**Mitchell Street Library (6.20.2023)**

**Story 1: Deonta Simmons**

*[Begin transcript 00:00:01]*

IN: Okay. So, thanks again for the opportunity. And could you tell me your name please and also spell it?

DS: Yes. My name is Deonta Simmons, D-E-O-N-T-A-S-I-M-M-O-N-S.

IN: Thanks so much. So, I’ll start with a simple question. What did you have for breakfast today?

DS: This morning I had a bowl of raisin bran with toaster strudel.

IN: Nice. So, the first question will be, where do commonly gather your food?

DS: Where do I commonly get it from?

IN: Yeah.

DS: Well, I stay in the neighborhood on Mitchell, so it'll be like the dollar stores. Mostly the dollar stores I would say pretty much. Or food pantries, you know, there's a lot of food pantries I go to too that provide us with free food and good stuff like that.

IN: Could you name them?

DS: What is it called? The Street Angels Street Life? I believe it's called, yeah. Yeah. They pull up every Monday and Wednesdays and they provide us with healthy foods, peanut butter, sandwiches, waters, and healthy stuff, which is good.

IN: Nice. So, what's the reason why I go to the dollar store That? Because it's close.

DS: Yes. It's very convenient for me. And it's easy and simple. Yeah, yeah.

IN: They also have some fresh food there.

DS: Yes. Fresh fruit, fresh everything. Pretty much whatever you need basically, it's like a family dollar is like, how do I say it..like Pick N Save's little brother, I would say. All right. You know, yeah.

IN: So, could you in as much details as possible describe your journey to there? How did you go there and how often do you go there?

DS: Okay, well, I go there every day, to be honest with you. And I discovered it just on a humbug. Said, let me go in here and see if they have some breakfast food. And they have the breakfast bagels, which I love frozen back for his bagels if they're listening and yeah. Yeah. Pretty simple. Like I said, it's convenient because it's in the neighborhood and it's close to my house, so it works out.

IN: So how long does it take for you to go there, like by walking or...

DS: It'll take me about 2 min, 3 min, give or take. Yeah, walking.

IN: That's pretty convenient?

DS: Yes. Yeah, very convenient. Nice and cheap too. And cheap. That's yeah. Yeah.

IN: So next question will be, what kind of food will you grow, grow, if you'll have a chance.

DS: Ooh, I would like to grow some type of vegetable-based things like green, you know, I like vegetables, I like corn, green beans, broccoli, somewhere along that line. I would like a vegetable if I had to pick.

IN: Nice. So, do you have a garden at your place at all?

DS: No. No, no.

IN: So, if you can have the opportunity, what's your dream garden will be? Looks like.

DS: Oh, my dream. Oh, nice. Like I said, I like the cauliflower. I will have a cauliflower. Broccoli, corn too. I love corn. Oh, and carrots. Carrots. Yeah, that would be nice. Yeah.

IN: So, what do you think of the word trust? What kind of taste or recipe that came to your mind?

DS: When you say trust?

IN: Yeah, trust or comfort or something that you enjoy.

DS: Hmm, well, like I said, I keep saying that breakfast, I love breakfast. So I would say somewhere along the lines of breakfast omelet would be my choice. Yeah.

IN: What would you have in the omelet?

DS: I would have. Okay, That's making me hungry. Let's see. I would have dice. I would dice up some sausage, maybe some bacon, a little bit of green pepper. Some cheese. Yeah, and some ham. A little diced ham and a little bit of tomatoes too.

IN: Yeah, nice. Sounds like a meat lover.

DS: Yeah, Yeah, that's basically Yeah, meat lover's omelette. There we go. Yeah.

IN: Nice. Yeah. Is there any other food that so special to you and why?

DS: Well, I love making lasagna. Lasagna is like my specialty. 'cause like I was telling you before I went to school for Culinary Arts. So with lasagna, there's so many different ways you can make it. I'll make a spicy dish or a non spicy dish, or one that has like bacon bits and jalapeños or other one would just have like ground beef and tomato slices. So, lasagna would be my choice of a dish. I love lasagna, man, I love it. [laughs]

IN: And how do you feel of cooking?

DS: I love it. I enjoy it. I love cooking. I wish I could have my own restaurant. To be honest with you, I don't know. It's just something about being in the kitchen. I love it cooking. I love it. Like I said, I went to school for Culinary Arts for a year and a half at Job Corps. And best experience of my life, man, I love cooking. Yeah, yeah.

IN: So, are you doing any job related to it right now? Related to cooking?

DS: Oh no, not really. Well, not at all. As if you notice across the street, I work at the furniture store Right across the street from here. Right. Yeah. So, nothing food wise which I guess a Right.

IN: Eventually, eventually you get there. Yeah, so is there any other things you want to add to your food journey you want to share?

DS: No, not really. But all I would say is if you have a goal, stick to it food wise. But my personal goal is to own my own restaurant and go from there. Yeah. Yeah.

IN: What kind of restaurant you want to have and could you Oh, yeah. Just describe your like Dream Restaurant.

DS: Okay. My dream restaurant, dream Restaurant. Let me think. I mean, everything from breakfast to lunch to dinner. Any type of food. I want a restaurant where if you come in, you can have anything, any way you want it. Basically, you know what I mean, food wise, like if you see a dish, you have a common dish that comes with this. But you can alternate it and add stuff that doesn't belong in that food so to speak. A restaurant like that, I wouldn't know what to name that though.

IN: Yeah, it has to, it will be great if it has a good name.

DS: Variety maybe, Deonta's Variety Restaurant. I don't know. We'll work on that.

IN: Great. Thanks so much.

DS: No problem. Yeah. Thank you. Bye.

*[End transcript 00:07:15]*

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Story 2: Zene Peer

*[Begin transcript 00:07:19]*

IN: Can state and spell your name, please?

ZP: Certainly. My name is Zene Peer. My first name is spelled Z-E-N-E. My last name is Peer, that’s P-E-E-R.

IN: And what did you have for breakfast this morning?

ZP: This morning. For breakfast, I had a cup of tumeric tea. And then I had a vanilla Ensure.

IN: Okay, thank you. So where do you most commonly gather your food?

ZP: Currently, I'm gathering it via home delivery. I like to order from Wild Planet or Aldi's to get what I need. Other than that, I'll shop within the neighborhood.

IN: Okay. And in as much detail as possible, could you describe your journey to those places to get your food? The ones that are not delivered to you?

ZP: The ones that are not delivered? I walk back and forth because it's right on 11th and Mitchell. So, I'll go to the Indian store across the street, or I'll go to the I guess it would be African store. I don't know their name specifically, but that's principally where I go for things that I like, spices and things of that nature, because they seem more healthy than going to Walmart or something and buying McCormick or whoever.

IN: Okay. And what food would you grow if you could?

ZP: I would grow salmon and tuna because I'm a seafood nutcase and that's what I principally like. But if you were talking about a green, I would probably grow... berries, blueberries, blackberries, that kind of thing.

IN: Okay. And the next question is, could you describe your dream garden plot?

ZP: Well, my dream garden plot would be very fertile. It would, it would be surrounded with trees, it would have a water source that's natural and it would be a combination of flowers, fruits and vegetables.

IN: Okay. And when you think of trust, what is a taste or recipe that comes to mind?

ZP: Tuna casserole.

IN: And why is that?

ZP: It's because my mom made the best tuna casserole. And apparently, I inherited her skills because my children, whenever I asked them, well, do you want something or happy birthday, what do you want? Tuna casserole. Tuna casserole. Tuna casserole.

IN: And can you explain briefly how you make your tuna casserole? Is there like a special ingredient that you use in it or what makes it like when you make it so special?

ZP: I make it excessively creamy using maybe two or three different kinds of cream soup, celery, cream soup, mushroom cream soup. I will add different types. I think they like it best when instead of using like macaroni shells or something that I use, spaghetti, broken spaghetti. And they like that a lot. Breadcrumbs on top which are principally garlic seasoned, and I use a lot of garlic ward off the evil spirits.

IN: Alright, and the last question that I have for you today is could you please tell us a food that is special to you and what makes that food so special?

ZP: Okay. This is going to seem like I'm a nutcase, but two foods that are special to me and I use them. I eat them because they put me to sleep. Don't ask me why because it seems like it's totally opposite of what they're meant for. But what I'm having difficulty sleeping. I will eat three or four mini–Reese Pieces and a small bag of flaming hot chips, and that puts me to sleep.

IN: So, do you traditionally like a sweet and spicy combination of food?

ZP: Absolutely. That's the best thing. Mm hmm. I like the spicy chopped mango that they have across the street. Oh my God, that is so good. I have to get some on my way home.

IN: Okay. And is there anything else that you would like to add about your food journey?

ZP: I'm glad that I had one that I'm not struggling for food like too many people are.

IN: All right. Well, thank you so much.

*[End transcript 00:12:34]*

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