[Snap Judgment intro]

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** Okay, Snappers, we're going to mix it up a little bit, break all kinds of formats this week and give you a peek at a new narrative experience. It's called A Hit Dog Will Holler, and it comes to us from our friends at Radiotopia Presents, and that's all the preamble you get. Inda Craig-Galván, take it away.

**Inda:** A Hit Dog Will Holler is written by me, Inda Craig-Galván.

This is a series that is grounded in some of the harsh realities for black people in America. There might be some moments that feel sad, or they might feel frightening or just loud. Please take care while listening and after.

This is Episode 1 - The Roar.

[slurping sounds]

**Gina:** Let’s do this. Start with "The Impeached."

[typing keyboard]

**Gina:** At his latest narcissistic nonsense rally, 45\* literally told his audience that he’d tricked them last election, explained how he tricked them, and told them he plans to do it again. And they applauded.

Segue into voter suppression because that is the only way they’ll get his orange ass back into office. He’s not going to harsh my mellow this day. Self-care, self-care.

Ooh, look at that. Oh, now this makes me feel good. These pictures of Barack and Michelle just frolicking. Frolicking, do you hear me? [chuckles] On a vacation, on a boat, in Nevis and St. Kitts. Oh, my Forever President and Michelle, my play cousin but she don’t know it, still out here showing up and showing out. Abs, legs, arms. Ma’am, I’m not jealous. Why would I be jealous? Good for you, Barry. Good for you, play cousin. That’s the audacity of hope right there. More like the negraucity of hope.

[chuckles]

Let me see. How many times have I used “negraucity” before?

[typing]

Ooh, that’s a lot. I mean, it’s cute, but damn, Gina. You are a wordsmith, dear. Don’t be repetitive. How about-- Ooh, negrolicious? I like that. #negroliciousness. You’re welcome, Black Twitter.

Okay, should I talk about the shooting or save that for the next episode?

[typing]

Wow. Sixteen years old. God. Visander Davis on his way back home from-- All right, let me get off Dionne Warwick’s internet and get in this recording booth. After I record this podcast real quick, I am binge-watching something. I don’t know. I’m in the mood for a comedy, because this real-life stuff is-- [sighs]

[background noise]

Testing, testing. [clears throat]

[vocalizes]

Take one. Three, two.

[A Hit Dog Will Holler intro]

**Gina:** Welcome back to Accounts Receivable, the podcast where we keep record, keep accounts, and of course, keep receipts. It’s your girl, Gina-Gina. How are you feeling today, my people? My people. Do me a favor, yes, the book’s coming out soon. Highly requested. Most-asked question on the website. We will get to all that later in this episode, I promise. But first, I want you all to do this with me, will you? I want you to close your eyes for a second, and take a deep breath, [inhales] and let it out. [exhales] Let out today’s headlines. Let out last year’s nonsense. We thought we were past the ’rona, and then up jumps the next variant showing its ass. And the next. But despite everything, you and me, fam, we are still fighting the good fight. Activism can be exhausting. It can be dangerous. But it is necessary, amen? So, fam, do what you’ve got to do to refill your own cup, practice self-care, and remember to do what we just did. Remember to breathe. DJ Nice says, “Let it breathe.” Let’s do it again, yes?

[breathes in and out]

There we go.

Now, because it don’t stop, there was another shooting today. Sixteen-year-old Visander Davis was shot and killed by a police officer in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Not a lot of details for you right now, fam. But you know your girl Gina will be on Twitter with the updates as they come in, and to let you know where we’ll be marching. Sixteen? Yeah, we’ll be marching. To the family of young Visander Davis, we are with you. Our hearts go out to you.

But there is some good news this week. Folks in Virginia awoke to find the statue of some dead Confederate loser toppled and covered with graffiti. Was it the work of DruCDru? The so-called Banksy of Black Lives Matter? All clandestine and shit. I mean, I’m not saying. I’m just saying. Probably. I don’t know who DruCDru really is, but he chose violence this morning, and we love to see it. [laughs] #fuckyourstatues. Now, if we could only get the—

[background noises]

[upbeat music]

[background noises]

**Dru:** That’s it. You’re all set.

**Gina:** Seriously?

**Dru:** Yup. You know these walls don’t look thin. I can’t hear any street noise. I’m surprised you’re having a problem, especially once you’re inside this little booth. You must have real good ears.

**Gina:** Yeah, I guess I do. All right, look, thanks for getting out here so early.

**Dru:** Oh, no worries. Do you know somebody at the company?

**Gina:** Mm-mm, no. I just went on Yelp and the Better Business Bureau site. Sound Fighter Systems had the best reviews. Why?

**Dru:** Oh. It’s just-- [scoffs] My dispatcher texted me late last night. Said it was an emergency, to get here first thing this morning. Like, bump everything else on the schedule. I figured you must’ve been one of Joe’s friends or relatives or something.

**Gina:** [laughs] No. I might have cussed your dispatcher out, and then bribed him. Girl, I might’ve offered to fuck him, I don’t even remember exactly. I just needed to get someone here ASAP.

[chuckles]

**Dru:** Gotcha. Well, it’s done. Hope you enjoy your day. You should be getting a survey. Please, be honest. I take pride in my work. No sounds are coming in there. You got my word.

**Gina:** Thank you. Dru, right?

**Dru:** Yes, ma’am.

**Gina:** Oh, Jesus.

**Dru:** No offense. Sorry. Just trying to be polite.

**Gina:** All offense taken. [chuckles] Don’t worry, I’ll leave that off your survey.

[cell phone vibrates]

**Dru:** Should I let myself out or--?

**Gina:** Don’t open the door. Just hold on, okay. Let me just-- Hey, Constance. Let me call you right back. I’m at the shoe store, trying on some good walking shoes for the rally.

**Constance:** Gina, that’s what I’m calling about. Your presence at the rally--

**Gina:** Yeah, absolutely. So many interviews lined up. I hate that it has to happen, like the country’s where it is right now, but this rally and the book about to come out, the timing is, phew.

**Constance:** Gina, do you have in-person interviews lined up?

**Gina:** Yeah, of course. I was just saying that I have several--

**Constance:** In. Person?

**Gina:** Constance, what are you--

**Constance:** And you’ll take photos in person?

**Gina:** What are you--? Absolutely. I always take photos in person.

**Constance:** [sighs] Dave brought an issue to my attention. There seems to have been several stock photos on your website after the last march, and--

**Gina:** Stock photos?

**Constance:** Gina.

**Gina:** Why would you think I’ve been using-- Dave?

**Constance:** Dave Dwyer. He’s my assistant.

**Gina:** Yeah. No, I know who Dave, but I don’t use-- I mean, maybe what they call an establishing shot of like the building exterior. Constance, what are you trying to-

**Constance:** [exhales] I just--

**Gina:** -say, or imply, or--? I just.

**Constance:** Just want to be sure there’s no cause for concern. Publishers have been burnt before. Hell, even Oprah, all because an author, let’s say, hasn’t triple-checked their source material. Gina, I need to know that there’s no cause for concern.

**Gina:** There is no cause for concern. If you can just-- Sorry. I have to-- I've got to go. Yeah, sorry, I've got to go.

Sorry about that.

**Dru:** Yeah. Look, I really need to get going.

**Gina:** Oh. Yeah. Dru. Sorry. Of course. Wait, just hold on. I don’t even know if this works, what you did. Can you just open the front door, and I’ll go in the booth and see if I hear any outside noises?

**Dru:** You got it.

[footsteps]

**Dru:** I’m sorry. Ma’am?

**Gina:** Gina. Just call me Gina. What is it?

**Dru:** That piano over there, where did you get it? If you don’t mind me asking.

**Gina:** Yard sale a few years ago. It’s purely decorative. I don’t even know if it plays. But it’s real cute, isn’t it? That’s all hand painted.

[piano playing]

**Gina:** Dru, you play, huh?

**Dru:** Used to. Sorry, I didn’t mean to overstep.

**Gina:** No, it’s fine. Glad to know it works.

**Dru**: Yeah.

**Gina:** Yeah, cool. So, I’m going to go in the booth now. You want to leave? Yeah? But hold the front door open for like five seconds and I’ll give you a thumbs up or down. Got it?

**Dru:** Gotcha.

**Gina:** Hold on, Dru. Wait till I’m inside the booth.

[background noise]

**Gina:** Okay, I'm inside.

**Dru:** I can see you’re inside. Can’t hear you though, and I know you can’t hear me. That’s how soundproofing works. Man, this lady’s a trip. I need to get up out of here.

[footsteps]

**Dru:** Nothing but a quiet ass street.

Ma’am--? Gina? Can you hear me? Can you hear anything?

[background noise]

**Gina:** [panting] Oh, God. Oh, God. Oh, God. Don’t go. Help me. Close it. Close the door. It’s not working. Close it.

**Dru:** Ma’am? Gina, are you okay?

**Gina:** I’m okay. Sorry. But whatever you did, it is not working. You need to fix it.

**Dru:** I was just in there, and I couldn’t hear anything, so. There’s no noise outside, nothing.

**Gina:** Is that your booth? Is that your booth? Do you record podcasts in there? No. Then it doesn’t matter if you could hear it. What matters is that I can still hear it. And I’m the customer. I will definitely Yelp this. Do you have any idea how many followers I have? A bitch is verified. So, you need to fix this.

**Dru:** Okay, of course, I’m going to fix it. I can come back with our next density, a higher fiber. Vinyl maybe or metal. But that’s going to--

**Gina:** I don’t care how much it costs.

**Dru:** No, I was saying it’ll have to be tomorrow. I have appointments scheduled for the rest of the day. We squoze you in. So, I--

**Gina:** Wow. See, what you should've done. you should’ve brought the better-quality insulation in the first place. Or is this how you do? You throw up some shoddy material for one price, then prove it doesn’t work so the customer has to beg for a better density. Ain’t that some shit? Just go.

**Dru:** Do you not want the--?

**Gina:** Of course, I want it. Hell, bring bricks and mortar if you have to, but this needs to get done.

**Dru:** Okay, Gina.

**Gina:** Mm-mm, now you need to call me “ma’am.”

**Dru:** Yes, ma’am. I’ll make sure our scheduler calls you to set up time for tomorrow.

**Gina:** Yeah, and I need you to wait until I’m in the booth before you open the front door. Please.

**Dru:** Mm-hmm.

**Gina:** And do it quickly.

**Dru:** Sure.

[door opens and closes]

**Dru:** The hell is up with this chick?

[piano playing]

**Dru:** Ain’t that nothin’?

[upbeat music]

**Ronnie:** Oh, Dru, honey. Yeah, that was-- First thing in the morning?

**Dru:** [slurps] Yup. Ronnie, I won’t even--

**Ronnie:** Some people just don’t have any peace.

**Dru:** I mean, maybe she--

**Ronnie:** Don’t.

**Dru:** Ronnie.

**Ronnie:** Do not make excuses for her. That’s what you do. Always extending yourself, literally and emotionally for people who've been on top of the emotional weightlifting you always taking on, we out here putting everything on the line for our community. You even more than me.

**Dru:** Well, this lady doesn’t know about any of that.

**Ronnie:** Probably wouldn’t make a difference if she did. Was it a nice place?

**Dru:** Mm. Real nice.

**Ronnie:** Course it was. Embracing capitalism and treating the working class like garbage. Was she blind?

**Dru:** Huh?

**Ronnie:** Of course, she isn’t. She looked at another black woman, standing right in front of her, looked. Okay? Looked you in the face, and chose to treat you like trash. Dru, that is not Okay.

**Dru:** I get it. But you done made me “garbage” and “trash” twice in the last minute.

**Ronnie:** Damn, I’m sorry, girl. You know I love you. Ooh, you know what you should do? Channel that pain, take that energy, and put it into this speech you're going to give tonight. How that sound?

**Dru:** Like a manipulation. That’s what that sounds like. Ronnie, I’ve told you, I’m not giving the speech. That’s your thing.

**Ronnie:** Hey, girl, Come on.

**Dru:** Mm-mm. [slurps]

**Ronnie:** No? No?

**Dru:** No, no, no. Never. I write ’em, you say ’em. That’s never changing. Here.

**Ronnie:** It’s going to make me cry, isn’t it?

**Dru:** I mean, they killed a sixteen-year-old.

**Ronnie:** When we not crying?

**Dru:** Ronnie, you remember what you felt when you were sixteen? What you worried about?

**Ronnie:** It wasn’t like it is now.

**Dru:** Right?

**Ronnie:** Shaving. I was preoccupied with figuring out how to get rid of the hair on my bikini area. [chuckles] That’s what I was worried about. I was going to a pool party that Naomi Driscoll was having at the Y. And I swear from the time I hit puberty at like 13, every single time I looked, there was a new damn hair poking out the side of my panties.

[chuckles]

I was so paranoid that I’d walk around that pool in my bathing suit, thinking I looked cute, and there’d be a dang-on bush waving hi to everybody.

[laughter]

**Ronnie:** Damn, that feel like a long time ago, doesn’t it?

**Dru:** [slurps] Can you imagine, being that age now? Ugh. These kids got it rough.

**Ronnie:** Worried about being killed by police instead of regular teenage shit. What about you? What was Dru worried about at 16?

**Dru:** Man. I just wanted to hoop and not to fail trig. [laughs]

**Ronnie:** Why did we need trig anyway? Have you ever used that mess?

**Dru:** Never. They make it seem real important when you’re 16. Visander-- [pauses] 16.

**Ronnie:** We only have a few hours. I should practice. Dru, I know you don’t want to be on stage. I know. But you put your whole self into writing this speech. Maybe-- I mean, I’m just--maybe. Maybe just think about being the one giving it?

[upbeat music]

[in a video call]

**Constance:** Gina?

**Gina:** I’m sharing my screen. Are you seeing a chart? You should be seeing a chart.

**Constance:** I see the chart. Gina--

**Gina:** Great. Okay, so I’m not doing numbers on TikTok. Okay, not my platform. But on Twitter, I am still killing it with my engagement numbers. 200 new followers yesterday. And IG, okay, see the-- hold on. Let me share this other graph.

**Constance:** Gina, you’re muted. I muted you at TikTok. I need you to stop talking, and listen. Can you do that?

**Gina:** Wow. Uh, yeah.

**Constance:** Okay, you’re still muted, so I’ll take that as a yes. Your new followers of those 200, 80% are bots or Russian trolls who think you still have something relevant to say.

**Gina:** Bitch, no, you didn’t.

**Constance:** Still muted, but I know you just called me a bitch. Our numbers are down because without fail, 20% of any day’s new followers also come on board because of your reputation. But then, they see your actual content and unfollow or just don’t engage. Do you know why that is? You’re unmuted.

**Gina:** First of all, Constance, you said “Our numbers. Our numbers are down." But let’s not get it twisted. This is me. This is all me.

**Constance:** It was you. Gina, Gina, Gina, activism, political savvy, the internet was just a tool. A means to an end. That is what excited Corbin and Thomas about you. That’s why we offered you the book deal. It was you, Gina. Not the number on your Twitter followers.

**Gina:** That’s bullshit.

**Constance:** Okay, okay, it’s part of it, sure, for marketing. We’d be dumb to ignore it. But we were much more interested in what you had to say about, and to your community. We wanted to be a strong ally to get the message out to as many people as possible. But the message changed. The witty banter you’re doing on the podcast, honestly, feels like a different brand.

**Gina:** It’s been a bit rough adjusting to, I don’t know, a worldwide pandemic and a coup and the seas rising because we’re literally in the middle of a biblical apocalypse? Like, inside of an actual-- it’s crazy. This is crazy that I’m being asked to explain myself--

**Constance:** Gina, Gina, that’s not that’s not what I’m--

**Gina:** No, it is.

**Constance:** I’m not asking that.

**Gina:** Sorry, if I needed to keep it light once in a while for my own sanity. Sorry, if I didn’t-- couldn’t sit up here and steep myself and my listeners in black trauma that they live with every single day in order to satisfy your desire for allyship. Was I muted that whole time or--

**Constance:** Nope. No. I heard you. I hear you.

**Gina:** Good. Thank you.

**Constance:** Of course. We can continue to discuss our concerns about the book deal another time. Will you be at the march tonight?

**Gina:** Will you?

**Constance:** Actually, yes. Perhaps I’ll see you there.

[video call ends]

**Gina:** Shit.

[upbeat music]

**Marchers:** No justice, no peace. No racist police. No justice, no peace. No racist police.

[crowd chants]

[crowd applause]

**Ronnie:** Thank you all for being here. Thank you. Most of y’all know me. I’m Ronnie Jackson. But I don’t matter tonight. Sister, can you hold that poster so everyone can see it? Thank you, sister.

This is Visander Davis. Look at that baby’s face. They’ll try to tell us he’s a man. Won’t they? They’ll try to paint him as-- we know. I don’t even have to say it. We know. We know what they’ll do even better than they know themselves, because we’ve had to know them, study them, their so-called history. Their history, isn’t that a trip? We know it’s our history too, but they refuse to even learn or teach it. But we know it. We hold onto it. And we hold onto our knowledge of them. And we hold onto our knowledge of self. And we hold onto that baby boy. We hold onto that woman-- [slowly voice fades away]

**Dru:** We hold onto that woman, and that man, and that trans woman, and that trans man, we hold onto our own. We hold each other up. We hold onto what we know to be true. We hold up that truth. We stand. We stand on the soil of this nation, our nation. We demand that it is a better nation, because it is our right. They want to restrict voting rights? We will pick up our people, our poor, our elders and we will bring them to the polls in droves to vote them out of office. They want to rewrite history to protect the fallacy of their so-called war heroes? We will topple their statues and mock their very monuments. They want to empower their officers to kill without impunity. We will hold them accountable. How? We will march. We will march. We will hold up our son, Visander Davis. We will hold him up. And we will march. [pants]

[marchers applause]

**Person:** Black lives.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black lives.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black lives.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black trans lives.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black women’s lives.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black men’s lives.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black children.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black children.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Person:** Black. Children.

**Marchers:** Matter.

**Ronnie:** Yes. Yes. No justice, no peace.

[upbeat music]

.

[drilling and nailing]

[background noise]

**Dru:** Can I bother you for a glass of water, Gina?

**Gina:** Sure. I’m sorry, I should’ve-- I’m sorry. Just a sec.

[background noise]

**Gina:** Dru, do you want ice? Do you--She probably wants ice. She’s in there sweating.

[background noises]

**Gina:** I put ice in it. I hope that’s okay.

**Dru:** One, it’s great. And two, I didn’t hear you because I had the door to the booth closed and you cannot hear anything outside of this door. I promise.

**Gina:** You said that last time.

**Dru:** Try it out. See for yourself.

[footsteps]

**Dru:** Okay, can you hear me?

**Gina:** I can’t hear you, but that is not the problem.

**Dru:** See? I’m screaming.

**Gina:** Oh, God. She’s yelling, isn’t she? I can’t hear-- thumb up. Two big thumbs-up. You’re great. Good job.

[door closes]

**Dru:** What did I tell you?

**Gina:** Yeah. No, I get what you’re saying, but the issue is the noise that’s coming from outside. Like outside.

**Dru:** Right. But if you can’t hear me yelling in your living room right outside the-- I was standing right outside the booth.

**Gina:** I know. You’re not quite understanding what I’m saying. I’m--

**Dru:** Oh, oh, okay

**Gina:** This is difficult

**Dru:** Well, let’s test it.

[door opens]

**Dru:** There’s seriously not any street traffic right now, but if you want to be--

**Gina:** No, I’m not ready to do that just yet.

[door opens]

**Gina:** No, I can’t--

[background noise]

**Gina:** [pants]

**Dru:** Oh, my God. Oh my God. Gina, what’s happening?

**Gina:** [crying]

**Dru:** I don’t understand what’s-- Can you talk? Do you want to get up? Can you get up? Can you get up? Can you stand up?

**Gina:** [sobbing] I tried to tell you.

**Dru:** What? What did I do? I don’t--

**Gina:** Shouldn’t have-- [sobbing]

**Dru:** Here. Take a sip. Take a sip.

**Gina:** [drinks water] I’m okay. It’s passed.

**Dru:** Good. Glad I could help.

**Gina:** Help? You did this.

**Dru:** Look, I don’t know what you got going on. I can call somebody for you, maybe. But I don’t-- I don’t think I feel real comfortable being here.

**Gina:** You opened the door when I told you not to.

**Dru:** Why are you trying to blame me for this?

**Gina:** You were the one who did the shoddy work, twice now.

**Dru:** Yo, I got the materials that should’ve cost you five times what I’m charging you. I felt real bad about yesterday and you looked like you were in a bad way. And yeah, I thought maybe there was a slim chance that I didn’t do it right. But I know it wasn’t me. I don’t do shoddy work. There’s no way any noise is getting through that soundproofing and into the booth. Nothing. And I-- [sarcastic chuckle] I was standing right at the door. Whatever noise you’re hearing, ma’am, is in your head.

**Gina:** Oh, you're calling me-- This bitch going to come up in my house and tell me I’m imagining things? I guess that’s easier than doing your job correctly. You know what? Forget Yelp. I’m calling your boss, and I’m calling you out on Twitter. Baby, I’ve got so many followers, you’ll be lucky if you can get a job at McDonald’s. Get the hell out.

**Dru:** Damn.

**Gina:** Yep.

**Dru:** I was just at the march last night--

**Gina:** Don’t care.

**Dru:** Mm. When’s the last time you lifted someone else up?

**Gina:** Bye.

**Dru:** Or been lifted?

**Gina:** If you don’t get out of my house.

**Dru:** Mm-hmm. Sure.

[door opens and closes]

[footsteps]

**Dru:** Stay inside your stupid soundproof booth. Hope you rot in there. Ain’t that something? I’m cussing her ass out and she can’t even hear me. Going to get me fired?

[background noise]

**Dru:** Bet. Might as well make it worth it.

[zipper sounds]

[background noise]

[door closes]

**Gina:** Get the hell out of my house. And don’t you ever think about coming back here. [scoffs] Dammit. She knows where I live. Knows exactly where I-- Why the hell did I make a scene? I could’ve just called her boss and done all the things I said I was going to do without telling her that I was going to do them. That was stupid.

[sighs]

[breathes heavily]

**Gina:** Give yourself grace. I made a mistake. Wasn’t as bad as her mistake, because she doesn’t know who she is messing with. But I also don’t know who she is. So, yeah, that was a mistake. Maybe wait a month or so before I call her boss so she doesn’t know it was me. Grace, girl. Grace.

[door opens and closes]

**Gina:** Oh. I need a glass of wine. What the hell?

[piano note sound]

**Gina:** Ah-oh. It’s on, bitch.

[upbeat music]

**Inda:** A Hit Dog Will Holler from Radiotopia was written by me, Inda Craig-Galván. It was produced and directed by Gisele Regatao. Mixing and sound design by Sandra Lopez-Monsalve, with help from Isabel Hibbard. The music theme is by Cristina Gaillard.

This podcast was recorded under a SAG-AFTRA collective bargaining agreement. It features Cynthia K. McWilliams as Gina and Ronnie, J. Nicole Brooks as Dru, Jacqueline Guillen as Constance and the receptionist. Thank you to WNYC News for the audio of Black Lives Matter protests. Support for this project was provided in part by a PSC-CUNY Award, jointly funded by The Professional Staff Congress and The City University of New York. For Radiotopia Presents, Mark Pagán is the producer. Production support from Yooree Losordo. Audrey Mardavich and Julie Shapiro are the executive producers.

**Glynn:** Big Love, and thanks to Inda Craig-Galván and Radiotopia Presents for sharing the story with us. I was lucky enough to sit down and chat with Inda after hearing this story for the first time.

Inda Craig-Galván, the creator of the piece you just heard. Welcome to Snap Judgment. Let me ask you why of all the things that you could do as an artist, did you decide, "You know what? I'm going to do an audio drama right now?"

**Inda:** [chuckles] Thank you, Glynn. This was initially a play inspired by a poem. With a play, you only get so many people seeing it, and I wanted the story to reach more people. It's such a contained situation, and it resonates with where we are now where we have been for the past year and a half, two years. And it just felt like the right time and the right story to tell and the right medium to tell it in.

**Glynn:** When you think of the core, we just heard the first part, and I wonder when you think about where we are right now, what was the start you were trying to capture? I'll just say, you are a black woman-

**Inda:** Mm-hmm.

**Glynn:** -what was it that you wanted to [sighs] let people see from your perspective?

**Inda:** The biggest thing for me is that we, as black women, are not a monolith. So, having these two very different black women who are fighting for the same thing, but using very different means, that we're affected by things. We're not always strong and superhero-ish, the way we're often portrayed, that sometimes we have flaws, our characters can be messed up and complicated and layered. Those were primarily what I was focusing on and looking at Gina and Dru.

**Glynn:** Do you see the portrayal of black women in contemporary media as being one note?

**Inda:** Often when they're not written by black people, we see superwomen, we see asexual women who are very, very good at their jobs. We see women who are solely there to support the male character storyline. Of course, there are more layered and interesting characters out there. But yeah, there's a lot that's one note, and there's a lot that's not really representative of who we are in the real world.

**Glynn:** We just heard a clash between two black women. I was trying to think about it. I don't know when the last time in a theatrical or narrative setting, besides like a comedy potentially, that I've got to hear two black women who are not playing a foil to maybe a male character, just go at each other. And that's strange. I thought how strange. Why is it that I'm hearing this sort of thing for the-- I'm not going to say the first time, but I certainly don't remember-- I can't recall. I literally can't recall the last time I've heard that. Why is that's such an odd thing to have? What is going on?

**Inda:** It's odd, because you see it all the time with white male characters or white female characters, but you look at who's creating the work. If we're given more opportunities or we make more opportunities to tell our own stories, you would see the varying degrees of characters, you'd see all the layers, you'd see the conflicts that we have, just like anyone else has.

**Glynn:** Was this a story for black people?

**Inda:** Absolutely. I don't explain in my work, whether it's playwriting or this or television. I'm not writing a story that needs an explanation or requires an explanation for a white audience. I write my stories, I write our stories for us. Absolutely anybody can listen, read, watch, get into it, but it's not going to be an explainer. It's not going to be an intro or a look into our world. It's just our world from inside of it.

**Glynn:** When the gatekeepers to people hearing any type of theatrical narrative work might not be familiar with the world, why did you make the choice to say, "Ah, either keep up, or listen to something else"?

**Inda:** I've been, as an audience member my whole life, a consumer of drama and narratives, I've figured out how to keep up. I've figured out how to understand what happens on Wall Street or a Texas town or space, outer space. It's fiction. If a story is told well, and grounded in character, and grounded in their conflict and their journey, you can keep up, that's fine.

**Glynn:** Inda, are you saying that [Inda laughing] Americans have the ability to understand their own America without interpretation? Are you saying this? Are you saying that English speakers themselves have the ability to actually understand if they just leaned forward a little bit? Is that what you're implying?

**Inda:** It's amazing, isn't it? [laughs] Yes.

**Glynn:** [laughs]

**Inda:** Yes.

**Glynn:** Where do you come from? Where did the worlds that you create come from?

**Inda:** Well, I grew up on the Southside of Chicago, surrounded by black folks. I think I had one white classmate in first grade, and then he left. So, my first play was *A* *Raisin in the Sun,* that's the first thing I saw and I assumed all theatre was written by black women, and it was about the Southside of Chicago. That's where my ideas of storytelling stem from. I studied sketch comedy in Chicago, I performed it, wrote it, acted in a lot of commercials. I'm a mom, a wife. So, all of those things contribute to how I tell stories and the lens I tell it through. And my mother dealt with some mental health issues. So, a lot of my stories are about black women. I think everything I've written has centered on a black woman. And usually, from a slightly skewed perspective, so that we see the world the way that woman sees it. For Gina, we're inside of her experience of the world. We're hearing what she's hearing, even though it might not really be there.

**Glynn:** Mental health issues in the black community, I won't say some-- for all manner of reasons have been sublimated. Something that we have not as a community or as even a larger nation really addressed. It's in the backdrop, it seems like, in a lot of your work. I guess, I'm wondering, because we've ignored it for so long. It seems when I hear it, and I see it in a narrative piece, it's one of those things, it's like why haven't we been talking about this? It's certainly affected my family. It's affected every person I know. Our stories are supposed to be a reflection of our real life. I'm wondering why you think that it's so rare that this issue has been brought to-- that makes its presence in a modern storytelling?

**Inda:** That's a great observation-question, Glynn. With my mother, it was undiagnosed until she was in her 60s. If something doesn't get talked about in real life, it's something you're not encouraged to get a diagnosis. You're not encouraged in real life to seek help. If you're told, "Oh, just deal with it. You're being lazy, you're being weak. Oh, that's just your mom. That's just how she is," we sweep this stuff under the rug in real life, and we don't deal with it nearly enough. We're made to believe that we're weak, or we're problematic, or we're asking for too much if we do seek that sort of help. We're expected to just keep working, just keep pushing and just be better and rise above, because there's so many things on the outside, so many things that are horrible.

There's so much oppression, there's so much real actual oppression happening to black people in this country and has been for centuries that we reduce that problem, and something that we compartmentalize it, and we don't have time to deal with it. So, if we're not dealing with it in real life, when we're creating fictional works, we're not exploring it there either, because it's something we're just so used to suppressing and sweeping under the rug, because there's more important fights out there.

**Glynn:** Do you think that stories have to have a point? Your stories.

**Inda:** I think they have to have a point of view. I think they have to have a reason. I need a reason to keep pushing, because no story is going to come out of me in an hour or a day. I need a reason to tell it. I need to feel passionate about it. I don't want to write something that feels like, "Oh, here's the point of this. Here's the issue that we need to discuss," because that inevitably, for me, feels forced and not quite as interesting as, here's the thing that's making me really mad, and I need to express it in a way that lets the world know that something's wrong or something's really beautiful.

**Glynn:** Is there a particular fire that connects your storytelling?

**Inda:** I think me dealing with my childhood is almost always something that's present. Me dealing with my fear that I keep pushing down, talking about sweeping stuff under the rug that I'm going to be like my mother. I spent a lot of time in a lot of other careers, and now I feel like I'm under the gun, clock's ticking, and I need to get all these stories out of me before I disappear. So, yeah, that's probably my fire.

**Glynn:** Wow. That's heavy.

**Inda:** I try not to think about it

[laughter]

**Glynn:** What kind of stories do you tell your kids?

**Inda:** Hmm. Oh, my kids are grown now. So, they're tired of my stories. Now, it's just me complaining about work. [laughs] I used to make up stories about a teeny-tiny little prince on a teeny-tiny little horse, and he ran a teeny-tiny little kingdom. That was my story to my son. That was really about-- it would expound on this tiny prince. It's really about someone realizing they can do more than they realize they could or that they are expected to do. With my daughter, we just read a lot of *Harry Potter* in the before time.

**Glynn:** In the before time.

**Inda:** Yeah. When it was still a good thing. [laughs]

**Glynn:** Let me ask you about that. A diet of narrative, I think, is important for any kid, especially for any person. Your story is about people who are not-- I'll just even say broken to some extent that are not-- everyone's broken.

**Inda:** Mm-hmm.

**Glynn:** What do you do with a story that you've loved, if you discover the author, the creator is, I wouldn't say broken, but maybe has a different point of view that you don't share. What do you do with that story?

**Inda:** Yeah. If I knew ahead of time, I probably just wouldn't engage. But you never have that knowledge ahead of time. It seems like you find out after the fact, after you've spent money and indoctrinating your children on it. I'm not going to go back and watch *Chinatown* again. I'm not going to--

**Glynn:** Why not?

**Inda:** I mean, Roman Polanski.

**Glynn:** I understand who he is [laughs] but I was saying--

**Inda:** But why I'd not engage with it anymore?

**Glynn:** Yeah. Will it still not be a seminal American film? Where do we as artists, I guess, draw the line for other artists? I'm asking this because I have no idea.

**Inda:** Yeah. There's so many people, I don't want to do a list. But how do I still engage with certain works? I feel there's always been such a clutching to what we consider the canon, and someone said, I've read this somewhere, that those works aren't necessarily great. They're works by white men that other white men told us were great. There's so many other works that we can let things go. I don't have to watch-- I don't have to read those books again. I still have the memories of going to Borders Bookstore at midnight with my daughter, when she was a kid to get that first edition of that new volume. I still have the memory of it, but I'm not going to go buy another one. I'm not going to reread it, I'm not going to engage with it again, because there are so many other works that I could be spending my time on and my money. It's a reminder that people are, like you say, broken, people are flawed, people are messed up. Just like I'm not going to seek out exes who I know are problematic, [chuckles] I'm not going to seek out any future work by someone that I know is-- or seek to revisit work by somebody that I know is not a great individual.

**Glynn:** I always wonder where our blind spots as artists are today. Where do you see them?

**Inda:** You've got to consider, when people are saying, "You're hurting me," and you don't listen to that's such a problem. Even now, hearing people where I work, in television, saying things like, "Oh, it doesn't really matter if we cast a person of that ethnicity, as long as they're the best person for the job." Or, "Do we really have to really have to cast person with a disability?" Those people are telling you it hurts them. It's hurt them for years that you dismiss them. Like you've got to attention. If I do something horrific, like absolutely horrific that's hurting other people, I want someone to say, hey-- to call me to the carpet.

When put your coat on, you're really hurting folks, and maybe don't. We need to not be so, or at least I'll speak for myself not be so adamant about the story I want to tell the way I want to tell it when it might be causing pain to someone else. I don't know if that answers your question about what our blind spots are but that's just something that I have to keep reminding myself. Listening when people are saying they need you to do a thing, because they're looking to you to do it. Someone's asking you, because you're in that position to maybe consider these folks.

**Glynn:** This is, if not a completely new world, a newish world. Radio drama has been around for a long time, but serialized, complex pieces, episodic.

**Inda:** Yeah.

**Glynn:** This is still the first inning of this type of storytelling. Why did you jump in?

**Inda:** I just love telling stories any way I can, whether it's theater, television, or film. I think it's such a challenge and a stretch to be able to go from one way of storytelling to another. This particularly is such a huge and fun challenge for me to think about a story without the spectacle and without the visual editing and without anything else to fall back on except the story. And, of course, there's sound effects, there's music underscoring, but you really have to just listen to these voices and listen to these two women telling their story and living in their story. Not so much telling it, but living in it. You can close your eyes and just put the headphones on. That's such a refreshing and different way of engaging with work. I found it really exciting.

**Glynn:** You have engaged with work previously where you expect people to sit down and watch the story unfold. What's different when you say, "Now, I want you to put on your headphones"?

**Inda:** There's a different kind of intimacy. You're not inundated. My husband keeps the subtitles on when we watch something on our television and it kills me, because there's just so many things. There's the sounds, there's the sights, and then there's word scrolling. And then, there's whatever is happening in the room. It becomes a bit of an overload and you have so much input that for me, you end up getting less into you because there's so much coming at you. Whereas with this, it's just you and you can literally just close your eyes and shut out everything else. There's no dog doing something-- there's no distractions in the room. There's no dog, there's no mailman, there's no laundry piling up. You can literally just close your eyes and be in Gina's living room or be in that booth with her. It's such a different feeling when I'm listening to fictional audio. It's somehow more connected, more intimate to me.

**Glynn:** Right on. Well, Inda Craig-Galván, thank you very, very much for being on the show. We really appreciate it.

**Inda:** Thank you for having me. Thanks for listening.

[upbeat music]

**Glynn:** That was Inda Craig-Galván. If you're going to find out what happens next in the story, listen to the rest of the series, A Hit Dog Will Holler at *radiotopiapresents.fm* on any podcast platform.

[upbeat music]