[Snap Judgment]

**Glynn:** What's your story? Do you need to deliver the perfect wedding toast? Wow clients at a business dinner? Or, simply connect more deeply to those around you? Whatever it is, our friends at The Moth are here to help. *How to Tell a Story: The Essential Guide to Memorable Storytelling,* is a new book to help you find the stories within you. Buy your copy today at *themoth.org/httas*.

[upbeat music]

Okay, I live in Oakland, the beautiful San Francisco Bay area. Let's imagine someone from here meets someone special, and they want to progress to the next level. There's nothing people from the bay love to do more than go to LA. And vice versa, people from LA love to come up to the Bay. Now often, we'll fly down. But really, the math has been done on this. You don't save a lot of time point to point by flying as opposed to driving, you don't. If timed right, you can make the drive in about six hours.

And friends, these hours can let you know if the person you are with is someone for the long haul, or someone you have to ditch. It turns out, six hours in a car with someone, six hours, that is a lot of hours. A lot of time that entails a lot of decisions, a lot of potential triumphs, setbacks, a lot of flashing lights. Who controls the radio? [radio static] Who drives? How fast? How slow? Does one person's sleep while the other is driving? Or do they make it their job to keep the other person occupied with a stream of inane chatter? Do they grind their teeth? Do they breathe hard? And what in God's name are they talking about now? The perennial question, do you stop at Pea Soup Andersen's and get you some pea soup on the way down? Or, do you stop on the way back up? Because you've got to stop there, everybody knows that. For real, break up immediately if they don't stop at Pea Soup Andersen's, or, or, or, or, or, or, do you throw caution to the wind and drive the scenic route, down Highway One?

Warning, danger, Will Robinson. This way is at least nine hours. Nine hours, and nine hours together in the car, is twice as many hours as six hours, believe me. But maybe. Maybe it's an investment. An investment in your future. Your future either with this person or without them, because if somehow, by some twist of fate, some accident of evolution, somehow if at the end of this trip, there and back again, you are still engaged, laughing, amused by and patient with the other person sharing this metal box with you? Well, then, y'all need to call the caterers, decide on the flower girls, because you passed the most important test, because that's not just the highway you've traveled on. No, no, no, no. That's the road of life. The journey distilled. And today on Snap Judgment, Snap Judgment's underground lair, an Odyssey like no other. For the most important reason of all, we're calling it The Pink Palace. And soon, we're going to find out why.

My name is Glynn Washington. Whenever you go on a road trip with someone special, always play Snap Judgment. Well, you're listening to Snap Judgment.

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** We begin with a beautiful young newlywed couple in love, love, on their honeymoon no less, around the world. First leg, South America. What could be better? That's where they meet two anthropologists who tell them, they can see the mighty Amazon River if they just make a wee detour. And you know how some relationships, there's the one who has the ideas and the one who has the hesitations, one that's the gas, the other is the brakes? You know what I'm talking about? Snap Judgment.

[lively music]

**Holly:** Well, I was the risk taker, and Fitz would probably put the brakes on. [chuckles] But not really. He was just more aware, he was city wise to my more naive self.

**Nikka:** But Fitz knew how much this trip meant to Holly. So here they were, seated with 13 people on an old army surplus plane, Holly peering out the tiny window on the way to the Amazon. And in that moment, she truly saw the jungle for the first time.

**Holly:** It's just like an ocean of different greens and little slivers of ribbon glinting in the light. This was just the most amazing thing I could ever imagine, because I knew there was a whole world down there that I'd never seen. There were probably people down there that we didn't know. There were animals, jaguars and ocelots. And it was all secret to me. But now, I was hoping I would be privy to a little bit of it.

**Nikka:** Then from the wing of the aircraft, she heard a loud noise.

**Holly:** There was some kind of a zing, like a metal sound, and the plane was rocking.

**Nikka:** They began hurtling down toward the trees, and the pilot tried for a crash landing on a short runway, cut from the thick of the jungle.

[loud crash]

**Holly:** It snapped off the wing and the landing gear. And then, we all jumped and rushed to get out, and Fitz was behind me. He said, "Come on, come on, it could blow at any time."

**Nikka:** They jumped out of the wreckage of the airplane with all they could carry and scrambled across a muddy field until they knew they were clear. Eventually, Holly and Fitz made their way through the Peruvian jungle to a threadbare town in the middle of nowhere. It's the 1970s, so there's no cell phones, no internet cafes, and no easy way out. But they did find there was a boat ride they could take, and it was leaving soon.

**Holly:** We were really desperate to get these tickets and continue with our dream to get to the Amazon River. We rushed to the harbormaster, and said, "Oh, can we have tickets for that boat tomorrow?" And he said, "What boat tomorrow? It left three days ago." Then, we said, "Well, what can we do now?" Then he said, "There are no boats for three months. But there's a plane back to where you came from."

**Nikka:** They weren't that far away. They could almost feel it. But this last little stretch seemed almost impossible to cross.

**Holly:** We said, "Let's go back to the hotel and think about it." And we felt pretty devastated, because now there seemed like the only way was to go backwards. We were sitting at dinner, talking about what we were going to do when this man came up. And he looked very debonair, he had a white suit on which really made me feel like, "Oh, this is something," and he didn't have any mud on his pants or anything. He just looked very sophisticated. And he said, "Oh, I couldn't help but overhear your conversation. My name is Juan Neuenschwander. And I would like to be able to help you if you don't mind." And we said, "Oh, sure. Well, sit down."

**Nikka:** Juan Neuenschwander said he was a gold explorer from the area. He'd also worked in Chicago for years and he spoke perfect English. So, after hearing that Holly and Fitz had missed their boat, he brought up an intriguing and intrepid idea, just the sort of thing that Holly was into.

**Holly:** He said, "Well, have you ever thought of taking a raft?" That's our means of transportation. And a light bulb suddenly went off behind my eyes. "Oh, some adventure." And I looked at Fitz, and I could see he definitely was not looking at this in the same way I was. But I started asking questions anyway. "How could we go down the raft? We don't know anything about it." Juan said, "Well, you don't have to know anything about rafts. You just get on and you just go. The current takes you." And then I said, "Well, what about detours? What if we end up going off the river with the current?" And he said, "Oh, any detour will take you back to the river. There's no problem with that. You always get back to the river and continue." Oh, my heart was skipping. I wanted to believe even though we'd never done it before. And he kept saying, "It's all right." I kept asking him the same questions over and over, and he said, "You can do it. You always get back to the river and continue."

That just made my heart skip more and more because it was a means of getting out of here. Plus, it would be a fun way of going. So, I was elated. Fitz was still frowning. And he said, "Wait a minute. We know nothing about rafts. You think we'll take one of those banana-laden rafts down the river?" Juan explained, "No, no. You could make a raft that way you want to make a raft. A big raft, with a tent, a platform, you put a grill on it. You make it the way you want. You can make it your own home." And then, I started thinking, "Oh, our own home. Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

**Nikka:** Holly and Fitz finished the last of their steak and potatoes, and Juan Neuenschwander bid them goodnight. Then, on the way back to the room, they talked it over.

**Holly:** "What do you think, Fitz?" "I just don't think this is great at all. I think this guy's crazy." "But Fitz, you were asking him questions, I thought you did seem kind of interested." "Well, thinking about it. We just don't know this guy at all. And how can we trust him? You're pretty trusting, Holly." "Just don't be so cautious," it just seemed to me, one more beautiful part of nature to see. It would be open, with really, the frontier, there would be no houses, there would be very few people. And we were really seeing what I imagined when I had read the National Geographic as a kid. I'd never really thought I'd get there. But here I was on the crux of it. So, I got excited about that too.

He was intrigued, yet he was trying to be cautious. He was the smart guy in the two of us. I did end up talking him into it because there was a part of him that did want to be that Huck Finn, which is a fantasy. But he did jump on in the end.

**Nikka:** The next morning, they met with Juan Neuenschwander, and they said they were in and they asked what should they do next. So, he told them. "Go down to the banks of the river, and someone there will probably just give you a raft for free."

**Holly:** And we went along the bank, and we saw a number of rafts. And we asked the people there, Ernesto was the name of the man and his family. They were teachers, he and his wife. We told him what we were planning on doing. They were very curious and friendly. And he said, "Oh, I have just the one, and it's right across the river. I'll take you over there."

**Nikka:** In the end, it was made of four balsa logs tied together. It was the size of a small bedroom. Then, they started to build their home on it. They had a grill made out of a canola oil can, a rudder to steer, and a platform with a huge pink plastic tent. It took them two days to build out their raft. And then on the day of their launch, they completed their final check of their supplies and prepare to christen their ship with a bottle of beer.

**Holly:** When he handed me the bottle, I swung it thinking, "Oh, this will be easy. I'll just bang it really hard against the raft and call her The Pink Palace." That's the name we had decided to call her. And somehow, it flew out of my hands and just barely bumped that side of the raft and crashed into the waters, unbroken. So, the local kids went, "Oh," on this side of the bank like a Greek chorus, and I thought, "Oh, no, is this a bad luck omen?" And then, Fitz said, "Oh, come on. Don't worry. That's just a superstition. It's no big deal."

[water crashing]

**Nikka:** They pushed off the shore and hopped aboard The Pink Palace.

**Holly:** We put the pole down and the paddle, and we just floated along, and then we could relax.

**Nikka:** The plan was to get themselves down to the town of Riberalta. From there, they would head over land and finally meet up with the Amazon. But first, they had a float for five days down this river, the Madre de Dios.

**Holly:** Oh, the sun felt great because there was a lovely breeze. And then there were little chirping birds going by. And we were just soaring along, and it felt like you're flying along with the current, so it felt just free as could be.

**Nikka:** With The Pink Palace drifting down the river, they're lounging around reading paperback novels. And then, a family of butterflies begins darting all around them.

**Holly:** Then, Fitz said, "Look, the butterflies are landing on you." Oh, there are at least seven or eight butterflies, and they were beautiful. Iridescent, opal, purples, whites, blues. And then, Fitz said. "Oh, your bejeweled." And I said, "Oh, my heavens, he's such a poet." And just making a slight movement, they darted off into the wind up into the sky.

I was drifting my hand in the water, as the current went along. And then, I started singing *Moon River* or humming it.

[*Moon River song*]

**Holly:** And then, I wanted to try to do a little dance, which isn't all that easy on these round logs, but just a little bit of a slow dance. And I just got into the moment, and I said, "Oh, come on, Fitz. Why don't we dance?" And he was reading a paperback and he's, "Oh, I'm not a good dancer. I can't dance." And I said, "Oh, come on." He was, "No way. No way. I can't do that." "Oh, come on. Come on." And then, "Well, all right," he said, so he got off. And then he put his arms around me and we just slowly danced to that. It was just wonderful. I just never wanted it to end. So, then we just ended up laughing. And that's the kind of moments we had.

**Nikka:** Holly and Fitz had met in Boston a few years earlier. Holly was just finishing her master's, Fitz had just served in Vietnam and was starting his undergrad. Fitz was something of a coffeehouse poet, wrapping everyone up in his conversations and stories, including Holly. They two quickly fell in love and started making a life together. And then one night, they got into a pretty scary car accident. The car was totaled. And even though they weren't hurt, Holly started to question the script they were living.

**Holly:** So, that's what got me started thinking, the next step would have been for us probably being married would be to save up for a house.

**Nikka:** But she wasn't ready for that life, settling down or having a baby.

**Holly:** I still had growing to do. I thought seeing the world and what was out there would help me to find out who that person was. And maybe I wanted to see how courageous I could be.

**Nikka:** So, they laid out a plan, began working second and third jobs to save up enough money. And now, they were off on a journey of a lifetime, floating on The Pink Palace down the Madre de Dios toward their goal, the Amazon River.

[water flowing]

**Holly:** It had been beautiful for the last few days, and then we fell asleep that night. It was fine. But suddenly in the middle of the night, there was thunder all around, right on top of us and lightning. And I said, "Fitz, Fitz. Wake up, wake up. There's a storm." The raft that usually was so stable was rocking up and down and spinning. So, I was scared because Ernesto had said, "Don't ever let the raft spin." And here we were, spinning around like a carousel. But Fitz sleeps very soundly, and he was, "What!? What!?" And I said, "Storm! Storm!" and he inched his way over and looked out the flap of the tent into the roiling river. It was all dark. And just as that happened, a trunk of a tree with all these spiking roots came blasting through the tent, and Fitz said, "Are you okay? Are you okay?" And I said, "Yes, yes. But I can't move." And then, Fitz grabbed me and said, "We've got to get this tree trunk off of the raft. It's pulling it down. "And the water was coming over the bow.

[heavily raining]

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** It's not over, Snappers. The water is rising. Will The Pink Palace stay afloat? Find out when Snap Judgment returns. Stay tuned.

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** Welcome back to Snap Judgment, Pink Palace episode. When last we left, Holly and Fitz on the Madre de Dios River in the middle of the storm, the wrath spinning out of control, and a tree trunk had just blasted their tent. Snap Judgment.

[loud thud]

**Holly:** And just as that happened, Fitz said, "Are you okay? Are you okay?" And I said, "Yes, yes, but I can't move." And then Fitz grabbed me said, "We've got to get this tree trunk off of the raft. It's pulling it down," and the water was coming over the bow. And that's what scared us, is that we had to get that tree off of us.

**Nikka:** Together, they heave the tree off the raft and tie The Pink Palace up to the riverbank. And then, they tried to get some sleep with the storm all around them.

**Holly:** So, the next morning after the storm, I woke up and I was so happy to be alive. A couple of birds were singing, but just the way after a storm, everything is so quiet and so pure and clean. Thought, "Wow, what a wonderful, beautiful world this is." And he sat down too, and we were just hugging each other actually, happy that we were alive.

**Nikka:** The Pink Palace was damaged. Their tent was torn, and they were caught in some branches. But they didn't think it was too bad. Until they tried to make some breakfast.

**Holly:** Most of our supplies had gone overboard with the storm. And we just looked at the one box that had a few things. And I could see there was a little pea soup, there was a can of Carnation milk--

**Nikka:** They had packed enough food for a week. And now, they didn't have enough for a meal.

**Holly:** So, there really wasn't much. And now, he just looked devastated.

**Nikka:** At this point, they knew that it would only take one more day until they reached the town of Riberalta. So, they tried to stay hopeful.

**Holly:** He said, "Well, let's have coffee at least," and I was relieved, "Okay, great." It was instant coffee but it was something. We're sitting, and Fitz looks out, and he says, "Holly, there's no current here really, it's not the way it was before rushing by us. There's no bank here. There's no land. Look under these trees, there's just more water. I don't know, but I don't think we're on the river anymore."

**Nikka:** The storm had blown them off course, down some kind of side channel. And now, Holly could hear the words of Juan Neuenschwander inside her head.

**Holly:** "Any detour will take you back to the river. There's no problem with that. You always get back to the river and continue."

**Nikka:** But it wasn't a detour. This was a floodplain, and they were stuck and pinned up against trees. And The Pink Palace was too large to go against the tide.

**Holly:** We were at a dead end, with a flooded jungle all around us and no way out. So, what made it even worse was that the water wasn't clear. We couldn't see what was out there. It was all muddy, and we'd hear the sounds. There were anacondas in there, there were South American alligators, the piranha, and the candiru, which was one of the scariest because they're little tiny, tiny fish with very, very sharp teeth, and they go up your orifices and eat your intestines and you bleed to death. So, suddenly, I realized that The Pink Palace was really all we had to stand on, because beyond it, in this channel or swamp, were all these creatures that could kill us.

**Nikka:** For days, they were paralyzed with fear, until Fitz spotted something, just sticking out of the muddy water. It was a tiny, waterlogged raft. It barely floated with the two of them on it. But it was small enough to go against the current or so they thought. Their first escape attempt ended two days later, as the water pushed them all the way back to where they had started.

**Holly:** We pulled up on The Pink Palace and tied up, and suddenly there was a sound in the sky, then Fitz said, "Oh, my God. There's a plane out there. Look at that little dot, it's coming towards us." And I looked up and I said, "Oh, my Lord," and we're waving, we're waving. "It's got to see us." And then, it swirls around. I said, "Surely, it will circle back." But then a humming of the plane, it becomes more and more distant. And we're waiting, waiting, surely it will come back. And then we don't hear it anymore. I said, "I'm sorry, Fitz." And he said, "For what?" And I said, "For wanting to go on this trip and talking you into it. I didn't know what would happen." And he said, "You didn't do it, we had to get out of there." And I felt relieved that he didn't blame me for that, that we were in this together and we just crumpled into each other's arms.

Now we're on the eighth day, and we had tried to escape two other times. And we were starving more and more, we had maybe a little bit of sugar. So, we knew, "Okay, if we are going to try one more time, we've got to do it now."

**Nikka:** There was only one option left, to swim.

**Holly:** Juan had told us never to go into the water, especially because of the candiru. But now, we had no choice and we had to get in.

**Nikka:** So, they each pried off the log from the small raft using it to stay afloat. There will be no land to rest on. Only some logjams from trees that have been washed down the river.

**Holly:** We got in the water. And we started ahead, and the sun was out. And we felt hopeful. We were making good headway as we went.

**Nikka:** They were weaker now. They hadn't eaten a full meal in seven days. Still, they made better headway swimming than they did on the raft. They got used to the slimy swirling things that moved around their legs, but they needed to rest. And finally, they saw a logjam up ahead and swam towards it.

**Holly:** So, I just pulled myself up on this logjam, and Fitz came wheezing in, and I helped him up, as I looked at him remembering just a month ago, how he had looked so strong and 6'1" guy, all muscles, curly hair with kind of blind from the sun. And now, he was almost like a skeleton and very gaunt, his face was very gaunt, with his eyes a little greyed over. And the wind was kicking up the water and we were wondering, "What are we going to do next?" Suddenly, just out of nowhere, he started yelling at the sky, and he had his fist raised and shaking and said, "What the hell do you think you're doing? Why are you doing this to us? We're good people. Why did you get me through Vietnam? I was wounded twice. What was the point of making it through everything, just to die in this godforsaken jungle?"

[somber music]

**Glynn:** Holly and Fitz are fighting to survive. Will their love falter in the face of the river's power? Stay tuned.

[somber music]

**Glynn:** From Snap Judgment's underground lair, welcome back to Snap Judgment, The Pink Palace episode. My name is Glynn Washington. And when last we left, Fitz and Holly's romantic adventure on the Madre de Dios River had turned into a test of survival. Snap Judgment.

[crickets]

**Holly:** Out of nowhere, he started yelling at the sky. "Why are you doing this to us? We're good people. Why did you get me through Vietnam? I was wounded twice. What was the point of making it through everything, just to die in this godforsaken jungle?" I was sure some lightning is going to come down at us or something. And I just saw he just completely was losing it. And I thought I've got to be strong for us, and we'll make it. And then I hugged him, and then he finally was spent, and said, "We need to go back. We can't do this anymore." I just didn't want to give up. But I knew that we had to, that Fitz couldn't do it. And so, I said, "Okay, yes, we have to go back."

I was thinking of my parents and how they would never know. We were going back to death. My mother and my father, Fitz's parents would never know what had happened to us. And I thought of them and how we were fighting so hard to get back to see them. And so, we both let go at the same time. And we went with all the landmarks we had fought so hard for. Within probably 15 minutes, we had passed them all. And then suddenly, we saw her, The Pink Palace. She was our savior, but she was a monster too that would be like a death, we'd never get out of here. And when we got on, I was saying to him, "This will be good. We'll be able to find food. We really need to do that." And he said, "You're the person I've admired the most, but now I even admire you more." And those were the most precious words I'd ever heard.

**Nikka:** All they could do now was try and stay alive. But they only had two tools for hunting, Holly's old girl scout knife, and a slightly oversized fishing hook.

**Holly:** We were hearing these fish splashing out there. All we needed was the right bait. But we weren't having any luck. And then one day, we were sitting on the raft and these beautiful iridescent butterflies came again and one landed on Fitz's shin. And I was thinking, "Oh, how beautiful." And wham, his hand came down and smashed the butterfly and I went, "Oh," and then he put it on the hook. But when he put it in the water, it disintegrated. But we tried again and again as there were maybe 11 or 12 butterflies that came, and we smashed everyone. But none of them were able to stay on that huge hook. So, we were really wasting these little creatures.

At some point, we started finding more snails. They were kind of glistening, and suddenly in our minds we thought of them as food instead of bait. So, we had about nine snails each and four frogs, and then we have two frogs each. I mean it was going to be a feast that we would put some water in the little frying pan on the oil can grill and we would quickly simmer them to kill any bacteria. And we sat down on the logs for dinner, and I said, "Thank you, God, and thank you to these wonderful creatures that giving up their lives for us." So, I took the first grub, it did have a little, tiny antenna. And when I looked at it, he had a little tiny snout. So that made it a little personal. But I had been dying to chew something. So, I just took it, and I crunched it. And it was a rubbery, awful crunch, and then it went into kind of an ooze inside. And I said, "Ah, this was awful." And I just had to get it down my throat with a lot of water. And then after that, I just said, "I'm going to do what Fitz is doing," which is just dropped them down with water and try the best to swallow them without crunching.

Things would come through my mind of, "Gosh, with hunger, I'm never going to leave the house without at least a few Snickers with me. Oh, gosh, savoring, I could just taste it. And then more serious things came into mind wanting, of course to see family again and friends. And then, this insight that came to me that I wanted to have a baby, and that that suddenly gave a whole new hope. And I told Fitz, "Fitz, I want to have a baby with you." And he looked at me and said, "Really?" I think he was thinking, "Now?" And I said, "Well, I couldn't have it right now in the jungle, obviously. But we're going to get out of here, and I want a baby with you." I looked in his eyes and he said, "Oh, that would be wonderful." And it gave us a sense of hope to feel that we could have a family in the future. But we still knew that we were going to die, that it was very close that we could die at any moment.

I wake up in the morning, this was the 26 days that we've been in here. I heard the birds chirping and I was so happy that we found so many frogs that I felt like we were on the upswing. And then I looked over at Fitz, and he just didn't look right. He was very still. And I didn't hear any breathing, and I put my hand on him. I just didn't hear anything, and I felt it was all gone. And I kind of shook him, "Fitz, Fitz." And he didn't respond. Tears came to my eyes, I just wanted him to wake up, and I shook his arm, "Fitz, please wake up. Please, please, honey. Please wake up." And then, he did respond. Then, I did start to cry. I was just holding him, and my tears were running into his beard. And then, something happened. I just felt calm. I said, "Fitz, guess what? We are going to get out of here today. I just know it. God said I'm taking you out of here today." "What? Really? Where's he taking us?" I said, "Well, home. We're going to go home."

And then Fitz said, "I'm going to go out. I'm going to go dip in the water." And he got up on his haunches, and I felt like I could hardly watch because he was so thin as he left the tent and I listened in case he needed my help pulling him up. Then, I heard Fitz screaming, "Socorro, socorro." He hadn't sounded so strong in weeks. "What is it, Fitz? What is it?" "It's men. It's men. I thought it was a log but it's men. They're coming this way." And I looked and, "Oh my gosh." It was. It was two men in a dugout canoe. And I just couldn't believe, and then we both started calling, "Socorro, socorro." And Fitz was saying, "Why? Why aren't they answering?" They're not glimmering, any smile or anything. They just were like statues coming toward us. And I quickly realized I better put some clothes on. Fitz was saying, "Oh, they've got a rifle." And he said, "Hand me that girl scout knife." And so, I found it in a box, and I handed it to him. "I mean, what was he going to do with this little, tiny knife?" And he was in the water. And he said, "I'll have to do it by surprise. And maybe I can throw one over and grab a gun." I said, "No, no, no. They're going to help us. They're going to help us."

I just got my dress on as fast as I could. And I got up and we'd only been crawling. So, I was very unsturdy when I got up, and I just tried to walk to get out of the tent. And I just fell and crashed into the water. And when I came up, the men were already there. When I put my hands up, they reached for me, and said, "Oh, poor señora." And so, I knew that they were going to be nice and good to us.

[somber music]

**Nikka:** They were local hunters. And they'd been tracking a monkey through the jungle when they came upon Holly and Fitz. And they could see they were in really bad shape. They helped them grab their belongings, and quickly loaded them on to their small boat.

**Holly:** We gave them our names, Holly and Fitz. And then, we asked them their names. Roca and Silverio. And I lean back on this huge dead turtle they've been hunting. And they handed us some banana chips, which we'd never seen before and some chicha, the maize drink. That was so nice of them. And then, they started paddling away, and I looked back. I was so thankful for having The Pink Palace, she kept us alive. And I just said goodbye, and I don't plan on ever coming back. She would just be a memory, and a memory in our minds and in a couple of photographs. And I was just so overjoyed to be alive and so was Fitz. We just kept hugging each other and crying and saying, "Thank you, thank you. Thank you to Silverio and Roca. And, yes, thank you to The Pink Palace too."

[lively music]

**Glynn:** Holly and Fitz ended up in a hospital for the next few weeks. There, they discovered that Fitz had become so weak because he had parasitic amoebas in his blood. But they both pulled through and decided to skip the Amazon and fly back home to Massachusetts. Three years after they got back home, they had their first baby, Megan Fitzgerald. And now they have two kids and five grandkids.

**Holly:** Just recently we were in France and seeing some of our friends that we had met in South America so long ago, and they brought out this banquet that they were very proud of. And they were these huge snails maybe, I don't know maybe six inches. They were huge. That's what French people love. And I did try one, and that was it, I could only really try one. It just was too reminiscent of the time on the raft. That one snail was enough for me. I hope those French people don't hear this. [chuckles] But no, I'm joking.

[lively music]

**Glynn:** Special thanks to Holly Fitzgerald for sharing her story the Snap. You can read her full account of Holly and Fitz's time on the Madre de Dios in her book, *Ruthless River*. We have a link on our website, *snapjudgment.org*. The original score for that story was by Renzo Gorrio. It was produced by Nikka Singh.

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** Oops. It happened again. I know, if you missed even a moment, get the amazing Snap Judgment podcast wherever you get your podcast, get this one. And do me a favor, if you will. If you do get the Snap storytelling, let somebody know. And here's the best test of all for anyone looking to find their special someone. Just ask your prospective lover if they're down to Snap, and they Snap and you snap? Lord, have mercy. Let me tell you something I've learned in my travels. Snappers are the very best people there are. You're welcome. Put a ring on it, go for it and make some little whippersnappers.

Listen up. The best way to signal you're Snapping, we have limited edition Snap stickers and mugs, available right now on our Patreon, *patreon.com/snapjudgment*. Get a hot cup of storytelling. Just let the world know you Snap, and pretty soon, you'll be taking your own trip on The Pink Palace. Believe it. *patreon.com/snapjudgment.* If you want a magic glimpse of the story behind the story, follow Snap on Instagram, @SnapJudgmentRadio. Learn about our lean, means storytelling machine, also known as the Snap Judgment team. Snap is brought to you by the crew that eat snails for each and every meal. In fact, we save the biggest, fattest, juiciest snail, for the uber producer, Mr. Mark Ristitch. Anna "The fillet" Sussman, Pat Mesiti-Miller on the sticks, trombone Nikka Singh, Renzo "Washboard" Gorrio, John Fecile of Tambourine Man, squeezing the accordion, Shaina Shealy, Liz Mak on the harmonica, Marisa Dodge rocks the [unintelligible [00:47:14]. Eliza "Banjo" Smith, Lauren Newsome bangs the block. Teo Ducot blows recorder. Base fiddler, Flo Wiley. Nancy López just claps, while Leo Morimoto dances around with his shirt off.

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** Well, as you may have heard, this is not the news. No way is this the news. In fact, you could tell you someone special that if you want to ride a raft down the river, and just when they get on, you could give that raft a good push and tell them you saw all the text messages to Karen. All of them, even as they floated away without the paddle. Watch out for the waterfall. Yes, friends, you could do all of that. And you would still, still, not be as far away from the news as this is, but this is PRX.

[song playing]