

Jerry: Well, hi there. How are you?

Laurie Segall: Hi so good to see you.

Jerry: You too. Why don't you take a minute just to introduce yourself.

Laurie Segall: Sure. Well, Laurie Segall. I, um, created a company called Dot Dot Dot. Now we just launched something called D3, which, uh, is covering Web3 and, um, and culture. But before that, I have covered technology my whole career at, at both CNN and, uh, 60 Minutes. And I dunno, I love looking for interesting stories and talking to weird people.

Jerry: And hence, you're talking to me.

Laurie Segall: Yeah. (laughs). You're like, like the good kinda weird. I love the good kinda weird. Good weird is the story of my life, you know. (laughs).

Jerry: Well, in full disclosure we are friends as well.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative). This is true. You and, and you have had a, a big impact on my career. So full disclosure. You've, you've, um, always been a guiding force for me. So it's, I think I joked it's fun to be on the other side of this, but like scary as well, 'cause I know your power. (laughs).

Jerry: Uh, I'll use it gently.

Laurie Segall: Thank you.

Jerry: Yeah, it, it's, I'm super excited to be with you today. Um, you've got a new book coming out, called *Special Characters*, which I was fortunate enough to get an advanced copy of. Thank you. And as I was saying to you just before we hit the record, I read it in the night. Um, and, um, and I really, really appreciate this question you asked me because I can feel it, you know, as a, as an author myself, did you like it? I wanna tell you that I loved it.

Laurie Segall: Oh.

Jerry: And I loved it, um, uh, for two reasons. One, there's this beautiful, fun experience of just seeing so many characters that I knew and know, um, and the, and the interweaving of characters. Like I had no idea that Dennis Crowley, you know, the co-founder of Foursquare was a, a mutual connection, and actually how we originally met. You must have told me that, but I must have forgotten.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: But, but the other piece that really moved me was, um, the degree to which, uh, Laurie showed up. Seriously. I, you know, I think back to some of the conversations we've had where I, you know, maybe leaned a little too heavily and said to you on camera, "Show up."

Laurie Segall: (laughs). Right. Yeah.

Jerry: Right. So the first thing I wanna tell you is, you showed up.

Laurie Segall: That means... I mean, God, that means a lot to me. Um, yeah, that means a lot to me.

Jerry: Yeah. You know, um, as, as I've shared with you both on camera, when we did that story for the short series you did for CNN, um, Mostly Human is this, the the series. Um, the thing that, that we all need to do, 'cause you asked me quite poignantly at that time, "What can we do to help people who are struggling?" And I vehemently said to you, "Show up."

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: And when, when those who hold power or those who hold the platform or those who hold a bull horn or the bully pulpit when they don't show up, we all suffer.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: So the greatest thing I can tell you is you showed up in the book.

Laurie Segall: Oh, that's the biggest compliment you could give me. I, 'cause I think, um, that moment, uh, was so important for me. Right. I, um, I just remember we were shooting this series and we were sitting, um, and I was asking you about, um, mental health and depression in the entrepreneurial world and, and uh, when Roxy, who was our director at the time was like, "Ask Laurie some questions." I was like, "Oh God, no." (laughs).

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: You know, and, and I just remember, um, how fiercely it hit me when you just said show up. Right.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: I don't, you know, this, um, it, it hit me in a different way. I think I was going through so much at CNN and, and trying to figure out who I was and wanted to be, um, and what I stood for, um, in an evolving media landscape and all that kind of stuff.

Laurie Segall: It was, you know, it was incredibly powerful, those words. And I feel like I kind of lived and, and died by those words. I think the, the Dot Dot Dot of that is right, is showing up is so painful sometimes. Right.

Laurie Segall: Like, you know, I've since left, um, some of those jobs, I've gone and done a bunch of other things and my God, is that painful. Um, but it feels authentic. So, um, yeah, I, I really appreciate those words at the time, which I can't believe I started crying on camera. That's my only time I've ever started crying on camera and I'd been doing it for 10 years, you know. Um, but I got Jerried. You know, what can I say? (laughs).

Jerry: You got Jerried.

Laurie Segall: Yeah. (laughs).

Jerry: ... I'm curious about that moment. And, and, um, you said it landed so powerfully for you.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: Why?

Laurie Segall: You know, I think I had been, um, I had been so scrappy. When you read the book, you'll see this. Like I was so scrappy my whole career fighting-

Jerry: Right.

Laurie Segall: ... for stories, fighting to get people to pay attention, whether it was entrepreneurs no one cared about at the time, or ideas no one cared about at the time. Or whether it was, um, you know, really important topics like, like revenge porn and non-consensual pornography and saying, hey, the world's gotta pay attention to this.

Laurie Segall: And, and that didn't just come. That meant me knocking down the executive's doors and saying, "We've gotta pay attention." And me going around when people said no, which people always said no. You know, like just trying to figure out the ways to get to yes.

Laurie Segall: But I, that was always what I believed in and, and what guided me. And I think at that point, um, because I had been able to convince Jeff Zucker, who was my mentor, um, to, to be able to, um, give me an opportunity to do a show.

Laurie Segall: I had pitched it to him on a PowerPoint and I, and it, it was my thesis of technology is humanity and we need to start there. Um, and it felt like the first time I was able to really be me on camera, you know, 'cause I didn't start out, um, a normal TV reporter. Right. I always felt like a fraud.

Laurie Segall: You know, when I would look in camera and be like, "Back to you, Wolf Blitzer," you know. Like I love Wolf. But it just didn't feel like me. Right. I loved being much more casual and conversational in the field and it felt more authentic to me.

Laurie Segall: So, um, there was this tension at the time because the network was also changing. It was, um, more talking heads and all this kind of stuff and, um, technology was changing. I had covered these kind of misfits who were dreamers and had this utopian vision for the future and things were getting super weird and complicated and all these things were happening.

Laurie Segall: I was trying to figure out my place in media and what I wanted because I didn't wanna go be a traditional news anchor. And I also didn't just wanna cover the hot new app anymore. I was so bored by just that. Um, you know, and I think personally I, um, I was trying to make hard decisions in my personal life too. And, a- and I think I was so easy to do the script, right, of like, you know, how you always say, how are you? And it's like, oh, I'm good. I think I did that at the beginning of this call, so-

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: ... yep, yep. Um, you know, and I think when you just looked at me and we had been talking about mental health and I'd been doing it from a certain angle, um, which is yes, of course, I deeply care about it. But when you said that to me in that way, it was very much, um, you know, show up and like face your own stuff, try to figure out what you want.

Laurie Segall: That was a day that I started thinking about why does mental health and all this stuff matter to me? Um, what does authenticity media mean to, and, and what kind of risk do I, am I willing to take to go accomplish that? Um, and I think also I thought about, should I break up with my boyfriend too?

Laurie Segall: I think, I think that was also [inaudible 00:08:51] part of that when you were like show up. But, um, you know, I just think it was a super powerful moment, um, that I, I just remember so clearly. Um, and I think also people, when that came out, I remember at the time my boss was like, "Oh, you should take this out. It makes you look, you know, makes you look bad." Um, cause I was crying on camera and, and my instincts, which I always said trust in my instincts editorially. So don't take that part out. That's real.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: If you screamed at me, be real.

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: And, and I kept it in and it's the [inaudible 00:09:22] to this day people still ask me about, you know. So, um, it was, it was a pretty defining moment when I look back on it.

Jerry: Yeah. Well, you know, rereading that, that, um, section and, and reliving, if you will, that experience of us, um, I'll put a little bit more context in it. I remember our first conversation about potentially participating in that story and you know, on my end I was in my house in Boulder and I was standing on the back porch and I was talking to in my mind, yet another reporter who was intending to do a very quick, um, well-intentioned, but not really in-depth story about depression and the mental health struggles that entrepreneurs go through.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: And I was just tired of it.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: I was tired of people not being real. And you made a promise to me in that call, which was that you were gonna treat it seriously.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: And, um, and I believed you. And so then when we set up the time to talk, I, I think you showed up e- even before that moment in our conversation, you were really there. You were asking questions from your heart. It wasn't, you know what I often will call the Kabuki theater of performative, you know, let me care. And you know, in, in, in reading your book, I, I got a deeper appreciation for how difficult it must have been to navigate the space, to navigate your way into arguably one of the most powerful news media organizations in history.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: And, and to get screen time, to get to, to, to, to get time.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: And I saw you navigating and, and like seeing an opening and wedging yourself, went in and trying to find a way. So I want you to know that the times in which you did not show up, I understand.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: Right.

Laurie Segall: I appreciate that. Yeah.

Jerry: When your boss said that, they were just trying to protect you.

Laurie Segall: Yeah. Yeah. And, and there's always that like, you know, you fall into this box when you're on TV and all of it. You fall into this box of what you should, you know what, this is what works, this is what people know works, this is what you wear, that this is what you look like. This is how you say, back to you Wolf.

Laurie Segall: You know, this is just how things work. And I've just like the reason I loved entrepreneurs back in the days, it was like a bunch of weirdos that didn't just like to see how, they didn't just accept, well, this is just how things work.

Jerry: Right.

Laurie Segall: So I never quite fit with it and, and it just, I just started up growing it, but I really, there's always this part of me that wanted to fit with it too, you know and I had, I had a lot of success in it and, and I was proud of a lot of the stuff I did do. I mean, I got to do a, you know, pitch of 20, 25 minute show, like on depression when people weren't really talking about this stuff and I got to give it the, the attention it deserved.

Laurie Segall: I was always just figuring out the right doors to go into at CNN, right, and the right, the right way to go about things, because I think people could look and say, "Oh, she was just..." I was a senior technology correspondent at CNN for a decade. I created our startup beat there. It's a nice line. Right?

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: But really what that means is I was a production assistant that in my free time was paying my way to South by Southwest when I probably couldn't afford it and was pretending to be a producer when I was actually just a production assistant and convincing Ed Williams and Dennis Crowley and all those people to go on camera with me and was the first to give them air time and convince bosses in other ways to put them on.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: And, um, and then I wrote my own job description for a startup reporter. And not because I just had crazy, I was crazy fearless. Because a female mentor said to me, "You're already doing this, like grow some, Laurie, you know and do it."

Jerry: Right.

Laurie Segall: And so I think it looked, it could look really easy from the outside, but it just, it was really, um, navigating big media. Um, it was my dream until it wasn't 'cause now I have all these new dreams. But um, you know, it, it was not for the faint of heart, but it was... I mean, I had, it was, you know, I knocked on every door, and

any time a door closed I would go to the next door, you know. So it was, um, I don't know, it, it was definitely not what you saw on the outside, which was me on camera interviewing entrepreneurs. There's a lot that went into a lot of that stuff, in that sense.

Jerry: Yeah. Right. And, and, and you see that clearly, you see the determination and, and um, you know, the, the desire to find a way in, in so many ways. And there's a moment though, in which after you document and you tell the story of, of that interview that we did, and you said something to the effect of, "Leaving Jerry's office, I felt an overwhelming desire to get to know myself better to take better care of myself. I swore to retain Jerry's truth as they integrated back into the busy streets." And then you went on a walk. What did you get to know about yourself then?

Laurie Segall: (laughs). Um, oh man. Well, you know, I was moving so fast when we first met. That doesn't mean I'm not moving fast now. I'm moving fast in a different way. Um, but I was moving so fast. It was hard for anything to stick. And I had this ability. I've always had this ability to read the room, right to understand what people are thinking. And it was my journalistic superpower, right, to-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: ... to be able to ask questions and get answers and all this kind of stuff, but I didn't slow down. Um, and I think in the last years ever since we met, I, I haven't slowed down, you know, on, on paper, but metaphorically, I've, I've slowed down. I, um, I think I learned a lot about, um, why I was attracted to certain stories, right. Like why I love the misfit type, weirdo type folks or why I was attracted to stories of mental health, um, why I wanted to always take that humanity first approach to reporting.

Laurie Segall: I think there was a lot of pain, truth be told, right, that, um, that once I, I slowed down a bit and I started talking and I wrote sort of writing again and I don't drink anymore. I, you know, I, I really took some, some steps in my life to change it, um, and confront some of these things. I think I learned that I had not confronted a lot of stuff, that I channeled a lot of, um, I channeled through storytelling and didn't look up at own world.

Laurie Segall: And I think there was a lot of pain there. Um, and I think being able to confront some of it, to understand my family dynamics, which you read about a little bit in the book. I don't like to do a whole family tell. I think that's this book right now, you know, but, um, but because of how I grew up and, and some of the things I, I faced, um, you know why and the way I am. You said to me on, um, when we were sitting on that, that couch, like, why does mental health matter to you?

Laurie Segall: And I gave you a line, which just wasn't entirely untrue, which is, you know, I've interviewed a lot of these entrepreneurs and families of entrepreneurs to folks who have, um, ended their lives and we've gotta talk about this. And you were like, "Well, that's like kind of bullshit." (laughs).

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: And I remember I was like, "Oh God."

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: And then I thought about like mental health and my family and my aunt who's schizophrenic and my other aunt who's an alcoholic. I mean, she was married to an alcoholic uncle back in the day and had this crazy life, but as wonderful as she could be, she could be that dark.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: And I think I always struggled between like, um, being able to orbit these worlds and then have to deal with my own darkness a little.

Laurie Segall: And I think I was able to deal with my own darkness. Like I think I was able to look at it and to confront it and understand where a lot of it came from. When I talked about getting to know myself better, like why was I making certain choices? Um, and that's been hard work. That's, um, that's stuff I, I still work on every day, but it started around that time, you know, which was just so funny 'cause I could always be so high functioning in so many ways, um, and successful in so many very, um, external ways. But then I think there was a lot that I struggled with internally.

Jerry: There's a, uh, there's a common experience I think that people have, which is, the, what you're describing as the dark stuff it's in all of our lives.

Laurie Segall: Right.

Jerry: And what happens is, you know, we don't, we don't set about, uh, with the intention of creating a Kabuki theater.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: We learn it as children as a way to, um, uh, not touch the hard stuff.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.



Jerry: And one of the things that is really powerful is, you know, in Buddhism, there is this notion of the four noble truths, and the first noble truth is that life is filled with suffering, which is just a sucky statement. I mean, it just, it's so annalistic.

Laurie Segall: It's not the quote on my wall, but I understand. (laughs).

Jerry: Right, right. But it's an important assertion because what it speaks about is the universality of this experience. This being human is a hard thing.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Totally. (laughs).

Jerry: But the second novel truth is the, the thing that I think you implicit in that sort of motion that you were going through, which is that, um, avoidance of suffering increases suffering.

Laurie Segall: That's right. Yeah.

Jerry: And you know, when, when, when you speed through your life, when you... Well, the opposite. When you slow down and you show up, you run the risk of actually feeling all of it.

Laurie Segall: Oh yeah. I think that's, I think I would, I would describe, um, I would describe that as like, I, I remember. I just went through a big, you know, deciding I was gonna leave, um, the job at CNN, which is scary. You know, you get to the top of your game, right. You're, um, you get... I was their senior technology correspondent there. I'd interviewed Zuckerberg like three or four times that year.

Laurie Segall: I was the only person you talked to. I'd interviewed everyone. I, I'd done everything I could do. I didn't wanna become an anchor. Um, and I wanted to go. I really, really wanted to go. Um, and I was terrified. And you read in the book, you're actually a big part of helping me make that, that push. But like, you know, I, I remember at the time I also decided to confront a lot of family stuff and I had stopped drinking, which, um, you know, I mean, just to it, I was just using anything for anxiety or for being able to kind of interact and take off some of the pressure.

Laurie Segall: And I quit the job, I stopped drinking. I like took all of my crutches and I just like took them away. And I was like, "Oh, this is gonna be good. These are all the things I wanted to do." And it was just like, it was painful at the time. Right. It was just like, it felt even more painful.

Laurie Segall: Before I got better, before I, you know, got to do the things that I always wanted to do and I'd had the courage to do it and before I, um, really could show up, but, but it took, I think it almost the, the misconception is that you do the things you're supposed to do and you show up and then all of a sudden things are

great. It's like, no, no. Then you have to go confront all the stuff you were avoiding

Laurie Segall: So I did that and, you know, and I still do that, but at least I'm, I'm present for that, you know, which I don't think I was, um, when you talk about showing up years ago.

Jerry: Yeah. I, you know, I, I think one of the, uh, first questions you asked me in that, uh, first interview that we did, um, which I was rereading the passage again this morning, and you asked me about what, what's the myth of success. And I said that it bring happiness.

Laurie Segall: Right.

Jerry: Well, you know, the other myth is the myth of slowing down and looking at your life is that somehow your life is going to be magically better. Um, and I think you've just said it really well, it's like, no, now you actually begin.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: Now you begin.

Laurie Segall: That's right.

Jerry: And, and you begin to do the work, um, uh, of, of your, of your life. I, I wanna connect it back though, to 'cause the other thing you did was you came to one of our boot camps.

Jerry: I think this is a detail you did not put in the book, but I remember you showed up into the mountains of Colorado with boots that had high heels. Maybe in stiletto heels.

Laurie Segall: Yes I did. I think I showed up like very confused by the whole weather situation that, that was happening where all these other people were. (laughs).

Jerry: Right. But the, but, but what's, what's remarkable is you were confused by the weather, but you weren't confused by the assignment to go out into the woods and talk to a tree.

Laurie Segall: Right. (laughs). Yeah. So, so I, I wonder, it's like I have this book coming out where I talk about like talking to a tree and quitting my job and I'm like, "Oh, this is gonna go great." I can't wait. It's like I'm totally gonna hide under a, a rock when it comes out for a bit. But no, is this crazy experience. And I, you know, me, I'm like totally not woo woo. You know, (laughs), like-

Jerry: Right. You're not you're definitely not woo woo. (laughs).

Laurie Segall: You know, like I wore heels for the mountains. Um, but, um, but yeah, it was just crazy. I remember because it, I just feel like you must have known some, you had sent me this email months before that was like, "You should come to this retreat." Um, and, and I'm so used to going as like a journalist to anything and being on the other side of it, but you were like, "You're not, don't come as a journalist," which is just like, the words don't come as a journalist.

Laurie Segall: I didn't even know how to process those, but it was the first, the beginning of me processing, don't come as a journalist. Right. And, and me being able to show up just as me. Um, and, and I went there and it just happened to be that the time timing [inaudible 00:24:46] like newsroom, but like the timing was, um, my contract at CNN, they wanted to renegotiate it. They wanted me to stay and I had to make a decision by that Monday. Right. It was like. [inaudible 00:24:57] or whatever it was to stay or go and leave CNN. We've, and, and I know maybe for folks listening is like, that's not that big of a deal, but for me, it was my identity. It's how I grew up. This is where I, you know, this was, my whole life was my, my job to some degree and what I built there and I kept thinking, "Who am I without this?"

Laurie Segall: But I, I really, really wanted, um, to take the jump and start my own thing. And, um, and I wa- wasn't sure I had the courage to do it. And I also had no idea how to do it. I've interviewed most successful entrepreneurs, and even then that doesn't make me one. Um, you know, and I, um, I remember going and being, and I talk about this a little bit in the book, but like just sitting, I just remember walking in, um, and the assignment [inaudible 00:25:43] does my life have meaning or something?

Laurie Segall: I wrote some lines down, like literally praying. I didn't have to read any of this out loud. And I walked in and I saw all these people that I've interviewed throughout my career, you know, and who I was like very, I was friendly with, and I very, um, and the power is I'm the journalist, you're the entrepreneur, you know, in this certain dynamic.

Laurie Segall: And all of a sudden I was supposed to, like, it was very cold and all was supposed to read about my feelings to these people. And I was just like, this is, this is really uncomfortable. (laughs). Um, but it was really powerful. And I, and I think I let myself kind of get into it, which I, I think in, in the past, I probably wouldn't have, I would've made jokes and I would've, um, you know, not really allowed it to happen.

Laurie Segall: And, and one of the most powerful things, I mean, there were so many powerful things that happened those couple days, but it was almost just like this extraordinary reset of like, well, who are you now and what do you want? Um, and one of the, the, um, the assignments was to go talk to trees. And I was just

like, "I can't." Like, I just done so many things in my career, but like talking to a tree is not something. I've like infiltrated hacker conferences. I've been chased by like maybe a member of ISIS. Like, I've, I've done a lot of things, but like talking to a tree in the, like in the wilderness is just not on the list for me. Um-

Jerry: Right. And the irony is the tree talk back.

Laurie Segall: That's exactly right. Like, it was so crazy. I had this like weird religious experience. I was so, I like walked out and like, you know, like this, at this tree. And I was just and I was feeling so much pain and I was weird because I was a little bit nervous 'cause I had gone away from the group and you can't really see your way back. And, and I had found this tree and I'm like, "Okay, Segall, just like do the assignment." Right?

Jerry: Right.

Laurie Segall: But then like something changed and I was looking at this like beautiful tree that like, it looked so worn and old. And I just thought like, you know, some would say you're, you're old and, but I think you're like just beginning. And there was just like this beautiful moment. And um, and I just like started crying. I was thinking about all of these things about, um, you know, uh, my parents when I was younger had a really nasty divorce and I didn't see my dad as much and all this stuff.

Laurie Segall: And I was thinking about all these things while sitting across from like a tree that I think really symbolized life and birth and all of these incredible things. And it was a, it was really a nice, um, moment. I realized I was sitting there, standing there for a while. Um, and there were all these cool metaphors because the snow, I'd never... It's such a weird thing to say, but like I'd never heard the sound of snow falling, but it was so silent for the first time in my life, like I heard the sound of snow like falling.

Laurie Segall: And I, I think that was just something like, I was just quiet. Like my brain was quiet for the first time and, and that's something that doesn't happen to me too often. And, um, and there was something about finding the path back, right, even though I didn't really know what the path was, I was just gonna find it and someone else could follow if they wanted to.

Laurie Segall: And that felt like a really good metaphor for what I wanted to do, which was I wanted to go out and create a better type of media company and I wanted to take the jump. Um, and I, I wanted to have the courage to do it. And I also wanted to, you know, think about how I could confront some of my own stuff and, um, and be nicer to the little girl in me.

Laurie Segall: And, and I think all of that happened at that tree. Um, so it, it was such an interesting experience. And I, and I was, I, when I walked back, I said, "Okay, I get

it." You know, but it, it really like that whole weekend, um, just so many of the things that we did, it just forces you out of your narrative. And I remember, um, we did that thing where we, um, put things we wanted and just throw away.

Laurie Segall: And I wanted... I'm such a good storyteller, maybe like not right now, 'cause it's about me. And when I tell my own story, I ramble and I'm terrible, but you know, like I'm, I'm generally a good storyteller. That's what I do.

Laurie Segall: But I think sometimes I get stuck in the narrative even when it came to my own life and my own, whatever and like I'm Laurie from CNN or I'm this, or this is how I was raised and that's why I'm this way. And sometimes you just forget the meaning behind all those words, you know. Well, what is it that you actually are? What do you really mean and what do you really want?

Laurie Segall: And I remember I threw away, I, uh, burned the word narrative in the fire while we were there, and it felt really good, um, just to kind of throw it all out. So it was, it was definitely a really important, um, weekend. And then I went back and I talked to Jeff, um, and I quit my job. Um, it was a, it was a pretty special experience. And, and then none of the things that have happened, I mean, we wouldn't be sitting here talking about my book. None of that would've happened had I stayed in the same place, you know.

Jerry: It's, um, I'm sitting here thinking about this, uh, wonderful book I read in high school, um, called *Zorba the Greek*. And everybody tends to know the movie with Anthony Quinn, but one of the more important, uh, aspects of that book is, um, there's a, the basic story is this unnamed narrator, this writer, uh, goes to Greek island, he's inherited, or he purchases, I can't remember a little mine, and he meets this larger than life care character, Zorba.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: And it's a struggle between these sort of two characters in a, in, in a way where Zorba is all feeling and all sensibility. And at one point Zorba accuses the narrator. He says some- something like this, he says, "Boss, you're the kind of person who'd rather read about making love than making love." And you know, it, you know, we laugh, Laurie, but, but the truth of the matter is when, when, when we hide behind the theater of what our life is supposed to be, we run the risk of being that writer who'd rather read about making love than making love.

Laurie Segall: Yeah. I, I think you're absolutely right. And I, I just think like I was holding on so tightly to this thing that I was supposed to want and to the thing that looked good and the thing that felt safe, um, and I wanted to like write my own story. Right. Like I just wanted to, you know, do those hard things.

Laurie Segall: Um, but I think you're right. I even felt like that too, to be honest with you as a, you know, with what I'm doing now, like, I, I really wanted, instead of just telling

other people's stories, which I love telling other people's stories, I wanted to create a way to be able to, how do I say this? To be in the arena.

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: Does that make sense?

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: Like I just, you know, I just didn't wanna look from a far and peer, peer at people the rest of my life. Um, um, even if I did it in a way that was humane and that I was proud of, you know, I, I, I just wanted to be in the arena and I wanted to roll up my sleeves and I wanted to say, I wanna build my own thing where I can peer at people and do this kind of thing the way that I believe it should be done.

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: And it's messy and trying to do that has been hard. Um, I know, I know we made a lot of progress, but it's, it's, um, I, I do believe that it's a lot more true than, you know, talking, writing about making love and making love, you know. (laughs).

Jerry: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you know, you can be... W- when I gave you that admonition to show up, um, it also came from a place in my own life where, where I had spent many years not showing up you know, pretending to be there and not really being there, you know, and people will say, "Well, Jerry, you know, what do you do that's so different?" Well, I actually am here and, you know, I am fully present to my life.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: And that means being fully present to the mess.

Laurie Segall: Yeah. Right.

Jerry: Right. You know, let's, let's talk about that transition. So you leave CNN and you and Derek and, you know, an assortment of other misfits. Right?

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: Derek Dodge is your co-founder.

Laurie Segall: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Jerry: Right. Um, you, you come together and it's like, hey kids, we're gonna put on a show and it's hard.

Laurie Segall: Oh yeah. I mean, it's like, we're gonna put on a show. First act is a global pandemic. (laughs).

Jerry: (laughs). That's right. So let's, let's, let's set the stage. Let's talk about the time. So this is like fall of 2019.

Laurie Segall: 'Cause Lauri, Lauri is not gonna start a company if like the stakes aren't as high as hell, you know.

Jerry: Right. Right, right, right.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: 'Cause you did-

Laurie Segall: We, we launched, we did, you know. I, I left CNN in February of 2019. I decided, first of all, I wanted to write this book because it was my ability to tell my own story. And just a quick side note to that, I remember, um, the real, I have to write this book came in a, in a moment that's like, I'm not, I don't even know if I'm proud of this moment or just like, of course, Segall.

Laurie Segall: But like, you know, I built our startup beat at CNN. I took it from zero to what it was, you know. I, I'd invested in all this stuff. I had shaped a conversation and a lot of these things. Uh, I'd grown up with a lot of these people. I've asked a lot these people challenging questions. Um, during the Mark... I, I interviewed Mark Zuckerberg during Cambridge Analytica.

Laurie Segall: I was, I was his on camera, I'm sorry, interview. Right. Um, but the reason I got that interview was, um, I had, it was during Cambridge Analytica and I remember, um, you know, no one had heard from any Facebook executives and people were like, "Where are they?" You know. And, and this Cambridge Analytica was important because it was a moment in time where I see like normal people, not just tech people were like, "What the hell is Facebook doing with my data? Like what is happening?"

Laurie Segall: And it had gone really mainstream. This was a scandal that was just huge. And, um, no one knew where Mark and Sheryl were. Like, why weren't they talking? Um, and I think they [inaudible 00:36:08] Facebook and their strategy and they think they were waiting to see if it would blow over. Um, but I had done so much digging and I rolled up my sleeves and I was like, "All right, let's find out what's happening in Facebook."

Laurie Segall: I found out what people were saying. I had this really good exclusive color of what was actually happening inside. And I went on to go on TV. Um, I shouldn't say this, but there's, it was definitely, I was with an anchor who was very much

like the woman who supports women, but like only if you have tons of Twitter followers kind of thing.

Laurie Segall: And, um, and I was going on with her and at the same time, they're like, okay, well, I won't say his name. I'll call him James. But they're like, "We're gonna put James on with you." Like James, like had never covered tech, but he recently had an interest in it and a very loud voice. Right. And, and I was not, and I was very used to people coming in with very loud voices to like, kind of speak over and whatnot.

Laurie Segall: And I remember being on with him and he just spoke the whole time. He had no information. He just had like opinions. It was opinion based journalism. He had no idea what was happening inside the company, what people were saying. And he just talked and talked and, you know, in television, he got two or three minutes to say everything. It's hard.

Laurie Segall: And so with 30 seconds to go, she came to me and she said, um, "Okay, Laurie, what are people saying inside?" And so I tried to speak. And she's like, "Oh, we gotta, we gotta go." And I just remember being so frustrated. I was like, "There's always some dude to speak over me." I've been doing this for so long. You know, I've been doing this for like a decade at this point. Right. And, um, and as I walked away, I was just like, "Fuck it, and I'm gonna book Mark. He should talk. He, he really should talk right now. He has a responsibility as a leader."

Laurie Segall: And I went over to my desk. And by the way, this is not how most journals work. Just like, so your audience knows, like they have booking departments and all this kind of stuff. That is never how I worked. I was always like booking myself. And, um, I messaged Mark on Facebook and I said, "You have a responsibility as a leader to speak."

Laurie Segall: And we had enough friends in common that I knew. And, um, and I saw that he saw it and I followed up and all these kinds of things. And, you know, the next thing you know, it wasn't easy, but I, I got on the phone with his head of PR. He said, "You gotta let me know if there's a storm coming in." And Mark saw the, the message and long story short, I got the interview, not without a lot of hustle, you know. And, uh, and went out and interviewed him.

Laurie Segall: And it was a big moment I think in tech and society. But all that, great, cool, Laurie, you got a great interview. You got a big interview. The thing that pissed me off, and the reason I wrote the book, Jerry, (laughs), is, you know, and this is probably an ego thing, but, um, I remember there was a wired story that came out later, um, about the market, about Cambridge Analytica and the chaos inside Facebook.

Laurie Segall: The writer in it actually didn't ask me for comment or anything like that. But the writer, um, characterized me, um, talked a lot about the behind the scenes



there. And he characterized me as just this reporter who was summoned to campus, you know. Yeah. And you know, for me, I had thought, you'll read this book. I'm so scrappy.

Laurie Segall: I mean, it's, it's almost like painful. At some point, it's like, stop as scrappy, Segall. Like let people do, you know. Like, it's get, it's a little like upsetting, like, but I fought my whole career. Right. And, and I was just so annoyed. This is like a dude, right, talking about how I just was like summoned, like I'm some kind of like talent, just summoned to do your homework tech people. And he just pissed me off. And I was just like, "You know what, I wanna write a book and I wanna set the record straight, and not set the record straight in a, in a way of like, um, you know, oh, I, I got this, you know, whatever it was."

Laurie Segall: But it was, it was very much, I wanted to put my stake in the ground and show that I was a part of this thing and that I had something to say. And I, and I knew that a lot of the human questions got lot. And I knew that this was an exciting time and, and I wanted my voice in there. I wanted to speak for myself and not just be the person that was summoned to these people.

Laurie Segall: So that's, so that happened and I was like, "I'm gonna write a book, you know, that's my tangent on that." Um, and I went and I sold the book I wrote. I worked on that proposal all summer and I also worked to build, uh, a company that would talk about technology and humanity.

Laurie Segall: At the same time we sold the book, Derek and I launched Dot Dot Dot that was in, um, I had sold the book at October and then Dot Dot Dot launched in December, um, of, you know, 2019, um, with a couple different folks. And, um, and then the pandemic happened and, you know, we, for a long time operated as production company, selling shows, doing books, uh, podcast. You are my podcast first contact.

Laurie Segall: But I always wanted to do something bigger than that too. You know, I think for me it was, that's what we needed to do at the time, um, in order to survive, right, the, the pandemic. And so we've just recently, um, launched a network to cover Web3, because I, I feel the same sense of responsibility I did back in 2009, um, where all these new players are coming and no one understands anything about it.

Laurie Segall: And they're, you know, we have talking about crypto and the metaverse and, um, NFTs, and, and we need someone to humanize this and talk about why it actually matters. Um, and I, I wanna build a network to do that. And why can't I do that? You know, so that's, that's the, that's the latest and we're calling it D3. So it's, it's been a journey and it is not been overnight, you know, and it's still isn't, uh, overnight.

Laurie Segall: You know, it's certainly a process. But I'll tell you like the one thing that I've never done is look back and say, I wish I was still in my senior technology correspondent position at CNN.

Jerry: Well, that, that makes me happy, 'cause I was, after reading some of this, I'm a little nervous as like, did I convince her [inaudible 00:42:06]. (laughs). I wanna go back though to that experience of these are my words, not yours.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: The writer kind of dismissively describing you, um, as having been summoned. And the thing that, that struck me, um, and, and, and in some ways I'm gonna tie together, the Laurie I've known, the Laurie I came to know in reading your story, the Laurie who showed up in that interview, the Laurie who shows up now every day, um, to, to the girl in Atlanta where you were growing up.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: I think that, um, it feels like that there's been a, uh, a theme of people underestimating you and dismissing you, and it could be gender based, but I don't think it's always gender based. I think there, and, and, and in my experience with my friend, Laurie, um, you are not to be underestimated.

Laurie Segall: (laughs). I appreciate that.

Jerry: And even, even if you struggle, Laurie, it doesn't mean that you're not on, on the right path. Does that resonate with you?

Laurie Segall: Yeah, I think it does. And, and I think, um, I think for me, um, I've always felt like I was fighting against something, right.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Laurie Segall: Like even at, at CNN there was this like, there was just like this, I had a lot of support from a lot of great people. And then there was also the like, no matter what we were gonna do, we were gonna be underestimated. I was not, you know, there was a bit of a boys club there. Um, and you know, and that was really tough. I did have a lot of mentors. but you know, I do think sometimes and I really underestimate myself or I, I hesitate with myself, and that comes through. Um, I can be talking to some of the most powerful people. I can have more support from the players in the world, and sometimes I can get in my own way. Because I don't believe it. And I don't know where that comes from. I do think, you know, I was, um, a bit of an oddball, almost like the only Jewish girl in a very Christian conservative southern school. I've always been a bit of like an outsider, um, no matter what community I went into. But I think I sometimes had some issues with underestimating myself for not having a courage to step in

of myself. Um, you call it, take your seat, but I, I really, I, I think that's a real thing. Um, and so-

Jerry: I think as your friend and, and itinerant coach now and then, I would say that that's true. I have seen you do that. And so in addition to show up, I'm gonna leave you with another, uh, observation. And this comes from my teacher and friend, Parker Palmer, who once wrote in, in a book, "Nothing is as tragic as when we are complicit in our own diminishment."

Laurie Segall: (laughs). Wow.

Jerry: Yeah. You know, you're, you're embarking on an extraordinary journey. You and Derek you're, you're, you're trying to will into being the magical, the truly magical unicorn of a new company trying to create something and pivot left, pivot right. We're gonna go here. We're gonna go there.

Laurie Segall: Right.

Jerry: That's normal.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: What is extraordinary here is, um, to try to do this in a way where you continually show up and are not complicit in your own diminishment. You know, you got this.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative). (laughs).

Jerry: You got this.

Laurie Segall: I'm gonna tape this saying you got this and I'm gonna literally like wake up every morning and it's gonna be repeating there like you got this, you got this. (laughs).

Jerry: But in all seriousness, you know, I love the fact that every now and then you would reference the people who have sort of, uh, been at your side.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. You know, I am, um, I'm so lucky. I have, I think you are the one that told me about this, like the board of Laurie.

Jerry: Yeah.

Laurie Segall: Like I have got such an incredible, um, I've got pretty incredible people on that board. You know, I, I count you on the board, so please don't resign anytime soon from the board of Laurie because she can't take it. But I'm, I'm pretty lucky

if I, um, in that regard. And I think, um, you know, I'm, I'm set up. Um, if I, if I can get outta my own way, I'm set up for it, if that makes sense, you know.

Jerry: It does. And in that way, you're actually quite human.

Laurie Segall: Yeah.

Jerry: In fact, that's, that's, that's another universal experience, which is that we all get our own way. I'll close with this. The thing that, that, um, people often ask me, well, you know, "Jerry, how do you get people to do what you do and all this stuff?" It's, I stay in touch with my messiness.

Laurie Segall: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: I stay in touch with my, my humanity. And then, you know, I just listen from that space, and the world is a lot better when you leave and you tell stories from that space.

Laurie Segall: Yeah. Yeah. I think you're absolutely right.

Jerry: Well, Laurie, I wanna thank you for, for coming on and spending time together. And, you know, aside from the personal, just delight of being together, I'm just really happy for you. Best of luck with all of this.

Laurie Segall: Thank you.

Jerry: Thank you.