to the person in front of me. And if the picture bears no resemblance, then we might do something further. That can't be the standard. Because even if you were going to go and get a fake ID from somebody, if you're underage, you wouldn't likely go and get one from somebody that didn't look anything like you. And that's the way the trainers expressed their concerns with identifying information. Every license in the country has height and weight on it. Lots of stores have a measure and stick out a door when you come in. The parkers doesn't. This door right down the block from Parkers 55 where the salesman does. The parkers doesn't use that. The cashiers didn't know to look, even though the written policies said that even if the ID resembles the person standing before you, make sure you check height and weight. They didn't know that. The other confusing factor here was that Parkers had three insurance policies totaling \$21 million in coverage that would have covered them in this case and in fact ended up covering them in this case. They had plenty of coverage because we were willing to settle within their coverage. Ultimately, Parkers Kitchen settled with the Beach family for \$15 million. According to Connor Cook's attorney, Connor settled with Parkers for \$1 million. The amounts of Miley Altman's Morgan Dowdy's and Anthony Cook's settlements have not been disclosed. In the lead up to the settlement, Parkers fought hard. It employed alleged journalists, private detectives, public relations perms, and social media knife fighters. At one point, it replaced its legal team with a whole new team, one that often seemed behind in their homework. Parkers had argued that Mark should be removed from the case because of his assertions in that second case. They argued that he only filed the second case to get insight for the first case. They argued they wouldn't get a fair trial in Hampton County and they argued that being tried in the same courtroom as Ellick Murdock would unfairly prejudice the jury against Parkers Kitchen, that they should be severed from the case and there should be two trials, as if a jury would confuse a gas station with a convicted murderer. We asked Mark why Parkers made that about face. You know, sometimes when I represent people, I tell them insurance companies, defendants, a lot of times it's sort of like a person who thinks that their power bill may be due on the first, but they got 10 extra days and they don't pay until the tenth day and then they might mail it on the level from the 12th. And that's sort of the way it is. And so most cases resolve, most cases settle, but oftentimes they don't settle until they have to. And so when you're coming down the home stretch, there are a lot of things that people may have thought were going to happen. We'll get densely kicked off, we'll get the case moved, we'll do this, we'll do that. And as those contingencies sort of fall away, and the certainty of what you're left with against the Fed end, it often stimulates discussions. We were very clear about what we wanted. I mean, we insisted there was no confidentiality. We insisted that it was

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

going to be a number that objectively represents some accountability. I mean, I wasn't under any illusion that Craig Parker himself was going to come in and suddenly admit any responsibility, same as I wasn't under any illusion that Alec is going to suddenly start telling the truth. So, you know, within the ability, that's what we were looking for. I mean, the Beech family actually gave up claims against the boat insurance that had been offered to get the case settled. It wasn't about the money. It was about the money to the extent that the people on the other side made it about the money and tried to make it seem like this was the money grab. But, you know, people will only pay \$15 million unless they think that the case is going to be a whole lot worse if you go to a jury. Why wouldn't we just go to a jury? Why not? If they're unfairly tethered to Alec Murdoch, and he's a convicted murderer, and all of these things, and we've got the upper hand, if that's all it's about, why not just go and try the case and get the big verdict and get all the money? It wasn't about that. It was about responsibility. It was about doing the right thing. And I think we've demonstrated that throughout. I mean, Buster Murdoch is a good example. After Paul and Maggie were killed, the Beech family, he's important to them. You know, let's use Buster Murdoch, for example. I mean, Paul had Buster's ID, and the testimony was such that we felt like we had a strong claim against Buster. But at the same time, they felt like Buster was a victim. And whatever he had done, he had suffered enough. And so we made sure that we were able to reach a deal that got Buster

out of the case, got some of Maggie's estate money to Buster, and it got Buster out of it, out of the circus. And we're proud about that. I mean, you know, that was a good thing. You might not like it. You might not understand it. But at the end of the day, it was the right thing to do. And they've been guided by the right thing all the way through. But it had to do with not having Paul removed from the scene of the boat crash, because Renee's father needed to be able to work through what he had done to pray him with Paul on the causeway and forgiven him. And Philip did in the days while they were looking for Malory's body. They've done the right thing throughout. And I'm proud of them.

We'll be right back.

On Sunday night, word came out that not only had the boat crash plaintiffs settled with Parker's kitchen, they had settled with Alec. Then Monday, Alec's camp denied that a settlement had been reached. This is where it gets super complicated, but it's actually kind of simple when you remember that we're talking about the worst human alive. I'm going to explain it really quickly before giving the floor back to Mark. The first thing to know here is that Alec Murdoch had \$500,000 in boat insurance from Progressive. This is different from the Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance on Moselle. Around the time of the murders, a federal judge ruled that Philadelphia Indemnity did not have to cover Alec in this case. So Alec was left with the progressive policy and his assets. But what assets, right? Remember, he had told Mark that he was broke, which made no sense to anyone. Also, he was in huge alleged debt to Padmata State Bank. I say alleged because who believes that paperwork? After the murders, Mark suspected that Alec and the Murdochs were liquidating assets and

hiding Alec's money. He made a motion to have Alec's assets placed under a receivership, someone who would account for the assets and legally be considered the owner of those assets. In November 2021, a state judge approved that motion. It was also around this time that it

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

started to become ultra clear that, should they win their cases, the Beach Family and the Boat Crash survivors weren't going to be the only ones in line to collect what Alec owed them. That line was already snaking around his metaphorical building, obviously. Now, you know how Alec is clearly the kind of guy who goes back on his promises and is like, psych when it's time for him to live up to his end of the deal? This kind of feels like that. It feels like a psych. When the Beach Family won their motion for a receivership that was, for all intents and purposes, the end of Alec in terms of money, whatever the receivership collected would be up for grabs unless Alec objected to the receivership and tried to appeal the decision. In March 2023, in connection with the settlements the Beaches had reached with Buster Murdoch two months earlier, Alec Murdoch waived his right to object to the receivership or appeal that decision. Meaning the receivership, which had been put in place to preserve his assets and anticipation of him owing money to the Beaches, was basically final. In other words, he had, for all practical purposes, settled. Add to that, the Beaches waived their right to the \$500,000 in Alec's boat insurance money in exchange for Alec not messing with the Parker settlement. But still, Alec, for no clear reason, has decided that he does not want the Beach Family to stand in line with the rest of his victims. So, according to him, he has not yet settled. Here's Mark. I mean, it's hard to make sense of it because I think everybody wants it to be black and white. I mean, the reality is that Alec lost everything that Alec owned when the receivers got appointed in, what was it, November of 2021. So, all of Alec's assets then become technically owned held by the receivers to be administered, to be distributed, pursuant to a court order that's going to come later. So, it's all gone from Alec. And the only way that Alec gets to get those assets back is to appeal. And, you know, the Beaches are not the only claimants. The kids in the boat crash are not the only claimants. You've got everybody from Dick and Jim, the law firm, you've got financial victims that are still out there. You've got Eric's clients, you've got Justin's clients. Maybe there are other people. Maybe the federal government's in line. Maybe the state's in line. There are a lot of hands out, and there's not enough money there to pay all the people. It's going to be divided by the court. The Beaches family wasn't trying to jump in the head of the line. I mean, the deal that we thought we worked out, and I think that we will work out, is a process through which the receiver funds get administered by the court. And just the people who are making those claims can all agree on the division fund. They can't agree the court's going to decide. And the court's ultimately going to bless it regardless of whatever happens. Now, one big question we've been fielding since Monday is this. Does this hiccup mean that there's a chance that the Beaches could actually take their case against Alec to trial? No, it's not happening. And, you know, I think that if I were being cynical, I think Alec wants it to happen. It's not going to happen. It's not going to happen because the county can't afford it. It's not going to happen because Alec wants it. It's not going to happen because it's unnecessary from where I stand. And, you know, I mean, everything he's got has been taken. And if that doesn't send a message to you, when you allow kids to drink and drive and use your vehicles, and when you turn a blind eye to your own child's behavior, that you can lose everything that you've got. I don't know what will. We asked Mark if it was possible that this latest move from Alec spoke more about his ongoing desire to, quote, clear Paul's name. Well, no. I mean, what he's saying is, is that if the insurance company works a deal that allows the Beach family to get in line,

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

I'm not agreeing to it. And I didn't really care about anything else. It doesn't care about the fact that the insurance is being paid on because Paul's driver doesn't care about the fact that, you know, immediately after the crash and the sort of excited utterance is coming out of Anthony Cook that Paul had killed his girlfriend. If there's that evidence doesn't care about the physical evidence that demonstrates that Paul was in fact the driver that Connor was thrown into the center console and suffered a broken jaw and couldn't possibly have been on the left side of the boat driving the boat. You know, I mean, the evidence is overwhelming that Paul was the driver. There is no real dispute. Why would Alec be in the hospital, be doing the things that were done to try to cover it up, not for Connor Cook? Speaking of the hospital video, we asked Mark about his thoughts when he first saw the footage with Alec going room to room with his 14th Circuit Solicitor's Office badge hanging out of his pocket.

Yes, if you know Alec, you know, it was just classical. You couldn't see the badge the whole time. I think after a while he put the badge up. But in the beginning, I saw the badge and, you know, he's what I didn't realize is how small the emergency room is. I mean, I remember what week it was. I went down there and went through and very close. Connor's room was sort of on the other side of the emergency station from where Alec was at Paul's door.

Oregon wasn't very far away. Just it's a very confined space. And when I watched the video, it seemed much more spread out. Looking back on the ups and downs of this case and all the cases related to the boat crash, we asked Mark if he'd ever seen anything like this in terms of the online harassment we've seen and that he's seen and that the beach family has seen and also in terms of the tactics that were used. At one point in the civil conspiracy case, Greg Parker's attorneys shockingly subpoenaed Mark's phone records to search for any calls and text messages to and from me, Mandy, and other journalists. I'm a little constrained in what I can say at this point because the outrage case is still going on. But I mean, I've never seen anything like this.

The people that I talked to, at least in this levy part of the world, and I don't think that we're so far behind the times that we're missing out on what the rest of the world's doing, this just cannot be the way it is. We cannot weaponize the legal system so that he who has the most money can pull the most extreme acts wins. That can't be it. And I mean, that's part of the reason I think I fight so hard for so many people. I like pulling for the underdog. I like giving it to the people who think that they're entitled, that whatever it is, their station, their money, their powers, their influence entitles them to something. I don't remember who said it, but we live in a republic, not a democracy, where the rights of a single person are as important as the rights of the group. And that's really the way it is, the way it should be. I remember in October of 2020, and there were motions filed, and you and Mandy were really the only ones watching the filings. So you would see, and I don't know when you leave and work for the county for some period of time, but it's pretty safe to say something is filed. There's going to be an article. And Parker's knew that. I mean, Parker's objected to me filing things at some point. But in October of 2020, I remember getting a call. I'd filed a motion to compel against Parker's that morning. That afternoon, I got a call from Mandy, who was horrified. It's someone on Reddit. I've never even heard a Reddit. It's kind of funny. This is how long this case has been going on. Never heard a Reddit, never heard a TikTok. I didn't know what those things were. And that someone on Reddit with an account that had never been posted on, just been created earlier, had accused Mandy of augmenting Mallory's breasts and photo per clicks. And I think that's the

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

startup. That's the first time you sort of see a concentrated attack against the people who are really trying to seek the truth, trying to pursue justice for whoever it may be.

There have been a bunch of attacks. And I think that some of those attackers have been common attackers. Now, who those people really are or whether they're really people or not, I guess we'll see. I think that we've got evidence about some of those accounts. And I hope that before the lawsuits ever, we had more evidence or some more. Ultimately, these cases were about accountability.

They didn't really want a pound of flesh from Greg Parker in the boat crash case. We're never going to get a pound of flesh from Greg Parker in the boat crash case. I mean, technically, the defendant in the boat crash case is Parker's company. And it's a legal distinction. And I think at times it's been a distinction that without a difference in terms of what's going on and who's met, call him the place. But the accountability that they wanted in the boat crash case was something that the other partners of the world would see and recognize and hopefully take stock in how they're doing things, what they're doing, how they're always conducting themselves to make sure that this doesn't happen if it can be presented. The civil conspiracy outrage case is very different. I mean, under the civil case, there's an idea of compensatory damages. That is, the law puts you in the place you would have been in, but for whatever wrong happened to you, breach of contract is the easiest to see. When you had a deal, I would have made \$5, you broke the deal, you owe me \$5. It's harder to do that when you've got a serious injury. Even harder, I think, to do that when you've lost your daughter. It's a no amount of money.

That's not what this was about. The civil conspiracy case, on the other hand, the law also allows for something called punitive damages and punish to make an example of. And that's what we're pursuing at the end of the day in the conspiracy case, to make an example of, to punish the people who conspired against this family and their lawful, constitutionally guaranteed right to seek redress and accountability for Mallory's death. And we're going to punish those people for what they did. It might not affect Parker, but I think that the average convenience store or bar or whoever it is that sells alcohol, I sure think it ought to.

Mark Tinsley's fight for accountability on behalf of Mallory Beach and her family, a fight that neither Elec Murdoch nor Greg Parker seem to expect nor seem to know how to deal with,

is what continues to give us hope in all of this. It was no surprise to us that Mark won people over when he took the stand in Elec's trial. He is the good guy in this. He is the hero of this story. He is the man holding the lantern and taking those first steps down that unfamiliar fork in the road, walking forward despite the jeers from the sidelines and the constant hills he's had to climb and despite his own life-threatening illness. Nearly every single thing that has happened in this case leads back to Mark in some way. It would take us all day to list all the good he has done behind the scenes and the murder case, all the effort he's put into getting people to see the things that he himself sees so clearly, like Elec's motive for the murders for instance.

You hear a lot about someone thinking that they're the smartest person in the room.

Mark does not think that, but he is. He is the smartest person in the room and he uses that talent, that power for good. And by the way, just like the other regulars on our shows, Mark is exactly who he seems to be in real life too.

I have three dogs at my feet now. One is asleep, one is pawing in my foot, one's wagging her tail.

[Transcript] True Sunlight / TSP #8 - Exclusive Interview With Mark 'The Tiger' Tinsley After Reaching \$15+ Million Settlement In Boat Crash Case

I have Daisy who's wagging her tail, peanuts pawing at my foot, and Bear is asleep and then I have Bella, the small animal killing massive. She's sweet. She's a good dog. You just can't have her around cats.

And predictably, Mark Tinsley is not fully accustomed to this newfound fame.

You know, my mother likes it, but my father doesn't go anywhere.

It's a little weird. It's a little weird at first, you know, to be in Franklin Tennessee at a Elf's impersonator concert at intermission and stand up and people see you and want to take selfies with you.

And that's not a normal experience. You know, everybody's nice. So that helps. I mean, if they weren't nice, it probably wouldn't be as the same experience. But, you know, I wasn't looking for some,

you know, I wasn't looking for recognition for any of that.

That's the thing, though. Sometimes the good guys do win. And sometimes they get recognition when they win.

And that is a good thing. I hope this story inspires pesky lawyers like Mark Tinsley and families like the Beaches to fight the good fight until accountability is reached.

Our justice system needs to celebrate people like that, those who stick their necks out when it's terrifying, and those who keep going, even when it's heartbreaking and cruel.

The good guys won this time. Remember that. Thank you again to Mark Tinsley for joining us today. Thanks again to Liz for nailing that interview. And for those of us who have been watching this video,

and for those of y'all who want more of Zero Dark Tinsley, we are planning something super special, exclusively for Luna Shark Premium members only. So stay tuned, stay pesky, and stay in the sunlight.

True sunlight is created by me, Mandy Matney, co-hosted by journalist Liz Farrell, and produced by my husband, David Moses.

True sunlight is a Luna Shark production, right Luna?