

Speaker 1:

Welcome to Black Girls Eating, a conversation about justice, black girl magic, and well-seasoned food. We are Black Girls Eating and welcome to our podcast.

Tanorria:

All right, friends, we are so excited about our guest today. This is one of my Master Chef family members, Chef Manny Washington. He is known as the firefighting chef and he of course appeared on Fox's Master Chef with me, but he was also the most recent runner up from Food Network Star this past summer.

Tanorria:

Manny introduces Orlando flavor to homes across the country and loves to come up with twist on classic home-style recipes for his firehouse family. As a Lieutenant and paramedic for the City of Orlando Fire Department, he has dedicated his career to keeping people safe, but that doesn't stop him from cooking for his whole fire station.

Tanorria:

Whether he's putting out fires or lighting up the grill, Chef Manny always brings the heat, especially with that bread pudding. Because that bread pudding is delicious. Welcome, Manny.

Manny:

Hey, how are you all doing?

Tanorria:

Thank you so much for joining us and taking time out to talk to us. We are a quick little growing podcast and we knew that you had to be in our first season. So thank you.

Manny:

Yeah, appreciate it. Glad to be on here.

Tanorria:

Candace, take it away, girl.

Candace:

Okay. So, Manny, it's so good to hear from you. I totally was shouting for you and Tanorria during your Master Chef season, and of course during your Food Network Star season. I was just a fan of yours. I've been a fan of yours for years. So welcome. So one of my first questions to ask you is when did you fall in love with food?

Manny:

Oh, man, been in love with food at a very young age. As you can see because I've always been a big kid. So I love to eat. So growing up with my grandmother, grandma would take care of me and stuff there, or just parents, whatever. My grandma would always cook for me. So I really fell in love with just seeing her in the kitchen, making her meals for the day, or making us lunch, fell in love with that.

Manny:

Then, like I said, make me go, want to do it. Then start off with Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving was a point in time where everybody, all the good meals were cooked. My mom started letting me do the desserts. I started doing the sweet potato pie and doing little things there. Then I kind of mastered that. Then all right, you get to move on up to the sides.

Manny:

So I did the sides. The macaroni and cheese. Started doing the potato salad and then all right, you mastered that. Then my dad said, "All right, now you can do the meat." That's huge. In my family you can do the meat. So I started doing the turkey, doing that. Making the ribs for the barbecue. So now I'm moving, it's totally about [inaudible 00:03:02], I moved up in stature and status based on those different ones there.

Manny:

So I know I was doing something, I was doing something right. So then I really fell in love with it and over time, just through growing up, high school college and the food. In the firehouse, it just grew organically.

Candace:

I mean, you literally got the gauntlet of food holidays, being able to make the sweet potato pie.

Tanorria:

Right.

Candace:

I mean, that's major.

Tanorria:

Right.

Manny:

Yes, it's huge.

Tanorria:

Now, Manny, I know that you have a cookbook out now and I have secured a copy. I read in your cookbook about the journey to making the sweet potato pie and how that was a big deal. That was kind of the first thing that you got to make for the family.

Tanorria:

Candace even talked about her experience with making the mac and cheese and getting the stamp of approval. So what was your stamp of approval for that sweet potato pie? How did you know that you made it?

Manny:

Okay. So my mama, anytime she eats somebody's food, she'll be like, "Oh. If I was did it, I would've did this." She always got to give her 12 cents on something. Usually, everybody's like, oh god, I know she going to eat that. She going to say, "Oh, it need vanilla." Or whatever.

Manny:

Literally, she ate her food and didn't say nothing. I'm like, what? She didn't say nothing. She just ate it all. I looked over, she took her first bite, I looked at and be like, mm-hmm (affirmative). And she kept eating. Then I turned my head, I put my hand for something, look back, it was gone. I'm like, oh snap. Yeah. She liked it.

Manny:

Because my momma usually always got to, "Oh yeah, you know you got a little something, something." Nothing. It was quiet. Everybody else was slowly eating the food and they wasn't talking. I knew because my parents, my family talk. When they stop talking to eat, I was like, oh yeah, I did my job. Just by saying nothing was the stamp of approval for me.

Candace:

Nice.

Tanorria:

That's a good one.

Candace:

That is a good one.

Tanorria:

When a room goes silent.

Candace:

When the room goes silent.

Tanorria:

You know you've done something right.

Candace:

Because they're enjoying it and it's delicious.

Tanorria:

Yeah.

Candace:

Well, I mean, that's huge. I mean, because if mama says nothing.

Tanorria:

Right.

Candace:

You got it right there. That's blue ribbon, grade A. You won the prize.

Tanorria:

I agree wholeheartedly, heartedly with that. Okay. Manny, we want to talk a little bit about your time as a firefighter. Knowing that this podcast is called Black Girls Eating and we talk about all things black culture, we want to know, what does it mean for you to be a black firefighter? Especially in a leadership role?

Manny:

Oh yeah. It's a very dynamic situation. Some that has greatest moments there. Because one of the things I grew up, my father was a firefighter. So growing up, seeing him every day was normal to me. That's like the normal, that's my normal.

Manny:

But for a lot of people seeing that person go and seeing these different people of color actually be in the fire service, that's foreign to them. So then now I start coming up in the ranks and started doing this stuff [inaudible 00:06:20]. Now people say, "Hey, man, I see you doing this, man. I'm going to see people."

Manny:

Now I can see, be that person that my father was for me for other people. Guys who are interested or something, I love bringing people in and trying to get them up to speed and get them actually hired in the fire department stuff there. It's like that's been one of the great experiences I think.

Manny:

From there, just that representation, especially now. There should be more of us, but there's not a lot of us. So then now being that person to do that, it's been a really great honor to do that.

Tanorria:

Have you faced any major challenges that you can pinpoint and say this is a struggle that I face as a firefighter and a black man? Versus typical challenges that you faced as a firefighter?

Manny:

Just in general for all, is that I think it's just more like just in general, when you're a black person and as a minority in a dominating, predominantly white or something like that. Then all of a sudden, you become the spokesperson for every ... Just something like that.

Manny:

Especially now, especially with this last recent year with Black Lives Matter and George Floyd's different things there. They're like, "Why are they protesting? I wouldn't do that." I'm like, "Do you just forget the whole thing purposely?" Sometimes you're in certain situations. Oh yes, I'm still work here, I'm still a officer, but also too is hey, I'm a black man. You just can't-

Tanorria:

Yeah.

Manny:

It has been harder sometimes just making sure everything's different. Every moment is like, "Hey, man. Hey, you just can't say that." They're close to you, they think you're saying something that Trump, this, that. I'm like, oh wait.

Tanorria:

Oh God, don't bring. Oh gosh, the stress alone from that.

Manny:

Because at dinner time, you're sitting there talking. Them dudes start getting going. I'm like, "Hey." So it's been very, it's had its moments of challenges where I had to find that fine line of putting stuff there and stuff there. So it's always evolving, but I've been able to navigate it so far. We still deal with it and it's getting better. It's just stuff there, but that's a everyday issue.

Manny:

I mean, regardless. Regardless if I am just a black man in general, I'm going to deal with some problems with a job or that. But now just even more. Because it's not like I'm just with these people for eight hours a day, I'm with these people for 24 hours a day, 24 hours.

Tanorria:

Yeah, I mean, essentially-

Manny:

I literally see them a third of my life. So then now you see them around here. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, sleep within them overnight. So it's totally different than just going to work where you can just leave that. Or it's eight hours and now you go home.

Manny:

So it's definitely a different dynamic. You watch TV with them, you watch news with them. You watch this. I put on CNN and five minutes I walk out, I come back in it's on Fox News. I'm like, "Who put Fox News on?" Little things like that. It's like those little things that normally, and they be saying crap like "No, turn this off, man." Those things that you just got to find, it's always that dynamic. It's always something.

Candace:

That's the one thing we have to remember. I mean, that white people don't have to think about. I mean, yes, they're white every day, but we are black every day.

Tanorria:

Every single day.

Candace:

Everything we go through. I mean, if we literally reported racism or microaggressions for every single time that we experienced that, we would never shut up.

Tanorria:

Right.

Candace:

Because it's every day in every part of our life. When we go to the grocery store, when we get gas, when we go to church, I mean it's every day. So I can only imagine not having that time to be able to decompress with your person or with just ... I mean, oh my gosh, 24 hours of having to be on, that's a lot.

Tanorria:

I mean, that's really why they give you guys two days off after you spend that 24 hours, is to decompress.

Candace:

Manny, have you had any experience in the last year where you had to go out on any calls related to protest? Or anything like that?

Manny:

Yeah. So I mean, like I said, recently it's been [inaudible 00:10:38] but before that, like I say, I worked in the emergency management part of it. So I've been to when they had their marches and their different protests up there. I had to actually sit in the emergency management side of it. So in the emergency operations center with all the chiefs and all.

Manny:

I got to see it from, I guess the 10,000 point view. The whole perspective of it. It's kind of weird being on the other side of it. Instead of being out there in the field, but sitting back and I'm in a room with chiefs that are police chiefs and fire chiefs and the mayor. All these different people, all these different attorneys and everything's here. Civil rights groups and stuff here.

Manny:

So now I'm sitting back and it's eye opening, you see how they perceive it and you can see the different emotions of people there. You see people who understand why it's happening. Some people don't understand why it's happening. It's different to see that these are the people that are you higher ups. You can understand it and just really understand.

Manny:

Sometimes I'm never really proactive, but he wanted people to protest. They were open to it, as long as it was safe, they wanted people to do everything. So we're lucky to have that in Orlando, but other places, they weren't for that at all. Or some were more aggressive towards the different things there. So it was definitely enlightening to see that side of it and the parts of it of that stuff there.

Manny:

But definitely, like I say it was one point, the time they were protesting, they stand in front of the fire station to protest whatever. Everybody was up in arms because literally just maybe a day before, two days before, is when they had the thing in Atlanta. One of the things they had were the ambulances because they were throwing bricks at the fire trucks and all this stuff and breaking glass.

Candace:

My god.

Tanorria:

Yeah.

Manny:

Then now when they came to the fire station and stuff here, now everybody was on high alert for things. They were thinking the stuff was going to happen in Atlanta that was going to happen there. So it was their perspective of that, understand it. But like I said, of anything.

Manny:

When you protest, there's always going to be some bad apples that's going to try to ruin it or try to undermine what the actual process was, why they were doing this. But luckily we didn't really have that, do that stuff there. But it was definitely enlightening. Definitely was kind of proud to see how well organized it was and actually did some things here with it. So we had lots of people, a surprising turn out amidst the pandemic and stuff there for that.

Tanorria:

Manny, a lot of times I think people don't recognize that men, especially black men, need some kind of self care regimen as well. We talked about you needing an opportunity to decompress. So what do you do to decompress after a shift?

Manny:

Usually I try to do is I try to get out. As soon as I get out of time, I try to go and work out immediately just to get my cardio in and some of that. Just to get that part of it, kind of get that stress off associated with it. I try to unplug from things, either where it's taking a nap, or just sometimes every once in a while I go get a manicure, pedicure. Get a massage, different things like that to kind of just decompress. Kind of get away from everything associated with it.

Manny:

Cooking. That's the reason, one of these cooking too, is this the reason, one of the main reasons why I really got into cooking. As this is my way of coping in the sense like that. I was at the station just even cooking is that this is where I kind of get away from things.

Manny:

So when I get those different everything's happening, it's, oh, let's go do cook something, or try something new, or do those different things there. So doing that, or even get to do a private chef and going to people's homes and stuff there, it gives me a minute to kind of break away from being that

firefighter, or break away from all those different things. I can just cook and just kind of bring some goodness to people like that. So that's some things I can do to do it. Definitely cooking is definitely one of those big things to help with the decompression of that.

Candace:

I love that. I feel the same way, that cooking is sort a ministry for me. So since we're talking about cooking, tell us about your amazing cookbook. What can readers expect from Chef Manny?

Manny:

Oh my gosh, we've been pushing this off for the past two, three years. I've been like, I want to do a book and just pretty much I wanted ... Because when I started cooking, guys are like, "Oh, Manny, that meal you made last shift, what was it? What's the ingredients?" I got pretty much tired of taking these guys the ingredients that I've made a pastry with.

Manny:

Kind of made a little thread of, "Hey, follow me in Instagram. Just go there to get the recipes." It kind of grew from there organically. Then now it's I'm doing this cooking stuff. So then over time, just this book represents the ones that either helped me in the firehouse itself, or helped me on the three shows that I did. It was Cutthroat Kitchen, Food Network Star, or Master Chef, these are meals that have carried me, or something that I've used to propel myself in those different things there.

Manny:

I have a lot more recipes that I have, but these recipes are close to me. It's kind of like, it tells my story of how I started, the things that got me on, got my white apron on Master Chef. Or the things that impressed Bobby Flay, my bread pudding, or different things like that. There's all different stories that kind of come along with it, that these, the purpose is to kind of tell and get to know Chef Manny and get to know me.

Manny:

Where all these different things and where my love cooking comes from. So that was this. So you have the, they're called the three alarms. The first alarm is all your appetizers, small things like that. We made appetizers and sides and stuff there. Second alarm is your main dishes. So you have chimichurri steak, our bacon jam burger. Then last you have your desserts with my bread pudding. But as well as some breakfast items that I do for this.

Manny:

The purpose of these recipes is that these is, like I said, made for the rookie or that new person. Because lot of times, rookies are the guys that come to me, "Hey, Manny, what's the meal I can cook for the station that's easy?" Or something like that because a lot of them have never cooked before or have very minimal cooking, let alone cook just for themselves, now going from cooking for one person, to now cook for 10 people or six people, it's a whole nother thing. So it's a lot for them.

Manny:



So it was just, all these recipes have been tried and vetted from new guys to seasoned vets, whatever of cooking. So that's why I was like, you know what? I need to put this out here. It's kind of like my memoirs, kind of like how I became the person who I am today.

Candace:

Well, yeah, because I'm looking at this cookbook and the meatloaf. You had me with the bacon jam. I've been making meatloaf for 20 years and I've never thought to add bacon jam to meat loaf.

Tanorria:

A little smokiness, a little sweetness.

Candace:

I mean it's perfect.

Tanorria:

A little tang.

Candace:

Give it to me.

Tanorria:

We know Candace doesn't love condiments. So the fact that she wants to incorporate anything into a meatloaf is huge.

Candace:

I mean, I like this. This is something. I mean, it says this ain't your mama's meatloaf. It may just become my meatloaf. This bacon jam situation, I like this, Manny. I'm here for this.

Tanorria:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Candace:

Mmm. Come on, come on here. Let me find out.

Tanorria:

I love it. I love it. I'm down for the bacon jam on a grilled cheese.

Candace:

Yes, yes.

Tanorria:

Yes.

Candace:

Yeah. I'm here for that.

Tanorria:

That's good stuff.

Candace:

Here for that.

Tanorria:

Good stuff.

Candace:

Manny, I know that firefighting is your career and cooking is kind of like your passion, I guess you can say. That's how you would line it up. Outside of your cookbook, what next big, exciting cooking or food endeavor do you have in the pipeline?

Manny:

One of the things is that, like I said, I was thinking of place back just from COVID and everything, was to get back into competitive cooking. I love competitive cooking, but I just kind of took a break from just was I was doing the cookbook, and this pandemic stuff and that. But I was trying to get back into the competitive thing. That's what I'm really pushing for, is to get back into the competitive game of cooking.

Manny:

Just do it one more hurrah of getting that. But also too, getting more started. Doing deals and start doing more endorsements with the other ones. I did some for Mazola Oil, corn oil, for frying turkeys and stuff that. I want to start, like I said, developing with more partners like that, with food products and stuff that I've been really trying to push out, to kind of get the stuff here.

Manny:

So it's one of the things I've been really pushed for this year. Is really, is getting my name out there and start working on those different things associated with that.

Tanorria:

All right, Manny, we have one more question for you. A little deep. It's a little deep. What would you tell a little black boy Emmanuel today?

Manny:

What would I tell little black boy Emmanuel now? One of the definitely things I would tell him is that definitely things are not going to happen the way you imagine are going to happen. You can plan as much as you can and as you like, but at the end of the day, everything's going to be all right, man.

Manny:

I think growing up, I was just really hard about some way. I got to do this, this, this, this way, this way. Or things have to go this way or this way. I'm thinking this, that. I'm learning more and more that God has a plan for you and just do what you need to do or whatever to get the right way. But, man, sometimes things are not going to go your way, or the way you want them to.

Manny:

But there is a reason for it. It's a lesson behind it that sometimes we don't go your way. Use that moment to learn from that lesson and capture that moment there, and enjoy the ride. I think a lot of times you're so worried about getting to the destination that we don't enjoy the ride to the destination.

Candace:

That's good.

Tanorria:

That's good.

Manny:

That's stuff there. I reflect on it now that when I was going through Master Chef. That at the time, I was going through it, it was fun, but it was a form of that. I was so busy trying to get to I want to win, that I didn't just take a minute to enjoy those moments. Even though being with all the family or the guys, everybody. With Tanorria and everybody, just enjoying that journey.

Manny:

I look back and say, "Man, I did some cool things." That was great and stuff, but I was so busy trying to win or trying to be that, I got to do this, that I'm not looking at the whole ... Taking the destination, not looking at the whole journey.

Manny:

I kind of took that same approach when I went to Food Network Star. It actually helped me, I think, got me further because I wasn't so worried about, I got to get to the end. It was just, hey, man, enjoy this moment. Have fun with this moment and be in the moment. Surprisingly I've actually felt better and did better just cooking wise and just being in that moment. Instead of trying to worry about what's the next, what's the next, what's the next? Just being in that moment. So I think that was a huge one is being in that moment.

Tanorria:

We definitely, we're always in our own heads and not able to savor the moment with Master Chef because I think the whole cast always thought there was some kind of conspiracy all the time. So everyone all had their own hypothesis on these conspiracies. So I was like, I don't care what y'all say. I want to go to the source. But then you can't go to the source because they're not telling you anything.

Tanorria:

Then there's someone else maybe, I don't know, Brandy had one theory and it was like, oh, but how does Brandy have that information? What does she know? Then David knows something else. It was pretty ridiculous all the time, all the time. I mean, there were times that it was helpful, but for the most

part, I do think that if we would've all just let go a little bit more, we would have probably all had slightly different experiences. My experience was great, but I still think that getting out of my head, maybe I would have fought them for robbing me, instead of just letting them Rob me. I'm not bitter.

Candace:

I am. I literally started a hashtag Tanorria was robbed. Do you remember that?

Tanorria:

Yes.

Candace:

This is before we met, I started a hashtag, Tanorria was robbed. But honestly, I mean, Manny, you touched on something that I think a lot of times, especially those of us who are creative, we are always thinking about the next thing.

Tanorria:

Yes.

Candace:

We're always working six months ahead, always looking at the next quarter. When really, taking that time to just stop and slow down and be in the moment, because truthfully that's all we have. I mean, we can plan for the next six months, but I mean, look at us now. We're a year into the pandemic and we never would have thought that this would be what it was like.

Tanorria:

Absolutely.

Manny:

Oh yeah. We'll be good at three weeks. At three weeks, we'll be back.

Candace:

Yup.

Tanorria:

Yeah.

Candace:

I literally-

Manny:

Things will be normal.

Candace:

I literally say to my team, I'll see you guys in a couple of weeks. It's been a year and I've gained the pandemic 40.

Tanorria:

Stop.

Candace:

But I mean, I think really being able to sit down and just kind of enjoy the moment because it's literally all we have. No matter how hard, I mean, you can plan all you want, but I always say we plan and God laughs.

Tanorria:

Absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. You want to make God laugh? Tell him your plans

Candace:

Tell him your plans.

Tanorria:

Most definitely.

Candace:

Yeah. And then he'll say, "Oh, you were just thinking too small."

Tanorria:

I always things God's like, "You cute little girl, you stop that."

Candace:

God's like, "You're so cute. Oh, you thought that's what that was, sweetie? Let me really show you."

Tanorria:

Let me really show you. Yeah.

Candace:

Well, Manny, this was so much fun.

Manny:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). It was.

Tanorria:

I have another question for you, Manny.

Candace:

Oh, a bonus.

Tanorria:

A bonus question. I think I know the answer. Manny, would you ever do master chef again?

Manny:

Hell no.

Tanorria:

Why?

Manny:

Let me see. It's just, you know what I realized? It's just more. Now I know my lane in reference to that, this was the first Master Chef, I was just trying to, oh, I got to do this cooking. But I realized, Master Chef is looking for a person that's a chef, whatever, but they're looking for a person that's more into fine dining and kind of like the elevated stuff there.

Manny:

It's like, I know that's not me. In the beginning, I'm like, oh, I can do that. I can do that. As I go on and then when I did Food Network Star, they really hound you on what is your personality? What is your point of view? Your food point of view?

Manny:

As you sit there and actually have that food point of view, you really have to come to, they teach you real quick, you got to learn, stay in your lane, bro. Know your lane and stay in your lane. I've learned from that, you got to be comfortable with it and got to taught yourself and know what your lane is and be comfortable with it. I learned that, hey as much as I love Master Chef, it's great stuff there, I know my lane's not fine dining.

Tanorria:

Yeah.

Manny:

The firehouse stuff there, the guys love food or whatever, but I don't do fine dining. They ain't doing fine dining. They'll look at me crazy if I come in there with tweezers [inaudible 00:26:06].

Manny:

I know where I'm at. I know my audience, I know what I'm trying to get to. It's like, you know what? I didn't stay in my lane. It would be great exposure, but at the end of the day, that's not me. It just evolved over these years. I've evolved to learn that sometimes everything is not for me. Every opportunity is not for me.

Manny:

I've learned just because I got an opportunity doesn't mean I have to take it. Just those things. Back then I was like, oh, I got to take everything because I don't ever know if I'll get it. But now I'm like, hmm, you know what? This is not me or a representation of me or my brand.

Candace:

Come on, you are dropping gems today. What you said about just because that opportunity is there, doesn't mean I have to take it. That is huge.

Tanorria:

Huge.

Candace:

Knowing when to say no.

Tanorria:

Yes.

Candace:

The thing is though, you don't really get that kind of good oomph and emphasis on that. Having that discernment until you say yes to some crap you know you shouldn't have said yes to.

Tanorria:

That's true.

Candace:

Because I know now-

Manny:

I learned very quickly, the stuff there. Yeah.

Tanorria:

Yeah.

Candace:

Absolutely. I mean, I know now. I can tell the type of client, the type of conversation that I'm going to have with somebody based off that first interaction. I know whether or not they're going to wear me out, or if it's going to be something beneficial. Just being able to say no is huge.

Candace:

I mean, I think too, again, being black creatives, I think sometimes we feel like we have to say yes more because the opportunities are so few and far between for us.

Tanorria:

And far between, yes.

Manny:

Right.

Candace:

Whereas if I'm a white influencer, I'm getting double the contacts.

Tanorria:

And double the pay.

Candace:

And double the pay. So, but hey, activating your no is important too. Knowing when to just say, you know what, I don't have to ride that. This is my lane, I'm going to drive right over here.

Tanorria:

I am far more successful when I stay in my lane. I am a master of my craft instead of trying to be a Jack of all trades.

Candace:

That's huge.

Tanorria:

So I guess with that being said, would you do Food Network Star again?

Manny:

Yes. I would definitely do that again because Food Network Store, I should have won Food Network Star, first of all, really.

Candace:

Come on.

Manny:

But being humble here. But like I said, I don't know, I didn't see the finale or whatever, is that my biggest thing is I like to have fun interacting with people. That's my thing. Bringing that kind of like, those complicated dishes and making it fun and accessible for other people.

Manny:

I'd definitely do that because it's not only just about being a really great cook, because there was some people there that I would say probably was a better technical chef than me on that show. But they didn't know how to explain it or actually make it fun for that other viewer, or those people on the show. But if vice versa, some people basically talk and could write a beautiful song, they're a poet, but necessarily didn't make appealing food story about it.

Manny:

I found that happy medium, where I found good foods but I could explain it easy. I think that was my thing is that I found my niche with it just from that discovery of really pushing who your point of view is and all those different things. I found my niche, I found my calling and say hey, this is where I'm coming



from. I found my thing, whatever, instead of trying to fit into what everybody needs me, I made my own shape, and kind of like who I am associated with it. I'm okay with that.

Manny:

At the end of the day, I did get a pilot. Even though everybody knew that, wow. Just looking at just the three pilots alone, I think I had by far the best one. Or if not, I tied with the other guy. But the thing that the other chick, I love her and Jess is great whatever, but the thing that a cauliflower, a big cauliflower outdid my stuff, whatever, it's just crazy. That's what it is.

Candace:

Guess I got to start another hashtag, Manny was robbed.

Tanorria:

He was robbed.

Manny:

Yeah, it was crazy. It was just crazy. But just it was a lot but I would definitely do that again. I would definitely do stuff here, or seeing those different opportunities associated with it, or find my new lane there. But I definitely want to definitely work on more now that the pandemic is kind of coming down.

Manny:

It's getting back to when I travel for work, is to get back to going into the firehouses and cook with the other guys at the other stations there. Like I said, did [inaudible 00:30:17] over there, up at the Indianapolis.

Candace:

He did Indy Downtown Firehouse.

Tanorria:

Yeah, he did.

Candace:

I remember that.

Manny:

Hopefully getting back to that stuff there and starting getting that and just really pushing that stuff because I think it'd be a great opportunity, a great thing to do.

Tanorria:

Well, we appreciate all of the work you're doing as a first responder and as a black creative, a black man in the food scene, that's rare as well. So keep doing what you're doing. Guys, we will make sure to include the link to buy Manny's cookbook. Sell him out. We will include that link in the show notes.

Manny:

I got a magazine now. I got a magazine.

Tanorria:

We will make sure to include that link in the show notes so that you can support him. We will include his firehouse YouTube link as well. So you could go back and see the great work that he's done in firehouses all across the US. Hopefully we will see you on some kind of food competition TV here soon, friend.

Manny:

Yes, indeed. I need to see your work. You know you're playing. I know [inaudible 00:31:30]. Out the wazoo. I know she's playing. [inaudible 00:31:36].

Tanorria:

I'm working behind the scenes on some things.

Manny:

Okay, yeah. All right, as long as you are. As long as you're working on something. That's all.

Tanorria:

Yeah. Manny and I will check in with each other, like, I don't know, once every three months. Like, what are you doing? Are you doing something?

Candace:

I love it.

Tanorria:

So it's good to have some friendships among Master Chef family, because I can promise you, I don't like all of them. Manny and I are good.

Manny:

Oh, god.

Candace:

Okay. Well, thank you again for being on the show, Manny, we really appreciate you.

Manny:

I appreciate it. Thanks for having me.

Candace:

Yeah. You guys, don't forget to check Manny out on his socials. We'll drop those in the show notes. Thank you guys so much for listening.

Tanorria:

Until next time.

Candace:

Bye-bye.

Candace:

Black Girls Eating the podcast is sound engineered and produced by David McKissic. It's recorded at Nexus Impact Center Creative Suite. Follow Black Girls Eating the podcast on Instagram at Black Girls Eating. Follow Tanorria at Tanorria's Table. Follow Candace at Blue Love Talk. Thank you for listening.