

Murder, Money, and Cows Part 3
Scott Moody

(Musical Theme Song) Ring around the rosies; a pocket full of posies; Ashes, ashes; We all fall down.

Sherry: Welcome to the Parricide Podcast. I'm Sherry...

Marie: ...and I'm Marie. And you are listening to the third part of our three-part series on Scott Moody. If you haven't heard the other two parts, we invite you to do that now. This is a very important case, even though it probably isn't really a parricide after all. As a reminder of what's happened so far, the police declared Scott a Family Annihilator and closed the case on the same day the deaths occurred. But Stacy, his 15-year-old sister who'd been shot twice but survived, identified a different killer when she was well enough to talk. We've taken you through the story as presented by the media and as developed through evidence and interviews. Today we're going to talk about motives suggested by the Sheriff's department, Stacy's recovery, how Jon Stout manipulated Stacy to try and get her to recount her testimony, and what's happened since then.

Sherry: At the end of Episode 2, we left you in Stacy's hospital room as she was being interviewed by Detectives Jon Stout and Mike Bruglar. Remember, this is where Jon Stout uses questioning techniques to insert Scott into the murders as the killer. Stacy shouted at the Investigators and told them Scott was not the shooter. But this isn't what the Logan County Sheriff's Department wanted to hear. The Sheriff was determined to make Scott the shooter. He had publicly announced the case was solved and closed, but it kept falling apart on him. He was sure there was something there and he tasked his deputies with finding the motive. So the motive was kind of grasping at straws:

Marie: *Well maybe he just snapped. That's a thing, right?*

Sherry: Well, snapping isn't really a thing. It's more of a myth. Plus, everyone - including Kay's ex-husbands and lovers who knew the family intimately - said Scott was never violent. Her ex-husband, Steve Wolfe, said in six years of living with the family, Scott had never revealed that kind of rage in him. He said Grandpa Gary was a guy you had to watch out for, but Scott was a harmless kid. So, most likely, no.

Marie: *Maybe he was being pressured to be the man and run the entire family farm?*

Sherry: That's an interesting notion. But he hadn't even been milking the cows lately because he'd had a hernia operation. Plus, Kay was the one working on acquiring the loans necessary to keep the farm going. Remember the family had come to an agreement on what should be happening with the farm - and Kay and her parents were working hard to conform to that agreement. This was again confirmed by Kay's ex-husband, Steve Wolfe, who said that Scott was a kid in all of this farm stuff. Not a decision maker. Not an adult.

Although Kay ended relationships, she tended to keep the men around afterwards. And most of these men still cared about Kay. They all knew her little family well. She and her parents had worked with the County Treasurer to put that payment plan in place to catch up on the past due taxes - and there was no threat of foreclosure on any of the 10 properties. And the Treasurer, remember, said they never foreclosed on property when it was in probate. So, not so much.

Marie: Well, there were rumors going around that *Scott had refused to walk at graduation. Maybe he was just bitter and so afraid of the future he didn't want to find out what it was.*

Sherry: Well, Stacy had picked out a dress for graduation. Kay was excited and talking about attending graduation and David tried to call Kay that morning; saying he wanted to remind her that he could not attend graduation because of his wife's mother's death. And Scott's friends all said that Scott mostly refrained from drinking the night before; saying he didn't want to be drunk or hung over for graduation. So, it seems he was looking forward to walking for graduation. And the conversations with his friends the night before also didn't reveal any angst or concerns about his future that were not typical of any high school graduate.

Marie: Well, one thing the Sheriff theorized was that *the acrimonious divorce between Steve and Kay must have taken its toll on the kids -what with Kay constantly calling Children's Services.*

Sherry: Well, there had been a total of 15 allegations called into Children's Services back then, and all of them had, in the end, been unsubstantiated. But all of that seemed to have settled down after the divorce was finalized - and that was 12 years ago. So, most likely not the motive now.

Marie: Hmm. Well, at some point later on, the Director of a local counseling center named Cheryl Garland-Briggs was said to have contacted the Investigators to report that *Kay had come to her office three months prior, claiming that Scott had beaten her and her daughter. She said that Kay wanted to know how to get Scott out of the house now that he was 18. So maybe it was just a domestic violence situation.*

Sherry: Oh. You mean, like, you don't know what goes on behind closed doors?

Marie: Yeah, kind of.

Sherry: That's an interesting concept - but this is really kind of an interesting thing, too. Stacy said Scott had never beaten them - and that this was untrue.

Marie: Okay.

Sherry: And Ms. Garland-Briggs was said to have claimed to see Kay only once. I did hear the interview with Ms. Briggs - between her and the investigator - and she claimed to have only seen Kay once. Which is suspect, if you're aware at all of how intake is typically handled in counseling centers. Additionally, I contacted Mr. St. Clair to confirm some of the details in his book and ask him about this particular interview. I was really unsettled by it - it seemed to conflict with all of the other interviews. The school said that in the six years he had been in the public school system - as a teen - he had never had one instance of violence, one instance of anger, one instance of outburst. The only time - once - that he was disciplined, was for being tardy. He doesn't sound like an angry boy or someone who was beating or threatening to kill anyone. But...

Marie: What did Mr. St. Clair say?

Sherry: He said that he spoke with Cheryl Garland, himself, and she said that no one had ever interviewed her. She said that was not her. She believed someone fabricated the whole thing to make Scott look like the killer. This person showed up kind of late in the investigative game, and she said it's completely untrue.

Marie: Well, that's an interesting thing to think about.

Sherry: Um, yeah. And a little bit frightening.

Marie: It is.

Sherry: Anyway, the Sheriff had mulled over all of this new information. He thought of all the theories that you just went over, and the only question he could come up with was, 'What drove this 18-year-old to lash out?'

Had the Sheriff's office not drawn any early conclusions, the evidence would have had a chance to unfold in front of them. Announcing the closure of the case - and declaring Scott the shooter within hours of arriving at the scene - guaranteed a lot of the evidence would remain hidden from them. Whether on purpose, or by accident, forcing a crime scene into a frame that it didn't fit kept the Investigators from actually identifying the killer. But people were whispering about the truth of the matter, and they all believed something was very very wrong.

(musical interlude)

Sherry: On the afternoon of the shooting, Stacy's dad and stepmother - Steve and Audrey - met the Life Flight helicopter at the Ohio State University Medical Center. As they waited, they must have reflected on their relationships with Stacy, and worried about her well-being. Stacy had been ditching them for visitation recently and they were concerned. When Scott turned 15, he had elected to forego further visitations with his dad, and they were worried that Stacy was heading down that same road.

Marie: Why had Scott stopped going when he was only 15?

Sherry: Scott was very angry at his father. He said it was because his father was a cheater.

Marie: Oh,

Sherry: And he didn't like that.

Marie: It's really hard on kids.

Sherry: Yeah, it is really hard on kids. But there's a little more to the story that may have played into it. Remember, Kay was a pretty lenient mother - she would buy beer for the kids, she would let kids smoke in her house things; like that. And Steve and Audrey were very strict. They had a strict no drinking - no smoking policy and that had created some problems in the past.

Marie: Okay. So, the kids were not enjoying transitioning between the rules of moms versus the rules of dad.

Sherry: I think that's probably a lot of what was going on there. Well, Steve and Audrey were worried about her not coming to visit and they were, of course, worried about drugs - because Kay would hang out with drug dealers and she had some drug problems herself. They'd been suspecting that Kay's liberal parenting philosophy was taking its toll on Stacy. She appeared to be struggling with the teenage trifecta - sex, drugs, and alcohol. It was when Steve and Audrey started taking steps to pull Stacy back that she started blowing off visitation.

Marie: Okay. So, it does sound like it was an issue of - she was used to being able to behave how she wanted and they didn't like how she was behaving.

Sherry: Yes. And they had three sons in the other home, so they had it structured as a fairly traditional family.

Marie: Umhmm.

Sherry: So, the Investigators had reported that there were no drugs in that house. That there were no drugs found in either house. But those in the know did not believe them.

Marie: It sounds like Kay had developed a little bit of a drug problem after she had those car accidents.

Sherry: Right.

Marie: And then she was also involved with Dave - who was a known drug dealer.

Sherry: Right. So those kids had a lot of exposure to drugs, alcohol, partying, sex...everything.

Marie: Yeah. It sounds like they were allowed to be sexually active at whatever age they decided to get started.

Sherry: I can't imagine telling your 15 -year-old it was okay to make a booty call. Have the guy come over and spend the night. It was all very open.

Marie: Yeah, it's very interesting. I think that we often talk about parents as authoritarian, um, but she's on the other side - she's permissive.

Sherry: Very permissive.

Marie: We've seen a lot of parenting style mismatches in these cases. Where one of the parents is permissive and the other is - or at least wants to be – authoritarian.

Sherry: Yes. And, in some cases that works really well. With specific types of children, if you have a highly authoritarian parent and you have a very kind, very accommodating other parent, the balance actually works for a child who needs someone to control them but also can do with kindness. But as soon as there's a death - or there's a divorce, or something separates that family - if the kind parent is left with the child and the child is more like the authoritarian parent, things can often flip very quickly and that child becomes abusive.

Marie: Yeah. We've seen that a couple times, too.

Sherry: Yeah, we have. But anyway, you're right. She was very very liberal. She was the one who was acting more like a teenager. And Steve and Audrey really struggled with trying to parent them at all with Kay in the picture. And, of course, Kay did not like them going to Steve's.

Marie: Yeah. It sounds like she had a real problem with that from the very beginning.

Sherry: Yeah. So, I would suppose that's why Stacy was starting to blow off visitation. It's really hard to go from one environment to the other when they are so different from each other. And there's still a lot of animosity between these parents.

Marie: Yeah. That's really hard.

Sherry: So, while the Moodys were being interviewed - right after Stacy had gotten to the hospital - the Sheriff had begun his press conference; announcing the case was now wrapped up. Scott was the gunman, and the case was officially closed.

Marie: That's insane! On the same day, before they even know if Stacy is going to live or die?

Sherry: Mere hours after they had found the crime scene.

Marie: That's really too fast!

Sherry: It is. And I don't know what they were thinking, but many people do think they know what they were thinking. The police had decided they'd solved this case after no investigation whatsoever – clearly. And they concluded that Scott, overwhelmed by the mounting farming and financial problems, had felt overwhelmed by the difficulties that lay ahead of graduation. So, he killed everyone and then himself - like an adult annihilator.

Marie: Yeah. And that makes sense for an adult annihilator - because if you're the provider for the family, and you're having a hard time providing, that can cause some psychological distress.

Sherry: Right. By following the textbook definition of the Family Annihilator here, they'd failed to recognize that this was not an adult. Scott was a child. Not the Head of Household. And children who are family annihilators are very different from adult family annihilators. They hadn't bothered following the evidence; as all good Police Investigators do. Scott was not the Head of Household, nor was he required to act as such. In this case, there were too many Heads of Household and Scott was a child in that household.

A Youthful Family Annihilator is not the same as a Family Annihilator. Their motives are different. Their lived experience is different. And you're right; they don't have a wife. They don't have children that they feel like they're in control of, or that they're responsible for. The case was deemed closed before it was ever opened - and the case was closed before their only eyewitness regained consciousness. No one had talked to Stacy.

Marie: Well, that turns out to be a real problem, doesn't it?

Sherry: Absolutely! It does.

(musical interlude)

Sherry: In Part 1 we talked about the funerals, and I mentioned that Grandma and Grandpa Shafer and Kay were cremated - and Scott had a traditional burial. I found the reason and I thought we'd share it. Grandpa Gary's brother, Ron, was the closest living relative of Gary and Sharyl Shafer - as well as Kay. He elected to have them cremated. But Steve Moody was, of course, Scott's living relative. He elected to have a traditional burial for Scott. When someone dies, the closest relatives have a lot more say than anyone else - and even though Kay and Scott were one family unit, that's how it divided to closest relatives.

Marie: That makes sense. After the divorce, he doesn't count anymore.

Sherry: Right. After the funerals, the Funeral Director took Steve Moody aside for a private conversation. This was the man who was in charge of embalming Scott's body. This is what he had to say (and I'm quoting this from Rob St. Clair's book). Quote: "I've been doing this for years, and I've handled several suicides. Based on what I know; Scott using a rifle, the entry wound behind his ear...there's no way Scott could have shot himself."

Marie: I'm sure that was really validating for Steve - but I'm sure he kind of already suspected it.

Sherry: Right.

Marie: Like, Scott had died of two bullet wounds – which, it's a little tricky to shoot yourself twice. And then you have to remember the first one was behind his left ear, with a rifle.

Sherry: Yeah. Like all the other deadly wounds in the two households.

Marie: Yeah. So, everybody was shot behind the left ear - which makes sense if someone else is shooting you - but it's really hard to shoot yourself behind the ear with a rifle. It just doesn't make sense. And then the second wound went through the right side, of inside, his mouth.

Sherry: Right.

Marie: Which would still be tricky with a rifle.

Sherry: It would be impossible with a rifle. That Marlin is 36 inches long and the muzzle-to-trigger distance is about 23 inches. So, take that, and the fact that it was eight to ten inches away from his head (because they didn't have any singed hair or burns indicating it was right up against his head) and try to hold a rifle behind you - eight inches away from your head - and shooting that rifle and actually getting it in the same spot everyone else had been shot in.

Marie: Well, shooting yourself at all from that distance - with a gun that long - doesn't make sense. They didn't find any sort of contraption he used to pull the trigger.

Sherry: No. That would be nearly impossible; if not completely impossible. It's crazy that that's where the police went. Just crazy.

Marie: Well, especially considering that these were men who presumably knew how guns work.

Sherry: Exactly. And now think of this. Not only did he take that rifle, hold it behind his head eight inches away from the back of his head, and shoot himself accurately in the air - he then changed positions by sliding down from the top of the bed to the foot of the bed (so his feet were touching the floor), switched his hands, and then shot himself in the mouth using his other hand. And if that sounds like it's every impossibility rolled up into one scenario - add this. Given how a .22 has kickback - his thumb remained on the trigger guard.

Marie: Yeah. That doesn't make sense at all.

Sherry: No, it doesn't make any sense at all.

Marie: Because I was just thinking. Well, maybe if he somehow managed to shoot himself the first time. Maybe he was like Stacy, and didn't die immediately. And got himself to the end of the bed and, like,

held the gun between his knees or something - which is already pretty far-fetched - but then to have no kickback?

Sherry: Right. It sounds like a movie scene that a teenager set up - not understanding how it works.

Marie: Yeah. It just doesn't make any sense.

Sherry: Right. Well, the autopsy reports were released the following Monday - after the funerals - and we know how Scott died. His grandparents and Megan had all been shot at least once in the neck behind their ears. Kay and Paige were each shot once in the left temple. And speculation was running like wildfire. How would Scott - who hated guns and rarely would even shoot one - know the most effective way to kill someone was using a Kill Switch?

Marie: Umhmm.

Sherry: Was to shoot them behind the ear. And how could he have been so accurate without any practice? These were experienced hunters in the community - and they were speculating and wondering out loud how the first shot made to kill a household member had not awakened everyone immediately. The .22 - the Marlin - is very loud.

Marie: Yeah. It doesn't make sense to me, either. Even if everybody was still drunk, and in a stupor, and unlikely to wake up to a noise. Mom had already been up, so we know that she's not in a deep sleep. She should have woken up at some point. There were people nearby who should have heard something. I think the only thing that makes sense is they must have used a pillow - or some kind of silencer - to make the gunshot quieter.

Sherry: I would go with that theory. I would think that a silencer was probably used.

Marie: Yeah. They must have done something to make it quieter - or they would have woken five other people in the house - who probably would not have laid there to be shot. I expected especially whether it's called a Rampage Killing that somebody would have gotten up and run. And it sounds like the only person who even moved when they were being murdered, was Stacy. And she didn't die.

Sherry: And in a Rampage Killing, it's assumed that there's anger somewhere. This doesn't sound like an angry person was doing the shooting. This was methodical.

Marie: I also think it kind of sounds like there were two people doing the shooting.

Sherry: You're absolutely right. I thought about that, too. And given that we have a witness who saw two men - it's very likely that both of those men were involved. Which could theoretically explain why no one heard the shooting. If they killed Megan downstairs; possibly no one heard anything - if they were using some kind of a...

Marie: ...makeshift silencer of some kind.

Sherry: Uh-huh.

Marie: Because they never found the gun; so, we don't know if it had a silencer.

Sherry: Well, the Marlin was supposed to be the gun, but they never did ballistics - so they don't know. So, possibly the Marlin was used in the murders. Most likely, the Marlin was used in the murders. And

there was probably some kind of silencer used with it. So, then they head upstairs. Well, we have Scott and Paige in one room, Kay in another room, and Stacy in a third room. Now remember, Stacy wakes up. Something wakes her up - which could have been a gunshot - possibly - or at least noise.

Marie: Yeah.

Sherry: But then you have two other rooms filled with three people.

Marie: Oh, and Stacy had already been awake, too. Because Andrew left. So, she wasn't in a deep sleep either.

Sherry: Right. So, if I had two men who were on this case, you could have one of them shoot Kay while the other one is shooting Scott. Those would be the two powerful people upstairs - and usually a killer will take out the most powerful people first. Paige had her face to the wall. So, it's possible that Scott was killed - she turned as a protective move - and they shot her, too.

Marie: (moan) Ohh.

Sherry: And then the person who had shot Kay immediately went into Stacy's room - shot her. And then came out to assist the person who was in the two-person room. And then they went back to finish off Stacy. But that's how I would do it if I were a killer. I would disable, at the very least, the two more powerful people - and then go back for the others.

Marie: Yeah. The two oldest; and, of course, Mom - who would have some organization capabilities. You know if she wakes up, she's going to call her kids - run to her kids - and get them out of there.

Sherry: Right. And she has a gun under her bed - which one of them may, or may not, know. We'll hear later that one of the possible killers had told Stacy he knew her mom, he knew her brother, he'd been to the house.

Marie: Oh. That's creepy!

Sherry: So, we'll hear about that in just a minute here. So, it's very possible that two people might have been able to handle four people. Especially if two of them were teenage girls.

Marie: Yeah.

Sherry: I think the biggest worry would have been disabling Scott quickly - assuming Scott was not the killer - which is what we're doing.

Marie: I think, at this point, it's hard to assume that Scott was the killer.

Sherry: Given the murder scene, I completely agree.

Marie: Well, in the first episode - we were really struggling because there's no motive that actually stacks up. Um, which is really unusual in a murder. Sometimes we like to talk about murders, like, people just snap -or sometimes you just don't know what causes someone to kill. But usually you can hazard, at least, a guess. And Scott didn't seem to have any reason.

Sherry: No, he didn't. And snapping is really not a thing. I've looked at over 2,000 cases and there's not one of those in which we have found someone who just snapped.

Marie: Yeah. I think that's just something that people say to, kind of, create some distance - and spend a little less time thinking about all the horrible reasons why people do kill.

Sherry: I agree. I think that's probably that, right there in a nutshell.

Marie: That's an uncomfortable thing to think about.

Sherry: No. Also, once the autopsies and the police photos were released, there was a family friend - it was, um, Chief Ron Murray. He was a Chief at another Precinct and was very experienced in murder scenes. He spoke privately with Steve Moody about his concerns regarding this case. He didn't do it at a bar or at their house. He literally called Steve Moody into the Precinct to talk to him.

As per the book, Saving Stacy, Chief Murray shared his serious concerns regarding myriad aspects of this investigation. As for the alleged act of suicide by Scott, he had this to say: 1) He stated the placement of the rifle looked staged. Like, just looking at the photos, it looked staged. He talked about the kickback - like we just talked about - he questioned how Scott's thumb would have been remaining on the trigger guard when that gun went off. Which we just talked about; 2) He talked about this. The bed had Paige - who was facing the wall with the blankets tucked up to her chin - and to the side of her was Scott - positioned down lower on the bed. But there was blood spatter where the headboard would have been on the bed. Where Scott would have been sleeping.

Marie: Okay. So, probably when they - when Scott was shot the first time, that was probably his blood.

Sherry: Right. And then there are drag marks, where it looks like he was dragged to the bottom of the bed. So, based on his positioning - it didn't appear that it was Paige's blood over here on the other side of the bed. But the Investigators insisted that it was Paige's blood, chose not to have it tested, and just called it good. Which is styming at best. But the location of that blood suggested it was Scott's blood - and he was in a sleeping position on the bed when he was first shot.

Marie: Okay.

Sherry: 3) The gun had unknown origins. As per Rob St. Clair, the Marlin (the .22 that was used in the killings) was traced from the manufacturer to each subsequent owner until it reached - Stout's Gun Shop.

Marie: Like Jon Stout? The policeman?

Sherry: ...who is investigating the case - the Primary Investigator. Once it reaches Stout's Gun Shop, ownership records disappeared. We know the rifle didn't belong to Scott - they didn't have a .22 in the house. And he didn't like guns. His grandfather had .22s. But his brother, Ron, said he never bought used guns, and he had never seen that gun in his brother's house - and he knew most of his brother's guns. And Stout's Gun Shop - I guess - was known for being kind of sketchy. It's gone now - but it was kind of the sketchy gun shop in town.

Marie: Okay.

Sherry: So, Scott appears, also, to have been dressed - and the details of his clothing were wrong. He lay there on the bed with a pair of fresh Levis on, and fresh socks. The socks didn't have any, like, marks from him walking around. You know how when you walk around on the ground, your feet get all kind of dirty? These are white socks. There were no dust marks, no dirt marks, no scuffing on the socks.

Marie: Okay - and also no blood.

Sherry: And - no blood. And his pants didn't have a belt. Which seems like – oh, well – because, like, I never wear a belt. I don't know about you. But he was this really skinny kid - and both his father and this investigator who knew him well said, 'Where is his belt?'

They have pictures of this. If you look over to the side, you see the pants that he'd worn. And just like any teenage boy, he'd pulled them off and thrown them on the floor. And guess what was in the pants that were on the floor by the bed?

Marie: His belt.

Sherry: Bingo!

Marie: So, the other thing is - you could argue, well, he killed everyone and then he put on pants and socks and got in bed because he wanted to be found presentable.

Sherry: (laughter)

Marie: But then why wouldn't he put on a shirt?

Sherry: Well, if he killed everyone and then put on socks and pants to look presentable - why didn't he put those socks and pants on to go to his grandparents' house?

Marie: Well, and if –

Sherry: Did he walk over there naked?

Marie: Yeah. That's the other question. Like, if people are looking out their windows and seeing men roaming around - wouldn't they have noticed a naked boy covered in blood?

Sherry: Or a boy who is freshly dressed at six in the morning?

Marie: Umhmm. It just doesn't make a lot of sense. You can't make a story that makes sense - where he shows up murdered, with no blood from killing other people. In just a pair of pants and socks.

Sherry: Right. And here's a spoiler for you: Chief Murray - the guy who's talking to his dad - mysteriously dies in April of 2011 at the age of 41 for no apparent reason. But the County Coroner didn't perform an autopsy. He just surmised that he probably died from a brain aneurysm.

Marie: Wow! That doesn't sound like very good work, either. Either this is the sloppiest group of Investigators, or they don't want people to know the truth.

Sherry: Right! And Chief Murray's close friends strongly suspect he was poisoned.

Marie: I would suspect that, as well.

Sherry: Me, too.

Marie: I mean, if my friend died and they said, 'Probably an aneurysm.' But there was no autopsy.

Sherry: Well, it was an unattended death - it was a questionable death. Where's the autopsy?

But as they prepared for Stacy's release from the hospital, Steve and Audrey privately discussed all of the details of the murders that were being released to them - and it was a lot to digest. I'm sure they wondered more than once if they were heavy into denial or had fallen into the conspiracy rabbit hole. And I suspect they worried about how to make Stacy feel safe - and how they would keep the rest of their small family safe - if there was still a killer on the loose. The Funeral Director was right. This didn't look like a suicide when how Scott had died was considered. But the Sheriff kept insisting that it was.

Stacy was released from the hospital 12 short days after the shootings. The world she was returning to looked nothing like the world she left.

(musical interlude)

Sherry: Stacy's new bedroom was a makeshift affair her dad and stepmom had cobbled together off their dining room. It had to be a main floor room to accommodate the medical devices that now came with Stacy's life. She had learned the fates - so here that she learned how the Sheriff had named Scott as the gunman. Stacy had sustained severe nerve damage that would make it difficult for her to talk and swallow for some time to come. They had to worry about her literally dying as she ate.

Marie: (sympathetic) Ooh.

Sherry: Yes. She was hooked up to tubes and braces and suction machines - and warned that she would need to take great care for the next three months in order to avoid paralysis or injury. And, of course, this part was almost easy compared to the psychological trauma she had suffered. Leaving the relative safety of the hospital had to have been a challenge for her. Stacy would also face the challenges of fitting in with the family with more boundaries and more rules than she'd ever had at home with her mother.

Marie: Yeah. I mean she was horribly injured. We keep talking about how Stacy lived - but she had a lot of physical injuries to heal from. And she didn't have a chance to heal or start getting better before she had to immediately confront the fact that her entire maternal side of the family - her grandparents, her brother, her mom - they were all dead. She just lost half of her family - everyone she'd grown up with.

Sherry: That's very true. And this is 12 days after that she's released - it's not even very long. There's not a lot of space in between the shooting and when she's released from the hospital.

Marie: And we've talked about how disturbing it is to think about this - but she was shot, nearly fatally injured, running from room to room and seeing the ways that all of her family had been painfully murdered.

Sherry: Yes. It's not like she was shot, unconscious, and moved into recovery. You're absolutely right. And that bullet is still in her today. It was too dangerous to remove - and that's why they told her she had to stay still for a few months; was because they needed it to, kind of, encapsulate itself. So that she wouldn't die. So, she was still living with the threat of death.

But 15 days after the shooting, the Investigators - Jon Stout and Detective Bruglar - they meet with Stacy for the *third* time. And this was the first time they were meeting outside of the hospital. The Investigators got right to the point; telling the family that all of the evidence pointed to Scott. And when Stacy tried to speak, she was gruffly interrupted by Jon Stout. As the family sat in stunned silence, the

Detectives reviewed what they believed to be the evidence - and told her this time she would need to tell the truth.

Marie: The truth?!? I think she's already told the truth a couple times.

Sherry: I think it would be difficult to come back from something like this and be making up a story as you're also trying to figure your life out.

Marie: And process what happened. I mean, how do you even talk about - I can't imagine having to try and talk about the horrors that she saw. And we've heard some of the tape: talking through a damaged vocal cord, she's physically very weak, she's emotionally very weak, and they're sitting there accusing her of lying.

Sherry: Right. And Jon Stout said, "You need to tell us the story one more time and then it's over, so long as you're telling me the truth." It's like they were interrogating - which I think is wrong.

Marie: Yeah. I don't think they should have been interrogating her. They should have been interviewing her briefly and leaving her alone.

Sherry: Right. She was the victim in this. She said that instead of a gray-haired man, she was remembering a dark figure with a blue shirt on. And we know that as you get further away from a traumatic incident, your memory will change. She remembered the gun, she remembered trying to wiggle away from being shot, she remembered hearing two shots after the gunman left the room, and she remembered him coming back in and shooting her in the neck a second time.

Marie: So, this doesn't sound substantially any different, other than she's not insisting on telling the full truth of a gray-haired man.

Sherry: Right.

Marie: It's the same story. She's just leaving out the detail that they are unhappy with.

Sherry: Right. And Jon Stout will maintain - when he ends up in court (which is a story further down the line). When he ends up in court, he claims that she's telling a different story every time, and that of course they couldn't believe her.

Marie: Yeah, this doesn't sound like a different story.

Sherry: No, it doesn't. She remembered going downstairs and falling everywhere, and she also remembered what she called going back to sleep for a bit.

Marie: Probably passing out, due to loss of blood.

Sherry: Right. Which is what I think she now understands happened. Detective Stout appeared pleased when she told them what she remembered. But then she threw them a curveball. She distinctly remembered Scott lying on his bed. She didn't remember him up and moving around. Stout needed her to say that Scott was still alive when she was conscious to fit their theory, so they pressed her. Jon Stout said, "Our concern is that Scott was up with you after you were shot. Either he was in the bathroom with you or helped you into your chair."

Marie: Why would he be doing that, if he'd shot her?

Sherry: I think, because she had lived, they wanted to pull her in and make her, like, an accomplice.

Marie: So, their idea was that Scott had shot her - even though she was an accomplice - and then shot himself?

Sherry: Right.

Marie: That doesn't make sense with a Family Annihilator, either!

Sherry: No, it doesn't. Anyway Stout - after she talked to him for a while – said, “How can you recall everything so clearly, but you can't remember the guy. That's why we're struggling to believe you didn't see the suspect.”

Marie: She remembered him! She described him very well. Especially for someone who'd been shot. If you listen to the tape in the documentary -she's not speaking very clearly because she's been shot in the throat. But she clearly is describing an older man. She's describing his build, she's describing what he was wearing. She remembers the guy, she's just blurring the details for Detective Stout's benefit - because he won't let her tell her story the way she remembers it.

Sherry: Right. And think of what they tell you about trauma. What does trauma do to your memory?

Marie: Well, it depends. Usually, it freezes it. But if you're pressed about what you remember - and forced to alter the memory - it makes it all very confusing.

Sherry: And sometimes you will change it in order to get the support you need.

Marie: And it sounded like what she wanted was for these policemen to stop interviewing her.

Sherry: That is exactly what she wanted.

Marie: After three times - when you're trying to recover from mortal wounds - they just needed to leave her alone.

Sherry: Right. But, instead, they pressed her until she cried in this interview. And she insisted the killer was not Scott - and she told them Scott had not been awake - or alive - before she went to sleep on that recliner downstairs. They asked her for details about her relationship with Scott - which was pretty good. They had fights and they didn't get along when they were young - which is pretty typical - but at this point they were pretty solid.

Marie: Yeah. They seemed to have a shared friend group. She was allowed to come to his party.

Sherry: Right. And she talked about how he and their mom didn't really get along. He was excited about graduating and he was excited because his mom was looking to buy a truck for him. And they went over the guns in the house again and Stacy remembered that Dave Cusick had kept a .22 in the house for a while, too.

Marie: So, Kay's current boyfriend had kept a gun there for a little bit.

Sherry: Yes. That's what she's remembering once pressed. So, they must have been pressing specifically for a .22. She said she wasn't sure if he'd taken it home or not - but they didn't pursue that, either. She mentioned how odd it was that her mother was tightly tucked into bed with blankets tucked up under

her chin. She told them that's not how she slept at all. Which, of course, everyone had blankets tucked up under their chin.

Marie: That seems to be something that was done after they were shot.

Sherry: That's methodical and that's usually pointing to a hitman. They talked about other items. How her grandparents had kept the milk money that Kay had been counting on for bills. They talked about Scott's relationship with Amanda, and the breakup. They talked about various family arguments. And then things got really weird. This is an excerpt from that book, *Saving Stacy*;

"Detective Stout's voice got soft and low. He said, "I've been to your house. I know your mother. I know your grandparents. I know Scott." Stacy drew back, surprised by Stout's comment. Stout continued in a soothing voice, "I hope to have a special bond with you that will last both of our lifetimes."

After a long silence, Stout looked around the stunned table, coughed, and turned to Detective Bruglar to see if he had anything else.

Marie: That's really creepy.

Sherry: Uh-huh.

Marie: At first it sounds like he's saying that he has some sort of special insider knowledge - in kind of a weird, menacing way. And then it sounds like he's coming on to her.

Sherry: Absolutely - that's what I thought, too!

Marie: That's super gross!

Sherry: Right. Well, Detective Bruglar recovered, and asked Stacy, "Let's talk about Dave Cusick growing marijuana at your mom's place." And unexpectedly, Stout reached over the center of the table, turned off the recorder, and with Detective Bruglar gaping at Stout - because he was confused about this sudden change - Stout stood up, thanked the parents, and told them the interview was over. So as soon as drugs were mentioned, Stout was out of there.

Marie: That's crazy! I mean there's so many courses of investigation that should have, at least, been considered. There's a drug angle, there's that mom has two boyfriends who could have been jealous angle, there's this family farm - half of which is said to be inherited by a foundation outside the family...I mean, there's so many angles that could have led to murder that were not investigated. And that it sounds like detectives doubt intentionally shut down.

Sherry: Yes. Which is very questionable. Anyway, now that the interview was over, they encouraged Steve to let them know if Stacy started to open up after attending therapy. And soon after that, Stout convinced Stacy's parents to allow him unfettered and unsupervised access to her so he could encourage her to open up more fully to the police. He talked them into putting him on the list so he could pick her up at school and take her off whenever he pleased. And he did that quite a few times. He'd pick her up at school, take her to lunch. And one time he said, "Could I take her on a stakeout with Detective Bruglar and I [sic]?" But the stakeout was actually just a ploy to get alone time with this now 16-year-old girl. He quickly breached the boundaries that adults have with children - remember she's 15 - and he engaged in a sexual relationship with her.

Marie: That's awful! He totally took advantage of not only a teenage girl, but a teenage girl who had just gone through - probably - the most awful experiences anyone could go through.

Sherry: Umhm. And told her that she was in a loving, romantic relationship - which she was not.

Marie: No. Not only is it impossible with an adult - but also an adult whose interests appear to be diametrically opposed to your own. He's already proven that he doesn't care what she remembers.

Sherry: And - he was saying completely inappropriate things to her. The first or second time he took her out to lunch, they were flirting a little and she asked what his wife would say and he would say, "Oh my wife will never know." And he turned to her one day and said, "I've got naked pictures of you from the hospital and I'm keeping them in my drawer - because you're so hot."

Marie: Ugh!

Sherry: Ugh, that's exactly right.

Marie: That's a huge violation of her privacy, and that's also just gross! In the hospital, if she was naked it was for medical purposes – and, also, she'd been shot in the neck and face. So, he's saying, 'I'm super aroused by pictures of you mortally injured.'

Sherry: Well, 'because you were naked.'

Yeah. And at that point, she reacted with embarrassment and disgust - much like you just did. So, he backed off, saying he was just teasing her.

Marie: It's gross!

Sherry: It is very gross! But he slowly convinced her that it would be best to recant her story - telling her that recanting would leave them more time for each other and their blossoming relationship. So, Stacy recanted. She said Scott was the killer and the interviews ceased. And Stacy went about the business of trying to build a new life for herself.

Marie: So, he tries to get her to recant with intimidation, repeated interviews, interviewing her at 10:30 p.m. in a hospital...

Sherry: ...calling her a liar.

Marie: Umhmm. Like, just all of this kind of cruelty. And when that doesn't work, he decides to seduce her to get her to recant.

Sherry: And to take a little girl who's had every avenue of trust burned, and create a new false avenue of trust - just to manipulate her.

Marie: That is just horrible! I can't even think of a word strong enough for what he's done.

Sherry: No. It's abominable - there's a word. Anyway, there are some other words we could use, but we try to keep this rated PG (or maybe PG-13 with the murders in it). But Stacy thought she was in a romantic relationship with Jon Stout until her stepmom, Audrey, (using that Spidey Sense that moms have) decided to listen in on one of their phone calls. She quietly picked up the receiver - this is when you had home phones - and there was Jon, trying to convince Stacy to come spend the weekend with

him while his wife was out of town. He suggested she lie to her parents and say she was at a girlfriend's house. Long story short, Stout was fired, and he faced criminal charges.

Marie: Well, that's good. Was he convicted?

Sherry: He actually ended up taking a plea deal - for endangering a minor. They couldn't prove when the sexual relationship started - if she was still 15 or 16. And I guess in Ohio, 16 is the age of consent.

Marie: That's too young! He was like 25, right?

Sherry: No, he was like 39.

Marie: Oh. That's even grosser! That's way too old! I mean if he was 22, maybe. The Age of Consent rules can get weird. But 16 shouldn't be this absolute Age of Consent to have sex with an old man.

Sherry: Right. But he really got his hand slapped and that was it. Which, if you're in a corrupt governmental entity, you're often protected - and it looks like he was protected. All of the charges went away except for endangering a minor.

Marie: That doesn't seem like enough. But at least he was convicted of something.

Sherry: Yes. Just not enough. So, unfortunately, that's what happened.

Marie: Okay. Well, that's all really horrible so let's take a minute.

(interval music)

Marie: So, what about Wilma's legacy that she was so worried about? Now everyone who was supposed to inherit the legacy is either literally dead or temporarily disabled. So, farms don't run themselves - was the farm abandoned? Those cows still needed milking and feeding.

Sherry: Well, this is a farming community first - and this community didn't care who the killer was, they cared about taking care of business as business unfolded. So Bret Davidson, Scott's best friend, and all of the members of the Future Farmers of America got organized and simply added the chores from the Moody farm to their own until the livestock could be sold at auction.

Marie: Oh. That's honestly heartwarming.

Sherry: Yes. There are some very good people in this community.

Marie: But what about the inheritance?

Sherry: Well, now every family member who had been named in that will was dead - except for Stacy. And Stacy was left waiting for a cadre of attorneys to untangle the mess that was left in the wake of the murders. Until this was entangled Stacy would not receive any of her inheritance. Remember how Wilma's attorney failed to state, "...or to the survivor of them?"

Marie: Yeah. So, that was confusing. And it's not clear from what you've told me or what we've looked at why that was so important. All I can think of was that this was some weird problem where she was trying to create a situation where Stacy and Scott would be Tenants in Common or Joint Tenants With Rights of Survivorship. Where, if one of them dies, the other would inherit the whole plot. But she'd never contemplated that one of them would be dead before the inheritance would take effect.

Sherry: I think it would have been really difficult for Wilma to anticipate what would happen to her family after she died. And I think she had this beautiful flowery picture in her imagination where Scott had a quarter of the farm, and Stacy had a quarter of the farm, and they had kids, and they had spouses, and they lived happily ever after. But because she didn't use "...or to the survivor of them" they kind of had a mess. So, without this clause it wasn't clear if Stacy was supposed to inherit half the farm - at this point - or a quarter of the farm at this point. Because the other half of the farm was still committed to that educational foundation.

Marie: At least that was clear.

Sherry: Right. So, the Slayer Laws would not apply to Scott because - being dead - he would never be convicted of the murders. He was not going to enjoy his inheritance. So, the Slayer Laws were out. He legitimately had an estate that had to be considered before his personal estate would be probated.

Marie: Well at first, I wondered why this was even an issue because - being 18 - he didn't have heirs. And now Stacy was the natural inheritor of his property.

Sherry: Or his father.

Marie: I guess. Or his father - but it doesn't sound like Steve would begrudge Stacy the inheritance.

Sherry: I agree. He seemed like he was pretty stand-up as a dad.

Marie: Yeah. He did. So...but it turns out the problem with this was the families of Paige and Megan. They filed wrongful death lawsuits, um, and they would need to file those against Scott's estate since he was the decided murderer. And so, they needed to make sure that Stacy was not given the full farm before their suits were resolved - because if they didn't, then she could sell the farm, spend the money, whatever - and then there wouldn't be any money - even if they won their wrongful death lawsuits - there wouldn't be any money and it would have been moot.

Sherry: Okay. That makes sense.

Marie: So, long story short there was a lot of legal runaround and eventually it turned out that the wrongful death suits were not filed timely, so it didn't even matter. And Scott's estate was probated to family. It's not clear if it went directly to Stacy or if it went first to his father and then to Stacy. Because if you die without heirs, usually whatever you own will go to your parents and then - if your parents are dead - to your siblings.

Sherry: So, is that dying Intestate?

Marie: Yeah. Dying Intestate. And presumably Scott didn't have a will - he was only 18.

Sherry: Right.

Marie: So, the most likely course of action would be that his estate - if he had one and it didn't go directly to Stacy through some kind of joint title with rights of survivorship - then it would have gone to his father and then, presumably, to Stacy. So, either way, eventually it would have ended up with Stacy. But it was a little complicated, because Wilma's will did not contemplate what if Stacy or Scott doesn't inherit until after the other one's dead.

Sherry: Right.

Marie: So, it wasn't really a bad Will - it just wasn't a Will that contemplated most of the family being killed at the same time.

Sherry: Sadly.

Marie: Yeah. Which I don't think anyone would contemplate.

(musical interlude)

Sherry: Anyway. What happened with Stacy?

Marie: Stacy seems to be doing okay. She appeared in a documentary which was called Porcelain Dolls: the Stacy Moody Story. Which you can watch on Amazon if you want to.

Sherry: It's like \$1.99. Not very much money, right?

Marie: Yeah - and it's really interesting. It's kind of heartening to see that she's okay. But since the sale of the farm, Stacy married, developed a personal relationship with God, and started a family of her own. She and her father are now estranged - but it's not clear why. She believes she lived because God had a plan for her. She actually, in the documentary, says that she believed that God must have placed that bullet. Because the doctors didn't understand how she lived. Nobody understood how she lived through being shot like that.

Sherry: It does seem to be a miracle.

Marie: It does. Um, and she's hoping to be an inspirational speaker sometime in the future. She's a mother - and she's waiting for that plan to unfold - and she just kind of feels like her religion will help her be open to whatever messages she may receive about the murder. Because she doesn't feel like this case was closed. I think most people in that community would agree that the case was not satisfactorily investigated.

Sherry: Is she hoping to eventually find the killer?

Marie: Um. She doesn't sound like she is really interested in that. She loves her family - she misses them very much. She's grateful for the second chance she received. But she kind of feels like God knows who the murderer is - and it's in God's hands. And that's enough for her for now.

Sherry: Oh, I can understand that.

Marie: Yeah. I think it's probably the only way she can find any peace. There's no way for her to know, and it sounds like she has found peace.

Sherry: You know, I'm glad Stacy's at peace not knowing who the killer is - but I believe Scott deserves justice still. And so does she.

Marie: Well, I guess the gray-haired man and, most likely, Jon Stout could use a little justice, too. The more I learn about this case the more I'm convinced this wasn't a parricide at all.

Sherry: I know, right? Sadly, there is no true ending to this story. We don't know who the killers are and we can't even tell you what the motive was. That's all we have.

This episode couldn't have happened without the invaluable insights we gained from both Stacy, herself, in her documentary, Porcelain Dolls: the Stacy Moody Story and Attorney Rob St. Clair, the author of Saving Stacy: The Untold Story of the Moody Massacre. That book is a treasure trove of facts and details. If you want to learn more about this case or the shady actors in it, we highly recommend you pick up a copy of this book. Rob St. Clair is really interesting. You mentioned he's an attorney, isn't he the very attorney who was in the hospital with Stacy when she was being interviewed for the first time?

Sherry: Yes, with the Coroner. He has been a part of this case, really, since the shootings.

Maire: Yeah. It makes sense that he's got so much information, because he's been with them the whole time.

Sherry: I agree he knows a lot about this case. Do you want some cool insider information?

Marie: You know I do.

Sherry: Rob St. Clair has a second book coming out that will give you more information about the two men at the scenes of the Moody murders. The book should be released any day now.

Marie: Really! We have to get that book! Is it more about these murders?

Sherry: Not directly. It's called The Killing of Dan Ott, and it's about a hit gone wrong. The hitmen kill the wrong Dan Ott. They murder a florist instead of the intended target - who is a notorious corvette thief.

Marie: That's quite a mistake! But wait. These murders looked a lot like a hit - with that kill switch shooting and the blankets tucked up under everyone's chins.

Sherry: Yeah. And the book is like a sequel on the crime and corruption existing in the Logan County Sheriff's Office. It details how the mistaken hit exposes a scheme where Logan County Law Enforcement officials were paying prison inmates to set up murder-for-hire hits with their friends on the outside. The Moodys lived in Logan County.

Marie: It all makes sense. Logan County seems to have been the home of a lot of corruption for a while. And it sounds like this new book will really lend some insights on the Moody case. Don't you think?

Sherry: Indeed.

Marie: Okay - I'm going to go to Amazon right now to pre-order.

Sherry: Okay.

Marie: Can I pre-order?

Sherry: I'm not sure. Let's see.

Marie: Hmm. It looks like maybe not yet on Amazon. Okay Siri, remind me in two weeks to buy the killing of Dan Ott by Rob St. Clair.

Siri: Done.

Brooke: Thanks, Siri.

Sherry: Good job.

Siri: Thanks. Glad to help.

Marie: We'd like to thank Siri. But we'd also like to thank Jade Brown for our theme music and Rob St. Clair and Stacy Moody for the information and insights we drew from their works. We'd also like to thank the Dayton Daily News, the New York Times, the Journal News, and the Bellefontaine Examiner for a variety of information and the photos we use for the show. You can see the photos at parricide.org just click on the Parricide Podcast once you get to the website.

If you are able, please consider helping us support our show with a pledge through patreon.com/ParricidePodcast. Any money donated is tax deductible because we're a 501(c)3 charity and every cent you donate goes directly into not only supporting the production of this podcast, but also into the research we are doing to build a model to help identify threats to family safety. Thanks for your support, and we'll see you in two weeks.

Sherry: Bye for now!

Marie: Goodbye!

(theme song) Ashes, ashes; We all fall down.

Siri: I don't understand.