

Jackson, Sheryl

Q How does it feel to be back at the plant?

A It feels good.

Q What's it been like, you've been back how long?

A I been back since May 5th.

Q You've been back about a month, you've had two pay checks.

A Yea, three pay checks.

Q So why dont we just go for awhile, if you want to refer to questions no big thing, you know. We just met ~~so~~ I don't know much about you why don't share a little what you been doing...you've been laid off.

A Well, I started at Wayne Assembly, in 77. I was looking , I was married looking for work, I just happened to go out there and was hiring and they called me a week later. and let's see it was rough too.

Q What was it like the first week, the first day.

A It was terrible, God, They had me using two big air guns, putting off some kind of flaps on the bumper, and they put me on that line and told me I better learn it in three days or I was fired.

Q That's the word they used.

A Yea, the foreman I had, a white guy, I think he was prejudice. You know, but after a while I made him like me. We became real good friends. And I moved up the line, I got a better job, you know, using the hoist, it was nice. In 79, I ...

80 I divorced...my husband...

2

Q How long you been married?

A Ugg, We had been married six years,, I had one child out that marriage.

Q She's how old now?

A She's eleven. After that it was great, I lost weight, I loved it. I had friends. Oh it was unbelievable.

Q After you got divorced.

A Yea, cause he was, I don't, he was mean to me, I don't know I couldn't have friends, it was like I was in prison...We bought this house together and this car. You know. But I ended up getting everything, you know. so...

Q You had to rebuild your life, after that.

A Yea, and it's been great ever since. I've been a single parent, I've got three kids now. And I enjoy it. You know.

Q Gerard is how old? He's sixteen months?

A Eighteen months, My boyfriend, we don't live together... we just...you know.

Q And you have a third child you said?

A Yea, Uh, Trace she's sixteen years old, her father died, he committed suicide. We didn't even have a chance to get married. We was.. parents..we was young, I was sixteen and he was eighteen, he was twenty-one when he died.

Q You were up north all the time.

A We were here.

Q Born and raised Detroiter?

3

A Uh-huh.

Q Not many, It's only folks that are from the south...

A Well, my mother and father are from the South.

Q What part?

A Georgia.

Q What town?

A Hawkinsville.

Q Where's that? How far from Atlanta?

A Uh, I think about one hundred and some miles from Atlanta.

It's not far.

Q And what kind of work did they do? Besides raise a family?

A Well, my father was a auto worker, when he moved up north, to Detroit. He worked in a plant...until they laid him off.

So, now he works for the city. He works for the water board.

My mother, she don't work. Uh....

Q Except raise all the kids.

A Uh-huh. Raised all the kids. Uh-huh.

Q They just don't pay us for that.

A Yea...

Q You were raised on the West side?

A Yup, yea.

Q Where on the West side?

A First, we lived on the Jeffries project. Those tall buildings...

Q I've been in Detroit since 67'.

4

A So then you know, so then from there we moved to the Hermans Gardens. I know you know the Herman Gardens. We moved away from there like, in 69, 68. Then we moved over here to Wisconsin and Schoolcraft. And that's where we are still at.

Q Your father should be getting ready to retire soon?

A Yea, in about two more years.

Q He'll get a nice little pension from the water board.

A He's looking forward to it, he's says he going back down south to build a house.

Q Do you ever...Do you like the south?

A I love the south...I travel all the time down there. Fly or go on the bus. Miami, Florida, Georgia, and New York.

Q When you were growing up did you think you would work at a auto plant?

A Let me see. In a way, I did, cause when I was in junior high they took us to the plant and I was saying this was where I wanted to work. I don't know why, you know when your young. When I was young I wanted always wanted to be a singer or a seamstress. I like to sew, but I still might, you know get into sewing. Later on, you know, save me some money and start my own business at home.

Q Do you sew much of the kids clothes?

A Yea, when I have the time. But, since I've been laid off I've had the time but, you know...money...or nothing but

I couldn't do it, but now I got my foot back into the door I'm gonna try and save some money and start from there so when they kick me out again I'll have something to fall back on.

Q You were called back to the plant because of increased sales of the Broncos'. We're the only plant in the country that makes the Bronco. What did you...when you got that call. Did you get a call?

A I got a telegram. I was in New York, when I got it. So my mother called me and I called Woody from New Jersey to tell him I would be in town for my medical.

Q So you had to fly right back.

A Right back. Me and the baby.

Q I'm from Brooklyn, born and raised.

A Are you?

Q Uh-huh, I was born and raised in Brooklyn for eighteen years. There is nothing like New York.

A Oh-wee! There sure isn't. The people, I mean..Oh.

Q What do you like about it?

A Oh. It's a twenty-four hour city, you know, you see everything, everybody in New York...people sleeping on the street, the night girls, you know, you... they are something else up there. Oow! I don't see how they do it.

Q Detroit is like a small town compared to New York.

A Yea...Yea..But I love it, you know, the clothes, on the streets. You know, when you go shopping, you get for

half price or what ever or they talk you down. Like okay something is 150.00 only I'll give it to you for 100.00 instead. You know, stuff like that. It's nice.

Q Do you have family in New York?

A Well, New Jersey.

Q That's a hard hit town.

A Yea, I see some of those places there. And some of the people living in some of those burnth out buildings. It's terrible.

Q We have great housing in Detroit.

A Uh-huh.

Q Just beautiful homes.

A Yea, and we got some houses that are boarded up that some people should be living in.

Q Closing down the projects, they are trying to close down Herman Gardens and all those projects. They trying to push those people out.

A Where are they going to come?

Q I don't think General Motors, or the Rensen people really care.

A I don't think they do either.

Q So you got called back, you went to your phsical, and what was the first day like?

A Let me see, I don't really remember, we..uh..had a orientation like I guess.

Q Yea, they got that, that's new.

A Yea, that was nice, we met all the supervisors, and the superintendents, plant managers all those people were down there and they introduced themselves. They were all nice, we had coffee and donuts and they told us, about the plant, what they were doing . You know... and they read ..they had pamphlets about all the chemicals they use. They read those to us. They let us ask questions and stuff. It was nice.

Q How many people did they call back?

A It was 29. And I think 2 people they called back didn't show up.

Q Did you know any people that they called back. Any old friends?

A I think one girl: That worked at the assembly plant with me, she was there.

Q You had a day of orientation and then...

A They bought us...okay they bought us after the orientation they showed us movies too. They showed us videos of plants and chemicals and what to do and what not to do. They took us down on the line and showed us the work and met the foremans.

Q Put you on the job?

A Uh...They put us right on the job? I think they...Yea, they put us on the job we were supposed to do, and they showed us what to do. We didn't work,,,we only had a hour...

So the next day they put us to work.

Q Was it hard getting up in the morning to...

A No, I was too excited to go to work you know. Yea, but it was fun, the people was nice, I couldn't believe it. When I worked at Wayne Assembly, they was mean over there. Oow. And prejudice and stuff.

Q Tell me all about it.

A Well,

Q How did you know they were prejudice?

A The way they look at you, they were mean and hollered at you and stuff.

Q They actually called you names and stuff, and say stuff.

A No, they didn't call you names, they just treated you funny. You know, they look at you all mean and "What are you doing here." Stuff like that. But at the truck plant they were nice, you know, smile at you and say hi! It was nice. Everybody, you know, just like you, you know, you do, you never seen me before. It was nice and one of the general foreman.. Should I mention names..?

Q You can mention names, we're not going to use names.

A Van Smith or something. Well anyway, my foreman Mr. Masure, I think he was sick and he was sick and was taking over the line for a couple of days. I had been on the job for about a week, you know, they were showing me what to do and I was doing a little bit here and there. The guy would say take a break if you want. Just watch me. So I was sitting down and he was gonna come by, you ought to be getting up to learn job, it's gonna be your job next week, you know.

Okay, so the next week comes, okay, I'm doing the job the best I could do, you know, I still had a little help, you know, so one day they going to take my away, and I still didn't know my job that good, I would still get in the hole, and it's hard getting out of the hole, what happened um?

Any way he come down there and a couple of other foreman and guys come around my job, watching me and stuff. And

he was fussin and saying she don't need no help, she been on that job long enough. Well, I say last week all I was doing was building stock and you know...fussing at me... I was mad and I wanted to cuss him and stuff.

Q He's loud too. He's loud. He doesn't..

A Everybody looking at and me and I'm just trying to the job Steady in the hole, Steady in the hole. One of the other superintend, I don't know his name, he was real nice to me, He come down and watch me and pat me on the back, he say How you coming along, how you doing? He was real nice. The other day he came down and he just happen to be watching me and I looked up and he say I'm proud of you. I like that.

Q Are you able to handle the job?

A Uh-Huh

Q Tell me exactly what you do on the job.

A I got a door latch and four rods and four little clips and I got to put each clip on and four rods, and pick up my gun, pick up some screws and put in that rod, put the gun down and pick up another little piece and hook it up to the

wire. And I got these little things that they got on the door to hold the door to hold the door open and they are real heavy. I got to grab one off the truck and one off the door and throw them um over to this crate. And go back and build up another rod. You know, start over, I guess

Q So it's pretty steady, I guess.

A Uh-huh, Keeps me moving, uh-huh, all the time. I can't even scratch my head.

Q Do you have time for a cigarette?

A No! No time for a cigarette, shoot!! The only time I get time for a cigarette is if someone is walking by and I say light me a cigarette and they'll stick it in my mouth. And I smoke it while I'm working, you know, inhale while the cigarette is still in my mouth and blowing it out. I don't have time for nothin. And the drinking facet is on the other side, you know, I have to ask someone, I have a cup, to bring it to me. I don't have time, unless the line is stopped. Then I can, I got it's to where I can run over there get's a drink and run back.

Q I couldn't do the job, they tried to train me on the job, and I couldn't do it. And with my seniority I just wasn't going to go through that week and a half that you had to go through, and also just coming back to work willing to give that extra, extra out-put that

I was't, and I knew they would find me a job, that I was't going to do. It's a greasy job, your hands, I mean, it goes right through the gloves every two hours.

A And the stuff would slip, you know, your gun, I don't like how they got the gun, I take the gun and I have to take it up to where I keep the screws at and it's the long cord, you know the hose, and I trip over it, you know, sometimes the gun falls down with the screw in it and I already got my stuff in my hands. I got to pick it up and put the gun between my legs and try to put the screw in with my hands, all this little kind of mess.

Q Is that all you have to do?

A Yeah.

Q So you working on the job now, it's still pretty hectic, still...?

A It's pretty hectic, but I, you know, I do the best I can, keep up with a little bit, guys will be talking to you and making the day go by.

Q What do you talk about?

A Some everything, you know, sex mostly, that's all they know. They always talking about what they can do...

Q The guys talk to you about it?

A Yeah, uh-huh. They talk about their families, you know, what they gonna do on their vacation, stuff like that. That's all.

Q What are you gonna do with your two weeks off? It's the first time in...

A I don't know,

Q How many years you've been laid off here?

A Let me see, 3½, 4 years.

Q So two weeks vacation pay is nice.

A I didn't know if we was getting that or not, cuz we was just getting back.

Q Yeah, you guys get off and you get unemployment or sub pay. When you get vacation pay, you get your seniority, right.

A Yeah.

Q So you get vacation, you probably get one weeks vacation pay and one week unemployment.

A Really?

Q Yeah.

A Even this holiday, this past? We get paid for it?

Q Sure do, sure do. I'm pretty sure, yeah.

A I meant to ask my commitee man.

Q Yeah, you get paid for it.

A I thought you had to work certain amount of months?

Q I don't know, unless they changed it in the contract. I don't know, I don't think so.

Q So, are there any people you know from before?

A Uh-huh, yup.

Q So you have lunch with them or...

A Not really, I just keep mostly to myself. I met one of the girls there named BJ. A black girl there. Sometimes I sit and eat lunch with her and gab, you know. I just mostly be by myself.

Q And you drive to work by yourself and come home.

A Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Q What ah...The change..I mean..What did you think.. What happen after you got laid off?

A Let me see, I was hurt. Really, I mean the way they laid me off. Here, your pink slip and just get out, we don't need you no more. That's exactly how it was, they weren't nice about it or nothing. You know, I had paid my car off you know, I wasn't worried cuz I know I had ADC to fall back on. You know. And I collected my unemployment and my sub for a year.

Q Your unemployment and sub?

A Uh-huh.

Q So how much were you taking home for the first?

A What you mean? My sub?

Q Yeah. How much is.. What did that add up to?

A I don't really remember. I don't remember.

Q It was 85% of the pay. So it must have been about \$250.00?

14

A Yeah, every two weeks.

Q And then you had to go on ADC? And how much did you take home a month on ADC?

A It was peanuts. ADC, let me see, every two weeks all together it was \$230. or something.

Q Every two weeks?

A Yeah, I had to pay my house note out of the that, and gas and lights.

Q Gas too?

A Uh-huh, and like altogether I was getting \$500.00, a month.

Q Raising, three children, gas...

A Food stamps I was getting, like a hundred and nine..it was rough.

Q How did you make it?

A It was rough, things were tight. I made..okay, like last year in June, I met this lady, she has a like a business, a cleaning service. And I got in with her making like 25.00 dollars a day with jobs. Sometimes, I work 3 days, 2 days, 5 days, what ever. And that kind of helped me out alot. And that was just last year. My boyfriend helped, my mother and father helped, you know, they buy groceries and stuff.

Q So everbody pitched in?

A Uh-huh.

Q Did you ever think you'd get called back?

15

A Nope.

Q Did you think, you'd just be on ADC for the next ten years?

A Yup. Cause I was still looking for jobs. I was taking the postoffice test, I took that twice. I took test for a correction officers twice, but they never called me, you know, so I didnt know...

Q How do you..Now you took home, last week, probably, four hundred dollars?

A Last week, I took home \$452.00, cause they took out union dues, this week I took out, I took home \$489.00

Q So that's equal to what you took home per month.

A Uh-huh.

Q What did you do with your first pay check? If I get to personal, you just tell me to shut up.

A Okay, I..What'd I'd do with my pay check? I paid bills. Cause, you know, ADC cut me off, so I had to take over my own bills now. So I had to pay my light, which was \$161.00 I paid that and I got my brother car, I'm helping him with that, so I gave him a hundred dollars and the rest on groceries, so I really didn't have no money to nothin with and my last check, last week, what'd I do? I don't know... It went so fast...

Q How do you feel, now that your working?

A I feel like a human being again. I'm in the work force, I feel like I'm in a league, a big league. Big people.

I feel different.

Q You feel like when you are walking in the street you feel different?

A Yeah I can take care of my own. I don't have to depend on ADC or nothing.

Q What do you think, I don't know folks in the plant say different things to me, being a white male they tell me things than they would say to you, but you know everybody, particularly whites, even black guys in the plant don't have much respect for folks who have been on ADC.

A They don't. They figure all you want to do is sit around and wait on that check every two weeks. That's not true. Maybe some women do that, but not me. I ain't like that. You know, true enough I was waiting on it because I needed it. I ain't like that you know because they aren't giving you nothing. I felt what I was getting I had put in already from the years that I was working because they take out what?...a hundred and some dollars in federal, right? So I figured I just get out what I worked for anyway. You know so now I am back to work and I can help somebody. They take them taxes out and somebody need it they can use it.

Q So you don't feel bad that you have to pay a lot of taxes?

A No. There are people out there that need it. I feel good. I can walk around with my head up high which I always did anyway you know. I never you know went down or was really depressed. I wasn't really depressed. In a way when I got laid off I was glad too because I wanted the time off to be with my kids because I was working afternoons see. Now I am working days and I like that better. I can come home and be

with my kids at night. See they be in school during the day and he be at the babysitter's. When I'm at home it is like I wasn't even away.

Q How many hours were you working when you were working afternoons?

A Ten. Ten hours.

Q He is a real mover, seventeen-eighteen months here? Yes sir. Being back in the plant now knowing that it is probably temporary how long do you think you will be working and how are you going to prepare if you can prepare? Is it possible to prepare for when you get laid off again?

A No. I don't like the idea that we might just be working until Christmas. I am going to try and save a little money you know. You know I just got to roll with the punches what can I do. I can't make them people make me stay there.

Q Do you get angry with so many folks working ten hours and some people are laid off? Did you when you weren't working?

A Yeah. I sure did. Because you guys have been on ten hours for...

Q Forever.

A Yeah because I've been laid off you know and that is a long time and that is a lot of work for one person. Why not split it up and let somebody else get some of that money you know. Eight hours is enough.

Q Do you want them to do that now?

A Yeah. I'm not greedy. You know just as long as I got a job.

Q Great.

A There are a lot of people out there that wants work too. They don't like sitting around their houses and they have family, they got kids you know.

Q I agree with you. I'd try to raise a lot of times that folks should be working eight hours. Guys volunteer for overtime, ten hours now, they are working eleven the guys in the garage and stuff.

A What kind of life is that? I mean you don't have time to do nothing. You are tired when you come home and you know share some of that work. Let everybody have some of the goodies.

Q One of the reasons that we all work the ten hours rather than having the work shared is the union has taken the position now not to fight over that issue anymore. Were you ever active with the union when you came in or attend any union activities?

A No.

Q What about church? Are you a church going person?

A Uh yeah, sometimes but since I have been laid off I really haven't been going because my clothes. I like to go to church looking nice like everybody else do you know and my car it is not running, but I got my brother's car now. I am going to start going back. My mother go every Sunday.

Q Every Sunday? What church does she go to?

A She goes to Hamlet Temples, it is a Methodist church over by her house. You know because she can walk there so she goes.

Q Is that the church you went to when you were little?

A Well when I was living over there yeah I went there with her. When we was little we went to the church over there by the Jeffries Projects. I forgot the name of it. She goes every Sunday. There is a church down the street here and I am going to start going there because it is closer to the house and so like if my car ain't running I won't have an excuse not to go.

Q What has been the hardest thing about being a single parent?

A I don't know. Raising kids without a father I guess.

Q How has that been hard for you? What you were telling me before it sounds a little easier because you felt much better about yourself after you got and went through that tough period.

A I think the kids would like to have a father around. I don't know. I never really gave it too much thought to tell you the truth. Really it is something I don't miss. I think the kids want a father, a man, you know someone to take their places and do this like a lot of places I won't go because a man isn't with us you know.

Q What kind?

A Like fishing you know, camping out and stuff like that. They like to do that, but I haven't done that since you know. Other than that it is great. I don't care what nobody is saying.

Q Being a Detroiter you have seen some fantastic changes in the city, when you come up the auto industry was sort of well anybody who had an auto plant job had a nice job, they had good families, not that everybody stayed together, husband and wife but I mean you know the house was able to be kept up. I mean I interviewed a

A Cars, campers you know stuff like that and we are called what blue collar workers so that is second-middle class right? Middle class. And that is what I was until they kicked me out the door.

Q Why do you think that happened? Why did they kick you out?

A I don't know. I know I was lowest seniority.

Q I don't mean that.

A I really don't know.

Q You don't. There have been over 200,000 jobs lost in our area, in our Metropolitan area, 200,000 production jobs. Not all auto industry jobs, but a lot related and they have been replaced by Burger King jobs and McDonald jobs and security jobs. I mean half of the people walking around with a security jacket used to be auto factory workers making good wages and now they make 1/5. One of the reasons I wanted to write the book is that I think that the auto industry and cities like Detroit are more now like the vanishing farm from the south in sort of a vanishing way of life. When you look at your three children, the youngest one is 16-17 months what kind of work can they get when they grow up living in the city? What do you think will happen?

A I was talking about that with my daughter today, you know, she was talking about the cars and how they are suppose to be flying and all that kind of stuff. I said that is probably what he'll be driving when he gets up in age you know.

Q How is he going to afford it? What kind of job is he going to have?

A I know. Even them you know what are they going to do? You know she is getting ready to graduate in two years and what kind of job...

Q She goes to high school?

A She is going to junior high. What kind of job are they going to have because computers is taking over and the robots are taking over now and I was off for $4\frac{1}{2}$ years and I can't find a job so what are they going to do?

Q I agree. So what do you think they will do? What do you

is going to happen?

A I don't know. They will probably end up on ADC you know, having babies, trying to find a husband to take care of them or something you know unless they be smart and start a business of their own or get lucky in some kind of way.

Q Do you think there is anything you can do to help them?

A Not really because I don't have the money. If I had the money I would let them go to college you know or if I could get my business started like that and they could help me with that-- sewing you know, but other than that all I can see them doing is going out here in these restaurants working.

Q Do you think that is the American dream? What happened to the American dream?

A What happened to it? President Reagan take it away.

Q I hear you.

A Yeah, because when he got in office I think that is when everything started messing up.

Q You got laid off when?

A In 1977.

Q He got elected in 1980.

A Yeah that's when I got laid off in '80...February. They started closing up all these plants.

Q So you don;t think too highly of Ronnie Reagan?

A I don't know if it is his fault or what, but no I don't. He is mean. He is like another, what's the name, Dan Smith or whatever. He is like one of him you know. He smile and everything on TV, but you know he is probably mean.

Q What do you think of Governor Blanchard?

A I think he is nice. He seems to be a pretty good guy. He is

all for Michigan. And Coleman...I don't know I guess he is okay too. He is all for Michigan and Detroit you know, trying to fix it up and everything.

Q Do you think he is succeeding?

A Well yeah as far as downtown is.

Q Who lives downtown?

A Yeah all of them, but what about out here. He is not doing nothing out here. He lives out in the suburbs. He lives nice out there. I don't know how they do it.

Q You mean the people in the suburbs?

A Yeah.

Q Heh there is different suburbs. Did you ever go to River Rouge?

A Yeah, a lot.

Q There are poor whites in River Rouge and they don't have different problems than Herman Gardens. A little difference, but the suburb is out near the plant...a different ballgame. They are still working in the auto plants. You are right. Do you have any ideas how you would make it better?

A How I could make it better?

Q Yeah, if you had the power to do something about this situation what would you do?

A I don't know. You know I used to think about that and I would be free-hearted with the money. I don't know, maybe, I don't know, I would just give everybody a certain amount of money and go for yourself. I would fix up these houses. You know I would get a certain group of people, not a certain group, but I would take a group at a time and maybe condition them and train them, how to take care of their houses and homes...put them in a home and give them a certain amount of money. I would you

know. For everybody if it was in my power to do that. Instead of like saving and banking it because I believe in God and Jesus Christ and the resurrection and all that and a lot of people say this is it, this is only one life, you know, do the best you can. I believe that too, I don't know. While I'm here I would really help people out.

Q How old are you?

A 33, I'll be 34 in June.

Q So in 1967, that was almost twenty years ago, you were thirteen or twelve.

A I was working, I was babysitting, I was making money and buying my own clothes. I was an independent child, always. Yep.

Q What do you remember the most that sort of makes you smile or sad when you think about growing up in the Jeffries?

A It was rough over there.

Q It was tough in the '60s?

A Yeah it was tough, everybody was mean and fighting. You know bullies. Yeah it was rough. We was on welfare and you know my momma filed on welfare. We would go to the store and steal candy.

Q Yeah we all did that.

A Yeah steal candy and stuff because we didn't have no money. The parents they had money, but they couldn't give it to us I guess. I don't know. Try to keep food in the house. We always had food.

Q Always had food.

A Yeah and clothes. We used to get them welfare boxes at Christmas and you know that kind of stuff. I feel the only way to survive in this world is you have to be strong. You just have to keep going. I mean you know things get tight now, but don't

give up. I think about this guy who committed suicide. Why did he give up. I mean it wasn't that bad. I mean we were having our little problems, but still there is always a brighter day. The sun is always going to shine the next day.

Q How did you get that value?

A Who me?

Q Where did it come from?

A Me? It is just in my heart.

Q Where did it come from? Who gave it to you?

A The Father in heaven. He had to. He had to put it there.

Q Do your brothers and sisters have the same view?

A Yeah.

Q How many are there?

A I got a little sister Rose, that is her picture up there. She is in the Air Force. She left and went to Texas. I got a brother, Michael, he is what thirty-two. I got a brother, Thomas, he is thirty and he is working at Chrysler.

Q How many years does he have in Chrysler?

A He got about thirteen?

Q Is he at Jefferson Assembly?

A Uh uh. He was, but he is at there in Sterling Heights. He was laid off for a long time too and it was rough for him. About him being a man, but he had got some kind of job through social service. They had gave him something. He worked about six months and he got called at Chryslers.

Q So he is in a new plant? A friend of mine just became the local president there.

A Yeah.

Q Yeah. Union president. So there is three plus you, right?

A And we are all working.

Q And you are all working now? The two of you went through the hard times.

A Yeah.

Q What is the difference between Christmas when you were working and Christmas when you aren't working?

A It was sad you know because I couldn't get my kids what they wanted.

Q What did they want?

A Clothes, radios and stuff. But Christmas just passed and I still wasn't working and I had a lot of people help me out. You know, grandparents and stuff. They really helped out.

Q Why were they able to help out this year and the year before they weren't able to? Are they working more?

A I don't know. Well I had met more people. I met this girl and she was working at Chrysler and she was nice and she really had helped out. My boyfriend he helped out. He bought hams and turkeys and stuff like that.

Q What does your boyfriend do?

A He works at the assembly plant next door.

Q So he has been working steady?

A Yeah he has been there for what twenty some years.

Q So he is looking to the retirement place.

A Uh huh, yep.

Q Do you, it is one thing and I agree that you have to be strong and think about brighter days, but who do you get angry at when they slap you with a pink slip? Who are the people who are tough and rough in the Jeffries? Who do you express your anger towards? Who do you think is responsible? Why does

it happen?

A I don't know. All I know is the people up there in Washington and in the pentagon and all that you know.

Q Have ;you ever been involved in trying to change the budgets from spending all the money on the pentagon or do you stay away from politics?

A No I don't get into that.

Q Did the civil rights movement in Martin King's march in 1963 you were only ten then, do you remember your folks talking about that at all. The rebelling in 1967 don't you remember that?

A No. I only remember the riot that we had. I remember that a little bit.

Q 1967.

A Uh huh. I never really got into that. I don't like war. I don't like people hurting. I don't like none of that. I read my bible. That helps me a lot and all of this stuff that is going on in this world is suppose to happen. You know it is in the bible.

Q It is in revelations.

A The world is coming to an end you know.

Q Yeah, but does it have to be so hard on you when it is coming to an end?

A That's why I say you have to be strong. You know you have to have faith and listen to God's word. He will pull you through. You know He will pull you through it and I believe that.

Q Are all your brothers and sisters believers to?

A Yeah they are believers.

Q Do you worry about your sister being in the Air Force?

A Yes because she was just in Green Commons.

Q She was in Green Commons in England with the Pershing and my wife went to demonstrate against the U.S. missiles there a few years ago. She was in England when the planes left for Libya?

A Yeah she was there. That is why we were worried about her. You know she got home just in time. She got home April 10th you know and we was praying she would get home one of them planes with a bomb on it.

Q She is a flier? She flies?

A Yes she flies. She is in the Air Force though so she flies everywhere. This last pass she brought a car home and she drove down to Texas. That is where she is stationed at now in Abileen.

Q You were saying you thought were more friendly in the truck plant more than the car plant?

A Yes much friendlier to me.

Q Do you thoughts as to why they are? The black and whites friendlier or the white's more friendlier or the black's more friendlier.

A Everybody is friendly, just like one big happy family. I'll tell you everybody talks to everybody, play with everybody you know. At the assembly plant it seems like they put their nose up at you and you better not say nothing to me bitch I'll kick your ass and all of this kind of stuff you know. Don't look at that man because I am looking at him.

Q Lot of competition.

A Yeah it was a trip. I hated that place. I was kind of glad to get laid off when I did you know.

Q It is nice to get laid off for a little while. That is

everybody's dream. Lay me off for about six months then give me my job back. That is everybody's dream. When my friends were getting laid off at Chrysler I said I wish I had hired in at Chrysler except when they lost their jobs then you learn. What are you going to do today after this interview?

A Go buy my baby some shoes, my son, he needs some shoes. I can't do nothing else for the rest of the kids you know because I got house payments.

Q It is that time of the month?

A Yeah and I got to pay that now.

Q How much is your house now?

A \$257 a month.

Q Where are you going to get the shoes, in a shopping mall?

A I'll probably go out to Sears in Lincoln Park. We are not allowed in Dearborn I understand so I don't go out there.

Q So you support the boycott of Dearborn?

A I guess. I'll go along with everybody else you know.

Q Why do you say you will go along with everybody else?

A I don't want to go out there and you know, I don't know.

Q Say a little more. What do you think?

A Well if they don't want us out there why should I go out there.

Q If Reverend Holly said we were having a march to Dearborn would you go?

A No I wouldn't go. I would just stay away. Let everything get straightened out. That is how I am you know. I'm like that. I see somebody out there fighting I'm not going out there to see. I am going to stand away. I don't like

fight.

Q How is the crime over on this...I have a friend right over on Hubbell, right a few streets up...Mydessa she has got twins. I don't know if you know here

A I don't know. Black?

Q Mydessa Erving yeah. Black woman.

A I think she knows her.

Q Do you know the twin girls?

A Me...no. Does she go to my school.

Q I don't know which junior high they go to.

A What are those two twins who live on Hubbell that you used to go visit all the time, those two twin girls?

Q They are good friends.

A It's not much crime in this neighborhood to me. I haven't heard anything.

Q You don't have to extremely worry?

A No. I think they have a halfway house over here in this area you know because you see some strange people walking around.

Q Strange.

A Strange guys you know.

Q Retarded?

A They look weird.

Q Retarded?

A Not retarded, just like they might have been in prison.

Q Oh a prison halfway house, I see.

A You know like that.

Q Does that concern you?

A Yeah because we got kids, you know, there is so much sex abuse and stuff going around. Rapes and stuff. This world

is crazy. That guy on the news, I was kind of asleep, he killed his mother. The twin women...he killed his mother.

Q For the insurance money or something.

A I don't know, they gave him \$7,000 and he wanted more money. He killed them and he lived down south and come all this way to kill them.

Q I saw that. I don't know what you thought about it, but any time there is a murder in Detroit because population is 60% black, the crime on crime, black on black crime, and today the two pictures of the white women being killed and here it is you know and the newspaper...

A I think white's kill just as much as blacks really. Blacks don't really kill their own family.

Q Only in fits of anger. When somebody picks up a gun and shoots...

A Maybe a husband.

Q Yeah that kind of stuff.

A Things like that. And kill the kids too.

Q In anger but not in planned murder.

A Yeah that is a trip. I know my own marriage...married people... some marriages are good and some ain't, but you can be with a person for so long and love him and then end up hating him.

Q I just came from an interview with one of the relief men on your line, not your relief man, but Jerry. He is a real nice guy. This is his third marriage. I'll ask you the same question...

A Marriage...to be more selective.

Q More selective.

A Be more careful. Take a lot of time to get to know that

person.

Q Being a little older you sort of learn that.

A Yeah.

Q We are about the same age.

A I don't think I would get married again.

Q No?

A I like my freedom too much.

Q Even though it might be a ticket to economic security? It is not worth it?

A Uh uh, I thought about that too.

Q It is not worth it?

A Because I had security when I was with my husband. We had everything. We had a business. We had a fish market and we had a record shop and we was working at Ford's together. We had good money. His mother is wealthy you know. We was going to sell this house and move out in Southfield. Get us a big trailer home you know and travel the world with it. It wasn't worth it.

Q Steve was a Ford worker too? Is he still working at Ford's?

A No he left and went to Alabama and he is mostly a construction worker.

Q But it is not worth it?

A No.

Q So you raise your daughter's not to chase the false security?

A True.

Q That is a helluva lesson.

A But you can't tell them. They are boy crazy and all that kind of stuff so, but I still talk to them.

Q That is all that you can do. That is a heck of a lesson es-

pecially now a days where the movie star and the pimp and the basketball player or the golf player or the tennis player whichever culture you are in is the hero you know, is not the up-standing member in the community who is respected. It is tough on the kids.

A Yeah it is. I'm glad I survived that marriage and I learned a lot from it, but I don't want nobody to go through what I went through...never.

Q Do you think they listen when you talk to them? You have two daughters listening age, little ladies already.

A They listen. They lived with me so they saw. They saw every-thing.

Q If and more than likely you won't be working in the truck plant in January...if you make it through January next year at this time, probably not. You are really sort of like a symbol of the less seniority employee who does this in and out of the work force of making a decent wage. How many years will you have? You will have what seven years, you get all of your seniority so you will have eight years, right, when your finished a year from now?

A I am going to have more than that.

Q '77 to '87, ten years, almost ten years. I would be nice if they would lay off until you got your ten years in.

A But they are not going to do that.

Q No. Unless they make a mistake.

A Yeah wouldn't that be nice.

Q For ten years you get a little something when you are finished. When you look at the plant, having been away from one plant and coming back, is there more drinking in the plant or?

A I think it is about the same.

Q Not much change?

A Yeah, not much change. All the guys that I met like on my line, a lot of guys...Chuck...he come in there smelling like a beer brewery. They always go outside for lunch and drink beer, you know, liquor and some of the guys...some of the maintenance guys they carry liquor in their pockets.

Q Is that how it was in the assembly plant?

A Yes, the same way you know.

Q The difference between then and now is then people drink Corvasier and now they are back to beer.

A Yeah and vodka. I don't know how they drink that stuff... and come out working. I drink, but I don't drink going to work. I wait until I get out you know. Come home and get drunk. I haven't seen no drugs or nothing around there.

Q It is light. It seems real light.

A That is good.

Q So if you let your mind wander and you dream little and you are going to lose this job and you are going to try and save what you can and make the next 1½-2 years at least better than... and they won't let you on ADC if you have any savings.

A They don't have to know what I got.

Q I see.

A I won't put it in the bank. I'll just hold it here.

Q Hide it under the mattress.

A Yes.

Q Don't tell anybody because somebody will come and take the mattress. How are you doing?

A Fine.

Q Good. Is it nice having your mother working again?

A Yes.

Q What do you like the best?

A The money.

Q Yes, it gives a little extra to do things with huh?

A Yes. Knowing they are going to lay me off we want to get us a VCR you know and a stereo because I had a stereo but they broke in my house when I was working and took it. So we want to get another one of those so we can have at least something to do while I am laid off. Some entertainment because when I was laid off we didn't go to a show that much because I never had the money to go, unless my friend come and take me or something like that. I don't know, I'll make it regardless. As long as I can keep my house you know, a roof over our heads and food in our refrigerator we'll be all right.

Q And love the family. So it is pretty hard to think about ten years from now?

A Yeah it is. I don't even look that far ahead because I'll be 45 or somewhere in there.

Q Would you like to live in the south? Do you ever think about going to the south?

A Uh uh. I was born and raised here, so I am going to stay here. My friend is here so I am going to stay here him.

Q Are some of the folks that you grew up with or people that you might see over the years are they working or gone through the ups and downs that you have gone through.

A Yeah I got a girlfriend who is working at Ford's out in Sterling Heights and they never called her back.

Q They never called her back so what is she doing?

A She is doing the same kind of work that I was doing, you know, cleaning service. Go and clean up people's houses and stuff.

Q Whose houses did you clean up?

A Rich white folks, Jews out there in Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills. It is beautiful. You should see some of them houses. You probably got a nice house too.

Q I live over on Livernois and Eight Mile.

A Do you? I know the area.

Q Nice houses. I'm Jewish too.

A Are you? They are nice people. Jews they are nice. They give you stuff. Give you money. They were real nice. I said I am going to miss going to work for those people because they were real nice.

Q One of the reasons I am writing the book is my father died when he was 57 and so I was about 20 years old and when my son was born, my first child, and I sort of said to myself I said I wanted to remember more than just the hard working.

A Your father was a factory worker?

Q He owned a small hand laundry and then had to give that up when they raised the rent and he didn't make much money. My mom was a school teacher and they gave me the chance to go college. I went to school in Ann Arbor and got real involved in the civil rights movement. I have been real involved in politics and I work with a group called the Detroiters for Dignity.

A Do you know a group called Young Socialists?

Q I know some of those folks, yeah.

A My daughter was kind of into that, but I didn't care about.

that too much because they would have to go on the streets and go door to door and march and give pamphlets and march and I didn't want her into all that.

Q It is a way to express of being concerned and care and then have dreams. Have dreams that you can make it better.

A Yeah, but how can you fight the government. I mean they wanted to move the government out and start a new government.

Q And Martin Luther King wanted to start a new government that we could all be proud of. It is different. I am not saying it is the same thing.

A Well he just wanted rights for the people you know.

Q I understand. Yeah now there was a difference. I mean in I think involvement.

A Look what happened to him too. He is dead. It is the same thing with Jesus Christ.

Q I am not Christian because I was raised Jewish.

A Jesus Christ was a Jew.

Q Right and if it wasn't for people doing what Jesus did or Martin Luther King we would be, you would have never been called back to the plant unless they were going to pay you \$3 an hour. We wouldn't have people build the unions and build the civil rights movement you know.

A That is true.

Q So while you might not agree with what the young socialists point of view...

A It is not that I didn't agree I just couldn't see myself get involved and letting my kids getting involved in that. That is a lot of hard work.

Q A lot of hard work, but not to be involved and not to have dreams, this is not my interview so I don't want...but I would love to talk to you about it. So one of the reasons I wanted to write the book was it was a way I think for me to give the respect to the people I worked with. In a funny way respect to my father too who worked real hard. He worked six days a week. When I was coming up in the 50's and 60's where if look if you were getting a job in the auto plants here in the 60's you went from job to job with no problems. It is a different ball game than now you know. I've just learned so much from people you know. I am interviewing you , but I am learning. I hope that when the book is written other people can pick up the book and say these are human beings that deserve a better shake and we better look at what we are doing in our country. I mean I am not writing a political heavy book, but I think through telling the story and your story is one of many that it is just unfair, unjust, wrong that in the wealthiest country in the world you have to think, that you won't be having a secure life. To me life can be secure. We have to be strong and make it secure, but when there is other people building Renaissance buildings downtown and we are building robots in the plant rather than you working, there is something funky about it you know. There is no reason the smile your daughter gave when she said you are glad you are working shouldn't be on her face all the time and that is what this book is sort of in a round about way about you know and sometimes our own views are own worse enemies, our own beliefs, our own greed which some guys that I interviewed they could

beans about your daughter.

A I know. Yep.

Q So that is sort of why I am trying to figure out how to put together something that expresses all these different ways of viewing things. What do you think an auto plant and had been in and out would look like in ten years?

A Well there won't be too many people walking around. There will be a lot of robots. It is just a place where a few people will go in and push a few buttons. Yes, that is what I think. There will be a few inspectors you know like that. I don't know. Okay like that job I did, no robot can do that.

Q No?

A Uh uh. Putting on rods and clips and stuff for the door latches.

Q Maybe they can pay somebody in Tawian 30¢ an hour or two to put all the latches on the doors and then ship the doors. Who knows.

A They say this is the devil's world and the Lord said that.

Q Who is the biggest devil around?

A Who is the biggest devil? I don't know. I just know there is a devil. He is in our hearts and the people just like God is in our hearts you know. He is in the air you know.

Q What do you think is the best thing that you got from your parents? What was the best advice? I don't mean a thing like a VCR? What was the best advice you got from them?

A The best advice, I don't know.

Q One of the best advice, I won't hold you to it.

A My parents, I don't know, we didn't talk too much. You know

they is from the south and they didn't really talk too much. When I was growing up they would tell me to watch my friends, you know, the friends I hung around with. That is about all.

Q What about what advice do you want to give your children? If you were going to leave a letter for them what would you tell them, by your actions? Sometimes things are done in words they are done by actions.

A I would just tell them never to give up. Just keep on searching for their dreams. Whatever is out there just keep finding it and keep looking and never give up, I don't care what. That is what I would tell them. Be selective. Don't just go for anything you know. And don't be in a hurry about nothing.

Q Who uses that, is that a Remington?

A Yeah. I got to get some type out.

Q Who uses the Remington typewriter?

A I do. I let my kids and teach them how.

Q Great, great. I think that is about it. I'll ask you a few more questions.

A Do you want something to drink? A glass of water or something?

Q I'll take a glass of water, sure, that would be great. Thank you very much. I was looking at the pictures of the Porsche and that is a good looking car. Did you always like cars?

A Yes. There is some things I need too, glässes and dishes, spoons, towels.

Q After not working for three years.

A I couldn't get those things.

Q Heh you didn't have a job.

A Did you see my yard and the flowers I planted?

Q Yes I did see. I was looking at that table, it is a beautiful

table.

A Yeah it is old. I tried to revarnish it myself and one of the kids stepped on it or something. It was my dad's.

Q It is a beautiful table. I worked in the plant for fifteen years and I can't, I mean, I just went looking for another job because I want to get out of the plant. So I went down to the service employees union, a union for the janitors and folks in the big buildings, race track and some of the contractors that you might have worked for doing day work. They pay \$16,000 a year and the health insurance they give would not cover my kids therapy what he goes to. I would much rather do that than work on the line, but that would be you know I only work forty hours a week in the plant. I take off one day a week usually.

A How do you do that?

Q Right now unfortunately I take the baby to therapy. So that is an excuse that is covered, but uh...so I made \$26,000 last year. But to take a cut of \$10,000 that would be tough and to go from what you were making in the assembly plant to you know that is an 80% cut. So you don't have to have any kind of apologies saying you don't have things. I mean it is just rotten. It is a disgrace that people are force to do this.

A The bible helped me out a lot though.

Q The bible helped you.

A Reading it and some of the things that are said like don't worry about what you are going to wear for tomorrow and all this other kind of stuff, what are you going to eat and He said I'll feed you and I'll clothe you and that has been true.

Q When you were coming up who were your heroes? TV heroes.

Who did you think was cool?

A I don't know, Superman. I was crazy about the Beatles. I loved them.

Q And you were raised in the birth of Motown.

A Oh Diana Ross that is my girl. I really didn't have no heroes or nothing like that. I like Billie Dee Williams. You know I am crazy about him. I like John Wayne too, he was a good guy and Bob Hope. I like people like that because they are for the people. Stevie Wonder has good music.

Q I like Stevie Wonder. He is God's gift to the new generation. He is someone who has put politics as well as talent together.

A Yeah. Michael Jackson, do you like him?

Q Yes. Who do you like?

A New Edition.

Q New Edition, what song do they sing?

A They are a new group. There is five of them. Five little black...you probably have seen them on the Pepsi commercials and stuff.

Q Oh okay, I've seen them. Who else do you like?

A I like Janet Jackson.

Q What TV show do you like?

A Bill Cosby and Webster and the stories.

Q Do you like the soaps? Do you watch the soaps every day?

A I like the Jefferson's and Bewitched. There is a guy on my line, I call him chief, one of the repair guys, a white guy, you probably know him. I don't know his name.

Q I'm new to that area too.

A I know his name, but I forgot. He calls me Nell. You know Nell, that big fat girl on TV and I said why do you call me

Nell? He said because when I be looking at you down the line I think you look her. So I call him chief. He knows my name is Cheryl, but he calls me Nell. I said you are trying to call me fat on the side. They are fun. They are a lot of fun over there. They are real, real nice.

Q That is good.

A They really help me out on my job too. They really helped me out. The foreman is real nice.

Q Major?

A But at first, the first couple of days he wouldn't talk to me and I was thinking that he didn't like me you know because I never had a foreman do that.

Q You didn't feel racial antagonism when you first hired in the other plant?

A No.

Q Do you think it is different people or different times? Do you think it is because people are different or that is it almost eight years difference and people learned a little since then?

A Maybe people learned a little something now, I don't know. I guess they must have because they are different.

Q I don't know. Sometimes I think yes and sometimes I think no.

A They are a lot different now. I guess they are learning to live in the world with each other I guess. You know we got to live here and work together.

Q Do you think the world is in better shape now?

A No. I don't think there is no change really. It is about the same.

Q Do you think the United States will go to war in the Middle

East or anything or Nicaragua? Do you think they will invade Nicaragua? Do you think about it much?

A No. I don't like wars.

Q What about South Africa? What do you think about that?

A I don't know about that either.

Q What about apartheid?

A I don't even know what that is. What is that.

Q Apartheid is the government in South Africa...the population of South Africa is twenty million people and one million whites have total control over nineteen million blacks. And apartheid means that the blacks are only allowed to go where the whites say and that is the policy our U.S. government supports.

A Coming up you know and it was rough because kids were bullies because I was like...no I wasn't no tomboy...well I was a rough child too, but I was a friendly type child you know and other kids always wanted to pick on me and kick me and you know talk about me and I didn't like that. My marriage was the pits, but as far as my life now it is great. I am back to work now and I know it is really not going to last long, but I have a stable life and it is okay. You know and putting them on the right track in life. That is my job as a mother you know and working. I always worked and I want them to work and have a job and do something. I don't want to say I don't care what it is. I do care what it is. You know as long as it is honest money. Anyway getting back to my exhusband he was in Vietnam. He fought the war and he talked about it a lot. Certain things he would not talk about. When we was going through our divorce he had to talk

a, I don't know if it was a parole officer, some kind of man anyway and he would come in and check on us and see how the marriage was coming along and he would talk to Ronnie. Ronnie wouldn't tell him certain things about Vietnam, but I think killed babies, you know, and stuff like that. When we was first married he was mean. He would fight all the time. I would fix him dinner or something and I wouldn't know what would be wrong with him. He would take his plate and just through the whole meal up against the wall. He would get angry just like that, quick and I didn't know what started it. Anyway he got that gun at me and I was up in the bed like that and I thought that man was going to shoot me. It was terrible. He would always fight me.

Q Did you know him before he went to Vietnam?

A Yes. We went to high school together and we were friends.

Q What high school did you go to?

A MacKenzie. We were friends. He wasn't like that until we got married. I could not understand that. I still don't understand that right now.

Q You both got out of high school, you got married and then he went to Vietnam?

A We went to high school and we were just friends, it wasn't no intimate thing or nothing like that. I was with my other daughter's father then and then Ronnie was in Vietnam and then he came home and then we got married.

Q Then you saw a fantastic change. What is your first name?

A Sheranna.

Q Sheranna, what your momma is sharing happenend to thousands and thousands of young men who had to go to war. They were

and they did things that they hated so much for doing it that when they came back here they were on drugs or they got on a lot of drugs when they were in Vietnam or when they came back here and lost all self respect and they had so much anger and hatred inside they took it out on the people they loved the most. It was one of the worst things that ever happened in our country because the war in Vietnam which was twenty years ago, fifteen years ago already was one soldiers fighting soldiers. It was American soldiers fighting civilians and babies and children. They would go into a village and burn the entire village even if the people were there. It would be like if some foreign force came into Hubbell and just burned down the city and the young men who had to do that came back with a big knot that was sort of a spring that would just sort of spring out and do what it did to your mom's relationship. I had lots of friends who saw them go through that. Friends at work at the plant and the pain they went through and all the therapy they went through afterwards and very rarely was there a woman in their lives that was able to stick through the violence that these guys put on them and the children. It is a honorable and it is courage for you to say enough is enough. Then are too many folks that didn't get out of those things.

A I was scared. I know it and that is why I am glad I survived. You know when I say I survived, I survived that and it was hell. After the divorce it seemed like he changed for a little while. He was sorry for everything he did. He said he realized now that God gave him a good wife and he didn't realize what he had until it was too late. I am not going back to

that.

Q He never understood himself.

A I don't think he had therapy either when he came out of Vietnam. He should have.

Q There are so many things people don't talk about from that period and they are so full of pain. Were most of his buddies in Vietnam?

A I think some of them was. He seen his buddy get killed. He had to drag him while he was dead. He had to drag him with him.

Q That's tough.

A I tried to understand that you know. I had sympathy for him and I felt sorry for him, but I couldn't live with him. Why should I have to live through that? You know take that punishment.

Q It doesn't help him either. It is like I had a friend who is still alive who is a junkie and as long as you bail out a junkie out of jail every time and you give sympathy to a junkie he is going to keep doing it. They just rip off. They don't care if it is there wife or their mother, their grandmother--they'll rip them off. Until you say heh I'm not going to be part of that game. I'll help you, but I am not going to be abused by you. That is why I continue to be involved and I am trying to keep the U.S. out of wars in central America and when you said your daughter was doing some work door to door for Young socialists, and they do a lot of the same kind of work and that is dreaming and being involved in believing that you can change things so we don't have to repeat that situation. Does that make any sense?

A Yes.

Q And I think it is hard that it is not that your ex was a rotten person, but there is a part of him...

A He just got a rotten deal you know. I couldn't help him.

Q That's right.

A So I had to say bye-bye. I have to live my life you know. I am an individual and he is an individual I don't care if we are married. When you marry you are suppose to be one, but everybody is different you know. Even your kids are different.

Q And it takes a lot of courage to say no more.

A I was scared too boy and I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing because of his illness you know, but I asked God to help me and he did. That is how I got through it.

Q I've got a friend that every time the alarm would go off to wake him up or if someone would walk in the house at night you would find him in a position like this. He didn't have a gun in his hand, but he was ready.

A My girlfriend came over and we were talking and she was married to a Vietnam vet and he would wake up in the bed doing the same thing.

Q Yeah, I know.

A She divorced him.

Q I think one of the crimes of our country right now is the, particularly the black male who during the 60's was able to get a good job in the auto plant and finally make a good economic living in a country that denied jobs before because of racism for so long. Now he can't get those jobs either. They are almost like the dinosaur. I am not saying black women had it easy you know. Did you see the Color Purple?

A Yes.

Q What did you think of it? What did you think of the film?

A I liked the movie.

Q What did you like about it?

A I liked it. It was down to earth you know.

Q What parts do you remember?

A The whole thing.

Q What did you like?

A I liked all of it you know. About the girl when they showed her having a baby and the father taking it away and how the woman was living with that man and how he treated her you know real bad.

Q Do you think it was true?

A Do I think the story was true?

Q Yes based on...yeah.

A I think it was true. I could believe it happened. I liked how she fought back too. How she got up and she took as much as she could take and she got out.

Q She never gave up her dreams.

A No. She how she turned out, got her business going you know.

Q That is right.

A She was old and then at the end her kids, she got her kids back and stuff. That was the sad part.

Q I thought it was a tremendous film and it was a shame that they didn't get no nominations, no awards, but it is a bigger shame that folks saw it as a black film rather than film of people who never gave up hope and overcame. I mean it didn't matter, it could have been black, white you know, but it was human beings that made life and the scene to me

that made it one of the most touching ones was when she comes back to the church and is reunited with her father. The sense of coming home you know and it was priceless. It was a fantastic film. You should see it in another year or so. You probably could see it now.

A I'll probably take her to see it.