



Jennifer Hill-Green and Ashanti Parker

Daisy Pastry Shoppe - North Little Rock, AR

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Interviewer: Jordan P. Hickey

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Jordan Hickey: Today is September 14th. We're here in Little Rock, Arkansas. I'm Jordan Hickey. I'm speaking with Ashanti Parker and Jennifer Hill-Green. Do you guys wanna introduce yourself for the recording?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes. My name is Jennifer Hill-Green. I'm one-half of Daisy Pastry.

Ashanti Parker: And I'm Ashanti Parker, and I'm the other half of Daisy Pastry. And we are a mother-daughter duo based in North Little Rock, Arkansas. And our theme of our bakery is music inspired. So we love—we put our love of music into everything that we bake.

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Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: So we're in Little Rock. Are you guys from Little Rock? Can you kind of tell me where you're from, when and where you were born—kind of just like the basic biographical sketch?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Okay. Well, I'm born in the late '60s. I was born in Cleveland, Ohio, moved to Arkansas when I was three with my mom, and been here in—and we grew up in Arkansas, and moved to Texas, then moved back to Arkansas.

Ashanti Parker: And I'm actually born in Hot Springs, Arkansas. We moved when I was about eight years old to Texas. We lived there until I was about, I would say, roughly 22, and then back to Sherwood, Arkansas to live with my dad, and then I've been here since.

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Jordan Hickey: So today we're talking about cottage baking and bakeries, and so I'm kind of curious, like, how did you guys get into baking? [To Ashanti] Was it something you saw your mom doing; [to Jennifer] something that you saw your mom doing? How did you get here?

Jennifer Hill-Green: I think that back when I was growing up, I saw my grandmother and my mom bake. Back then when you had home ec in school, and I love home ec, and so we would have all these different recipes. I would start cooking at home when I was young. I remember one time [laughter], I made my mom and dad—it was their anniversary, and I'm pretty sure she wanted to go out to eat. And I'm like, "Oh, I'm gonna make this fabulous Chinese dinner."

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I made egg foo young and all this stuff, and they ate it. And now, looking back, I'm thinking, as a woman, yeah, she wanted to go out.

[Laughter]

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Ashanti Parker: I know, it's disgusting.

Jennifer Hill-Green: But yet—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: —they said that everything was great and stuff, but that's so funny. But just watching my grandmom and my mom bake, I always thought that was a lot of fun, interesting. There's a lot of science behind it, you know, not really, you know, you have to make

sure you measure everything right, and all that kind of thing. But I just—and then Duff Goldman.

Jordan Hickey: Oh, okay, so—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, *Ace of Cakes*. Love him. I would love to meet him. And I will watch his show, and his friend Geoffrey, and they were so funny, but they would just made these amazing cakes. And I'm like, "I think I can do that."

Jordan Hickey: And so I'm kind of curious though. We've kind of gone from being in home ec, kind of baking cakes. And you're seeing your mom and your family do this. And then obviously we're skipping a couple years though.

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And so my question I guess would be like, you know, baking cakes when you were growing up, seeing your family do this, I mean, did you ever think that that was a career—

Jennifer Hill-Green: No.

Jordan Hickey: —or it could have been?

Jennifer Hill-Green: No, I never saw it as a career.

Ashanti Parker: Well, you did think of—remember you told me that story? You said when you were younger you thought about going into the military to work in the—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yes, I did. But it was one of those—

Ashanti Parker: It wasn't like a—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, it wasn't one of those things like, oh, I think I'm gonna do this. Because on holidays, I was the one that made all the yeast rolls, and I was always the one making the cinnamon rolls and the cookies and everything, and I love—'cause I like to feed people. I really love feeding people. And I was like, oh, this is a lot of fun. But, of course, I've had some things that turn out really bad in the kitchen—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: —from peanut brittle to cookies. I had some terrible things.

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But just I think—I don't know. I just think that baking is one of those things that it actually helps mentally. And so when you go in the kitchen when you bake, you can kind of zone into your own world and, I don't know, it makes me feel good. It makes me feel really good.

Jordan Hickey: And so you're baking. You're doing all this stuff for your family. How did that change when you started watching *Ace of Cakes*? I mean, did it change? Was that like the moment where you were like, "Yeah, I can make this for friends, family, customers, everything"? Or was it like a slower burn?

Jennifer Hill-Green: I think it was a slower burn. I think it was one of those things. I wanted to see if I can do it at home. But then we were actually at a church [laughter], and we would feed the homeless like breakfast and lunch in Texas.

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And so it just happened to be like the birthday month, and I made my first birthday cake.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But that—

Jordan Hickey: I'm wondering, like, there's a—

Ashanti Parker: Just imagine—

Jordan Hickey: You [Ashanti] put your head on the table. I feel like I don't know if I'm getting five-star cake vibes here.

Ashanti Parker: Imagine like those '80s cakes, but like really—like, you know, the—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You know those cakes that you can have like a picture of, and then like the failed cake?

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: Yes.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I nailed it.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I nailed it.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Well, I didn't nail it.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I remember that cake too, because it was on my birthday. It was a two-tiered whi...it was like a, yeah, it was a two-tiered cake. It looked like a wedding cake with white frosting. It had little pink pipettes on it.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: And that cake was so dry.

Ashanti Parker: It was so dry [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: But the smell and the taste was there.

Ashanti Parker: It was there. But that was like—

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Jennifer Hill-Green: It was just really dry.

Ashanti Parker: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: And I think the next time I made a cake for—I think it was over at Angela's house, and we all got together. So it was a guy. He was from South Africa [laughter]. It was supposed to be like a lemon curd in between. He said, "Who made the cake 'cause that doesn't make sense?" [Laughter] He said, "That lemon is too sharp." [Laughter] So I'm like, "Oh." [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Like, well—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Well—

Jordan Hickey: So I guess the question then becomes, you've had these two cakes that were maybe not where you would've liked to have been. How do you go from those experiences to being like, "No, I'm gonna make it better. I am gonna do this"?

Jennifer Hill-Green: That's when you start getting serious, and start looking at different recipes, and start making sure that you're following a recipe to the T. Because a lot of time, people just kind of put things together.

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When it comes to baking, you can't do that. It has to be to the T. So just got serious about it, and I think I made—I don't know what I made after that 'cause it was fondant on it, and it was cute. I'm like, oh.

Ashanti Parker: It was the New York Yankees. It was the Yankees cake—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, but it—

Ashanti Parker: —and it was a chocolate cake.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, it was for a customer, and that was like our first cake. And I was like, whoa [laughter].

Jordan Hickey: So when you say it was for a customer, was this somebody you knew or—
?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, someone new in church.

Jordan Hickey: How did it make you feel?

Jennifer Hill-Green: To put that thing on Facebook, I was so excited.

Jordan Hickey: Really?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, 'cause I'm like, oh my gosh, it looks like something really Duff would make.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But I was so excited to see that. I was like, okay, I may have something here.

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I may have something, and just kinda—I just kept going a little bit more and more. I couldn't have—I couldn't frost a cake for nothing. I can put—I can roll out fondant, and put it on a cake. But frosting a cake smooth? I just learned that last year.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, it just takes time. [Laughter] It's a lot of practice that goes into it—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: —a lot of diligence and patience.

Jordan Hickey: And so that must have been—so you mentioned it was on Facebook. So what year would this have been?

Ashanti Parker: 2011.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah—

Jordan Hickey: 2011?

Jennifer Hill-Green: —2011.

Jordan Hickey: And so, Ashanti, I think—how old would you have been at this point?

Ashanti Parker: Thirteen, I was thirteen. And 'cause when she was watching *Ace of Cakes*, I was watching *Cupcake Wars*. And the judge on there, she was the owner of Sprinkles Cupcake Bakery. And I was like obsessed, 'cause I was like I love the way she does her cupcakes. It's so simple, and just I love that. I was like, I wanna do that.

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And that was around the same time 'cause both those shows came out around the same time. And I told Mom, my mom, and she was like, "Oh, that's a good idea. You should give it a try." And then that's when she started doing cakes and stuff. So it was like I think that was like a confirmation for her to like, "You know what, let me just go ahead and just—let me just try this cake thing. Just lemme just give it a try."

Jennifer Hill-Green: 'Cause my thing was, if I'm gonna start this up, she can actually take over later on. She wants to do cupcakes. It's just like getting a business off the ground for her.

Jordan Hickey: Yeah. What did the next couple years look like? I mean, were you kind of doing this—was this like a steady thing?

Jennifer Hill-Green: This was like, yeah, I think it was steady for a while.

Ashanti Parker: Starting off, it was steady.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes. I was working at a doctor's office, at a urologist, and I was doing both. And you know how hard that is?

Ashanti Parker: And not to mention—I'm sorry, it's on the record—but she was a single mom at the same time. So it was just like she was doing all of that and then some, and just—

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Jennifer Hill-Green: That was hard [laughter].

Ashanti Parker: —rocking the hell out of it [laughter]. She did a great job.

Jordan Hickey: How were you doing that? 'Cause it's one thing to be a baker, one thing to work in a doctor's office, another thing to be a single mom, but to—I mean, this is a bad pun, but it's like putting everything into the baking pan, and just being like, "I'm just gonna see what happens."

Ashanti Parker: Absolutely.

Jordan Hickey: I feel like when you have that many things going in, that's gotta be like really, really hard.

Jennifer Hill-Green: It was hard, but something happens when I would get into the kitchen, that just kind of melt away, because at the time, you want a good product, so you're gonna switch your brain over to that. "I'm gonna do this; make sure this turns out right." But I look back, and I started out. My son kept saying, "Mom, you should go full time with this." I was like, "There's no way I can go full time with this."

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Jennifer Hill-Green: It felt like I was, you know, I was making cakes, and I was decorating, but I didn't feel like it was show-stopping, I guess. I'm like, there's so much more to learn. And so I'm like, I'm gonna have to keep this job here, and I'll just do this on the side. So it was fun. And there's times where you get one cake, and then sometimes you'd get like three cakes in a weekend. That's not fun—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: —back then, anyway. But I just—

Ashanti Parker: You just roll the dice—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, roll the dice.

Jordan Hickey: So I guess the question I would ask then is, what comes next? Ashanti, I know you mentioned like you had moved to Little Rock, and I think you had mentioned that there was a pastry program.

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Can you tell me how your early experience, seeing your mom doing what she did, inspired you to move in that direction? Did you think it was gonna be a full-time gig?

Ashanti Parker: Well, I will say I was a late bloomer—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —because I was the type of person, like, I wanted some ... Growing up, if I wanted to do something, I would do it. And if I didn't do it right, I would drop it. So it took a lot of pushing from my mom for me to keep trying, like baking and everything, because during

that period, I would try something, it didn't work, and Mom's like, "Well, you gotta keep at it. You gotta keep trying and trying and trying." And during that, when I moved here from—when I moved back to Little Rock, I was—it was during that time where I didn't know what I wanted to do.

Jordan Hickey: And so what year, like, how old were you at that point?

Ashanti Parker: I was about 22.

Jordan Hickey: So it had been a couple of years then—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: —from 13 to 22?

Ashanti Parker: Exactly, 'cause during that little period, I was doing a lot of—I was trying.

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I had like an idea, like, I want to have this, that, and a third, but I wasn't, like, she was more active with it. She was doing more of the work. I just was like I had ideas.

Jordan Hickey: Had you been helping her with, you know, like bake cakes on the side?

Ashanti Parker: I was like assist her in everything, and she would teach me, and everything like that. But I didn't, yeah, like I said, I was a late bloomer. I always wanted to, I was just afraid to, if that makes sense. Does that make sense?

Jordan Hickey: Yeah, I think so.

Ashanti Parker: Okay [laughter]. Sorry.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: No, it does. It does, because I think that you sort of get to the precipice of something, and then it's like making that jump though is like that's the—no matter what it is, that's the—I feel like you kind of push the boulder up the hill, but pushing the boulder, I mean, not off the cliff but to the top, that's the toughest part. So you've kind of been in that sort of head space.

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What got you to saying like, "I'm gonna do it"? How does that happen?

Ashanti Parker: I was in—I had just moved, like I said, just moved here from Little Rock. I was about like 22, and I was working as a—what was I? ... I worked at Easter Seals. I was like a nurse for a client, basically. So I was doing that with my aunt as a side thing. And I was like, I can't keep doing this forever, so what is it that you want to do? I said, where does your heart always lie to? And it was always like pastry. So I was like, well, I don't feel like I'm not that good enough for it. And then she—I remember having a conversation with Mom, and she's like, "Well, well don't you give pastry school a try? It's an online program. Just give it a try. See if you like it." And I was like, "Okay." And I signed up for it, and the process was so easy to get in. I was like, okay, this is for me. And then I remember, yeah—

Jordan Hickey: What was the program?

Ashanti Parker: Oh yes, it's called—so it's actually a pastry school based in Colorado. It's called [Auguste Escoffier School Of Culinary Arts].

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It's a really nice program too. I think they did that during COVID. It was an online program, so what they do is they send you all of the things that you need.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Equipment.

Ashanti Parker: Equipment.

Jordan Hickey: Oh wow.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Some of the ingredients—

Ashanti Parker: Ingredients.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —and everything. So it was really cool. And the uniform, 'cause you have to be in uniform when you're actually in a kitchen baking.

Ashanti Parker: Yes, there was a lot of like criteria.

Jordan Hickey: So I'm sort of picturing like what this would be like. Did they send you like a stand mixer and like all the stuff? How much did you have to provide for the course?

Ashanti Parker: Very little. I think just a mixer, and then—'cause they give you a—okay. So I can break down the school.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So what they do is they send you all of your equipment as far as like knives. What is it? Just any kind of baking tools that you need, they provide all of that. It's within

the tuition. With that, they give you a stipend as well, so you can get your groceries and everything for that.

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But the requirement is like for your lessons, you have to wear your uniform, which they send you, and then you have to kind of make, what is it called, those ransom notes?

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You have to put the date—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You have to—but you do.

Jennifer Hill-Green: That little chalkboard.

Ashanti Parker: You have a little chalkboard.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You have to take a picture with it, and you have to put the lesson name, and what you're learning, and then the date, and you have to take a picture. And that's the only reason they will know—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Usually a full body because they want the shoes on.

Ashanti Parker: And they wanna make sure you are good for baking. So with that, and then they also required you to take pictures of each and every individual step you do in baking. And you would think that you could get away with stuff. You could not.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Say, for instance, what did I make? I think it was a souffle. I made a souffle, and I think the texture—they said, "Yeah, I zoomed in, and I saw the texture was—" I was like, "How can you notice that from the picture?" They're very detailed. They know you went wrong with this one because the egg deflated here.

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And if you did it the other way, it wouldn't have done that. They can tell all of that by a picture.

Jordan Hickey: Oh wow.

Ashanti Parker: I know.

Jordan Hickey: That's—

Ashanti Parker: Insane.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And the thing is, and we tested that, I think I tested that one time. I was like, let me just see if they can do—if she's right. And I ended up doing the souffle or something correctly, and it came out perfectly, the way she said it. I was like, okay, they know what they're doing [laughter]. Yes. But you're required to take pictures of each and every step. They call it *mise en place*, which is getting your ingredients together. Take a picture with that, with your ransom note chalkboard [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: So each step—

Ashanti Parker: Each step.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —if you're pouring your flour and sugar—

Ashanti Parker: You need to take—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —take a picture of that. And then as it's mixing, you take a picture of that.

Ashanti Parker: Because within those steps, that's how they can tell you where you went wrong.

Jordan Hickey: And so you're doing this?

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Is this making you think like, "Yeah, this is what I want to do?"

Ashanti Parker: Oh, for sure. The first [laughter]—my first day that I think they were teaching us how to cut fruit.

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Yes, it was. I was like, I'm in love with this. I just had—I don't know why or what it was, and I could easily just go in the kitchen and cut fruit. But just something about learning, I was able to learn something. And I think for me, I had to learn instead of just go and do it. She's the type of person, she can just go and do it. I need someone to teach me a little bit.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: For the record, Jennifer looked to the side—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, I did. I know.

Jordan Hickey: —and went, "Oh."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But, no, she can get in the kitchen and just try things. For me, I'm a step-by-step type of person. I like to learn and then apply it. I just learn better that way. But she's more creative than I am when it comes to the kitchen. You are. You are.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Jordan Hickey: And so like—

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: —also just for the record, I'm seeing a little bit of a head shake from Jennifer. However, I feel like you're probably being humble where you don't need to be humble, if I can be so bold.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I honestly think she doesn't see what I see. No, I take that back. She doesn't see what everyone else sees 'cause she's like—

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Jennifer Hill-Green: I try—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I try my best [laughter], really. I put my heart and soul into it.

Jordan Hickey: So having heard about this program, all the hoops you needed to jump through, because that sounds like a lot of hoops, at what point, Jennifer, did you decide like, "I wanna try this"? Did you guys have a conversation? How did this—?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, we had a conversation. I think she brought it up to me. And I'm like, "I don't know. I don't know." 'Cause I had just got remarried, and I was living in Texas, and we were supposed to move to Memphis, but we didn't. And then he [laughter] ended up moving his job to Little Rock. And I'm like, okay, maybe this is a good thing. I'll just start school, and I think I did some lessons in Texas. Yes. I think I cut my fruit in—

Ashanti Parker: 'Cause you started a little later.

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Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes. But I'm like, oh, this is so cool. And I was like, oh my gosh, if I was younger, I would've done this back when I was a teenager—

Jordan Hickey: Really?

Jennifer Hill-Green: —back when I was, you know, first got outta high school. It's just it depends on where you grow up. You grow up in Arkansas. No one talks about things like that. It depends on where you are. But if that had been applied to me, and I'm like, hmm, I would've done it.

Ashanti Parker: Same, like, right outta high school, I would've done it.

Jordan Hickey: It's funny. With the different cottage bakers that I've spoken with, I think there was one person who said their parents were supportive. Everyone else was like, "Yeah, I

know, this was—baking was hobby," especially people, like, if you're in your 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s—

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But it kind of seems like before, baking was like, yeah, this is a hobby.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right.

Jordan Hickey: This is like something that you just do because there are birthdays. It wasn't a career path. And that kind of sounds like what it was for you especially, Ashanti.

Ashanti Parker: Sure, 'cause it was mostly just like for us, 'cause around that time—I would say, around like Duff in like 2011—that was more like chefs. You just have a restaurant, but you're like a chef cooking in there and anything. But they didn't really, like, I didn't know much about having a bakery. I've never—we didn't even know there was bakeries in Texas. There wasn't—we didn't have those during that time. So it was just—yeah.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, just your donut shops.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah.

Jennifer Hill-Green: But it was just—I don't know. It's so interesting how it all just kinda came together, you know? School was, I mean, it was a lot of fun to me 'cause I wasn't doing anything, 'cause I had just moved to Arkansas, and it's really hard to find a job in Arkansas.

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Jordan Hickey: Oh. So you had moved here and, like, were you kind of doing the classwork full-time?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, I was doing it full-time. We were living in Redfield, and I was doing it full-time. And, like I said, it was really hard to find a job in the medical field because I have like 20 years plus in the medical—just you got to know someone that knows someone that knows someone to get in. And so that was depressing. But then again, it was exciting when I got in the kitchen to just be able to take pictures of my stuff, and then have the feedback from the chefs, 'cause you get this long feedback from the chefs. They make a video—

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: —a voice video, and send it to you, and tell you what you did right, and everything. It was just always so positive.

Jordan Hickey: Because the microphones aren't going to pick this up, I think, Ashanti, your eyes were big, and kind of shaking your head—

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Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: —as you were hearing what your mom was saying about the feedback.

Ashanti Parker: Yes, they're very detailed.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Very detailed.

Ashanti Parker: And that's a thing people don't understand. They're like, "Oh, an online program? That was easy." No, it was not. I would've rather have been in a physical building—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yes.

Ashanti Parker: —because I feel like it would've been a lot easier.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, for sure, because—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, they're very detailed, very.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —'cause even like each subject, let's say, croissant, you had to fill out, go online, and fill out this long paperwork for each product that you make.

Ashanti Parker: I forgot about that.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yeah. And you have to do a description on the flavor wheel. And it's just—it's a lot.

Ashanti Parker: A lot of moving parts, because with the program—

Jennifer Hill-Green: It's a lot.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —'cause with the program, you do get tested as well. They give you tests, finals, and stuff like that. But, no, with each, say, project or lesson that you learn, you have this—what is it? It was like a sheet that they give you. It was like a little chart, and you have to— it's a flavor profile. You have to type in the recipe, and then the grams and everything that it requires.

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You have to explain the taste and the texture, all of it, and then also you have to type out exactly how you did your steps. So it's very detailed [laughter]. They're very detailed. But that's what we do. We're able to use that now.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yeah, for sure.

Ashanti Parker: —it's helpful, for the most part.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Especially the mise en place—

Ashanti Parker: The mise en place, for sure.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —just making sure you're setting up all your ingredients, you measured 'em, and all that kind of stuff. So it's just easy to put things together when you have everything measured out, everything in its place.

Jordan Hickey: It's kinda like you said, it's a science.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: So one thing I am wondering, so you're both going through this program, I mean, were you baking in the same kitchen at this point?

Ashanti Parker: No.

Jordan Hickey: So you weren't baking in the same kitchen.

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I guess the question is, you know, so you're doing this coursework, but then at what point did you guys start talking about collaborating? How did you start moving in that direction?

Ashanti Parker: So we actually bake separately. I lived in Sherwood. She lived in Redfield. But sometimes I would drive down to Redfield, and we would bake together, which was—it also started something. But we started baking separately. And then when I decided, I was like, "Mom, I think I wanna bake in your kitchen." And we started doing our lessons together. And I've noticed how just us being in the kitchen together, it started something. It sparked something. I enjoyed being in the kitchen, doing things with her. It was to the point where I got excited when I had to get off work and do school. It's like I would just get off work and go straight to Redfield, and we would just do our school lessons, and then I'd just come back home. It was just something I looked forward to. And that was just like a slow burning, like a slow burn. And then we ended up learning from each other.

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And then I think I was the one that sparked the idea for having a bakery, because I was like—she didn't have a job at the time. And I was like, I think we have something. I think we can do something here. At least try to build something. There's something to think about. And so we had it in the back of our mind as we were going through school. And then during that, we started kind of developing a menu and ideas and stuff like that. But we would just sit on it. It was a lot of just sitting on ideas.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: There was a lot of ideas sitting.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: At what point did you guys just say like, "Let's not sit on these ideas anymore"? At what point did you guys let these ideas out into the world? But also how long was the program, by the way? I don't think I asked that.

Ashanti Parker: It was a year or two? Two years?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Two years.

Ashanti Parker: Two years. It was a two-year program.

Jordan Hickey: So it was a two-year program?

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm.

0:27:59

Jordan Hickey: Oh my God. I didn't know it was that long.

Ashanti Parker: It's not—no, it was not.

Jennifer Hill-Green: It was.

Ashanti Parker: It was like a year and a half.

Jennifer Hill-Green: A year and a half.

Ashanti Parker: Because I think the way—'cause that was the thing. The way we started, it was—I think we first started in January.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Ashanti Parker: And then—

Jordan Hickey: What year was that?

Ashanti Parker: —of 2021. Yes, I think it was 2021, and then we graduated. Yeah, we graduated last year in May 2022.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, we could have graduated earlier. But we both had COVID.

Ashanti Parker: That's what it was.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And we had to kind of push our classes—you know.

Ashanti Parker: 'Cause I was gonna say, yeah, it would've been a shorter program, but we ended up catching COVID.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: So you had all these ideas that you're sitting on. At what point did you start? It's like, "Okay, these ideas are going out into the world"?

Jennifer Hill-Green: These are ideas that, like, she was doing when she was 12, too. There's a lot of those ideas.

Ashanti Parker: I told you, a lot of ideas sitting.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: So like a decade of like—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, for sure.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —more than a decade of ideas sitting?

0:29:00

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm. And it's funny that we're actually using those recipes—

Jordan Hickey: Really?

Ashanti Parker: —from all that. Just ideas sitting, 'cause I wasn't confident in myself, honestly. But we came together. I started getting bolder. I was like, "Mom, I think we got something. I think we just need to just do it."

Jordan Hickey: And was this during the program?

Ashanti Parker: During the program, yeah. So I was dealing with the stress from work, and then the program, which was a lot at one time, but she kept me going. I have to put that in there 'cause she kept me going. I would've quit.

Jordan Hickey: Really?

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And I was like "Mm-mm."

Ashanti Parker: —'cause I—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-mm.

Ashanti Parker: I finally was able to get her out of that quitting mentality. But I would—if something gets too tough, I would just push it aside.

0:29:58

But she said, "No, you have to see this through." I'm like, "Oh Jesus." But I'm so glad I did.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I know, right? [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And now I won't let her drop anything.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Now the roles are reversed.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But, yeah, so we moved. So from Redfield, we lived in Redfield, and we were baking together in school, and we were coming up with ideas. And then we actually finally moved to North Little Rock, and then that's when—that was about, I would say, October—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Ashanti Parker: —of 2021. No, it was November of 2021.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: That's when we started baking just for fun, just to kind of like curate something, 'cause she—there's so many little moments that build up to that. 'Cause I remember in Redfield, you had your therapy appointment, remember? And I made that your—what is that therapist's name?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh, the—

Ashanti Parker: Sure, that person—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, my shoulder physical therapy.

0:30:59

Ashanti Parker: Physical therapist, yes, we made him some treats, and I remember I did the Spirit in the Sky, which is an oatmeal cream pie. That was the first time I tried that, and I just wanted to try it 'cause I was like, I love oatmeal cream pies so I just wanna give this a try. And I did that, and she ended up taking it to him, and he was obsessed with it. And I was like, okay, great.

Jennifer Hill-Green: So then I end up bringing him—

Ashanti Parker: Bringing him a little box too—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And everyone was going through the box.

Ashanti Parker: Yes.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So that was a moment. That was like October of 2021. That was October. Then in November, I was working at a gym, and the personal trainer, it was his birthday, and we made him like the same little box of multiple treats. It was the Spirit in Sky, which is the oatmeal cream pie, Abbey Road—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And Sweet Child of Mine.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, Abbey Road, which is the chocolate chip bar, and then the Sweet Child of Mine, which is like a pecan pie bar. And we put it—we packaged it really nicely,

individually packaged, and then we put it in a nice little box. And I went into the gym, fully crowded—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I saw him, and said, "Happy birthday."

0:31:59

He said, "Oh my gosh," 'cause he loves those things. Those are his favorite things. And then the clients, they all came over, and looked at it and stuff.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: Again, this is at the gym.

Ashanti Parker: This is at the gym.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And, honestly, I have to say, it was actually—what time was it? It was about, I would say, like, seven o'clock in the morning, by the way.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I think 6:45 or 7 o'clock in the morning, 'cause it's still kind of dark.

[Laughter] Yeah, so that happened. And then one of the—I think he was sharing with I think the cus...the clients, he was sharing with some of the clients, and everything like that. And then I had a call from one client in particular. Her name was Vicky [sp], I have to shout her out, Vicky [sp], 'cause she said, "Hey, do you guys—can you make me a box like that?" I was like, "Sure,"

and I made her a box, and that's from her—she was the person that made us decide to make a Thanksgiving menu, just like, you know, let's just give it a try, because she just raved so much about it.

0:33:03

I said, "Well, maybe we have something." I mean, she's kind of hard to please.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So it was like, I mean, I love Vicky [sp], but she's hard to please [laughter]. So for her to love that, I was like, I think we've got something. So from then, we decided to make a Thanksgiving menu, posted it on Facebook, and our family and friends. And then of course the clients at the gym, they kept us busy.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Well, we were busy.

Ashanti Parker: Kept us busy. And, mind you, we didn't have a name or anything. We were just a mother-daughter, a little bakery. We were just selling things. And then that, oh yeah, Thanksgiving did really, really well. And then I was like, "Okay, Mom, I think we should probably think of a name, and then maybe get business cards, the logo, start working on that." And I was like, who can do it? And then [laughter] I was on Pinterest. This is so—we are so random—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —such a random business. I was on Pinterest—

Jennifer Hill-Green: We're kind of all over the place [laughter].

0:34:00

Ashanti Parker: I was on Pinterest, and I saw this brand. She's an illustrator. She's from New Zealand. And I was looking at her branding. I was like, oh, that's so cool. I found her on Pinterest. And I was like, let me see if this is a real thing. I typed in her name in Google, and she was like legit. And I just filled out a form and, just like that, she got in contact, and she started doing our branding and everything like that.

Jordan Hickey: So what did you say that you wanted to be like? I mean, how much information did you have to give her?

Ashanti Parker: So she wanted, well, of course, the name, the kind of theme that we were going with. And at the time, we actually solidified that we wanted a music theme. But we wanted our bakery to be different, so we chose a different color palette 'cause we were trying to stand out—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, we just want to stand out.

Ashanti Parker: A little bit.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Most bakeries have a certain look. We just kind of wanted to step—

Ashanti Parker: A little bit more vibrant.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —further, and say, "Hey, we're a bakery, a rocking bakery."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Yes, 'cause the thing [laughter]—and she—the thing is, her name is Courtney Moore. The thing is with Courtney, she—we clicked so well together. She made our

vision better than we can imagine. So we gave her just a little bit, and she created something amazing. And it's like how can she take these little words that I said, and just make something exactly how I wanted it to be? So just the communication with that, so that took her about a month—

Jennifer Hill-Green: 'Cause she gave us three different illustrations—

Ashanti Parker: She did, she gave us examples, like just different things—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —and different color schemes and stuff.

Ashanti Parker: And we ended up choosing one, and I think by December, that's when we had our logo and our business card. So we just sat on it though.

[Laughter]

0:36:00

Jordan Hickey: So you had all the stuff, and you just—

Ashanti Parker: Sat on it.

Jordan Hickey: —sat on it?

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: Like what—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Scared.

Jordan Hickey: What were you waiting for? Oh—

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: —fear, okay.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Fear.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Fear is real.

[Laughter].

Ashanti Parker: Fear is real, for sure. Even though, 'cause I gonna say 'cause it was done in December, and we had orders in Christmas, and Christmas was just booming. But it was just like, oh, I don't know.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I know, 'cause you get scared 'cause after Christmas, what's there after Christmas? 'Cause I'm thinking, okay, should we do something healthy for people? Because people, you know, they will go and start eating healthy, and they're gonna see our stuff and be like, “Well, can I have that?” But then I'm like, “Give 'em what they want.”

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So, first off, January was also good because—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: And February.

Ashanti Parker: —I was gonna say the clients at the gym was like, "I'm just gonna carry this over [laughter] to the new year as well."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But, yeah, we sat on that until about like January, and that's when we just displayed it. But it was mostly because at that time, I was working at a full-time, very high pressure job. It was very high pressure.

0:36:59

I was a mixture of everything. I was like admin, a videographer, editor. I was a mixture of everything for her—for my—for the owner of the building. So it was just a lot at one time, and I couldn't see past what I was doing for me to go ahead and just release Daisy Pastry, 'cause I was like I—I've worked for her for so long, and I'm so loyal. It's just that fear like I don't want to leave this job. It pays well. She's awesome. And it's like I don't wanna—it was just—it was a fearful thing. It was very fearful. And also I was thinking about other people, and what people may say or think. And I was like, you know, when January hit, I was like, you know what, screw it. [Laughter] We have something. We have something.

Jordan Hickey: So I wanna come back to that just for a second. But, Jennifer, were you working at this point?

Ashanti Parker: [Whispers] Yes, you were..

0:38:00

Jennifer Hill-Green: I was work...Oh yes. So I was actually working with a lady. It was, I would say, home health. I was with a lady that was pretty sick and everything. And so what I

would do, I would whatever—I'd bake, 'cause I was in abundance. I would take it over to this family's home—

Jordan Hickey: Oh really?

Jennifer Hill-Green: —and share it with them, because they were—all the siblings would come together on the weekends and stuff to be with their mom and everything. So I was giving all my stuff away 'cause there's no way to stay at home. I gained so much weight. Oh my god, it was crazy.

Ashanti Parker: Okay.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I would like to say school, oh my gosh—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh my gosh.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And, mind you, I was working at—'cause the thing is with my job at the gym, I have the avail...I'm able to get trained by the trainers as well. But, mind you, I have a profession that requires me to eat and try things. [Laughter] I have to—I ate so many, oh my gosh, I gained so much weight.

0:39:01

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh my gosh, it was crazy.

Ashanti Parker: And my trainer, she was so upset. I was like, "I don't know what else I can do."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I have to try this. I mean, I can't just bake this, and say in my notes that it tastes good. I can't lie for school.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: —especially when it came to, I think, the—

Ashanti Parker: The breads.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —the breads, but, no, the Bakewell tart, and the—what is the pudding? The plum pudding? No. What is that? It's a Christmas thing.

Ashanti Parker: The figgy pudding?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, the figgy pudding.

Ashanti Parker: That actually is shockingly—I'm sorry, off the record—that's shockingly delicious.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh my gosh.

Ashanti Parker: I'm so sorry. We're very random. But that's very good.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh my gosh, that was so good. I'm like, this is crazy. I was eating, oh my God—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: This job requires a lot of eating.

Jordan Hickey: I feel like that's something that, like, even if you're just trying like, okay, we gotta make sure that what we're putting out is good—

Ashanti Parker: It tastes right.

Jordan Hickey: —you still have to try it.

0:40:00

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: It's like you don't really, I mean, I feel like you don't even really have a choice in that. Like, you have to, right?

Ashanti Parker: Until—yes and no. And I will say when it comes to baking, now that we've baked so much of the same things, we know, like, if the color's different, then we have to try it 'cause that means something's wrong. So I can honestly say some things have been—we don't have to try because it's been consistent. But, like I said, if the color is different, or if the rise is different, that's a little off, and we would try it.

Jennifer Hill-Green: For the most part—

Ashanti Parker: For the most part.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —we use my son and my husband as taste testers, and they—

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter] Those poor men, I bet they are so sad.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: They are, they are.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Well, no. Well, see, my brother, he's like, "You guys, I can't do this anymore."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: He said, "I'm trying to get a girlfriend."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Noted.

[Laughter]

0:41:00

Jordan Hickey: So part of the reason why I asked about, like, if you were working at the time is that so, like, now this would've been January 2022, is that right, when you started kind of thinking like, "Oh, I'm gonna take the next step"?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: Is that right?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Ashanti Parker: I thought it was '23. Yes, it was.

Jennifer Hill-Green: We were in school.

Ashanti Parker: Sorry, yes.

Jordan Hickey: And so at what point did you guys start having this conversation like, "Oh, this doesn't just have to be like something that it's a side thing. It could be something that's more"? Were there talks about like, "Okay, I'll cut back on hours"? What was that conversation like when you were thinking about, "Okay, we're gonna take this forward"?

Jennifer Hill-Green: I don't know. I think it was just—

Ashanti Parker: I will say, I have the answer.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: She does.

Ashanti Parker: There was no reducing hours. I made—you saw the cane right?

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: He saw the cane, right?

0:41:58 No, I was still—we were still—I was still working full-time, and we were still doing orders and stuff like that. We debuted Daisy Pastry in January 2022. I remember it was like, we had our thank you cards and business cards. That was that. But we just left that there

[laughter], left that there. And around that time, we were getting our website together. February came around. That's when Valentine's Day. So we kind of picked back up because January's a little slow 'cause you come off of Christmas. So we had a few orders in January. But February, we had a lot of orders. Specifically, there was—he owns a restaurant. It's downtown. It's called [Fat Jaws Soul Food and Southern Eats]. We grew up—we went way back with him. Anyway, he reached out to us because he's having an event, and he wanted us to cater some desserts. That was like our first little catering gig. And he was like, "Oh yeah, sure, absolutely."

0:42:59

Jennifer Hill-Green: And it was for Shorter College.

Ashanti Parker: Yes, it was for Shorter College, yes, it was. So he was over there at that time, and he was still doing that job.

Jordan Hickey: Downtown North Little Rock?

Ashanti Parker: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: Okay, got it. Okay.

Ashanti Parker: And so we did that, and then he was impressed with that, and then he asked for—we had another event. It was a Valentine's Day event at his new restaurant. It was like a soft opening, and we catered some desserts. And then at that time, we had our signage and everything, Daisy Pastry Shoppe. So that's when we kind of branded, and we had like our business cards. And that day [laughter], as soon as we delivered that day, I said, I have to blast Daisy Pastry. I was in the car just like okay, the Facebook page, that's done.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But, yeah, 'cause I was like, I don't know. It was so quick, 'cause as soon as we left the building, 'cause he was still getting things started, I was like, "We put business cards, but where are they gonna go to?"

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I was like, what are we gonna look at?

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I was like—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —oh gosh, I still have to publish the page.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So I have to publish our Facebook page.

0:44:00

So I had to do that. I made sure to post all the pictures that we had of our signature cakes and cookies, 'cause that's when our menu was kind of set, for the most part. And I put all it on there, and then that was that. And then I put that on our personal pages. Friends and family went over there. It was great. Thanks. So we got a lot of bi...we got a few bites from the event we did.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, we did.

Ashanti Parker: But that same day forced me to say, you have to put that up there.

Jordan Hickey: That's probably, like, I was curious 'cause you guys had had this branding and all this stuff ready, have been sitting on ideas since you were like 11 or 12. So the thing that pushed Daisy Pastry out the world was just like, "Oh, we need to send people somewhere, 'cause it's already out there"? It was almost, again, like the horse before the cart, right?

Ashanti Parker: It was, it really was, because he—I think it was a last-minute thing too, 'cause he asked for—did he ask for business cards?

0:44:59

I think he asked—him or his wife asked for business cards, and we just like made some up. No, no, no, no, we just got the ones printed that Courtney made. I think it had our phone number and our email address, and then I think it had Facebook, our Facebook. I was like, but I didn't even publish our page.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So literally as we were driving back from the venue, I was on the phone just like, okay, publish. "Okay, I have published this." Okay, made this [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: She does all the social media.

Ashanti Parker: So that's where my creativity, that's my—I'm great at baking too, but she's like—I have to say that 'cause she'll get upset.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But she's queen baker, but I like the behind the scenes. I like doing our marketing and stuff like that—

Jordan Hickey: And so that actually—

Ashanti Parker: —because I'm used to that.

Jordan Hickey: Yeah, 'cause you have the content creation background.

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: So that kind of gets me to this question of, like, you've been doing this. It's starting to snowball a little bit. You're starting to get some clients.

0:46:00

At what point did it start to feel like very real? 'Cause, I mean, it doesn't sound like when you got the branding stuff, it doesn't seem like that was real. Was it the Valentine's Day thing? Or is it like, "Oh, this is a thing"?

Ashanti Parker: It didn't become a thing, honestly, until October of 2022.

Jordan Hickey: Really?

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: Like 10 months or 8 months later?

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, it didn't, because during that time, it was just friends and family. And that doesn't validate you as much as a stranger would, 'cause they're just supporting you, which is, I mean, that's not a bad thing. Of course they love your things. But it's just like, okay, I kind of want someone new [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: It's good to see, yes, it's good to see someone, a new name, you know, some—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, just someone random.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: I don't know.

Jennifer Hill-Green: No, it's okay. But, no, it's just I get so excited. I'm like, "How did you find us?"

Ashanti Parker: Yeah. Just like you.

[Laughter]

0:46:57

Jennifer Hill-Green: And so, with that being said, we had—I was actually working for the railroad at the time. I was at home. It was a remote job. And I get this—it was a Facebook Messenger asking about a wedding cake. And I was just like, okay.

Ashanti Parker: Oh, that's right.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah. And then she said that she was coming in from Colorado Springs, Colorado. They were gonna get married here in Arkansas. And I'm like, okay. And so we just hit it off really well. I hit it off with her so well, and she's almost like my sister, you know? And then she would send me pictures of what she wanted, and I was sending her pictures of what I think she should have. It was just back and forth.

Ashanti Parker: Did not know this woman.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I did not know her. She, her and her fiancé at the time, came to the house, and did a taste testing.

Ashanti Parker: They drove from Colorado. They were in town because they wanted to try different bakers, and then—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Look at the venue.

Ashanti Parker: —look at the venue and then the food.

0:47:59

It was a food tasting. So they just made a whole trip out of it. So, mind you, really quickly, she found us from a hashtag. I used a hashtag on a post. I think I said hashtag Little Rock Bakers. I guess she put the hashtag in on Facebook. She said, she literally said, "I put that in there, and then y'all's page was the first one that popped up." I was like, "Interesting."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And that's when I rushed.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: That's when I was rushing. Cool. But, yeah, anyway, so they were in town. She came to—they came to the house, sat down. We had this whole nice little spread. I think about her all the time. She's supposed to be—I could cry. So when she was trying each one, she was crying. She was crying. And I can tell she was—she's a hard person to please as well. She

started crying because she was so happy about how it tasted, like, just the who...how she found us, like, everything. And her husband, oh my, they fell in love.

0:48:58

And they said, "We have another baker, but I think you guys are gonna—y'all are it. But we're not gonna cancel on this baker. We're still gonna go. But you guys got it." It was so sweet. It was so, so sweet. Ended up going to other bakers. That's another story we won't talk about.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: She—yeah, anyway, we were definitely a shoo-in. But that's when we knew we had something.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right—

Ashanti Parker: That's when we knew. That was—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —'cause she wanted so much.

Ashanti Parker: So many things.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, it was just like a lot of different items that we made, the wedding cake along with cake jars, and different flavors. It was crazy. Oh, it was so much fun.

Jordan Hickey: That's like pushing you guys really outside of your comfort zone, right?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yes.

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm, for sure, yeah, absolutely.

Jordan Hickey: And so when you do that, I kind of wonder, like, at what point, like, at this point, what are your expectations for the bakery?

0:50:05

Did you kind of know what you were getting into, and you just already knew, or was this like the first time where it's like, "Oh, this could be a lot of work"? What was going through your mind at this point?

Ashanti Parker: We're used to a lot of work.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I didn't think—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I never thought of that.

Ashanti Parker: That's a good question too. I don't think I thought too much of it. I think it was, to me, when I have an opportunity, I get excited, and I just go for it; I just do. I don't really think too much about it, especially since that was just so awesome. It was very random. I think she had our taste testing, and it was like August. I was like, okay, we got something. We got something. And so, yeah, so that was that. And then I think it was Vicky [sp], the same lady—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —she said, "Why don't you guys set up at like River Market or something like that?" I was like, "Oh."

0:51:00

She's like, "Yeah, you should. I've been there before. There's not a lot of people selling cookies and stuff." I was like—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: She said, "You guys should try that." And I was like, "Okay." And on the clock, I was like, "Let me just look at some farmers markets"—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: On the clock, she said.

Ashanti Parker: On the clock, I was on the clock, and I was looking at a farmers market, and I came up with Bernice, Bernice Farmers Market, and I just filled out the form. They got back immediately, and said they had availability that Satur...that Sunday, excuse me, that Sunday.

Jordan Hickey: Yeah, that Sunday. So it was the Sunday before their wedding?

Ashanti Parker: Yes, it was.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: It was the Sunday before their wedding.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And I was like—and I kid you not. I think it was Tuesday. It was Tuesday when they said, "Oh, we have availability on Sunday." And I screenshotted it to mom, and I said,

"We're doing this. No, just we're not—we're doing it." She said, "Okay." And by the time I came home, I think that's when we kind of figured out what we're gonna do.

Jennifer Hill-Green: We got the table—

Ashanti Parker: The table—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —chairs.

Ashanti Parker: —the decorations, the labels, all in that week.

0:51:58

We made our debut that Sunday at Bernice. Started off a little nervous, until we got outta the car, and we saw someone we knew setting up. I was like, oh, okay, whew, this is great.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And then we set up. We were setting up, and we had our first customer.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Uh-uh, Ms. Barnhill [sp] came by the table first.

Ashanti Parker: Oh yeah, she stopped to tell us how beautiful our table was.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, and that was like, okay, this is good [laughter].

Ashanti Parker: And then another—and I was nervous mostly for the—I was actually nervous for the vendors because sometimes when you go to like set up at somewhere, you have people looking at you like, "Oh, who's this?" But everyone was so warming. It wasn't a competition, that was the thing, and it didn't feel like it either. No one was in competition with each other. So when we were there, it was like a very friendly environment. It was so warming,

so that my nerves immediately left because no one was looking at us. 'Cause there was a baker behind us, and we were just talking to him, and there was no competition, zero, because everyone provided something—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Different.

Ashanti Parker: —yeah, different.

0:52:58

So that was like, okay, I think this, okay, I think we're gonna do well today. A customer came. More customers came. We sold out on our first market.

Jordan Hickey: You sold out?

Jennifer Hill-Green: We sold out.

Jordan Hickey: How much had you brought, and were you thinking you were gonna sell out?

Ashanti Parker: No.

Jennifer Hill-Green: No.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: No, not at all. No, honestly, no. I don't think I had much expectation, no, we didn't, because I tell—every market and every pop-up we do, I said, "If we sell, we sell. If we don't, we don't. It's okay."

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, that's our thing.

Ashanti Parker: I feel like that just gets rid of all disappointment.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: If we sell, we sell. If we don't, we don't. It's okay. It's all right. For some reason, that just kind of takes the nerves away. But, no, we did not think we were gonna sell out. I think we took about two dozen. It depends...I think about a dozen and a half of each item, and we had approximately five items? Five, six items?

Jennifer Hill-Green: No, we probably had more than that.

0:53:59

Ashanti Parker: Because we started off with a lot.

Jennifer Hill-Green: We started doing way too much.

Ashanti Parker: We had a lot of product.

Jordan Hickey: Do you mean like a lot of different—

Ashanti Parker: Different.

Jordan Hickey: —types of items?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm—

Jordan Hickey: Okay.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —'cause my mind, I can wake up in the middle of the night, thinking, you know what? I think I'm gonna do this and that and that and that. And I'mma add this to this and, boom, I just gotta make my own recipes up.

Ashanti Parker: Yes, and with that, and that's where the conflict came, because she would do that without talking to me first.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So that's where the—I was like, "Oh, so this is on the menu now? Okay. No one wanted to discuss. Got it."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So that's actually where the conflict came.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: So yeah, starting off, we had way too much, but who cares, 'cause it sold, and everyone liked it. That's great. The response was great. Yeah, we sold out the first one. That was just like, okay, all right.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And then leaving there, we end up having to bake all that week for the wedding.

Ashanti Parker: Bake all that week on top—

0:55:00

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, bake, like, yeah, we had to bake for the wedding. And, mind you, I still had a full-time job [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: And then also we baked for that Sunday 'cause we went back to the market [laughter].

Jordan Hickey: So you baked an entire wedding—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah.

Jordan Hickey: —all this stuff, and also all the stuff for the next—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Uh-huh, for the farmers market.

Ashanti Parker: Mind you, 'cause she, the bride, she wanted like a variety of a whole bunch of stuff. I love her so much, but she did not—she was overzealous. But she'll tell you that she agreed. But she asked for a lot of like chocolate-covered pretzel rods, like, different flavors of cake jars. So it was just like little cake in jars, and there was like red velvet, vanilla—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Strawberry.

Ashanti Parker: —strawberry, chocolate.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And then I think it was oatmeal cream pies. And then I made like a s'mores whoopie pie. And she wanted several of those. And then Abbey Road, which is the chocolate chip bar. Just a bunch of just stuff. And like there's not a lot of people coming to this wedding, and there wasn't [laughter].

0:55:59

But, yeah, we made a lot of—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And then—

Ashanti Parker: And then the wedding cake.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And the wedding cake. But her wedding cake was small 'cause she wanted a smaller wedding cake. But she just wanted—I like the fact when people want—

Ashanti Parker: Ask for a dessert party.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes—

Ashanti Parker: I think that's cool.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —'cause I think that way, you get a little bit of everything for your guests.

Ashanti Parker: And did they get everything.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: They didn't even leave her anything, those few guests that came to the wedding.

Jennifer Hill-Green: No, I made her box.

Ashanti Parker: I know, but just if you didn't [laughter]—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: —because if you didn't, that's—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I try to remember to make the groom and the bride a box of different desserts, 'cause that's a busy day. Not gonna sit down and think about it.

Ashanti Parker: That week was crazy. And on top of that too, my friend, her mom's birthday was that weekend, and she called me, frantic. She said, "Okay, my mom's friend called this cake lady, and I was like, 'Don't do that. I have a cake lady.' And she said, 'No, I'm just gonna use this lady.'"

0:56:56

Anyway, the cake was not great, and she called me, asking if Mom can make like a quick—or even like redo the cake that was already done. I was like maybe—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And she called crying.

Ashanti Parker: She was crying and laughing. She was in hysterics.

Jordan Hickey: Crying and laughing?

Ashanti Parker: Yeah.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: My little Hannah is just so melodramatic. But anyway—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —I was like, "Hannah, we're about to leave to drop off at this wedding in like the next hour. Where are you?" She said, "Well, I'm about to go pick up the cake." I said, "If you can get here real quick, she can take the frosting off, and she can do something real quick." And she's like, "You know what? No, that's too much work. I'll just go to like Nothing Bundt Cake or something." I was like, "Okay." [Laughter] But the fact that Mom—the reason I mention that because she almost had to do a cake on—it's just like—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, and I was willing to do it.

Jordan Hickey: So I kind of wonder, you know, you guys have sort of talked a little bit about the dynamic that you have.

0:57:55

It's like pushing, like, "Okay, you should do the pastry program." "No, *you* should do the pastry program." Coming up with ideas in the middle of the night. You're mother and daughter too, and so it's not like you just met, and then you have this business. It's like you have your entire lives together. How has the dynamic of the mother-daughter relationship kind of ebbed and flowed as you figured out how to run this business together?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Well, it was—we're were both very strong, opinionated. I mean, we've had some, you know, bumped heads. We bumped heads a lot.

Ashanti Parker: It didn't last more than like an hour—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: —two nights.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But then, you know, but the thing is, we're both trying to work for the same thing.

Ashanti Parker: We have—

Jennifer Hill-Green: It's just I wasn't used to working with someone. I'm so used to just doing things, and this is how I'm gonna do it. But then now I gotta make sure that my partner knows exactly what's going on.

0:59:00

Like she said, I'll come up with the recipes in the middle of the night, and I change it, and I'm like, oh, I didn't run it through her first. So that was hard. And then another thing that was hard too for me was my bakery, oh, my recipe, my cake. And I'm just like, oh my gosh, it's us. I'm so used to—because in Texas—

Ashanti Parker: I will flame her [laughter].

Jordan Hickey: What's that?

Jennifer Hill-Green: But you see—

Ashanti Parker: I had to flame her.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But in Texas, I was so used to doing things—

Ashanti Parker: On her own.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —on my own, so, and just taking that verbiage to a partnership, you don't do that—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Because we'll be at a farmers market, she's, "Yeah, I baked this at ..." I was like, "First off"—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —"well, no. We did that."

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, that was really hard.

Ashanti Parker: It was hard, but I understood. I was so annoyed. But then I had to [laughter] realize like, no, she's so used to working by herself, and I understood that.

0:59:58

But for me, it was being heard because the thing is like even though she's a more seasoned baker, I'm like, "Well, mom, I think you're doing too much. I think we need to scale it back a little bit." 'Cause sometimes she'll be like, "I think I wanna try this recipe." It's like, "Well, no, it's a little too soon. You only have two days to construct this."

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I love stuff at the last minute.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: That's when her ADHD kicks in. She loves that.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: No, I'm serious, really, she likes last-minute like—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I can knock it out the park last-minute. Give me a cake—

Ashanti Parker: I cannot.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —an intricate cake, and I can knock it out. But if I have like a month before, I'm thinking, I think too hard. I do better if it's just given to me. "Can you make this happen by tomorrow?" And I can.

Ashanti Parker: I need a week—two, three.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I have to have a plan.

1:00:57

Jordan Hickey: So how do you come together? 'Cause if you need pressure under fire to make the cake, and you need time, how do you work together? 'Cause these are like two seemingly opposite traits, right?

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But which is great.

Ashanti Parker: It's a great thing. Yes—

Jennifer Hill-Green: It works out, for the most part.

Ashanti Parker: I have to disagree because sometimes [laughter]—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Okay, we disagree.

Ashanti Parker: —it works, yes, it does, 'cause I would say at the beginning, it was very difficult. Now it's great, 'cause the thing is you took notes from me. Like, okay, Mom, I think

you need to plan out each day like what you're doing, like, plan those out. And she's really good with that. At the beginning—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I was all over—

Ashanti Parker: —Jordan—

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I was so random.

Ashanti Parker: Oh my gosh.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I could be so random.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, it was not helpful for me. But I will say, what came together, how we were able to pull it together, it was communication and just being honest. If this is gonna work, you're gonna have to listen to me, and I have to listen to you. We have to hear each other. We have to talk. We have to hear each other.

1:01:57 And this is—I don't like what you're doing, and this is—and she'll tell me what she doesn't like what I do, 'cause that's the thing. And just over time, we were able to kind of get through that, which didn't take too long.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, it didn't take long at all.

Jordan Hickey: This is sort of like a side question. But do you feel like your relationship, like, non-professional relationship changed or got—I don't want to say improved. But did it change working together? Do you know each other better than you did before?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yeah.

Ashanti Parker: For sure, absolutely.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: Actually, yes, very much so.

Jennifer Hill-Green: 'Cause I could tell, you know, when she wakes up, like, okay, she don't wanna talk.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: And she can sing with me. I mean, it's just we've gotten to know each other a lot better.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, our communication is a lot better, and I feel more comfy...I don't if I should know tell. But I can say what I want to—?

Jordan Hickey: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: Okay. But I've learned to dial it down.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So she's taught me how to do that, and also just we taught each other how to talk to one another.

1:03:00

Ashanti Parker: So that's helpful.

Jordan Hickey: But I think there's also something to like, you know, and you're—where are you baking right now? And if it's baking out of your house, which I think is the case, right?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: How do you—like, you can't be like, "You know what? I'm done. I'm going home." It's like, well, you're already at home.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: What's it been like to bake out of the house? What kind of challenges come with baking out of the house?

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Well, many challenges.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, a lot of challenges—

Ashanti Parker: A lot of challenges.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —'cause my husband—

Ashanti Parker: Bless my—I love that man so much, Kevin Green. But he is very—he's a very scheduled man.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: When it's a certain time, he eats at a certain time, he has to eat.

1:03:59

He doesn't care who's in the kitchen, what you're doing, how you're doing it, he has to eat. He has no regard for that. So that is annoying.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I don't care if it's on record.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I do not care. He has zero regard. And the thing is he's so sweet, and he doesn't—he's not aware of his thing, so you can't say anything. I can't be mean to him like I would love to [laughter], like I desire to be. So [laughter] I don't say anything. But with that, and I think also the space can be a lot. And we actually take different baking days.

Jordan Hickey: So that's what I was wondering.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, because it's—I'm sorry, I cannot work in the kitchen with anybody. I get very irritable.

Jordan Hickey: Even when you're baking with your mom?

Ashanti Parker: Yes, well, like, a small kitchen. If there's a—I'm sorry, lemme specify—a small enclosed space, I don't like it because I can't—it's hard to naviga...if it had more space, I'd be fine because like the house that we started baking out of in Redfield, that was perfectly fine 'cause there was a lot of space.

1:05:04

You have one side; I have the other. But in our kitchen, it's kind of close, so I can't—the things that I bake require a lot of ingredients, and I have to go around. It's just all—it's just difficult. So

what we do is, some things we mostly come together for, like breads, we always come together. But like cookies, 'cause I'm over the cookie sandwiches and stuff, I have to have the whole kitchen because that requires a lot of pans, everything. I don't need anyone in the kitchen [laughter].

Jordan Hickey: So how do you—and I guess I should have asked this before. So do you guys live together?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: And so what does a week look like? What are the baking days? Is it Monday, Wednesday, Friday? How does that break down?

Ashanti Parker: Tuesday through Thursday, because at the beginning, we would do Monday through Friday, and then Friday, of course, you're getting stuff ready for your Saturday.

1:05:59

But I was like, I don't like Friday being the last day we have to get stuff together. That needs to be a free day. Make sure everything is done during the week. You can rest for Friday, and then you're ready for Saturday. So we take turns. So I used to take Tuesdays and Thursdays. And then for her, because she has breads that have to be freshly baked, she'll take Tuesdays and Fridays.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And Fridays, yes.

Ashanti Parker: Did I say that right? No, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Wednesdays and Fridays, yeah. And then there's times where she'll sleep in, and I may get up early on more her baking days, and knock out something.

Jordan Hickey: Did it take a while to kind of figure out how to—

Ashanti Parker: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: —figure this out?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: It took a while.

Ashanti Parker: Oh my goodness.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And as far as separating working from home and living at home, it's easy for me because when I'm done, the kitchen's clean. I go down the hallway, and there's my bedroom [laughter]. Or go downstairs, there's the basement.

1:07:00

So I can—it doesn't bother me that it's all in one place. Now, a bigger place, like a commercial kitchen where we can just be open and everything, but as far as working and living there, I don't have a problem. Do you have a problem?

Ashanti Parker: Yes.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Of course she does.

Ashanti Parker: I always have a problem. Just kidding.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, I do, I do because I'm just so—I don't think I'm coming off likable at all on this.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Sorry. But when it comes to like, I don't know, I just—when I'm baking, I like to be in my zone. I like to listen to my own music. I don't like to—I just like to just be in it. I don't wanna be—how do I explain it? I just like to be in there by myself, in a way. It sounds terrible.

Jennifer Hill-Green: No.

Ashanti Parker: It doesn't?

Jennifer Hill-Green: No—

Ashanti Parker: Okay.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —because it's—

Ashanti Parker: Because I feel like I do better that way, just off on my own, just in my own zone. And I can pay attention better.

1:08:00

I don't make mistakes, 'cause sometimes if she's in the kitchen, and we're having a conversation, I can easily miscalculate something. So sometimes I just have to like, okay, I need everyone to shut up, and I have to—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Everyone, please take your lunch somewhere else for a moment. It's like there's cookies in the oven.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: Well, it kind of reminds me of, Jennifer, what you were saying about, like, when you're baking, like everything melts away, right?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: It kind of sounds like—

Ashanti Parker: It is.

Jordan Hickey: —you're the same way.

Ashanti Parker: Exactly. It's totally like a getaway, 'cause there would be times [laughter] where I get so irritable 'cause I feel like when I'm not baking the way I wanna bake, I feel like I'm not me. It's not like something I'm—it's hard to explain, 'cause there'll be times I'll wake up at like—I'll come home from work, yeah, I'll come home late from work around 6:30, 7:00. I'll immediately start baking, and I have my music in, and everyone's probably going to bed. I like that because that was my time. I was able to just release, basically.

1:09:02

I was able to just—I don't know. I just feel more free that way.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I can see that, yeah.

Ashanti Parker: I just liked—I like that.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And for me, I can do—

Ashanti Parker: She can bake in front of everybody. I'm like, I need—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah. I mean, sometimes I'll like a lot of company in the kitchen and everything. I like music playing. And there's times where it's okay being by myself, and just no music. It's just me just thinking about what I'm doing.

Jordan Hickey: Oh, so when it comes to then, like, I know you guys have both mentioned work. Jennifer, are you working remotely still for the railroad, or are you—

Jennifer Hill-Green: No.

Jordan Hickey: —doing something different?

Jennifer Hill-Green: I'm to a mobile phlebotomy, where they call me, and I go to someone's home and draw blood. I haven't been there in a couple weeks, but that's the only thing I have on the side.

1:10:01

Jordan Hickey: And so that's kinda like a part-time kind of thing?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes—

Jordan Hickey: Ashanti?

Jennifer Hill-Green: —a PRN.

Jordan Hickey: And what was it?

Jennifer Hill-Green: It's like a PRN thing.

Jordan Hickey: Oh, and what is a PRN?

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, what is it?

Jennifer Hill-Green: PRN, just whenever they need me.

Jordan Hickey: And then, Ashanti, you've mentioned that—are you still working full-time or no?

Ashanti Parker: Part-time, but I work from home now because I'm remote for—but I do when I can.

Jordan Hickey: I ask because I'm kind of curious. You've mentioned like you guys have figured out sort of the balance of things. And I'm kind of wondering, you know, thinking back from that, so we're in September of 2023, kind of like how the business has changed since October 2022, and also since that wedding, that crazy weekend of so much baking.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: How have things sort of changed in the past year?

1:11:00

Jennifer Hill-Green: Well, we changed the—we changed the branding, I mean, the colors. At first, not gonna lie, I was thinking, oh my gosh, what is she doing?

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, okay, 'cause I was gonna say, now I kicked—I think—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —since we had that little boost of like, what is it called, not success but like just, okay, I got something, we have something, which was last year, and, I mean, that train rode on, and it kept going. I'm like, okay. I was like, they're look...people are looking now and with eyes. I'm like, okay, I have eyes, they have eyes, I don't like what I see—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —so this has to change.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And I was like, okay, I have to start honing in. I was like, I want everything to be consistent. I want a consistent brand that can be consistent. It can stay the same. I'm not gonna get tired of it, not gonna wanna switch it around. And I was like, well, just, I need something vibrant. And I was like, "Mom, I think I wanna change everything pink." And she's like, "Okay."

[Laughter]

1:12:00

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, I was thinking, but—

Ashanti Parker: But the table's already cute.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I was like, "The boho, it's cute."

Ashanti Parker: No, and I said, "We're going in another direction"—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —"to [Peepas 1:12:09]."

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: And I'm like, "Okay. Well, let's go ahead and throw some disco balls on there, and just"—

Ashanti Parker: So the rebranding of that, but then also, I think, it was—last year was so great because it's just like—we're just totally different from where we were from last year. We're better this year. But just even with the start of last year, I think it's like amazing because it started with Bernice, and then continued with Bernice, and then we started doing Hillcrest. And then I had the balls to like, you know what, I think I'm just gonna message different businesses, and see if we can pop up in our stores [laughter].

Jordan Hickey: What? That's cool.

Ashanti Parker: Uh-huh.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And then we did—

Ashanti Parker: That was during Christmas, and then—

Jennifer Hill-Green: There was Box Turtle.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, there was Box Turtle, Crying Weasel, which is a vintage, a nice vintage store.

1:12:58

And then from then, our name started getting out there, and people started asking us to come. I said okay. And then the Root Cafe, we popped up there, and they still—we give discounts, and they want us to come back. They basically want us to live there.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Basically, Kate, I swear to God, Katie is waiting.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: She's waiting. So just those little moments, and the thing is, we started building relationships with those people, and they love our product. Anytime we're like—oh, the Green Corner Store as well. Anytime we pop up somewhere, we always see neighboring people. They'd always like to come and support, no matter where we are. So that, we built that, and then we built a customer base, which is amazing. And then, yeah, it just—that's—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I think what got me—was it at Boulevard Bread?

Ashanti Parker: Oh, the Valentine's thing?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Okay. Oh my gosh, I think that is when I'm like, I think we have something.

1:13:59

Ashanti Parker: Really, that was the—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, that was so amazing because people were like, "I've heard about you." And not heard about you as in, "Oh, I heard about you guys," and walk away. "I heard about you, and I want this and this and this and this." That was nice.

Ashanti Parker: And we sold out there, too, quickly.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: It was a Valentine's Day event by Crying Weasel. She invited us [laughter] to pop up. I was like, okay. And it was just for all women. It was really nice. And she put us like right in the middle. And I was a little nervous because I was like, you know, any event you're just like, ah, you don't—if you sell, you sell.

Jennifer Hill-Green: You don't know the crowd.

Ashanti Parker: Right, you don't know the crowd, and that that's a thing.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, that's a thing, know your crowd.

Ashanti Parker: Know your people [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Know 'em.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Know it [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Ehh.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Know your age range.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You gotta know it.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: What was I gonna say? Yes. It was just I don't think we set up.

1:15:00

We didn't even set up good enough until we had just customers just piling, piling and piling and piling. Because that time, that's when I was experimenting with our branding. It was more vibrant, so we were posting more vibrant things. People saw that, and they would literally just come just to have what they just saw. You know what I'm saying?

Jordan Hickey: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: Okay. So it was a lot of that.

Jennifer Hill-Green: It was a lot of that.

Ashanti Parker: It was a lot of that. So, yeah, we sold out very, very quickly. But it was just that was so busy. That was so busy.

Jennifer Hill-Green: That was so much fun. That's when I'm like, oh, man—

Ashanti Parker: And then from that—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —people want us [laughter].

Ashanti Parker: I know. And then from that, we started getting even more invites to pop up here, and then do that, and that and a third. It was just great [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: I think the personality—

Ashanti Parker: I'm not—I am a really nice person.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: She is a nice person.

Jordan Hickey: For the record.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, for the record [laughter].

Ashanti Parker: For the record, I think I'm nice.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But, no, I think it was our [laughter] personalities that goes a long way.

1:15:59

I think people don't realize that, you know? I liked the people watching us, the other vendors. If you have a sour look on your face, I don't care what kind of product that you have on the table—

Ashanti Parker: People are not gonna—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —it's not gonna happen, you know?

Ashanti Parker: You have to look inviting, I promise you. Just when it comes to talking about the business, that's when I'm just like very, like, I have a lot to say. I'm very critical, and I sound rude.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: No, no, no.

Ashanti Parker: I just have to—I'm very passionate about it. But when it comes to like with customers, oh my gosh, I'm just lovely. I'm so nice [laughter].

Jordan Hickey: For whatever it's worth, on this side of the table, there's not any rude sort of vibes—

Ashanti Parker: Okay.

Jordan Hickey: —I promise.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Okay.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: And so I'm thinking, like, you guys are going like anything, getting invited everywhere, and people are seeing you and getting excited to see you, and all this stuff. And so where are you now? Are you still just going to pop-ups?

1:16:58

Has the success of the past year kind of changed where you want to go?

Ashanti Parker: Yes, 'cause since October of last year, it was very, very fast. I mean, we were constantly moving. And the thing is, I was very much pushing us to do a lot of things, and like we gotta do it. I will double-book us, and I was just trying to get our name out there, just wearing us out a little bit. And then health came into play [laughter], which meant to slow down a little bit.

Jordan Hickey: So what do you mean by that?

Ashanti Parker: When did that start? We had an event one weekend. It was so, so hot. It was in July. It was so hot.

Jennifer Hill-Green: It was in June.

Ashanti Parker: It was in June, thank you. It was in June. It was very, very hot. We had two events outside that day and—

Jordan Hickey: On the same day?

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm. Crazy [laughter]. I'm a psycho [laughter]. We had one that morning and then immediately we had to pack up early to make it on time for the other one.

1:18:03

And we were right in the sun anyway. So that triggered my body. I got really over...I was sweating profusely. I was really, really sick, and I went home, thought I was dehydrated, whatever. And then I think that following week, I think it was like a—I was still feeling terrible, but that—it was a Thursday—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Thursday.

Ashanti Parker: —'cause it was the day before we had an event. It was a Thursday. I felt like I was about to pass out. I was actually rolling pretzels. I was rolling pretzels. I was like, "Mom, can you check my blood pressure?" And she took my blood pressure. It was fine. And then, all of a sudden, I got super, super cold. I couldn't—my legs stopped working, they got like super numb, and they were like having muscle spasms and stuff like that. And I was really

nauseous. And then Mom was like, "Well, maybe you're dehydrated and stuff." And I was, you know, they're trying to pump me up with fluids, whatever.

1:18:58

And then she's like, "Well, if you can't go to the library, I'll ask your brother." Whatever, anyway. So the event the next day was the library event, and it was indoors. I was in there for maybe like an hour, a couple hours—

Jennifer Hill-Green: A couple hours.

Ashanti Parker: —a couple hours. I had to go to the car and—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I found an EMT—

Ashanti Parker: EMT.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —to go out to the car to check in on her, and she—

Ashanti Parker: And my blood pressure was so low, and I had to like—she took me immediately to the emergency room.

Jordan Hickey: Oh my God.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah. So that was the first of a series of what's wrong. So we went to the emergency room, hooked me up on IV, whatever. I was released. The IV didn't do a thing. I was like, okay, this is weird.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: And then I couldn't walk at all. Like, it was hard to walk in general. And then we went back to the ER, admitted, and it was just a slew of tests, and all that. It's still an ongoing thing.

1:19:55

It turns out that I might have an autoimmune issue and, basically, I think with the heat, it cooked my nerves, my nervous system. So I basically [laughter] have to, like, walking, I have to like reteach myself how to put one foot in front of the other and stuff.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And she put, you know, she's done good.

Ashanti Parker: I'm doing great.

Jennifer Hill-Green: She went from a walker—

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm, to a cane.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —to a cane now.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah. But, yeah, it was my legs were numb, and then my toes. It was all the way down to my feet. And my toes are still numb. Like, she—I'm very ticklish. I have no—she can tickle me now, and I feel nothing. I don't feel a thing. So my toes, she can play with those all she wants to, and I can't feel it. So that's a thing [laughter], all from the sun. But, honestly, it just made me—it's not a bad thing, honestly, because I've thought about it. I'm the type of person that if I get onto something that works, I don't let go. I push it too hard.

1:20:59

And this taught me you have to slow down. 'Cause I was pushing. I was like in incre...we were doing so much, so, so much. I apologize.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But we were doing so, so much. And because I was like, we got it, we have to work this, and it worked me. [Laughter] It worked me. So it just taught, just basically just taught me how to take it slow, basically.

Jordan Hickey: So that was happening in like June, July?

Ashanti Parker: June.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Jordan Hickey: How did that change everything? Have you guys continued to do events? Did you scale back?

Ashanti Parker: We did a lot of that. So during that time, we were, I think, about in June, that was our last event at that time. So we didn't—what shall I say? She didn't do anything until, what was it, August?

Jennifer Hill-Green: I think it was August.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, she went back to the market that was in Hillcrest, which is normally where we pop up at. And she set up there, and she's doing great [laughter].

1:21:59

Jennifer Hill-Green: And my husband is now with me.

Jordan Hickey: Oh, that's good.

Ashanti Parker: So, yeah, he's filling in for me for the meantime, 'cause I can't really do outside too long. But my first event was a couple weeks ago. It was in Oklahoma City, indoors.

Jordan Hickey: So you went back?

Ashanti Parker: Mm-hmm. So, yeah, it was indoors, so that was great. It did a little wear and tear on the body. I had a little week of recovery there. I actually had to go back on the walker 'cause it was a lot of walking and stuff that I was doing that I wasn't really ready for. So I had to go back on the walker for a couple days, and then went back on my cane. So I just know, like, now I'm learning limits, when to—yeah. So, I don't know, anything more than two hours, I can't, especially with a lot of people.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Exactly.

Ashanti Parker: But, yeah, so she's been kind of taking that over.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: But the business is actually going really, really good, because during that time she had a lot more cakes. You had more cake orders—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Mm-hmm.

Ashanti Parker: —and then like little party orders, like online and stuff like that. So the business was—it was still going.

1:22:59

It wasn't like going-going. It was steady. So we just—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Then I start kind of doing the things that I've been wanting to do.

Ashanti Parker: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter] The menu expands sixfold?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: So my—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I apologize to her this morning. I was like, "I stepped on your neck, and I am so sorry. You do whatever your heart desires."

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I'm like baking breads, and I also do galettes. And the galettes are really doing pretty well.

Ashanti Parker: I know. I wish you would've brought it.

Jennifer Hill-Green: But, yeah, I started doing peach, plum, and nectarine galettes. And so I was selling them for like 15 an order about that big.

1:23:58

And so I had this one guy, older guy come up. He said, "I want to buy one of these galettes." I said, "I sold out." He said, "Well, how many did you make?" [Laughter] I said, "I only made six." He said, "Okay. Well, how much you selling them for?" I said, "Oh, 15." He said, "Oh no, no, honey, 20."

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: "You make sure you sell those things for 20." He said, "That's a pie. That's a whole pie." [Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And even a vendor—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Our vegetable vendor, he's amazing, Cory of Firelight Farm. He DM'd 'cause he bought one. He got one from you—

Jennifer Hill-Green: He got one—

Ashanti Parker: —with the barter system.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —yeah, with barter.

Ashanti Parker: And he DM'd you, DM'd us, like, I think a couple days later. He said, "Yeah, that pie needs to be like \$20." I was like, "Cory." [Laughter] He knew nothing about the conversation she had with the customer.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: He said, "Yeah, oh, that pie was amazing. That needs to be like \$20."

Jennifer Hill-Green: And so the next week, I think I made 12, and I sold them, they were just like this [snaps fingers].

1:25:00

Jordan Hickey: Yeah, that's—

Ashanti Parker: So it took—because when I had my foot in it, it was [laughter] a mixture of a lot of—I was trying to—so each month, I was like, oh, to do something different, like a theme each month, it's expensive, 'cause it was [laughter]. It was very expensive. So February was like a Valentine's theme. Then March was like a—

Jennifer Hill-Green: A Valentine's and then we also had the Black History Month.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, we did. And then March was like a—we had like a Beatles theme. So each month was something different inspired and stuff. So I was making us do that, which worked because people loved it. But it's just—starting out, you don't do that much at that time. You know what I mean? That's something you do when you actually have a physical bakery, because that's when you can keep it up, you sell—yeah, 'cause the things that we were making were so specific, and it's very like—it requires a particular palette, which it still worked though.

1:26:05

But it is one of those things, like I say, you have to have a bakery for that. So the things that I was doing was bigger than what we were doing at the time. So it was like—so now we're doing it correctly. So it's like, okay, we're—why is this so hard to explain? [Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: No, you're good.

Ashanti Parker: Is it okay? [Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: No, you're fine, yeah.

Ashanti Parker: Okay [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Now 'cause the things that she was coming up with, which is great ideas, like, we had a Prince theme, so everything was kind of purple and everything, and it was cool, and it went really well, but it's just so short-lived.

Ashanti Parker: Right.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And I like your traditional things that you can kind of go back and redo and—

Ashanti Parker: See, I didn't want to be traditional. See, at the beginning, I didn't wanna be traditional 'cause I was like, if you're gonna be—if we're gonna be different, we have to be different.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right.

Ashanti Parker: And to me, I was like traditional, I mean, anyone can be traditional. Yeah. But, I mean, it works.

[Laughter]

1:26:59

Ashanti Parker: Traditional works. So I didn't—I was—I really wanted us to be like, yeah, I didn't—I wasn't into being traditional. But I was like, well, the thing is I think the balance

between now that since I've been out of the game for a little bit, it's like you can be traditional, but you can also put your own stamp on it as well. You wanna make it eclectic, you can make it different. And that's what we've been learning too. You can make things—you can make traditional work, basically.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right, but with different flavors and everything.

Jordan Hickey: So I kind of wonder, having been out of it for a little bit, did kind of having to take a step back kind of give you a fresh perspective on what you were doing, and also maybe like where you guys want to take it, going forward?

Ashanti Parker: Yeah. Starting off, no, because starting off, I'm like, ah, what is this?

[Laughter] Because for me, I'm so used to going really, really fast. So that was very slow, and I felt I was like—I just feel like—I don't know.

1:28:02

I just—I don't know. It was a lonely period 'cause I felt like I wasn't able to do anything. And that frightened me, 'cause I was like, what if I'm not able to do anything ever again? So that's when I would take a step back. I was like, well, first off, no [laughter]. But just—the question was? What was the question?

Jordan Hickey: Did it force you to kind of take a step back, and kind of see the business with fresh eyes, and also like where you wanted to go?

Ashanti Parker: Yes, I did. Yes. So after that period I had, then I decided, I was like, okay, that's actually a good thing. You need to slow down. Things are going too fast. And then also

you're doing too much. You're selling too much. You have too many things on your menu. You have to scale that down.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: You have to make it as easy to read and as easy as possible, and as easy for the only baker as well [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right.

Ashanti Parker: So that's—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And easy for the customer as well—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, sure.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —because sometimes we can have so much on the table, they don't—

Ashanti Parker: And they're just like—and they love that. Yeah.

1:29:00

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, they love that, but they don't know what to buy.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah. They're like staring at the menu for a long time.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But the thing is they're dedicated. They want something. They're trying to figure out which one they wanna get. But now it's like, "Okay, I want that, that, that," and it's real quick, and I love that. But it took this to understand like, okay, we have something great. Now let's refine it a little bit.

Jordan Hickey: So what does bakery look like, going forward? I mean, is it a commercial kitchen? Because I guess you guys are still baking out of the house. Is it going somewhere else? Is it the brick and mortar? Is that the dream? What does Daisy Pastry look like in six months? What does it look like in a year? What does it look like in five years?

Jennifer Hill-Green: In six months, I would like to be at a commercial kitchen, just so we can bake just a little bit more.

1:30:00

And then from there, within a year or two, a brick and mortar.

Jordan Hickey: Really? What about a brick and mortar? Why is that?

Jennifer Hill-Green: First, my dad would tell me all the time, "Oh, you guys gonna get a—you need a brick and mortar." I'm like, "No, Dad, the overhead. He's, "Oh, but it'll be fine." "No, Dad."

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: But with what happened with her, it kind of put things in perspective of thinking, you know, maybe a brick and mortar, because you'll still be able to push it. No, I won't say push it. You'll still be able to do what you need to do 'cause now you can hire outside help, and I don't have to rely on her. It doesn't, it doesn't have to fall on her. I can get outside help, and the things will still continue to sell. And I'm thinking, you know, a brick and mortar may be where it's at.

Ashanti Parker: Because we were entertaining like a mobile bakery for a long time. That was the goal. It was a commercial kitchen, mobile bakery, that's it.

1:30:59

But since that [laughter], we're like, no, a brick and mortar could be good.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And we also froze to death last year and I don't wanna do that anymore [laughter].

Ashanti Parker: Froze to death, yeah, it was so cold last year 'cause that was another thing. My body, poor little thing—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —because it was—we had a lot of events outside last year, and it was freezing cold.

Jennifer Hill-Green: [Laughter] And I didn't like that.

Ashanti Parker: It was so cold. It was so cold that we, I mean, even like the layers that we had, like the thermal, it didn't—nothing worked.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Nothing.

Ashanti Parker: Nothing.

Jennifer Hill-Green: The hand warmers, nothing.

Ashanti Parker: Nothing. My body went into a shock one day. I should've known then, but whatever. So I was just shaking like profuse...it was just ridiculous.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, it was crazy.

Ashanti Parker: It was insane.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And so that, and then the heat, so it just would be nice to have a building.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: And I feel like I'm getting like, well, actually, I was gonna say like hearing your mom talk about the dream for six months, a year, is this your dream too?

1:31:58

I mean, I feel like I need to like—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: —ask both sides. Is this the thing?

Ashanti Parker: Her timeline is [laughter] all right.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: What? I said—

Ashanti Parker: I want all—I want everything sooner.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I'm kidding.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Well, actually, we do actually—we have an opportunity. It was solidified a couple days ago. We have a partnership. So we're actually gonna be—it's a new coffee shop downtown. It's a vendor that we know, I mean, not a vendor, but it's the owner of a store that we know. And he asked us to put our pastries in the store, and stuff like that. So that's the beginning of something great. And so we just finished the menu for that, and then how we're going to construct that weekly, and we wanna see how that goes. But I want us to work on, I think, a brick and mortar, just not like now, but like that's something that needs to be talked about for the beginning of next year—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Okay, yes, yes, yes, yes, beginning of next year, yeah, for sure.

Ashanti Parker: —to work towards.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

1:33:00

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, not two years [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: No, I said one or two years.

Ashanti Parker: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I mean, first, you got to get this in your head—

Ashanti Parker: Sure.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —as far as the location, you know.

Ashanti Parker: I got that.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Of course she does.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Because that's the thing, having this off time too, I'm able to read and research and kind of get things together in a way. So I'm confident with the plan of things. But I did not tell you that either [laughter]. Sorry, my bad.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But just also just I'm sitting on it because—but I'm sitting on the idea because, you never know, things may change. So just, you know, that's what I'm saying.

Jordan Hickey: So I think the last question I have is, you know, we started off talking a little bit about *Ace of Cakes* and *Cupcake Wars*. I wonder, you know, thinking back on all those years ago now, what is it like to think, now that you're doing the same thing?

1:34:01

Did you think that it would be the way that it is? Is it harder than you thought it would be? Easier than you thought it would be? So what's it like to think about this idea that kind of grew into what it is today?

Ashanti Parker: It's surreal, honestly [laughter], 'cause—

Jennifer Hill-Green: That's so true, very surreal.

Ashanti Parker: —that's big. I will say about us too, we've had so many amazing opportunities, and we're so humbled by them that we don't even appreciate it in the moment because it's just like it's not that we're asking like, "What's next?" It's just like we—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Chasing after what's next. I feel like I can't—

Ashanti Parker: We're not—we can never be in the moment. We could never be in the moment.

Jennifer Hill-Green: We could never be in the moment. We were on *The Vine* and that was—

Ashanti Parker: On TV.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, and that was great. And my cousin's calling, "Jenny, you on TV."

[Laughter] I'm like, "I know. I'll call you back."

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But, seriously, yeah, people were calling and stuff like that. And then the thing is after *The Vine*, we went home and started baking, and we just couldn't even like enjoy that moment.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I forgot about—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah. And even with at home, I—

Ashanti Parker: We forgot we were in a magazine.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I just recently got magazines, you know, copies of those. I just—you know.

Ashanti Parker: And we've been featured in a lot of things, and we just—not that we would—it's just like—I don't know.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I don't know. I would like to live in the moment for a while.

Ashanti Parker: And sit in it.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Maybe sit in it. Maybe that will help me grow in some areas. But I'm so ready to do what's next, that let me just—whatever I did here, okay, let me amp that up. I'm just—

Ashanti Parker: Like overly critical [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, very, very much so.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, 'cause even like this moment here, this won't hit me until like a couple days, maybe.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: Maybe, 'cause it's like I just cannot—I don't know why I cannot be in the moment.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, and trying to stay humble—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, that's the thing.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —but then—

1:35:59

Ashanti Parker: I think we're a little too humble 'cause it's like this is amazing. This is amazing. But, to me, if I go home, and they're like, "Oh, what you do?" "Oh, we had an interview." That's a big thing, but we're just like, "Yeah, mm-hmm." [Laughter] It's—
[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I just—it's—I don't know, but this whole process has been that. Even just starting the Pastry Shoppe has just been that though.

Jordan Hickey: I wonder if that's part of it though. Like, if you're constantly looking forward to the next marketing or the next thing, I think sometimes it is hard to kind of take stock, and have that moment where you breathe out [exhales], "Okay. Let's just think about it"? Is that it? It's kind of hard to find those moments to reflect? Or is it just—?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, 'cause I'm still—my—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —brain just running for the next event.

1:36:56

Ashanti Parker: Well, I think that's you 'cause for me, I think like, well, even like that *At Home* photoshoot, like, that's a big deal. That's a big, big deal. And I know that's a big deal because I was in the bed planning the whole thing, 'cause I was on this one. Yeah, I was very sick in that photo, very sick. I was—that was—

Jennifer Hill-Green: You wasn't—you didn't have that—

Ashanti Parker: I wasn't—I didn't have this at all.

Jordan Hickey: Are you pointing to the cane?

Ashanti Parker: Oh, the cane, I'm sorry.

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: That's good.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, I was very sick in that photo 'cause that was a couple days before I went to the hospital. Yes, it was—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And she could barely walk.

Ashanti Parker: —that I was admitted. Yeah, I could barely walk that day. But I was so focused on my health that I couldn't even be in the moment, like, this is a big deal. But, I mean, even like when we sold out our first time in Bernice, that's a big deal. Everything felt surreal, like it's not real.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Right.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah [laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: It's weird, yeah. I don't know how you get over that. I would like to.

1:37:59

Jordan Hickey: I wonder if it might just be something with time, I guess. I don't know. I'll be curious to know five years from now—

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: —if that is the case.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Exactly.

Ashanti Parker: We'll update, Jordan.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: We're living in the moment.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: We're finally living in the moment.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I hope so—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Me too.

Ashanti Parker: —'cause this is awesome. And that's the thing, I've loved every bit of this experience. I wouldn't change a thing. Even for me just doing a whole bunch, I wouldn't change it, 'cause sometimes you have to do a whole bunch in order to learn. So I don't regret a single thing.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, I don't.

Ashanti Parker: But I think what makes it hard is like, well, anytime you have anything health-related, but also I think running the business, it's like finances. That's a thing. That's a big thing.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Oh yeah, just buying things. Stuff is so high. It's so expensive.

Ashanti Parker: We just wanna grow everything.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Can I grow flour?

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Is there—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Is there a flour tree?

[Laughter]

1:38:58

Ashanti Parker: At this rate, I'm willing—I'm wanting—I want to marry a farmer.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You think I'm joking.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: You think I'm kidding.

Jennifer Hill-Green: 'Cause it's just things are so expensive. I put in an order, 'cause normally with the grocery shopping, I don't like to go inside the grocery store that much, especially with COVID and everything. But I would do the grocery pickup. It's easy 'cause you can calculate

how much you're gonna spend and everything. But then when I go pick up that stuff, I'm like there's only three bags.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: So where's the—

[Laughter]

Jordan Hickey: Where's the rest of it [laughter]?

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah. It's like this is so crazy. Butter, oh my gosh.

Ashanti Parker: And with that, and because of the high price, we've had to reevaluate our menu too, because some of the things we were doing were expensive. So even like the filling in the oatmeal cream pies, we used to do—what was that buttercream? American buttercream? That used a lot of butter?

Jennifer Hill-Green: No.

Ashanti Parker: What was it like—?

Jennifer Hill-Green: No. It was a Swiss meringue buttercream.

1:39:59

Ashanti Parker: A Swiss meringue kicked our ass [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, because we were looking at the egg whites. So you're separating your eggs, so you're wasting your yolks, 'cause I don't have anything I can use a yolk in, and yolk can only stay in a refrigerator for like a day. And then butter—

Ashanti Parker: Butter.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —butter—

Ashanti Parker: And that—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —a crap ton of butter. And that's just—it is, it's very expensive.

Ashanti Parker: So we have to kind of, like, okay, how can we make this a little bit more affordable but still taste high quality? Because that's the thing we were doing. We're very—what's [laughter]—we're very bougie.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: We really are. And the thing is that's because of my grandmother and her mother, and things like that. But we wanted high-quality ingredients. So we would, starting off, we bought high-quality ingredients. Those are expensive. And people get used to that taste.

[Laughter] They get used to that butter taste [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes—

1:41:00

That's expensive butter.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —that butter.

Ashanti Parker: So we've had to like, okay, we're gonna have to—we can make this affordable, and it can taste exactly the same. So it's just that was going back in the kitchen, trying to figure out how we can make this consistent—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes—

Ashanti Parker: —make it taste the same.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —'cause that's, to me, that's the thing: consistency. 'Cause if it's not consistent—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, if that oatmeal cream pie tasted this way this week, and it tastes different the other week, oh no, absolutely not.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, I just—I can't.

Ashanti Parker: We've thrown away, oh my gosh—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes, we've thrown away a lot of product because this did not turn out right, and I'm not gonna sell it.

Ashanti Parker: And that hurts us 'cause there's so many people that can eat this.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I know, but it's one of those things that, you know, it wasn't like last week, so the week before; it's just something was different. I left this out or—yeah, we threw away a lot of oatmeal cream pies because it was salty.

Ashanti Parker: Oh my gosh, yeah. So our first big—

[Laughter]

1:41:58

Ashanti Parker: It was St. Joseph. It was during—when was it during—the little bit before Christmas. Very cold. We had a big event that day. It was the St. Joseph Farm Stand. And I think

I did about like three dozen Spirit in the Skies. And that was an incident, and that's when I knew, someone was talking to me [laughter] and I put too much—no, it wasn't you. It was Matthew. I think I put too much baking soda. And, mind you, do you realize how much three dozen is in one—

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: —in a mixing bowl [laughter]. And I knew it. And the thing is, it was way too late. I already put it in the batter. It was like I knew. I said, this is going to be thrown away, and I should have done that. Anyway, baked them, all of them, taste it, and it was so salty. I was thinking, you've gotta be joking. You've got to be joking. So that was three dozen oatmeal cream pies.

1:42:58

So because I was like, well, may...I said, well, 'cause I was like, okay, I'll bake, yes. So the batter, I just did one pan. I was like, if it looks weird, then I'll scrap it. It turned out it looked okay. I was like, you're lying to me.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: I messed up. I know this isn't right.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: And I just like, okay, I'm gonna trust it. And then I was like, let me just see this through. And I did it, and I was like, oh God. So there's—yeah.

Jordan Hickey: A lot of lessons learned?

Ashanti Parker: A lot of lessons.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, for sure.

Jordan Hickey: So I think I've kind of come to the end of some of the stuff that I was gonna ask about. Is there anything that I've completely forgotten to ask about, anything that has been sitting with you, like, "I need to say this about the bakery," anything that we haven't touched on?

Jennifer Hill-Green: I was on TV.

Jordan Hickey: [Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: I was [laughter]. Well, I can't think of the name of the show though.

1:44:00

What show?

Ashanti Parker: Oh.

Jennifer Hill-Green: What was the name of that show?

Ashanti Parker: It was in Texas. There is a mutual friend. She did cakes. She actually quit her job, a full-paying job, and she just—that was our inspiration too.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Ashanti Parker: She quit her job, and then so, you know, "I'm just gonna do this." She had a young son who was a couple months old. And she's like, "I'm just gonna quit. and just do this full-time." She did great. I mean, she was consistent, she built her business, and then with that,

she started getting known. And she was doing cakes for celebrities and things like that. And then she got—someone, a TV show from I think it was Food Network. No, it was the Cooking Channel.

Jennifer Hill-Green: The Cooking Channel.

Ashanti Parker: The Cooking Channel, they reached out to her for a wedding cake, and she didn't have any help, 'cause she was doing that all by herself. So she called Mom, 'cause she knew Mom was a cake person, and she was on TV.

Jennifer Hill-Green: And I was on TV. It was so cool. I kept—

1:44:59

Ashanti Parker: And I remember that day, 'cause I was like, "Mom, I think you should, you know," but like, "No." I said, "Okay." And there was a lot of years of me saying, "Mom just do it. Just go for it," because you—to me, if someone's really talented at something, I'm like, "Why don't you just make a career out of it? Just do it." 'Cause to me, I didn't have that yet. I didn't have that confidence yet. But she was actually just doing it. I was like, "Just go for it. Make it full-time." But she was afraid to do that by herself.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: She was afraid to do that stuff.

Jordan Hickey: So when was this? Also, I guess the other question I would have is, you know, you saw this woman do it, like, quit the job, do her thing. What did you think about that at the time, and what do you think about it now?

Jennifer Hill-Green: At the time, it was like, no way, I can't quit my job [laughter], you know? That was scary. Now it's like, man, I should have quit my job—

1:46:00

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: Seriously.

Jennifer Hill-Green: —and because that was a lot of fun. She ended up going back on Food Network. She did Food Network a couple times too, and I wish I would've just stayed with her, because I think what she was—

Ashanti Parker: Because that was the relationship—

Jennifer Hill-Green: —she was trying to pull me into that world as well.

Ashanti Parker: And I kept trying to be like—

Jennifer Hill-Green: And I'm like, oh no, it's still scary [laughter].

Ashanti Parker: She distanced herself quickly. I was like, "Mom, this is a good thing."

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, but back then, quitting your job, mm-mm, that's just not an option.

Jordan Hickey: And yet, here you are. You guys have this successful bakery, like, all these things. I think it's, I mean, correct me if I'm wrong, I think to do something like that now, yeah, you might need a little pushing from other people. But I think you've gotta get to it on your own.

Ashanti Parker: Oh yeah, for sure.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: Absolutely. And I feel like you still are still fighting with that somehow.

1:47:02

I'm okay [laughter].

Jennifer Hill-Green: I just want things to, like I said, it kind of goes back to what I said earlier when you were thinking about cupcakes. I just wanna leave something, a legacy. And I just wanna make sure that it works, and it's going to do good for you and for your children.

Ashanti Parker: I know. But like you—but that's what I'm saying. You're not here with me. You know what I'm saying? You're thinking about that. But I'm like, well, we—

Jennifer Hill-Green: I know, 'cause I'm always thinking, and I can never shut this brain down [laughter]. I'm always thinking.

Ashanti Parker: 'Cause sometimes I feel like she doesn't think it's hers sometimes, Daisy Pastry, it's hers, 'cause she's always, yeah—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, I know.

Ashanti Parker: Sometimes I feel that from you sometimes. It's like this is an “us” thing. We did this together.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah.

Ashanti Parker: But I feel like you're like, "Well, I just wanna leave this for Ashanti." It's like, no, we did this together.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yeah, we did this, yes, we did it together. But it would be something—

Ashanti Parker: Hrm, so you're ditching me.

[Laughter]

1:48:00

Jennifer Hill-Green: It's not for one person. It's not for the faint of heart. Even with two people—

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, I couldn't do this by myself, right now, oh yeah, gosh no. Could you do this by yourself? Well, you're doing it by yourself.

[Laughter]

Ashanti Parker: But you know what I mean.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Could I do it by myself?

Ashanti Parker: At the beginning?

Jennifer Hill-Green: At the beginning? Oh no.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah. I think—

Jennifer Hill-Green: Now?

Ashanti Parker: —now I could.

Jennifer Hill-Green: I could.

Ashanti Parker: But at the beginning, absolutely not.

Jennifer Hill-Green: But by myself, I mean, baking? Yes. Social media? Oh, absolutely not.

Ashanti Parker: All right.

[Laughter]

Jennifer Hill-Green: That's all you.

Ashanti Parker: Yeah, I think we balance.

Jennifer Hill-Green: Yes.

Jordan Hickey: I love that. Well, like I said, unless there's anything else that we didn't touch on that you guys wanna get out there, I think that kind of concludes this. Thank you, guys, so much for your time, truly.

[End]