

Speaker 1: Interview Number 2019. Okay, I'm just going to set that there. You're also welcome to grab it and hold it at any point. How are you doing today?

█ Oh, I'm doing good. It's a long day. Long day.

Speaker 1: What makes it a long day?

█ I was ripping apart one of the Broom Bear engines. See, I was sweeping, and the radiator was just being a pain in the butt, so I spent all day ripping that engine apart. An hour ago, I just got the radiator out, an hour ago. So, yeah. It's been a rough day.

Speaker 1: What are you taking it apart for?

█ We're actually getting a new engine for it, so I forget what engine, but it's a CAT. But we're going to try to put a [inaudible] engine on it.

Speaker 1: That's awesome.

█ Yeah, it's going to be fun.

Speaker 1: What brings you here to us today?

█: I was actually down at the depot, and I was actually referred to you guys by one of my buddies, Dale. I was like, "I really don't want to walk all the way over there right now." I went, "Wait, it's Friday. It's 4:00. Let's go."

Speaker 3: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Yep.

█ So, I put on some Redbone, put in my earbuds, and I just... walking over here.

Speaker 3: I was out there looking for you guys.

Speaker 1: That's great.

Speaker 3: Some of you didn't want to talk to me. They're like, "What is this girl, this Mexican girl, doing out here?"

Speaker 1: That's awesome. How long have you been going to the depot?

█ Six years now.

Speaker 1: Six years?

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: Nice. And can I ask what your current housing situation is?

██████ I currently live up in the brush up by the truck stop.

Speaker 1: Oh, okay.

██████ So basically I ride my bike every day to work, and then I leave my bike at work, and then I get a ride back to my spot, so I can grab a couple things, and then back out here is my bike. And then, yeah.

Speaker 1: And being up there in the brush as you say, do you have a tent or anything that you're living in?

██████ Yeah.

Speaker 1: Okay.

██████ Yeah. It's a pretty bright tent, but I camouflaged it a little bit, so...

Speaker 1: Why'd you camouflage it?

██████ I like camping by myself a little bit. It's more peaceful, less drama.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

██████ I'm a drama free type of person. Any drama comes around me, I get anxiety really bad, and I have to leave, so... it's just one of them things. But I'm close by somewhere if I need help or whatnot, so...

Speaker 1: That's great. Where do you go if you need help?

██████ I just go to one of the gas stations up at the truck stop. Either the Goal, the Shell Station, or the Truck Stop itself. There's also another one there. I forget the name of that one, but...

Speaker 3: Get help from what?

██████ Well, if I... they got showers up there.

Speaker 3: Oh.

██████ Throw away trash. Go throw away my trash in the dumpsters. There's little things like that.

Speaker 1: Nice. Sweet. How long have you been sleeping up there?

██████ Four years now?

Speaker 1: So, four years.

Speaker 3: That's tough.

Speaker 1: That's a pretty long time.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: What started it?

█ Well, it was more of a choice.

Speaker 1: Oh, okay.

█ I wanted to go a little bit more off the grid, but not all the way off the grid, and the spot I'm at reminds me of back home. So...

Speaker 1: Where's home?

█ Northern California. I've been out here for six years now, so.

Speaker 3: So, you've been there in the tent for four years, but prior to those, two years?

█ I've been up there for four years, but prior to those, I was down by they call it Hidden Beach, down by Ship Bridge.

Speaker 1: Okay.

█ There was five other people down there, and then it just got to the point where all my stuff was getting stolen, so I just had... that's the main reason why I don't camp around people. I don't want any of my stuff getting-

Speaker 3: Stolen.

█ Stolen. The most I have is a duffle bag and a backpack.

Speaker 1: Okay.

█ And that's everything I own, and I've worked my tail end off for that.

Speaker 1: Absolutely. How's it been... so I hear that you like being over there because you're alone, you're drama-free. What's that like overall?

█ It's not bad. It's peaceful. There's elk that just walk right through my camp every morning.

Speaker 3: Elk?

█ Yeah. It's almost like I'm in the middle of nowhere, but I'm not.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

█ I grew up 30 miles away from a town like this. The town I grew up in is called Longbourn, California. We had 15 people in that town. We had an ice skating rink down the road, we had a forest station, with a volunteer fire station, and then we had a continuation high school and a post office.

Speaker 1: Small place.

█ Yeah. It was about a mile long, and about four or five miles wide. But, it was a place where everybody knows everybody.

Speaker 3: So, you prefer to be in the woods. It's a lifestyle.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 3: You don't want to be acclimated in society.

█ Exactly. It's a lifestyle.

Speaker 3: You don't want an apartment, [inaudible].

█ Well, I do eventually.

Speaker 3: Okay.

█ But, that's what I'm currently saving up for. Because I want to get out of the Valley.

Speaker 3: I got you.

Speaker 1: Where would you want to go?

█ Probably somewhere closer to my mom. My birth mom. That's the whole reason I moved out here to Washington was because I was adopted when I was four years old, and then so... I'd probably move out somewhere closer to Kent.

Speaker 1: That's where she's at?

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: Do you keep in contact with her?

█ Yeah, I call her every day.

Speaker 3: Great.

Speaker 1: That's sweet.

█ I call my parents out in California once every Friday. I got to call them tonight. Talked to my brother, he's in the Navy, yesterday. Talked to him last night for about an hour or two. We caught up. And I barely even recognized him [inaudible] video chat. I'm like, "Wait. Oh, okay." So, I don't know. It depends. It really depends on where I'm going to go. Wherever the road takes me, really.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

█ Somewhere where the rent's cheap, obviously.

Speaker 3: Yeah.

Speaker 1: Okay. So, you said that you're saving up money in order to get there.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: What are the different ways you make money?

█ I work for █. I work for them full time during the week, and then-

Speaker 1: I'm not familiar with them. What do you do for them?

█ I'm a diesel mechanic. I work on the trucks. I wash the trucks, and then I also on the weekends, I do... and also five days a week, plus the weekends, five days a week I'm on call with █ I can get a call any time at night, and I'm getting my ass up and going to work. Go and take a tree of a house, and then tomorrow and Sunday, weekends, I work for █ as well.

Speaker 1: That's awesome. Sorry, just [inaudible].

█ Just trying to be contributing to society, rather than [inaudible].

Speaker 3: We all are right? That's so good.

█ That's what most people don't understand. A lot of us homeless people, we work. We're not just... but I don't know.

Speaker 3: You're not lazy.

█ Yeah. Yeah. I may be dirty, yeah I may look homeless, I am homeless, but hey-

Speaker 3: You're a diesel mechanic. That's [inaudible].

██████████ Home is where you make it.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

██████████ Home is where you lay your head down at night.

Speaker 1: Absolutely.

██████████ All that matters is that you're happy.

Speaker 1: Are you happy?

██████████ Yeah. I mean, I couldn't be any happier, really. I mean-

Speaker 3: Really? That's good.

Speaker 1: I love that.

██████████ [inaudible] couldn't be better. I wake up every morning still breathing, right? I mean, I'm still alive.

Speaker 3: Good attitude.

Speaker 1: Got some elk around you.

Speaker 3: Elk is delicious. Have you had elk?

██████████ Elk is delicious, yes.

Speaker 3: I love bison, elk. Oh my god.

██████████ I love deer.

Speaker 3: I'm a big girl, you know I love to eat.

██████████ I love deer, I love eating. I've ate a couple bear. Oh my goodness, there's a lot of things I've eaten. Have you ever eaten rattlesnake?

Speaker 3: Yeah, no. You eat that out where you're at?

██████████ Tastes like chicken.

Speaker 3: Oh my... I feel like if you put hot sauce on it would taste like chicken.

██████████ You don't need hot sauce. Barbecue sauce, tastes like chicken.

Speaker 3: Rattlesnake. They come out where you're at?

█ Not out there, but I've ate a couple out in California.

Speaker 1: That makes sense. While you've been in your current situation, what kind of things have been helpful? You mentioned before coming into town to get things.

█ Yeah, my tree service boss, he's always... he's like my boss dad. It's all about social networking, really. You got to have people that you can know you can go talk to. Give them a call, hey can I stop by and hang out for a little bit? And no matter what he's doing, he always says yeah.

Speaker 1: That's awesome.

Speaker 3: He's your boss, right?

█ Yeah. He's my tree service boss.

Speaker 3: And he knows your situation, that he's there for you.

█ And I've known him for six years that I've been here, so.

Speaker 3: Okay.

█ Yeah, he knows my mom, too, and my mom and him talk every day.

Speaker 3: That's great.

Speaker 1: That's awesome.

Speaker 3: You're lucky.

Speaker 1: Do you have any other folks like that in the area?

█ Got a couple coworkers. And then I got the guys at the depot.

Speaker 1: You guys seem pretty tight at the depot.

█ It's a tight-knit community. We're always helping each other out. If someone needed my jacket, everything I had on right now, I'd give it to them.

Speaker 3: I love that.

█ I'd fucking right my bike home in nothing but my boxers for one of them. It's like a separate community away from normal community.

Speaker 3: I love that you say that. Every time I go down there, they won't let anybody use the

bathrooms. They're locked. That's crazy.

██████ Yeah, and right.

Speaker 3: That's awful.

██████ That's...

Speaker 1: That is.

██████ That's [inaudible].

Speaker 3: They can't let people use the bathrooms that are port-a-potties outside [inaudible].

██████ Well, a lot of people, a lot of homeless, they do other extracurricular activities.

Speaker 3: In the bathroom?

██████ In the bathroom.

Speaker 1: Just for the purposes of the interview, what do you mean by extracurricular?

██████ Smoke dope.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I figured that's what you were meaning.

██████ Yeah.

Speaker 3: But they shouldn't have that... oh, yeah. Okay. I get you.

██████ It's a problem out here. It's sad to see, but... and don't get me wrong, I had that problem for two years, but I've been sober for three months... four months? Yeah, four months.

Speaker 3: Good, so it's just Everclear now?

██████ Everclear, or any alcohol and weed.

Speaker 3: Yeah. And before you know it, you'll wean yourself off that.

██████ And nicotine. No I won't.

Speaker 3: Well...

██████ Well, I don't drink as much as I used to, let's just say that.

Speaker 3: One day at a time.



██████ Yeah. One day at a time.

Speaker 1: Three months sober from the other stuff, though, that's impressive.

██████ Four.

Speaker 1: Four. That's impressive.

Speaker 3: That's very impressive. Right here.

██████ It's all about who you put yourself around. If you put yourself around people who push you to do better every day, you're going to do better. The most important thing is, you have to want it.

Speaker 3: Yes.

██████ You have to want what you [inaudible]. You got to set your goals.

Speaker 3: It's like me. I have to want to lose the weight, right?

██████ Me, it's like I have to want to get out of bed in the morning to go to work. It's cold in the mother fucking morning. Do I want to get up? No. But do I? Yes.

Speaker 3: Yes, because you need to fix those diesel engines.

██████ Yeah. I need to...

Speaker 1: Can I ask a little more deeply what caused... if you had been using for so long, what gave you that drive to change?

██████ It was more the fact that I was losing friends that I didn't really want to lose. I have a lot to lose, and if I mess up again, I'm going to lose it all. So...

Speaker 3: You'll lose your relationship with your mother, that's for sure.

██████ My mother. She's been clean for 40 years... well, 38. Something like that. Something like that. But yeah, that's one of the most important ones, but there's a couple others that are really important, too. They're on top three.

Speaker 3: And plus, the stuff is so temporary. When you wake up in the morning, you hate yourself.

██████ Yeah.

Speaker 3: So it's just better to just...

██████ Yeah.

Speaker 3: It's temporary, right? It's so temporary.

██████: I don't ever hate myself. I mean, I-

Speaker 3: Not hate yourself, but you feel better if you just skipped it all aside, right? Maybe I don't know what I'm talking about.

██████: I don't know.

Speaker 1: That's okay.

██████: Sometimes, yes. Sometimes, yes.

Speaker 3: Sometimes, yes.

Speaker 1: For the current situation you're in, what led to it? What caused your current experience with homelessness?

██████: It was more of a decision.

Speaker 1: Yeah, that's what you said before. But what was the decision you made?

██████: It's a long, complicated story. Something I really don't know how to quite tell.

Speaker 1: That's fine. You don't have to share it today if you don't want to.

Speaker 3: You just wanted to be out of society and on your own in the woods?

██████: Yeah.

Speaker 3: Is that what it is?

██████: It was more of overwhelmed. An overwhelming feeling. I don't even know if I really know how to explain it.

Speaker 1: Would you be okay if I asked a few probing questions about it? We can move on if you don't want to talk about the subject, too.

██████: Let's move on.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Speaker 3: Okay.

Speaker 1: Thanks for being explicit about that.

Speaker 3: Thank you.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: Is this your first time being homeless?

█ No. I was homeless for six months out in California before I moved out here.

Speaker 1: Okay. And then you moved up here because your mom is close by?

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: How did you end up here versus in Kent?

█ All right. She originally was out here. We actually lived down the road, down at █ on █. I got kicked out. I got sent to jail and got charged, BS. And then, she moved back out to Kent. She got her own apartment, her and my aunt, to be closer to my grandpa. And then, yeah. And then I just did my own thing out here after that.

Speaker 1: Nice. Have you used any homeless services like shelter, day centers, anything like that?

█ I've used a shelter.

Speaker 1: How was that?

█ It honestly was magical.

Speaker 1: Tell me more.

█ It's a very very very very tight-knit community. It's just felt warm and welcoming. I mean, like family almost. They treated me like family. And honestly, sometimes that's all someone ever needs.

Speaker 1: Was that the shelter over in Snoqualmie?

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: That's awesome. How long did you stay there for?

█ I stayed there for the summer and a little bit of spring last year.

Speaker 1: Why did you leave?

█ I mean, it was another decision.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

█ I take breaks from society, come back for a little bit. I go back and forth.

Speaker 1: That makes total sense. Do you use any other services? What about the food bank?

█: I don't really use the food bank in all honesty. I used to, but I haven't had my ID in so long that I got to fill out paperwork, and they're going to ask me for my ID. I don't have one. All that good stuff.

Speaker 1: If you wanted to get an ID again, do you know where you go to get one?

█ Yeah. Just right at higher North Bend DOL.

Speaker 1: Perfect.

█ [inaudible] place.

Speaker 1: Is there anything keeping you from doing that?

█ More of I don't know how to manage my money.

Speaker 1: Okay.

█ I probably should start [inaudible]. Yeah, I don't see it as a pressing urge, or a need right now. In all honesty. Just everybody knows me anyways. All the cops, they know me by first name, so... first and last, so it's like-

Speaker 3: Are they kind to you?

█ They don't like my ass.

Speaker 1: Yeah, I'm curious. What is your relationship like with the police here?

█ Well, it's a love hate relationship. I mean, I get along with a couple of them. I get along with Officer █, and Officer █. But the rest of them, they're just dicks to me. They find every little reason just to basically mess with me. Yeah.

Speaker 1: Are they ever violent to you?

█ No. They're not ever violent, but I'm sure if they wanted to, they would be. If I was drunk enough.

Speaker 1: What kind of things do they do in interactions with you?

Speaker 3: Do they intimidate you?

█ Some of them, yeah. They always have their fucking hands on their fucking guns when they're around me. Unclipped, at that. Okay? And I'm always carrying my knife. They

know I have my knife. I make it obvious. There it is, Officer.

Speaker 3: [inaudible] right. Do they get upset when you set up a campfire? Because they were telling me that that's the biggest problem for them. They don't like the fact that you guys set campfire. I mean, I know you guys need to stay warm, but, Bradley told me that. He said that scares him most about everything.

█ Yeah. I mean, it depends on-

Speaker 3: It's cold. I know it's cold.

█ If you're close to a water source, it's different. But, if you're not close to a water source, then how the hell do you put it out? Because I'm not going to sleep all night with a fire going. What if it...

Speaker 3: Right.

█ I've done the wild land fires side. I've cut my share of fire lines. So, I'm not trying to... I got my fire pit dug three feet deep and wide and I have it all cleared out at least 20 feet away from the fire. And I actually climbed the trees around me and trimmed up the trees, too.

Speaker 3: Because that's what Officer Bradley was telling me. He said that was his main concern.

█ Yeah, it's-

Speaker 3: Because I was walking down there, and he's like, "What are you doing walking down there?" He literally said the same thing to me, and I was telling him I'm passing out fliers. He's like, "Well, this is our problem with this segment of the community." It was the fires.

█ Yeah. I don't see a big problem with it as long as you're close to a water source. And I'll tell that to them, too. I always make sure I'm close to a water source.

Speaker 3: Yeah, well I was down by the river is the point.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So, the ability to live in the woods the way that you do, that's not easy. How did you learn that?

█ I learned it growing up. I was born and raised out in the middle of Tim Buk Nowhere. So, it was middle of Stanislaus National Forest. I mean, so I grew up hunting, fishing. Just...

Speaker 3: So you don't use an EBD card to get food? You hunt?

█ I don't even have an EBT card.

Speaker 3: Why not?

█ I use either cash or go get it.

Speaker 3: You've never had an EBD card?

█ I used to.

Speaker 3: Okay.

█ But I don't need it.

Speaker 3: I got you. You're going to hunt that rattlesnake.

█ Yeah. I'd rather work hard for my food. I would rather work for my food.

Speaker 1: That's fair. How often are you hunting and fishing for food?

█ At least once a week.

Speaker 1: Okay.

█ If not two. It just depends. As long as I got snacks around me, but once the snacks run out, okay.

Speaker 1: You know where to go.

█ Fishing pole and bow and arrow. Oh yes, I will take a fruit snack.

Speaker 3: Honey, look.

Speaker 1: That's what these are here for.

Speaker 3: Take a handful.

Speaker 1: Take a handful. Send you with some water bottles.

█ I will take a handful of fruit snacks. You can never-

Speaker 3: Leave the rattlesnakes alone.

█ I will never say not to a fruit snack.

Speaker 3: It's okay, baby. It's okay.

█ [inaudible] stockpile.

Speaker 1: Good.

Speaker 3: That's good.

Speaker 1: [inaudible].

Speaker 3: Love that.

Speaker 1: If you could imagine a service, whether it be a shelter, food bank, something that would help you, what would a service look like that would be helpful to you? Dream big.

█ You're probably not going to like this answer.

Speaker 1: I don't care. It's your answer.

█ Like one of them trading posts.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

█ I'd sit one of those out, where you can barter and trade type thing.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

█ How old trappers used to do it back in the day.

Speaker 1: [inaudible].

█ They'd have these every 20 miles or so, 100 miles or so. They'd have trading posts set up.

Speaker 3: Trading what for what? Like an engine for-

█ They would trade furs and pelts.

Speaker 3: Stolen items for others-

█ No, I don't steal shit.

Speaker 3: No, I'm not saying you're stealing. I'm just saying. An engine for something else? Or a mechanical item, or food?

█ Well, I don't really need mechanical items up where I am. Well, I do keep a tool set so I can work on my chainsaw, but...

Speaker 3: So, the items that people in your community need.

█ Yeah, exactly.

Speaker 3: Oh, for the stuff you guys have. Sleeping bags...

█ Like sleeping bags, socks, or stuff like that. Hygienic stuff.

Speaker 3: Shelters have that, and there's also a food bank right behind us. Do you use that food bank?

█ I used to. Last time I used it was 2019.

Speaker 3: Okay. Why don't you use it? It's full of food.

█ I don't have my ID. It's been a while since I-

Speaker 3: You need... yeah. They won't let you enter without an ID. I find that's what people always tell me.

█ I mean, they will-

Speaker 1: It's a weird requirement.

Speaker 3: It's the craziest thing.

█ They will on the first day.

Speaker 3: They will on the first day. They'll pack you something.

█ Yeah, they will give you [inaudible].

Speaker 3: But they won't let you enter, and you can't pick.

█ But they won't let you in after that.

Speaker 3: But after that, they won't.

Speaker 1: Sorry. A few more questions for you on this. Have you ever served in the military? I know it's a huge departure from what we're talking about right now.

█ No, but if they're drafting, I'm waiting for my draft papers.

Speaker 1: Yeah?

█ Yeah. I'm sure there's going to be a World War III.

Speaker 1: [inaudible].

█ And if there is, I'm going to be on the front lines.



Speaker 1: Okay. If you were given the opportunity to enlist right now without it, would you?

██████████ Without a second thought.

Speaker 1: Okay. Why is that?

Speaker 3: You're young enough, you can still do it. Go in the military.

██████████ Well, my adopted dad, he was in the Navy. He served in Vietnam. My brother, he just retired. Got an honorable discharge from the Navy Seals. And then my little brother, he's even younger than me, is actually stationed out in Pemberton with the Navy.

Speaker 1: It's a cool base they have there.

██████████ Yeah. So, I got a lot of... quite a bit of military family. I'd go down The Marine Corps recruitment office and...

Speaker 3: You can still do it. You're young enough. You understand?

██████████ Yeah, but I'm probably not mental health [inaudible].

Speaker 1: That's fair.

Speaker 3: That's fair.

Speaker 1: Got to be in the right place for something like that.

██████████ But, if I got my draft papers today, I'd be running my ass down there.

Speaker 3: That is so good.

Speaker 1: That's awesome. How would you characterize your health?

██████████ Pretty healthy.

Speaker 1: Yeah?

██████████ I mean, I made a couple unended bones, and unended... well, mended. Yeah, I'm pretty healthy.

Speaker 1: Okay. Do you have health insurance?

██████████ No.

Speaker 1: If you had a health emergency or a health need, where would you go?

██████████ Go to the main road and call 911.

Speaker 1: Perfect.

█ Get myself an ambulance if I needed it.

Speaker 3: Yes.

Speaker 1: Good.

█ Happened a couple times already, but...

Speaker 1: Really?

Speaker 3: They can't deny you health care.

█ Yeah. I got bit by a hobo spider down at Hidden beach down there, and my pinky swelled up to the size of a pickle.

Speaker 1: I bet.

Speaker 3: Right.

█ And then, the infection lines went to my spine. It was one at my lungs, and there was one about an inch away from my heart.

Speaker 1: That's scary.

█ They got to the hospital. They immediately put me into surgery.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

█ And they cut open right here, right here, and then right here.

Speaker 1: How long were you in the hospital for that?

█ Three months.

Speaker 1: Whoa.

Speaker 3: That's a serious infection.

█ They told me literally I had 20 minutes to live.

Speaker 1: That's nuts.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: What did you do after your stay in the hospital?

█ Went to my mom's for a little bit. I let my hand heal up a little bit. And then after it got healed, I came back out here. Started working. Was working tree service full time at the time, seven days a week, 24/7 basically. And then, yeah. I just went back to my thing.

Speaker 1: Makes sense.

Speaker 3: I knew somebody else who had the same spider injury, and they didn't tell him 20 minutes to live, but they told him you need to get your affairs in order, Owen.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I'm so sorry. I have to answer this real quick.

Speaker 3: Okay.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 1: Are you okay with me pausing this for a second?

█ Three months ago, because I was over there.

Speaker 3: Okay.

█ So, I got a couple more months to go before I can go back over there.

Speaker 1: They're calling me-

█ [inaudible] okay.

Speaker 3: Don't be embarrassed about anything. Yeah. Go ahead.

Speaker 1: Wonderful. Sorry about that.

█ No worries.

Speaker 1: On these, there's a phone number for folks to call for all the different sites, so they're at the Renton one, wondering if they were still open. They're not.

Speaker 3: We're almost done, by the way. [inaudible].

Speaker 1: We talked a little bit about your interactions with the police-

Speaker 3: Did you turn that on?

Speaker 1: I did turn it back on. Thank you. Do you have any outstanding fines or tickets with them?

█ Probably.

Speaker 1: Probably? Do you have an idea of how many? Overall, about how much you might owe?

█ I know I have two no insurance tickets. A DUI. A couple-

Speaker 3: So you have a car?

█ I have a 1985 Ford F150, two wheel drive.

Speaker 1: That's a nice car.

█ Extended cab, short bed, medium bed. I think it's a six foot bed, or something like that.

Speaker 1: Nice.

█ I need to get new tires for it. I need to get some new all terrain tires for it. [inaudible] those.

Speaker 1: Do you have any experiences with child welfare or foster care system?

█ I was adopted when I was four years old. I've been through the foster care system out in California, and it's not something that I... actually, my tree service boss, he was a foster parent for a while, and he'd get foster kids, and they'd be there for a couple, three or four months, and you'd develop that relationship with them-

Speaker 3: That's why you have a good relationship with him, and you go to him for things.

█ And it hurts so much when you see them go. They had this one little girl, and when they came to pick her up to take her away from them, I was in jail at the time. And my boss told me this when I got out, but before she left, she asked █ where's my █? And that just destroyed me.

Speaker 3: Is that your name?

█ Yeah. My name's █, yeah. That just destroyed me, man. It broke my heart. But, I know she'll always remember me though, so.

Speaker 3: Well, thank you for sharing that with us. Children know good people.

█ Yeah.

Speaker 3: I'm sorry. You're going to make me cry.

█ I love kids. Kids are cool.

Speaker 3: Kids are the best. They're honest, right?

██████ Yeah. Really, brutally honest.

Speaker 3: Brutally honest.

██████ I've been roasted by a two year old, okay?

Speaker 3: I know. They know how to do it so well.

██████ Straight up roasted.

Speaker 3: They're the best at comebacks.

██████ In front of everybody in Denny's.

Speaker 1: I love it.

Speaker 3: I know. They have the best comebacks.

██████ I was like...

Speaker 3: They're so witty.

██████ My boss was like, "How you doing, ████████? And then this little girl was like, "██████. Stinking."

Speaker 1: That's funny.

Speaker 3: That's not funny. Actually, it is, but...

██████ I'm like, "Oh my god. I just got roasted by a two year old. This is awesome. Do it again."

Speaker 3: I love that. I love how you... yeah.

██████ I don't care you are, that's funny. Git 'er done.

Speaker 1: Yeah, that's great. Where did you go to school?

██████ I actually went to very... five schools, and then college. So, I went to Black Oak Elementary, then Twain Harte Middle, and Summerville High School. Got expelled from Summerville in my... the very beginning. The first week of my sophomore year. And then I went to Gold Rush Charter School, and then I went to Tuomy Community School, whatever.

It's a continuation of high school, and then I got sent to Juvy for eight months, and then after that I went to this school, graduated from this schooled called One Vision. It's a continuation high school. It was part of the group home program that I was in. So, I graduated high school, the middle of my junior year at 16 years old, applied for college,

got into the Fire Academy in computer science programming. And by the time I was 19, I had got two Associate degrees in arts.

Speaker 1: That's awesome.

So, it was totally worth it. But even though I don't use any of my degrees, but still I have them.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Education's important.

Speaker 3: They can't take that away from you.

No.

Speaker 3: Ever. Right.

Speaker 1: To wrap up, I have a few demographic questions. How do you identify in terms of race and ethnicity?

Native.

Speaker 1: Can I ask what tribal affiliation?

Nooksack.

Speaker 1: How old are you?

■

Speaker 1: How would you describe your gender identity?

Male.

Speaker 1: How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Straight.

Speaker 1: Have you been married?

Nope.

Speaker 1: Do you have children?

No. At least I hope not. Another one of me running around, that's the last thing we need.

Speaker 3: That's not true. That's not true. We need you. We need more of you.

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██████ I'm pretty wild.

Speaker 1: Is there anything else you want us to know about?

██████ I can't think of anything.

Speaker 1: Okay.

Speaker 3: Peace to Ukraine.