

Interview with Mr. Jiam DesJardins and Bert featuring Emily

**Total runtime: 56:35**

**PART 1**

[[00:00:00]] - *(Background noise)*

MR DESJARDINS: At one time.

*(Shuffling)*

MR DESJARDINS: That went all the way over to John R.

BERT: Okay, but then --

MR DESJARDINS: You know, where Greektown--

BERT: Okay, okay, but --

MDJ: Where Greektown was.

B: Okay.

MDJ: That's 19-- This early -- that's the 19, uh, 20's. 1917.

B: Okay. W--wasn't Germans, uh...

MDJ: No, no, no. That-that was before Germans that were there. Before it.

B: Okay.

MDJ: That happened--

B: Okay.

MDJ: The Germans had--had left by--by this time.

B: Okay.

MDJ: You know, beca--like that area in Harmonie Park. You understand. That area in Harmonie Park where Greektown is and Trappers Island and all of that -- that was all Black businesses. You remember that.

B: 'Cause remember Second Baptist was there -- all that was there.

MDJ: Yeah, yeah. All that was -- so that was really considered --

EMILY: Okay.

MDJ: In the same sense-

B: Black Bottom.

MDJ: Black Bottom off Peralijah? Black Bottom. But basically B-Black Bottom. But it wasn't called Black Bottom. That's the point I'm making.

E: Okay.

MDJ: It was the Greeks that came and pushed them out.

E: Huh...

MDJ: The was not -- The church was there but t--the population was Black people.

E: Huh. I saw something... um, what was --

MDJ: Remember that? Don't you remember--

*(Overlapping conversation)*

B: Okay, but see now, I remember I stayed on Jefferson.

E: Okay.

BERT: And uh... right when the building I had downtown.

MDJ: Mmm-hmm.

B: Right next to the Pantatree. Wasn't no Pantatree.

MDJ: No, no.

B: Okay? That was in 1951-52. When I stayed there, I can look and see the Boblo Boat.

MDJ: Mmm-hmm.

B: And back then like the summers now we'd get hot. You couldn't stay in the house, you couldn't sleep, so you'd come down and wait until the breeze come in. And you would go to bed like after the breeze 'cause the breeze would calm through the windows and stuff.

MDJ: Yeah.

B: Okay?

MDJ: But-but what we're really - what we're really talkin' about is...

B: And that was on Jefferson.

*(Overlapping conversation)*

MDJ: But I'm talking about 1910.

B: Okay.

EMILY: Okay.

MDJ: You've seen -- you've seen the -- I'm talking about my book.

B: Yeah.

MDJ: 'Cause there was newspapers from that era. All that insignia. The hotel. They had a Black hotel all--all-- But anyway my point is that there was no segregation at that time. Blacks were doing fine. No need for any of this uh-- It's when they start shipping those people up from the South to work at Ford is what -- It disturbed the Black people already here -- had been here since 18 something (*chuckles*). You get what I'm saying? You know, older families really became disturbed because um, they had a social life. They had private clubs, they had all of this.

E: I've seen a little bit about that.

MDJ: And then we build a Y because hey, they didn't want you going to theirs... So, they built the Y. YWCA, YMCA and all that in Paradise Valley.

E: W-- where were they?

MDJ: Right there. You know where Ford Field is?

E: Uh, huh.

MDJ: Just right there.

E: Right there. Wow.

MDJ: You see, that's the area-

*(Overlapping conversation)*

E: I saw something about um, who's the famous black photographer in the 1910's?

[[00:03:00]] - B: There's a lot of them.

MDJ: When?

E: Um, 1910's like really early. Um, they have a whole thing of his. A whole archive of his photographs at the Burton.

MDJ: Oh, oh yeah I--

E: Claren -- no it's not Clarence.

MDJ: What are we talking about?

E: Um...

MDJ: But he wasn't really the first.

E: But his... I saw that his photo studio was like downtown on St. Antoine and it was--

MDJ: Yeah, well St. Antoine was the main street. Woodward Ave was not the main street.

E: Okay.

MDJ: St. Antoine was the main street.

E: Huh...

MDJ: There were more businesses on St. Antoine going from the River all the way out to uh, uh, uh the Boulevard.

E: Huh, wow.

MDJ: Businesses. But remember now, Hastings. The Jewish -- Russian Jews, German Jews sometimes -- most of them were Russian. So that was, you talkin' about 18-- late 1800's. Hastings street. So Hastings street is a new division of Paradise Valley -- that's what it is. But I'm only talking about a 9 block area.

E: Okay.

MDJ: And that 9 block area, they didn't just happen to own th-- businesses. They also owned the land. That-- that's a whole different story.

E: And you're saying -- so it's Gratiot to Vernor. And then...

MDJ: Vernor to Gratiot.

E: Okay.

MDJ: Hastings to Brush.

E: Okay.

MDJ: Now since then people include John R. They have it all the way up to Ferry, as far as that's concerned. You'll find that research follows all the way up to Ferry, all the way up to the Boulevard. They keep goin', they'll probably wind up at 8 mile Road, the next thing you know. 'Cause that's the way it's been going. Basically, when they're doing -- poor researching, that's the whole thing. They go and read a newspaper article that was written in 1930 but the person that wrote the newspaper article didn't know.

E: Didn't know.

*(Both MDJ & E chuckle)*

E: Yeah.

MDJ: So, that because in the newspaper it must be so.

E: Yeah, yeah. Oh, and it's hard to find information.

MDJ: And then there's also those who purposely... did that also. That's where that racial thing about Black Bottom having something to do with Black people.

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: But everywhere that Black people lived almost in the city in Detroit they would call it Black Bottom. You're doing your research, you'll see the newspaper article I've done.

E: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, there were -- we've--we've done a couple of oral histories with--with uh, older ladies who were like in their like -- maybe like mid-80's. Early-mid 80's. And both of them--

MDJ: When did they come here?

E: They -- So, 1940s was one. Um, and then the other lady grew -- was born in Detroit.

MDJ: Okay. Okay 1940.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Let me -- let me tell you and this is *(indistinguishable)* You have to remember the culture of the times -- how things were at the time.

[[00:06:00]] - MDJ: So women were housewives.

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Okay. And there were so many barriers -- covenants that they cannot live in. So, that's why the Black Bottom people lived in that area because *(indistinguishable)*. Paradise Valley wouldn't have been -- even though people were living in there, but the people living there, they didn't go to the nigh-- Don't forget, this is during--during the Depression years -- number one. And the major thing is Black people-- 1933 was the most important year for the 20th century.

*(MDJ asks E a question)*

E: No.

MDJ: The end of Prohibition.

E: In 1933?

MDJ: Yes.

E: Wow, I didn't--

MDJ: 1919 -- it started in 1919.

E: Wow. I didn't realize it ended that late.

MDJ: That, yeah. 1933.

E: I always thought of it as like a 1920s thing.

MDJ: People -- (*chuckles*).

E: Oh.

MDJ: No, that's what created gangsters.

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: That's what created the Purple Gang. That's the great gangsters during the period of Prohibition. From 1919 to 1933.

E: Okay.

MDJ: And '33 is when it became legal.

E: Okay.

MDJ: So don't -- There had already been speakeasies in every 50 feet there was a (*indistinguishable*) speakeasy up until that time.

E: Yeah, yeah. Wow.

MDJ: So, my uncles -- the ones who -- two of my uncles, they owned nightclubs. Our family owned businesses. Uh, two nightclubs, three restaurants, two grocery stores. And my father was a jeweler. My father is from India. Tamil, India. And he was a jeweler on Hastings. All of that property in that area -- they were smart enough to own land.

E: To own it.

MDJ: Not just the businesses. They formed the Paradise Valley Business Association.

E: Huh.

MDJ: That was uh, 100 and -- first it was 10 then 100. So, that's how the Paradise Valley Business Association kept it intact. That's how Orchestra Hall--

E: And they saved Orchestra Hall, right? Because they were--

MDJ: No... Well, they-- You see, I might. I might have to-- Yep, yep, yep.

E: Okay.

**END**

**[[00:08:28]]**

**PART 2**

**[[00:00:00]]** - MDJ: Now we're back to uh, Black Bottom. Uh... like I said basically from my time uh, Gratiot to Larned.

E: Yeah, okay, that's what I heard. Yeah, that makes sense.

MDJ: From uh, really from Hastings. But actually Rivard (*indistinguishable*) started. So, that's where I moved in when they first built it.

E: That's wild.

MDJ: The--we're talkin' about the glass out before they built anything else.

E: Wow.

MDJ: From--from -- let's say from-- And that's why they changed the name because--because Joliette, Nicolette those were the new names.

E: Mmm-hmm. Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Now, the original names wasn't the Lafayette. During the time I'm talking about, it wasn't Lafayette. When Blacks owned businesses and hotels.

E: Where was it? What was it called?

MDJ: Champlain.

E: Really?

MDJ: Yeah.

E: Whoa.

MDJ: Champlain Street.

E: Okay. Ah, interesting. Huh.

MDJ: That--that time they owned hotels... As far over as Brush... to Woodward. All that-- Everything was fine until that (*indistinguishable*) that's when that stuff changed. So, those people who had been here early 1800s, early 1900s, and so on-- They were appalled. They had, you know, they had private clubs, Old Colombian, St. Antoine. They had--

B: Women's (*indistinguishable*)

MDJ: Women's club, social, (*indistinguishable*) singing opera. Singing at the Orchestra Hall and stuff. Cul-- High culture, let's put it that way.

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: The culture was high.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Until the-- the Southern middle class started comin' up and Ford opened up.

*(MDJ briefly engages in a tangent conversation with someone at Bert's until [[00:02:04]])*

MDJ: So, it existed. And I--I'll show you later. You have to see it. And uh -- 'cause these were newspapers that lasted 20 and 30 years.

E: Wow.

*(Audio indistinguishable due to moving chairs)*

MDJ: Burton only got just a few copies. *(Audio indistinguishable due to moving chairs)* And not all the issues and so forth. But it's not enough for research for somebody to--to really go through.

E: Yeah, it's just like a few--

MDJ: Unless you know what you are looking for.

E: Yeah, and so few people do.

MDJ: That's exactly... And that's why a lot of that stuff is useless; just sitting down here.

E: Yeah, yeah. Huh.

MDJ: Just laying there until someone come: 'Oh, we like uh-uh-uh, an exhibit, or something like that.' They don't encourage that. And they still--

E: Yeah. Oh, I know.

MDJ: A--and they st-- A-and if you notice-- *(Clears throat)* In uh, in stuff that hasn't been digitized, you gotta go through the...

**[[00:03:00]]** - E: Yeah, manually.

MDJ: -Through the cards.

E: Yeah, yeah.



MDJ: 'Cause I'm the one that made them keep the cards. They were gonna get rid of all of 'em.

E: Wow.

MDJ: (*Mimics staff*) 'Oh it is going to be digitized, we don't--we don't need this.'

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Go to the vertical files. Upstairs they got rid of their vertical files. In the art department.

E: Hmm.

MDJ: You know. They got rid of their vertical files. Uh, in Social Science they got rid of 'em. A guy threw out magazines. 'Oh, this is gonna be digitized.' I gave them, uh... I gave them... 20 issues of *Sepia* magazine. Remember *Sepia*?

B: Yeah.

MDJ: You know that was--

B: Right.

MDJ: --A competition to *Ebony*.

B: *Ebony*.

MDJ: *Ebony*. In fact, *Ebony* bought 'em out.

E: Okay.

MDJ: I gave them those issues, you know, and I found out they c--called me when I was in New York and said, 'Mr. DesJardin they're gettin' ready to throw the books -- those-those newspapers you gave. (*Indistinguishable*) So, they threw 'em out. So, then they got smart and went and... got 'em out of the garbage.

E: Wow.

MDJ: Went I got back - I didn't get back the day before that. I came back there, that same guy that had it--had it thrown out went and got 'em and threw 'em out again. (*Long pause*) This was a Black guy.

E: Geez.

MDJ: They got rid of the Black publication because they-- everything was gonna be digitized. Libros. Books themselves.

E: (*Sighs*) Geez.

MDJ: Gone.

E Geez.

MDJ: So... (*Clears throat*) Back to uh... What--what is it-- I mean, what is the ultimate-- What are you gonna do with it? What--what's in your mind?

E: So-- Well, let me tell you what I thought it was gonna be first.

MDJ: I know what it's- Go, go ahead.

E: And then -- and then I'll tell you what I think is kind of evolving now. Um, so, yeah. And just, you know -- so you know, I--I had no idea what I was getting into. Um--

MDJ: I know you didn't. W--when I heard it then I thought Filpots and, uh, wait a minute - the other one -- The other false-- And he, he... Uh-uh-uh-uh (*taps ground*) Ken Coleman.

E: Oh.

MDJ: Another one.

E: I--I've never met him, actually.

MDJ: Yes, you have. He--he's one of the one's that's--that's quoting *you*.

E: I--I know. I--

MDJ: With uh, with uh, with uh, uh (*bangs hand against table*) uh, uh, Marsha. He and Marsha... were talking about 'Oh, this is a great discovery.' Ken Coleman.

E: I--I know his work and I know who is but I--I don't think I've ever actually, personally met him.

MDJ: You see that, what I'm saying.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Yeah, well he's claiming you.

E: Yeah--

MDJ: Like (*indistinguishable*), he said, he wrote a book and says according to somethin' according to y-- Doctor Desjardins, Paradise Valley was so and so. And that was a lie. I haven't tell him nothin'. And I called him up and said 'Number one, you got the wrong area, you got the street wrong--' (*Mimics Coleman*) 'Oh, what are you talking about?' So, so, so, so. 'What are you--' I said, 'Listen, you used my--'

[[00:06:00]] - MDJ: 'I didn't do this.' I said, 'What are you talking about?' And hang up the phone.

E: Oh...

MDJ: Five minutes later he calls back and says, 'Oh, I'm sorry. You're right.' *I'm right about what he wrote? (A brief pause)* You didn't -- you don't know what you wrote? And I said, 'You better-- You know, you're saying that I said something that I didn't.' They-- I met you one day because they all-- like in-- they all sittin' in the Wright Museum, I met 'em in Fedex. And he was tellin' me, he was working on a book. And I'm a follower-- And he wrote three books in one year. All self-published... And they callin' him a historian. *(Pauses)* So, he's another one. *(Indistinguishable)* Filpots and Marsha and he did this article and they were talkin' about Black Bottom. And they with you at the time.

E: Yeah, yeah. I don't-- I don't know Ken but... but I-- So, so-- Okay. So I-- so basically I--I found this stuff totally accidentally. I was trying to find just pictures of- I just wanted to see what Hastings Street looked like. That was -- I just-- I couldn't find any pictures online and so I was looking. I started searching through the digital database. At the library.

MDJ: There's only one shot of Hastings Street and that's how it-- I'm the one that put that there. That's *(audio disrupted by background noise)*

E: I didn't find anything.

*(Audio disrupted by background noise. Tangent dialogue takes place until [[00:07:42]])*

E: So, so, I was just searching the Wright in this database and I didn't find anything of Hastings Street but it-- what it pulled up-- what the search pulled up was thousands of photographs... of Black Bottom. It was all those photos. 'Cause they had just recently digitized the whole thing.

MDJ: They finally had them digitized.

E: Yeah a--and I found out later that they had just done it.

MDJ: Yeah.

E: It was like right before--

MDJ: That--that's why they act like they were 'Ooh.' Like it was-

E: Like it was new but it-- Yeah.

MDJ: Yeah. Uh, uh. Uh, uh. 'Cause they know that they had goofed up.

E: Yeah. So, this is just-- this is just me on my computer, no ideas about anything and I just-- I realize what it was. And I was like, 'Oh, my gosh.' It just blew my mind that those photos existed. And so, just for myself-- What-- So basically, I realized that it was like every house. Because I was looking at the addresses. And so, I downloaded them all and probably over the course of like a year-- I never intended to do anything with it, actually. I just wanted to see what it looked like, really. *(Chuckles)* And so--

MDJ: That's fascinating.

E: It's so-- Oh, my gosh. I still--

MDJ: You got real people there.

E: It's wild.

MDJ: Now, if you didn't have the people there, it probably would've been a different thing altogether.

E: Yeah, oh yeah. For sure.

MDJ: People think it's houses but that's what the police did... They told them, 'There's a lot of accidents that's happening. And we're taking pictures, so we can put up different signs and so forth.'

[[00:09:00]] - MDJ: So, that's why the people went out there and start grinnin', takin pictures.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: They didn't know that -- their heads about to be cut off...

E: That is just--

MDJ: You know, nobody would be smilin' like you see those pictures--

E: Yeah, I know. I know.

MDJ: Thinkin' they're gonna tear this place down.

E: It's eerie.

MDJ: That's why.

E: It's spooky. So, so I downloaded them all and on my computer I organized them all by address. Um, so you can sort of look through-- I can-- I actually have some 'em in here I can show you... what I've been doing. But I-- So, I organized them all by address and I basically tried to reconstruct, you know, a picture of the whole neighborhood based on these photographs. And never intended to do anything with it. Um, and my... my friend was over at my house one day and I was showing it to him. And he was like, 'You've gotta make this public. You have to make a website, or something, so that people can see 'em. He's like I know they're at the library but, you know, it's hard to find them and they're not organized. And so... So, I kind've like no idea what I was getting into and I- Like I'm- I don't- I don't think about the history, or anything. I'm just like tryna- You know, I'm an architect and so-

MDJ: I understand that. In my interview I said, 'What is an architect... *(words muffled by food in MDJ's mouth)* for an interview.

E: Yeah. Well, I mean, I'm kind of-- I'm an architect. I'm mostly an artist and I-- You know, I just-- I like-- I do lots of creative projects that aren't necessarily buildings. Um, but, you know, I--I know how to do the tech stuff like Photoshop and whatever. Um, because of it. And so, so my friend convinced me to apply for the- There's this arts program, the Knights Arts or

whatever. And he convinced me to apply for a grant and make a website. And I never thought I was gonna get it. I actually was like totally, casually did it. It's like three sentences that you have to write to apply for this grant. And so, I--I, you know, I sent him my thing and then I got a call back. And I later found out that it was because Marsha was on the board. And she saw a project about--

MDJ: She's on what board?

E: She was-- She was on the--the board for selecting the finalist for the grants.

MDJ: So, that's how she's doing her thing for the grants.

E: Well... I don't think so. I think that she had gotten a grant in the past from them and so they invited her to help them.

MDJ: She's supposed to be doing a documentary on Dr. (*muffled*) or somethin'.

E: Yeah, yeah. She's working on it still.

MDJ: See, I knew her father.

E: Oh, wow.

MDJ: I told her about her father. She didn't know her father. I told her about-- And-and this particular... time when I was up at the Wright Museum when I was tellin' you about him.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: That's when she didn't get anymore information herself. About-- about that time.

E: Yeah. Yeah, so, so, so... The end of that story is basically they gave me a grant to do this project and I was like, 'Oh, my gosh. Okay. How do I even approach this?' Um, and--and the original idea that I had when I applied for it was to make a website where you could basically just look at the photos in a way that was organized by address. So, you could see it. Like, you know--

[[00:12:00]] - E: They have Google Street View now where you can walk down the streets. Um, and that there would be an oral history project to document people's stories about the community.

MDJ: Well, you're not gonna get that.

E: Yeah, that's -- I know. It's gonna be...

MDJ: Ain't nobody around.

B: They're still around.

E: There's a--

B: Tell K-Line.

MDJ: K-Line. K-Line is not old enough. K-Line. K-Line.

B: K-Line is 90-86-years-old.

MDJ: I'm 90.

B: Okay, but K-Line-- No, I--I talked to K-Line.

MDJ: Well, yeah.

B: About the pool, different stuff, certain areas. Okay?

MDJ: I understand that. I understand that. I had to talk to K-Line in a car wit 'em, I talked to K-Line. I know when he was going to Northeastern. My point is-- This is the point that I'm making, is that... the actual information -- and this is about -- really about the city of Detroit in general. Not just the, you know, the basic sense of locations. Is that-- you have to understand, you got to c--categorize it in periods.

E: Mmm-hmm. Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: The era... of the time. 'Cause things change like street names change.

E: Right.

MDJ: You understand what I'm saying.

B: Correct.

E: Mmm-hmm. Okay.

MDJ: So, that person can only give you -- deliver it when--

B: Their time.

MDJ: Their time.

B: I--I-- One hundred percent. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

MDJ: Yeah.

E: Yeah.

B: Oh, yeah.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: But he hasn't done research before a long time.

B: But he--he ain't know. It's just conversation--

MDJ: That's what I'm saying--

B: Just conversation.

MDJ: --It's conversation. No, that's not what I meant about when I said, 'Nobody really- They didn't know about it.' Is that most of the people that are alive now, are people who came here much later. You know, finding somebody that was actually, you know-- I would say anybody--anybody that was born in--in the 30's -- that would be good enough. Not the 20's, just the 30's... That were still coherent.

E: Yeah.

B: Yeah, ain't too many coherent.

MDJ: 'Cause I only know two people... Leontyne is 98. *(A brief pause)* Well, you know the **string army**-- They still existed when he was selling papers. Right there at uh, Adelaide and Terrace sits right there. Used to be a whore house... prostitutes. Right--right there on John R. *(Pauses)* Anyway, her mother had a house. Runnin' a house in the 1930s, 1940s. She's the only one of her age that still has all the -- all the -- She's the only one I can even talk to.

E: Wow.

MDJ: Somebody of the time.

B: How about the-- How about the queen, Miss Wood-- Woodbury?

MDJ: I don't-- That doesn't ring a bell. That doesn't ring a bell. But we talkin' about somebody who was in the life.

B: Okay. Oh, in-- Okay.

MDJ: You see?

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Those are the people that know...

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: You understand. Cleadie Taylor -- look at her age. You saw about Cleadie.

B: Yeah.

MDJ: Cleadie was sheltered from that. She don't know nothin' about that. This woman's 90-94-years-old.

**[[00:15:00]]** - MDJ: Couldn't tell you nothin' about that. 'Cause her family kept her sheltered. *(Words muffled)* She couldn't tell you nothin' about none of that.

E: Yeah, I see.

MDJ: 'Cause the culture's different as well.

E: Yeah, yeah.

NDJ: Kinda like an embarrassment to her now because she missed all of that.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: You see.

E: Yeah, you-you were talkin' about that for... yeah...

MDJ: So... back to what I'm saying about... uh...

*(E has a tangent conversation with MDJ & B about shutting the door to record better until [[00:15:54]])*

**END**

**[[00:15:54]]**

### **PART 3**

**[[00:00:00]]** - B: Okay.

MDJ: That's why those pictures were taken in the 1920s.

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Okay.

B: Barbershop was on the corner there.

MDJ: Well, this was the 1920s.

B: Okay, but I'm just sayin', you know.

MDJ: Yeah.

B: Um... *(Taps hand against table)* When I was comin' up. Okay? Hmm.

MDJ: So... that photographer... Uh, Blockburg... Burton came to me on that one - same thing. And they went passin' it off... I told 'em, I said, 'That's not Paradise Valley.' *(Chuckles)* That's not Black Bottom. Just because there Black people, that's what they have people *(words muffled)* that's where they have to be. That man's studio was right over there on Russell... So, his family gave those pictures to Burton.



B: Four-- four blocks from here.

MDJ: Yeah, just four blocks from here.

B: Yeah.

MDJ: That's where his studio was. And you got all of these pictures and they were callin' it Black Bottom and Paradise Valley. And I said, 'You can get this stuff outta here, 'cause this--this is not so.' So, they gave the-- They gave that stuff to the Wright museum. That's when the first, uh, camp was at-- Before they built this p-- You know, the orphanage.

B: They here now.

MDJ: Right. And when I got camp, outta here... They been in there and they had a big thing. Search of, you know, all history. Come and identify these pictures. Big thing (*Chuckles*) And they pu- Have you been in the Wright museum and seen that little stuff they got down there?

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: I told them that was wrong when they was puttin' it up. When you see the Paradise Theatre in there.

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Paradise Valley.

E: Right, yeah.

MDJ: Yeah. That's because it's Smith -- Robert Smith... and Sharon Sexton. He was at the-- And he was the boss at that time. He's the one that did that. (*Words muffled*)

B: They told the-- Dennis Ross-Smith? Was it Dennis?

MDJ: No, no, no, no. The guy that-- What you saw on the video.

B: Okay, I know who talkin' 'bout now. Okay.

MDJ: Yeah, the one I busted. (*Chuckles*) He tol-- He had to confess that all of-- all this information came from me and even you for fif-- thirty or something like that. That's how he got the job at the uh, at the Wright museum.

(*A brief pause*)

MDJ: On that- On that uh -- that uh, they filmed me because I told you- It was supposed to been students and all these other people come in there with their own agendas.

E: I see.

MDJ: Taking my information.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: And not giving me any credit.

E: Right, right.

MDJ: You understand what I'm saying. And uh, uh, I wouldn't let the thing be released. 'When is this gonna be--' Eh, I--I--I paid for the filming and nobody-- *(MDJ goes on a tangent and discusses someone who was demoted until [[00:02:49]])* But I made it very clear, you know, you told me that it was gonna be students.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: And I hear I- - You done call up all of these other people on the phone just to make this thing *work*.

[[00:03:00]] - MDJ: And I'm giving out my information... Now, this is-- this video's not-- this DVD is not going anywhere. Okay?

B: Okay, lets see what you got. See what, uh-- Let 'em see what you got there.

*(E asks to show panorama images then briefly stops audio)*

**END**

[[00:03:19]]

**PART 4**

[[00:00:00]] - *(Tangent conversation takes place until [[00:00:22]])*

MDJ: Yeah, I get off right there and sometime we would go to that uh, Rialto. You know the Rialto?

B: Uh, huh.

*(A brief pause)*

E: Where was the Rialto?

MDJ: Huh?

E: Where was the Rialto?

MDJ: What was the question?

B: Huh?

MDJ: On Gratiot.

B: And Mt. Elliott.

E: Okay.

MDJ: That's-- that was like the-- One of the big theaters for the ar-- for that area.

E: Oh, okay. Movie theaters?

MDJ: Yeah. They--they were two but that was the largest right in the same block off of Gratiot.  
(*A brief pause*) Which incidentally-- that was owned by the Cohen Brothers also.

(*A brief pause*)

E: Was that-- that was the Jewish family you were talkin' about?

MDJ: Well, they were--they were movie mongols.

E: Okay.

MDJ: They owned-- they owned 20.

E: Whoa. Wow.

MDJ: Oh, yeah. The Cohen Brothers.

E: Okay, so that's what you were saying about the-- what all the theaters on Woodward?

MDJ: Right. Well, they had them all over. You know that building on the Plaza? On the Boulevard?

E: Yeah.

MDJ: That's-- that was their building.

E: Oh, okay.

MDJ: They owned that.

E: Huh.

MDJ: That was-- that was a residential.

E: Yeah, that's a cool building.

MDJ: Up at there, at that time... But they're the guys that got with the Paradise Valley Business... Association.

E: I see, okay.

MDJ: They worked together. That's how it became Paradise Business Association.

*(Background noise until [[00:02:06]])*

B: And here are the houses, showin' all the houses.

E: Yeah, it even sometimes says... like what the name of the business was--

B: Okay.

E: Or, what kind of business it was, at least.

MDJ: 50, there were 50.

E: So one of the- one of the things that I'm doing.... is I'm going through all the city directories and I'm digitizing them too.

MDJ: Yeah.

E: So that you can--

MDJ: You can pinpoint the businesses.

E: Yeah, and--and I wanna-- I mean, i--it's gonna be a lot of work but I wanna go all the way back to the 1800s.

MDJ: I've had to do that. I know what it is... That took years.

E: Yes. It-- Yeah, there's a lot.

*(MDJ chuckles)*

E: And-- So, it's gonna be a long term kinda effort.

MDJ: Oh, like I was saying, you know... probably longer than you can even imagine.

E: Yeah, oh. I'm starting to get an idea, for sure.

*(MDJ & E chuckle)*

MDJ: More than a notion, I'll put it that way.

E: Uh, huh. Oh, yeah. It's serious work, for sure.

MDJ: But--but like I said--

**[[00:03:00]]** - MDJ: Burton was glad to get it off their hands.

*(A brief pause)*

E: Well they-- I mean, they weren't gonna do anything with it.

MDJ: No. Oh, no. They -- tried to throw it down there in the basement, all of that other stuff they got down there. Nobody's seen. You know. They've got photos... I'll tell you what, that've never been seen by anybody. Other than--

E: I can.

MDJ: --Other than the person that gave it to them.

E: I can ima--

MDJ: They have photos-- I've been down in there before. 'Cause at that time, I was-- I was -- whatchucalit -- I was carte blanche, 'cause they were old pictures. And I saw these. And I took -- I had to sneak and I took some pic--pictures. And you know what it was, Bert? Slave owners and their slaves.

E: Whoa.

*(A brief pause)*

MDJ: Slave owners a-- and their slaves. On tintype.

E: Wow.

MDJ: On tintype... And the family, you know, the mulatto family. The father h-- had a picture of this black woman... had uh, 12 kids. You know, like their talkin' about -- like the Jefferson people right now. *(Sound muffled by background noise)* Well, that was... *(Sound muffled by background noise)* That's what created that terminology that they always used -- mulatto. You know what a mulatto is? What is a mulatto?

E: It's a-- a child of mixed race, right?

MDJ: No, a little more than that, a little more detailed.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Let's put it this way, so that you'll understand it thoroughly... In order to be a mulatto, you have to have a white father...

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: -And a black mother. You cannot have a black father and a white mother. That child is a n\*\*\*er. That was the law. And the whole reason for that is, is that last 10 years, for example, when the civil war was goin' on...

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: The master of the plantation went off to war. Okay? He went off to war while maybe his wife went and got involved with one of the *(words muffled)* and he was killed in action. Well, that means that she could -- if they hadn't made this law -- she could marry that guy and that would be his plan-- his property.

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: So, that's how they made the determination for it.

E: Hmm. Yeah. Wow.

MDJ: Made sure that was the dangerous thing... And uh, if they caught him, he-- he'd be lynched. Killed or somethin'. So, but that did exist. That did happen. *(Words muffled)* It did happen.

B: Where was this at? This look like something on Gratiot Street?

MDJ: Let me see.

*(A brief pause)*

MDJ: Well, it should be. Don't you have an address there?

E: Yeah, so that's Monroe. 1325 Monroe.

MDJ: Yeah.

E: Monroe and Rivard.

MDJ: Yeah--

*(Overlapping conversation)*

B: This where Lafayette Park--

E: Yeah, that's the same one.

MDJ: Yeah, yeah, that's the same thing. Here it is, right there.

**[[00:06:00]]** - *(Background noise)*

E: So, this is one of the things that I'm doing is trying to st-- stitch together the photos, so you can get like a full picture.

*(Overlapping conversation)*

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: Now, that's what I did the other day.

E: Wow, yeah.

MDJ: In fact, I made 'em get up and... But I merely use it just to show... people not... particularly about the area.

E: Yeah, right. Right.

MDJ: Not identify a bunch of buildings but the people and the condition of the-- of that time. All I needed was the people, I didn't need to identify the area. All that just depends on the time.

E: True. Okay.

*(A brief pause)*

MDJ: And this is what makes it really looks hard when you see these new kinda cars and this is *(words muffled)*.

E: Yeah, yeah. Oh, yeah.

MDJ: Guy get. I got one shot. He got a Cadillac in front. *(Words muffled by background noise)*

E: Yeah. Well, I mean, there's some beautiful buildings there too.

MDJ: Uh... yeah. But they, you know, all of that was built back in the other century.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: So, most of it was framed.

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: But that existed all the way up to... here. Cleveland. All the way -- You can go, right now. *(Words muffled by background noise)* When you go through that area, yeah. It's in the same neighborhood. Architect is the same thing. Frame out, no basement, you know, and some of them, you know, had a out house.

E: Real quick, like--

MDJ: Yeah.

E: Depression era, war time--

MDJ: No, no. Before that. No, those houses, those houses built in the 1800s.

E: Oh, wow. Okay.

MDJ: That's why they condemned it. A lot of them didn't have uh, didn't have toilets -- out houses and stuff. And no basement.

*(There is a brief tangent conversation about the audio recording until [[00:07:59]])*

MDJ: Now, this is a Panorama.

E: Yeah, this is one-- Actually, this is half of one. So there-- they're two halves. This-- this goes together.

MDJ: Panorama, okay.

E: You can see where it picks up again, right there.

B: So, just roll this here.

E: Yeah--

B: Okay, I can start here?

E: --You can just kind of fold it up -- yeah.

*(E presumably unfolds panorama of street views)*

E: So th-- this goes Monroe-- Rivard to Monroe to Russell, that's Russell there.

MDJ: See this kinda stuff here.

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: That kinda stuff. Now he doesn't know about it, but she knows about it.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: 'Cause she's facing-- She knows the picture--picture is being taken, at that time. But not standing people, we talking about ones that are sitting out on the porches in front of their house.

E: I know. Like the whole family.

MDJ: Yeah, yeah. Oh, yeah. That's how they tricked 'em.

E: Spooky.

MDJ: That's how they tricked 'em.

E: Here's--here's some people, actually in these.

MDJ: And I knew, I knew three families in those pictures.

E: Really?

B: And they were throwin' this stuff out, you said?

**[[00:09:00]]** - MDJ: Huh?



B: They were throwin' this stuff out?

MDJ: The police-- it said it's the police got rid of it. The police department are the ones who took the pictures. They're the ones who took the pictures.

B: A hundred street station.

MDJ: I don-- Police. The whole point was that they were the people that were goin' into the neighborhood. See, what I'm sayin'.

B: Oh, that was a hundred street station?

MDJ: Well, well, it may-- it may not have been. But the point I'm getting to, is that they told them that the reason why they were doing this was because there were a lot of accidents in the neighborhood. And they're trying to put -- be able to put up--

E: Like car accidents? Or--

B: Yeah.

MDJ: Car accidents o--or too much traffic happening in the area and they wanna change t-the timing from after that. And so, uh, we just wanna take pictures of the house that we have the addresses, so we can identify them. That's why the people, 'Oh,' taking pictures. They out their muggin' -- kids, family, people on the porches and stuff. They didn't know it was a guillotine... You see.

E: It's hunting to me.

MDJ: Well, that's typical, you know, 'cause that's what they-- gettin' rid of the area. That's what- I mean, they've done this more than- This wasn't the first time. They been doin' this for... so many people, right now. Still doin' it.

E: Right, I know.

MDJ: Yeah.

E: That-- I mean, that's one of the reasons why I think it's really important to make this history more... well known. You know.

MDJ: Yeah, it may-- Again, it's well known but here it-- here it is.

B: And you go back and compare what's there now. I just--

MDJ: Well, to really compare what--what's now is... already been done.

E: Well, there, there, there-- Even now--

MDJ: Well, I'm talking about, you know, you know-- We did that with Lafayette Park, which is Plaisance Park.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: That informa-- They have that there at the Burton, I gave it to 'em. But you haven't seen that... They haven't showed you that.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: See, what I'm saying... The thing about is, I'm-- A--again, you know, they've gotten this far. This is what I'm really asking. Now, what you see what it is, which way are you going with it now?

E: So, there's a couple things. One is that the short-term project that I'm working on with these two young women who are-- do this Pedal to Porch... event.

MDJ: That's what--

E: Have you heard about it?

MDJ: Marsha told me-- that's why she wanted me to come down there. That-- Wh--what was that uh?

B: That was-- We missed the-- uh, yeah.

MDJ: Yeah. Yeah. The day she called me that day talkin' 'bout, 'I know it's last minute.' And I said, 'Yeah, it's last minute.' You know, okay. And then she said, 'Pedal to Porch.' She didn't mention--

E: Yeah, yeah. So this-- this is this concept that um, a woman who grew up in Core City area um, she came up with this idea that's basically a bike ride that um... It's like a neighborhood bike ride. And the residents of that area will sorta use their porch as a stage and tell a story... about the neighborhood. Um, and so she started in Core City where-where she grew up

[[00:12:00]] - E: And then she--she-- Eventually it's gone to a couple of different neighborhoods. So, they did one about Southwest. And this year, she-- They're doing it about Black Bottom. Um, and so, one of the, I mean the-- the two biggest challenges are the people who live there aren't there anymore. And there aren't any, you know, all the houses are gone, right? So, *(clears throat)* so, we're sort of trying to figure out how to do this event... that can really honor the history.

MDJ: There is some houses left. There--there some houses.

E: Yeah. Like up-- Are you talking about like around Miller High School, kind of?

MDJ: No, no, no. Around Miller... that's all new.

E: What-- Where--where are the houses?

MDJ: Uh, uh, over there by the cemetery.

E: Oh.

MDJ: Don't forget the streets there that's still *(words muffled by background noise)*.

E: Like up above Vernor, kind of?

MDJ: Mt. Elliott. You know, the cemetery that goes-- goes all the way to Vernor doesn't it?

B: Yeah, but it's... um.

MDJ: But it's the side -- the other side. The other streets.

B: I was a few on the other side of Vernor and everything. You know, that um-- at Vernor there and where Wardover was. They tore all that out... and put those uh, complex houses and stuff. Okay? Now, I'm just tryna see -- visualize--

MDJ: What about-- What about on the Southside? You know, going towards Jefferson? From the fu-- from the cemetery? *(Pauses)* Or cemeteries. W-- we used to cut through there to go to Belle Isle to make a shortcut.

E: Now, you can't get through.

*(Overlapping conversation)*

B: But see, that wouldn't be...

MDJ: But it was open.

B: -That wouldn't be considered Black Bottom then. You talkin' about... Then like you say, before you get to the Boulevard--

MDJ: Larned. Larned.

B: Larned. Yeah, Larned. It's some houses and stuff here.

MDJ: Yeah, Larned. Larned.

B: Yeah, that wouldn't be-- That wasn't-- That wasn't Black--Black Bottom. We-we didn't stay in that area. That's on the other side of Mt. Elliott.

MDJ: No, no, but no- I'm just talkin' about on this side... Nothin' there?

B: 'Cause you got uh, Martin Luther King... High-High school. You got People's Church.

MDJ: Well, okay. But Martin Luther King High School is on-- is on Larned.

B: Yeah, but it's on this side of Mt. Elliott.

MDJ: Yeah, this side.

B: Yeah.

MDJ: But I'm talkin' 'bout right at Mt. Elliott. Right at Mt. Elliott. What--what's on the--

B: On the other side- on the other side, you still got some old houses... down there between Lafayette and... um... Vernor.

MDJ: Right.

B: Even uh, um...

MDJ: But the architect made it upon-- making it. Being the architect-- it's the same kinda house.

E: Same kind of architecture.

B: Same type of house.

E: Yeah, yeah. Right.

*(Overlapping conversation)*

MDJ: But that's the point I'm making. In other words, you can go and shoot that and say this is it because it wouldn't be any different.

E: Well, except that it does.

MDJ: Well, I-- Architect.

E: Yeah, yeah. I see what you're saying.

MDJ: So, some- The same design-- whoever did that did those houses.

E: Yeah, right. Right.

MDJ: That's what that *(words muffled)*.

E: Yeah, yeah.

*(Overlapping conversation)*

B: Even on the other side of Vernor.

MDJ: Yeah.

B: Was a few uh, uh--

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Yeah, right.

*(Overlapping conversation)*

B: Between Mt. Elliott and uh, um...

[[00:15:00]] - MDJ: Right.

B: All the way going down to Mack.

E: Yeah--

B: You find a few of them just--just like that too.

E: Yeah, yeah. I was just-- I was just driving around there the other day.

B: Yeah.

MDJ: And what about-- what about right off Chene and Hunt? Goin' East...

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: Yeah.

B: It's a few.

MDJ: Yeah, it's a few there.

B: Because uh, um...

MDJ: Yeah.

B: Even up to the Boulevard, you can still find somethin'.

MDJ: Yeah.

B: Up in *(indistinguishable)* area.

E: Yeah, like I kinda just used the-- Well, went that way kind of.

MDJ: Mmm-hmm. 'Cause when--when one up near the Boulevard was-- That was almost like still country. *(Words muffled)*

*(Overlapping conversation)*

E: That's also hard to picture for me.

B: Right, they were that far.

E: So, okay, so there's that-- So, I lookin' at that project which--turn out that page and short-term and that's-- There's an event August 14th. Um, which is gonna be this bike ride. And if you-- Are you interested in being a part of it?

*(MDJ presumably shakes head no)*

E: No? Okay. Yeah, I hear you.

*(MDJ says something low)*

E: I can imagine. I can't imagine, actually.

*(MDJ & E chuckle)*

E: So-- Okay, so there's an event that I--I'm helping to support in a couple weeks. So this-- all of these panoramas I--I'm making into uh, it's basically like a physical re-creation of the street views. So, these are- I'm building these sort of um, structures that hold up these things. So, actually the last-- That one, this one, makes the whole block like a- the rectangle of the block. So, those wrap around structures and that's one block. And there's like uh, 23 blocks that I'm working on here. So, so you'll be able to walk up and down the streets and see you know what was to your left and what was to your right for everything. And like I said before, like we don't -- we don't have all the pictures 'cause there's stuff missing. So, it'll be everything that we have. That you can see. Um, a--and that's gonna be part of this bike ride but it's also gonna be... uh, you know, out in the area that was once Black Bottom. We're--we're um, working to find people who want to tell stories about that area. And it might, you know-- There's--there's uh-- Like a friend of mine, for example who-who grew up um, kinda near uh, Miller High School. Who-- And which was, you know, that existed--

MDJ: You know about the picnic we have every year.

E: Mmm-hmm. Yeah, I know. I wanna do something there, for sure.

MDJ: Well, yeah, because... anybody that went Miller at anytime will know something about the area.

E: Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: Who went to school there.

E: Yeah, it- And--and uh--

MDJ: That group--

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Anybody that's coherent.

E: Yeah, yeah.

*(MDJ excuses himself and the audio ends at [[00:17:58]])*

**END**

[[00:17:58]]

## PART 5

[[00:00:00]] - MDJ: Okay, here we are.

E: So, you were talkin' about you were at the Bonstelle Theater.

MDJ: I was at the Bonstelle. Uh, I--I was visiting a cousin. I had been out of the neighborhood but we owned property and when it was called Brush Park. That was between Mack... and uh... Between Mack and uh... Radian.

E: Okay.

MDJ: On the traffic way on the park. So I was down there visiting my cousin and we went to the movie... theater. Uh... the Mayfair -- on Bonstelle. And uh... we heard all of this commotion outside. We had already saw the movie. We went to see it over again. Let me tell you what was playing there and you'll get the just of it... *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman*.

E: Whoa.

MDJ: I got the--

E: Wow.

MDJ: The marquee and everything.

E: Wow. So, wait-- So how old were you at-- You were like--

MDJ: 15.

E: 15, okay.

MDJ: Yeah.

E: Okay.

MDJ: Yeah. 15-years-old... And uh, we heard this commotion. I'm wonder where all this sound coming out of there. And we went out- leaving the- going out to see what's going on. And we saw this guy-- they had this guy beatin' 'em and he was-- Thinkin' he was goin' down -- runnin' down the street, bleeding and bloody. We looked and saw that-- Then they-- We saw him take his car and turn it over and set it on fire.

E: Wow...

MDJ: He scooted around-- 'round the block. And come find out they were going in these theaters and pullin' Black people out. Said, don't you get your head all of these guys worked at Ford Plant, which is East of -- on the street car. They have to cross where Woodward Ave was.

E: They have to get across to get home.

MDJ: Right. And that's where they were gettin'-- Pullin' 'em off streetcars. I got photos - footage and stuff like that. But, oh, yeah. And that lasted until the National Guard. And that was the curfew. And I got stuck down there (*words muffled*).

E: Really.

MDJ: I was livin' on. I lived in the Boston Edison, really.

E: Okay.

MDJ: By that time. Boston, Boston. You know, where that is?

E: I live on Taylor Street right--

MDJ: Well, yeah, the Northend.

E: --Between Second and Third.

MDJ: I went to Northern High School. That's called the Northend.

E: Okay, yeah that- I know.

MDJ: I know, I'm sayin'--

E: Northern High School's right at the end my street.

MDJ: Yeah, that--that's where I went--

E: Yeah.

MDJ: But I lived on uh, on Boston between uh, Oakland and Brush.

E: Okay.

MDJ: That's not the Boston Edison side.

E: Yeah, right. That's a--

MDJ: W--we were not allowed on that-- Nobody had bought houses there.

E: At that time, in '43.

MDJ: Well, yeah, I guess '43 but, you know, we went there in 19-- We moved there in 19-- My grandmother -- my grandmother's house. Uh, she moved there and she bought that house in Nineteen... thirty... seven.

E: Okay.



MDJ: '36, '37.

E: Okay.

MDJ: And uh, anyway... So, that side... The Boston Edison. So, the Northend was where I finished growing up.

E: Did your family ever live in Black Bottom?

*(A brief pause)*

MDJ: No.

E: No.

MDJ: No.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: W--when we came here the only--

[[00:03:00]] - MDJ: We lived on Hastings and Bruce.

E: Okay.

MDJ: But not in that area. I had cousins that lived in there. That's how I would go back down there 'cause I had c--cousins that lived in-- in that-- that lived on uh, Hendry.

E: Okay.

MDJ: Vernor and the next street block is... Hendry.

E: Yep. Yep.

MDJ: For that one block, right there.

E: I see.

MDJ: Okay, that block doesn't go any further 'cause it goes down to Gratiot.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: That's where they lived and that was the uh... Silver Cup Bakery.

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Now, Silver Cup is the one that sponsored the Lone Ranger.

E: Oh, really.

MDJ: The Lone Ranger-- The horse is named Silver. Silver Cup.

E: Oh... Okay.

MDJ: That was a sponsor for the--the series the Lone Ranger.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: The Silver Cup Bakery. Silver Cup. So, that was the bakery and I would go-- come and visit them. That's how I knew about the area. I didn't live there. I would always come there in the summertime and visit them and go all the way through that-that area. They were there. A Hundred Street Station right there in the back. I knew Ben Turpin. You heard of him.

E: Mmm-hmm.

MDJ: Yep. But I knew him, obviously. He was nice to kids, you know. But uh -- oh, here's another one. Here's another one that he asked me for. I thought it was for his own collection.

E: Wow.

MDJ: Malcolm.

E: Wow... That's wild.

MDJ: See, and this is what--what you--

E: 'Cause he's from Lansing, right?

MDJ: Huh?

E: He's from Lansing, right?

MDJ: Uh... yeah. Yeah, but -- yeah. Yeah, he was born, you know--

E: Born in Lansing.

MDJ: Yeah, but he was- came into Detroit, he was down here. When he was read- when he was in Hastings Street, John R.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: But... see him...

*(A brief pause)*

E: That's not right.

MDJ: No, but listen. There's tons of that.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: I'm no-- I got through naming 'em who are doing the same thing, including... Marsha.

E: Whoa.

MDJ: You understand. Father (*indistinguishable*). Including. Okay, this was the last building. In uh, in uh-- You know. It's not identifying it but this is...

E: Right.

MDJ: 606. This is Beacon Street, here. This was the last building. Property over here was the one that I-- I'll show that later when we get together. Really, see some real stuff.

E: That's pro--property that you owned.

MDJ: Mmm-hmm.

E: That's the-

MDJ: That's probably- We would go-- went to court with the stadium authorities to create the whole-- We would develop-- Architect -- we got the architect. It was already finished. The city council was gonna... say hey we're gonna make this--

E: They were gonna skip--

MDJ: Historically designated. And they came-- That was gonna be Monday. They snuck in and tore the buildings down on a Sunday.

*(A brief pause)*

E: Geez... Wow.

MDJ: When you see that stuff, you'll understand why I'm crying.

E: Geez.

MDJ: And you'll see the architect. You'll see the work that was put into it.

E: Wow.

**[[00:06:00]]** - MDJ: Still have the pictures.

E: Wow, wow.

MDJ: But as an architect, you wouldn't-- You know what we had for parking? (*Pauses*) Like they do in Chicago. The express-- See, you don't have problems with parking, right? Still.

E: Right.

MDJ: We done solved that -- solved that... over the expressway build up.

E: Mmm. Yeah, yeah.

MDJ: I mean, New York.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: No more land.

E: Right.

MDJ: So, you build a lot--

E: You know, you know you-- Have you heard they're talkin' about doin' that now.

MDJ: Oh, that's because they have my original plan-- They have the plan-- the city hall had the plan and they been lookin' at it. All this -- Paradise Valley. Sure they're talkin' about it.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: I can show it to you in color and in black and white.

E: Wow.

MDJ: With the architects.

E: Wow. So, let me ask you this.

MDJ: Mmm-hmm.

E: What...

*(Microphone shakes)*

E: Oh, man. Where is this? What house is this? This the one in Arden Park?

MDJ: No.

E: No.

MDJ: No. No. And I-- This is what I'm showin' this guy around.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: Now, that house-- You know where the Urban League is -- the Albert Cohn Building?

E: Uh, huh.

MDJ: Uh, uh. That's next door.

E: Oh, okay. Okay.

MDJ: And that was my grandmother's house... At that time.

E: Okay. Yeah.

MDJ: And there was a fire that we had in 1936. And so, for a year, we stayed there. So, I'm telling him around, I said, 'That's house.' Gave him the history of what I'm telling you--

E: I stayed there for a minute. Yeah.

MDJ: And he says, 'Is it alright, if I take a picture of you on it?' I said, 'Yeah, okay.'

E: Yeah.

MDJ: And that's what he did.

E: Oh, geez.

*(A brief pause)*

E: So--

MDJ: The house I was raised-- *(Chuckles)* Oh, wait a minute, read this.

E: Oh, yeah.

MDJ: Because you had just read this-- He took that -- that you looked at -- and worked the way that he wanted to work it.

E: Well, yeah, and it's like word for word. Right.

MDJ: But a few changes.

E: That's terrible.

MDJ: It's not terrible, that's what they do.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: That's what they been doing. And they grab a mop, a broom, a squeegee, and everything else. They're still doing it.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: He lifted that information and then put his-- And see what's it's in -- old school.

E: Geez.

MDJ: Huh.

E: Man.

*(A brief pause)*

MDJ: Sad but true.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: And people still buyin' this and this is... like a bible with some people.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: You know. But that's what he did, knowingly. And then he says, I helped him, you know. That was the clean-up, you know, I guess they're sayin', 'Oh, we helped.' After this and so and so and so. That wasn't so I-- And this is Sunnie Wilson... And this is-- this is that time when they had took him out to dinner. I told you they took him out to dinner, he had all these pictures of Paradise Valley and everything else. And then, when they got to the house he had all these pictures layin' out. And the girl reached for 'em and he put his hand over there. He said, 'How much?' And they got talkin' he was gonna beat 'em up 'cause he spent a hundred-thousand that night... for dinner. The guy was just too smart. He was dealin' with a real serious man and you didn't know what he was dealin' with.

[[00:09:00]] - E: Geez.

MDJ: So, that's the only book that's in print. 'Course of the time.

E: Alright. Cool. I'm gonna read that next. So, okay. So, what I want to ask you is like what-- what do you think as-- Okay, so I'm working on this project, right? And I really... I--I want it to be... real and good. And I want it to honor the history. And I-- and I really think that it's so important that even if we don't have all of the information, right, that we pass on what we do know to people my age. People comin' after us, right? So, what do you think...

MDJ: Well, I'll tell you what it's gonna be. I--it's really going to be something that's visual.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: So, you'll have to go to another level.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: To put it in its proper perspective.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: And-and I might convince you to do something else a little different. What you talkin'--

E: Yeah, what is-- So, what do you think that... we should do differently?

MDJ: Well, I'm talking about this information. That-- this information. I'm doing a series -- another series. See, I do five things, I'm--I'm a *(microphone shakes)* person.

E: Yeah.

MDJ: And I'm doing five things at one time.

*(B asks E a tangent question about dropping his friend off. A tangent conversation proceeds until the end of the interview)*

**END**

**[[00:10:56]]**