

9<sup>TH</sup> UNPLUGGED

RANDI THOMAS

JUDICIAL ASSISTANT

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

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

MS. THOMAS: Hi, I'm Randi Thomas.

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

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So Randi, before we get unplugged from work and dive right into this conversation, tell us your title and which department you work in.

MS. THOMAS: I'm a judicial assistant for Judge Elizabeth Starr in the county civil division.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And how long have you been doing that?

MS. THOMAS: With Judge Starr, since June of this year. Previously, four years with Judge Clark. And prior to that four years with Judge Michael Miller.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You're a pro at this. All right. And so what skill would you like to master?

MS. THOMAS: Oh, goodness, okay. This is kind of a long stretch but I want to know what every motion means.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right.

MS. THOMAS: For work.

JUDGE LATIMORE: From your job right now.

MS. THOMAS: Yeah, I just – I want to know every civil order or the motions that are filed. I want to know what they are, why they're being filed.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Any interest in law? Becoming a lawyer?

MS. THOMAS: No, not really. I just really like to do well at my job and so when someone's talking to me or asking me questions, I want to know what I'm talking about.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. THOMAS: I'm really interested in teaching and I don't know if maybe that's the background of it. I like to know things and why it's being done and doing it correctly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what is it that you want to teach?

MS. THOMAS: Well, I would love to teach counseling, maybe college level. I have a master's in counseling, but I love my job here.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And how did you end up here when you had an interest in education and counseling?

MS. THOMAS: Well, I worked for the Clerk's Office during a really difficult time when the economy wasn't doing great. And they were gracious enough to hire me and so I wanted to work my way up. And at the time as a JA, the JA position, that was a hard job to get. There were no positions open and so I said, I want that challenge. I want to become a JA. And so three years working for the Clerk, I became a JA for Judge Miller.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. THOMAS: And I love it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You love it.

MS. THOMAS: I do. I love working here. I'm so happy.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. Well, let's – good. I'm glad you are happy working here.

MS. THOMAS: I am.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's a good thing. You have a great judge so I'm sure that's part of the reason. Let's go ahead and unplug. So when you're not at work, what are you doing?

MS. THOMAS: With my son.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Your son and how old is your son?

MS. THOMAS: He's ten.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Ten. And so what do you all enjoy doing together?

MS. THOMAS: We love to do all sorts of outdoor activities. He's in sports. He plays baseball. He does Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, flag football so I really love getting out with him and helping him. We love going riding – riding bikes, anything outdoors is just our fun thing to do together. Go-carts.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Did you do any type of sports previous to becoming an adult and having to go to work every day? Were you engaged in sports?

MS. THOMAS: Yes, I played lacrosse in high school.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. THOMAS: And I was recruited to play in college. And I also taught lacrosse at a summer camp on my time off in college in upstate New York.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right, so where were you born and raised?

MS. THOMAS: Here, Winter Park, Florida.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, so you are an original.

MS. THOMAS: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: A native as we say.

MS. THOMAS: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, that's wonderful. What gives your life meaning?

MS. THOMAS: These questions are great. What gives my life meaning? My family. I have a really big family.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you.

MS. THOMAS: That lives in this area. My son, my job.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And if you could live somewhere else other than Orlando or Winter Park, where would you live outside, if you wanted to live outside of this area?

MS. THOMAS: I would love to live in New York City.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Why is that?

MS. THOMAS: I love the hustle and bustle. I love fast pace. I just – I love that there's so much to do there.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. THOMAS: The arts and the food.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's your favorite food?

MS. THOMAS: Oh, gosh, I love sweets. I love chocolate.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, we just had somebody as a baker just walked past here so you just missed out on her.

MS. THOMAS: Really.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. THOMAS: Oh, I love –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Right in the building.

MS. THOMAS: I love baking. I do love baking.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Another baker. All right. So what is your favorite baking good that you make?

MS. THOMAS: Oh, I make I'm told really good homemade chocolate chip cookies. It's a simple thing but I make them and that is one of the things that I think I do really well and I'm really glad that I don't have to share right now.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And so what is your favorite restaurant? Do you have a favorite restaurant that you like to go to?

MS. THOMAS: Yes, I do. I love Hillstone.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, that is a good restaurant. Do you have a favorite dish there?

MS. THOMAS: Yes, the Hawaiian Ribeye.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Listen to you. Okay. So I think I read somewhere that you are not a seafood fan.

MS. THOMAS: No, I am not. Living in Florida and I love fishing. I love going fishing. I have scalloping but I do not eat seafood, and I've tried it but I don't eat it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And that's a taste preference, not necessarily an allergy or anything –

MS. THOMAS: No allergy. It's the taste and I tried it. I just can't –

JUDGE LATIMORE: How would you like to be remembered?

MS. THOMAS: I would like to be remembered as being empathetic, positive and just a joy to be around.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. What are you proudest of your life – about your life? What is the proudest thing?

MS. THOMAS: Very simple. My son.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

MS. THOMAS: Yeah. And my education.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. All right. And when you have a moment to be alone, what is it that you likely prefer to do all by yourself? When the son is off visiting family, what do you like to do on your own?

MS. THOMAS: I love to bake. I love to clean the house and have a nice clean house and light my candles and nobody can tell me it's too much.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Right. Right. There you go. Now I'm with you on the candle lighting thing but you can come over and help me with the cleaning the house part, okay. So there's very few people I know who say they enjoy cleaning the house.

MS. THOMAS: I know, I do. I really do.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's what makes you special, right?

MS. THOMAS: Yeah, I guess and I have a new puppy and he is no longer a puppy. He's a 90-pound black lab and I didn't know I could love an animal as much as I love him. He just brings so much joy to my life.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is this your first puppy?

MS. THOMAS: He is my first puppy but I also have a husky, a 13-year-old husky but he's just – he's always had that old man personality. He's not playful. He's a great dog but he's just not a very playful animal and this puppy, Kylo is my job. Oh, gosh, I love him, outside of my son.

JUDGE LATIMORE: How did you get that name?

MS. THOMAS: He was born on May the 4<sup>th</sup> and so that's, you know, they say Star Wars Day and so we named him Kylo. Kylo Ren, he's a black lab and so we thought you know the dark side, and so Kylo.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Cool. Cool. Tell me, what's your best tip for making the world a better place?

MS. THOMAS: I think people need to listen more, actively listen more. And be kind.



JUDGE LATIMORE: And you mentioned, I'm just not -- going to try to get this last bit in there. You mentioned Star Wars so if you were a mythical creature, what creature would that be?

MS. THOMAS: Okay. Let's see, I did -- you know, I thought of this. I really, really think I would want, and I don't know if this counts, a unicorn.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. THOMAS: Does that count?

JUDGE LATIMORE: That counts. That's absolutely a mythical creature.

MS. THOMAS: I know it's not Star Wars but they're just so fun and pretty. And sparkly and just seems that I would just have so much fun.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you know what, Randi, I think that fits you perfectly. I really do.

MS. THOMAS: Thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: It was wonderful speaking with you. Thank you for taking the time to get unplugged with me.

MS. THOMAS: Oh, it was great. Thank you so much for having me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Of course. I hope you have a good weekend.

MS. THOMAS: Thank you so much. You too.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Thank you.

(Music)