

9<sup>TH</sup> UNPLUGGED

ALLEN FIGUEROA

COURT INTERPRETER

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, hello, I'm Judge Latimore.

MR. FIGUEROA: I'm Allen Figueroa.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you're listening to 9<sup>th</sup> Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So before we unplug from work and dive into life outside the courts as we do, tell us your title and which department you work in.

MR. FIGUEROA: I am a court interpreter and I work for the interpreters' department.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. And so what languages do you speak?

MR. FIGUEROA: For the courthouse, English and Spanish. I also speak American Sign Language.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Is there a language that you would have – another language that you would like to learn or wish you had learned?

MR. FIGUEROA: Definitely. I'm currently working on Portuguese.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. So what is something you would never ever do again?

MR. FIGUEROA: Something I would never ever do again.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Um-hum.

MR. FIGUEROA: Probably go surfing.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What happened when you went surfing?

MR. FIGUEROA: Last time I got bit by a shark.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, that's probably a reason why you might not want to go again.

MR. FIGUEROA: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you ever go to beaches anymore?

MR. FIGUEROA: Of course. All the time. I love it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You love the beaches but you're not going to go surfing.

MR. FIGUEROA: Not surfing, not anymore.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What do you like to do sports-wise?

MR. FIGUEROA: So I'm in a league. I play kickball, volleyball and dodgeball. And actually tomorrow we start up again after Corona. We have the first kickball game.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All righty. So what is special about where you grew up?

MR. FIGUEROA: Special about where I grew up, in Cuba, oh, my gosh everything. The food, the people, the beaches, it's the best.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And if you were able to choose where you would live now other than Orlando, where would you like to live?

MR. FIGUEROA: In the U.S. I would think Atlanta would be a nice place to live. Been there a few times and I love it. Outside of the U.S., I'd have to say Madrid.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Madrid. Have you visited Madrid before?

MR. FIGUEROA: Of course, yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what is it about Madrid that you like so much?

MR. FIGUEROA: Everything. Just the food, the lifestyle, just the way that people live there, just the vibe that you get from the city, it's amazing.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. You say a lot about food. Do you cook?

MR. FIGUEROA: I do.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You do. You have all kinds of skills, don't you?

MR. FIGUEROA: I was taught by my grandmother.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. So what is your best dish that you cook?

MR. FIGUEROA: Oh, definitely, my black beans.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Black beans.

MR. FIGUEROA: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. And do you do any other type of cuisines other than –

MR. FIGUEROA: You'd be surprised. My shepherd's pie is freaking amazing.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What is a skill that you'd like to master?

MR. FIGUEROA: A skill that I'd like to master?

JUDGE LATIMORE: Um-hum.

MR. FIGUEROA: I'd have to say cooking because I love to eat.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. On a typical weekend, or I'm sorry on a typical weekday, tell us what your day looks like.

MR. FIGUEROA: Wake up, shower, come to work. I like to go out during my lunch hour and just walk around, stretch my legs a little bit, get a little sun. And after I go home, if I haven't cooked already, cook my dinner and lunch for the next day. Go either for a walk or run and watch a movie or just relax.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. If you did not have to sleep, what would you do with the extra time?

MR. FIGUEROA: If I didn't have to sleep, oh, my gosh, I would probably go to the beach.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What is the most memorable gift you've ever received?

MR. FIGUEROA: The most memorable gift that I've ever received. I would have to say that was probably from my grandfather.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And can you share that with us?

MR. FIGUEROA: He gave me – so I don't have it with me yet, but the house that I grew up in Cuba, has a big frame that is embroidered and he told me that whenever I wanted that, that's going to be mine for my household. So I'm waiting for the date to go and be able to pack it up and bring it with me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's wonderful. And what do you regret not doing or not starting when you were younger?

MR. FIGUEROA: Probably not finishing my nursing career but that I could still do.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, okay. So you had an interest in nursing.

MR. FIGUEROA: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Are there any nurses in your family?

MR. FIGUEROA: No.

JUDGE LATIMORE: How is it that you came interested in nursing?

MR. FIGUEROA: I was always a very sick child. I was a preemie and we were – my brother and I were always in and out of the hospital so it was just an environment that we got used to. And it caught my eye early on.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. What makes you feel inspired or like your best self?

MR. FIGUEROA: Probably when I'm around my family.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And do you have a large family or smaller family?

MR. FIGUEROA: I grew up in a large family with all my uncles and aunts and cousins and grandparents. They're all still back in Cuba.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Other than not finishing your nursing career as of yet, how has your life been different from what you had imagined?

MR. FIGUEROA: It's been very different. For one, I never thought I was going to leave my country. After I left and I lived in Miami for 12 years, I never thought I was going to leave Miami and now I'm in Orlando and I don't know where I'm going to go next.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. So we have a connection. So I grew up, born and raised in Miami, Florida, so we've got that connection going on, right.

MR. FIGUEROA: There you go.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There you go. And what is it that you like the most about Miami?

MR. FIGUEROA: Just, well, all my – well, my old friends are there, the people that I grew up, my high school, my parents, my brother, the beaches, all the Cuban places, I miss being surrounded by Cubans.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. What's your favorite color?

MR. FIGUEROA: Red.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Red. And when was it that you got your ears pierced?

MR. FIGUEROA: That was in April actually of this year.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Really.

MR. FIGUEROA: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And how did that happen? Was that over a bet or did you lose a bet? Was that a challenge? How did that go?

MR. FIGUEROA: It was like half-and-half. I had always told my friends that – I was like, you know, I've always wanted to get my ears pierced and I want to get tattoos. And we made a bet and they're like, if you lose, you're getting your ears pierced. I'm like, let's do it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right.

MR. FIGUEROA: And it happened.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you lost.

MR. FIGUEROA: I lost. Clearly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: But you like the ear piercing?

MR. FIGUEROA: Yeah, I do. I'm digging it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. How about tattoos, have you done that yet?

MR. FIGUEROA: Not yet but I already know what I want.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You do know what you want.

MR. FIGUEROA: Of course.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, can you share that with us?

MR. FIGUEROA: So my first tattoo is going to be my mom, my aunt and my grandmother's birthdays all in numerals right here on this side.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. So you do have it all planned out. Do you need to lose another bet to make that happen?

MR. FIGUEROA: No, that's going to happen regardless.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. You're going to go ahead and get that done. What is the best book or series that you've ever read?

MR. FIGUEROA: Best book or series. So I will have to say one of my favorite authors is Gabriel Garcia Marquez. And one of my favorite books – I don't know if I can say the name on the radio because it does have a bit of a bad word on it in Spanish, but it's Memoria de Mis blank Tristes. And it's one of the best books I've ever read.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. That is one. What's your best movie, your favorite movie?

MR. FIGUEROA: Underworld.



JUDGE LATIMORE: Underworld. Why do you like Underworld?

MR. FIGUEROA: I don't know. It's the whole vibe of like the vampires and the werewolves, and it's just – it's cool.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So if you could be a creature, which mythical creature would you be?

MR. FIGUEROA: Oh, for sure, a vampire.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, would you?

MR. FIGUEROA: Oh, yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Tell me why. I just want to know why.

MR. FIGUEROA: I just – so from watching that movie Underworld, the fact that they're so classy and rich and just snobby, I was like, I love it, I want to be like that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You want to be classy, rich and snobby.

MR. FIGUEROA: Exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, I can understand that. Okay. What's your secret talent? You have lots of secret talents apparently, but what is one that you would like for everyone to know?

MR. FIGUEROA: I do. I can move only one eye at a time. That's pretty cool.

JUDGE LATIMORE: If you had a super power, what would it be?

MR. FIGUEROA: Telekinesis.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, okay. So that seems to be kind of popular today.

MR. FIGUEROA: Yeah, I mean, growing up watching the X-Men series and Jean Gray, and all that stuff, it's – it's cool.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's on your bucket list?

MR. FIGUEROA: What's on my bucket list? Well, first thing will be once the whole travel ban is lifted, be able to go back to Cuba and see my family. I haven't done that in over a year and I miss them a lot. And after that, for next year is take my mom on a trip around Europe.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, and is it because she wants to go to Europe or you want to show her Europe?

MR. FIGUEROA: She wants to go and I also want her to see – I want to show her all those countries.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Who inspires you to be better?

MR. FIGUEROA: Definitely my grandmother.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And what is a small gesture from a stranger that made a big impact on you?

MR. FIGUEROA: Small gesture from a stranger that made a big impact on me. I would have to say –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Even if it wasn't a stranger. Something that is most memorable that just had a big impact.

MR. FIGUEROA: That someone just did it. I don't know. Whenever someone does – I pay attention to detail a lot and I think it's the little things that count. When someone – like I received a birthday gift on my last birthday and it was the tiniest thing and I didn't even know

people knew, but they're like, yeah, you said at one time in conversation that you really loved this and I thought – I was – that just blew my mind.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. Well, it was great talking with you so I'll definitely remember this opportunity I had to meet you.

MR. FIGUEROA: Thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. Good talking with you and have a good day.

MR. FIGUEROA: You as well.

(Music)