

9TH UNPLUGGED

SUZANNE MORRIS

JUDICIAL ASSISTANT

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore.

MS. MORRIS: Hi, I'm Suzanne Morris.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And we are on 9th Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So welcome to 9th Unplugged. Thank you so much for joining me.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you for having me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You are welcome. Please tell our audience your position and what you do.

MS. MORRIS: I am a new judicial assistant --

JUDGE LATIMORE: Welcome.

MS. MORRIS: Yes. Judge Elizabeth Gibson. Just started with her in March and before that I actually worked in family court, Unified Family Court, case management.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And do you miss that?

MS. MORRIS: There's parts of it that I miss.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

MS. MORRIS: But it's exciting. I'm in criminal now so I'm learning a lot of stuff.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, so I came from family not too long ago as well. You do kind of miss parts of it.

MS. MORRIS: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You're working with the families and then you have something new to get attached to.

MS. MORRIS: Exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is that right?

MS. MORRIS: Exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So we're going to step away from work for a little while and find out what you're doing outside of work. So what do you spend most of your time doing when you're away from work?

MS. MORRIS: I have an almost ten-year-old daughter, who is currently obsessed with Universal so we go there quite a bit.

JUDGE LATIMORE: How do you like Universal?

MS. MORRIS: I love it. It's funny though, I used to love roller coasters, but I'm noticing like as I'm getting older, I'm like, yeah, I'm good this time.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, I think when we get older, we realize what really a roller coaster is. We kind of pull away from that.

MS. MORRIS: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: But does she really enjoy the roller coasters?

MS. MORRIS: For the most part she does. She's still, you know, a little nervous because she's still at that age but I told her in a couple years, she's probably going to want to do everything. But yeah, so it's mostly just spending time with her and my husband.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And are you originally from Orlando?

MS. MORRIS: No.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Where are you from?

MS. MORRIS: I – well, I've been here so long, it almost feels like it. I've been here since 2007. But I'm originally from the Hampton Roads area of Virginia.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right, you were born there.

MS. MORRIS: Yes. Born and raised.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is your family still there?

MS. MORRIS: I have some family still there.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. MORRIS: Some of us have sprouted out.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What brought you here?

MS. MORRIS: Actually, my brother moved down here first. And then I was kind of at a transition phase in my life and was just like, I'm going to go down there with him and –

JUDGE LATIMORE: There you go.

MS. MORRIS: -- just been here ever since.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There you go. So welcome to Florida too. So with that, you – I understand you have a podcast yourself.

MS. MORRIS: I do.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice. Okay, so teach me something so I can do better.

MS. MORRIS: Oh, man, I was hoping to learn from you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Tricked you.

MS. MORRIS: It's a little different format because we don't – we don't interview people.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Tell us about it.

MS. MORRIS: It's me and a friend of mine, we go to the same church and it just kind of came out of us having these long conversations. And her husband was just like, you guys should start a podcast. And I was like, because I knew quite a few people that when I would talk to them about things that me and her discussed, they would be like, I wish I was a fly on the wall, you know in the room with you two. And so we kind of prayed on it and waited till the right time, and I think we released our first episode in February.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Of this year?

MS. MORRIS: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wonderful.

MS. MORRIS: So, but it's fun. It's exciting. I love it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's the name of it?

MS. MORRIS: It's called Stringing Pearls.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wonderful. All right, well, keep up the good work.

MS. MORRIS: Thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I also understand that you're studying Hebrew.

MS. MORRIS: It's kind of like self-study.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. MORRIS: It's funny, it started during 2020 you know when all of us were trying to find things to do with our life.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Right, when we were all locked in the house.

MS. MORRIS: In the house. Right, and my local library, you know, they're sending out emails on how to keep you connected while they're closed. And they're like, we offer free language, like a little website you could go to. I was like, yeah, why not. Didn't expect it, but when I came across Biblical Hebrew, I was like, oh, wow, that sounds interesting.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. MORRIS: And ever since then I'm just like – just anything I can to try to learn like – it's just to me personally brought a new level of depth in understanding. When I'm reading my Bible, understanding the original contexts, the original words, what it meant to them when they said certain things because it's not always what we think in our understanding. Our western view is very different from their view and so it's just like – to me it's like a treasure hunt.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

MS. MORRIS: Like, oh my gosh, what was the original word? What did it originally mean?

JUDGE LATIMORE: What did it really mean?

MS. MORRIS: Yeah, like it's just exciting to me so I love it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's wonderful. That is quite interesting.

MS. MORRIS: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I would love to know what your secret talent is.

MS. MORRIS: Do I have a secret talent? If you were to ask the people closest to me, they would say my secret talent is knowing the outcome of something before it happens.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh.

MS. MORRIS: Because I am extremely analytical.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. MORRIS: And my degree is in psychology so like I already have a little bit of a psychological background like – and so they sometimes won't tell me things because they know I might tell them an outcome they don't want to hear. But I don't claim that I predict anything. I'm just really good at analyzing situations and being able to –

JUDGE LATIMORE: An intuition.

MS. MORRIS: Yes, exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. MORRIS: I can just be like, this is – or I can see the root of something. If someone starts telling me something is going on in their life, I can kind of probably get to the root of it without them having to tell me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

MS. MORRIS: So that's my secret.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So remind me not to tell you anything, okay.

MS. MORRIS: Yeah, people tell me that all the time, like, let me be careful what I say around you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I don't really want to know, okay, how this is going to turn out. What inspires you to be better?

MS. MORRIS: I think, of course, you know being a great example for my daughter. I had her a little bit later. I had my son when I was 19, and then I had my daughter when I was 34. So just trying to be a better me, especially being a female, having her have someone that she can look up to see what it's like to not be perfect but try to be better. And yeah, that's mostly the biggest motivation.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So before you came to the court system, what other types of jobs did you hold.

MS. MORRIS: Nothing in the legal field.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So what was it?

MS. MORRIS: Immediately before I came here, I actually did dependency case management.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Really. Did I meet you there by any chance?

MS. MORRIS: Yes. I don't – I don't think – I don't think so. Well, you know what, you did do the adoption – I came to adoption day.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, nice.

MS. MORRIS: And you did that. So –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Happiest day in the courthouse.

MS. MORRIS: But yeah, I used to work for Children's Home Society doing that. And then before that, I did stuff in public schools. Like I worked in the discipline office at a high school. I have a history in banking, in mortgages and stuff like that. It's like all kind of random kind of things. But, and I honestly never thought in a million years I would be in any way connected to the legal system at all. Like, it just never was on my radar, but it's shocked me how much I've actually enjoyed it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So you can tell other people what's going to happen in their life but you didn't figure that part out –

MS. MORRIS: I really had no idea.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Just a side note, okay.

MS. MORRIS: No idea. None.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What question would you most like to know the answer to?

MS. MORRIS: Oh, man, that is way too complex.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, all right, we don't want to be complex on 9th Unplugged, now. We're just having a good time.

MS. MORRIS: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I'll move to another question. So tell me, who are the three people who have most influenced you throughout your life?

MS. MORRIS: Oh, wow. My husband.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, how did you all meet?

MS. MORRIS: On line.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, nice. Okay.

MS. MORRIS: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So there are good outcomes to online dating.

MS. MORRIS: There are good outcomes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Somebody on this – somebody listening to this need to hear that, okay.

MS. MORRIS: I tell people all the time, your spouse will bring out the worst in you but it's because it has to come out for you to be your best.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh...

MS. MORRIS: So I feel like we've both done that for one another. And I couldn't like, to see where we are now, I would have imagined. So – inspired me. Probably my grandmother.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. MORRIS: Just to see how she was such a hard worker. She did whatever it took to take care of us.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. MORRIS: So – yep.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is there a third one?

MS. MORRIS: I guess I can say Jesus. He’s my ultimate inspiration.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, I would think that would –

MS. MORRIS: He is who I aim to be like

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, then, you know what, and that is a great person to want to be like.

MS. MORRIS: Exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So with that, thank you so much for joining me for 9th Unplugged.

MS. MORRIS: Absolutely. Thank you. It was fun.

(Music)