

## Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness and Diane Guerrero

JVN [00:00:03] On today's episode, I'm joined by an incredible person. She is an actress, an advocate and author. Her name is Diane Guerrero. You may know her from "Orange is the New Black" or her incredible book, "In the Country We Love: My Family Divided". She is about to help blow our minds and really open up our senses to a experience that so many Americans face that we don't hear about. And the perspective and the importance of what Diane is sharing is really beyond any intro that I can give this. So without any further ado, here we go with our gorgeous conversation on "How we can be better allies to our undocumented American family members with Diane Guerrero". I was so nervous at the Emmys this year.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:00:49] Oh yeah.

JVN [00:00:49] Like I feel like last year, I wasn't as much, and this year, I was like, I was just, like, edgy.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:00:54] You looked great.

JVN [00:00:55] Thank you.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:00:55] And I saw, like I saw you and I go, oh, my God. It was so great to see you because I felt like I, I went and I get scared at those events and I do the red carpet and then I hate myself, 'cause I'm like, where was your confidence, bitch? You know? And I'm just like, where? Where? And then I just try to like, look for people that I know. And I didn't know you, but I knew that I was doing this podcast so I was like, hello. I like that, honestly, coming up to you was like so hard for me. Like I have crazy anxiety.

JVN [00:01:23] I'm so glad you did. I have really intense anxiety around like certain issues or certain things, for sure. OK. Wait, let's start.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:01:29] OK.

JVN [00:01:29] You ready? But I hope we record that because it was really cute. But if we didn't, it's ok. I'll get over it. But OK, OK. That was really cute. OK. like Diane Guerrero.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:01:37] Yes.

JVN [00:01:38] Nailed it.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:01:38] Yeah. Nailed it.

JVN [00:01:39] OK, great. Welcome to "Getting Curious". This is Jonathan Van Ness and I'm so excited to welcome a guest that I've been watching for, on tele for years and I just look up to so much and I love your work so much and I'm just so excited to talk to you. So welcome to the studio, Diane Guerrero.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:01:54] Thank you.

JVN [00:01:55] From "Orange is the New Black" and "Jane the Virgin", which we double love. But I think it, like because we know about your, about you on "Orange is the New Black" and we know your character, but I think a lot of people don't know your activism side.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:02:13] Mmhmm.

JVN [00:02:13] And just your gorgeous origin story.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:02:16] Yeah.

JVN [00:02:16] So you were born in New Jersey.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:02:19] That's right.

JVN [00:02:19] Which is, I have got to spend more time in the last couple of years than I've ever really gotten to before.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:02:25] I bet.

JVN [00:02:25] And she's, she's a gorgeous, but she's the Garden State.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:02:28] She really is. And I honestly, I love New Jersey. I think people crap on it a lot. And especially people from New York. Or people who just I've heard that kind of negative rhetoric about a certain state. And that's why we go into these places and we humanize them and we share stories. And that's exactly what we're doing. I love New Jersey and it has so much to offer.

JVN [00:02:48] It's so, it really is so green.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:02:50] Yeah. Super lush.

JVN [00:02:50] I've driven through it from, from New York to Philly like 18,000 times in the last 10 weeks because I was shooting in Philly but living in New York. And it's just a beautiful green state. And also the people in New Jersey are incredible people.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:03:03] Yes. They are.

JVN [00:03:03] So I mean, you are, have really navigated Hollywood, honey, like congratulations. You're part of this, like, incredible show and you have an incredible career. How did that happen? How did you go from this girl born in New Jersey to this girl?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:03:19] My goodness.

JVN [00:03:20] It's a big question.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:03:21] It is a big question, but I'm happy to answer it. I mean, I think that I always, I mean, I was born Jersey, but I was, I was raised in Boston, Massachusetts. And so I was around a lot of academia and "mac", sounds like macadamia. Academia. And so I always, the, the

arts were always a big part of my life. I went to a performance arts high school so that, we were like the "Fame" of Boston.

JVN [00:03:46] Oh, I love that.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:03:47] Oh, I know. It was really cute and everybody was really expressive and people could be themselves. And we learned about a bunch of different philosophies and how they pertain to your, the art that you were pursuing. So I was pursuing music at the time, but I, I think, you know, one time I went, I took this class, an acting class, and, and I had mentioned that I like to sing or that I like music. And somebody said "Sing". And I said, "No, I don't do that anymore". And the professor there or the, the coach there said, "You are an artist. And that means you can do anything regarding art. Any kind of art, you can do. And that is a part of you". And that really changed me. And, and it made me pursue really any kind of art that I wanted, that I wanted to. And I think that I'm still sort of open to pursuing different forms of art to this day. So I, I kind of I, I started acting and wanting to, to pursue that a little more. And I just wanted to tell stories and to represent kind of a little bit about what I had lived and what I had seen in my fantasies and in my real life.

JVN [00:04:57] What was your fantasies? Being like a little girl in Boston and being part of this, like performing art school? Like, did you see yourself being like on TV and being like? Was that your fantasy?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:05:08] Yeah. I, yeah, I wanted to be. I just I wanted to show all of the emotions that I had inside me. I was always a very emotive child and I always was very empathetic towards a lot of people and people who were struggling, people who had, who came from different backgrounds or, because I felt that way, I felt sort of othered, growing up, just because my, my parents were immigrants and we were in a predominantly immigrant community. And so I, I grew up with a lot of kids making fun of my parents or speaking Spanish or, you know, they would call us like "wetbacks".

JVN [00:05:46] Oh.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:05:47] I know.

JVN [00:05:48] So growing up in Boston.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:05:48] Yeah.

JVN [00:05:48] And like in our era, 'cause I feel like we're in similar age boxes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:05:51] Yeah.

JVN [00:05:52] So in our era of growing up, like you faced like xenophobic, like racism in Boston.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:05:58] Oh yeah.

JVN [00:05:58] Just being like the child of immigrants. And-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:06:01] Oh, for sure. Yeah. So what I, what I had inside was-.

JVN [00:06:04] But I think that's really important to-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:06:05] Yeah.

JVN [00:06:05] Like I feel like people, like so people like that might be like OK. But there's like I feel like people in the middle of America, like my family, friends of my family wouldn't realize that someone like you faced bullying and xenophobia and like racism.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:06:25] Yeah.

JVN [00:06:25] Like they wouldn't, they wouldn't necessarily think that like some, like that people face this like literal racism in America. But just so you know, like it really, it goes on now.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:06:34] It does go on now and it's even, it's worse when you're poor or living in, in lower income communities, because you're getting that sort of discrimination not only by people who have more than you, but also people who are also discriminated against. And that's sort of the way we're taught, right? Is that if, if we go after another group, then that will kind of lessen the heat on you.

JVN [00:06:57] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:06:57] And that's, that's kind of what we grew up with. It's like making fun of the person who you can make fun of to took sort of take the heat off of you. But, but I want, I really wanted to show that I was fucking Barbra Streisand inside, you know what I mean?

JVN [00:07:12] Who knew?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:07:13] I'm like, I know my parents are immigrants and I know that I'm brown, but I have so much to give, you know? And I, and I shared so much of, of, I guess, that American dream, if you will, sort of like that, that mixture of I could understand Spanish and spoke Spanish and, and embrace my family's culture because I was never ashamed of them. But I also embrace, embrace my American culture, which I was very much a part of. I mean, I watched "Full House", I watched "Saved by the Bell". I was there for all of it. And I just wanted to show that I belong too. And that I'm, that I was just as American or just as normal as anybody else.

JVN [00:07:54] That feeling of just like wanting to be seen as normal and accepted by our peers is like been a driving like need and desire, I know for me and I mean, I felt othered in different ways, but I just I, I hear you and like yes, like I, but I think the older I get the more I'm like what is normal anyway?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:08:14] Oh totally. Oh, now I'm just like.

JVN [00:08:16] Yeah. But it's like, it's just like I wish someone could have like let us know, like we were just minding our own business. Like being like thriving little babies like trying to figure out our way in the world.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:08:24] Absolutely.

JVN [00:08:24] We just didn't know.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:08:24] And that normal is actually boring and actually does not exist.

JVN [00:08:28] It actually literally doesn't.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:08:29] It doesn't exist.

JVN [00:08:30] But why didn't we know? We just didn't know. So if you don't know by now, just to give it, you know, name to a face. On "Orange is the New Black", you played the character Maritza Ramos, who your best friend is the go- the girl with the fri-

DIANE GUERRERO [00:08:44] Flaca.

JVN [00:08:45] Flaca. Yes. Your baby podcast, or not the podcast, the show that you guys do on the show is called? What was it called? You're like, like because like, because like you guys are like cohosting-?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:08:54] Oh yeah. We were just like bloggers. I don't think we had like an actual name.

JVN [00:08:57] But it turned into a podcast kind of on the-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:00] I wasn't part of that podcast.

JVN [00:09:01] Because she was like, no, because you guys like you. You.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:03] We seperated.

JVN [00:09:03] Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. You had combative energy as hosts.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:06] No, no. That was her and, and Adrienne Moore's character, Black Cindy.

JVN [00:09:12] Yes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:13] Yes. That was a season that I went off to go do like a multicam because I wanted to be on TV Land.

JVN [00:09:19] Oh my God.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:19] I wanted to be, I was like on CBS, but I wanted, I went off to do like a multi-, kind of old school multicam with Judd Hirsch and Katey Sagal. And it was just like all, you know, comedy, kind of slapstick comedy.

JVN [00:09:33] So you weren't in that season? But really-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:35] I wasn't in that season, no.

JVN [00:09:35] But in the beginning of that storyline, didn't? Weren't you gonna host it with her? And then you guys had a fight? Why am I hallucinating that in my mind?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:42] I don't even know.

JVN [00:09:42] I binge watch that like, like and that season was like three years ago.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:46] Season 6? Season 6. I wasn't part of Season 6.

JVN [00:09:48] And that was like? Because this season was-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:09:51] Season 5 was like us doing the makeup tutorial then like shit went, hit the fan because-.

JVN [00:09:57] Yeah, because that was the three day. So Season 6 is the one that takes place over like three days. Or four days.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:02] Season 5.

JVN [00:10:02] That was a really good, they're all really such good seasons.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:03] They're all really cute. Yeah. They're all really good, especially this last one.

JVN [00:10:06] Oh, my god. It was really, your, I can't. I mean, I guess, well, I guess, I was gonna do this thing where I was going like, wait until we got to a point to talk about "Orange is the New Black".

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:16] Yeah.

JVN [00:10:16] So the people could be like just fast forward through these seven minutes if they haven't seen the last season. But I guess we did kind of arrive here organically.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:21] Right.

JVN [00:10:21] But so, OK, but I don't want to go right into the last season, OK, so wait. So pre "Orange is the New Black".

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:26] Yes.

JVN [00:10:26] You're minding your own business, living in?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:28] Boston, Massachusetts.

JVN [00:10:29] Still?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:30] Still.

JVN [00:10:31] Right before "Orange is the New Black"?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:10:31] Oh, no, no. Right before "Orange is the New Black". OK, so after like I, I went to school for political science so I didn't even pursue the arts. I went to an all women's college, like Catholic college, because I was like, my. I was just in this kind of world where I felt like I needed to be practical because I was like, hey, I am a brown woman. I have nothing. I have no money. I have no backup. No support. So that means I have to do something practical if I want to get ahead and this means going to a school where there's no male energy and I can just focus and I can be with women and also I can be under the watchful eye of these nuns that were teaching at the school. So I went there. I almost went crazy, as you can imagine someone would if they went to a school where, like, nuns were teaching them.

JVN [00:11:24] So you're 18.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:11:25] I'm 18.

JVN [00:11:26] And you decide to go to an all women's-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:11:28] Catholic.

JVN [00:11:30] Catholic college.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:11:31] Yes.

JVN [00:11:32] Now, when you said right before, you're like, I'm a young brown woman, I have no support, I need to do something practical. Can you, like, expound upon that, on like what made your decision to that different than, let's say, like any counterparts that you're in high school when they're deciding on like when they were, like where they were going to go to college.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:11:49] Right. Well, I. So at this time, I was 18 or 17. About to turn 18 and at 14, I had experienced my family separating because of deportation. So my family, both my parents were undocumented. And so when I was 14. This is like I was a freshman in high school, I came home and they were gone. And so I had to act fast. So for those four years of high school, I stayed with friends. Their parents took me in and they trusted me and my parents to, to kind of, my parents to parent me from out, from abroad. And them just to be sort of a vessel for me to, a safe haven, if you will.

JVN [00:12:30] So you literally come home from school.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:12:32] Yeah.

JVN [00:12:32] And like, the front door is just like like close but unlocked?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:12:36] It's like wide open. My parents cars are in front. My, my, my parents, my mom had started dinner like this is how kids come home to finding their parents are

missing is that it can happen at any moment. This is the kind of fear that I grew up with and a lot of kids are growing up with these days is if they have a mixed status family, if their parents are gonna be there one day or not be there.

JVN [00:13:02] Was that something that like they like, and so you grew up knowing that that was something that was like a potential?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:13:07] Yeah, I knew that, that, that it was a potential. And so that created a lot of anxiety in my life. But you always hope and if you grew up like me, pray, that it doesn't happen. But it did. And it, and it totally changed my perspective as far as what I could and could not achieve. And so that little girl that once had this dream of being Barbra Streisand or singing or actually having options, that kind of diminished a bit. And so me saying I had no support, that meant my parents weren't really there helping me apply to schools. My parents really weren't there, if I didn't have any money, like, I couldn't fall back for their, with their, with their help. And so I decided I needed to go to school for political science and hopefully try to, I don't know what I wanted to do. What they don't tell you is that practicality means shit. Right? Because whether you, me, you have to be passionate and you, and you need the support regardless. Whether you're doing anything like nursing or dance or, or singing or anything like that. So you need that support regardless. And so I get to school. Thank God. I don't even know how I even got that.

JVN [00:14:20] And that you have that wherewithal at that age to be like. All right, let me just, like, not be around no dick. Because I know dick made me make foolish decisions.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:14:28] Honey, dick made me crazy.

JVN [00:14:29] 17, 18. I could not be trusted with no dicks.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:14:31] I can't either.

JVN [00:14:32] So that was so good that you just knew how to.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:14:33] I knew. I was like, I can't do this.

JVN [00:14:35] You're so smart, girl.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:14:37] Yeah, I was like, I can't do the whole, what, what movies did I-? I can't, you know, I'm not, I'm not in "Clueless" or whatever. Like, I can't go and like, just be coed and like, happy go lucky. I'm like, if there is a dick in my way, I don't know what's going to happen.

JVN [00:14:49] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:14:50] I don't know what will happen.

JVN [00:14:51] I mean, we've had a little bit of, like on "Getting Curious", we were just talking about like, I can't remember who, but it's like the, the right to dream. Like. That is like a fundamental American right, is like the right to dream. And when that is taken away from people



and how you just said that, like I mean, I didn't even discuss that with you, like, beforehand or, but it's like that is what people in power are taking away from people is like the right to dream.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:15:25] Absolutely. At such a young age. And they do, they do it to kids at such a young age. And that is sort of, in my opinion, sort of a formula to sort of keep the status quo. Right? The first thing that you do is deny children rights to education, deny them health care, deny them a right to dream.

JVN [00:15:44] It was the acting president of Planned Parenthood, and she was telling us that when people, when people try to control people's access to reproductive health care, they can by proxy be controlling that person's right to dream. Because when you are forcing someone to bring a person into the world that they are not ready for, don't want to, whatever, the, all the dreams that that person had before they, you know, were pregnant, like have to be, can't be there anymore if they are forced to have this baby in this particular way.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:16:10] Right. It has such a psychological effect on your progress and everything that you do there after, because it affects the opportunities that you're gonna go for. It affects you taking a chance on yourself. It affects you loving yourself, which loving yourself has so much to do with your success. And we've seen that when you are depressed, when you are not taking care of your mental health. And we've, we've seen it. People do, people do not go to places where they need to go because they are sort of stunted and when, when they tell you no, you can't have your parents here because we think less of you. No, you can't really, this is not an option for you. Then, then you're, then you're starting off a little wonky and you are, I think, more prone to failure. And I experienced that very early on because I basically went crazy and was, not crazy, but I did have a lot of mental health issues that I, that weren't addressed. And I eventually was very suicidal and which was actually what got me to acting in the first place because I was in such a dark place. And I mentioned this in my book. So I. I wrote a book in 2016 called "In the Country We Love", and it's all about my family's experience with the immigration system and also my journey as a young girl to finally getting a job on "Orange is the New Black" and having my entire life change. That through, through the darkness and through the most awful things in your life can also grow the most beautiful things. If you'd just give yourself a moment, if you'd just reach out for help, if you go and share your story with someone, there is power to that. And so I did. I did it in a forum. I went to a therapist and she said, these are some of the things I need you to do. I need you to everyday say an affirmation, something really nice about yourself, so that you can change this awful mentality that you have for yourself. And then I need you to go take acting classes or painting classes or whatever the fuck you need to do to make yourself feel worthy again. And I did. And then I moved to New York. And then I passed out my fake resumé to everyone.

JVN [00:18:27] I love a clutch fake resume. We're going to be back with more, "Getting Curious" right after the break. Welcome back to "Getting Curious". We have me who is fully crying, and we have Diane Guerrero, star of "Orange is the New Black" and "Jane the Virgin" and author, activist, advocate. Sharing your gorgeous story, could not agree more about turning some of the darkest times in our life into growing some of the seeds that bear like the most, you know, gorgeous fruit where you can really, like, find your purpose and wow. Wow. So where were we?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:19:12] We were. Oh, when I-.

JVN [00:19:13] So you moved to New York.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:19:14] When I moved to New York and I gave myself that chance because at that point when I had faced literally thinking, I don't deserve to live anymore, because whatever this is, whatever this is, whatever I've taught myself to want is not what I want. I want something that is so impossible. And what no one told me was that it's OK to want things that seem impossible and it's OK to go after them and fail or, or, or, or succeed. Right? I didn't know what that was. I never gave myself the opportunity to say if I go for something that seems hard. That's OK. There's so many things along the way that are going to inform what I really want to do and my place in what I want to do. And I found that. I found that by just simply giving myself the opportunity, by just saying yes to my-, I feel like I'm promoting a book that says just say yes to yourself.

JVN [00:20:13] But isn't that kind of, I mean-?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:20:14] But really, it's kind of that simple.

JVN [00:20:17] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:20:17] And you either get it or you don't or you'll figure it out. But not giving yourself the opportunity because, because you think that you don't deserve it or because your parents were undocumented or because you're gay or because you're straight or because of whatever it is, isn't a good enough reason not to say yes to yourself.

JVN [00:20:35] You're gonna really fucked me up today, Queen. Wow. So OK. So you find yourself on "Orange is the New Black" or at the auditions for it?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:20:44] Yeah.

JVN [00:20:45] And you're in New York and that's where their first audition was?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:20:49] So I went to New York and I had been auditioning-.

JVN [00:20:52] With your gorgeous fake resume.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:20:53] With my fake ass resume. And it was so funny because I was like, um, I can juggle. I honestly put down "cutting a rug" as one of my skills. Which is just, like, looking really good at, like, on the dance floor.

JVN [00:21:06] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:06] I was like, OK, I put in lacrosse. I played like three years of terrible lacrosse.

JVN [00:21:10] You were like the original Lori Loughlin.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:13] Girl, it was terrible. It was terr-. I was like just making things up.

JVN [00:21:16] But were you an actual lacrosse player?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:17] I played lacrosse, but I was terrible. I was like midfield. Sure, I ran.

JVN [00:21:21] But at least you weren't like, you didn't just like go to the pictures and then never go to practice. You were actually on the team.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:26] No, no, no. I was on the team.

JVN [00:21:27] OK, great.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:27] I was on, yeah.

JVN [00:21:28] So it wasn't like a college admissions scandal. Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:29] For the record. Oh no. Yeah, no, I wasn't like I played lacrosse.

JVN [00:21:33] I'm fully joking. I know, you like, you back it up, girl.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:35] No, no, no. I'm played.

JVN [00:21:36] You back it up all the way.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:36] I maybe wasn't the best player, but I played.

JVN [00:21:39] Yes. Maybe I was like a four year J.V. person, but honey, I never gave up.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:21:42] Exactly. I never gave up. Exactly. Oh, my God. That, that's so funny that you mention all, all of the Lori Loughlin thing, because not that I want to, like, spend our segment talking about that, but that's the kind of behavior. The, that's the kind of stuff that, like us kids who are going through this process don't know that goes on like we don't know about all this sort of like under the table stuff. And like we think that it's honestly best, based on actual merit and actual, and based on, on how smart you are or how, how like precious you are, or how like important you are. And it's not.

JVN [00:22:18] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:22:18] And that, of course, you learned through, I learned that through auditioning. I learned that through going to New York and having terrible auditions and have them sort of work out and having the best of auditions where I thought that I was right for the part, that had nothing to do with whether I was right or not. So that's why you just, I, I've learned that you just kind of have to fucking go for everything and just see, see if something works for you or speaks to you or if, if that's a good connection with someone else. It's just not at all putting any barriers for yourself because there are enough systemic barriers around to last you a lifetime. So don't put any on yourself. And that's what I realized when I went out and passed out my little fake resumé. And then I would actually build stuff when I actually gave, when I, when I went to things, I thought, oh, this doesn't seem great, but I can learn something from it.

JVN [00:23:15] And then you actually got a real resumé.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:23:16] And then I actually got a real resumé, and I got on "Orange is New Black". Audition was like come looking like you rolled out of bed.

JVN [00:23:24] And you did?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:23:24] And I did. It was great. It was liberating.

JVN [00:23:27] And so what was that like for you? Because I mean, I remember the first season of "Orange is the New Black" and like I, like I binged that shit so fucking hard. But I think that "Orange is the New Black" and like "House of Cards" were two of the first shows on Netflix that really like set that like Netflix standard of like original in-house content, that was just like, what is? It was just so good.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:23:47] Yeah.

JVN [00:23:48] But like, you and your. OK, so this is the part where well, I kind of want to go from the beginning.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:23:54] Go ahead.

JVN [00:23:54] So you started, because I haven't like-. Because I actually I re-, I binge all the seasons, like when they first come out. I should have re-binged it but like bitch has been busy and stuff.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:24:03] Oh yeah, of course.

JVN [00:24:04] You came into "Orange is the New Black" in Season 1.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:24:09] 1. Yeah. Episode 2.

JVN [00:24:09] Episode 2. And you were there, all of them, except for the one where you did the multicam, which I didn't really realize until you just said.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:24:19] Yeah.

JVN [00:24:19] So then what was that? So what was, I mean, obviously I know how it is like when you're on a show. So it's like, you were just like, oh, my God, this has been really fun for these like five seasons. But my, but I actually, these people want to do this like multicam. So like can she? Can, can, can my, can my girl just like please go do like something else on the show so I can go do this other thing? But I want to come back. I just like, you had to like do a thing with the producers and be like mommy wants to do a multicam, like, how do I do it?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:24:40] Well, I actually like very early on I understood that I had to spread my wings in whichever way that I, that I could. And so I started like auditioning like crazy. I got, I got "Orange is the New Black" first season. That was great. But I was still a recur. Second season came around. I was still a recur. So like I was never offered a season-, a series regular.

JVN [00:25:04] You can't wait.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:25:06] And bitch needs to be series regular. You know what I mean? Like so I was always just saying this is a wonderful job and I, I love everything that it's given me, but I want to go and see if I can give more of myself over here. And actually that's the time that I got "Jane the Virgin". So I actually got "Jane the Virgin" while I got "Orange is the New Black". And I was doing two recurs on that show, which really expanded my horizons and kind of got networks to sort of see me, because at the time, you know, anybody from Netflix, they were just doing Netflix and it wasn't really crossing over to like network TV. That was at the time where network TV thought that nothing could ever take them down.

JVN [00:25:49] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:25:49] We saw it differently. But, but I was always just trying to, to go for different parts that kind of showed me in different lights because I had, again, so much to give. So I did "Jane the Virgin" while I was doing "Orange" and then I just kept on auditioning. I got a few pilots that didn't go anywhere, so I would always go right back to "Orange is the New Black", which was for me something. That's why "Orange" means so much to me, because they were actually my home, like any time that something wouldn't work out. They were so ready to, to take me back and say, of course, we have a home for you. Season 3, Season 4, Season 5. But at that point, I wasn't ready to accept a series regular because I knew that I could do "Orange is the New Black" and something else if I wanted and, and then they gave me that opportunity.

JVN [00:26:36] I love that.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:26:36] Yeah.

JVN [00:26:37] They gave you like, they give you like the space for you to be abundant.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:26:39] Yes. Yes.

JVN [00:26:40] Which I love.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:26:40] Yeah. Me too.

JVN [00:26:41] So but. When you, when you started in Season 1 that was 2014?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:26:47] '13?

JVN [00:26:48] '13.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:26:48] I'm going to say '13. Yeah. '13.

JVN [00:26:49] Because I think that's interesting in the sense that you have been on this show in a, in a time where like our political environment has shifted greatly, a TV environment has shifted greatly. But I would imagine that it is. OK, so I have a book that's coming out. And-

DIANE GUERRERO [00:27:08] Oh, congratulations.

JVN [00:27:07] I, and I come out about all sorts of kind of intense just stuff that I've kind of went through. And one of those things I'm not trying to lay this on you right now, but one of them is that I'm HIV positive.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:27:17] OK.

JVN [00:27:17] And so for me, having this kind of public platform and like when George H.W. Bush died and everyone was like, oh, my God, like, you know, he was this amazing president. I was like, actually, he kind of like was the vice president to a president who like, didn't do anything in the face of HIV AIDS and kind of like further stigmatized it and like really like it was a really problematic relationship that he had to like this community and like. It was very hard for me to like to hear people talk about him and to see what is happening like within the HIV positive community, because there's just a lot of attack on science and funding and there's a lot of stigmatization that's like really being like ramped up like as we speak, like under this administration. And so for you, like you've had this platform and you. I just would imagine that it would be really super fucking difficult for you having, like, been through what you've been through and like seeing what this country is doing now. Like, how has that been for your baby heart?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:28:16] Well, well, that, that I think that-.

JVN [00:28:20] I mean, because you're certainly doing a lot about. I mean, you've written a book. You're an activist like you're doing the most for it.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:28:24] Right.

JVN [00:28:24] Like, how is it for you? Just like processing?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:28:28] I mean, I think that a way that I have dealt with, with my pain. Well, obviously there were other ways that I dealt with it before that really weren't working and weren't helping. And that was mainly keeping what I had went through a secret and just keeping it all to myself and try to go and walk around life pretending that I was someone else, someone that hadn't been affected. When there are so, when there are millions of people being affected by this. And the best thing that you can do for yourself in this situation is find allies and find people who are also going through this so that you won't have to be alone. And so the way that I dealt with my pain, and especially around this time with "Orange is the New Black", "Orange is the New Black" happened to me and I was beginning to experience in, being interviewed, being, people having an interest in me and wanting to know about me. And I couldn't be happy in that. And I couldn't excel after that if I wasn't honest about what had happened. If I wasn't talking about the things that I think truly matter. I think that families belong together. I feel like there is a great need for immigration reform and social justice and equality in this country and in this world. And I wasn't being, I wasn't able to talk about those things because I hadn't been yet honest. And so part of my way to heal myself was to be honest and talk about this story out loud in the way that I did. And then everything that came afterwards, the activism, the organizations that wanted to work with me. "Orange is the New Black" supporting me and also trying to share my story, that came all after. And it only took me taking a chance on speaking the truth. And it was so liberating

and life changing that I don't think I could be anything else other than what I am now. And, and I, if I go back, I would never do anything differently.

JVN [00:30:38] Take a really quick break.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:30:39] OK.

JVN [00:30:40] We'll be right back with more with Diane and myself right after this. Welcome back to "Getting Curious". This is Jonathan Van Ness. So, wow, very much. I feel like you said a couple of things that I really just identify with so much. One of them at the beginning was like when you, the art teacher that taught you like, you know, if you're an artist, like you get to touch all the art that touch-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:31:10] Yeah.

JVN [00:31:10] I feel so much like that. There's just so much, just like, wow. And then the other thing is. With what you were just saying to, and speaking in, in your family's experience and having the courage to speak about, you know, what happened to you so that you can like speak your truth to power.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:31:29] Yeah.

JVN [00:31:29] Is so strong and so courageous. I think part of what I was asking before about just the time from "Orange is the New Black" started to now, it's like in 2013, '14 '15. Is there? Did? I didn't see this path of like xenophobia and general casual racism and like the rise of, like white supremacy with these fucking shooters like.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:31:54] Right.

JVN [00:31:55] I guess I didn't see that in the cards in 2013.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:31:57] Right. Right, right. Yeah. We kind of saw, because any time around that time, I think that we tried to speak about racism or inequality in this country. You would get shut down so fast. What are you talking about? We gave you this. Don't pull out the race card. Well look at all the strides you're making. Like, what do you? No one was allowed to talk about their own experiences. And how does that happen? By the lack of representation on television and in media or in film, right? We didn't, we didn't have any of that. Nobody was allowed to share their stories. Nobody was writing about these things. As soon as the platform for media changed and the landscape expanded, we have more people sharing, more people sharing, and then people who do not want those people to share growing angrier and angrier and angrier. And this is sort of the bubble that that sort of exploded in 2016 when you saw Donald Trump running for president. And that's when shit hit the fan and people were like super open about airing their grievances with people who are liberal and, and or democratic or whatever it was, whatever side you were on. But if you were, if you were way too idealistic or anything like that, that was being shot down. When I was in college, when I talked about equality and justice for all, these kids would chew me up.

JVN [00:33:21] When was this?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:33:22] This was, let's I graduated, '08. And so during this time, there weren't any conversations about immigration reform. There wasn't even. I mean, I hadn't even thought about sharing my story. Because-

JVN [00:33:35] Because when you were 14, was that Bush 2?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:33:39] That was Bush 2. Yeah. Yeah.

JVN [00:33:41] And actually, I, I know that this like unpopular and like, we might have to edit this out, but it is it, I think that this is like a fact. I'm pretty sure I like read this. Like from Bush 2 to Obama. There was actually more deportations under the Obama administration.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:33:55] Yeah, yeah.

JVN [00:33:55] And part of why he, I think this is true, increased deportations is actually a way for him to, like, appease the conservatives because he was like, look, you can't say that I'm soft on security and soft on whatever, because I am enforcing this whole thing.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:34:09] Right.

JVN [00:34:09] But I think that's part of what's interesting. And I just like wrote down was like "life versus art, life imitating art". And your story in "Orange is the New Black", and not only like your character story, but just the way that like we talk about mass incarceration and the way that "Orange is the New Black" kind of really shed a light on the for profit nature of mass incarceration and how it is this like huge, like a very corrupt business. And it's really not about making anyone safer. And it's really about money. And it's for every butt that's in one of those beds. It's like X amount of dollars a year.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:34:42] Oh, for sure.

JVN [00:34:42] Then there's these people who are just getting really, really rich. And really we're criminalizing like mental health, drug addiction, pornist. Like I think we also criminalize pornists.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:34:53] Pornists and sex work and and everything that people indulge in and enjoy. Obviously, this is a way we, instead of having actual conversations about it or actually giving rights to people who deserve, who, actual workers who, who deserve rights. What we do is we criminalize it so that we can, so that people can profit off of those bodies. And I think going back to the Obama administration and why and, and thinking about the Bush administration, and all the harm that I guess both administrations did. I, it's dif-, the Obama administration really had a, it was difficult for them to do anything. The Obama administration actually did try to pass comprehensive immigration reform. He did try to enact and use his executive power to keep parents here and, and enact DAPA, which was an extension of DACA.

JVN [00:35:55] Oh, that would've been for parents?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:35:57] That would have been for parents who are here with U.S. citizen kids. And there were bills that were, that were tried to-



JVN [00:36:04] That McConnell just like killed 'cause-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:36:05] Yeah, that, that House and Senate-.

JVN [00:36:06] 'Cause after 2010, we lost.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:36:08] Yeah.

JVN [00:36:09] Because 2008 to '10, you did have Nancy Pelosi and we did have Harry or had Harry Reid, Henry, Harry Reid. And then after '10, we like because we also learned with Sister District on this podcast, like that was the largest loss of like, democratically elect, or like Democrats. We lost a thousand seats in the midterm election of 2010 because that was like with the Tea Party coming in.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:36:27] Yeah. The deportation machine, though, had been choo choo-ing, like for a long time. In 1996, they enacted these terrible, terrible immigration laws that actually set up the immigration landscape as we know it today. And Trump has been able to exacerbate these awful-.

JVN [00:36:44] Can you tell us? Like what? I don't know where they are.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:36:46] So in 1996 and I won't get because too heady with you.

JVN [00:36:49] Because when I think 1996, all I think is like the Magnificent Seven. Shannon Miller, who we've also had on this podcast, not to keep namedropping, but honey. Like for a Midwestern kid who was obsessed gymnastics, like that was a great gymnastics year, but I need to know.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:36:59] Sure. Absolutely. I know.

JVN [00:36:59] I need to fucking know.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:36:59] I know.

JVN [00:36:59] But I need to know what's really going on, while we were like 9.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:37:02] So, yes. So there were these awful laws that did, it did really awful things for the, for the immigration landscape, which were to increase the privatization of detention centers, increased attention and weakened due process and criminalized crossing the border. Right? Or criminalize entry. And so these things really hurt the immigrant community, because after you, you are, most, most entries are going to be illegal or over, and overstaying a visa is going to be illegal. So it's so hard for people to come back from this and actually apply for citizenship and, and, and get anywhere with it. Right? So these were things that were expanded on even now. So that's why you see due process weekend. People go and they don't, they're not able to exercise certain rights because we do have certain rights under the Constitution, whether you are documented or undocumented. So those are weekend. And then you have this country exercising incarceration for a little, like a sneeze.

JVN [00:38:12] Right.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:38:12] And so, and so. And then here's where you see the problem is that these people are filling up these beds, people are making more money and nothing is changing.

JVN [00:38:20] Because like, so is that like the whole thing of like where after '96, like, let's say that you're undocumented and you get pulled over for like, like driving under the influence. Like it's not. But you're not like, you didn't like a point 2, like let's say you blew like a point 0, like a point 04, so you're not, you wouldn't even get a DUI.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:38:36] It's a criminal offense.

JVN [00:38:36] Yeah, you wouldn't get a DUI, like if you are documented.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:38:39] No.

JVN [00:38:39] Like it. But like you, because again it's like point 04. You're not like at the point 08.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:38:42] Right.

JVN [00:38:43] So it's like but yeah. Like just, it's.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:38:46] Any little thing. Jaywalking, smoking a J. Whatever it is. Things are super decriminalized now for like, for-.

JVN [00:38:53] White people. Or for citizens.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:38:54] But yes, white people. These are criminalized in immigration court.

JVN [00:38:58] The reason that the white person thing is really important to mention here, though, is because like statistically, like we know this from New York City, like if you had three white people smoking a joint on a stoop and three Latino people smoking a joint on the stoop, the likelihood of the, of the three Latino people to get stopped and questioned by the police or just fucked with because they're smoking a joint is like way higher than like the three counter than-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:39:18] Way higher.

JVN [00:39:19] And we also, I mean, this is like kind of off the subject, but I feel like I've seen several news stories in this last year where you had an American citizen who was of Latino or LatinX, Latin, you know, descent, ethnicity, whatever, and was detained for like multiple months.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:39:35] Right. Right. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you see that when the kinds of bail that is set for, for folks of color as opposed to, to white folks. It's, it's, it's really, their discrepancy is huge. And that's what we need to talk about. And that's when we say when, when we talk about checking your privilege and understanding that because you are of lighter skin, we still have colorism that dominates this country and the world. Right? And we have to understand that, that you are going to have certain privileges and benefits based on your skin color. And

that's something that we need to really talk about and, and consider when we're trying to just label anyone as a criminal.

JVN [00:40:17] So in 2016, you write "In The Love-", "In the Country We Love: My Family Divided". And you would, I'm guessing, had been thinking about this book and writing this book over like the couple of years previously as you're working on "Orange is the New Black" and like doing "Jane the Virgin" and running around. Correct?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:40:32] No.

JVN [00:40:32] No?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:40:33] No. I was, I honestly.

JVN [00:40:35] You wrote it like super fast?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:40:37] It was super fast. The whole thing happened fast because I, again, I think that the biggest moments in my life happen when I'm, like, super depressed and I have nowhere else to put my energy or nowhere else. And like no other options other than to just come out with something super dope. So I think that's, I think that's has sort of been my M.O. is like taking a leap in something that's super scary. But it kind of always happens when I'm, I'm down to the wire and I'm boiling up. I think that it happened during, during, right before the 2016 elections. And I'm starting to hear really negative rhetoric about my community and I'm starting to audition for different things and really not seeing the needle moving at all because I was, I was on "Orange is the New Black", but I really wasn't seeing too much change in Hollywood or for the parts that I was kind of going after. So I really felt like, OK, this is my time. I have to say something about representation in media. And I absolutely have to talk about what's going on in politics because I, who am a daughter of immigrants who actually has experienced family separation, know way more about what an actual person goes through than some of these fucking politicians who are trying to, like, pander to us and tell us about our own experience. And so I honestly just did an op ed. I met this woman at this at, there was, remember "Cosmo for Latinas"?

JVN [00:42:04] Yes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:42:06] So there is an event, that, that publication is no longer, but there was an event where this woman was being honored and she was a young immigration lawyer, lawyer, attorney. She was a young immigration attorney. And she was doing incredible things for her community. And I was so inspired by what she was doing and she wasn't chasing fame. She wasn't chasing, you know, trying to get ahead in this business. Nothing. And she just seems so resolved. She just seemed like she had, I mean, I'm sure, she. I mean, I know her. She's my very good friend and she has her own stuff going on. But she is very clear in her purpose. She was put here to help others. And that, for her, means the world. And I was trying, I was at the time there, I was trying to find what, what was going to make me tick. What did I do? What did I want? Diane, what do you want? Do you want to be an actress? You're an actress. You want, you want this or that. You want to buy yourself that. OK, you can do it. So now what? Well. I want to finally come from a place of truth. And I want to help others with my story and I want to help other people not feel so alone. So I went up to this woman and like word vomit. I was like, "My parents were

deported. And I want to be like you". I just went up to her and said, "I want to be like you". This woman is my age. And she goes, "I can help you. What's going on? Write your story".

JVN [00:43:30] I had to get it out. I had a little cough. I was holding it for 30 seconds. Sorry.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:43:33] No, no. Don't hold it, don't hold it. And then I wrote this op ed. It went, it was published and people went nuts. And I got all these calls. You need to write a book. Da da da da. All these people wanting to interview me. They were so like, outraged by what had happened. And that's kind of how I got launched into it. I was not prepared for it at all.

JVN [00:43:54] So. I guess that's kind of what I was saying with like the processing thing, it's like so that happens. And then the next fucking year.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:44:03] Yeah. I release the book.

JVN [00:44:05] And then Donald Trump is elected.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:44:07] And then, yes.

JVN [00:44:07] And now we're seeing all these families being separated.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:44:10] Yeah. Well, now we're seeing asylum seekers be, which was, we started seeing things that we had never seen before. Even with the Obama administration, even with the Bush administration.

JVN [00:44:21] Like separating families because of parents HIV positive now. Which is like a new thing.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:44:24] OK, OK. See, I did not know that. See, so-.

JVN [00:44:26] We just found that out that in a public hearing that AOC was conducting and, and now we found out that if a family comes across the border and a parent has retroviral HIV medication, they are separating them because the parent is HIV positive, which is a non-, I mean, it is, if you're undetectable and you're on your pills like you're not spread, it's, it would be like, do you take a kid away if they had the flu?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:44:48] It's so fucking backwards, like that's what they keep on doing. And it's like, it's we're, we're going backwards. Obviously.

JVN [00:44:53] So I guess what I was going to say. That's what I trying to say, it's like isn't that re-traumatizing for you knowing what these people are going through and knowing that these people in pow-, like, and you shared your-? Like, what do you do for people that are activists and work so hard, and then it's like, I mean, I think 2018 was, that helps me sleep at night still. Like the midterms of 2018.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:13] Oh my god, for-. That last, that's lasting. I got a little juice left from that.

JVN [00:45:17] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:17] Absolutely.

JVN [00:45:17] Me too. It's give me any hope that 2020 won't be so bad, but I am just having a little bit of like nerves.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:22] Yeah.

JVN [00:45:23] I was just interviewing Bill Nye just right before this and he was telling, you know, talking me about climate change and it's like, he's like, you know, hopefully like cooler heads are gonna prevail, like we're gonna be better. And I was like-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:31] How do you stay so positive?

JVN [00:45:33] I'm. I'm like yeah seriously.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:34] Bill Nye has literally been talking about this like since the dinosaurs.

JVN [00:45:37] Which is what we were fucking saying.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:39] I know.

JVN [00:45:39] It's, but it's like, it's like but, it's like if you're still sitting here, I mean you're Bill Nye and you're like, "Well, I hope, you know, cooler heads are going to prevail" and like, I'm not convinced.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:47] Yeah.

JVN [00:45:47] I'm fucking scared like.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:49] Right.

JVN [00:45:50] Like things are, like it's like things are getting crazier and crazier.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:45:53] And I think that, I think that when you sign up for whatever you signed up for. Right? That being an activist isn't a seasonal thing or not the word "activist", but being an advocate or being an ally for folks isn't a seasonal thing. It is lifelong. So if you don't keep a cool head and if you don't keep that mentality that things are gonna change and there is work to be done, then, then you have no business doing it because, you know, then what do you do?

JVN [00:46:24] But it's like, how do you self soothe in the face of this fucking bullshit?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:46:27] 'Cause I've been getting trashed every weekend, I don't know. I don't know.

JVN [00:46:31] So a little bit of comedy.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:46:32] Yes, absolutely. I, I try to fill my life with positive people. I feel so protected now that I have shared and that people have welcomed me with open arms. And I have such an amazing community that is there for me. And that's why I tell, I tell my, I say my kids because I go to different universities and different high schools and I talk to kids who are either Dreamers or going through family separation or are afraid of family separation or just have an interest in politics or in advocacy work or in the arts, is that you can't, you have to, you have to align yourself with people who are doing great work because therefore you will be always sort of in the know and always doing great work right alongside them. And it's OK to take time for yourself and say, you know what, today I can't really do it. And that's what I do. I, sometimes I can't get out of bed because I suffer from depression and sometimes I just have to say, no, I'm not showing up for this or I'm not showing up for that. And that's OK. I know that tomorrow I'll wake up and everything that I've worked for isn't completely collapsed.

JVN [00:47:41] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:47:41] You know, and that's what you do when you surround yourself with a community that cares about you. So even, even me coming here to this podcast, I saw a great benefit to me knowing you, because I know you're doing so many great things in your community and doing so many positive things and driving change. I said I'm also doing that. I'm going to align myself with Jonathan because I also I want him to know that I'm an ally and I want him to be an ally for my community, for everything that I'm working. And that's how you build. That's how you build.

JVN [00:48:14] Can we go just like a few more minutes? Just a few. Do you have a few more minutes?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:48:18] Yeah, yeah.

JVN [00:48:18] OK. So great. Ally. How can white people and citizens of the United States be better allies to our gorgeous undocumented family members?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:48:28] Yeah.

JVN [00:48:28] Or people that are maybe they're, like we're born in the United States, but they're going through family separations due to deportation or maybe due to incarceration, like how can we be better allies for advocacy and for change?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:48:39] Well, first, let's stop incarcerating. First, let's stop using incarceration as a form of a cure. That is not a cure. That is a disease. Incarceration is terrible. And it will fucking kill us all. It is creating generations of fatherless and motherless children. It is creating people who are very lost and without any direction. That isn't fair. That's not OK to put on our children. What we need to do is support bills and, and organizations and people who are fighting to, to decriminalize a system, decriminalize people, to, to get rid of the privatization of, of prisons. We need to support organizations who are doing the work for that, so that families can stay together and just listen, listen to folks who are actually going through this. And then I would say the other thing is to educate yourselves. Know your history. Just because my parents came in the 80s and your parents came in the Mayflower, don't make you better immigrants than us.

JVN [00:49:47] Right.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:49:47] Do you know what I mean?

JVN [00:49:49] Yes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:49:49] Regard, regardless of when you came. Everything has a cause and effect. We were talking earlier about the de-, destabilization of certain governments that the U.S. had a great part to do with in Honduras, in-

JVN [00:50:02] Guatemala, El Salvador.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:50:03] Guatemala and El Savador. So these are all places, we have to understand that the U.S. has had a part in destabilizing a lot of different economies and a lot of different governments. And the reason why people are fleeing here now is because those places are unsafe to live. And what we're doing now is criminalizing asylum seekers and that isn't right. Think about you. Think about if you were in that position with your child and you had to flee this country, you would do anything, anything you can or you could do to save your family. And that's what these people are going through. So just be a human for a second and think about your history.

JVN [00:50:46] So, I'm going to paraphrase from that a little bit. It's like elections and like showing up for elections is so important. We got to interview Masha Gessen earlier this year, who is an incredible LGBTQ activist. But immigration is a queer issue.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:50:59] Yeah.

JVN [00:50:59] It's an LGBTQ+ issue. America was one of the only 12 countries, now it's even harder to do so, but it was one of the only countries where you could claim asylum on basis of gender identity or sexual orientation, which is now being like really called into question by this administration. So it really is an issue of like equality, fairness, what the American dream fundamentally boils down to, which is like the ability to like dream the life live-, the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness. And I think that's really important. So it's like really showing up for elections.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:51:24] Showing up.

JVN [00:51:25] Knowing what your history is. I do have one little-. Is your mom and dad like, OK, now? Are we, are we thriving? Everything, ones OK? Like?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:51:34] Everyone's OK.

JVN [00:51:35] Great. Like that's like so happy to hear like namaste, yay for that. Like love thriving fam. And like can't we just like get a great president in 2020 and then will just like apply for like a gorgeous green card and then everyone can come back, come back. We'll just get gorgeous houses, it'll be fine.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:51:51] Can it be like family reunification? Can we like set up the visa system to work? And to work equally for everyone? And can we invest in, in rehabilitation instead of continually incarcerating folks?

JVN [00:52:05] If Republicans made like rehabilitation versus re-incarceration, like a part of there like election strategy, I feel like they would become more popular.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:52:14] Yeah. Could we let go a little bit of our fucking money so that so many others can thrive? Because it keeps me up at night knowing that there are so many hungry people out there, like, how can you-?

JVN [00:52:24] Does it not keep certain people? I know. I feel so much guilt about, like working day in and day out over like my whole life, and I still feel guilty about what I have. Why do these rich folks now feel more guilty?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:52:37] Yes! They need to be feeling guilty so that we can be happy with a little bit of money that we have.

JVN [00:52:41] We're working so god damn hard to get.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:52:43] Damnit.

JVN [00:52:43] OK, so then, this is the last thing.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:52:46] Yeah.

JVN [00:52:46] For 2020, we obviously have a very gorgeous field. I think I did realize who I'm going to endorse like last week. I think I realized who I like.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:52:55] Oh my God, oh my God. On.

JVN [00:52:55] I do think I realize who I like. Is like do you-, I don't need to put that same pressure on you. Like, it's like it's time, it's fine. Like you can figure you want, but do you have like a top three? Do you have a top five? Like who are we really into right now.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:06] Elizabeth Warren. I know. Bernie.

JVN [00:53:14] I kind of like that Julian this last time.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:19] Julian Castro.

JVN [00:53:19] Yeah.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:19] OK, let me let me just tell you who I love.

JVN [00:53:20] I just didn't like it when he said that thing to Joe-, OK. I'm not a Joe Biden queen. I'm literally not a Joe Biden queen.



DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:26] I'm not a Joe Biden queen either. But I get Joe Biden. I hear you, boo.

JVN [00:53:28] But I'm, but I'm actually like literally not a Joe Biden queen, even though I did really like when he, like, beat Obama to the punch on gay marriage. I thought that was fierce back in the day.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:36] Yes.

JVN [00:53:37] And if he does win the nomination, I will obviously support him. But he's not who I am, he's not my first choice.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:42] Yeah.

JVN [00:53:42] But I will go for him.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:42] It's OK.

JVN [00:53:43] Comma.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:43] Yeah. Go ahead.

JVN [00:53:44] But I didn't like when, when baby Julian Castro was like, you just said this different thing two minutes ago. I was like, no, he didn't.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:49] Oh. To Joe Biden.

JVN [00:53:50] Yes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:51] I know. It's such a cut throat.

JVN [00:53:51] That little thing, I was like I was like girl.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:54] Like, leave him alone.

JVN [00:53:55] But I like when he was cut throating the other people. I really did. And you know, here's the thing about Julian Castro that I like the most.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:53:59] What?

JVN [00:54:01] If you close your eyes, does he not sound like he could be Barack's brother?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:06] Sure.

JVN [00:54:07] They have like that same sort of like soothing but booming BDE voice, that's like.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:14] Yeah, yeah.

JVN [00:54:15] You know, but I don't need to ever show you that because I'm like I'm happily married and like, I don't, you know, I'm very professional, like-.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:19] Julian is a great candidate. And he's super overlooked because of, you know, so many reasons and who we try to, you know, who we put on a pedestal. But I, I'm really glad that there are so many people running for office that are clear headed.

JVN [00:54:32] I cut you off. I have to, but please, no. So but your top three is?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:35] No. I was gonna say, I would, actually I have a top 4. I have baby Biden. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Sorry. Baby. Baby Lizzy.

JVN [00:54:43] Yes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:43] Baby Bernie.

JVN [00:54:46] Yes.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:47] Baby Julian and Baby Biden.

JVN [00:54:50] That's your top four.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:51] That's my top four.

JVN [00:54:52] Ok, I love that.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:54:53] You know, I'm just gonna put it out there.

JVN [00:54:54] I mean, you know. And I am, I would, I, I feel, think that's a solid top four. I want to give room for that little Baby Pete to like continue to, like, figure it out. Like, I'm supporting. But, you know, I think a really dark horse is and I know the people get so mad when I say this cause, like, we can have another-. But I like certain things that Marianne Williamson says.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:55:17] Sure.

JVN [00:55:17] I know it's controversial, but I like where she's coming from with a whole like it's going to take a bigger thought, a bigger thought or a bigger notion or bigger idea than pol-, because like, because Donald Trump is bigger than a person. He is like my state of mind. He's like, he's like a phenomenon.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:55:31] These, all these wonderful people who are running need to figure out how to like, we need all of you.

JVN [00:55:37] Yeah. What's our MAGA? What's our way to? Oh my God, that was the literal question that I was gonna fucking ask you. And then we can leave.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:55:41] OK, OK.

JVN [00:55:42] OK, so I've been doing this commercial with Thomas' English muffins and it's like, what's your? In your perfect morning, what is like your perfect morning? Mine always involves building a time machine to either fix the 1998 Nagano Olympics or the 2016 election.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:55:54] OK.

JVN [00:55:54] Because I want my bitch Michelle Kwan to have a gold medal and it really, you know, it's whatever. She's got 5 World ones, but like, whatever.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:56:00] Yeah.

JVN [00:56:00] I just really would like going, but I'm not over Nagano yet. We might have to edit this out because-

DIANE GUERRERO [00:56:04] It's not over.

JVN [00:56:04] Like it was it's continuing to upset me though, even now that I have like a close personal friendship with her. It's not assuaging that for me at all. It's only intensifying it.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:56:11] Greatt. Right. Of course.

JVN [00:56:12] Like my my feeling scorned over '98 because she's actually even like more of an amazing person and friend in real life than I could have ever even imagined. So it's like wow.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:56:20] I'm so happy for you.

JVN [00:56:21] Me too, to be honest. But in your perfect world, like if, if we could wake up on November 7th, 2020, which I think is the day of the election or the 6th, whatever the Election Day is, what do you think is the strategy to like building a winning coalition to elect a leader and not only a leader, but a Senate majority and a House majority and more state Houses and Senates so that we can really like ensure the future of equality and immigration reform and criminal justice reform? What do you think the platform is? What do you think it would take in that perfect world to get that to happen?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:56:53] In the perfect, in, in our, in a perfect world, we would need voting rights restored, is huge because most, most people that we can, we, whose votes we rely on aren't even allowed to vote. So I would say restoring voting rights would be like my number one. That's it.

JVN [00:57:15] No, it's so great.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:57:16] That's all I got.

JVN [00:57:16] And we were starting to see that a little bit in Florida.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:57:19] Vote Elizabeth Warren, 2020.

JVN [00:57:20] I love that. And I love your glasses so much.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:57:22] Thank you.

JVN [00:57:22] We need to show those on some Instagram content. Thank you so much.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:57:25] Thank you.

JVN [00:57:25] Diane Guerrero. And get the book. Get, follow you on the Gram. Is there. And where, is there anything they are doing like RN, that you really want people to know about?

DIANE GUERRERO [00:57:33] I am. I'm on a show that I already did a first season of called "Doom Patrol". It's on DCUniverse.com and it's going to be on HBO Max. But I play a fucking superhero, bad ass crazy Jane. She deals with mental health issues and she also has different superpowers that match her different personalities cause she has split personality disorder.

JVN [00:57:52] HBO Max, girl.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:57:54] Yeah, yeah. people recognized me for the fucking Emmys next year. You see that my true colors come out.

JVN [00:58:01] I love your colors. They're beautiful. But I can't wait to see the show and I really feel like HBO Max is gonna be like a threat to this competition. I'm really excited to see their slew of offerings that they're bringing out. So, Diane Guerrero, thank you so much for your time. Let's go make some content.

DIANE GUERRERO [00:58:10] Thank you so much.

JVN [00:58:14] You've been listening to "Getting Curious" with me, Jonathan Van Ness. My guest this week was Diane Guerrero. You'll find links to her work in the episode description of whatever you're listening to the show on. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter @curiouswithjvn. Our theme music is "Freak" by Quin. Thank you so much to her for letting us use it. If you enjoy our show, introduce a friend. Tell someone, tell anyone you know. Just yeah, spread the word. We love you so much. And we so appreciate you coming back and continuing to listen and supporting our show. We just love you so much. So thank you so much. And to our team, "Getting Curious" is produced by me, Emily Bossak is our amazing producer on "Getting Curious" and she also runs our CuriousWithJVN social accounts. We love you, Emily, Julie Carrillo, Rae Ellis, Harry Nelson, Cody Ziglar and Colin Anderson. Thank you so much, everyone, for listening. See you next time.