

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[SQUEAKING]

[MOANING]

JIMMY CARPER: The following program contains language or images of the frank or sensitive nature--

MAN: Oh, Frank.

JIMMY CARPER: --which may be considered objectionable by some. Listener discretion is advised.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

(SINGING) After hours. After hours.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes, you've tuned in to *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude, right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of *After Hours* is ready to bring you news, interviews, dialogue, and music geared for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people and their friends. Here at *After Hours*, we may be diverse, but we have one thing in common.

We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets. That means standing up for yourself, taking responsibility for your own life, and being proud of who you are. Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age, job, or frame of mind. That's OK. We're here for you too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of *After Hours*.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Hello, Houston and College Station. And welcome to *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude. This is the December-- no, this is the February 9th edition. Oops, oops, oops, I don't know where I am. I want to tell you about the music that you heard because one piece, at least, was new, and the other one was almost new. That last one you heard was the dance remix of Christy Claxton's "Best Loved Girl." And that's on a single.

It's great. It's great. You can probably get a copy if you go to christyclaxton.com. That's C-H-R-I-S-T-Y-C-L-A-X-T-O-N. That's christyclaxton.com. The first one was also brand new. And it's from Miss Mon E, Miss Mon E, who does that incredible, incredible song, "Tired, I'm so tired." And this is called "Neverland." I got it in the mail this week.

It's written by Steven Bogey and Miss Money. And you can probably get a hold of that-- let's see if she's got it on here. Girl-- here it is, www.missmoney.net, N-E-T, missmoney.net. Good music from local, local women, local women, yes. I want to say hi to some of our friends behind bars because they can't get out to come see us.

Mike, Randy, Randall, Paul, Daniel, Junior, and Wilson-- I've been getting a letter a week from Wilson. And he's looking for a pen pal. He'd love to have a pen pal, as well as several of these other guys. If you were interested in something like that, give us a call right now. Talk to Big Roy at 713-526-5738, 713-526-KPFT, and Big Roy will set you up with a pen pal.

[SCOFFS]

He's just finding that out now.

[LAUGHTER]

BIG ROY: I'm always the last to know.

JIMMY CARPER: He's always the last to know. Yes, that's right, you're always the last to know. Well, well, a couple of things before we start our show tonight. Of course, this is the second Saturday. We've got the first half, we've got transgender night with Beth Richards--

BETH Hello, hello.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Hey, hey, she's here.

BETH Yes, indeed.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --and guests. Also, the second half of the show is normally the Hispanic hour, but Francisco Sanchez is ill. He just got out of the hospital. And he's OK. He's fine.

BETH That's good.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: There's nothing wrong. You know, everything worked out well.

BETH He did his time and they're letting him free.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. He's just recuperating. He just can't make it tonight. So we're going to have kind of an extension. I've got someone coming in later to do a transgender news segment.

BETH Well, there you go.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. Alyssa Wright, who has been putting together some new things for quite a while now. And we're also going to just hang out, do music, and do a kind of a news magazine type of thing. I've got Chris and Big Roy in the lobby, looking up stuff, checking out the local publications.

And we're going to just chat about events, things going on. A couple of things I'm going to chat about before I give the microphone over to Beth is next weekend, not only is it Valentine's Day, but it is Let Us Entertain You Weekend, LUEY Weekend 2002. And do you know what LUEY means?

BETH Let's hear it.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Do you know what it is about?

BETH Let us entertain you?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH I don't know.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

BETH That's my guess, anyway.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, you know what's going on right now?

BETH And that would be-- Mardi Gras?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras.

BETH Mardi Gras, absolutely.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, LUEY is a kind of a party weekend for those who just didn't get enough Mardi Gras.

BETH Well, is there such thing as enough Mardi Gras?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I guess not because last year we had well over 1,000 people come into Houston--

BETH Wow.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --from all over, about 40 states and several countries, for this event. It's free to outsiders, 15 bucks for those who are from Houston. And that's just to pay for the setups.

BETH Yeah, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But it's free cocktail parties all week long--

BETH Wow.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --all weekend long, plus food. And one of the spreads is by the court, and you know, them some big girls so--

BETH Oh yeah, they know how to party.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --they can do food, oh, yes, indeedy. So that's going on. If you need some more information about that, just go to www.lueyweekend.com, L-U-E-Y-- Let Us Entertain You-- weekend.com. And don't forget, next Saturday is a big day. You have to go vote.

BETH Yes.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: For whom, you might ask.

BETH That's a great question.

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

Why don't you enlighten all of us heathens.

JIMMY CARPER: For the grand marshals of the 2002 GLBT Pride Parade.

BETH Ah, Pride Parade.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH It's that again.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it is. Yes, it is. And it's going to be held next Saturday, February 16. And that is LUEY weekend--

BETH Ah-huh.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Houston Lesbian and Gay Community Center, located at 803 Hawthorne. Now, the nominations are as follows. For male grand marshal, we only have one, unfortunately. But, I mean--

BETH Is it Jimmy Carper this year?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: No, it isn't.

BETH No, not this year.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: It's Rusty Mueller a.k.a. Crystal Rae Lee Love.

BETH Ah-huh.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: This is a person who has been doing fundraisers through the Court for years, absolute years, raised tons of money for our organizations. The female grand marshals, you have Janine Brungess is running, and Herlinda Mela Contreras, who owns Mela's Tejano Bar--

BETH OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --and Barbara Walker from the Court and the Montrose Clinic. The honorary grand marshal, Jane and Irv Smith are running. No one else was nominated.

BETH OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And the honorary grand marshal goes to heterosexual folks who have served our community well. They have been involved heavily in PFLAG for many, many years.

BETH Yeah, that's worthwhile.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, it is. Now, the organizational grand marshal, this is-- well, you see--

BETH Go ahead.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --two organizations have been nominated, and both of them are very close to my heart.

BETH OK, Switchboard and?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: [CHUCKLES]

The Gay and Lesbian Switchboard because it's its 20th year--

BETH Oh, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --and the Gulf Coast Archives and Museum.

BETH Archives and Museum.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH Oh, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that's going to be tough.

BETH You know, both of the contested races in there are going to be tough.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Because they're all great.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I know, I know, great people and great organizations.

BETH And it's a good thing they don't have to go with so much on the other ones because they're great too.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, yeah, now, I must say that the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard has been grand marshal for their 10th anniversary.

BETH Oh, OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But, you know, it's 20th anniversary.

BETH It's been a whole decade.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: That's right. And the Gulf Coast Archives and Museum is certainly a wonderful organization. So I'll be marching in the front of the parade no matter what.

BETH [LAUGHS]

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yep, I shall be.

BIG ROY: Does that mean you'll get to the station on time?

JIMMY CARPER: Uh, no, no, no.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH You could do like me and go up with a parade participant early, and pop off one T-shirt and on another and go

RICHARDS: back--

JIMMY CARPER: There you go.

BETH --and go back again.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: There you go. There you go.

BETH Last year I ran up and down there, three different floats.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, it's overtime now. It's almost 20 after. And I mean to get you on at quarter after, but you know, hey.

BETH You know.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Here we are.

BETH That's OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Thank you. Thank you, Beth.

BETH I had a wonderful show prepared. I had all my Is dotted and Ts crossed, and it all fell apart at the last minute.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Uh-oh.

BETH So we're going to do that one in May.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, you're going to have some interviews with some really great folks.

BETH So the show that I wanted to do--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH --was to talk about what it was like to be a transgendered person pre-Stonewall, pre 1968, 1969.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Wow, ooh. Well, that's an interesting question because I don't know that even the word "transgender" existed before then.

BETH It did not. It did not. That's some of the things that I've been finding out.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah-huh.

BETH The word "transsexual" was coined and used in the medical communities. But that's not what people on the

RICHARDS: street used.

JIMMY CARPER: No.

BETH Not at all. Everybody was a queen of one sort or another. There were the face queens, there was a drag queens,

RICHARDS: there was this queen, hormone queens--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yes.

BETH --and then the sex change. You know, today if somebody calls a person a sex change, that would be very

RICHARDS: derogatory. But back then, that's just the word they used.

JIMMY CARPER: That's interesting. I spent nine months in 1966, living in Manhattan. I'd been kicked out of my house.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And that was when I met my first lover who lived in Houston, which is how I got here.

BETH Oh, OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But for nine months, I lived in New York. And I wanted to see it all because I was just coming out. And I just wanted to do it all. And so I worked and I hung out with the folks, the nightly workers.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH OK, you cleaned that one up, didn't ya?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah. And actually, participated in--

[STAMMERS]

[LAUGHTER]

BETH Spit it out, Jimmy. Jimmy is speechless.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Mark it on your calendar, folks.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I hustled.

BETH Oh, you did?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: You know, I was an ugly duckling all my life. And I went to New York and got skinny. And all of a sudden, people were interested. And I thought, oh, you know--

BETH Hey, this works.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: So it was a big ego boost to somebody who had just been kicked out of their house from being gay and that kind of thing. So yeah, I hung out with all sorts of people. And the biggest celebrity in the under life--

BETH As it were.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --was a person by the name of Pat Morgan.

BETH OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Pat Morgan had been a trucker who had a sex change--

BETH OK.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --and was incredibly flamboyant. And I met her one time. And she would think nothing of exposing her breasts to get a taxicab.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH You know, this is Mardi Gras season.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, there you go. Yeah, see, it works right in there.

BETH It works right in there. There's your tie-in from your earlier piece, you know.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHS]

So I'm familiar with that. And those words were not known. It was just, oh, Pat Morgan's a sex change.

BETH Right. Yeah, that's just the terminology that was used back then.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that was it.

BETH That's all there was. And the Harry Benjamin Society didn't come about until like the mid '70s. So this is 15 years

RICHARDS: before that we're talking about.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH The standards of care that they wrote came out in '79, up to almost 20 years before. So there's that saying that

RICHARDS: we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. And I think there's a lot in our community that's forgotten whose shoulders those were--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH --and the messages that they brought with them and bring to us today that we just don't see. We just take it all

RICHARDS: for granted. I mean, it's so easy to get information and services today--

JIMMY CARPER: Sure is.

BETH --compared to even 10 years ago when I was first looking for it. How must it have been 15 years before that?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, incredible. I don't know where Pat ever got her operation.

BETH Probably either Casablanca, Morocco--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Something like that.

BETH --or in Mexico.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Because back then that was like the two big places.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Because she was in the service and so maybe she availed herself there. I don't know. I never knew that.

BETH Copenhagen, Denmark, was a possibility, but not as likely as either Dr. Burou or Dr. Bra-- something with a B that

RICHARDS: was the guy from Mexico. So there you go. I mean, hopefully we'll get a chance to talk to the people that lived this history, back for my next show in May.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. And you have guests tonight.

BETH Yes, I have guests tonight. So given that-- put that back, Jimmy.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I'm fine.

BETH Jimmy just took himself off, and I wanted him to talk first.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: No, no, no.

BETH Yes, I do.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I just-- I-- when--

BETH Oh, it's just one of those moments.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I'm in control here. Yeah, I can pull down my volume when I want to cough or burp or do something rude like that.

BETH Do all those bodily functions things.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, yeah.

BIG ROY: Laugh your butt off at things going on in the studio.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, that too.

BETH This can be a wild place at times, you know.

RICHARDS:

BIG ROY: Yes, it can.

JIMMY CARPER: There's always several shows going on here, folks.

BETH So yeah, you know.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And you only hear one of them.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH Life came crashing down-- the best laid plans came crashing down around my ears yesterday afternoon. And I

RICHARDS: said, oh, God, what am I going to do? And I called my good friend, Sarah DePalma--

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH --and we brainstormed for a few minutes, and came up with a really pretty interesting topic that we could do on

RICHARDS: short notice. And that is coming out stories.

JIMMY CARPER: You know, yes, because there's been gay and lesbian coming out stories until you just can't stand it any longer.

But there's not a whole lot of coming out stories that I've heard from transgendered folks.

BETH Well, so--

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I mean, I know Sarah's.

BETH We can do some of that.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I know Sarah's, and a couple of folks, but you know--

BETH So as a contrast, I wanted to see what your coming out story was.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I just kind of--

BETH Well?

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

I mean, we were just talking about part of it there, with the [INAUDIBLE].

JIMMY CARPER: But you know, you find out that coming out is not an event.

BETH It's a process.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: It's a process, yes.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And my first coming out was, yes, when my parents discovered I was gay and kicked me out of the house.

BETH Thank you.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And that was a little tough.

BETH A little traumatic?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, OK, that was a lot tough.

BETH Yeah. [LAUGHS]

RICHARDS:

Yeah.

JIMMY CARPER: But that was an age when nobody was out of the closet.

BETH Yeah, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Ray Hill was, but I didn't even know him yet.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH He lived in a different city entirely.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BIG ROY: He came out of the womb gay.

BETH Yeah, Ray came out of the womb gay.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I mean, you had friends, and it would be hysterical because these incredible wild ass queens who-- you know--

[LAUGHTER]

--just couldn't walk without a swish or talk without a lisp, and they're carrying on about how nobody at work knew they were gay.

BETH yeah, OK

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And you think, oh, come on, honey.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But that was the game we played. We were all in the closet. And no matter how obvious you were, you didn't admit it because you would be fired.

BETH Totally, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: You'd be asked to leave your apartment complex or wherever you were living and stuff like that. So it was a secret society.

BETH And unfortunately, that's still going on in a lot of places for both the gay and lesbian community, in general, but

RICHARDS: even more so the trans community still.

JIMMY CARPER: Now, I know I'm not the most masculine guy y'all ever going to see.

BETH Really?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BIG ROY: No.

BETH Really?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: You can tell by my big, faggy voice, as Melanie calls it. But also--

BETH A little Melly there?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Just a touch.

[LAUGHTER]

But also, I worked at Tenneco for 19 years. And though I was only out to very close friends there--

BETH Right.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Tenneco was a kind of a small company in Houston, and we were in one building, several thousand people in one building. And I worked in office services, so I dealt with all of the people in the building.

BETH Yeah, yeah, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: So they all got to know me. And after being there 19 years-- I mean, I didn't ever come out, but I didn't date anyone.

BETH You figured somebody might have figured it out in that time.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I never took a woman to any social function at the company or anything like that.

BETH Right.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: After all those years, people knew.

BETH They kind of get an idea, huh?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But kind of in those days, you just knew you didn't talk about it.

BETH Right, right.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, yeah, he's a confirmed bachelor.

BETH Confirmed bachelor.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Right, that means that he is so queer.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH He's so queer.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yeah, so that was kind of that. In fact, when I met my lover, Stanley, in 19--

BETH And you didn't take him to any office parties?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: --78-- oh, no, no, no, he was more closeted than I.

BETH Ah-huh.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: But at the time, we were both kind of closeted Republicans.

BETH Republicans?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Hold on, hold on, don't--

BETH Hold the phone here.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, yeah.

BIG ROY: Ouch.

BETH Well, you have to admit that between then and now, the Republican Party has completely changed direction.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes, they have. Yes, they have.

BETH Because back then, I was too. But now my values haven't changed, just the party that fits them has.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly, exactly, yeah, that. And it was really the mid '80s that I really started coming out. It was toward the end of my career. I was getting tired. Things weren't going well at Tenneco for me. And then in 1986, they had a big layoff.

BETH Oh, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And I was caught up in that, yes.

BETH Was that one of those waves of oil busts that they called them?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: That was the second one.

BETH That was a little before for my Houston time, but I knew they existed.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: There were several after that, yeah. In fact, Tenneco doesn't even exist anymore. It was that bad.

BETH Oh, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Then I kind of took some time off, and then about January of 1987, I thought, well, you know, I should go back to work. And what am I going to do? Go to another big corporation? But this was in the middle of the AIDS crisis, and nobody knew what was going on.

BETH Going on, everybody was scared.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Everybody was scared. You couldn't get insurance. And it was just to a point where the gay community was saying it's OK to get tested now. Because prior to that, they said, don't get tested because there were so many false positives.

BETH False positives, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH And people would freak out, and then it turned out nothing, and, oh, my god.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Right, So I thought, OK, well, this is going to be it for me. I'm going to take the test to find out if I'm HIV negative or positive, and that will kind of decide what I do. If I'm negative, then I'll go for another job, like at Shell or Exxon or something, doing what I did. And if not, then I'll do something else with my life. And as it turned out, I was HIV positive.

BETH So here you are doing something else with your life.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, and the first thing that happened was that I decided to-- well, that yuppie stuff for me is over. And so now it's time to see what I want to do. And I thought, oh, work in a bookstore or do something like that. And I just didn't get a job and didn't get a job. And then my lover said, well, why don't you start volunteering for some community organizations? And the first thing I did is the Gay and Lesbian Switchboard.

BETH Switchboard, yes.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. And that was it. That was the first time I volunteered. And he said, if we were a straight couple--

BETH Yeah, I hear where this is going.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah. You would be doing the JC thing or the Junior League and all of that kind of stuff, yeah.

BETH You're just an urban housewife.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Exactly. So he said, I'm closeted, and you can be doing this stuff that I feel that I should be doing. You can be doing it for me.

BETH Well, there you go.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And so the Switchboard and all of that, and then I became a professional queer.

[LAUGHTER]

And now, Coming Out Day, October 11 comes around, and I'm accosting perfect strangers off the street to tell them that I'm gay.

BETH You gotta find somebody who doesn't already know.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And they look at me like, yeah, right.

BETH OK.

RICHARDS:

BIG ROY: And?

BETH Yeah, next.

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: So that's pretty much my coming out story.

BETH Very cool.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH Very cool. So for me, it had been little bits here and there, lots of years, lots of years.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, because coming out for a transgendered person is a lot different. I mean, I can come out to somebody, but I'm still me.

BETH Yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: When you come out to somebody, you're like killing off a son or a daughter or--

BETH Yeah, my first coming out experience was in high school. And the person who I was talking with was a close

RICHARDS: friend of mine. And it was basically this abstract conversation. There was no reality to it. There wasn't anything that she could understand. It didn't mean anything to her. So that was kind of pointless.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: You tried, but that didn't work.

BETH Yeah, it just didn't work.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Where are we going now?

BETH OK, next topic. That didn't go anywhere, OK. And then the next one was in college. And that was a little bit more-

RICHARDS: - somebody who could figure out what was going on. And I haven't seen that person since.

[LAUGHS]

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh, so it went badly?

BETH That one-- well, it didn't really go badly at the time. But just the whole concept totally squicked her, so that was
RICHARDS: the end of that.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

BETH And then the next one was about a year and a half before I got married to my spouse.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, and who was it to?

BETH To her.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

BETH And she was making noises about, you know, this could be a real relationship, and this could end up leading
RICHARDS: towards marriage. And it's like, you want this to be a real relationship, leaning towards marriage, we need to talk about something.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH And I couldn't quite bring myself to bring it up. One day, she decided she was going to come over to the
RICHARDS: apartment early and surprise me by making me dinner, or making me breakfast.

JIMMY CARPER: [GASPS]

BETH Well, that's when she found out that my sleeping attire was not what she expected.
RICHARDS:

[LAUGHS]

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, so you didn't sleep nude?

BETH Mm, no.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: No, you had a nightgown.

BETH Yes.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes. And she said, what is this?

BETH And she was very surprised.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah, and she had no-- she just didn't suspect--

BETH The first two words out of my mouth were, don't go. And then that started a 2 and 1/2 hour conversation. And at
RICHARDS: the end of it, nobody was really happy about it, but we were going to go work through it.

JIMMY CARPER: OK.

BETH And we were going to make it-- our relationship was working, and as long as it was working, we were going to
RICHARDS: stay together. That's been 18 years.

JIMMY CARPER: Hmm.

[LAUGHTER]

BIG ROY: So it's still working.

JIMMY CARPER: It worked.

BETH It's still working. Is that right? 18?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, it's still working.

BETH 17 years.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, it was worth missing a breakfast, huh.

BETH It's worth missing a breakfast. And my transition process has been, what a lot of people would say, unacceptably
RICHARDS: slow. But for me, the result has been I've kept my family together.

JIMMY CARPER: You were different than a lot of other people because many folks are already married or in a relationship or something--

BETH And then they come out.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: And then they spring it on them, or they come to that realization, and they never have a family like you have. You have two children.

BETH Yeah, well, a large part of the whole wanting to be in that relationship is that, like any parent, a big part of my
RICHARDS: identity is tied up in being a parent to these kids.

JIMMY CARPER: Mm-hmm, yes.

BETH And without having taken the path I did, that would have been a complete impossibility. Had I transitioned at the
RICHARDS: end of college, like I wanted to, and not gotten into this relationship and been post-op in '87 instead of 2002-- that's how long we're talking about pushing this off here.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes. That's a very long time. But you had some emotional stability in those years.

BETH Yeah, and I've got those kids that are so much a part of who I am, and that never would have happened
RICHARDS: otherwise.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH And the coming out process started-- the first person who really took me seriously back in college, which was the
RICHARDS: mid '80s for me. And it goes on today, literally. This evening was the most recent time I came out to somebody.

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, boy.

[LAUGHTER]

What happened?

BETH Oh, well, let's see. Tonight was the usual one. So, whose kids are these? Are these your kids or your partner's
RICHARDS: kids? Well, they're our kids. Well, yeah, yeah, I know they're your kids, but like, biologically, you know, whose kids are they? Well, they're our kids. Well, did you birth them or did she birth them? I mean, you know, well, she birthed them, but they're our kids.

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

BETH And she goes, well, I know what you mean. But, no, I don't think you know what you mean.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: No, I don't think you know, no.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH And it's like, well, OK, so they're not really your kids because you had to have somebody else donate, right. It's
RICHARDS: like, no, we did it the usual way. And it's like, how did you do that?

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I had the equipment there.

BETH And it's like, well, you know, you really want to talk about this? And she's like, yeah, you know, OK, sure. The only
RICHARDS: thing I can think of is that one of you used to be a guy or something a long time ago. And I go, hey, you got it in one.

[LAUGHTER]

BIG ROY: Yahtzee!

[LAUGHTER]

Yahtzee!

BETH Yeah, so which one of you was it?

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Well--

BETH Because you got to understand, looking at the two of us, side by side, she's a bit more butch than I am.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yeah, I want people to know that you are incredibly feminine looking.

BETH Um, I'm--
RICHARDS:

BIG ROY: I wouldn't have a clue.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH I'm incredibly-- I don't know how to say this. I'm just being me.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, I know.

BETH And this is the place I came to. And if that's where I am, that's cool. I mean, there's other people in the
RICHARDS: community that aren't as feminine looking as I am.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH And that's OK too because that's where they got to.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: The first time I saw your wife, and I had not been introduced yet-- I didn't know who she was--

BETH Right.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: I thought-- I just assumed she was a lesbian.

BETH Well, she was here--
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH She was here with Sarah and Laurie, doing an interview about partners or spouses, or however you want to say
RICHARDS: it.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH And so I would have figured, in the context, that you would have thought, well, maybe she's like FTM or
RICHARDS: something.

[LAUGHTER]

I don't know. Somebody else is [INAUDIBLE]. I don't know. But I think one of the more fun ones was just a week ago, just last Sunday afternoon, sitting in my kitchen and having a conversation with a friend of mine who I'd known for about a year. And we'd met a year ago, spent a weekend hanging out together at the same conference, spent the last year conversing in email, had a chance to go to another conference this year.

And we're sitting in my kitchen, cleaning up after breakfast, and she says, well, now, you're in this relationship with a same sex lesbian and all that, so are you involved in the lesbian community at all? And I go, well, yeah, I guess you could say that. And she says, well, maybe you'd know the answer to this. There's this couple that's in my church. And he's becoming a woman.

JIMMY CARPER: [GASP]

BETH And I'm going, oh, shit, did I get red? That'll be the first time in a long time. And she goes, and so, does that
RICHARDS: make them a lesbian couple when they get done? Well, how does your community look at something like that?

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

BETH And I go, oh, you should have asked--
RICHARDS:

BIG ROY: That's a good question.

BETH --you should have asked Theresa before she left with the kids to go to dance class. And she goes, why? Is she
RICHARDS: transgendered? And I go, no, duh, I am.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: And her mouth blew open.

BETH And she goes--
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH --what?
RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

And so we ended up with about a 2 and 1/2 hour conversation out of that about, well, this person said this, and how does that work? And we went through the whole transgender 101.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, yeah.

BETH You know.
RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: I know. Yeah.

BETH But that was probably one of the more funny ones. And the other was, that same day, later on in the day-- I'm
RICHARDS: telling you, I don't know if it's like the phase of the moon or the year or something. I mean, it's just all of a sudden.

We're having this conversation with somebody who-- well, the long and short of it is, I think that she was talking about a person who I knew that was transgendered, well, specifically transsexual. And she said, look, what's going on with this person? And I said, are we talking about the same person? And we kind of figured out we think we were talking about the same person. And she had known him, and then--

JIMMY CARPER: Oh.

BETH But only acquaintance, had met him once or twice a long time ago. And then she met her. And she was trying to
RICHARDS: put this all together and it wasn't working. And I said, well, you know, she's transsexual. She's like, no, no, no, she's a woman. And I go, well, yeah, she's a woman now, but she used to be this other guy.

JIMMY CARPER: Yes, yes.

BETH And she's like, no, no, no, she's a woman. And I go, well, OK, how do you know? And she's like, oh, I can tell.
RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: Ooh.

BETH I can just tell. OK.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Oh, I can see the wheels turning.

BETH It's a challenge.
RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

Oh, really, you can tell, can you? So how many have you actually known? And she goes, oh, a couple.

JIMMY CARPER: Ah-huh.

BETH Oh, well, how many have you spent any time with? Oh, at least a few.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah-huh.

BETH And it's like, oh, well, how many have you spent time with lately? And she's like, well, I don't know. And I said,
RICHARDS: well, how many are you-- and I reached out and held her hand. I said, how many are you holding hands with?

JIMMY CARPER: [GASP] [LAUGHS]

Oh, that's good. I like that.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH And she goes, what? And I go, you can't always tell.
RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: See?

BETH And she just went, what?

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

And that's part of the reason-- that's an idea I've got for another show coming up, is that you can't always tell.

JIMMY CARPER: No, you can't.

BETH And there are so many people in our community who have woodworked effectively, and they're invisible.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yes.

BETH And there's two parts of our community that the activist community that we're part of has lost. There's the

RICHARDS: woodworking people and the street people. And I don't think that's healthy for our community to have lost those people because they're a part of our community. They're important to us.

JIMMY CARPER: You bet. You bet.

BETH And so that's something I'd like to investigate more for a future show.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I think the transgendered community is very similar to the gay and lesbian community in that some people will be able to pass, some people will never be able to pass.

BETH Yeah, yeah.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: It doesn't matter what they do. I mean, there are women who look like little boys, and they're just never going to pass as women. And there are transgenders who are just never going to pass. And there are just flaming faggots who just--

[LAUGHTER]

--you know, it doesn't matter what they do.

BIG ROY: And preach on, sister.

BETH And the butchest dyke you ever saw.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, we all play with gender.

BETH Sure, sure.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Which is why we're all related. It's one community.

BETH Yes, it is.

RICHARDS:

BIG ROY: There's a concept.

JIMMY CARPER: [LAUGHING]

BETH Some people will get that through their head eventually.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, I know.

BETH Until then, we just got to do it we can do.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BETH So there's other people that can contribute.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: There certainly are.

BETH There certainly are. Right, Kristen?

RICHARDS:

KRISTEN: Yeah, I suppose so.

JIMMY CARPER: Hello, there.

KRISTEN: Sorry, I was just relaxing.

BETH Just relaxing.

RICHARDS:

KRISTEN: Just listening to the story and laughing to myself.

BETH It's just such a weird thing going on right now. I don't know how many more it'll be before this little wave ends.

RICHARDS:

KRISTEN: I know. You know, I was at a birthday party earlier tonight. And I was tired. Oh, I was just so tired. And I wanted to go home. Everybody was drinking and everything. And Beth comes up to me, and says, everybody canceled on me, so you have got to come down here. You have got to. So I've been sitting here trying not to fall asleep.

BETH Oh, I did not. I did not. I didn't, got to, got to.

RICHARDS:

KRISTEN: Yes, you did. You threw me down on the floor, kicked me a couple of times, dragged me by my hair up here.

JIMMY CARPER: Well, I can understand somebody throwing you to the floor, but I don't know about the other stuff.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH I guess it came from watching all that wrestling in the '60s, you know.

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

BIG ROY: And she didn't leave any bruises on you.

JIMMY CARPER: I know, yeah.

BIG ROY: You look good for somebody who got dragged across the floor.

BETH Well, we'll go to People Exchanging Power next weekend. How about, hi, want to make it a date?

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Woo-hoo.

BETH Oh, boy, is she getting red now.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah, we did that.

BETH Oh, and I know Jimmy and I had an interesting eyeful that evening.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Ah-huh, woo-wee.

BETH Yes, indeed.

RICHARDS:

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY CARPER: I found out what a pain pig is.

[LAUGHTER]

BETH That's right. Man, those electrodes, I'll tell ya.

RICHARDS:

JIMMY CARPER: Woo, I'll tell ya.

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah, it hurt me. Woo.

BIG ROY: And three guys in the background--

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

BIG ROY: --just crossed their legs.

JIMMY CARPER: I mean it. You must have some coming out stories.

KRISTEN: No. No, I'm just-- no.

JIMMY CARPER: I know that's wrong. I know that is so wrong.

[LAUGHTER]

KRISTEN: No, you know--

JIMMY CARPER: Because you also pass very well.

KRISTEN: Well, thank you very much.

BETH And some.

RICHARDS:

KRISTEN: Yes.

JIMMY CARPER: Yeah.

KRISTEN: Well, I kind of came out a couple of times, like a lot of people do. The first time that I came out was to my mother. I was going through puberty. And I just couldn't get this depression out of my system. I was just so depressed. And all I could think about is that there's just something wrong with me.