

9TH UNPLUGGED

NATASHA EDWARDS

HUMAN RESOURCE SPECIALIST I

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore

MS. EDWARDS: And I'm Natasha Edwards.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you're listening to 9th Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: Looking forward to getting unplugged with you, but before we do that, I'd ask if you could please tell our audience, you know, what are your duties or assignment in the courthouse.

MS. EDWARDS: I'm actually -- I just recently started a position as the HR specialist.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: I was before, just prior to that, I was a digital court reporter.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: So I'm happy to be in HR. I love helping people. And that's where I am right now.

JUDGE LATIMORE: We love having you there as well. What do you miss about court reporting?

MS. EDWARDS: Oh, my, God. That family over there of ladies and maybe just about two guys, it's a huge family. They stick together. They're very supportive and encouraging and we eat, eat, eat.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice, see, I can fit in that group.

MS. EDWARDS: Yes, good everywhere, yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I absolutely could fit in that group. All right, let's go ahead and get unplugged. So what is it that you do when you're not at work? What takes up most of your time?

MS. EDWARDS: I do a lot of Yoga.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: I go out a lot with my aunt who is part of a group called the Golden Girls.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: And they have – I've gotten acclimated to them now so they call me and they hang out. We do charity work. We do a lot of partying.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes. Yes, that sounds great.

MS. EDWARDS: Yes, a lot of partying. I exercise a lot when I leave here. I do either Yoga or I would go for a run. I do a lot of those things.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. And I, of course, we can't help but notice your accent. So where were you born and raised?

MS. EDWARDS: Trinidad and Tobago.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And how long has it been since you've been there?

MS. EDWARDS: I go every year because for the carnival.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Right.

MS. EDWARDS: But when I left Trinidad and Tobago, I moved to the UK, and then now I'm here.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, so the carnival, tell us about your experience with the carnival.

MS. EDWARDS: Oh, the parade. Oh, yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I only get to see it on TV so tell me.

MS. EDWARDS: All right. It's what you call an all-inclusive experience from beginning to end. From the minute you choose your costume till you end up in the street parade.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. EDWARDS: It's amazing. Everything is all-inclusive. The alcohol, the food, the pretty, pretty costumes, the music, the dancing in the streets.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. EDWARDS: It's just what carnival for me signifies freedom because it has a lot of history to it. Not many people know the history behind it and it was during slavery that that was the only time that slaves got to have like that one day.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: To enjoy themselves.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Celebrate.

MS. EDWARDS: And celebrate, yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, okay.

MS. EDWARDS: So as the years go on, they decided to get dressed, you know, do something about that parade.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, beautiful, beautiful outfits.

MS. EDWARDS: Yeah, design pretty, pretty costumes and so on. So that's what it signifies.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So does it last one day or is it more than one day?

MS. EDWARDS: Carnival in Trinidad lasts probably a whole month.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wow.

MS. EDWARDS: But the last two weeks of the month coming close to when Lent starts, that's when carnival ends and then we go into Lent, praying and acting like we never did anything. And any drinking or partying and so on. So it lasts two weeks, two full weeks.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, yes, all right. So that's wonderful. I would love to experience that one day. I understand that you had an unfortunate circumstance when you were a child.

MS. EDWARDS: Yes.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Can you share that with the audience?

MS. EDWARDS: Oh, boy, that was why –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Is it difficult for you to speak about?

MS. EDWARDS: No, no, no, not anymore. I'm getting better with water now.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes. I think it would take a while after that.

MS. EDWARDS: I'm getting better. I'm getting my fear – I'm overcoming that fear now. And I'm learning to swim.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: So before I remember being, probably I could have been about five years old and I remember going, and I was always brave and excited and getting in the water like I knew what I was doing. And the next thing I know I was you know trying to get air and couldn't. And I couldn't touch – just remember that I just couldn't touch –

JUDGE LATIMORE: The bottom of the –

MS. EDWARDS: The bottom of the – the ocean floor, you know. And I started to you know, started to get like a couldn't breathe and I'm just going under. And I'm trying to say help but of course I can't because water is going all in my –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. EDWARDS: And then I felt a hand just plucked me up and that was my godfather, which is also my uncle, and he was also my godfather. He was a fantastic swimmer. So he must have seen that I was struggling and pulled me out and ever since then for a very long time, going in like a pool or the beach, I would just, as long as it was touching my feet, my feet is touching the ground, I'm happy. But beyond that I'm not, no, but I'm getting better.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes. But that's understandable.

MS. EDWARDS: Yeah, getting better. It scared me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's understandable. I'm so --

MS. EDWARDS: It scared me tremendously.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So grateful for the godfather.

MS. EDWARDS: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE; Yes, absolutely.

MS. EDWARDS: Thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, and so do you participate in any type of activities involving nature, you know, not necessarily going to beaches or anything but –

MS. EDWARDS: No, I do a lot of hiking, because I plan a lot of things with the Golden Girls. We go out for meals. We go for dinner. We also try to stay healthy and active, so we do a lot of walk experiences or anything to do with, while I was big on the – in October we had the breast cancer walks so I told my whole department, breast cancer walk, why aren't we all involved in all of these things. So anything healthy and active, that's me. We're always doing outdoor stuff.

JUDGE LATIMORE: If you could invite anyone – just let me start with this. You cook a lot, correct?

MS. EDWARDS: Yes, I do.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And what types of cuisine do you cook?

MS. EDWARDS: Oh, boy, I can do Chinese. I can do Caribbean.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wow.

MS. EDWARDS: Yeah, if you want –

JUDGE LATIMORE: You're making me hungry.

MS. EDWARDS: My husband likes – his favorite is shrimp and linguini so I prepare the shrimp linguini for him, especially on his birthday. He likes the shrimp linguini. I make him shrimp linguini. We try not to go to restaurants too much because his family suffers from high blood pressure so we try to eat food at home so that we can monitor the salt and you know the seasoning intake.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes. Now, are you a natural cook or did you take cooking classes?

MS. EDWARDS: Natural cook, but classes from my uncle and my grandmother. My same godfather, fantastic cook.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Awesome.

MS. EDWARDS: He was an allrounder. So he taught us from a very young age, and even my grandmother to cook – how to cook.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, are you one of those cooks that if someone comes to you and says, tell me how you make that dish, that you don't do measurements, you're like a dash of this and a pinch of that.

MS. EDWARDS: Thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, ma'am. You're a real cook.

MS. EDWARDS: Yes, yep.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You are definitely a real cook. Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: Exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So if you able to invite anyone to dinner, who would that be and what would you cook for them? Other than your husband.

MS. EDWARDS: Who would it be? Oh, there's so many people on my list.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, well invite them all. Who would they be?

MS. EDWARDS: Because there are so many interesting people who have – we have Obama, you know. We have Oprah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

MS. EDWARDS: There are so many interesting people.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, what would you cook them?

MS. EDWARDS: What would I cook them?

JUDGE LATIMORE: The two of them.

MS. EDWARDS: I will give them a taste – I would give them a taste of the Caribbean.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, and what would that be?

MS. EDWARDS: Definitely. That would be the Roti.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's Roti?

MS. EDWARDS: Roti, Caribbean – curry.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Curry, okay.

MS. EDWARDS: Curry chicken and goat, and oh, my God, the Roti, out of this world. They'll get doubles. They'll get Roti and they'll get the pilau. So the pilau comes with rice and chicken and vegetables all mixed up in with coconut water. Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, that just sounds delicious. Absolutely delicious. I understand that you're really into health and well-being. You spoke about doing Yoga. You spoke about also being a part of the Golden Girls. And just you know what else is it that you really would like our audience to know about self-care, health and well-being?

MS. EDWARDS: Basically I think as we're getting older and as you look at the news now, so many people are getting sick and ill with high blood pressure or heart issues, or whatever, you know, something is going on even at a young age too. You can see that a person is getting older, this is what's happening, even now. And I think if you take care of yourself now, and watch what you eat. My aunt is a nutritionist so she teaches me all the time about watching what I eat and taking care of myself.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

MS. EDWARDS: So I try to encourage that not only to the Golden Girls but to my younger – even my colleagues, my girlfriends, even my colleagues, I try to encourage people watch how you're eating, be careful with the salt, use certain things. You know things like that so yes, it's all about taking care of yourself so that you can be well later on.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I agree. You take care of yourself so you'll be in a position to take care of others, right.

MS. EDWARDS: Correct, exactly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Thank you so much for being unplugged with me today.

MS. EDWARDS: Oh, it's been a pleasure.

(Music)