

[Transcription]

Grief After Dark- Podcast

Season 1: Dark Waters

BONUS 01: Shameless Promo featuring D. & Adventures of Grief Girl

[Gentle Piano background music]

\*Disclaimer\*

Micki: This podcast addresses death, difficult emotional content and contains profanity. Listen with-

D: Your own motherfucking discretion [laughs, coughs] Get your kids. This is Grief After Dark

Micki: 3, and a 2, and [playful singing] do do do ...[laughs]

D:[Laughs]

Micki:HI D

D: Hi

Micki:Hi everybody

D: Heyyy everybody

Micki: Welcome to bonus episode 3. Last bonerso-

D:[snickering laughs]

Micki:[laughs] Damn it

D:It was bound to happen

Micki: I don't know who started calling these a bonersode first but now I'm very used to saying it

D:You know who it was, it was Tim!

Micki: Was it you?

D:It wasn't me, it was Tim

Micki: Was it me?

D:it was Tim [laughs]

Micki: We've been referring to these as bonersodes and now I almost just said it on accident and I didn't want to sound like a 12 year old boy today but I'm going to. [seriously] Last bonus episode uh was my chance to shamelessly self promote my jewelry company Moonstar Charms. Today we are here to honor D and some really incredible, amazing things that she's built. Take it away! Tell me everything.

D:Wow, where to start, I guess, well you know I've always been an artist. I decided that I was gonna start making art when I was little and I saw Michael Jackson perform at the Motown concert and I had always just been deeply in love with Michael Jackson. Anyway, where he performed Billy Jean for the first time

Micki:mmm

D: And he threw his hat, and then he moonwalked and I was like OH! This is what I'm supposed to be doing. You know, I had really decided that that was going to be my life and performing and I'll be darned that's exactly what it was. It was my life. So I had joined a choir after that and again that was at 6 years old and then I got into the theatre at school, I got into the choirs at school, I got into the drill team at school. I also played basketball for a while, I played softball for a while. I did a brief stint with a band in high school, got to perform all over L.A. for a while. It

was a really well known band at the time and they were related to another really well known band at the time that I am gonna not name right now because it's not important. And you know some tragedy struck here and there and I stopped performing for a long time and decided that I wanted to learn some other things, so in my very early 20's a very dear friend of mine taught me how to paint and how to draw a little bit and was really mentoring me. Every Tuesday we would play tennis and go eat eggs and waffles with whipped cream and we would go to her home and we would draw or paint or read or you know study different types of art. And you know she is definitely like a sister to me. You know how you get to choose your family sometimes. This family kind of chose me and I kinda chose them too. It's like a video game, you get to meet these really amazing characters along the way and they give you something, a tool to help you throughout the game or the rest of your life or whatever it is. She is definitely one of those inspirations for me and I really kind of owe everything of why all my stories come together right now, to her. So that was my early twenties. And then, I picked up a camera when I was 13 or 14 and was mentored by my uncle for a long time, who used to be the official photographer for the sheriff's department in Los Angeles County. He helped me with all of my photography projects while I was doing photography in school. He would let me use all of his equipment, he would put up his backdrops for me, that was how I picked up photography. So I was really young, and I have been taking pictures ever since, like I never stopped taking pictures even though I haven't had a lot of gallery time, I've always been taking photos. I've done a few weddings and a few things. And then I became an officiant, I'm celebrating my 13th years as an officiant.

Micki: No kidding?

D: No kidding. I know, the lucky 13.

Micki: Wow

D: I've officiated weddings, and one funeral which was my daughter's and then uh, oh gosh, I danced forever, forever, every kind of dance. Ballroom and latin dances were my very favorites I used to do those the most and of course hip hop was just in my blood so that's just kind of a no brainer for me and then, I don't even know how many years we're coming up on with Adventures of Grief Girl because it just seems like it is part of my life and part of what I've always been doing and I get these little epiphanies that just come to me. While it seems odd that I am using my personal stories in a lot of my art, I think it's probably the most authentic art that I've ever made. Everybody can find me @adventuresofgriefgirl on instagram, my website will be up in a couple of months because I'm just dragging ass or whatever and I'm technically challenged. And, aside from Adventures of Grief Girl I do a lot of momming and we homeschool our kids. With our two surviving children, they're lifetime homeschoolers. Our eldest went to the Deaf school. So, we're really busy with that. I was homeschooling my son at the same time because they were teaching me how to teach her, so in essence they were just teaching me how to teach so that's really how it went. They were teaching me, I was teaching him and it was just a very natural movement into homeschooling for me and we do a lot of project based learning. So every project that we do here on the farm and garden project, the kids are always involved they're doing the math, they're doing science, they're doing the chicken care, they are mini veterinarians [laughs] and I call my son the undertaker because every time these chickens die, I'm like you gotta bury em or you've gotta take care of them, you've got to take care of this. And that's the Jade Dragonfly, and what we're moving towards with that is producing a series of

adventure books, adventure guides for black kids and so I'm really kind of excited about this next endeavor that we're doing is gonna be self publishing and creating with the kids, really detailed projects

Micki: What kind of adventure guide?

D: Well we call our son Foxking, his sister gave him the sign name Fox and somebody on the internet decided that he is the Fox King, so it just stuck and he's like the animal whisperer so the concept of the book is that he will be our adventure guide, the FoxKing, he'll be his regular self and once he goes out into the world or the wilderness or whatever he'll become the Fox and then the fox will introduce us to his friends and eventually all of his friends will have a separate book in the series. So he's gonna be talking about our neighborhood here in our state and then in the back of the book there will be an activity guide for other kids to list all the things in their state and look for animal tracks, learn how to tie knots, learn how to plant a garden with very simple materials, you don't have to use the fanciest of everything. Really cute little guides about that. We were running a little chicken class with friends, the Urban AgriKids, they are amazing, they're working in a garden in Georgia, a historic garden, And so we partner with them sometimes and do little did you know videos. We're just really big on education over here, we love to learn things. So we do a lot of science projects, in order to keep ourselves accountable we give our things little names, our kitchen is the Area 5 Chemistry Lab [laughs] it's where we do a lot of stuff, we set things on fire, do not try that at home, we really just kind of go all in with the kids

Micki: Well and it's such fun learning

D: It is

Micki: And there's so much art incorporated

D: Oh my gosh, we do everything like we do the science, the technology, the math, the art, we do it. The engineering, we're building things

Micki: I guess I feel like, I feel it's art centric because it's so creative

D: Yeah

Micki: What you all are doing, it's really creative fun learning

D: Yeah

Micki: So you performed for years?

D: Yes

Micki: Did you get nervous?

D: I would get nervous like weeks before a thing. So like if I was booked on a show or something, I would know probably like weeks beforehand and then I would panic about it. But when it's time and the lights come on it's show time we and we don't have time for anything else and it's my time to just enjoy myself and [laughs]

Micki: [laughs]

D: I know, [laughs] like I don't want to be spoken to regularly on the street or whatever but like if I'm on stage, if I'm in, that's just where I'm at, I have no restrictions there it's about performing, it's about entertaining. I love to entertain folks and I've always loved to entertain folks whether it was a dinner party or I'm singing somewhere. But, now that I'm in my elderly years [laughs]

Micki: yeah let's not start, I've got a couple years on you and I would like to not go down the elderly route in this conversation

D: right right right

Micki: Young and supple!

D:[laughs] I really just, I have to be in the mood and it has to be something that really strikes me. I was in a circus and that was a really wonderful experience in and it helped a lot with my grief and moving it through my body because you have to be present, you cannot be on a trapeze and wander off in your mind or you can't be on stilts and wander off, you need to be in your body to do what you're doing. I had a long stint in the circus and it was really really beautiful. Stilting has brought a lot to my art, which I never would have thought of honestly but I was really excited about getting a new skill so that's one thing, I am a collector of skills. So if it is a skill that draws me and I want it, I'm gonna really pick it up quickly.

Micki: I will attest to that

D: Yeah, I'm gonna pick it up and i'm gonna run with it and i'm gonna see how that thing works, see how fast it goes, see how far I can push this. Like what is this and do I want to keep doing it for a long time

Micki: And you are always, I feel like you're always working on an exhibit like you've always got a fine art piece or 7 in the works all the time

D: I guess I do. I don't know. I feel like I'm not doing enough [laughs]

Micki: [laughs] ugh, you just rattled off like 18 different things that you did before you were 20

D: [laughs] And that's the thing it's like, I don't have that mechanism in my brain that says that "I can't" it's I don't have enough time to do all the things and that's what holds me up is the commitment to time [laughs]

Micki: That's kind of the plight of the passionate person right? There's not enough hours in the day for all the shit you really like to do

D:Yeah, I mourn so much. So many projects that I wish that I could do. I'm just an idea factory, shit if y'all need an idea, call me, we can sit down for two good hours, you will have a whole ass project fleshed out or two or three maybe I don't know [laughs]

Micki: Well when I referenced Big Magic by Elizabeth Gilbert, a lot of people really feel that ideas are living entities, invisible things that sort of float around in the ethers and attach themselves to something, somebody who can make them manifest. So hopefully the ideas that you can

D:Exactly

Micki:They'll find somebody else to make them, you don't gotta do all the things. All of the different angles of performance that you were in

D: mmmhmmm

Micki: Even with circus, can you think back to one of your absolute favorite performance experiences?

D: [chuckles] oh my gosh so, I will have to say, there's a couple, it was when I got to see Michael Jackson Live and I almost died, they could've just collected my body and took me right on home to meet the lord [laughs]

Micki: [laughs]

D: Because again, regardless of what was going on in his personal life, I don't know because I wasn't there but his work ethic, his love, his creativity, everything that he gave us that was genuine and pure and to be able to witness that up close before I was 20, that was pretty amazing. Probably being able to dance and be taught by Dennon and Sayhber Rawles who did the choreography for a John Travolta Film and various Broadway productions, they were just

unstoppable forces of beauty, creativity and love and they really were giving out some excellent life skills and advice while, [laughs], which by the way we should link Dennon Rawles' book it's full of all the things and all the shit he used to talk during dance class [laughs], there's that and then I definitely will have to say the various occasions that I got to be on the Wayne Brady Show, because like Wayne Brady is probably one of the funniest people that I've been able to witness and from there performing with whoever was on the show at the time. Yeah [chuckles] he really inspired me to go full out and just be good at your job no matter what

Micki: Right and amongst the 5 billion things that you're working on right now, what is one of your favorite projects that you're working on right now?

D: Well, Grief After Dark! [laughs]

Micki: Yay!

D: [laughs]

Micki: Awe that's such a good answer [laughs]

D:[laughs] Right? Let's see, so definitely this podcast has been amazing, and then I am working on it. I have a small piece in a larger exhibit by Nikesha Breeze. I definitely need to talk about because it's coming up here pretty soon, it opens on April 30th here in Santa Fe and Form & Concept and it's sure to be the event of the season if I must say so myself and it comes out of Earthseed Black Arts Alliance and we'll put a link to them on the internet as well. We have such powerhouses in this Black Arts Alliance and it's just an honor honestly. She's asked us to create some hand tools to take to the future with us so I will not do this just but we will link this in the episode guide. It's called Hand Tools of Resilience and it's about the Arch of Return, what she has planned for her portion of the exhibit it's incredible

Micki: The concept alone, I cannot wait to see it

D:It's incredible and it's inspired me to pick back up some projects that I had put down and I don't know when I'm gonna have time to do this and the call came out and I was like oh, she's knocking on my door basically, she's talking to me! OH! I have to answer this, so once I was like yes, then things just like just started to come together, it got me back into blacksmithing which again it was kind of one of those things that I just picked up and I had an incredible teacher and I will always be thankful for that so like we're gonna be in a gallery now [laughs] honestly that's another thing, I never would've thought that I would be forging my own

Micki: The magic of just starting, I never. I didn't think I was gonna be a jeweler.

D:mmmhhmm

Micki: If you don't try something you're interested in you never know how far it can take you. These things can be really wonderfully unpredictable and surprisingly successful

D: Exactly, that part.

Micki: Yeah you are. I mean I am a huge fan of your art, you're such a prolific artist and

D: You're going to make me cry! [laughs]

Micki: Well, I am just inspired by you and you really do live, what's that term

D: [laughs]

Micki: You art the art

D: I art the art

Micki: You art the art, you don't just talk about it you make the things, if you don't know how to do it you figure it out and I am incredibly inspired by you so thank you for bringing your art into this world

D: Thank you for appreciating that, and I mean it's not always the prettiest and by all means I can do some really detailed things but most of the things that I take out are more rough and they're more like the raw energy than they are the detailed perfectionist energy, which took me a long time to let go of because perfectionism is unrelatable

Micki: Authenticity, that's where you get people

D: While it's fine to want to have a lovely streamlined project, all the projects don't have to be that and so start, like you said, like you referenced before Big Magic, folks read that book. I've definitely been trying to encourage people to do that in offering the grief guide and the coaching and like I said, if you need ideas, call me up and we'll set aside some time [laughs] because yeah there's no shortage of ideas like I just pluck them out of the air. I am always very shocked when people don't do this, like I don't understand how you're not doing it. There's such an abundance everywhere.

Micki: It takes a little bit of practice to build up the self confidence to get started but unless you practice it, you're just gonna be talking. You're not gonna be making art

D: That's exactly it. You're not gonna be arting. So get out there and art the art and enjoy your life

Micki: The wide world of art by D. Anaya and Adventures of Grief Girl

D: Yay!

Micki: Uh, links on the website [GriefAfterDark.com](http://GriefAfterDark.com) uhm thanks for being here everybody.

D: Yeah thanks for listening everybody

Micki: And thanks for sharing D! Cheers

D: Cheers!