**Michael Gandy Talking Book Synopses**

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**Books available from-** **thegandymysteries1@gmail.com**

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**“Murder in Olivet”: Based on the true-life abduction of a leading citizen of a small town in Mississippi, this, my first novel, changes the victim and the setting and resolves a mystery that, in reality, remains just that…unsolved. Some of the darker characters came from stories told by my contemporaries in other churches when I worked in such a setting. (All the folks I interacted with were great.)**

**“Tatters and other Tales”: Inspired by the true-life murder of two Mississippi policemen, this, my second novel, gains its title from the wire-haired terrier that was the family pet of the Gandy’s who lived at the YMCA during World War II. Some characters are based on members of our family of the day and many tales from our kin of that era are included. The five short stories, a foray into that form, remain appended to the novel I wrote about that same time.**

**“Emily Stallworth is About” (there is a reason for the spacing in the title): This came from the real-life unsolved kidnapping of a beloved Mississippi matriarch in 1988. In my novel, I changed the location to Maryland and the victim to a millionaire’s trophy wife for whom the bloom has faded a bit. One of my longest works, it consists of two books—the initial dealing with the abduction, the subsequent with the discovery by a young newspaper reporter of what happened. A key character is the irascible Alice Roosevelt Longworth, Teddy Roosevelt’s daughter, who described herself as Washington’s gadfly.**

**“That, My Friends, Is That”:  Broadcast executive Frederick Mellon skewers them all—local politicians, drug dealers, unsavory businessmen—in his weekly radio editorial, That, My Friends, Is That.  But someone takes exception and shoots him, though not fatally. Davy and his friend Eugene—two gangly, funny twelve-year-olds—seek to find out who and why. But Mellon and others do everything possible to keep these pre-teens from revealing truths that could destroy the reputation of the adult and the lives of the boys.**

**“Passenger Pigeon”: The novel was inspired by a real-life crime in which a public official faked his own death. The plot runs from South Mississippi to the Florida Panhandle and introduces characters who appear in a number of sequels including “Re^Incarnation”, “Isle of Caprice”, and “Damascus”. This tale transforms a formerly benign character into a psychotic villain in my canon.**

**“The Zapruder Soundtrack”: This is by far my most popular book. The seminal event in the childhood of many of us Baby Boomers was the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The eight-millimeter home movie of the murder, just twenty-six seconds long, by garment-maker Abraham Zapruder, actually photographed the moving air, of which sound is constituted. With a mechanism to convert that image into an audible signal, the number of shots and the directionality of fire could be determined, answering a lot of the questions that remain about this crime. A silent film restorer and the retired owner of a cable network, the cur and the curmudgeon, get to work on this, which gains the quite negative attention from those who want the secrets behind the murder of our 35th President kept.**

**“Hidden Alley”: Extending the story of the missing trophy wife from “Emily Stallworth Is…About”, this mystery expands on the novel, taking the narrative in a totally unexpected direction, which is all I can say without giving away the plot.**

**“Chain”: A series of unexplained deaths among personages at Hemley University involves the campus police chief, eventually revealing a most unusual and unsavory use of science. This, my eighth book, has an interesting history. The lead character, Gil Marino, didn’t make an appearance again until my thirty-eighth book, “Immolation”, which continued Gil’s life just after the events in this one.**

**“Revolution Number Nine”: In a small town in Texas, a retired professor in criminal justice working as a maintenance man in a middle school teams up with the police chief, one of his former pupils, to solve the problem of increasing levels of violence at the school that somehow seem to be related to an obscure track by The Beatles.**

**“Sam Lord’s Castle”: A middle-aged woman is sent to Barbados for an experiential training exercise that turns out to be a murder plot with her at the middle. But is the victim supposed to be her or is she merely the bait to bring the real target to an end?**

**“Whippoorwill”: This is the story that is to date my most read serialized novel on Facebook, gaining dozens of readers as it included memories and photographs of the real YMCA camp that inspired this tale of little Davy’s loss and discoveries at the fictional Camp Scanlan following the events of its prequel, “That, My Friends, Is That”.**

**“Incar\*Nation”: The First Lady finds out that the President of the United States is planning to scrap the Constitution and set himself up as a monarch. She will do anything to stop him, even if it requires that she give up her own life.**

**“Re^Incarnation”: This was my first foray into the supernatural. Ellen Garner’s daughter is lost to her by way of a jealous ex-boyfriend. She moves to Cape Cod to escape her grief, but while there, a miracle reunites her with her child. And then she is given the unthinkable choice—to keep her or to let her go?**

**“A Bell Toils in the Vieux Carré”: My one-time take on a Sherlock Holmes-type mystery, this one takes the real-life model for Holmes, the Edinburg physician Dr. Joseph Bell, and transports him with a clerk who may or may not be Arthur Conan Doyle to New Orleans in the late nineteenth century ostensibly for a vacation but which turns into a search for a serial killer. I had a great deal of fun recording the talking book, which required I employ all sorts of British accents, bringing forth the skill in mimicry that used to annoy our British mother no end. And too, inspired by *Shakespeare in Love*, there are all sorts of references to characters and places in the Holmes canon.**

**“Tempest-Tossed”: A true fantasy, this one tells of a Southerner trying out New York City in the 1970s and stumbling into some of the most fascinating celebrities of the day, the most famous one asking him to ghostwrite a novel for her, while on his way to what will prove to be a life-changing calamity.**

**“You Can’t Always Get What You Want”: This book deals with a great deal of marital strife brought on by sexual obsession. A man runs into an old teacher of his and cannot get her off his mind. His compulsion to be with her wrecks his marriage, his relationship with his children, and his career. A listener of the talking book version noted that “You Can’t Always Get What You Want” has the most shocking finale of any of my mysteries. The reader emailed me to say she had to listen to the ending three times…it was that powerful.**

**“Gloriette”: Jenny Livingstone, an attractive, married lower-level state employee, is noticed by the governor, who brings him into his orbit with the attending pressures. When she resists his advances, he retains her but brings in someone much more amenable to his desires, which sets up a huge career conflict for Jenny.**

**“Alchemy”: Patty Sue, a little girl in a small Southern town, finds undeveloped film in an old camera and has a friend at the local newspaper develop it. When a feature piece is published regarding the depicted parade from three decades past, threatening events indicate someone quite powerful does not want whatever the photos show investigated further.**

**“Circle of Fifths”: A celebration of my twentieth book, this set of forty short stories feature characters from their like-numbered novels, and connect to each other in the order of presentation and from both the middle (twenty stories in) and the end (forty stories in) to the beginning story. (You have to read it to get the concept.)**

**“Coelecanth”: A Texas family is whisked away in the middle of the night owing to some infraction of their mother and end up in England. But the trouble she inspired has followed, threatening her children, a brother and sister totally disoriented by the Old Country and fearful of what they don’t understand about their Mom.**

**“Isle of Caprice”: A psychopathic escaped prisoner kidnaps a woman who resembles someone he believed wronged him and places her on an island in the Gulf of Mexico. She manages an escape and, with the help of a crime family in Biloxi—“the Corleone’s of the Coast”—she gains her revenge.**

**“Dummy Line”: A man who suffered a head injury as a child writes his autobiography, which deals with his many challenges and climaxes with the town beauty, a former homecoming queen, getting down on one knee and proposing marriage to him, a gesture that he has totally earned.**

**“Lists”: An unlikely figure is propelled into the presidency and faces his greatest challenge when pregnant women are kidnapped off the streets of America, threatened with live beheading on the Internet. His unprecedented solution results in their immediate freedom but does not end the threat to him.**

**“Snowmen Sleep in the Sea”: A mass murder at a small town manufacturing plant is investigated by the Chief of Security, the former woman police chief from “Murder in Olivet”, and discloses an international conspiracy far beyond killing.**

**“The Guilt of the Magi”: The spontaneous immolation of a protestor across from the White House reveals a horrendous injustice mounted against a Native American tribe in the great Southwest. Robert Todd, a minor character in “Emily Stallworth is About” takes center stage, playing alongside major figures from the Nixon administration including the President himself. A totally different take on the Watergate break-in wraps up the tale.**

**“Detritus”: This is one story spread across two books, with a huge plot turn right in the middle.  An exploration of power politics in state government, this one begins with a state employee rising in his career until it is abruptly cut off and continues with the effects of the devastating happenings on his wife and child.**

**“Thunder Snow”:  The horrific natural disaster that struck the little town of Millicent, Mississippi, was nothing compared to the international conspiracy that was hatched there.  Mayor Millie, who insisted that her architectural standards define the whole town, was just one of the puzzles that Harry Howell had to unravel to solve the mystery at the center of "Thunder Snow".**

**“The Purple Lantern”:  Two sisters, Rosemary and Margaret Howse, buy a bed-and-breakfast in a small town in Mississippi, hoping to live out their years entertaining guests with home-baked goods and fresh flowers picked from their garden.   But within the home they purchased lives a history of treachery involving an unexplained fatal automobile accident and a preacher who suddenly left the ministry, and, as Faulkner wrote, in the case of the Howse sisters and murder, the past is never dead, it's not even past**.

**“Unthinkable”: The threat from “Lists” continues, this time with an attempt to kidnap the body of John F. Kennedy, not to hold it for ransom, as was attempted with Lincoln’s remains, but to accomplish something far more sinister.**

**“Inconceivable”: This begins with two children, twelve-years-old, but the little girl is gravely ill and dies. Years later, as the administrator of a mental health facility, the little boy, grown into middle age, sees her again as an inpatient, and she recognizes him as well. But she is not a ghost and she is not a clone.**

**“Dreamless”: A strange elderly neighbor to a graduate student in the Mississippi college town of Adeline (also featured in “Chain”) turns out to hold the keys to mysteries of the assassination of Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr.**

**“Jackson Whole”: An automobile accident involving Mississippi’s governor and the mayor of its capital city kills the mayor’s daughter, who is thrown to the road. But in which vehicle was she riding and what does this mean?**

**“Resolute”: A trainer of detectives in Washington, DC (Wes Estebuch, a minor figure in both “Emily Stallworth is About” and “The Zapruder Soundtrack”) uncovers a conspiracy that extended from the assassination of Abraham Lincoln to the rise of Adolf Hitler to power and beyond.**

**“A Moving Thing”: A retired man goes to sleep one night and wakes up in his childhood home, once again twelve-years-old. He goes back and forth in time without being able to control that. In his younger days, an older man who lives down the block turns out to possess secrets of life and death that extend back to the Bible.**

**“Pilgrim”: The head of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health takes time off to lead a seminar on Cape Cod. But one of his students stages her suicide in front of him, and the investigation into that reveals the actual motive for the murder of his own wife, which took places years previously.**

**“Coercion”: The first female governor of Mississippi is blackmailed into running for President of the United States. At issue are not any personal failings on her behalf but her resolves to protect a former client of her law practice at the middle of the disappearance of seven teenagers decades previously.**

**“Legerdemain”: A retelling of the story of “Detritus”, this time with an emphasis on the villain, rather than her victims, an autocratic woman whose actions wreak havoc throughout state government. She’s much less sexy and much scarier this time around.**

**“Immolation”: A sequel to “Chain”, written thirty books later, this deals with arson and how it is used to influence the power politics of a college campus.**

**“Twist of Fate”: John F. Kennedy forgoes his back brace on that November day, suffering a neck wound but falling out of sight before the fatal head blow. He lives, paraplegic and with his distinctive voice affected, and must decide whether to run for re-election in less than a year. The scene where he meets Lee Harvey Oswald is pivotal.**

**“Synergy”: Synergy Best, a self-described fat little girl on Cape Cod seeks to find why her model-gorgeous mother left her and her father and learns family truths she wishes she hadn’t known. At heart, this is an unconventional love story, and when the girl grows up to become Governor of Massachusetts, she finds the culmination of that.**

**“Kidnapping Lincoln”: A revised history, wherein the initial plot against the 16th President, to abduct him and put him on trial, is carried out. An unexpected ally brings the story to its surprise conclusion.**

**“Juxtaposition”: This recounts a fictionalized version of the real-life story of Lucy Lambert Hale, once a sweetheart of Abraham Lincoln’s eldest son Robert Todd Lincoln, and, at the time of the assassination, engaged to marry John Wilkes Booth, the President’s murderer.**

**“Hub City”: A retired female reporter, pushing ninety, and her young friend, a teenager who wants to pursue a career in journalism, run across the matter of the misuse of teenage girls by the school principal and how he was made to face accountability for his sins.**

**“Damascus”: A tale of Hurricane Sandy, which brought both a typhoon and a blizzard to New England, and what its winds revealed that should have been hidden forever.**

**“Solstice”: Roberta Lee, the Vice President from “Incar\*Nation”, is featured in this prequel that deals with the hunting death of the congressman husband of her friend Mary Ann Montgomery. Only it turns out the accident was no accident, and both Roberta and Mary Ann are in jeopardy.**

**“Solitude”: The patriarch of the richest family in little Olivet, Mississippi, decides to leave his wife, something she defiantly decides to reverse. And the woman chief of security at the manufacturing plant in which the family has a controlling interest is pulled right into the middle of all of it.**

**“Solipsis”: A man wakes up in the middle of a family dinner, realizing he has lost over twenty years of his memory. He pieces together the events of the past two decades, including a marriage he doesn’t remember along with the mysterious death of that wife and whether or not he played a part in that.**

**“DS”: The designated survivor on the night of the State of the Union, the African American female Secretary of Education, is at the White House when the Capitol is attacked, with everyone killed. She is sworn into office and gives a brief address on television. But then Dan Rather (yep, the very same), now working for an Internet news site, discovers that the white, male Secretary of Commerce, six steps above her in the succession chain, is alive, being held in a Maryland jail for questioning in the murder of his wife, which under the Constitution makes him the President. Or does it? And, oh yes, she’s a conservative of the opposition party and he is a liberal of the dead President’s constituency.**

**“Lucy”: While closing up one night, a thirty-year-old hardware store owner comes across the dog he and his girlfriend owned in college before she cut out one night, taking Lucy with her. But now the dog has returned and the girl is missing. A check indicates the girlfriend died in a fire years ago. What gives?**

**“BMOC”: A high school, college, and pro-football star becomes a prominent figure in Washington politics, though working inside the system, not from elective office. But then he attempts to kill the President, dying in the process, and it is up to his cousin, who was as a sister to him, to tell his true story to clear his name.**

**“Trio”: Three women in their middle years deal with a major shift in their relationship when one of them goes to work for someone who turns out to be a major criminal, setting up everything for her to take the blame. It is up to the other two to set things right.**

**“Blunt”: An unconventional President, determined to do things his own way, turns out to be at the middle of a plot of which he is somewhat unaware—there is far more to it than the nefarious things he does know—a conspiracy to both rob him of his power and, ultimately, his life. He’s no innocent, but he doesn’t deserve to die.**

**“Fail”: A powerful family hires an incompetent reporter to investigate the disappearance of their son with an unsavory woman. But she is connected to a crime family on the coast (the same ones from “Isle of Caprice”), and our reporter—Brad Everett from many past tales—is soon way in over his head.**

**“11 Out”: Based on a true story…eleven ophthalmology residents weigh leaving their program because their supervising physician is putting them in unethical, sometimes illegal, positions. But the medical school is taking his side.**

**“Run”: A teenager is kidnapped, and it turns out his late mother’s family is connected with this, feeling the boy is better off in their care than with his father. But all is not as it seems, and family secrets long kept hidden come out in the attempt to find him.**

**“Stalk”: The police chief in a small town goes missing, and whether he is alive or dead, bad things are about to come out that no one wants to know, not his ex-wife, not the man vying for his job, not the chief’s bodacious girlfriend, who, as it turned out, was not so friendly.**

**“Aesthetics”: The attempt to put a big box store in the middle of an upscale development turns the town of Millicent, Mississippi, on its head, with opponents on both sides of the issue turning deadly.**

**“Intruder”: The Vice President’s daughter is granted time at Camp David to work on her doctoral dissertation. But her time out there is interrupted by an intrusion of a most deadly nature, the revelation of a military conspiracy against the presidency itself.**

**“Escape”: Lee Harvey Oswald’s big mistake was leaving the Book Depository right after the assassination of President Kennedy. But what if he had stayed, hiding the rifle in a place in the wall? A rewriting of that awful time, with no suspect in hand, makes the succeeding days much more fraught. A reporter gains Oswald as an inside source as to what is happening in the building, not realizing he is talking with the killer himself.**

**“Eclipse”: An action movie star is catapulted into the Presidency through an unexpected act of God at an outside debate—a freak bolt of heat lightning—and finds himself way over his head in his new job. His First Lady, an Asian woman with snow white hair named Yono, turns out to have much better appreciation for the situation than the public knows.**

**“Ellipse”: The daughters of Gil Marino, the campus security chief from “Chain” and “Immolation”, chart very different paths. One follows him into law enforcement, the other is a computer geek, and it is the tech wiz who finds herself in the middle of a plot of revenge against, of all people, her mother, an attorney who has, for the most part, dealt with non-controversial cases.**

**“P-Town”: A series of murders against gay and lesbian residents in and around Provincetown on Cape Cod, are linked to black gangs in Boston and Providence, Rhode Island. But it’s a set-up, and it is up to the woman police chief of Wellfleet, Massachusetts, and the older male detective in P-Town to find out who really is behind this and why.**

**“Whistler”: The graduate student daughter of a Texas police chief, killed years ago in the line of duty, is drawn back to the town of his murder by clues designed to lead her to the truth.**

**“Murder on the Cape”: Two girls are abducted from the establishment of a new innkeeper, threatening his business and making him wonder if they are really dead or if this was just a way of putting him out of business.**

**“Murder in DC”: A politician is ruined when his affair with an intern is suspected and her body is found within sight of his home back in his district. But there is a lot more than meets the eye, including the possibility that she was behind the whole thing.**

**“Syzygy”: Just before Christmas break, a small-town teacher receives a notice of a package she has supposedly received from Afghanistan. Though she has no idea what this is about, this sends her into legal jeopardy and on a journey to protect her ward that results in a possible life sentence in a South American jail.**

**“Purloin”: After moving to an assisted living center for support with her Parkinson’s disease, an older woman weighs whether to invest in the facility. A criminal element seeks to exploit her financially, and she engages the help of a significant powerful woman connected with a crime family to take her side in the matter.**

**“Life’s”: This is the telling of the post-automobile accident experiences of a man who survives alternated with those of a woman surviving a wreck. John’s story is told in first person narrative, with Jennifer’s being presented in third person. Some characters appear in both stories, but each time the narrative changes, the point-of-view changes as well. (It’s not as confusing as it sounds!)**

**“Assig^Nation”: A young man is suspected of engaging in a sexual liaison with the First Lady. It’s not true, but try to tell the thundering hoard of media that. And, yes, there is a hidden agenda behind all of it.**

**“Resig^Nation”: The story of “Assig^Nation” is told from the President’s standpoint, and all isn’t what it seems in the earlier book.**

**“Thief”: Life as a young single in the late 1970s/early 1980s is told through the eyes of a young man who joins a nontraditional church only to find some of the members are quite eccentric, one or two criminally so. The Great Jackson Flood of 1979 is a key event in the telling.**

**“Obelysk”: A coffee shop in DC is at the center of a plot to overhear conversations from within the White House by using an app that records and uploads conversations from different cell phones five seconds at a time, then stitches them together in the middle of the night. But the owner of the place has no idea this is happening.**

**“MemorobiliC”: The Judge, a resident of a memory care unit who hasn’t spoken for at least a decade, turns to an aide to say, “They are all dead, and I think I killed them.” The aide seeks the help of a local TV personality to come to the truth, which turns out to be horrific and genocidal, with The Judge on the right side of the matter, though he has no idea of it. (This book has a majority African American cast, and I had inside help both from memory care staff and some black friends in making that realistic.)**

**“pERFECT”: An embezzler escapes to Cape Cod, but behind him, a former girlfriend ends up dead, and he is suspected of having killed her. The hunt is on!**

**“PAUL OTT: Listen to the Eagle”: Mississippi’s good will ambassador—singer, environmentalist, all-around entertainer—contacted me to write his authorized biography. Filled with inside stories and contributions from two Mississippi governors, a star of a 1960s television program, and many notable others, this is the definitive story of one of the Magnolia state’s favorite sons. The talking book includes an album of his most notable tracks including “Listen to the Eagle”, “Ole Blue”, and “I Am The South.”**

**“PAUL OTT: Word-for Word”: After Paul Ott’s death, his widow Lynda and I got together to edit the interviews of him that went into making his contributions to the book. The talking book includes his first album, long out of print, “A Message for Mankind”, specifically remastered for this release.**

**“State of This Art”: A 2021 review of my books, including an overview of all works available up to that date with samples from each, including forty novels, three sets of short stories, three nonfictions works, a short story published in an outside anthology, and two excerpts from personal remembrances that will not be published.**