



Enoch Rosas
Papa Rollo's Pizza - Waco, TX

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Project: Serving Waco for \$2.13/Hr—Waco Restaurant Servers Who Make the Federal
Subminimum Wage

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Angelica Mazé: This is Angelica Mazé. The date is April 11, 2024. I am working on this Waco Restaurant Server Project for the Southern Foodways Alliance, and I am here with my first narrator, Enoch Rosas. Enoch, will you tell us your full name for the record?

Enoch Rosas: Yes, ma'am. My name is Enoch Rosas.

Angelica Mazé: Wonderful, thank you. And if you don't mind sharing, what is your date of birth?

Enoch Rosas: April 8, 1991. I just had a birthday three days ago.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, happy birthday!

Enoch Rosas: On Eclipse Day, so—

Angelica Mazé: Oh my gosh, I didn't even think about that!

Enoch Rosas: Yeah! No, it's cool. So, we didn't have to make too many plans, 'cause the city of Waco made plans for us to be busy.

Angelica Mazé: That's so cool! Well, auspicious. Happy birthday!

Enoch Rosas: You're right. Thank you, thank you.0:00:54

Angelica Mazé: So, before we get into your experience working as a restaurant server in Waco making the subminimum wage, tell me just a little bit about how you came to Waco, and then we'll sort of lead into how you found that work.

Enoch Rosas: Sure! I was born and raised in Waco, Texas; lived here my entire life. I'm thirty-three now. My very first job was at a fast-food restaurant, which at the time they started

paying me just a little over minimum wage, which at the time was \$5.75. I was at a Wendy's, and they started paying me \$6.15, so as a sixteen-year-old year old I was just happy to have a job. And then I picked up a dishwasher gig at a restaurant, which was my first official restaurant job like that, which again, the minimum wage there was \$7.25, so we started making \$7.25 there at that time. So, I was at Wendy's a bit for this minimum wage increase from \$5.75 to \$7.25, which has not changed by the way.

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Angelica Mazé: Which has not changed! We will get to that. [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: All right. Cool, cool.

Angelica Mazé: So, when you started that dishwashing job, how old were you, roughly?

Enoch Rosas: I was actually... Was I seventeen? I must have been sixteen. Honestly, when I tell people I can't remember, I really cannot remember.

Angelica Mazé: [laughs] Yeah, that's fine.

Enoch Rosas: I was in high school. I remember being a senior and already working at the same restaurant, which then I later pivoted onto what we'll get into.

Angelica Mazé: Gotcha, so let's get to it. So, you had dipped your feet into the restaurant work in high school and saw a minor wage increase which has not budged since then. That was a long time ago. So, what came after that? How did you get into front of house serving work?

Enoch Rosas: That was actually kind of—no joke—like a life transforming thing for me, 'cause then I started attending Baylor, and this was after two years of community college. Since I

started pursuing a degree in business, this was like one of those moments in my life where I was like, "Enoch, you can't be a dishwasher for your whole life if you're trying to pursue business."

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Honestly, I was just intimidated by talking to people, which actually reflects my time at the fast food restaurant. The fast food industry was, at the time—well, I don't know how it is now, but you took some of the most verbal abuse ever, especially where I worked at, where there was a dollar menu and people would cuss at you because you had to spend a dollar. So, I was a dishwasher, so I kind of avoided front of house things for the longest, and then one day while I was attending here at Baylor, I was like, "No, I have to be able to branch out and be able to talk to people," so I started waiting tables. And specifically where I worked at, you kinda started in a section where you did not get very many tables, but we'll get into that here in a sec.

Angelica Mazé: OK, yeah. So, you were thinking that it would be like good customer service experience, and sort of just like front facing, dealing with people, getting your social interactions?

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Enoch Rosas: Definitely. I thought it was gonna be—well, it is practice. And before you know it, you kind of just find this part of you where it's like, oh! This is what I'm good at, or this is what I like to do, or it comes naturally to me. And to me personally, it came very naturally to me, at least I thought at that time. And no, it definitely led on to what I did for the next ten years.

Angelica Mazé: Wow! OK, ten years. So, what/where was that first job?

Enoch Rosas: It was at a local pizza restaurant here, Papa Rollo's Pizza, here in Waco.

And it's a Waco staple, actually. It's been here [since] 1963, I believe 1963, [19]73, [19]63, [19]69—I can't remember at the time. It was on my T-shirt for fifteen years, and I don't remember what it was, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: You blocked it out. [laughing]

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. But, for me personally, I started because I wanted to learn to talk to people.

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I had had so many bad experiences talking to people in fast food, because then later I did retail jobs, and whenever I took those jobs on, all I wanted to do was fold clothes and stay in the back. [Angelica laughs] And I am not kidding with just how bad fast food was, or just how it was as a sixteen-year-old in my first job. And this was inside of a mall, too, so I got to see all sorts of interactions.

But anyway, yeah, I knew I would have to start being more social, and I said, "OK, this is either gonna happen now, or you're gonna have to do something about it," because again, I was pursuing a business degree. And it took something inside of me, 'cause I was twenty-two at the time, which most of your servers, as soon as they turn eighteen, they're doing it. And if you go to some of these other restaurants, they're doing it before that. But that's just how it went for me.

Angelica Mazé: So, you're saying you felt like you were kind of coming to the game a little bit older, to the serving game?

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Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah, definitely.

Angelica Mazé: Like, other young people had started...

Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah, especially. You could see sixteen-year-olds working at Bush's chicken and stuff like that, but once I started, I knew at first it's something I definitely did not want to do, only because I was a dishwasher I got to see all that. I was like, "I don't want any part of that. I'd rather be back here minding my business with my headphones on." [Angelica laughs] And then I was like, "No, if I wanna be social, if I wanna learn to actually talk to people, I have to go out and do that." So, that's what happened. That's how it sparked.

Angelica Mazé: That's a lot of bravery and initiative. As someone who has observed from the outside, too—or from the other side, from the kitchen—it's difficult work, serving.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, it is.

Angelica Mazé: So, you were twenty-two, you were at Papa Rollo's. How long were you there for?

Enoch Rosas: [thinking] What was it? Can't even tell you the year. 2022, actually. August of 2022, that was my last month there. That's a different conversation. I mean, we can talk about that if y'all want.

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Angelica Mazé: We can talk about as much or as little as you want. But we'll lead up to that.

Enoch Rosas: Perfect, yeah.

Angelica Mazé: And if you want, it's up to you.

Enoch Rosas: Cool. No, that's all good.

Angelica Mazé: So, leading up to that, you were there for ten years or something?

Enoch Rosas: Probably four—[thinking] Like I said, I...

Angelica Mazé: Longer?

Enoch Rosas: People joke like, "I don't know how long I've been doing this?" No, I have no idea, because I always had—I was working that fast food restaurant and also dishwashing over here at Papa Rollo's at the same time. It's just 'cause I've always been a workaholic my whole life. But yeah, it had to be about fourteen years. But I was only serving there after I turned twenty-two. Yeah, that's what I remember from Instagram pictures that I posted ten years ago.

Angelica Mazé: So, at that job, you were making that subminimum wage, the \$2.13 an hour?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, definitely.

Angelica Mazé: Let's talk a little bit about your experience as a server, and then we'll kind of get into the wages. So, how was it for you? What was the work like for you? Did you enjoy it?

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Enoch Rosas: Sure. So, that specific restaurant I was at, the section where you started training, it was an upstairs section, and I remember this so clear, it was like you would have no tables. You wouldn't even—so, you haven't made no money, basically, for the first two hours of your shift. And then seven o'clock comes, it's busy. The whole downstairs is full, so the only place to put them is upstairs. So, you had zero tables or you had five, because they would take

the two-top, and they're like, "How many do you have? Three? OK, upstairs. How many do you have? Four? OK, upstairs." Because it was the last place to put them, and before I know it, I'd be sitting there with nothing, on my phone one minute, and three minutes later I have eighteen people in my section, and I'm like, "Oh, crap." And then I gotta run. And this is also, again, upstairs, so you are running downstairs, coming back upstairs, running downstairs, and just—for anything! I mean, if they need a straw and you forgot it? Oh man...

Angelica Mazé: So, super physical?

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Enoch Rosas: Basically. Honestly, at that time it was more mental for me, 'cause I'm like, "Crap, what am I doing? That is not, like... How did it go from zero to a hundred real quick?" And later on I've learned that that's actually the best place to train, 'cause you're not even sinking or swimming, you're just sinking.

Angelica Mazé: [laughs] You just sink.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, you're just sinking the whole time. But when you mentioned the wage that you were making at the time, because of the structure of that section in that restaurant specifically, after, say, those five tables that I got at that moment, if it didn't get busier than that, they're like, "OK, that's all you got for tonight." And you're like, "Crap, that was it?" So, whatever money you made there, you made there.

Angelica Mazé: Wow.

Enoch Rosas: And then you still had to do probably an hour's worth of side work, at least. And at the time we were closing at 11:30, so if I got all my business 7:00 to 8:30, by the

time everybody was paid out—9:00 latest, in that upstairs section—now you gotta go do all this other stuff.

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It was just like, "And I'm here till 11:30?" It was just something that, looking back—this was pre-Covid era, as well. It was dreadful, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Was it?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, it was terrible.

Angelica Mazé: So, on average, roughly how long was that shift for you?

Enoch Rosas: Honestly, it was shorter than the dishwasher shift. At the time you just didn't know what to compare it to, because it was my first time doing something like that. Nowadays, obviously you can look back, obviously with hindsight. But yeah, you were there nine hours, 4:00 to whatever, at that time. And you're like, "Crap, this is what I'm making today." I do know later—years on, almost seven or eight years later—that situation was still the same there, where they were eight-hour shifts. At this time I was a waiter in the bar, but they were there for eight hours, and some people would make \$30 to \$60 in tips. That was later on.

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Angelica Mazé: So, at the beginning part of this dreadfulness was that it was such a long, grueling shift, and then the tips would be. . .

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, the tips were. . . They were there. Another thing is the restaurant itself, just how much strain they put on you and stuff like that, so this isn't all necessarily just

that. The structure of where you're at makes a big, big difference. Skip forward, last July, I worked in a fine dining restaurant where, same thing, you just sit there for like two hours. You're like, "I'm at the mercy of the guest, honestly, right now," and then you make what you make. Despite it being high dining, you were still making a certain amount. Later on, restaurants have it to where they average out your pay. They legally can't pay you less than minimum wage, but every place is different, honestly.

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The one I had the most experience with obviously was Rollo's, but early on in those days, I remember very, very specifically, I worked a double, 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM, and I made \$50 in tips, which is crazy 'cause I had only two tables, so I couldn't even complain. I was in sections—first off, I remember this very specifically, 'cause later on I look forward and I'm like man, "How blessed am I now?" But I was in this party-room section where a table came in. It was probably a group of over ten. I made \$20 in tips. But then you're sitting there, you're just like, "Man, what is going on?" And then at night, I just remembered, I was like, "Hey, does anybody work in that section tonight?" They're like, "No." I was like, "Hey, I'll pick up that shift. I have nothing going on tonight. Let me pick up that shift." This area was upstairs in the bar, which nobody really went up there unless it got crazy in the bar.

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But it did! I actually made \$30 that night, and I was out of there by 10:00 PM. I remember later on, I talked to somebody that night, and I was like, "Yeah, I didn't do very well. I didn't do much. I made \$50." They're like, "Well, that's good. You didn't do anything, and you made \$50." I'm like, "I was there how long? Eleven hours?" So, I was like, "Yeah." But that was me also

breaking another little personal barrier where I wanted to, I had to prove to myself like, "Look man, you got to do it. You have to do it if you want to make money, honestly."

Angelica Mazé: So, you were sort of just trying to prove to yourself that you were kind of—I don't know, resilient? Tough enough to work the long shift?

Enoch Rosas: Tough, but also you kind of had to do it, because otherwise you're not gonna make money. And then later on, I preached that to everybody else who went into that place, but again, then it trails off.

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Angelica Mazé: When you were preaching to other people, what kind of advice did you end up giving to new folks who were coming in?

Enoch Rosas: I was like, "Look, if you wanna make money doing this, you can make a lot of money. You can make it, but you're just gonna have to put in the hours." And I always referenced that. I was like, "I remember working doubles and making \$50." And then I was like, "You can make money, you're just gonna have to give everything else up, and you're just gonna have to work open to close, open to close, open. . . ." I have a picture of my schedule here from 2015.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, wow! Really?

Enoch Rosas: And I'll show it to you.

Angelica Mazé: I'd love to see it.

Enoch Rosas: I'll pull it up here in a little bit. It is nowhere near normal hours that

anybody should be working, and I think this was pre-Covid.

Angelica Mazé: It sounds like you were—I don't wanna put words in your mouth, but you were really feeling like there were obviously days where you would make very little money in tips, and that was mainly just because people weren't coming in, but you had to be there.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah.

Angelica Mazé: OK, we're looking at your schedule now.

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Enoch Rosas: Mm-hmm. This was in 2015, I believe.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, dang.

Enoch Rosas: Those last couple of Saturdays and Sundays were—we used to close at midnight, or 11:00 PM on Sunday, so you're there twelve hours a day.

Angelica Mazé: That's a lot.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah.

Angelica Mazé: How long were you going to school? Because I think you said originally you were going to school while you were [working], so how long were you able to go to school and work this super demanding job?

Enoch Rosas: That kind of reflected on my school. Well, the results reflected that I didn't do very good in school. I eventually couldn't pay for Baylor, but that's a different thing.

Angelica Mazé: It's a private school. I will just note that for the record. It's an expensive private school.

Enoch Rosas: It's an expensive school, yeah. Which is actually funny! One time—this is a side note—I had such a big project here at Baylor that when I finished it, I went into my shift, and I got to work—this also reflects on that restaurant. I got to the restaurant, I was like, "I just finished my biggest project." And they're like, "Enoch, you're not even scheduled today." That is a true story!

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Angelica Mazé: Oh, wow!

Enoch Rosas: And I was like, "No way, you're kidding me!" And I checked the schedule, and I'm not scheduled. I literally went to work as a server, and then the manager is like, "Yeah, well, this guy didn't show up, so we kind of need you." And I'm like, "Well, this kind of just keeps. . . Keep going with it." But I did end up—I graduated from Tarleton. It was completely online though, which was—

Angelica Mazé: Well done.

Enoch Rosas: Thank you. That's the one way I could have really focused on that, but I know plenty of other servers that still go to school, who are still doing the whole thing, the school and then this and then that.

Angelica Mazé: So, with Tarleton, I'm guessing it was asynchronous, like you could do it on your own time?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. You did have—in the morning, so I just had to do my nights. Well, yeah. . . This is a long time ago, honestly. I still barely remember, 'cause I only did it for about a year, 'cause I was almost done. I was so close to being done.

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Angelica Mazé: You were almost done at Baylor?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, I only needed a few more hours, and I just couldn't do it, personally, so I registered at Tarleton. And yeah, daytime there, night time and homework. I remember doing my homework on the clock at Rollo's.

Angelica Mazé: Wow, that's a full load. That's amazing that you got so far through your Baylor career, so close. I'm assuming you just got really burned out, but was it just like...

Enoch Rosas: Tuition costs, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, that's right. Tuition costs.

Enoch Rosas: I just could not keep on doing it like that.

Angelica Mazé: Do you mind my asking, your restaurant wage, were you using that money to pay for your—

Enoch Rosas: No, but skip forward, I will say that later on, whenever I was working in a different section of the restaurant, I paid off just about all my other college at Tarleton with tips.

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Angelica Mazé: Oh wow! OK.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, but again, it goes to show. Cause whenever I tell people, "Hey, if you wanna do like this, there's this." And I kind of feel empathetic to some areas and restaurants and stuff like that, 'cause you're like, "Wow, look at this guy! He has a full section!" And then I look over here, and this person has like two tables. I was like, "Uh, OK."

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, it's an interesting—what you're describing—sort of a combination of, in terms of kind of getting the wage that you hope to make, the highest wage possible, whatever that is in tips specifically. It's this combination of like, you're hustling super hard, and staying open, and that includes like staying open to shifts whenever they fall in your lap and showing up sometimes when you're not even scheduled. [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: Yeah.

Angelica Mazé: But then it's also up to chance, which if it's a slow night, there's not much you can do about it, right?

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Enoch Rosas: Mm-hmm, yeah. I'm still doing it now. I still wait tables now.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, we'll get to that.

Enoch Rosas: And then, the mentality is still like, “Ugh, I don’t know.” Now I have a different one, but yeah, we'll get to that because it's a mental thing now. Now, it's more mental than it was.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, I'm interested in how your feelings about this have changed over the years as you've been doing it for so long. I'm going to backtrack just a little bit here—so, you were able to graduate from Tarleton—and we'll get to how you continued and then left Papa Rollo's and all that, but it sounded like from some of the things you said earlier that this was always meant to be kind of a training ground for something that would come after.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, definitely.

Angelica Mazé: So, you went into it not expecting to do that for your whole life?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, no. Not even close. We used to, as dishwashers, we'd always be like, "Ha, those servers suck. [Angelica laughs] Those servers are just, like, making a mess. They come back here, they leave their dishes!"

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Which is another reason I did not want any part of that. And now we're about to get into some real judgmental stuff, but we would hear these servers, and they're like, "Hey, this table doesn't want this." And it just shows that the mental capacity is like, "Bro, just do this." And we would see that from back there, as dishwashers. Later on when I started waiting tables, I'm like, "This is cake." But again, it was because it's whatever cake you got.

Angelica Mazé: Right.

Enoch Rosas: So, it's not like. . .

Angelica Mazé: So, they were complaining about, like, tables that were high maintenance?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, definitely. Or they were just. . . 'cause then I've learned this, too: Once you master that skill of being able to remember—and I'll go ahead, if that's OK, and I'll skip to my time in the bar.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, please.

Enoch Rosas: Whenever I finally started waiting tables in the bar—I only got that role, by the way, 'cause another restaurant opened up the same roles, and then a lot of the senior bartenders would go to the other one. They're like, "Ah! We're gonna make so much money over

there!" And then, yeah... other news.

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But then I kind of established myself. But I kinda knew, I was like, this is gonna take some time to get used to because these people don't know me. Now we're in the area where these people have been coming here for ten-plus years, twenty-plus years, and they know who they're talking to. They know who they're dealing with. And most of them are gonna be rude to you, like right off the bat. They're like, "Oh, I don't know this guy. This guy is this and that."

Angelica Mazé: If you're new.

Enoch Rosas: If you're new, yeah. Which, I had been there eight years, but—

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, I mean, you weren't new.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, and I'm like, "Well, now we're back to square one." And that's literally how it felt like, and then before you know, a couple years go by, and everybody asks for me. Everybody was asking for me like that. But yeah, there, finally—it took, obviously, years—I was established enough to where I was making the best money I'd ever made, honestly.

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Angelica Mazé: OK, so there was this kind of proving ground, where in addition to getting used to the job, you already were eight years used to the job, but then if you change location, even if it's the same restaurant or whatever, the customers, all the regulars, you have to get to know them.

Enoch Rosas: Now you have to win them over, yeah.

Angelica Mazé: OK.

Enoch Rosas: So, it was very difficult at first. My brothers also worked in that same restaurant. And then after time, they were like, "Hey yo, those customers don't wanna talk to me. They don't wanna talk to anybody." [Angelica laughs] They're like, "They only want you." And it's like that. You go to George's sometimes and they'll be like, "Yeah I want this person." I don't know how often that happens over there, but there's customers who only want a specific person, and then you're like, "OK, cool." This and this and this, and now I have to make time for this, now I have to make room for this and adjust it to that. Again, going back to when we would see some of these servers complain, it's like, bro you can fix that problem easily. You have to know your audience. And that's something I was able to master—after years, though.

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Angelica Mazé: Yeah, definitely. So, can you think of some examples, stories, or just—and I don't need names or anything, but of people who you worked alongside with who maybe didn't have your social skills, or weren't able to...

Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah. Oh geez, there's too many. [Angelica laughs] No seriously, it was just like, "Girl, just go do this." Or, "Dude. . ." I remember one time a guy walked this customer through the kitchen. He was like, "Oh yeah, we're going this way. That room is over here." Because he walked in through the bar, and the guy's like, "Hey, I'm looking for this meeting." And the guys like, "That's this way," and he walks him right through the kitchen area. And our GM, he's like, "Are you seriously doing that?" They just don't. Which—not just this restaurant, everywhere. You're like, "Are you serious? Like, come on man, let's think rationally. This is the best way to do this?" Oh man, I'm telling you, I could write books about this stuff. [laughs]

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Because just so much time there, you see it, and you're like, "No way, is that actually happening?" You're like, "You can fix this problem like [snaps] this fast." And then there's just . . . That might even bring up a whole different conversation. [laughs]

Angelica Mazé: Yeah. Well, that's interesting. So, you definitely worked with people who maybe weren't as successful as you are, it sounds like, in terms of whatever it was, experience, or just the ability to talk to people, or to hustle. Did y'all talk about your wages? Did you have a feel from your coworkers of how everybody felt about the \$2.13 plus the customer makes up the difference and then tips on top of that?

Enoch Rosas: Never really, because everybody—it depends who you are. You kind of walk in thinking, "I'm gonna make so much money here today," because they have rather seen it, or they have rather heard of it, or they've experienced it maybe one day.

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But there will be some days where they're feeling real full of themselves. They're like, "Hey, I made X amount of dollars today." And then the very next day they're like, "I don't know how I'm gonna do this." That's more of a personal kind of thing, but it's like, look man, you kind of have to know, once you start doing that, you kind of know what you're getting yourself into. And then of course everything else comes into play. It's a bigger reflection of how the restaurant actually will address you. Or like I said, sometimes you'll make \$30, and you'll have an hour's worth of work that you have to do afterwards. So, some restaurants, I don't know. I'm only speaking on the one where I spent the most time on, but that's how we would kind of judge, I guess, our effort, or

the work that we put into it.

Angelica Mazé: OK, yeah. I'm curious in terms of like how everybody engaged the fairness just of the wage. And I understand, too, that's something that if it hasn't changed, if it's been the same forever, maybe you take it for granted, too, that that's just the way it is.

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Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah.

Angelica Mazé: But, how are y'all sort of gauging the lean days, the days you don't make a lot of money versus the days that you are slammed and make a ton of money, and then the people who are maybe not as socially talented, [laughs] not as adept as you are?

Enoch Rosas: We don't honestly talk about it as much other than. . . Again, there's so many things that go into play. Like I said, once you have your regulars, you're kind of just like, "I know what he needs. I know this. I know this X amount." You kind of have to plan out your entire—I plan out my entire month for just how—financially—I have to be. So, if you don't—obviously, going in as an 18 year old, you might not have all the necessities that you have to plan out and stuff like that. But like I always say, as an 18 year old, I wish I started waiting tables sooner, honestly.

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Because the money, it's just there. Again, restaurant comes into play, where you work, what section, this and this and this, but we never really discussed it other than they would see that I was always there for X amount of years. They're like, "Oh, Enoch does this, so that's why he gets to do that." Or, "He makes this amount because he knows everybody in there," and this and this

and this. But then I'd always reflect on that double shift where I was like, "Look, I had two tables," and it's only because they were big parties where I made \$50, because other than that I would have made, I don't know, I would have made \$24 that day I guess, technically, 'cause \$2 an hour, twelve hours. But that's just how I would perceive it before and after there.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah. So, you were at some point of the way through this, you were doing some pretty serious financial planning for your month to budget for lean days?

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Enoch Rosas: Yeah, you had to especially, 'cause again, you don't know what you're getting into that day. Ice storms in Waco all of a sudden.

Angelica Mazé: Right, [laughs] I remember that.

Enoch Rosas: Which is crazy, because that first day the ice storm, I made an insane amount of money, but me personally. But I also had these people who came in, and I told them specifically, I was like, "Hey guys, you guys are gonna sit on a puddle," because we had a huge—and they saw it! [Angelica laughs] They sat down, and they're like, "Oh yeah, look at that!" Again, this was like my last year there, so I'm just like, "Hey, y'all are sitting in a puddle." I know who they are, by the way, so I'm just talking to them straight. I'm like, "And pizzas are taking ninety minutes." I haven't even gotten a drink order, nothing. And they're like, "Oh, that's fine." Of course, thirty minutes later, they're like, "Hey, where's our pizza?" And I was like, "I told you, it's ninety minutes." [Angelica laughs] So, of course they don't tip me. Nothing. Zero.

Angelica Mazé: Oh no!

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Enoch Rosas: And I'm like, "Look man, I literally talked to you. I gave you everything you needed to know. I told you this and this and this. I even told you don't sit in a puddle, and y'all wanted to sit in the puddle." [Angelica laughs] And then they got mad at me, and of course zero tip, and I'm like, "I'm not even mad. That was you who wanted to sit in the puddle and wait ninety minutes for a pizza." Stuff like that. Again, this came with years and years of me being in that role and stuff like that, and being able to talk to people like that, because after 2020, after Covid, oh I kinda. . . That's a whole different chapter, 'cause at that point it didn't even matter. I was like, I'm gonna talk to you the way I—

Angelica Mazé: The gloves are off.

Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, there was a big reckoning. We talked about this a little bit when we met last time. There was a big service industry reckoning. I think servers in particular and restaurant workers in particular realized how valuable they were.

Enoch Rosas: That's exactly why, yeah. I was like, "No, I'm not gonna. . ." Which in the end, the reason me and that restaurant parted ways was actually the restaurant's choice.

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It wasn't even me and a customer, or an interaction specifically, or nothing like that. It was between the restaurant.

Angelica Mazé: I'm just kind of getting this idea of all the different things especially that can kind of affect your wages. How much does management have—and you've touched on this a bit; obviously you said each restaurant, the way that it's run is kind of different. And you can talk

as much or as little as you're comfortable with about Papa Rollo's, or use them as an example, or talk generally. But how much does management and how the restaurant is run affect your quality of work, life at work, and then also how much money you're taking home?

Enoch Rosas: No, it was dreadful, 100 percent dreadful working in that restaurant. I haven't been there going on two years, and they're facing a couple of lawsuits right now. The place itself is just not—and again, I would not have lasted very long there if I hadn't been there as a dishwasher and seen all the background and been like, "OK, that's normal here."

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And then you see things, which—restaurant work—and you're like, "OK, I guess that's normal here." But I had done it so long. I was a dishwasher and I already had regulars, because I'd go to the bar and pick up the dirty mugs, and all the beer leftover, and stuff like that. I'd just take it to get washed, so all the bar guys knew me by then. I had never even waited a table once in my life, and I already knew the guys in the bar because they're like, "Hey! The dish guy. . ." You know. We'd watched sports together. I'd hang out in there. We saw RG III win the Heisman Trophy in there, as a dishwasher. So, I put my time in there. That's another reason why I say that a lot, because working, I don't know how anybody else's situation in a certain restaurant could be and stuff like that. But there, at least the management and stuff like that was abysmal. It was terrible, looking back.

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Looking back, honestly, I probably should have taken the server unemployment money, because I don't know what it was going for at that time.

Angelica Mazé: For Covid, you mean?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, 'cause when we—again, this is particular just to that restaurant that I know of. I felt very blessed, and I still feel blessed. I'm not gonna say I wasn't blessed. We stayed open. We were doing to-go curbside. And the funniest thing is, my regulars would be in that line, and they'd be like, "Enoch, here. Enoch, here." And they were taking very well care of me. I was like, "Oh, it's so good." Obviously that was not gonna go for the very next server behind me or whoever was in charge. And I bring that up a lot, because despite everything, or history and stuff like that with me and that place, I felt very, very blessed for the people that I met there and the people that I got to really learn from there, honestly. Cause the next server up was not gonna get that and stuff like that.

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Angelica Mazé: Yeah. So, I think you mean some of your very loyal customers?

Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah.

Angelica Mazé: But you also mean there were some people at the restaurant that you worked with who you learned from? Or, you mean mainly the people that you met as customers?

Enoch Rosas: Just customers, honestly, because at this point I think I had aged out by then, somewhat. Yeah, that work environment was just so—this is only pertaining to this restaurant, and I'm kind of just tiptoeing around it, because it's like...

Angelica Mazé: Yeah. Yeah, whatever you're comfortable with.

Enoch Rosas: It's just 'cause like, they had no idea what they were doing, ice-storm-wise. Oh yeah, no, our boss there wanted to open the doors when we had no cooks. I remember this

clearly. We had no cooks. We had nothing, and he's like, "Turn on the TVs, Enoch." And I told him, I was like, "Are we housing people?" I was like, "Because you don't have any cooks." This is another step. Like, this man knew I was being very disrespectful to him, but there is no way that he could have really sat there and told me, "Enoch, you need to turn on these TVs," when we have no cooks.

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And I'm like, "You're lucky"—At the time it was me—and I showed up, honestly, because my vehicle could drive in the snow, and I was like, "This will be fun; let's figure it out!" And about three of us showed up—servers. I think I picked up one of them, otherwise there was no reason to go. The very next year—I'll skip forward—the very next year, I didn't bother. I was like, "No, I'm not doing it." I was like, "No, I'm not gonna do this. Like, I did it last year."

Angelica Mazé: The next time we have a big ice storm?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, and that ice storm only lasted like one or two days. And I was like, "No." That was another reason: I was like, this ice will be gone in two days, and everything will be fine. Again, I only thought about money. I was like, "Can I go without money for these next two days?" I'm like, "Probably." I was like, "I'll be fine." But I will say that I think that's the first time I brought that up. I saw every day as an opportunity for income. It's like, if I took a weekend off, like say, for an ACL Festival—I tried to take that one off every year.

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And it's like, "Think about what you're missing out on. This is football season." When I tell you I bought the first calendar for that restaurant and hung it up right next to the bar, it's because

nobody else had any initiative.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, wow. [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: I was like, "No, I need to know this. I need to know." And I bought a calendar. Every Baylor home game, every Baylor away game of football, and everything that mattered, I took the energy to do that because the managers weren't gonna do it. They just weren't gonna do it. None of them made over \$18 an hour. Let's just put it that way. They weren't making—and these are managers who were there until 1:00 AM sometimes. So, I took the initiative to do all that. So, I knew starting August, when football season starts, there's Cowboy games where we're gonna get busy, there's this. I was like, do this, do this, do this, do this. This is the day this and this and this and this.

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And before you know it, the owners of the restaurant were referring to my calendar to go see. And I'll tell you, it was literally just learning because nobody else was. . .

Angelica Mazé: And self-taught. I mean, this was just you figuring it out on your own.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, and it wasn't until I was waiting tables and—oh no, I'll get even more detailed like that. I knew this was income that I needed to make. It's like, "This day I can make this money. This day I can make this money." I got as far as, I used to take my own Bose speaker from my parents' house that I was still at at the time, and I would take that every football season and set it up, 'cause I was like, "This is what's gonna bring people. This is how I want this to be." And yeah, I had a full bar every Cowboys game for a while.

Angelica Mazé: Wow, that's great. That's a lot of initiative, and it's a lot of work to put in

without any kind of buy-in from management.

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Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah. They couldn't tell you what channel the Texas Rangers play on. They could not tell you. They had three cable providers for no reason. [Angelica laughs] No, that is not a joke. They literally had three cable providers, and if you asked them, "Can you put it on the Rangers game?" They wouldn't know what to do.

Angelica Mazé: And you just mentioned—so, I'll backtrack for a second—that you were living at home for some of this time.

Enoch Rosas: Yes, I did want to bring that up.

Angelica Mazé: So, were you able to save money by living at home and hustling your butt off? [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. I was able to pay off a vehicle. I didn't have a vehicle. Referring back to the college thing, I did take out some loans for Tarleton, but for the majority of it, I did pay off most of it like that. I paid off two student loans that I took on from Baylor, one Discover, and one. . . I can't remember who the other was. But again, this was—you saw my work schedule, and it only got more after that.

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One was a personal thing. I just knew I was—like I said, every day was income, income, income, income. And I knew it was like, "OK, if I do this, or if I want to purchase this, it means you're gonna sacrifice this, and you're gonna have to work more of this." And that's ultimately what it came down to.

Angelica Mazé: How did that affect your personal life? Just knowing that any day that you're not there, you're not making any money.

Enoch Rosas: Two ways. Sometimes, if I planned something ahead of time—and I tried to do all my planning prior to football season. My life revolved around football season.

Angelica Mazé: Interesting.

Enoch Rosas: It was like, can't do anything from August to December. I was like, you just can't do it.

Angelica Mazé: Wow!

Enoch Rosas: The Cowboys don't make the playoffs very often, [Angelica laughs] so January was good.

Angelica Mazé: [laughs] That's hilarious.

Enoch Rosas: So we were good. We're like, "We're not gonna make it. We're fine." But yeah, if I look at my trips, Vegas always was in Feb—that first week after the Super Bowl, I'm like, "I'm taking this week off."

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Because I'm like, "I have done everything I could here in this." But again, that's something that came naturally to me, and I don't know if that was after seeing the amount of money I could make putting in this hour. But personally, yeah I barely saw my family. I don't have any kids, but barely saw my brothers. My other brother, who I hope you get to speak to, would attest to he didn't see me very often, ever. And I would never see my mom. After I moved out, yeah we

wouldn't really—even when I lived with my mom, there's weeks where I'd be like, "Yeah, I haven't seen my mom. I haven't seen her." Just 'cause, like, you get off early, you know, like that. Again, this was self-brought upon myself, but if you wanted to make a certain amount of money, you were gonna have to do it like that.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, I mean it sounds like you were just motivated to make money, and that that required sacrifices.

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Enoch Rosas: And after years, I kinda knew it. I was like, "Hey, in April, we can hang out." Or, "I can afford to take off." My birthday is April 8th, so I was like, we can take a weekend birthday. We can do this and this. But summertime, Waco-wise summer picked up after the Silos, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, OK. That's the Magnolia Silos, "Fixer Upper."

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, the Magnolia Silos. For summertime, Waco restaurants started really getting it, but now we have two hundred restaurants in Waco, so you never know. I don't know how that goes over there anymore.

Angelica Mazé: Do we have two hundred restaurants? Is that like a real number?

Enoch Rosas: It's quite a bit. It's up there.

Angelica Mazé: I know it's a lot, but I haven't actually. . .

Enoch Rosas: I just threw that one out there.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, no, that's good. It makes sense. [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: But it is growing. There's a Salad To Go I drive by. I'm like, "Is that a Salad To Go?" In Hewitt.

Angelica Mazé: I haven't even seen that.

Enoch Rosas: It's just like a little portable—but I guess that counts. I was like, "Somebody's eating dinner there."

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Angelica Mazé: Yeah, it counts! So, at what point—were you still working at Papa Rollo's when you moved out?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, Covid. Actually, it was Covid that caused it, because another challenge was like, "Yo, I live with my parents." And I could have moved out whenever, but we're a very close family, this and that. But my brother got Covid very, very, very bad.

Angelica Mazé: Oh no! Oh gosh, I'm sorry to hear that.

Enoch Rosas: Very bad. Passed it on to my mom who got it even worse, and then that's when I was like, "OK, I gotta go." Not for my health, 'cause I was in this restaurant where people didn't even believe Covid was real. And I'm like, "OK!" I have one niece. I'm like, I don't want to get near her. I didn't hug my niece for months. And there are some people who are gonna attack that, but I'm like, "Nah." I'm here to be safe. So, I moved out of my parents' house and I actually got a great place.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, good!

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Enoch Rosas: But, I got the apartment version of buying a house during Covid. But again, it goes back to that server tip money, but none of my peers could have got what I was doing because of how I was doing it. And actually, when Covid started, I remember it was March 17th, and we had a meeting. And our GM, she was very caring, and she was crying, and everybody's like, "Yeah, we're going to work. We're going to work through this." I think like more than half of them dropped off.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, wow.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, and it was only because—this goes back to the me thing, where it's like, I'm going to put in the hours because that's really all I knew what to do. It was like, OK, let me just work through this and we'll get it.

Angelica Mazé: It sounds like—and I hope you will tell me more about it getting pretty tough during the Covid times—

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you lost people. Just because it's something you said, and because I also remember, that customers and maybe also management, I don't know, not everybody was on the same page in terms of safety measures. Do you want to talk a little bit about how Covid played out in the restaurant and how you felt about it?

Enoch Rosas: Sure. I'll never—ugh, I don't even know where to start with that, because it kind of gave me this mindset now that I have that is probably not the most Christian thing, but I'm like, "Look buddy, if you don't wanna believe in that, I'm not gonna force you, because at the end of the day, it's your choice." I remember the very first day we opened up, and we have a clear

rule: It's six people to this table. That's what we were told. First table walks in like, "Hey, we have nine, but we live together." And it was like, "OK, well the rule says six." And they're like, "Well, we're gonna sit with nine." And we're like. . . And I always bring this up. This is where I bring in that \$2 an hour.

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For the longest, I would defend my role, or even, I don't wanna say the restaurant, but I would sit there and be like, "No, we have to do this. This is the rule, this is the rule, this is the rule." And looking back now, I have a completely different mindset. Honestly, now I'm like, "You want to sit there? I'm gonna add \$20 to your tab, not including tip." Which legally, I can't do that, but I don't even know if I can do that. [Angelica laughs] But I'm gonna tell you something, you're gonna do something that you feel like that? Again, you said it earlier: the gloves are off. It's like, "Look, now I'm gonna treat you in a way. . ." Back to my Wendy's days. I was like, no. It's like, no, this is it. And I was like, "No, I'm gonna..." Because you're not here to respect me, and this is when I finally started really thinking about that \$2 an hour thing. I'm like, "I'm a \$2 an hour employee? That's what my company values me at?" My manager, the owner did not have my back on any of this.

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The owner, of course he's like, "Hey, have a seat wherever you want." I'm like, "What am I doing defending this for now?" And this was post-2020. Well, still 2020. And that kind of is where like a different version of me started saying, "Uh-uh. I'm gonna just. . ." Then I became kind of rude. I don't wanna say rude, but I was like, "No." But if I said it loud enough in front of more people, they knew. They were like, "OK, we got Enoch's back." They're like, "He is the one that. . ."

Because these people came in like nothing happened. You had your customers that were like, "Oh, I don't speak mask."

Angelica Mazé: Oh my goodness.

Enoch Rosas: Oh no, that was probably one of the nicer ones. And when I tell you that I just gave up completely, I was like, "Well, you're not gonna speak to anybody then, because if I'm not here, you're not gonna have anybody." Oh yeah, after 2020, everything spiraled out of—like, I had more fights inside that bar—not personally.

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Angelica Mazé: Customers fighting with each other?

Enoch Rosas: Customers started fighting. And this is a place who might have seen one or two arguments, maybe one fight in like five years. Maybe more than that since I was a dishwasher there. And then in one year I saw—not even, I think it was like in six months I saw about two big, big fights. I'm talking blood on blood.

Angelica Mazé: Oh my goodness.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. People kind of just lost their minds, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Was that anything to do with Covid? Like, they weren't fighting about Covid, it just was this kind of tense. . .

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, tense environment. One of them happened in the ice storm.

Angelica Mazé: Oh my goodness!

Enoch Rosas: And I remember even telling them, 'cause I had—that was probably the

last—

[end of first recording]

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—time, because when I was trying to break up this fight—and yes, I tried to break it up like an idiot. [Angelica laughs] I was like, "Y'all better not have Covid." 'Cause now I'm thinking about being a referee, *and* this? That was the last time I stopped caring about doing something like that. I'm like, "No, I'm not going to do it anymore." And that's finally when I reverted back to the wage. I'm like, "I am a \$2 an hour employee in this restaurant. This company, this restaurant, values me at \$2 an hour. I'm out here making the money, keeping this restaurant open through Covid, through an ice storm." Management didn't care. They didn't appreciate it. And I'm like, "Nah, that's it. Never again." I was like, "I'm not doing this again." The next fight that popped off, there are two guys beating the crap out of another one, and I'm on the phone. I just called the cops. I'm like, "I'm not doing this." I'm like, "No." I'm not going to stop it. No. Why would I do that? I make two bucks an hour.

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I'm not a bouncer. I'm not a referee. I'm not—I'm nothing. I'm your server, OK? Actually, during that ice storm, whenever they started fighting, I'm like, "I'm about to just charge y'all 40 percent on this." I don't know if it's legal, but I was like, look, if y'all wanna do something stupid, let me just tell y'all this and scare y'all off. But you said it best: the gloves are off. I just didn't care. I'm going to talk to y'all like you talk to us, or me at least, personally. There was this one guy in particular. A woman came in, and she's wearing a mask. He's just some rowdy-ass guy. He's like, "You don't have to wear that!" And I looked at him and I'm like, "Why don't you

just stay over there, buddy.” I used to always talk crap to this guy, because he’s just one of those guys. He would only come in for Cowboys games. He had the oldest Cowboy jersey you’ve ever seen. [Angelica laughs] And I wanted to tell him so bad. I can’t even remember if I did. I was like, “Nobody... You’re wearing that old-ass Cowboys jersey. Don’t get mad at people for wearing the mask.”

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Covid turned, at least me, into—it made me feel how I used to be like, “Man, I should have said that when I was sixteen at Wendy’s and just like, clapped back at these people.” The actual hourly wage did not come into play until I really, really felt unappreciated by the restaurant I worked at. Because even at one point, after this one fight, the second fight where I had just gave up, she gave me a taser. I don’t know if it was to protect myself or to stop the fight, but I’m like, “I am not here to. . .” And then I’m like, “Are you serious? What do you want me to do? I’m making \$2 an hour here.” Like I said, I could write books about this stuff.

Angelica Mazé: I hope you do. [laughs] I want to read that book.

Enoch Rosas: Seriously, it is insane. It’s crazy just looking back at it.

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That’s why I think at one point I said, for a while I’m like, I should have just taken the unemployment money. I think servers were doing pretty good, honestly. Again, you never knew what was going to happen after that. Nobody could’ve. So, I just felt very, very blessed, and I still am, because the customers that were there, my regulars that were there, we were all—I was very, very blessed. I’ll never complain. That’s how I was able to get where I live now, save money, and keep me afloat during Covid, because nobody knew.

Angelica Mazé: I probably should have asked this sooner, but I was making assumptions that I want to double check with you, which is: Were benefits ever a part of this organization, health or otherwise?

Enoch Rosas: Nothing, not even retirement, which is crazy. The thing about restaurants on that is the turnover is ridiculous, honestly. You can have somebody work a week and then not like it, which is cool. But you know, obviously, take care of those who take care of you, and that's where me and the fallout began with that restaurant.

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And it wasn't for anything, because I even worked other jobs while I was trying to pivot away from the restaurant industry. I worked in insurance jobs and stuff like that, so I got to learn more, and one day I asked our boss, which is a different story, I was like, "Hey can we get insurance? At least me and Louie?" Me and Lou, we'd been there a while. And they were like, "Nah, it's too expensive." This and this, this and that, this and that. I'm like, "OK, fair enough. Whatever." But yeah, it was always in the back of my mind. Like, I don't have... During Covid—when was it? I remember this, it was actually 4/20—no, coincidence—because I was listening to an album when I was mountain biking, and I tried to do something dumb, hurt my collarbone. Bad. First broken bone ever in my life. It was a fracture.

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We were still shut down in the restaurant. We were just doing to-go, but I could not do anything with my arm. And of course no... I had money saved up, because that's just how I always have thought. I paid my medical.

Angelica Mazé: Without insurance?

Enoch Rosas: No insurance, no. And I was like, “Hey, could you check this out?” This was during Covid. It couldn’t have happened at a worst time, really—or maybe best, I don’t know, because we were closed. But I was leading to this: If you break a bone and you’re a server, and that’s your main source of income, you’re not going to get any disab—or maybe, who knows? I don’t know, but you’re not going to make any money. That’s just how it goes. I remember I could not lift a gallon of tea with that arm and I was like, “Crap, what am I gonna do now?” Ironically—well, I went finally. . . big deal.

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Ironically, my regulars came in a week later. We officially opened back up. My arm was a little better, or my collar bone was just a little better, so I was able to work. It still hurt, like I couldn’t extend too far. But some of my regulars, great folks, they’re X-ray techs, and I was like, “Man, I messed up my collar bone two weeks ago.” And they’re like, “Oh, eight weeks.” I’m like, “Thanks bro!”

Angelica Mazé: Eight weeks to recover?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, and I was like, “You know what? Thank you. You just saved me...” I did go get X-rays and stuff like that prior to that, but I was like, “Thanks guys.” Here I am thinking I need surgery, or I don’t know. But that was... If you hurt yourself, it sucks, because sometimes I would work, no joke, twenty, twenty-five days in a row, my choice partly, but honestly it’s because you want to make those tips. Those tips are rolling in and it’s hard to stop.

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If you take one day off—and I like to mountain bike, say you just want to do that, and you want to do the one hobby you like, and you hurt yourself? Well, you’re done. It doesn’t matter how

much time you put in there. And that's just something that, the older you get, you realize it. That really stood out to me. I'm like, "Crap. It doesn't matter how many days I work, if I just take one day off and I hurt my leg or something like that..."

Angelica Mazé: There's not a lot of security.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, there's nothing there. There's nothing I can do.

Angelica Mazé: That's a good transition to my next question which I've been brewing on as you've been talking, which is: Did you have any server coworkers who were over the age of twenty-five or thirty? Or did you have folks who were in their forties or fifties? Or was it typically pretty young?

Enoch Rosas: Pretty young. You got your turnover in the kitchen quite a bit. I had another guy who was actually probably there just as long as we were. He was in the kitchen.

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I still talk to him every once in a while, but he had a bad leg—or, a bad knee. He had a bad knee, so he couldn't work that section that we said.

Angelica Mazé: With the stairs?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. He couldn't do that. And sometimes he would have to take at least food up there, and we're like, "Dang." His name's Kyle. We're like, "Wow, Kyle. Sorry man, but you can't be doing all this and that and this." But he was always in the kitchen, too. And then he was a manager. He wore a boot to work for the longest. I don't know what his medical situation was, or medical insurance, or anything like that. Our restaurant was not going to take care of him.

Angelica Mazé: And he still had to go upstairs?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, occasionally he would, but working in the kitchen is worse than probably the one trip he had to take upstairs because you're just on your feet all day long. You're just walking around. This is concrete floor. You're in the kitchen. It's not pleasant. You make of it what you can, and I tried to milk it as much as I can, honestly.

0:09:08

Angelica Mazé: So you got out. However much or however little you want to talk about leaving Papa Rollo's, and then we'll move into the present. Like I said, as much or as little. That you decided to leave, you can talk about how that came about, or you can just say you left, whatever you're willing to talk about.

Enoch Rosas: Actually, it was their choice. They decided to just say, "Hey..." They didn't want me there anymore. Part of it is because of my... honestly, I don't want to get into that too much.

Angelica Mazé: No worries.

Enoch Rosas: But I had definitely outgrown that place to the point where—I think I mentioned how I would talk to the owner earlier, and it is not just because of a personal opinion. It was just like, no, that's not OK. That second fight that happened where I'm telling you, somebody's bloodied up, the cops were outside.

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I'm telling the cops, "Hey, this guy's over here." My boss, the owner of the restaurant walks out, and he sees these folks who just got there, and he tells me, he's like, "Hey, those people need beer." And I just look at him, and I'm just like, and I talk to him the same—I always respected

him for the longest, but then I was like, “No, you’re not. No.” And then I was like, “Do you not see what’s going on?” I would talk to him in a way where I was like, “No, you’re not going to sit here and try to teach me something.” Nobody in that restaurant could teach me anything else. There’s nothing else I could have learned in that restaurant. Ultimately, the person who didn’t want me there was his daughter. That’s a whole different personal family thing. But it wasn’t just me!

Angelica Mazé: But it’s a family-run business.

Enoch Rosas: Correct, yeah. She actually went on to fire my brother, too. She fired Louie. She fired anybody with a college degree, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, interesting.

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Enoch Rosas: It was family issues that came into this, and yeah, that’s was its own thing where... It has nothing to do with the wages and stuff like that, but I was definitely outgrown of that place and it’s a blessing. It really is.

Angelica Mazé: So, when you left, because you had said, too, you were sort of already kind of working insurance jobs and other things to kind of transition out of that job anyway, so what did you do?

Enoch Rosas: At that time, I didn’t have anything, because... Actually, the insurance job I was at, she ultimately retired, and she just closed the firm. And I was just feeling so overworked between both things that I was like, I can stay with Rollo’s, I can make my tips, and I can get by. So, when did she... She officially fired me back in August of 2022.

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I had been looking for work, but not as intently as I was, obviously, after. I think back in May of 2022 I might have had like one interview somewhere else, but nothing went off. Obviously I could have worked at any other restaurant, and I just didn't want to do that. I was like, this is the time where I'm going to transition out. I was like, I'm not going to do this. And to this moment, I'm still trying to catch up financially to what I was doing there. And it's just 'cause of the amount of years I spent and the amount of time there.

I did date somebody who worked at George's at one point, and even she would—we would compare tips. Obviously we were dating, and she's like, "How are you making this money?" And I'm like, "It's just 'cause of how much time I put in, the people I met." Because I still get my zeros here and there. People wouldn't tip me, like that angry guy who I could clap at, yeah, he wouldn't tip me a dime. [Angelica laughs]

0:13:00

This was years ago, this was pre-Covid, though. So, we compared tips, and even for her, she'd make good money. But the same thing, she would work. I remember sometimes she'd work double shifts, triple shifts, stuff like that, and you kind of get used to that lifestyle. It is so hard to get out of it, because once you start seeing that money. But again, you're not going to start waiting tables tomorrow and be like, "OK, this is what I want to do." It's going to take some time like that. [cross-talk]

Whenever I see an eighteen-year-old or a twenty-year-old, who, by the way, is relatively the age of that fine-dining restaurant I worked at. I was like, "You guys are twenty years old?" I'm like, "Y'all are pretty good right now." They're all at Baylor, they're all at school, or somewhere. I'm like, "You guys are twenty and you're working at a fine-dining restaurant?" That had its ups and

downs, but I'm like, "Hey, not bad." I was like, "Y'all keep at it. Stick with it, but you're all trying to get your education right now, you're trying to do it like that." So, I was very impressed, and I was like, "I should have done this when I was nineteen or twenty."

0:14:07

Angelica Mazé: Worked at a fine dining restaurant? Or—

Enoch Rosas: Just waited tables. Again, even when I did it at twenty-two, I had to start from the bottom.

Angelica Mazé: Right. Everybody starts at the bottom. [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: Which, in this case it was the top section, where...

Angelica Mazé: Right, the top which is the bottom.

Enoch Rosas: Mm-hmm.

Angelica Mazé: I won't keep you here for too much longer. What did you do after Papa Rollo's? How did you transition? Because I know you've got this job at Neighborly now, but then you also mentioned that you're also working at another restaurant. So, tell me a little—bring us up to the present if you don't mind.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, for sure. It did take a bit, however, I will reflect on that I had waited tables so long that I knew: Have money saved up. You have to save that money, because you never know what's going to happen. And that, it came so abruptly.

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Like, one morning I woke up, wasn't on the schedule, I confront her and this and this, but that day, I sat at the restaurant and I just was like, "Well, I'm going to have a beer." The funny thing

is, my regulars who saw this all bought me a beer. I didn't spend a dime. [Angelica laughs] And I haven't been back.

I had probably at least two to three savings accounts. Well, one was like a high-yield, one was like a bank account and just cash you have saved up as a server. But it took me years to develop that kind of discipline, because once you're making server money, you're just like, "Welp, I got money, I can go spend it right now!"

Angelica Mazé: And it's cash.

Enoch Rosas: It's cash! So, you're just like, "I'm gonna go do this, I'm gonna go do this." Covid helped me a lot [to] learn, like, "No, don't do that. Don't do that."

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No, I really did discipline myself to where when she fired me, I still had money to get me by. And then just start trying to think about where do I want to go work, and I just jumped right into trying to find something more corporate, something that was going to align with my goals, really, which was to get out of the restaurant industry. [Angelica laughs] But mostly 'cause, hey, I went to school for this, I wanna be able to do this and do that. I could have gone to work at George's the next day, or something like that, Buffalo Wild Wings, anywhere, but I didn't. I held out.

I did file for unemployment. That was the whole wrongful termination thing. So, I got that, helped me out. And the thing for them was, I didn't even know where the unemployment office was. Did not even know. I worked through Covid in the restaurant and never even knew where that office was. It wasn't even until after *you* took over that I finally—I was like, I survived Covid, but I couldn't survive her? [Angelica laughs]

0:17:00

After that, the way I made money, just a biweekly check was nothing like I was used to. Not for the last ten or twelve years, so I'm like, "Wow, what am I gonna do?" I worked at a friend's store. He has a little convenience store, so I just—ever since then, it has been two jobs, though. It has been two jobs only for the fact that I am still trying to figure out how to financially get to where I was.

And I think it's great that we spoke about this, because this is not how it goes for everybody, especially my situation. If you speak to other servers, they'll give you something completely different. Again, I was in the same place for probably fifteen years. Some of my regulars were very—I have their phone numbers—and some of them are very, very well off. Bank presidents and stuff like that. And it's just what I enjoy to do.

0:18:00

That's why I did it for so long. I would always tell people, "Hey, if I didn't like doing this, I wouldn't do it." On a given Sunday I could look at every table in my section and be like, "I know everybody in this. I know exactly what they're drinking. I know what kind of pizza they like."

Angelica Mazé: That's kind of powerful.

Enoch Rosas: It was! It was.

Angelica Mazé: And you, to a certain extent, get rewarded for it financially.

Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah, and they were—because that's how I made my living, that's how—that's what I knew. And I tried to transition out of the restaurant industry like that, but it was just very difficult.

Angelica Mazé: Well, it sounds like you are. So, Neighborly. Quick question: What was your degree at Tarleton?

Enoch Rosas: It was a Bachelor of Applied Science in Business.

Angelica Mazé: OK, Bachelor of Applied Science in Business. And you are still working at Neighborly?

Enoch Rosas: Mm-hmm.

Angelica Mazé: And you've been there for how long?

Enoch Rosas: November 2022.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, wow!

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, so I was out of work for three or four months. I think it was December of 2022, which—it was very difficult time.

0:19:01

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, I don't mean to downplay it.

Enoch Rosas: No, you're good. But you're right. I was like, "Oh, I did get something." Again, I was very picky, because I'm from Waco and I wanna work—I'm not just trying to jump into something. This is, I'm coming out of what I've done my entire life, and try to find something else. So, I'm like, "OK, where do I want to. . . ?" I knew Neighborly was a company in Waco that I had applied, and I'm like, "OK, cool." But again, what I was used to for so long, like if I needed my truck payment, I could work a double and I could make my truck payment. And I'd be like, "Yes, cool." Now, I've learned. It took me a long time, but I was like, "Yeah, OK! Let's not spend X amount of dollars on a Wednesday night just because you have it." So, to help me out right now, I'm working at Shorty's Pizza Shack, just the Hewitt one, because I love the other one to hang out.

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So, the one here in Hewitt. Again, I could have gone to any restaurant, but the one over there, I knew the staff. And when I walked in, I'm like, "OK, this is crazy. This feels familiar." I saw regulars. The food distributor was there from Rollo's. I'm like, "Hey, what's up buddy?"

Angelica Mazé: Oh wow, OK. Kind of a homecoming.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, so I'm working there just two days. I only work there Saturday and Sunday now. I love it, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: And are you working forty—full time for Neighborly as well?

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. We are hybrid, so thankfully it does give me a bit of a break. And then only Saturday/Sunday, I said that because there's no way I could go back to doing the whole...

Angelica Mazé: Like, multiple shifts—[cross-talk]

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, there's no way. Mentally, it would destroy you, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah. It gets harder as you get older, too. It's different when you're not twenty-two. [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, and that's another thing. Serving at that age, yeah. Sorry, you're probably...

0:21:01

Angelica Mazé: No, you're good. I'm just checking the time because I don't want to go—I'll give us another fifteen, or whatever you're comfortable with.

Enoch Rosas: Maybe only five, because my brother is—we have a movie at 6:45.

Angelica Mazé: Well—

Enoch Rosas: Nah, twenty minutes' worth of trailers. I just don't want them to be texting me all up and down.

Angelica Mazé: OK, cool. We'll wrap it up. So, what are you doing at Neighborly?

Enoch Rosas: I'm a compliance specialist. It's a franchise development organization, so very corporate. Basically it's like a collections department. I'm at the end of that where I basically—say you have a terminated franchise. I make sure that you have taken down all your signage, all this to make sure that you're not doing business under them. It's a very entry-level position, but it's a great company to work for. Great benefits.

Angelica Mazé: I was going to say, does it feel good? And benefits!

Enoch Rosas: Yes! That is the one where you're like, "Wow!" This is also just a reflection of what I like to do.

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Those first couple of months at Neighborly, nothing bad, it was so hard. It was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do, because I went from seeing fifty people [snaps] like that, taking care of them like that, [snaps] seeing the reward right then and there.

Angelica Mazé: Fast, everything's faster.

Enoch Rosas: It was one of the hardest times ever. But I knew it's a patience game, I just got into it later, when I was thirty-one years old. I've worked with twenty-one-year-olds at Neighborly too, where they'll go and get their thing and they're like, "All right, we're out." And I'm like, "OK." So, it's still a process. I'm very God-believing that everything is going to pan out

the way it was. I'll let my brother tell you his story, but he is doing amazing after they fired him from Rollo's too. He is to the moon.

Angelica Mazé: I can't wait. [laughs] It's like the Rollo's legacy. All the people that they lost have gone on to be badasses.

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Enoch Rosas: Oh yeah. Louie's a branch manager at a bank.

Angelica Mazé: Fantastic.

Enoch Rosas: I know one person who still works at Rollo's, and it's just that server lifestyle, whether you're gonna stick with it. I have friends, too, that are still bartenders other places. That life will consume you, honestly. It really will. You get used to it, and you get stuck in it, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, I can understand that, with the cash ready, and then also just because I imagine it's hard to transition once you've got this, you just adjust to this crazy schedule and this fast-paced life, and it's hard to imagine or even have time, right? Because if you're working twenty-five shifts or days in a row, when do you job hunt?

Enoch Rosas: There's not really a way I could have transitioned into Neighborly and just quit doing the waiting tables thing, because of just how that income comes in. And how before you know it, you're like, "What? I have to wait two weeks to get this paycheck?"

Angelica Mazé: Yeah.

0:24:00

Enoch Rosas: So, that's the side of waiting tables that I know, but even when I was doing

those doubles, \$50 in one day, I still. . . I don't remember if I had another job at that time. Just about all the time, I've had two jobs. The one time I didn't was when I was full-time bar, handling that.

Angelica Mazé: Gotcha. That's a lot.

Enoch Rosas: It was, but like I said, after 2020 everything changed. Before you knew it, I'm like, "Uh, yeah no, I'm not gonna take this crap anymore. I'm not gonna defend somebody for..." It wasn't gonna happen like that, not anymore.

Angelica Mazé: Cool. Well, I could keep talking, but I think you need to get out of here.

Enoch Rosas: The only reason I'm like this is 'cause I know they're gonna text me like, "Hey. . ."

Angelica Mazé: Like, where are you? [laughs]

Enoch Rosas: Yeah, "You coming?" And I could too, honestly, because there's plenty of it. Again, I still feel like I might not be giving you the best answers from someone who...

Angelica Mazé: No, it's great.

0:24:57

Enoch Rosas: Because I made a living. I was able to help my mom pay medical bills.

Angelica Mazé: Oh, wow.

Enoch Rosas: But like, I made a great amount of money. But say you get fired tomorrow and you can't work at another restaurant? You break an arm? Good luck.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah.

Enoch Rosas: Luckily I was—but I saw that coming. Well, with Covid, I was like, "Save

money, Enoch. Save money.” Because that’s really what’s going to help you out, honestly.

Angelica Mazé: Very quick, do you think that servers should be making the full minimum wage? Do you think that would be more fair?

Enoch Rosas: If you asked some of them, they would probably tell you that they make more without it, but I remember one time I was waiting on this older woman, and she was like, “Hey, what do you make hourly?” This was probably like eight years ago—seven or eight years ago. And I said, “\$2.13.”

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And she’s like, “That’s what I made in the [19]80s and [19]70s,” something like that, whatever she told me. And then I can’t remember, she must have given me like \$10. She’s like, “Wow, that is what I made when I waited tables in X year.” Ugh, I wish I could tell you the year. Definitely before the [19]90s. She’s like, “That’s what I was making at this time.” I was like, “Thank you. I appreciate you.”

But honestly, \$2.13 doesn’t make sense anywhere, for bartenders or anything. From what I’ve learned, bartenders make a different amount of money. I don’t like the whole tip-out thing, where—well, we didn’t have it there, luckily. I would have been furious if we had it there. But no, I think everyone should be paid fairly, honestly, when it comes to that. At the end of the day, I owed money to the restaurant because I made X amount of dollars on my credit cards that I have to pay taxes on that. But that doesn’t go for everybody. Far from it. Far from it.

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But that’s why I always said I don’t know if I can give you the best answers, ‘cause I was very blessed, looking back at that time. And even then, I was like, “OK, but the amount of effort, the

amount of stress, the amount of things that you have to think about. . .” And it also takes a certain kind of person. I’ve seen servers go in there thinking they’re gonna make X amount of dollars, walk out of there with half of that, and not care! They’re like, “Ah, OK.” I’m like, “OK.” I’m a workaholic. I have my own opinions about that.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, well everybody’s so individual: where you’re coming from, what the rest of your support system looks like, and how old you are, all of these things. But this is great. I wanted your story. I think it’s going to be really interesting to compare it to, like you said, how it shook out for other people. And I’m just so grateful that you took time out of your two-job crazy schedule [laughs] to talk to me today. Thank you so much.

Enoch Rosas: Thank you.

Angelica Mazé: It’s been such a joy. Is there anything you want to add before we finish?

0:28:00

Enoch Rosas: I think I’m good. Just that last—I do remember that. It stood out to me, because she was like, “That’s what I made twenty”—ah, she told me the year, too.

Angelica Mazé: And it obviously made an impression. It was a long time ago. The wage hasn’t changed.

Enoch Rosas: Yeah. She had her mind blown, like, “Yeah, that’s what I was making back then.”

Angelica Mazé: Wow.

Enoch Rosas: And also the amount of people that don’t know servers make \$2 an hour, it’s ridiculous.

Angelica Mazé: Yeah, I know. I didn't know before I moved here. That was part of how this whole project came about. I was shocked. [laughs] Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate it. I won't keep you longer.

Enoch Rosas: Any time. Any time.

Angelica Mazé: I wish you just all the best on whatever comes next.

Enoch Rosas: It's getting there. I'm very, very positive right now.

Angelica Mazé: I think if anyone can do it, you can.

Enoch Rosas: I appreciate that, I really do.

Angelica Mazé: Awesome. Thank you, Enoch.

Enoch Rosas: Absolutely. Thank you.

[End]