Speaker 1:

Adapted:

I'm currently producing this latest episode from Soul. I'm here speaking to Korean media about the podcast. In this next episode, we'll hear from one adopted Korean woman who, like a lot of us was raised without any mirrors in the Midwest. After decades of burying parts of herself from shame and being othered, she returned to Korea. And through those visits, her writing and even learning how to love being Korean from her son, she's found her full self. Here's Zhen E.

Zhen E:

Hi, I am ZhenE Remmelsberg and I live in Marion, Iowa, and I am 50, soon to be 51.

Adapted:

And ZhenE, did you grow up in Iowa?

Zhen E:

I did, yes. I have not left Iowa <laugh>. I've not left, moved out of Iowa. Yes, I I'm not actually, where I grew up was a small town in Iowa. and when other people tell me they come from a small town and then they'll tell me it's got like thousands of people, I'll be like, ha ha. I came from a small town and it was like 700 people. and so I was literally the only non-white person there. But but I did not move far from that. I moved about 30 miles west or east, sorry, 30 miles east into the big city <laugh> of Cedar Rapids.

Adapted:

And tell me, is there a story behind the spelling of your name? It's kind of unusual.

Zhen E:

Yeah. So what's interesting about that is I'm part of a, a group called the Adoptee Voices Writing Group, and we just did a prompt about this, about how much, and so we talk because it was called What's in a Name. And one of the things that several of us have talked about is having our name changed. And so technically my name has been changed four times that I know of, and the last two were by me. So so you know, obviously I have the name that was on my passport and on my Holt picture. So whether that was my original name, I have no idea. but it was a name that was given to me as far as I know. And that was my last name would've been noon. And my first name would've been Son Young. and then my parents here, my adoptive parents adopted me and turned and changed my name to Jenny Elizabeth McCallum.

And so from that moment on, I was that for a long time and I was named Jenny, not Jennifer. I had to be told that because I was named after two maternal great-grandmothers. So that would've been my mom's mom's mom and my dad's mom's mom were both named Jenny not Jennifer. And so that's a weird legacy to have because I share no DNA with this person. I never would've met this person and you name me after this person. So it's a lot of, it's a lot of history that, you know, I'm carrying that really, you know, why. Anyway, so fast forward, I was happy being Jenny Elizabeth MacCallum. I actually enjoyed that until things started happening with my adoptive family and started coming out and I realized I did not want to be a MacCallum anymore. But and so when I met my husband, I knew that I wanted to take his name if, if we ever got married.

So I did. So I became Jenny Elizabeth Rammelsberg and and I was happy to be Jenny Remsberg. I was well known in this area as Jenny Remsberg. It was always, it wasn't just like, oh, it's Jenny, it's always Jenny Rammelsberg. It was always the, anyway, s o so then I started a salon and it was called Studio Zhen. And the reason why I, and it was spelled z h e n and the reason why I named it that it was after this beauty product line and it, they said it was a Korean word cuz it was a Korean beauty line called Zhen Beauty. And they said it, Zhen was a Korean work for beauty. So I named my salon that. And then we had a massive flood in this area that we took on 20, no, 30, 31 feet of water in our town and it decimated our town.

So my salon got destroyed and I was kind of sad because I was like, oh my gosh, that name's gonna go away. And then I started realizing, you know what? I think I wanna change the spelling of my name to that. So I legally did that. So that, so I felt very to do that cuz it, it looks like the Korean spelling, cuz if, you know, Korean hangeul, the J sound is kind of, it looks like a, a Romanized Z. And so so I kind of felt like, okay, I named myself this. It does still sound like Jenny. and, but it's more of a Korean looking word ish. And so that's, that's, so I, I feel empowered that I named myself. Right. So it's ZhenE, spelled z h e n and then I get the E from Elizabeth. So ZhenE.

Adapted:

Yeah I, you know, I didn't, I didn't know any of that backstory, but it totally makes sense now. and we have something in common because my name too was given to me by my adoptive parents because I was named after my dad's first cousin who was adopted from Japan. Oh, okay. And so I have a Japanese name, so I'm not biologically related to her, but I got named after her being the two Asian adoptees in the family and <laugh>,

Zhen E:

Which is also all weird <laugh>.

Adapted:

Yeah. And it's Japanese.

Zhen E:

Yeah. It's like, hello, not the Same.

Adapted:

So then, so then that becomes kind of my identity. Yes. Which is,

Zhen E:

Yeah,

Adapted:

Strange. But I

Zhen E:

Recently train people ask you about that. Do they say like, oh, that looks like a Japanese name.

Adapted:

Yeah, I mean all the time.

Zhen E:

Yeah. Cuz I've even had people ask me if my name is Chinese, because I can see why they say that. I think it's more X H E N is usually a Chinese version, but, but there is, I have seen Z H E N also as a Chinese last name perhaps. So so a lot of times they'll, they'll ask me that, are you, are you sure you're not Chinese? And it's like, no, I <laugh>, I know I'm not Chinese. So <laugh>

Adapted:

And then Rammelsberg is very German, right?

Zhen E:

Very German. Yeah. Yeah, it's completely German. So it's funny, our last name it translates directly to Ramel means thunder and berg means mountains. So Thunder Mountain, we sound like a ride at Disney World. <laugh>,

Adapted:

<laugh>.

Zhen E:

But I had somebody, so what's funny about that is, so back in the day before we had to worry about safety issues so much when I worked at a well known retail chain, I won't say which one. and we had our name tags and at that time we had our first and last names on there. And at that time it was Jenny spelled j e n n y. And so it's a ZhenE Berg on my tag and some, and this lady comes in and she goes, Rammelsberg, but that's German. Like, she's accusing me like I shouldn't have a German last name. And I just go, yeah, yeah, my maiden name was Mac Callum. And she goes, that's Irish. And I was like, yeah, yeah, scotch Irish actually. And she's like, how is that possible? And I'm just like, well, I was adopted. And then she kind of looked like, 'oh, like I shouldn't have done that.' And it, and, but you know, I just kind of was like leaning into it about trying to make her feel a little stupid because yeah, it's like, you know, don't open your mouth, <laugh>, don't open your mouth and say stuff. So yes, I, I'm sure when people used to see Jenny Elizabeth Callum or Jenny Elizabeth Rammelsberg on a piece of paper before I ever showed up, they probably weren't envisioning a Korean girl <laugh>.

Adapted:

How does it feel to have created your own name?

Zhen E:

Like I said, I feel like that kind of empowered me. It also helped me with my journey of trying to embrace my koreanness because, you know, it's a tough, it's, it's weird because we were so, I was abandoned when I was two and I did speak Korean I guess when I first got here. I have a hard time struggling with learning Korean now, which is really heartbreaking to me that I, that was the first language I spoke and I cannot, it's, it's really hard for me to learn it now. but so it, because of that, I feel like I got robbed of that culture and because the family that I got adopted into, they're really big about like generational things like that. My parent, my mom was from generations of cooks. Her mom was an amazing cook and Baker, her mom before her was an amazing cook and baker.

So they have recipes that they've handed down through the family that are not written down. They just know them. Right. And so they would get together and cook together in different times of the season. They would can and freeze things together. And I remember watching them make sauerkraut and they would get big things of cabbage and they would, they would actually, you know, you know, cut it all up on this cutter and then they would have these crockpots of stuff. So I think of that stuff like that we can't, that I don't have that background in Korean culture. Right. Cause I'm sure that probably also happened in Korea, that they would get together and make kimchi together and different things. Right. so I can cook very well German and English food, which is how I grew up. You can get me out of a dead sleep and ask me to make a gravy and I can do it.

Okay. But like I have to really work really hard to cook Korean food. I'm getting better at not having to work so hard at it. But, but again, it's, there was a point where I was like, I wanted nothing to do with it, with people reminding me that I ate looked Asian, I wanted people think of me as American. I I was with white people all the time. I wanted to be, I knew I wasn't white, but there was a part of me, it felt like I was right. I was very American. And so it took me a while to embrace the Asian part of me. So this, once I did that, once I chose that name, it was like, I was like, okay, I'm fully in. I've fully trying to figure out who I am. Cuz yeah, I was raised in America. So that is in me and that's part of me, right. But the Korean part of me is also very part, much a part of me.

Adapted:

So we first met in 2016 and yes, I've heard you talk about, you know, and, and you have a, a great sense of humor and I like how you've told different stories. recently, your recent trip, unfortunately you were injured, but your recent trip, I, I heard about that, but I wondered if it's been kind of a rocky journey to reclaiming your Korean identity.

Zhen E:

Yeah, I mean, or your,

Adapted:

You know, so your koreanness

Zhen E:

Yes. Yeah. And I mean, you know, it is, it's really tough cuz I've even, so like I said, I'm part of that adoptee voices writing group, and that is not necessarily Korean adoptee. There are some Korean adoptees in there, but it's just anybody that is an adoptee. So most of the people involved are domestic adoptees, so American domestic domestic adoptees. But but there are few of us that are Korean in there. And so we've talked about that, that like you know, and I've written pieces and we get to, so we write, we have a prompt and then we write for like an hour and a half and then we come back and read 'em to each other. And so one of the pro one of the times I wrote about feeling like not just a puzzle piece that doesn't quite fit, but a puzzle piece that actually is in the wrong puzzle completely.

You know? And so and it's ti and no matter how, you know, it looks like it shouldn't be the same pieces. Like it has the round here and the indent here, but, and no matter how hard you try and push that thing in there, it's not fitting quite right. Right. So that's how I've always kind of felt. But there is, you know, like when you first met me, that was the first time we had been back to Korea ever, like for me, ever. And then, you know, we, our son went with us and that was the first time he'd ever been to Korea. so when you <laugh> when you met me, I was at a frustrating point of, of that trip, but every single time I've gone to Korea, so the, so this last time would've been the fourth time, the time that I got injured.

But I I, it's a lo I always say it's a love-hate relationship because I love it. even my husband who is a white Midwesterner, Iowa boy loves it there. And he is not really <laugh> big on being out of his comfort zone and stuff like that, but he loves it there. He loves the culture, he loves the people, he loves how they kind of take care of each other ish. You know what I mean? But but I always feel like there's always a disconnect because I can, although I can't speak Korean very well for some reason, I have ability to kind of understand what people are saying to me. And so I can tell like when they're asking me like, why is it that you do not speak Korean but you look Korean? and so, and I'll say, you know, [inaudible] which means I'm an American, right?

I never say that I'm adopted. it's because that als all of a sudden starts a whole other thing with them. So, but but yeah, I never, I, there's always that language barrier thing. There's always that where they kind of treat you like, we know you're not Korean Korean, you know? because like even when, when when I went on some tours, they knew I was an American. They knew somehow they knew, they knew I was American. They knew I wasn't, they didn't even try to act like we're Korean <laugh>. so that's, that gets tough. I can always tell that. They always are like, well she's not quite Korean sold. Like, so you feel like a fish outta water. They're amongst people that look like you. And then they kind of treat you like, well you should speak Korean, you look like us. Right? So so that's tough. And I try and I do my best.

Adapted:

Yeah. I was gonna say like so the four times you've been back, do you feel like you've taken away a different, some a different takeaway each time? Or a different, do you feel like you have a different kind of insight?

Zhen E:

Oh, for sure. So the first time you know, this was the first time my husband had ever traveled really kind of very far away ever. he has not flown very many times in his life. And so then that was one, you know, that's, that's a long flight, right? and and so then I was not prepared for a lot. I, you know, I, I thought I was prepared for it, but then I also knew I wasn't gonna be prepared for it. But he is, even though he doesn't speak Korean re Korean or anything, he can navigate that subway system like nobody's business. So I, I have an ease with that so I don't have to worry about not getting to places because he seems to have the sixth sense. And you know what it's like addresses there are weird because you see the address, but that doesn't mean it's gonna get you to that exact address. There's like weird, sometimes you have to go down an alley and up through <laugh> to, to actually get to where the address is. But he seems to know how to do that. So I've never had to worry about that with him being with me. I've never done it on my own. That might be its own adventure. But so the first time we found out that we could do that and and since it was

Adapted:

What sparked going back in 2016?

Zhen E:

So once I kind of fully embraced that, yes, I, cuz I had never really wanted to look into going back to Korea, finding birth family, any of that stuff. My son, when he was filling out applications for either jobs or college or something, cuz he's half Korean and half, half white. I asked him, what box do you check? And he goes Korean or Asian, duh. And he said, and he said it kind of like, duh, you know? And I was like, wow, you actually are proud of being Asian. And he's like, yeah, I kind of had a cool Asian mom. So I realized that he had, he had an Asian role model, whether I was a correct Asian role model, I was an Asian role model that he saw, right? and a positive one I guess. And so, and then I started realizing, okay, he's proud of being Asian.

Why am I not proud of being Asian? And so then I really started really deep diving into that. And so then we decided to go to Korea and I had, we had booked this trip already. We booked this trip already and I've been putting it on Facebook that we were gonna go to Korea, blah, blah, blah. And then somebody had said, you know what, you should watch this documentary twinsters, I just watched it on Netflix and you should watch it. It's about, and so I watched it and then of course in that they talk about Ika. And so I look it up and they said that it, they do it every three years. And it happened to be, they were doing it in 2016. And so I, I call my husband cuz it's in the middle of Workday. And I said, oh my gosh, this thing is happening, this gathering, it's called ia.

And it's two weeks after we're supposed to be there, trip will be over. And he goes, I don't care what we gotta do, you gotta cancel that trip and we have to book it during ia. So of course, you know, it was a little more expensive, but we did it and we went during ia. So that was technically why, because then we had also a destination a group of other adoptees that were supposedly gonna be there. But we had not, I had at that point, I hadn't really done any adoptee stuff. I hadn't been around other Korean adoptees.

Adapted:

Oh, that was your first kind of mm-hmm. <affirmative> coming out. Mm-hmm. <affirmative> was

Zhen E:

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. I mean, not of my own age cuz usually the Korean adoptees I knew were little children that I had babysat when I was a kid myself. So yeah. So that was, I had never really done any adoptee stuff.

Adapted:

And ika, we should probably just mention for people who don't know, it's just we're hundreds of crane adoptees from all over the world get together. And it's been held in soul the last, the last several times and every three years they get together and it's different adoptee organizations kind of come together. Correct.

Zhen E:

And then they did take a hiatus cuz of covid. And so now I'm on, I'm actually weirdly on the planning committee for the one next year in 2023. But you know, that's a whole other <laugh>. So that's where I've come in my journey. But anyway, so yeah, so that was why we went the first time. but we you

Adapted:

Have come far in your journey. Yeah,

Zhen E:

I have in a short amount of time.

Adapted:

The first time I remember you were going through some stuff. Yeah,

Zhen E:

Yeah, yeah. And I've,

Adapted:

You think that had to be to do with just you being overwhelmed. It was like the first time with all these adoptees

Zhen E:

That, and also I had put expectations on them and this gathering that were never gonna be met, you know what I mean? So of course there was all frustration with that. And then also just the fact that y you know, I'm in my birth country for the first time, which is overwhelming in itself. There was not emotional support for that for those of us that had never been there before. You know, that's, it's a big thing. And I, so when I see other people will post like, oh my gosh, I'm going back on like a such and such tour or blah blah, this is my first time. And so I tell 'em, I say, just so you know, check your check. Make sure you check in with yourself emotionally all the time because it is an emotional thing. You are not prepared for being back in your birth country.

And so that was a lot of it. As I had put a lot of expectations, I thought there would be an instant group of people that I would be able to, you know, kind of talk to. And, and that was not, that did not happen instantly. It was really tough for me. Which is weird because in my life I usually make friends very easily. But this, but you know, adoptees are it's almost like their own category of people because we're all dealing with different things and we all come from different backgrounds and just because we're adoptees doesn't make doesn't mean we automatically have a lot in common. And that's,

Adapted:

And you kind of ex you were kind of expecting more of a immediate kind of kinship thing.

Zhen E:

Yes, exactly. And that's not enough to develop that level of what I, what I expected at that time. And also, you know, being an adoptee, you as I think you try to create your family where you think you can. And and so I p I put a lot of that on there, but, and like I said, when I had met you, it was during that cooking class thing. And so then by the end of Iica we had done, we had done breakout sessions according to our age. And that's when I found other adoptees that I really could, could relate to. Up until then I was, I seemed to be meeting all the ones that were very young and just wanted to be there to party and blah, blah blah. And they were kind of more my son's age. And I was like, okay, these are not <laugh>, these are not the adopts that I wanna hang around with.

But I also at that time met Chris Detrych, which, so he had he is the reason I got involved with KAtCH. So how, which is the Korean Adoptees of Chicago with, you know, so, and it's, and I tell, and I've told the story, Chris has told the story that like, it was one of the hottest days in Korea, which whenever you go to ICA it's always hot, right? And we were at the palace and we had our name tags on, but they only say your name and your country. And he looked at our name tags, my husband and mine, and he says, he goes, oh, you're from America, where <laugh> we're in America. And we're like, oh, we're from the Midwest. And he's like, oh, well I'm from the Midwest. And we're like, oh, well we're, we're from Iowa. And he's like, oh, I, I lived in Iowa for a little bit.

And we're like, oh well we're from Cedar Rapids. And he's like, oh yeah, I used to work in Cedar Rapids. And then we're like, well technically we're from Marion, but you probably haven't heard of that, but we always say Cedar Rapids cuz it's the bigger city. And he said, oh yeah, I used to live in Marian <laugh>. So, so we started talking and then I was saying about how I was trying to get an adoptee group started in Iowa and he sa talked, told me about catch in Chicago. And so he invited me to come to some events so I could kind of see how they organize stuff. Chicago is a much different animal to tame than, than Iowa. Iowa is so spread out, right? So all of our adoptees are spread out of the state. so some of us have to drive, you know, like two to four hours to see each other.

Whereas like Chicago, you're kind of in one area and you can just get together with the Chicago group. It's not like all of Illinois, right. So so yeah, the a actually we've done better with Iowa gatherings if we do 'em virtually, cuz the pandemic kind of actually weirdly helped us because we weren't actually trying to physically get together, but, so for us it's four hours to drive to Chicago, but our son lived in Milwaukee at the time, which is only an hour from Chicago. So we would go to catch events a lot. And so so I really got to know the catch group a lot and that really has helped me cuz that's an adoptee group that I can get to know. And then what it does help me each time we go to Korea. So other than this last time it was almost, it was weird, but like each time we went to Korea, Chris Dietrich happened to be there too.

So we joked that like he has to be there when we're there. this last time he wasn't there and then I fell and broke my ankle. So I'm gonna blame him. No, that's, I'm just joking. That's not true. But but even one of the times we went when it wasn't IICA, he happened to be there at that same time too. And it was, it was really weird. but, so in 2019 we also went for IKAA, but our son proposed to his now wife because she is actually a Korean adopted, she and her brother are both Korean adoptees. And so I convinced them to come to IA and her family. And so that was the first time she'd ever done any kind of adoptee related kind of gathering thing too. And so then he proposed to her there in Korea we had a, both the families there and then since then a pandemic has happened and so then they got married and have had a baby since then. So, and they would like to go back for hopefully this upcoming ica. So we'll

Adapted:

See. You know, you're right. It's not like when you go back for the first time and if you're going for this big gathering where there's, you know, so, so many adoptees in one space they, you know, it's not like they have therapists on standby, you know, so you really do. Yeah. You know, that is, oh yeah. Something that, you know, can be difficult and it was probably helpful that you were able to, you know, with your daughter-in-law going over for the first time that you had, you know, sort of been able to explain or be there to share that experience with her.

Zhen E:

I, yeah, I tried to help her by saying like, you know, just, you know, you can, you can, you don't have to attend everything. That's what I made the mistake of trying to do. And then, and I said, and just kind of keep check with your emotions. Cuz if it's getting overwhelming then you know what, take some time for yourself and just do that. And that's okay. If you're exhausted, just take a nap. I mean, it's no big deal <laugh> like, because I think a lot of people think, oh, if I don't do this and if I don't do this, I'm gonna miss out. And, and it's, I think it's better to kind of take care of yourself too, because if you're not in a good healthy place, it's, it's, it's, it's hard to be around a big group of other people that are, you know, that are also in kind of in the same energy as you. So so yeah, I think that did help her a lot. and you know, we both got hobos together so we, we kind of bonded over that. So yeah.

Adapted:

What is it like having a daughter-in-law who's also a Korean adoptee?

Zhen E:

It's, it's, it's inter interesting. I don't try to push her into adoptee spaces if she doesn't feel comfortable. because it took me a while. I mean, you know, I was in my forties before I started really going into adoptee spaces. part of it was, it wasn't really encouraged when I was young and we were so spread out that the chances of running into another adoptee wasn't. But I can remember like always wishing that there was, I wish there was another adoptee that I could, or not necessarily even adoptee, but another Korean person is what I remember thinking that. And then and then other people adopt in our town adopted Koreans, but they were way younger than me. And like I said, I babysat 'em. So it wasn't like they were helpful to me. I I might have been helpful to them a little bit, I have no idea.

But and I found out later it was actually because my parents had adopted me, that other families had talked to my parents. And so then they had decided to adopt because I guess they liked me and they thought from the outside it looked like a wonderful <laugh> wonderful thing. You know, since then I've changed my thinking of of how I feel about adoption and I'm pretty vocal about that on social media as well as in my writings. and I'm sure there's people that are going to disagree with it cuz there's people that still are in that adoptee fog and believe that, you know, it's this wonderful amazing thing. But I'm part of a group that has requested that the Korean government open up our case files and find out the truth about our adoptions because we're finding out that there's evidence that some of them might not have been above board. So

Adapted:

I am too by the way.

Zhen E:

Yeah. So that's what I'm saying. Yeah. So it's, and I'm sure you know, there's a lot of, you know, a lot of us that are, cuz they, I think they handed over at least 300 cases or case requests or whatever, so, and I and more,

Adapted:

More coming.

Zhen E:

Yeah. And I've heard that they recently opened up that you could, more people could apply. So so I think, I think with that deadline now, you know, that's been pushed out. I think there will be more. and I think it's great. I think they need to, I think they need to do this because I have, so that first time we went, I did do the groundwork of contacting Holt who was the adoption agency, I was adopted through and first it was like, no, you have to contact the one in Korea. No, you have to contact the one in Oregon. No, you have to contact the one in Korea. No, they have your, so it was this like back and forth before anybody finally was like, oh yeah, we did find your case file and this is what we found, blah blah blah.

And they told me information that was different than the stuff that my that my parents had been told, my adoptive parents had been told. My mom was really good about keeping all my paperwork. So I have scrapbooks of all of it. doesn't necessarily make sense to me what's in there, but I have all of it and I've made all these like scrapbooks of it. so we took all that with us to Korea the first time. And so I had made an appointment with Holt and it was interesting to go in to the, you know, adopt, it's like what the, I can't remember what it's called. Post adoption service? Yeah, post adoption cuz it was PA c PAs or something. But anyway, so and they come out with this file that's like, what, two inches thick and they only let me read like three PA pages and that was it.

And it's frustrating because you're like, wait a minute, there's, there's more to this file, but you're not letting me read this. And they're like, well we, we can't, we can't let you read this. And they wouldn't let us know like infor like who my foster mom was because there was other kids that were possible. It, it, it was just, it, it was all this like, you know, a lot of shell game is what it felt like and a lot of lies. so that was frustrating. And then I also did the DNA n a thing I did, I went to 3 25 camera and had them take my at Corot and had them take my dna n I left DNA n at couple different police stations. I've done all the DNA n stuff, but it's just, that's, that's what's frustrating too is that you can't seem to get straight answers from people.

So I'd like to know if any of the information that I've been told is even true at all because supposedly they're saying that I had a note on me that said that my name was my name and that my birthday was my birthday. And if that's true, then that means I was abandoned two days after my second birthday in the middle of winter, in the middle of night. And supposedly I was left in on young city, which is little south of soul. and so we went there, we went to the registrar's office to see if I'd ever been registered there and they said no. So that was, that was another emotional like because you're finding out that you were never, as far as the, as far as Korea was concerned, I never existed. And that just, that's a whole other emotional tailspin that I was not prepared for.

And then all of a sudden they like threw us in the back of this truck and we're like, what? We can't understand what you're telling us. So they throw us in the back of this work truck and then they're like taking us through all these like weird alleys and streets and then they're like, get out, take picture. And we're like, take pictures of what? And they're like this. And so we take pictures, we're like, what are we taking pictures of? And we get back in the truck and then we figure out that what they're trying to say is that they think that's is close of an approximation to the original g p s location of where I was supposedly abandoned. So I never got a chance to really absorb it and think about like, this might have been supposedly where somebody found me. Whether that's true or not, again, I have no idea. it just, and so it, it's, it was discombobulating it was frustrating. We even tried to go back with a translator who also did not try do a good job of helping us. So that was frustrating too. So so I kind of am not doing <laugh> doing any of the birth family search anymore just because I just kind of feel like it's dead end.

Adapted:

Yeah. How just stressful and the fact that you were at a, like you found out later the significance of the spot that, you know, they said take pictures and you're like, why are we taking

Zhen E:

Yeah, they're like, take picture, take pictures. And we're like, what? I mean, so some of it, like you said like earlier you said, oh you have a funny way, you know, I can be kind of humorous with some of my stuff cuz one of the <laugh> one, the one of the first times since I had taken my documentation, we took it to a police station in an young and we had them reading this police report saying that I had been found and blah, blah blah. And they had like all their little policemen, they were young young guys, these policemen all looking at my paper and they were all excited and they were reading it and they were like, oh my gosh. So one of 'em decides to take us to the police station where they have like a person that investigates that stuff. And so he throws us in the back of this police car, <laugh>.

And so I have a picture of the three of us in the back of this police car and I was, and I, and I had put it on Facebook and I said, the one thing you're not supposed to do in a foreign country, probably voluntarily get in the back of a police car in a country that you don't speak the language. But but they were very nice and they took us and the gal looked into it and then because of privacy laws, they said, we did find out that the people that supposedly where you were abandoned, they kept saying, dead, dead, dead. Somebody's dead. And we're like, who's dead? We're dead. Am I dead? Who's, you know, we're like trying figure out who's dead, who are you talking about? And we figured out that they were saying that the coup, the original couple that lived there is dead, but their sons were of an age that they would probably have remembered a child in the middle of the night, you know, showing up. But they contacted those boys and they did not want to be, you know, they have privacy laws and they said they did not wanna be contacted. So so that was it. And so whether, whether that's true or not, I have no idea.

Adapted:

<laugh>, you know so you believe Holt has more information they're not giving you

Zhen E:

Correct. <laugh>? I mean that's a short version of that, but yeah, so I mean, like I said, so since then, you know, that case thing that we're trying to get the government to open for us it's with k s s and hold and they've found, I guess documentation that there are two files on everybody. There's the file that has the information and the file that we were given or that whoever was given where they made up stories about how we were abandoned and how however they, you know, got us or whatever how we became, you know, in up for adoption I guess. And so I'm convinced that yeah, that my file is completely made up and that hold has the correct one.

Adapted:

Do you feel this is a human rights issue?

Zhen E:

I do. I do. But but even before I heard any of this stuff with this, you know, with this this filing going on, I, I had kind of been one that was very loud and vocal about saying that I feel like adoption is basically human trafficking. Cuz if you're buying a person <laugh>, if you're buying a person from another person, that's human trafficking, right? and, and that's kind of how I see it. but yes, I feel like there were human rights violations because if, if we were falsely taken, if we were part of a commodity, because it sounds like some of the, they found evidence that there was documentation saying that, that Holt was not keeping up with their quotas of how many children they were supposed to be getting to adopt. That's a human rights violation cuz how they, how did they get us? You know? It's, it's just kind of, it's just kind of sickening. It's kind of heartbreaking to think about. were were we taken, you know, especially since I was two, I spoke Korean, I was potty trained. You just wonder did I wander off and somebody grabbed me?

Adapted:

Yeah. if you were relinquished at around two or found and, and you know, there's just so many questions as to the circumstances, like you said, were you stolen, were you taken? Were, did you get lost? Just so

Zhen E:

Many. But I think about it, one of the questions that was brought up at the KAAN conference, and I know you were there I don't know if you were in this session, but one of the questions that was brought up, and it was in the session about failed to adopt failed birth family search and just, it was just supposed to be us adoptees just sharing our feelings about it. And one of the questions was what is your biggest fear? And at that time, this other information hadn't come out about finding out that like some of us might have been taken incorrectly or, you know, in hor horrible ways, illegal ways. but I, I was still in the thought that I was probably relining relinquished by my family and perhaps there was an issue of like, that they couldn't afford to keep me. Maybe they were pregnant with another child and they couldn't afford to have a child and an baby at the same time. And my greatest fear would be that if I did find my family and I found out I was the only child that was given up and they kept the other ones, to me that would be heartbreaking. And it makes me cry just thinking about it because you have that self-doubt of like, why, why me, why not me? Right?

<affirmative>. but now I wonder knowing this other information, I mean what's weird is, again, it would still be more horrible to me. I mean, it would be, it, it would be horrible that if I was illegally nabbed or illegally taken, but for some reason, to me it would still be more heartbreaking if my family made the decision to give me up and didn't give up any other children that would still be heartbreaking to me. so there's a part of me that kind of doesn't wanna find out <laugh>

Adapted:

Yeah, these searches can be so emotionally taxing because on the one hand it's unsettling and it's, it seems kind of like an empty, I don't know, like a hole that you can't fill and that you can never fill of just not knowing your, your history and then also all the work and, and wild goose chases and having people, you know, where you think people are lying to you. And it could be even like government officials, you know, or your adoption agency or, you know, that's also, that's difficult to keep going.

Zhen E:

Oh yeah. Well there's, I have told people many times that I'm actually done trying to do birth family search. I mean, what I've done, it's out there. I've, you know, I even did the news thing. It wasn't like live it live news. They did a news article about me and it was, and and what's interesting is my husband works at a company that has an office actually in a branch office in Korea in Gangnam. And so he had so they have a lot of Korean people that work at his company and, and they had seen the newspaper article <laugh> because they all get the newspaper sent electronically to their phones or, and so then they asked him, they're like, is this your wife <laugh>? And he's like, yeah. and then I had also K B s also interviewed me about a play that I had written loosely based on my adoption story.

And and so that we talked about the adoption birth family search. So I've done literally all the dna. So I mean if, if, if anything I'm not actively looking anymore. but you know, if somebody matches with dna there could be a possibility, but I doubt it and I don't think anybody's looking for me, that's what seems to make it easier. That's what's heartbreaking is hearing other adoptees that are like, oh, I didn't even try and I've found my birth family, you know, and you're like, I wanna be happy for you. But it also is like, it's a lot, it triggers me, but I also have to realize I can't compare my story to their story. they're going through a different journey, but it's hard to all that's your rational mind, but your heart is also like, you know, it hurts. but I so if it happens, it happens.

if it doesn't, I have, you know, I don't, I feel like where it was easier for people, and I say easier in quotes cuz it doesn't mean just because you have reunion that that your life is totally better. Cuz sometimes it's actually worse and more heartbreaking and you know, there's all that. But I, it just seemed like if their birth family was looking for them, it made them finding them easier. When I say easier, you know, but so I, I can tell nobody's looking for me. So that's, that's what it, that's why it's dead ends all the time. Whether it's a government thing again cuz they always say it's privacy issues. you know, so I'm not actively looking, but I have, like I said, I have all my D n A and with all the different services. So if somebody matches, then that would be my only hope. Well,

Adapted:

And on this podcast a couple episodes ago we had Peter Möller on from the Danish, Korean rights group. What are you hoping that they can accomplish?

Zhen E:

I hope they really do get our files opened and that we can uncover the truth about how a lot of us were gotten <laugh> and that that people are held accountable for if they, if, because it sounds like it's a lot of human rights violations that they're already kind of counting, counting that are in there. You know, they're, they said, you know, there's different ones were knowingly sent to families with people that were sexual predators. It's horrible. I ended up in, adopted into a family where so my adoptive parents had a biological son and he sexually abused me. And and then we just weren't allowed to be alone together. Once it kind of came out that it was happening and then I kind of forgot about it, I went into my adoptee fog and my life seemed wonderful and great again. And then later on in my life, it kind of came back and I had to deal with it and I had to deal with it with the fam with that adoptive family. And so now I don't have any relationship with my adoptive family because of that. So, like I said, I that's, that's horrible that they did. They didn't do great background checks for people because it, you know, so that my heartbreaks with that. So I hope that people are held accountable for any violations that they find <laugh>.

Adapted:

And it's even not even you, you probably know my backstory too. you know, it's even horrible like in these families that sexual abuse child, you know, child abuse that happens that it's, it's not just the acts acts themselves mm-hmm <affirmative> that does the damage, but it's also the way our families reacted to it. Oh yeah. Or, or didn't react to it.

Zhen E:

Yeah, that's what I had problems. That's as an adult later. That's what kind of caused the rift between my adoptive family and mine because the act itself was one thing. The grooming was a whole other situation that actually was worse for me. That caused a lot of tr damage

Adapted:

Grooming. What do you mean grooming?

Zhen E:

So you know, like trying to convince me that it was the right thing to do, that it was my idea if I wanted to do it and that it was, you know, just grooming.

Adapted:

Oh, he the brother? Yeah,

Zhen E:

The brother was grooming me. but then after it was revealed that it was happening, yeah, it was just kind of swept under the rug. We never talked about, we never discussed it, which is really weird cuz my family was really good about talking about things and then this thing was not talked about at all. And then and it, like I said, it was swept under the rug and that's, that's what I had a hard time cuz even when I tried to bring it up with my family later, I said, this was the problem that I had is how it was not dealt with. I have no idea if you even talked to him as far as I know. and, you know, so that's what was tough is that it wasn't, it felt like it wasn't dealt with. It was just kind of like hidden.

And then where it really, where I started really having anger issues was, so I had my son out of wedlock and I was pregnant with him. And so my father or my adoptive father who tended to be emotionally abusive to us anyway, was really horrible to me during that time. And he made it a really un hard, uncomfortable place to live instead of trying to help me at a time when I needed help. he tried to make it very uncomfortable, like it was emotionally abusive. It was just really, it was, it was not a, a he healthy place for me. But then my adopted brother because he was going through a divorce at the time and he also had a son he was allowed to move into the house and then I was kind of kicked out. and that's what sucked cuz I was like, okay, so because what my sin showed to the rest of the world that we were not this perfect family because my family wanted everyone to look, they wanted everyone to believe that if it looks perfect on the outside, we must be perfect on the inside.

So the sins that he did to in my mind were worse than what I had done. But because my, his sins didn't show to the outside world, he was allowed to stay there. And I was not, but I also don't know how much of it was also perhaps because he was their biological son, they're always gonna side with him. I have no idea if that played into it, but that was, that was a lot of that. So anyway, I even talked about like, when I named my son, I did it to protect him, which sounds really weird, but, so I, I'd come up with, so his biological dad's name was Jason and mine was Jenny spelled with a J at that time. So I wanted him to have the same initials at me as, as I did. So I was Jenny Elizabeth McCellum at that time.

So it was Jem, Jem and the Holograms, right? So his was, so I decided to name him Jordan and then and then MacCallum obviously. And then I knew I was gonna give him an e middle name and my dad's middle name was Eugene. And so I named him after my dad so that my dad would be nice to him and it worked because then he, that was his favorite grandchild. He loved him to, you know, even when my dad died he said that he was his favorite grandchild. So, so it worked that I protected him by, by naming him. It sounds really weird.

Adapted:

No, no, you know, you weren't, you weren't protected ZhenE. No. And,

Zhen E:

And, but I knew I had to protect him because yeah, cuz yeah, I was willing to take the abuse, but then he was very sweet to him. but yeah, <laugh>, so it's really weird that I knew even at that age that a name would've been, was so important to protect him. <crying>. So yeah, so he probably isn't excited that his, the name Eugene, his middle name, but it was so, you know, it was for protection. yeah.

Adapted:

<laugh>, you know, with everything you've gone on in your life, has it been a struggle to feel, you know, that you, that you had self-worth?

Zhen E:

sometimes <laugh>, cuz you know, the roots grow really quickly when you plant those seeds and when anything plants those seeds of doubt. But for the, for the most part, I weirdly have a lot of self-confidence.

Adapted:

I mean I love the fact that you are just, for people who don't, it's, you know, what you look like you have this Yeah. You know, neon blue hair, purple cat eye glasses. I mean, you definitely own your look, you know, and it, it does seem like a very confident Oh yeah,

Zhen E:

Look.

Adapted:

Yeah,

Zhen E:

Yeah. For the most part I am, I'm very confident. I know my abilities. I know that if I'm, I'm pretty competitive. I know if I'm gonna do something, I'm gonna do it really well and it's not, I'm not half ass in anything. But then there are times where I get, yeah, I'll get that. Like, like somebody will do something and it'll just derail me a little bit. But then I'll know there, I'll have like a little bit of time where I'm like, oh, I suck. You know, where you have that self talk talk. But because like one of the things I know I'm really good at is writing and that's kind of also what's always helped me through different times of my life. And and so then recently I had some friends that own a theater company and I had submitted some pieces to them and they kind of rejected me.

And so that, like I said, those seeds of doubt, the roots grow quickly. And I was like, oh my God, I can't, I, I suck at writing, I might as well stop writing. I'm, I, you know, I, and, and I did have a little bit of like, where it just really kicked me, <laugh> kicked me in the self-confidence and to the point that like, it was kind of affecting my ability to write in that adoptee voices writing group. Like I would just kind of, they would gimme the prompt and I would just kind of go through the motions, but it was nothing really great. but two things have also happened too. So since then I feel like I, ever since I fell in Korea and broke my ankle, I feel like my mojo has kind of gone cuz my body's in the mode of like, I, we have to heal you.

That's what's kind of going on right now. So between that and then this other thing, I kind of felt like it kind of affected my ability to write, but I'm still writing, I'm still making myself do it because it does help me emotionally. And not everything has to be like, you know, you know, amazing published pieces, right. Some of it is just, you just, you just have to do so, but yeah, for the most part, I'd say I'm mostly pretty self-confident. I and I weirdly have always had this kind of weird Pollyanna attitude about things like, where I'm very optimistic, which is really weird. But then on the other hand, I'm also very much a realist and I'm very sarcastic and I'm very you know, I, I'm not, I'm kind of, sometimes I get kind of doom and gloom where I'm like, you know, blah, blah, blah sucks, you know, but but for the most part, I'm, I would say I'm mostly, I still try to see the good in people, even though I know people have done horrible things to me, which is really probably terrible <laugh> to do to myself because I'll still like I, I'm not somebody that'll be like, I'm gonna forgive you and I'm gonna let you keep abusing me.

I'm not like that at all. And I do stand up for myself

Adapted:

In the the environment. You're in the area. It must be hard to be someone who speaks out against adoption.

Zhen E:

Oh yeah. Well I've had people that are, you know, that have had wonderful adoptions, kind of chastised me for some of the stuff that I post. And I said, you know, whether you had an amazing adoption story or not, or experience, you can still have trauma. Cuz the, all of our stories basically started with trauma. so because like even like I said in this adopt voices writing group, some of these people did have wonderful adoptions as far as it goes, but that doesn't mean they still don't have trauma or emotion about it. And a lot of 'em, they love this writing group because for the first time it's from the narrative of us as the adoptee, not necessarily the adopters where the story's always been. And also they feel like they're in a safe space that they can tell their truth. Whereas maybe they can't tell their adoptive family because they feel like they're gonna hurt their feelings. so perhaps their adoptive family doesn't even realize they feel this way about things because they're probably like, oh well, you know, we have this amazing adoption family. because they don't feel safe like that they can tell somebody cuz they're afraid it's gonna break their heart or it's gonna hurt their feelings or, you know, change their relationship. So I, so that's what I tell 'em. I said, you know, we all have our different backgrounds in it. So

Adapted:

Do you feel like when you go back to Korea and whether it's like the government or at ICA or your adoption agency, do you feel like they also don't want you to rock the boat or they don't want you to say things that are not the good adoptee kind of?

Zhen E:

Yeah, I, I, I get that feeling and I also get the feeling that, like, part of the reason why I think I don't say to Koreans when they ask like, why can't you speak Korean? I don't say anything about adoption because I know it's gonna change the narrative. Suddenly they're gonna get this look in their face. Like, oh, we don't talk about that often. You know? So because it does, it's almost like there's, there's a negative connotation to it in Korea. even when I put up my posters about my adoption story, they did not want to know about it. They don't want to read it. They didn't want, Nope. They don't, they wanna pretend like that did not happen. Which is, that's heartbreaking to me because it did happen. It's a big thing in your history of your country, you know, there. So in the, to find out that a lot of it could have been ethnic cleansing, which makes, I guess it's not that it makes sense cause I'm not gonna say that, but it, once somebody made that, you know, Peter had said that, that a lot of it was ethnic cleansing, you're like, yeah, that's probably true because, you know, we had a lot of, you know, when Japan occupied us, there wa there was probably a lot of that.

And then when the military was there for the, you know, for the war, there was probably a lot of mixed babies and they didn't want those in the, in the gene pool to muddy the gene pool anymore, so they got rid of us. Right. So, I don't know, I just kind of feel like with that there's that, that's why there's a lot of stonewalling there when you try to ask anything about your background, they don't want, but things are being taken out of their hands. So they, because like DNA n a has been a game changer because now we're all doing the DNA n a thing and you're finding out like what your makeup is supposedly, but, and then they are finding each other through DNA n a. Right? So the, the, I think the government's gonna have to make a, they're gonna have to be more open because things are, things are happening whether they, that they can't control. And it

Adapted:

Just, it it's like just being, you know, erasing 200,000 plus people from a society and then Yeah. What happens with the these Yeah, these people come back asking questions and it, you know, and they think about, oh, we don't wanna rip apart families and this will cause, you know, but it's like, well the original thing was you erased all these people, so this is kind of Yeah,

Zhen E:

Yeah, yeah. That's what's weird to me is that cuz I've had to explain that to people here in America that like, you know, like we had like talk shows that were based on people finding their birth families or whatever, right. You know, like Mari Povich, they'd be like, I think I was your son or whatever, you know? and I said, so just because maybe they do find out in Korea like who your birth mom is. Okay. That doesn't mean that you can just automatically call her up and write her or son and say like, Hey I think I'm your daughter. I said, because of privacy laws is what they told me is what it is. you could ruin her family. So they don't want you just automatically contacting her. But there's that part that's like, okay, so you're concerned more about her rights than my rights and feelings about this because, you know, I was robbed of this whole history.

Right. And or just a reason why, maybe that's all I wanna know, but but again, reunion is not necessarily a happy ever after. And I've told people that too. I go, that is not necessarily the, the answer to everything for us as adoptees either, because sometimes it, it causes more heartbreak or it's more of a, you know, it causes more issues than, than it, or more questions than answers or, you know, so it's not necessarily a good thing to be in Reunion, but I would just like to kind of know the truth about stuff. because I, that's, that's a big thing with me is knowing truth. And I think

Adapted:

That's all any, you know, most of us you know, are, are looking for is just answers and the, and the truth and not, you know, a relationship would be great, but that's not necessarily the primary focus for a lot of us. It's just to know where our lives started and with whom.

Zhen E:

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Cuz that's my thing. I don't necessarily need a relationship. Cause as far as I'm concerned, I've, I have a family with my husband, my son and his wife, and now my granddaughter, right? So and that's an interesting thing too because, so my son is, you know, half Korean, his wife is technically full Korean, right? And so now his daughter is more Korean genetically than he is. and so luckily at this point in my life, I am embracing Korean, like being Korean. So people that meet me now, people that have known me in different, I say chapters of my life, there would've been a point where I, if you would've brought it up that I was Korean, I would've been like, yeah, I would change the subject and I didn't wanna talk about it and blah, blah blah. But now I'm like so fully immersed in being Korean.

People are probably like, all right, enough with, yeah, we get it. You're cooking Korean food, you post about it all the time, you're going to Korea, we get it, you know, blah, blah, blah. But my son and his and my daughter-in-law are loving it because I'm technically, genetically the only one that's biologically related to my granddaughter because her parents are adopt, you know, her, they adopted her. And and my husband is not, he, you know, I married him after I'd met after I'd already had Jordan. So technically I'm the only grandparent that is biologically connected to this girl, to our granddaughter. And so what's lovely is that now I can also be that link to her Korean side because I've tried to like, you know, anything I've learned, I've taught myself about Korea, but I do fully immerse. And what's lovely is, so Skylar, that's my daughter-in-law, she is fully embracing, you know, Korean culture and Jordan always kind of weirdly did more than I did. So so it, it works out that like, that's kind of what I bring to the table for her is that she'll probably be like, yeah, that's my crazy Korean grandma, but <laugh> stop it. But but at least she has that we've, we're creating our own history together. We're starting our own legacy together. because you know, like I said, I missed out on generations of cultural Korean stuff, but we we're just gonna start our own from this point. Right. So hopefully,

Adapted:

One thing I wanted to ask you is you know, when you were kind of a marginalized young woman, pregnant, not married, maybe didn't have the family support for what you were going through, did you think about your own birth mother?

Zhen E:

Yeah, I thought about that a lot cuz I thought, oh my gosh, was this the situation she was in? Is this a legacy repeating itself? You know, cuz you wonder about that. Like, do are, am I repeating the same pattern because it became a legacy in my family? yeah, I wondered about that. I wondered if she had some of the same feelings because like I said, I was a single mom, so I wondered if she had any of the same feelings about me as a baby that I had about my baby. and I wrote about that in that play that when I wrote about my letter to my birth mom supposedly in there that like, I wondered if she had the same questions that I did. I, I can remember when I was literally giving birth to my son hoping that he looked more white than Korean, which sounds terrible to be thinking of it as in the moment that you're giving birth to him.

But I just didn't want him to have to deal with some of the issues that I had to deal with. And I remember being thankful that he did look a little more white when he was born. and that's heartbreaking to think about that <laugh>, but I know that like my birth mom was not probably worrying about that cuz I was, I was Korean, but but she also probably, you know, she was giving birth to a Korean child in Korea, so, you know, so, but yeah, you, you wonder if she, if yeah, you can't help but think about the similarities at the time.

Adapted:

Did you wanna read anything? Oh, part of your, the play that you wrote?

Zhen E:

Adapted:

I didn't really tell you in advance, but if you <laugh>,

Zhen E:

So I won't read that because I've read that on other things before. But what I will do is I have a, that I wrote, wrote, so it's really weird. I wrote this piece in my head on the flight, this last flight to Korea. so let me find, it's gonna take a, it's, I had written it in my head on the way because you know that flight to Korea is like 14 hours. and oops, sorry. And so I had it written in my head of this thing I was gonna, this piece I was gonna do and then and I just needed to get it on paper. And so I finally have gotten it on paper. So I'll just read that to you. I wrote it to be a spoken word piece with visuals behind me on a screen, but you'll understand.

So it's called Yellow. Yellow, like the little dress with the blue Holt logo on the sleeve that I wore at the age of two on my trip from Korea to this foreign land. Yellow like the golden hair of my adopted mother. And the warm glow of the sunlight glinting off her as she held me and I felt safe and instantly fell in love. Yellow like the eyes of the fattest cat that greeted me in my new home, causing me to yell out [inaudible] which was Korean for cat. The first words my new parents heard from and understood. Yellow like the beard of the father that I knew from a young age I didn't like or feel close to, or that I belonged to. Yellow. Like caution, which father am I waking up to today? And don't leave me alone with my adopted brother. Yellow like the plastic of my favorite teething toy that I would gum until I was comforted and lulled to sleep.

Yellow. The name, the kids at school called me as they taunted me for not being white like they were as they chanted Chinese Japanese Dirty knees. Look at these. Uellow, like the feelings of cowardice I felt each time I entered a room not knowing if people were friends or foes. Yellow like the school bus I rode when I encountered my first best friend after she asked me to sit down with her and we chatted about how scared she was too. Yellow, like the warm sun on my face and the cool wind whipping through my hair the first time I felt freedom as I drove my car and my friends and I felt carefree and light as we cranked up the tunes and sang at the top of our lungs,. Yellow like the fever that came over the young men as they leed and forced themselves upon me thinking that Asians were sexual conquests. Yellow like the color of the car you drove as you pulled up alongside me on the avenue and asked me my name. Yellow, like the crunchy leaves under our feet as we went on our first hike together full of promise.

And I could see how our lives were meant to be together. Yellow, like the golden bands that adorned our fingers as we vowed to love and live together forever. Yellow, like the blanket that held our baby boy. He stared up at us trusting and knowing and my heart filled with a love that I didn't know existed. Yellow. Like the firelight and the millions of birthday candles and bicycles in camping tents and eventually. Yellow like the sa sash around your neck sun on your graduation day when we couldn't be have been more proud of you. Yellow, like the people in the land we returned to. When you proposed to your now wife, you were so much more proudly Korean than I ever was because I was made to be ashamed. But now with you, I am proud. Yellow like the er we pinned to you on your wedding day, a day that because of the pandemic we never thought would be possible, and Yellow, like the dress that I wore on my trip from Korea to America, no longer a dress of shame worn by a child, thrown away, abandoned and found a yellow dress with a blue Holt logo on the shoulder and now is worn by your daughter and my granddaughter Jasmine Nari.

Adapted:

So ZhenE, if folks wanna get get in touch with you how can they do it?

Zhen E:

Oh my gosh. Well, I mean I'm on, I guess I'm on Facebook, I'm on Mastodon, but nobody knows how to use that <laugh> including me. I'm like, I dunno what I'm doing, but I'm on it. I I don't know, I guess, I guess Facebook is probably the easiest. I mean I have email and all that, but,

Adapted:

Okay. And what's your name on Facebook?

Zhen E:

So it's actually my name because Facebook got mad at me cuz I used to go by princess on there <laugh> ex. And so when Facebook made everybody change their name to their real names I was one of the ones that, that they did that to. And, and what really makes me angry is I had, I know people that are entertainers and they didn't want their real names on there because they work, it, it those are jobs besides, and so they made 'em change their names. And so I'm one of those people that they had, I, I had to prove that my name was ZhenE Remmelsberg, spelled Zhen you know, E and not Princess <laugh>. And so they will not let me change my name to anything else. So I'm on there as ZhenE Remsberg, spelled Z H E N Remsberg, you can find me.

Adapted:

Thank you for sharing ZhenE. Thanks. Also goes to Jayn for our theme music. For more go to jaejinmusic.com. I also wanna give a shout out to Kimberly Kaminski and all of our Patreon supporters. You help keep this podcast running each month. If you'd like to join them, go to patreon.com/adapted podcast. Until next time, take care.