

Untold Virginia
Episode Four Transcript
“Genealogy and Mayflower Roots”

Frank: ... and, there you go. You should be all set.

Elizabeth: Thank you, Frank. I promise I really am trying.

Frank: These things take a bit of time to catch on.

Elizabeth: Well, how long did it take for you?

Frank: Longer. How else can I be helpful today?

Elizabeth: Oh, the equipment was the big thing. Now that I have this checklist, I should be all set. Please tell me you didn't type this up just for me.

Frank: You'd be surprised at how many people need a little guidance. Let me know if you want another copy. I've got plenty of my office if Ruth wants one too. How is Ruth, by the way?

Elizabeth: Oh, she's good, I think. Last I heard from her she was feeling better.

Frank: That cave episode was quite a cliffhanger.

Elizabeth: It was just dramatic effect. Ruth is totally fine, I swear. She'll be in later if you want to come by.

Frank: Only if I'm not interfering with the recording. Ah, I have a tea blend that could be helpful for her. I'll bring it by just in case. Do you drink tea?

Elizabeth: Sometimes. What's in the blend exactly?

Frank: It's an herbal tea blend that my family has made for generations. Lots of local flora. It's the perfect cure-all.

Elizabeth: Do you grow all the plants in your garden?

Frank: The ones in my garden, yes, but I got a few others from the neighbors.

Elizabeth: Oh, like a historical society thing.

Frank: What do you mean?

Elizabeth: Oh, no, sorry. I just assumed, because I know everyone there is really close. You and Ruth's parents and ergo, Ruth. I'm not trying to pry, I swear.

Frank: I know you mean well, but yes, if you're so curious, all of us grow a few different plants and then share the bounty. It's the same way we approach everything we do.

Elizabeth: Like divide and conquer?

Frank: A little more hierarchical than that, but essentially you've got it.

Elizabeth: Very cool. So when you say hierarchy-

Frank: So what's on the rundown for today?

Elizabeth: Well, it depends. Can I ask you something?

Frank: Of course.

Elizabeth: As a radio journalist, how do you know when you should pivot? You know, like if you want to get more listeners or internet buzz or just pursue a better story?

Frank: Do you have an example in mind?

Elizabeth: Not exactly. It's kind of like, let's say you had a planned a rundown and then something more interesting came along and you wanted to pursue that instead because you thought people would respond to it more. You know?

Frank: Sure. There are dozens of story beats you could follow. Sometimes it's good that things get left behind. Endings are beginnings from a different angle.

Elizabeth: I was thinking in more of a micro podcast sense.

Frank: It still applies. Why don't you talk it over with Ruth when she gets here? I'm sure she'll do the logical thing.

Elizabeth: Doesn't she always?

Frank: That's what keeps it easy. Well, break a leg.

Elizabeth: Okay. Three, two, one. Welcome to Untold Virginia. Yeah. So if you just actually sit, if you scoot your chair back.

Tyler: Okay.

Elizabeth: And you can sit right there. Yeah.

Tyler: Right here?

Elizabeth: Yeah. That's perfect.

Tyler: Great.

Elizabeth: Hey everyone. Sorry for the scramble here. But as you know by now, I'm your host, Elizabeth Miller, and this is Untold Virginia. A show where we, I, tell you about cool historical things from a cool historical place. You may have noticed that while I'm here, my co-host Ruth Morgan isn't. Ruth's been

busy lately. Unfortunately, she won't be joining us for this episode, I think, but the show must go on. Please give a warm, theoretical welcome to Tyler Danson. You can talk now.

Tyler: All right. Hello everyone. My name is Tyler Danson and I'm excited to be on the radio.

Elizabeth: Podcast.

Tyler: Hmm?

Elizabeth: We're just in a radio station. This will be released as a podcast episode online.

Tyler: Same thing.

Elizabeth: No, it's ... Right. Who cares? Tyler Danson is a former park ranger who like Deirdre from Episode Two, worked at Historical Jamestown, though he doesn't work there now, he still has all that knowledge to use. So Tyler is currently working on a blog.

Tyler: It's a book.

Elizabeth: Oh, sorry. I thought it was a blog.

Tyler: It's a blog right now, but it's going to be developed into a book.

Elizabeth: Oh, that's amazing. Who is the publisher?

Tyler: I don't have one yet. That's just the plan.

Elizabeth: Okay. Well, let's just cut the intro short and I'll toss it to you, Tyler. Why don't you tell our listeners more about the book blog that you're currently working on?

Tyler: Sure. Well, when I was a park ranger at Historical Jamestown, I focused on the genealogical aspects of the area and those who were visiting.

Elizabeth: Interesting. So Tyler, the history of genealogy in your life, when did you start to become interested in it, and how long have you been working on your book/blog?

Tyler: Sure. Yeah. I mean, for me personally, I didn't grow up knowing my father, and not knowing really half of who I was. So, I, one day just started to do some research and that's really ... The blog was born out of this personal exploration that I embarked on. I mean, it wasn't easy. There was some snags along the way, but I really wanted to know who I was, because I always knew that I came from greatness. I always had this feeling, and believe it or not, I ended up finding out that my great-great-grandfather was actually the third lieutenant governor of this great state of Virginia, and it was-

Ruth: Hey.

Tyler: ... really special.

Ruth: Sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Oh my God. Hey Tyler, I'm so sorry. I'm Ruth. We emailed.

Tyler: Nice to meet you.

Elizabeth: We're in the middle of an interview.

Ruth: I know. I figured it. I'm sorry.

Tyler: I just got over a cold.

Elizabeth: You look sick, real sick.

Ruth: Thank you so much.

Elizabeth: No, no, I'm worried about you. And I think I'm allowed to be worried about my best friend.

Ruth: Being worried about me and insulting me are two different things.

Elizabeth: You just ... You look like you've lost a lot of weight in too short an amount of time.

Ruth: Wow, you just keep making me feel better, don't you?

Elizabeth: Tyler, do you mind just popping out a sec?

Tyler: Popping out?

Elizabeth: Yeah. Yeah. Just head on out there. Let us hash something out and then we'll invite you back in.

Tyler: Sure.

Elizabeth: Sorry.

Ruth: There's a kitchen down the hall if you'd like something to drink while you wait.

Tyler: Yeah, I'll go fetch myself some tea.

Ruth: For the record I didn't even know if I was able to make it in today.

Elizabeth: If you were busy, then you should have tried to reschedule.

Ruth: It wasn't that I was busy. It was that I wasn't feeling well. And I'm still not, by the way.

Elizabeth: I don't know what you want me to do about that.

Ruth: Not be an asshole for starters.

Elizabeth: I am not trying to be an asshole. I am genuinely worried about you. Have you been sleeping?

Ruth: As much as I can.

Elizabeth: You should have told me. I would have canceled this. I could have taken you to a doctor or something.

Ruth: I don't need a doctor.

Elizabeth: What was that?

Ruth: What was what?

Elizabeth: That, the ah. Are you feeling okay?

Ruth: Have you not been listening? Look, I'm sorry I was late. I should have texted.

Elizabeth: Yeah, you should have. We're supposed to be in this together.

Ruth: That's literally what I told you last week.

Elizabeth: So?

Ruth: So there's supposed to be something in this for me too.

Elizabeth: I don't know what to tell you.

Ruth: Course you don't.

Elizabeth: I don't know how I'm supposed to get more listeners with this guy. He's a drag. Why did we book this?

Ruth: Because tracking the genealogical ancestry of our colonial ancestors can be interesting.

Elizabeth: I'm sure it can, but it's not.

Ruth: This is a history podcast.

Tyler: Are you two done?

Elizabeth: If we could just have another minute.

Ruth: I'm so sorry, Tyler.

Tyler: Okay. I'll just be in the hallway then doing nothing.

Ruth: Well I'm ready to go if you are.

Elizabeth: So I was talking to Frank before you got here.

Ruth: Okay.

Elizabeth: And he agreed with me that we should pivot to more interesting topics. Stuff that listeners might actually like.

Ruth: We said that we were making a history show.

Elizabeth: Yeah, but people don't care about that kind of history. I mean, there's all this interesting stuff that we're missing because we're so tied to your plan. I want to pivot to cool historical stuff. People loved the Witch of Pungo. It's historical, but it's also sensational. People like hearing about us and what we're up to. So then I thought we could have-

Ruth: Where are you getting this from?

Elizabeth: Twitter.

Ruth: So like one person on Twitter.

Elizabeth: Does it matter?

Ruth: Immensely.

Elizabeth: I don't understand why you just won't listen to me.

Ruth: Why I won't listen to you? That is absolutely hilarious.

Elizabeth: I have a good ear for this stuff. I just want us to pursue interesting stories so we can stand out and

Ruth: And what, become famous? Get over yourself. Come in.

Tyler: Now?

Ruth: Now is perfect. Please, have a seat. Officially, Tyler, it's nice to meet you. I'm sorry to have to burst in like that.

Tyler: If you're sick, I'd rather not shake hands.

Ruth: No worries. Completely understand. Okay. So walk me through what you've been doing.

Elizabeth: I was waiting outside in the hallway.

Ruth: No, no, no, not you. Sorry.

Tyler: Oh.

Elizabeth: Let's talk about your health for a second, Ruth.

Ruth: We have a guest in the studio.

Elizabeth: Tell me what medicine you've been taking. Tell me what you've been eating, if you've been active, et cetera.

Ruth: What? No.

Elizabeth: What do you mean, no?

Ruth: What? As in no, I don't have to tell you my personal stuff.

Elizabeth: Okay. Well look. Somebody needs to focus on your health if you're not going to. So you definitely shouldn't be exercising, especially if you haven't been sleeping. You should at least be moving around somewhat. I feel like a hike, hike might be a bad idea.

Ruth: Liz, I-

Elizabeth: I've got some soup at home that I could bring over. Listeners, I just made this slow cooker butternut squash soup that is so good, recipe to come. It has a bit of curry powder in it, but it's only for flavor. You'd still like it. I'll just need to get some more sourdough beforehand because I used most of it last time.

Ruth: Can we not do this now? I haven't really been able to keep a lot of food down anyway.

Elizabeth: Oh, well that is your problem. You need liquids.

Ruth: No, I really don't think so.

Elizabeth: I'm first aid certified.

Tyler: I have an appointment at three.

Ruth: Of course, I'm sorry, Tyler. I promise we're not usually like this.

Elizabeth: I forgot you were here to be honest.

Ruth: Going to edit all of that out. Right?

Elizabeth: I will give it my best try.

Ruth: I bet.

Elizabeth: Okay. And we are good to go. So hey everyone, so sorry for this sudden interruption before, but-

Ruth: You don't have to be that cheery.

Elizabeth: This is my podcasting voice.

Ruth: It's kind of a lot.

Elizabeth: Fine. Is this better?

Ruth: Yeah, that works.

Elizabeth: Oh good. It works. Hey everyone. Sorry for the weird break, but here's a special surprise. Ruth is here.

Ruth: Sorry. Hey everyone. I am so sorry for being late. My car had trouble starting and I had to call a mechanic. It was a whole-

Elizabeth: Car had trouble starting?

Ruth: Do I really have to go into all my medical problems on air? Can't I just say what I want to say?

Elizabeth: I think that would be a really interesting subplot.

Tyler: I disagree.

Ruth: Great. It's settled then. Anyway guys, I'm super late for our episode today and it's all my fault as usual. Shout out to Elizabeth for taking the lead without me.

Elizabeth: Oh, no worries, Ruth. It's totally fine.

Ruth: Now that I am here, what have you both been talking about so far?

Elizabeth: Oh my goodness. Tyler has been so interesting. Tyler has a lot to say about genealogy and the history of genealogy and how it relates to him and his favorite part.

Ruth: That is so cool. I have always wanted to learn more about that and I feel like it's the one part of history and that I just don't know that much about is how genealogy relates to our past. Could you elaborate?

Tyler: Well, yes. I mean, it's everything. It's who we are. So it has a lot to do with history in that regard. I mean, what's more to say? I feel like we-

Ruth: Tyler.

Tyler: ... covered a lot of good ground, but-

Ruth: What got you into genealogy? Is there a moment in your life where you decided, huh, this is for me.

Tyler: Sure. I mean, I had mentioned before that I didn't know my father growing up.

Ruth: I'm so sorry.

Elizabeth: Oh, this story is so good, Ruth.

Tyler: And I needed to uncover my own truth about who I am. And so that to me is really the core of genealogy is uncovering the past, and I did my own research and it turned out that my great-great-grandfather was the third lieutenant governor of this great state of Virginia.

Ruth: Are you kidding me? That's like basically being royalty. That's so cool.

Tyler: It's something. I mean, it was a true moment of validation, I will say. I-

Elizabeth: So Tyler, I'm sorry to cut you off. I just want to keep the conversation going and the interview going, I know that Ruth has a very, very, very big spot in her heart for Historic Jamestown and the fact that you have spent time working there-

Tyler: Right.

Elizabeth: It would be great to hear about any moments that you had that were life-changing at Historic Jamestown.

Tyler: Sure. I mean, there's a lot to draw from to be honest. I guess my time spent there as a tour guide, you're always getting people on different groups that have connections to the area. That's why they're there, there's a clear interest in the state's history. And I'd probably say my favorite moment was it was revealed that somebody in my group was the great-granddaughter of one of the architects of The Mayflower.

Ruth: What? Holy cow?

Tyler: Yeah.

Ruth: That is so cool.

Tyler: And so I got to find out all about kind of what that whole process was for ... what kind of wood they wanted to use for the ship and how they were going to prepare it for the journey. And there's some really, really great things that I don't think we don't talk about it enough in history class. Some of these really-

Elizabeth: What an exciting story. Tyler, I am blown away by how exciting that was to hear.

Ruth: That was like ... how often does that happen?

Elizabeth: Are you okay there?

Ruth: Yeah. I'm fine. Stop, he's-

Elizabeth: I can grab you some-

Ruth: He's trying to answer. Tyler. That is like such a cool story. How often does it happen that you're in the same room as the same places these people that have such a connection to the town and the history. That's incredible.

Tyler: It does happen a lot. And I think that's kind of why I wanted to start this book was to really take on-

Ruth: Wait. You didn't tell me. You have a book? Please. Why didn't you lead with that?

Elizabeth: Oh, he told me.

Tyler: Well, that's why I'm here.

Ruth: Right. I'm sorry, I'm a little out of it.

Tyler: In your email, you said you'd read it.

Ruth: Yeah.

Elizabeth: And let's move on to another question. Tyler, do you like caves?

Tyler: Excuse me?

Elizabeth: Because in Historic Jamestown, Ruth and I went on a tour and we got to this cave in the middle of ... No Ruth, this is what happened. We walked into this cave. There were ancient writings, there were ancient symbols-

Ruth: Liz, I don't think this is really relevant to the interview. And I don't know if he wants to talk about-

Elizabeth: I know. Well, I'm just curious about his-

Ruth: We're not doing, we're not ... sorry. We're not doing it. We only have so much tape, so much-

Elizabeth: We're not recording on actual tape.

Ruth: ... time. It's still ... it's valuable. It's valuable space and I just don't ... I know you have get out of here.

Elizabeth: Okay. Fine. You ask the question then, Ruth.

Ruth: Sorry. I meant to ask you Tony, Todd, sorry, Tyler. I meant to ask you about that ... Can you talk about the technology, the stuff that you use, the technology that goes into genealogy and-

Elizabeth: Ruth, are you okay?

Ruth: I'm fine. I-

Tyler: Well sure. I mean, I'm not using the technology myself. There's a lab that I go to and-

Elizabeth: Okay. Tyler. I think that's good right now. Ruth, are you okay?

Ruth: Fine.

Elizabeth: I'll just help you. Hold on.

Ruth: I'm fine.

Elizabeth: I don't know what's going on.

Ruth: Ow, ow.

Elizabeth: Can I get you some water?

Ruth: Yeah.

Elizabeth: Ruth, Ruth?

Tyler: Oh my God.

Elizabeth: Ruth, talk to me. Are you okay?

Tyler: Has this happened before?

Elizabeth: Get back. She needs some air.

Tyler: You want me to just stand here?

Elizabeth: Just to be useful or something. Go find Frank.

Tyler: Who is Frank?

Elizabeth: The old guy. In the office. Across from the kitchen. Go.

Ruth: Liz?

Elizabeth: Yeah. Take a deep breath. Ruth, are you okay? Can you talk to me? I need you to breathe.

Ruth: My stomach. I know.

Elizabeth: Hold on one second. I'm here. I'm here.

Ruth: I need air.

Frank: It's okay. I'm here.

Elizabeth: Should I call an ambulance?

Frank: No, I can take care of this. Ruth. Ruth? I'm going to move you into my office, all right? It's going to sting a bit, but we need to get you lying down, okay?

Ruth: Okay.

Frank: Move the chairs out of the way.

Elizabeth: Do you need to get help, I can-

Frank: No, just ... the mics. Shut off the mics.

Elizabeth: Okay.

Frank: It's okay. It's okay.

Elizabeth: Ruth, you're going to be fine. Ruth, I promise. Just take deep breaths. Oh God, the mics, okay. The mics. Oh God. Okay. Well, you're going to want to stay tuned.