

Jamina Lynn “Jimmie” Carder

Where: Jim’s Spaghetti and Steak

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Jamina Lynn “Jimie” Carder

“Jimie” Carder, 78, is the owner of Jim’s Spaghetti and Steak in Huntington, WV. Jim’s was founded in 1938 by Jimie’s parents, who were both of Lebanese descent. 25 years ago, Jimie moved back from Nashville, TN to operate the restaurant, which was awarded West Virginia’s first James Beard American Classics Award in 2019.

<http://www.jimsspaghetti.com/>

EH: Emily Hilliard

JC: Jimmie Carder

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JC: Well my voice is very bad today

EH: Okay. Yeah— I'm a little...

JC: Some days it's bad and some days it's not but it's sort of permanently not good anymore.

EH: Okay. Why don't you introduce yourself and tell me your name, when you were born and where you were born.

JC: My name is Jimmie Carder, J-I-M-M-I-E C-A-R-D as in David-E-R, and I was born in Huntington, West Virginia and I was born in December the 23rd 1940.

EH: Why don't you tell me a little bit about your family. So was it your parents who started this restaurant?

JC: As I like to say because I think it's cute, my future mother said to my future dad, get a job or I'm gone. So he borrowed 1500 dollars from an uncle and bought this restaurant, just this small part there and they were both very hard workers and so they worked the restaurant together and then I was born the year after it started, so my mother backed away a little but she still worked a lot. They were originally open, well at one point they opened from 7 in the morning 'til 2 in the morning on the weekends and midnight during the week and it started out as a nickel/dime place. And then in 1945 a man, an Italian man came in and told my dad that he had an Italian spaghetti recipe he would like to give him. So he came and brought him the recipe and they started making spaghetti and about 3 years later business was really booming and so they opened the other section up over there where you were sitting. And they really did well, worked very hard. In the meantime, my mother had 2 other children, so I have 2 younger brothers. They are both attorneys. And then in 1958 I went away to school and in 1962 they closed the entire restaurant down and opened up this side and remodeled the entire restaurant. So, the interesting part about that is that everything in this restaurant has been here since 1962 or before. All of this out here since '62 except for that out there and it's older. The stain... I mean the stainless over there. But there's stuff in the back that has been here since the early '40s. Equipment. It's really awesome to see.

EH: Whoa. Yeah, that's cool.

JC: Then I never came back. I stayed in Lexington, got married, then I after a year in Lexington, we moved to Nashville, and I have...actually still been there... I have a home there and I have 4 kids and 9 grandkids and so I still go back there and retire there one day. But in the meantime, the restaurant just went perking on and there were times my mother worked at it and sometimes she didn't and my dad was known as The Ambassador of Huntington because everybody wanted to come see Jim's. Then we got out, we acquired in 1960, our million-dollar picture of Kennedy who came in here one morning on his campaign train ride thing. And so now everybody wants to come and sit in the Kennedy booth.

EH: Which one's the Kennedy booth?

JC: It was right in front of you.

EH: Oh okay.

JC: Yeah.

03:58

So that's sort of been, sort of a cute little perky thing. And let's see. Then in 1994 I came back up here. I needed a job. My husband died 30 years ago, and so I came back up here and... to help my dad for 4 or 5 years and that was 25 years ago. (laughs)

EH: (laughs)

JC: So I'm still here and they sort of turned it over to me oh almost 20 years ago and just said here, you know. And my dad died 13 years ago and my mother died 2 years ago. She was 99 when she died. And I have one brother that lives here in town and he's, quote, the president of the company now. And he's become more of a part of it in the last 4 or 5 years and then I have another brother that lives in Charlottesville.

EH: Okay. Here...

JC: What do you want to know?

EH: I can hold the microphone cause it's so heavy.

JC: That's okay!

EH: So what did you study in college?

JC: (laughs) How to get out!

EH: Got it! (laughs)

JC: My brothers are the smart people in the family and I'm the street person. I'm just a...

EH: You have street smarts.

JC: Yeah, yeah. I studied social work.

EH: Oh, okay!

JC: So what little good that did for here...

EH: Probably some!

JC: ... but I raised 4 kids and so that helped a lot. Yeah! I had a lot of background on that. But yeah I worked really hard to try and get out.

EH: And this was at UK?

JC: Uh-huh, yeah.

EH: What is your—what were your parents' family cultural background?

JC: We are—they're Lebanese. All 4 of my grandparents came from Lebanon in a little town called Kfeir and no, we've never been there—none of us— but my father's mother was alive through most of my life until, well, she died after I left here. And my father's father died when he was 8 years old. And then my mother's parents— her mother died when she was a year old and he went back to the old country and remarried and came back in '22 or something like that. And so I knew both of them really well—they were sort of the love of my life. They were very good influence on all of us. But they lived in Beckley.

EH: Okay.

06:45

So I actually just listened to an interview— so I saw that— is it your mother was a Rahall?

JC: Uh-huh.

EH: So I just listened to an interview in '91 with a woman who was a Rahall—no, they were both Rahalls and they owned the store in Fayetteville, the Ben Franklin? And she said she was from Charleston and Lebanese.

JC: I don't know...

EH: Anyway... so I was wondering if...

JC: Okay, because you're probably a little familiar— Nicky Joe Rahall [Nick Joe Rahall, US Congressman from West Virginia]—that ring a bell?

EH: Right, right. Yes.

JC: Okay, so Nicky Joe and I are on the same...

EH: Generation?

JC: Uh-huh, and then there was my mother and his father who was Joe, and my grandfather and his, Nicky Joe's grandfather—that was Mike and Nick.

EH: Okay. I'll have to look at my notes when we're done 'cause I have their names down.

JC: Okay.

EH: So... and she was saying that her family owned Hussons.

JC: Oh!

EH: Pizza.

JC: Okay. So there's a Hussons Pizza here.

EH: Yeah.

JC: And they have been in here a couple times, but I do not know them.

EH: Okay.

JC: Yeah.

EH: Did your mother's family attend the Orthodox Church in Beckley?

JC: I think so, yes. Yeah.

EH: Was there a...

JC: There was not one here.

EH: Okay.

JC: While my grandparents were alive here. And we were members of the Fifth Avenue Baptist, was where I was raised.

EH: Okay. Mmhm.

JC: But yes, my grandparents went to the orthodox church in Beckley.

EH: Okay.

JC: This one [in Huntington] just started—has not been around that long. The one here. The Holy Spirit—is relatively new, and they were very committed to Fifth Avenue, so they did not switch. Yeah.

EH: Was there a big Lebanese community in Huntington?

JC: Yes. Yeah. There were a lot of people. Just my dad's family alone—there were 6 kids and so there were a lot of them and there were many Lebanese families here. Yeah.

EH: So nickel and dime store—it was like a general store to start?

JC: Where?

EH: Jim's? This was a nickel and dime?

JC: Oh! Well, it was just—it was milkshakes, hamburgers, cokes, you know, just little bitty stuff on the menu—little bitty menu.

EH: Okay.

JC: And then they didn't do food, food. They did a lot of... they increased their sandwiches and they they eventually, once they started the spaghetti, started adding more food to it. And then it got to be a big menu, and then it got to be a smaller menu. But they had fried chicken and filet, bacon-wrapped and they did homemade fries and onion rings and baked steak and all kinds of stuff. And then when labor went up they had to cut somewhere so they cut the menu and it virtually is the same menu today that they've had for I don't know, 45 years.

EH: Wow.

JC: Yeah.

EH: And was there ever any kind of Lebanese food served?

JC: No because it would have had to have been made by my mother.

EH: (laughs)

JC: (laughs) And she never had time to do that.

EH: Right.

JC: Yeah.

EH: Okay.

JC: She always wanted to. And you know, there could have been a time when maybe she would make a dish one day or something, but to my knowledge the answer to that question is no. (laughs)

EH: (laughs) Got it. So so many restaurants don't—they update their booths or their... you know the menu or the style and to me I always... I just learned that the historic Quarrier Diner in Charleston—they ripped out the wooden booths and I was just more upset than I should have been (laughs) but why do you think you've stuck with the original details?

10:53

JC: You know I've been thinking about that in terms of the fact that the James Beard people are coming next week—the 21st—to do a video to be shown, and things run through your head about different aspects of this restaurant and my life and the people here. And one of the reasons is because if you take it that I came back here 25 years ago to help my dad, so he would have been 103 I think this year, so whenever I came 25 years ago, he was what, 78 or something like that. And we never, we've never been planners for this restaurant. It's just take it day by day, day by day, and now here it is for me, 25 years later, and I'm still here. If I had known I was gonna be here for 25 years, there could possibly have been some changes made, but every year, I sort of put it in the back of my head and say—uh-uh. No, I'm not about to do anything because everybody loves it just like it is—why would we change? So the menu has been the same. Everything's the same—we... it was sort of like, to bluntly put it, why get into doing something if we're gonna close down next year? So never knowing the longevity of this restaurant, and thinking, my God, and now here we are 80 years later? So, are we ever gonna change? No. Have we changed anything? Yes. We had a major change this year. This time last year, I started looking online and in different catalogs, and everywhere we could find for our dress uniform. I don't know—do you know the dress?

EH: I saw it online.

JC: Okay, the nurse dress?

EH: Yeah.

JC: Okay. We had worn it—I have a picture of my mother in a dress in the early 40s. And so we've always worn a dress. And so we had to have certain things—they had to be short sleeved, they had to have pockets, they had to have some fullness in the skirt, so the only thing left was the nurses white dresses which were very straight, long sleeves, and nobody would make 'em. I begged them to make me 5,000 dollars' worth of uniforms, you know. And nobody would do it and so then we had to decide what we were gonna do, and we wanted something simple, plain, neat. At that point we had just hired 2 waiters for the first time and so we liked what they looked like, so we went out and found black pants and a white shirt.

EH: Mmhm.

JC: But that's been a SHOCK!

EH: (laughs)

JC: I still, you know, look over at her and I think, where is your damn dress? (laughs)

EH: (laughs)

JC: You know? So anyway, that's the story of the change. And there's just, you know it's just unique, it's just unique. And there's nothing here that's replaceable.

EH: Right, right.

JC: They wanted to do the movie "We Are Marshall" in here, and I offered it to 'em for 2 weeks and then something happened and the waitress in the movie couldn't stay—she had to go to Atlanta to do a double deal, and so they built a thing down there and we sent some props to 'em and when it was all over and done with, I thought oh thank heavens. If they had come in here with those cranes and they had broke one ball [vintage light fixture] I would have cried! It would have cost them a fortune! Cause they would have had to have one made.

EH: Right, right. Yeah.

JC: So it's just—we're glad just the way we are.

EH: Right, well yeah I was thinking—the booths look incredible! They're in such good shape.

JC: Yeah, we had these reupholstered.

EH: Oh, okay.

JC: Yes, yeah. But it's still the same frame.

EH: Uh-huh. And the same color?

JC: Yeah, yeah.

EH: Yeah, the color looks very vintage.

JC: Yeah. Oh, it is very vintage. Because in 1966 when I bought a house for the first time, all the carpet was this color [pea green] (laughs)!

EH: Yeah, I think we had a stove that color when I was little.

JC: Yes! Yes certainly. But if you go to California, they're going all retro now.

EH: Uh-huh, right, right.

JC: That's what I've heard. (laughs)

EH: Well I think that's a part of West Virginia that is unique—the way things hold on to the style. And you know, that's what makes it exciting I think for young people visiting or coming back. So when I hear something like they tore out the booths of the diner, just— you need to know what you have and hold on to the things that you do well.

JC: Yes, yes. Look at the stools—how worn they are. But to our knowledge they've been here forever!

EH: Yeah, those look great!

JC: Yeah!

15:47

EH: What about the stainless [black splash]?

JC: Do you know, somebody made that and we don't know who. It's really sad, there's so much history in this restaurant that nobody knows. I've got a gal upstairs that comes back every year for strawberry pie. She's up there—been making pie dough—I mean pie shells for us. And she doesn't know—she knows some history, but we don't have anybody left that knows a lot of the history and it never got written down.

EH: Right. Well that's in beautiful shape too. And it's so clean.

JC: Yep, oh yeah. We're neat freaks. Yeah, you wouldn't believe. I'll show you around because it's really worth, it's really interesting to see some of the stuff.

EH: Is being a neat freak a family trait?

JC: Uh, yeah. The 5 of us. I can't speak for all of our families, you know, but my brothers and I are pretty picky. Yeah.

EH: Did you ever think you would come back?

JC: No. No. No way. You know, life has it's funny turns and you never know. Who would have thought at the age of 48 I would have been a widow with 4 kids, you know? So you do what you have to do. It's just the way it is.

EH: Was that a hard transition to come back here?

JC: I was just telling somebody today I've just learned over my lifetime and probably the death of my husband. He, well, this is off the record—he was an alcoholic so he died very suddenly and but yet at the same time at the age of 48 with 4 kids, I learned then to accept life. So I came up here, I did what I had to do, and that was it. And I never questioned.

EH: Yeah. And then with your parents was there kind of a handing over? Any kind of an official handing over to you?

JC: No.

EH: (laughs)

JC: No, like I said, I came up here and I guess it was 5 or 7 years after I'd been here, my dad started deteriorating and his manager died a year before he did so it was just sort of, I just assumed the responsibility. And I'm a workaholic and I'm still working 60 hours a week you know? So I just do what I have to do. That's just what you do, isn't it?

EH: Yep!

JC: Okay, so that's what you do! (laughs)

EH: (laughs) So there's so many photos of famous people. Can you name some of them and have you met any folks passing through?

JC: Oh, I have to show you this.

EH: Okay.

JC: [points at old high school group photo] This is my dad. Right there.

EH: Oh wow.

JC: In the jacket?

EH: Uh-huh.

JC: Yes, with hair.

EH: (reads) Huntington High School, class of '32.

JC: Uh-huh.

EH: Yeah, he's got a good head of hair.

JC: He does.

19:17

Okay, this was his class. He has a group, my brother has a group of guys that come every Tuesday and Thursday to eat here, and so we did a picture of some of 'em that day. Billy Joel was married to Katie Lee who was from Huntington.

EH: Oh wow!

JC: Yeah, and so that's my brother and them. They're since divorced and she's remarried.

EH: Okay.

JC: Okay? But that was sort of an interesting little segue into whoever's life. This guy—Tina knows his name—I can't think of his name. The guy with the beard is the director of the Young Life here in Huntington.

EH: Okay.

JC: And that's his family. But this guy used to sing with Kenny Chesney and he's now... Rice...are you into music?

EH: Um...

JC: Rice...

EH: I don't think I know a Rice.

JC: Rice.

EH: Country singer?

JC: Uh-huh.

EH: I don't think I know.

JC: Tina will be back by here, I'll ask her. Oh, there's all kinds of pictures.

EH: Yeah, I saw Dustin Hoffman, Muhammed Ali, Marcel Marceau...

JC: Okay Dustin Hoffman was here because the National President of the Autism Society was from here when the movie Rain Main was...

EH: Ohhh.

JC: Okay? So they did a premiere here and so he came here and my dad used to get pictures of everybody and so that's why his picture's on the wall. My brother Ron who lives in Charlottesville was Mohammed's attorney for 35 years and is still Lonnie's attorney today. Lonnie and my brother were the one that planned the whole funeral.

EH: Oh wow!

JC: Yeah, and then his son is a documentary person and he did the whole funeral. He filmed the entire funeral—for her. It will never be shown. It was for Lonnie, period.

21:18

And let's see Dagmar's over there. You don't even know Dagmar.

EH: No.

JC: She was in TV back in the 50s. She looks like a Jane Mansfield.

EH: (laughs)

JC: And so her brother is right there and they're from Huntington.

EH: Okay.

JC: Yeah, so we have her picture up, and let's see... I don't know who's over there...

EH: Marcel Marceau—isn't he a French mime?

JC: Yeah! He just came in and my dad loved him. Oh I was here then. And they sat on the counter and you know, talked to each other. It was so cute.

EH: (laughs) That's cool.

JC: Yeah, it was so cute. And there's a lot of—this is the singing section back here and then the Marshall section up front and... my dad and mom were big Marshall people and so is my brother so... I don't know. These are... what happened was—a lot of these pictures, there are stacks of 'em upstairs—the Keith Albee across the alley here is the theatre and that's where people would come and sing and entertain, do performances. And so then after the performance was over at midnight or whenever, they would come over here 'cause it was the only place that was open. And so they would all sign a picture for my mom and dad, and so that's how a lot of those—Perry Como and I can't call 'em off. Tina—what's this kid's name?

Tina: Chase Rice.

JC: Chase Rice.

EH: I haven't heard of him.

JC: Okay.

Tina: We need a card up there.

JC: I know! I know, we need to.

EH: Um...

JC: Yes?

EH: I had one— a question in my mind that went away. Um... so you said initially it was open until midnight. And what...

JC: They opened at 7 in the morning and they stayed open until midnight. Now I don't know what year that was. That was probably a little ways into it. Then that was 'til—they were open 7 days a week then. And then they'd stay open...

23:35

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00:00

JC: ...open until midnight, and then on the weekends they stayed open until 2 o'clock in the morning. And then would open back up at 7. Yeah, it was crazy. Crazy life they led. And then in the 50s they started closing down on Sunday with the Blue Law. Do you know blue...?

EH: No I don't.

JC: Blue Law shut everything down on Sundays.

EH: Okay.

JC: Okay. Then on Mondays we finally got my dad to close down on Monday because he had had bypass surgery and he just didn't need to be working another day, so my brothers got him to close down so that's how it turned into 5 days. And then it just—the hours closed in, you know, it was 7 and then it was 10 and then it was 11 and now it's 11 to 8:30.

EH: Mmhm. That seems about right.

JC: Yes. In this town?

EH: Yeah.

JC: That's about it.

EH: How have you seen Huntington change?

JC: Well, when I was growing up back in the 50s downtown was a booming place. I mean we spent every weekend roaming the streets and having fun and going to the movie and all that kind of stuff. And then as I left, it sort of like changed. Industry left, the mall went to up, you know, up that way 15, 20 minutes. That was the big decline of downtown. And then Pullman Square came in—somebody from Columbus or somewhere came and bought that property and put Pullman Square in, and so that sort of perked the town back up and 3rd Avenue's doing really well I think. 4th Avenue has a few things, and we're sort of stuck up here. I mean if you don't know about us, you don't... you know, we don't get it like we used to. But we're hanging in there. We're not complaining. We still get our share. But it is different.

EH: What do you think the future will be—when you go back to Nashville or...

JC: Oh for me? My future?

EH: Your future or the future of the restaurant.

JC: The future of the restaurant is that I will eventually very soon go back. You know how old I am—you figured that out.

EH: Right.

JC: Yeah. And I really need some downtime it's... about that time. I think we're working hard enough that we'll get somebody in here to help if Brad wants to stay. If not, we'll end up trying to find somebody that wants to be a part of the history of this store. My future's just going home to be with my kids. I'm the one

that flew the coop so I have grandchildren that are 23 and I've never really gotten to spend a lot of time with any of them. I have 9 of 'em. And so I hope to be able to have some energy left to do that.

EH: Are most of them still in Nashville?

JC: Yeah. Yeah. One's getting ready to do an internship I think in Michigan, but everybody else is living in Nashville, yeah.

EH: When you moved to Nashville, did you meet people from West Virginia?

03:22

JC: No. I don't... no, I don't think I did. I had one friend that was there when I moved there and we're still friends today. But that's the only one I knew from Huntington. We grew up together here.

EH: Yeah, I always wonder—I mean there's definitely a lot of musicians from West Virginia who moved down there but I wonder if there was other migration.

JC: Not now, I mean not then there wasn't. Now there are a lot of people—I just talked to a mother the other day who's getting ready to buy something in Nashville for her son who's doing some music stuff.

EH: Uh-huh.

JC: Yeah, so that's cool.

EH: What's your favorite thing on the menu here?

JC: I still have to say the spaghetti. The fish is the best fish ever. So it's sort of a switch off, but we have people that come from the East Coast to eat our fish. I mean it's that incredible. We, well we don't fly it in, but our distributor flies it in from Iceland and so we cut and bread fish all day and it's our own... our breading, our tartar sauce, our coleslaw. People love it.

EH: Well I'll have to get that next time.

JC: Yeah! Yeah, give you a reason to come back.

EH: Yeah! For sure.

JC: Yeah.

EH: Is there anything else you want to add?

JC: No... we're really excited about the James Beard.

EH: Yeah!

JC: That was just—that's sort of like the icing on the cake for me.

EH: Yeah, especially to be the first in West Virginia.

JC: Yeah. Yeah. I'm really hoping I can meet this lady—Hannah [Raskin]

EH: Hannah?

JC: Uh-huh.

EH: Yeah. Is she supposed to come?

JC: I would assume she would be there but I have not found out yet.

EH: And Sean Brock—he was just kind of giving the announcement?

JC: He—the funny story about that—is that they called me and told me that a guy named Sean Brock who had won the award 2010 or sometime as the best chef and anyway, he was going to do the announcing of it on Instagram and nothing was—we were dead set for secrecy until February the 1st, all of a sudden the day before, it comes out on Instagram and so we get it put in the paper and I don't know whether we screwed up or not, but anyway, Sean Brock is in Nashville.

EH: Yes he is!

JC: Yes! And he is at a restaurant called Husk!

EH: Yeah!

JC: Okay, well my kid knows about it and I don't think I'm speaking out of turn and if I am you don't have to do anything with it, but I have one son that's 18 years clean and sober who knows that Sean is in recovery!

EH: Sean is sober, yes.

JC: Yeah! And fairly new in recovery, maybe?

EH: Yeah, but I think this is—I mean he's public about it and I think he's been experimenting with alcohol-free cocktails to serve as well.

JC: Oh really? Oh that's awesome!

EH: Yeah.

JC: Okay, so I got in touch with the James Beard people and I said, would someone please find out if we can get some spaghetti sauce to Sean because I've got a freezer full of sauce in Nashville. Okay? And I just thought it'd be so clever—here he announced us—for us to get him some sauce.

EH: Yeah.

JC: So the son that's gonna do that just got back from a trip, so he's all excited because we're gonna...this is so funny—we're gonna take a trip by car from my house to this address we were told to send it to, which is 4 minutes from my house.

EH: (laughs)

JC: He— if he lives there, it's literally like here.

EH: Whoa!

JC: I know! (laughs) Is that not funny? Now it might be his office.

EH: Right, right.

JC: But it might be his house—we don't know because a lot of people live in East Nashville now—so is that not cute?

EH: So you're in East Nashville? My boyfriend actually lives in West Nashville.

JC: Where?

EH: Sylvan Park.

JC: Oh yes!

EH: Like Acklen Park Drive.

07:36

JC: Huh?

EH: Acklen Park Drive.

JC: Yes!

EH: Mmhm, yeah.

JC: Oh my God, how funny! Well see, we were all raised on the West Side.

EH: Oh! Okay.

JC: Yeah, we lived—have you been down there?

EH: Yeah, yeah.

JC: Okay, so if you go... if you go all the way out Harding Road, West End...it's Broadway, West End.

EH: Yeah.

JC: And then Harding, and you go over the overpass going into Bellevue, there's a little subdivision, 2 streets—that's where we were. But Sylvan Park is where Colorado... all those streets... what street are you on?

EH: He's on Acklen Park Drive.

JC: Okay, yeah, well my son lived over there, my daughter lived over there... he built a house on 38th Street? At 38th and one of those streets there.

EH: Yeah, yeah.

JC: Yeah!

EH: Yeah, small world.

JC: That's funny!

EH: Yeah, we went to Husk for I guess it was New Year's Eve brunch.

JC: Yeah?

EH: But Sean Brock is from, I think he's from southwestern Virginia. And he's building a new restaurant in Nashville that's supposed to be this monument to Appalachian foodways.

JC: Really?

EH: Yeah.

JC: Oh awesome!

EH: So you should try to see if you can get a shoutout there or something—spaghetti sauce, or...

JC: Yeah, we're gonna try to do something. I can't even talk about it 'cause it frustrates me because... our sauce needs to be somewhere. Somewhere in the world, because we make 40 gallons of it every day. Now we don't use 40 gallons every day, but for the rotation, we have to do that.

EH: Wow.

JC: Yeah. That's a lot of spaghetti.

EH: Yeah, you should be canning that.

JC: Yeah.

EH: But yeah, I hope you get to meet him and I do think he's interested in food preservation in Appalachia and there's a diner, or a drive-through in Eastern Kentucky where the burger at Husk is modeled off of that burger. And it's just like a drive-through burger.

JC: What kind of restaurant is Husk?

EH: It's like a fancy new southern—I mean it's like, when we went for brunch, we had to wait. Most people had reservations. It's nice. It's in a historic home.

JC: Do you know where it is? I mean do you remember where it is?

EH: I think it's East Nashville.

JC: Well see, that's what someone told me, but I don't know and I haven't looked it up to see where it is, but I'm gonna find out.

EH: I think it's East Nashville. But yeah, in it's a really pretty brick house.

JC: Well maybe that's where 2112 Carter Avenue is.

EH: Yeah, maybe so. Yeah, look it up! (laughs) But also, I have a friend...

JC: Is it H-U-S-K?

EH: H-U-S-K, yeah. But my friend Travis is a chef—he's with the Appalachian Food Summit—and he and Sean are buddies so if you don't have success I can talk to Travis too.

JC: Okay. What am I looking for?

EH: Husk Restaurant.

10:57

JC: Yeah. (speaks into phone) Husk Restaurant, Nashville. Okay, Husk Restaurant Nashville... whoops. Oh, Jimmie, you're so stupid. Okay... let me see... where is it? No, it's Rutledge— no, it's not East Nashville where I live, it's 37210 Rutledge Street Cumberland—oh, I know where it is. It's... it's downtown.

EH: Oh, okay.

JC: It's it's... it's right on the river, right close to the river. It looks like.

EH: It was very rainy when we went so I wasn't...

JC: Martin... yeah, Husk, Davidson County Motor, Lightning Room, yeah—it's downtown, looks like.

EH: Well I hope that works out.

JC: Yeah!

EH: Oh, how'd you get the name "Jimmie?"

JC: My mother always liked a boy's name for a girl and so my dad's name was Jim, so I got Jimmie, but my real name is Jamina Lynn.

EH: Ah! Have you ever gone by Jamina?

JC: I did until the 6th grade and then we didn't have phonetics back then so everybody pronounced it Jam-ina. It's J-A-M-I-N-A. And my pediatrician called me Aunt Jemima. And so I gave the name to my daughter and until she was 18, she went by Lynn and then something happened at her first job and she had 2 name tags and they didn't know what to call her, so they called her Jamina.

EH: Nice.

JC: And she's still Jamina, and I LOVE it, I'm so glad.

EH: Yeah, that's nice.

JC: Yeah, it's a pretty name. You're pretty.

EH: Jimmie's cool too. (laughs)

JC: (laughs) Oh, it's okay. It'll do.

EH: Well thank you so much, this was fun.

JC: What else do you need? Oh God, that's enough, isn't it?

EH: Yeah, well I'm sure we could talk longer, but I don't want to keep you.

JC: Well that's okay. Well, there's not much. You know, I'll tell you the interesting. Let me give you a couple facts.

EH: Okay.

JC: My dad's manager was here 62 years. He had a waitress that was here 62 years. He had another waitress 52 years. And it's not a coincidence that they're all 2s. He had another waitress that was here, what'd I say... 62, 52... 62, 62, 52, uh 42, and then there's a girl upstairs who's still coming back in—she's been here over 42 years. The girl that told me what this guy's name was has been here 30 years. I have another waitress that's been here 30 years. I have a guy in the back that's been here 38 years—he started out in the dish department. He does a lot of stuff for me. Mary, the manager up front has been here 13 years. She's retiring this year. I think he... did you see the girl that was here with him just a little... he, the 2 that work the grill are married. They met here. They're sort of a, they're sort of a story for me. They were both incarcerated, came here straight out of, met, got married, really cute story.

EH: Oh, that is.

JC: Yeah, we have a couple success stories like that. A lady came in with an ankle bracelet on—I hired her, she was all dressed up. She talked like this (looks down). I said, are you okay? She said, yeah I don't have any teeth!

EH: (laughs)

JC: She was going to get her teeth the next day! (laughs) And she's now married to somebody that's supporting her very well.

EH: Nice.

JC: Yeah! Just cute stories, you know.

EH: What's the secret to keeping employees?

JC: It's hard now, but we do have some that have stayed. We're getting into that over 6-month period. I think we're easy to work for. We try to treat 'em well, you know. I used to yell a lot but I don't yell anymore. (laughs)

EH: (laughs)

JC: So that's about it. Okay, that's it.

EH: Okay, cool. Thank you so much!

JC: Thank you! You're cute.

15:51

END OF TAPE