

The Art of Asking Everything

Storm Large: Knowing Who You Are Not

Amanda Palmer 00:00

This is The Art of Asking Everything, I am Amanda Palmer. This week's guest is performer, songwriter, singer, writer, feminist, crazy friend person of mine, Storm Large, starring in, "Knowing Who You Are Not."

I met Storm Large through my cabaret kamikaze friend [Meow Meow](#), about 5 years ago, and I immediately wanted her to be my friend, she is a larger-than-life singer and front-person of the band [Pink Martini](#). Her old band, [Storm and the Balls](#), has toured the world playing mashup covers of rock hits from the 70s and 80s. In 2006, she appeared as a finalist on the CBS show Rock Star: Supernova, which was an experience that really weirded out her life, and we go into during our conversation. But what drew me into her world most of all was her memoir, which was based on a one woman show that she did in Portland, called [Crazy Enough](#), which is about growing up with a psychologically ill mother, and making her way out of the dark.

We talk about all sorts of things like the power of vulnerability, what it was like for both of us growing up in the weirdness of Massachusetts, the isolating horrors of actually writing a memoir about painful things, our shared obsession with Madonna, parallel parking as a feminist statement, and especially our shared imposter syndrome.

Please welcome, Storm Large. And that is her actual name.

MUSIC BREAK - I Don't Have This Shit Figured Out

Amanda 02:30

Storm Large, thank you for being on my podcast.

Storm Large 02:33

Amanda Palmer, thank you for having me on your podcast.

Amanda 02:35

You're just awesome.

Storm 02:26

You're just awesome.

Amanda 02:37

We should just be done right now.

Storm 02:40

Do some scissoring, go get a snack.

Amanda 02:45

I was very lucky today, we're in Portland recording this right now, and I got to go see you do a rehearsal of your one woman show, which is called Crazy Enough. Do you call it a one woman show? Cos you've got a band with you on stage.

Storm 03:00

I call it a musical memoir. A lot of people call it a one woman show cos it's mostly me, the lion's share, it's not just music, it's a lot of monologue and stuff, so they call it a one woman show, but I have my guys with me, so it's more of a musical memoir.

Amanda 03:15

It's Hedwig-y.

Storm 03:16

Is it?

Amanda 03:17

Well, it's Hedwig-y the way I imagine Hedwig was when John first wrote it, which was it was just him in a bar, with a band, telling this story, and then sometimes the band would play. But it was an incredible privilege to actually sit there and get to watch you in such an intimate space, it was me, Storm, a couple of people from this theater where she's about to remount this show after doing it 10 years ago, in a really, really long run, that sounds like it sort of ran out of control because the show was so popular. What's the name of the venue again in Portland?

Storm 04:00

Portland Center Stage at the Armory.

Amanda 04:05

So this was 10 years ago, you did this memoir show of stories about your life, and songs, and then that turned into a book, called Crazy Enough, which I've now read most of. But you did most of the heavy lifting for me, because I got about half way through the book last night, and then I was like, I'm not gonna get to the end of the book! But then I got to watch the show, which more or less fills in... I mean, I'll still go read the book, you're a fantastic writer.

Storm 04:29

Thank you!

Amanda 04:30

And we can talk about that, we can talk about your show, we can talk about the book, but we could talk about anything. This is the nice thing, this is my podcast, and there's no fucking point, there's no time limit, there's no language restrictions, and there's no commercials, because my patrons pay for it.

Storm 04:46

That's so nice, thank you Patreon.

Amanda 04:49

And you and I also, we have been lucky because I have been staying at your house for the last few days, and I've gotten to actually know you a little bit, because mostly before this I just knew you on the internet, and through mutual friends.

Storm 05:02

And that one interview. You were pregnant, I think, when I met you. That's right.

Amanda 05:09

I was 8 months pregnant, but we didn't hang out. [We met on stage, did a quick talk.](#)

Storm 05:15

Cos I remember you interviewed me, and I was literally like 3 days out of knee surgery, so I remember I got on stage in crutches, and I had to get the hell out of there cos I had to take painkillers.

Amanda 05:29

This was on the Art of Asking book tour, when I was pregnant. But we didn't get a good hang in. And now that we've actually gotten to hang out, we're kind of the same person.

Storm 05:37

We really are.

Amanda 05:38

Oh my god.

Storm 05:39

It's great. I think you're I think you're braver than me, though. I do. I think you have... And this is from just my perspective, in being a fan of your work, feeling also the familiarity of your approach to honesty. And also, I think I've always assumed you felt the same way about vulnerability that I do. That it's not being brave to be that vulnerable and exposed. It's actually a defensive move, because no one can hurt you. You've already given them absolutely everything.

Amanda 06:11

You've bared your neck.

Storm 06:12

Yeah, here's my throat. And if you kick it out, well, fuck you. That's you. I gave you my throat in good faith, and also for your entertainment. But I feel you are so much more strong in your accessibility. I get really...

Amanda 06:29

What do you mean by accessibility?

Storm 06:31

Accessibility, you are so generous with your fans, and I try to be as well, but I find myself really trying to have a thicker boundary from people, because people respond to us viscerally, as fans. We were talking about it earlier today, about how people cry, and they share really intense stories, and it's so empowering for us as artists to know that we're actually doing something that matters. But I get really frightened that I'm not enough. I'm not giving enough to people directly, not just from the stage. People always want more, and I'm always kind of... I'm accessible after shows, always signing and taking pictures and selfies and stuff like that. But I do need a lot of recovery after that, and it seems like you are constant exposure. You're in a state of constant exposure of yourself.

Amanda 07:23

Well, I can be as honest with you about this as I can with anyone, more honest with you. I'm like a vampire. I feed on that so much. If I don't get to sign after a show, I'm just so lonely. I don't want to get off stage like after doing that, and then just go back to a hotel room and read Twitter. I want to be with everyone. And I love people collapsing in my arms, and I love feeling that close and connected and seen. But it's... I don't want to say it's selfish, but I want that just as much as they want it.

Storm 08:08

But the way I see that, that still seems very, very brave, because so much of yourself...

Amanda 08:13

But what's brave about that? It's the thing that I want.

Storm 08:16

Oh, that's true, I guess. I guess as someone who's outside of your body, at least for now...

Amanda 08:23

Well we do have a dinner date in two hours. Who knows, after a couple of bottles of wine, what's gonna happen?

Storm 08:30

No, we're not drinking again, Jesus God, no.

Amanda 08:31

That was two nights ago. Oh no, that was last night! Two nights ago was mine. And last night was my good night, cos I was still hungover.

Storm 08:40

No, I need that too. I don't pretend for a minute that I'm an artist out of some altruistic, I'm so great, and I have such a great thing to say, and I'm so great at it. I'm fucking lonely, and I want to be in front of people who are like yeah, I think I love you. Like, no way! That's great! I love love! And then I get down and sign and stuff after I do my thing, and it is a party, and I love it and I enjoy it. I don't know why I consider it to be brave. And also you're just so goddamn prolific, you fucking are always making. It's so goddamn old school, like a constant chisel in your hand, hammer, dust flying, sparks flying, thinking, working, going.

Amanda 09:24

But also, that's a defense mechanism as well. If I'm trying to work on anything in my life right now, it's to be okay with not just like, it's that New England thing, we're both from sort of Massachusetts. And I mean, I just grew up with that like, work work, work, you need to be a productive member of society. Puritan ethos. You need to be useful. Idle hands. And I have a really hard time just letting myself relax.

Storm 10:00

I do too. I can only take a break if it's like a yoga retreat where I'm learning, doing teacher training, or I go to Hawaii to learn permaculture farming, and I'm lifting.

Amanda 10:13

I am literally the same way. The only breaks I've taken in my adult life are meditation retreats, and yoga retreats, where it's so strict.

Storm 10:20

Regimented, and learning.

Amanda 10:21

And I'm like nope, I just can't answer my phone, cos I'm at a meditation retreat. Otherwise my self discipline is pretty terrible.

Storm 10:28

Yeah, the idea of going on vacation, and sitting on a beach, and not doing anything. Considering the level of energy sap that touring can just suck you so dry, there are like two days after a long run where I am staring into middle distance, and if someone threw me on the beach and I didn't know, but it looked like I was on vacation. But other than that, I can't sit still.

Amanda 10:52

I can take a day or two of that.

My idea of a perfect day off is what we did yesterday. Being hosted by a friendly new friend, stranger, out of my own element, not in my own house, couchsurfing in some wonderful other bohemian utopia, surrounded by nice friendly strangers who don't really give a shit that I'm Amanda Palmer and that I just did a tour. Hearing children banging on a piano, drinking wine, and cooking food, and getting a massage.

Storm 11:26

Oh, fuck yeah.

Amanda 11:27

And a really good cup of coffee somewhere in there. That's my idea of a perfect day off. Not on the beach. Not at a strip club. Not hiking in the mountains. Kitchen, people, camaraderie, wine. That's my idea of fucking heaven.

Amanda 11:53

The only thing missing was dogs. If there had been dogs there, it would have been perfect.

Storm 11:58

I'm trying so hard to get my boyfriend to just surprise me with a dog, or I'll get a dog and be like, surprise, you got me a dog! But I've gotta go on tour.

MUSIC BREAK - I Don't Have This Shit Figured Out

Amanda 12:08

This is maybe a good way to ask you about the show and the book. You've been very, very, very open about it. It's about mental health. The book is called Crazy Enough. You grew up wondering if, thinking that you would be, grappling with the idea of, being fucking crazy, and probably feeling crazy. So did I. I really struggled with my mental health, as a teenager, and then well into my 20s, and I don't think I really fully found stability until I was into my 30s. And a lot of it was, I think, getting to exorcize the demons on stage, and perform, and write, but also doing a lot of yoga and meditation. And just reading your book, and also watching your show today, but reading the book and just seeing someone so viscerally, honestly, describe what it feels like to be a child who is trying to figure out the world, especially with a crazy parent. And the weird things that happen in your head. And weird shit still happens in our head all the time, but when you're a kid, and you don't even have language for certain things, and you don't understand how the real world works, and how grown ups work, and how relationships work and what crazy is and isn't, it's just so strange in there.

Storm 13:42

I mean everybody, especially being a teenager, we all have crazy thoughts and depression, and hormonal ups and downs, and rejection and heartbreak, and overreaction, and you don't understand. But when you have that sword of Damocles over your head already that your mom is mentally ill and locked up in a mental institution, you're probably going to end up just like her, any little strange notion or behavior you start to see in yourself is terrifying. And then it compounds it, and becomes anxiety, and then more and more scar tissue wraps around those thoughts, and they become bigger, cancer cells, and then they just take over. And so you, you meaning me basically, my escape was sex drugs and then ultimately rock and roll. It was at first to try and be as different as I possibly could from my mother, in every possible way. And she was very small and very sweet, very, very feminine. But she was the only woman around me, really, so I associated being a woman with being sick, and fucked up, and not loved. You won't be loved if you're a girl.

So I grew up, learned how to fight, learned how to sleep outside, learned how to run from the cops. Learned how to give screaming blowjobs, shit like that. Be funny, be loud, be absolutely fearless, and say anything to anybody.

Amanda 15:15

And be big.

Storm 15:15

Be big. Be big, and loud, because the whole world was saying shut up, you just want attention. I'm like, fuck yeah, I want attention, but check this out. I wasn't going to conform to any kind of thing, because that meant I was gonna die in a hospital. And when you're little, you don't know what that even means, you're watching someone try to kill themselves all the time.

Amanda 15:39

This is your mother?

Storm 15:40

My mom, yeah, my mom was trying to. But it was all very... Humans aren't that strong. I mean, we're tough, and we're strong, and we're easy to kill. So it occurred to me pretty quickly that she just wanted to feel loved, and she couldn't. There was like this Plexiglas between her and everything, and the only thing she knew was medical emergencies, and drama. And so, I was like, I am not going to be that, I am not going to be that, I am not going to be that. But how can you see what she's seeing on the inside of her head? All I was seeing was her behavior on the outside. I was like, is it like someone's going to come and yank on a chain of a lamp? And then I'm gonna be talking to someone, and they're gonna look at me like I'm not making sense? And I'm gonna become this alien?

Amanda 16:32

Well, to back up, you should tell the story that you tell in the show, and you also tell at the beginning of the book, what your doctor said to you when you were 9.

Storm 16:42

My mom had a lot of doctors. There were a lot of doctors, there were a lot of social workers around, and this one doctor, that she was often on with for a long time, I said very casually to him, when I was really little, making conversation because my mom had just been dragged off and sobbing and banging her head on the floor, and it was really intense, and I said sort of to myself and sort of to him, I'm not going to end up like that, am I? Expecting him to be like, oh, honey, no, no, no, no, your mother has blah, blah, blah. But he said, it's hereditary, you're absolutely going to end up like your mother. And the floor went out.

And then he said, trying to comfort me, but probably not until your 20s, or when you have children, whichever comes first. And he went on to say, this is not in the show, I think it might be in the book, but he went on to say about well, but we know what's wrong with your mother, we'll be able to take care of it when it starts to happen to you.

Amanda 17:38

You just said that in the book.

Storm 17:39

Yeah, and I was like, you know, what's wrong with my mom? My mom's been fucking trying to kill us all my whole life! But it wasn't like, you know when you were afraid of something, you're so afraid of something, you're so afraid of something, and then someone sees it. They see it. And they call you on it. They're like, oh, yeah, you are this person. And you hear it out loud, you're like, oh, yeah, well, I kind of already knew. And we are a lot alike.

MUSIC BREAK - Hold On Tight, Darling

Amanda 18:10

So I grew up... I also think it's really interesting, we're 7 years apart. You're almost 50, I'm 43. We both grew up in Massachusetts. I was the youngest of four siblings. I had two steps, and then my full sister who was four years older than me. And I was the baby. Still now, if you really want to fucking get to me, and you just want to hit the nerve, the raw nerve that will never close, just tell me that I am trying to do anything to get attention. And you will just watch.

Storm 18:53

Or, this one, just ignore her, she just wants attention. Just ignore her.

Amanda 18:55

I mean, that was a running theme growing up. Amanda thinks she's very special.

Storm 19:08

Oh my god! Oh! Yeah!

Amanda 19:17

My mom and my stepdad, they sort of covered different territories, and they were really good parents. My mom worked her ass off, while your mom was in mental hospitals, my mom was working full time. Sometimes she was supporting the whole family, and my stepdad was inventing things, and starting companies, and it wasn't stable, and my mom was just like, nose to the grindstone. She was a computer programmer, she was raising two kids, she had left my dad when I was one. But the emotional landscape of my world was really anemic. The divorce that my parents went through had a really un-talked-about emotional effect on my mom and my sister, who grew up hating me, and sort of blaming me for everything. And I, of course, worshipped her until I wised up and was like, wait a second, you can't fucking stand me.

But the running theme, and also the thing that really started to occur to me when I got into my late 20s and 30s, and was like, hang on, who the fuck am I, and why did I choose this and not this? was I was always told I was an attention getter. I was made to feel like any performance that I wanted to give was kind of evil. And there was kind of a creepy undercurrent of competition. My sister, with my mom, as a female, and there was also a bizarre paradox, because it was also like, well, Amanda can play piano! And I'm so proud of you! And you're such a little genius! And Amanda's a musical genius, she can play Beethoven, she can do this, she can do that. And the very thing that I wanted to be celebrated for, and loved for, like, look at me! I did this, I'm in a play! I wrote a song! Was the same thing that I felt I was being punished for. Amanda's just trying to get attention. And this wasn't just my parents, this is the teachers, this was everybody.

Storm 21:28

Oh yeah. I was in New England too.

Amanda 21:30

And I was loud! I was loud as fuck!

Storm 21:36

Cos we wanted love. We're good at this thing. Love us. Don't love us more than anyone else, but don't shun us because we're good at this thing that you're not good at.

A great story along those lines, when I came home, and I was exhausted, I'd been on tour forever. And my dad wanted to go to pick up some groceries or whatever. And so I was with him, and I was in the car, and I was so fucking tired. We're grocery shopping, and we get in line at where they're bagging the groceries, and this kid is wearing a t-shirt that has two pink flamingos on it. It says, I can't remember the call letters, but when I was really little, I used to hitchhike, or walk as far as I could to get to Framingham State College, and there was a punk rock radio station there. And when I was like 12 or 13, I was walking there to DJ and play Black Flag songs, and Dead Kennedys, and take calls, and I hung out with these college kids. And I stole, because I was a little shit, stole two lawn ornaments of two pink flamingos, and brought them to the station, and they became the mascots, Chuck and Fifi. Chuck and Fifi were the

mascots of this station, and these people really liked me, it was when I started to get into more punk rock, because it was more of an accepting place.

So we're in line at the grocery, in Framingham, and I see the guy wearing the Chuck and Fifi shirt. And I was like, hey, man, no way! And I told him the story!

Amanda 23:09

I stole those flamingos!

Storm 23:10

I was like, I did that thing! I used to actually, when I was little, I used to go and DJ over at that station, when I was really little, over at Framingham state. And my dad goes, yeah, you also delivered pizza there. And I go, you're right, Dad. I'm also nobody. Pardon me.

But, in that same trip to the grocery store, when I was so exhausted, he said, hey, we're going to stop off some place really quickly, and I'm like, okay, whatever, I'm really tired, just throw me into a bed or whatever when we get back to the house. We're still on our way back from the fucking airport. He takes me to his friend's house, who had been watching me on TV, and really wanted to meet me.

Amanda 23:55

He made you do a meet and greet.

Storm 23:57

He brought me to his friend, so they could gawk and take pictures, while I'm literally just barely able to stand. So on the same trip, he was like, don't think so much of yourself, but let me show you off to my friend. It's like, be the thing that I want you to be right now, and I don't care about any of the other shit.

MUSIC BREAK - I'm Having To Do It All By Myself

Amanda 24:23

My teen years, and then college was its own dark story, but it continued I really struggled with wanting to perform. Because I really wanted to do it, but I also couldn't exorcize the, really Amanda? You're gonna walk around going, look at me, look at me, look at me? Because I couldn't fix it. I could not fix it in my own head. And I also started going down very peculiar avenues of crazy in my head, because I would literally be like, walking down the street, and I would just start going into these thought spirals of like, how do I look? Why am I so worried about how I look? Who's even looking at me? And if someone's looking at me, why am I so concerned? Why do I care so much what people think of me, and what I look like? But I would start to cry, and I would be like, now you just are trying to get attention, because you think that if someone looks at you and you're crying, you'll look sad and dramatic. And I would be like, no! It would take nothing, to just spiral me out of control, because I didn't know what was real. I just

didn't know what was real. And I often felt like I was just performing my life, for a hidden fucking camera.

And on a good day, I could enjoy the performance. But I also was like, is this the way people think? Is this the way we are? Is this everybody? And the main theme there is, I just felt lonely. I felt isolated. I felt like everyone else seemed like they were having a good time, and had it figured it out, and were living their lives not as a performance, imagining themselves from the outside. And I could not make peace with myself

Storm 26:16

No, me neither. I would punch myself at night. When I was really little, even before high school, my brain would start going, and it would all be spiraling about I'm a bad person, I'm making my mother sick, you just can't shut up, can you? You just fucking can't be quiet, can you? Because my brain was such that I was a super cut up in school. Not trying to get into trouble or anything, I just would think something was funny, and I would do something like draw dicks on everything. Whatever, stupid little kid stuff. And then I was always getting in trouble for that, but I couldn't fucking help it because I'm like, somebody fucking say something to me, somebody notice me. I'm not pretty, and I'm not smart, and I'm not good at anything, I guess. But I needed something, and it's so scary to be trapped inside the vessel of whatever shaped body you're in, feeling like you are not supposed to be there. You were born in the wrong time. Born in the wrong place. You shouldn't have been born. You're just fucking too much.

Amanda 27:27

Yeah, so we are the same. Because that was my experience, really growing up, and that didn't really start to right itself until I was in my 20s. Getting away from my family was really healthy. Starting my own life was really healthy. Starting to put together a life. Street performing really helped me, especially in the confidence department, because I was like, I can just do this. No boss, no superior, no dealing with the man. I am just gonna go out there and pound the pavement, and make my own money, and set my own agenda. I will literally take on the world. It's like, me and the world. Look at me or don't look at me, but I'm doing this on my terms.

And then also starting a band. The Dresden Dolls was a real salvation for me. Because as a street performer, ironically, I was completely silent, which was also a really good practice for me, stood there silently, trying to emanate love. But I was just waiting for my moment to be a musician, I was writing my songs, I was trying to figure out how you do it. I was like, how do you even do this? I have a demo, I have another demo, where do I take it? Who even cares? How I get a gig? I don't fucking understand this. And then I met Brian, and things happened, at least in rock'n'roll time, from the moment I met Brian, it took three years, and then there we were, playing in front of 500 people.

But what was the most awesome about it, is that my music was so based on the inner dialogue of, this is how crazy I feel, and songs like [Half Jack](#), and [Girl Anachronism](#), which were two mainstays of the early Dresden Dolls live shows, they were literally just about I feel crazy. I feel

split in half, and I don't know what to do about it, except pound on his fucking piano and tell you how crazy it feels in here.

And, it was just so satisfying seeing thousands of people, especially women, mostly women, going yep, yep. No one's ever articulated it quite that way, Amanda. Give me more, cos now I finally don't feel alone. You've articulated something with that song that I just have not been able to articulate. And all of a sudden I was not quite so alone.

MUSIC BREAK - Drowning In The Sound

Storm 30:13

Mine happened way, way later. When I read your book, *The Art of Asking*, I was so happy that I saw when you were talking about imposter syndrome. I was like, Oh my God. It's a fucking thing!

Amanda 30:28

It's a thing.

Storm 30:29

It's a thing, holy shit! Because the voice in your head, so many times, falls on, who do you think you are? Who the fuck you think you are? It took me a lot longer to get to that place of finding my voice. I think it took me far longer. I don't know why, maybe this is the question of courage, I think you're so much braver, because you found your voice. You insisted on using your voice, and finding your voice, and owning it. I doubted every fucking second of being in a band.

I knew I was a good singer. And I knew I could captivate an audience, and tell stories, and that kind of thing. But I wasn't cool. I wasn't skinny. There was no evidence anywhere around, that anyone could actually make a living, or anybody could be in a band and not be signed and famous and on the radio. Oh, you need a hit song. You need to get on the radio. You need to lose 15 pounds. You need to lie about your age. Can you change your name, your name's kind of weird. Can you just put your hands in your pocket, you've got huge man hands. Don't swear so much, you're really pretty, you've got a pretty face, blah blah blah. You could be like Courtney Love but without the heroin. You could be like so and so without this, or more like that.

Amanda 31:48

Just don't be you. Anything but you!

Storm 31:49

Right, anything but you! If you wanna make it in the music business, or anywhere, you've gotta fit these things. And luckily for me, or maybe unluckily, who knows, I'm a shitty liar. And I have no guile. I can't play poker for shit, because I'm so transparent. I'm just really on the sleeve.

Amanda 32:11

I feel the same way

Storm 32:12

And dorky, and if I feel something, I feel the fuck out of it. And I'm just walking around, exclamation points jumping off me at all times. And it could also be where we grew up. It's definitely a patriarchal, I think, phenomenon of woman, be what I want you to be, at all times, and don't don't think for yourself

Amanda 32:31

Being a loud, flamboyant woman in New England is a no-no. It's a no-no.

Storm 32:38

Yeah, exactly. It was funny.

Amanda 32:42

You could be classy.

Storm 32:46

But you didn't get attention because you're cute, you look like an actress.

Amanda 32:50

Or you're intellectually powerful. But, being loud and rambunctious, as a woman, especially in that part of the world, it's not even... It's just in poor taste, Amanda. It's just in a poor taste. My mother used to say, stay clasé.

Storm 33:05

Oh, wow. Yeah, no one bothered to say that to me, they just told me to shut up, I was a weirdo.

Amanda 33:11

They told me that too.

Storm 33:12

Yeah, whatever. If I was singing along to something, I would harmonize with it, even if there wasn't a harmony. And the looks I would get.

Amanda 33:21

Must you?

Storm 33:22

Oh, and it was so, so weird. What's the story I was gonna tell you about? No, we were just recently talking about New England, and how shocking it was for me to realize it's a democratic state? I was like, you are kidding me!

Amanda 33:41

It's politically liberal. Socially...

Storm 33:45

Intellectual, booky liberal.

Amanda 33:46

It's emotionally conservative.

Storm 33:49

Oh my god. It's emotionally Great Britain. It's so buttoned up, and so don't feel, so Yankee. Don't feel. Don't feel, don't emote. Nothing's wrong. And that was the other thing. There'd be blood all over the bathroom, and pill vomit, and you knew that mom got hauled away, but where's mom? She's resting. Oh, that was code. She's resting at the hospital. Fucking strapped to a bed being fed through a tube.

Amanda 34:21

Well I say this in the show, my milieu, New England, that way of being, and that area of the world, that culture didn't believe in therapy. My whole sort of scene of people, there weren't therapists. And people believed in suffering.

Storm 34:45

It's the Puritans, man, we landed there, and like... Builds character! You do it frontways for a baby, and then you don't enjoy it, you just kind of fucking move along.

Amanda 34:56

So what happened... I mean, you say later, what happened to change that for you?

Storm 35:03

It's so strange. Because of me associating being a woman with being weak, because the only woman in my experience was my mom, and I thought she was fucking weak. My dad's family weren't like, masculine, but they valued hard work, and not a lot of histrionic, not a lot of attention. My grandmother, if she saw someone on TV, my grandmother kind of hated women. And she would just be like, oh, no, God, your hair's too long and she's too skinny! She would imitate their voice.

Amanda 35:43

Judgy.

Storm 35:44

She just would talk shit about any girl she saw on television. And so the message was very clear. Don't make a big deal about yourself, whatever. So when I started playing in bands, I

went after it like it was a fight, and I'd get on stage, and I'd be joyful and exuberant, whatever, but I would be fucking...

Amanda 36:05

You just try to shut me up.

Storm 36:07

Yeah, you can't touch me. I am absolutely the loudest and the strongest. I'll get down there. If there's a fight, and I have to break up a fight, I'll do that, I don't want violence. But my biggest fear for the longest time was ever being seen crying on stage. Never, ever, ever let anyone see you fucking cry, ever.

And that changed, oddly, when I was on television. And of all fucking people, it was Dave Navarro. We had been on the show for a while, and I was sleep deprived, it was a really insane time. Dave Navarro pulled me into his dressing room, right after we had done a taping, and he's like, I love you. And I was like, I love you too. And he's like, you're really smart. And I was like, thanks? And he's like, I know you could kick my ass. Everybody who sees you, knows that you could kick everybody's ass, and you can probably out-sing most people around, you're a badass, we get it. I want to see you be vulnerable. And I was like, why? What's that about? It's not rock and roll at all. And he goes, if you're vulnerable, and you sing something... I know you're feeling it, but just to be up there, just a big fucking veiny cock-like person. When I'm super muscley and skinny...

Amanda 37:37

Just like a penis.

Storm 37:38

I'm like veiny and shit, I look like a dick, right? Like a dick with boobs. Which is really weird, I'm sure, for most men to visualize, sorry, I'll let you go back to the spank tank pictures of me.

But he's like, it's so much more powerful or whatever to be soft. I was like, you're just saying that because whatever, you're just a guy, whatever. But at the end of the show, I didn't do this consciously at all, I didn't do it consciously, but I knew it was the last time I was going to sing on that stage. Yeah. And the thing was, if you got in the bottom three, you had to sing one of your songs that you had previously selected and practiced with the band. And it was originally supposed to be Bohemian Rhapsody, where I was just gonna sing my fucking dick straight off, and just hit the wall with people's eyeballs, and just blood spatter and, arterial spray, and fuck you. I'm going out guns blazing!

Amanda 38:33

Money shot.

Storm 38:35

Right? And at the last minute, I told them to change it. And I said, I want to do Wish You Were Here. And it was for no other reason, in my head at the time, was that everybody's gonna do a big barn-burner. I've done tons of barn-burners on this show. I want to do something. I love Pink Floyd, I wore out those records for years.

[So I did it.](#) And all of a sudden, my mom was all over me in that moment. And I felt myself...

Amanda 39:15

Was she gone at that point?

Storm 39:15

She was gone, she had died the year before. And I was singing it, and all of a sudden I felt my throat start to close up. And I was like, oh my god. And just sang it, and tried so hard to ground myself, and I knew I was done. I knew they were gonna kick me off. I wasn't, you know, whatever. And it was fine. I wasn't like oh, I'm not gonna win, whatever. I thought it was a really great run. Three months on TV was fun. But I managed to get through it without totally cracking my voice, and then at the very last minute, I was just like, that's for you, mom. And tears were coming down my face, and Jason Newstead was crying. And I think Dave just had his glasses on really tight, but he was just like, that's what I'm fucking talking about.

And what happened though, was palpable, what I felt. Nobody came in to kick me. No one came in to humiliate my weakness, or take advantage of it. I felt people crack open, and I cracked open, and all the light came out. And later on, with the tabloids and stuff, cos the TV show was kind of popular, and there was People Magazine, and In Touch magazine, there was some snarky, who had the best tears on television, because they make fun of emotional breakdowns and stuff, and I was nominated for Best Cry or whatever the fuck. Rude. But it stuck with me that I was like okay, so I look like Military Barbie. Big, strong, kind of sexual looking, female. Formidable, physically formidable.

Amanda 41:21

Did you just say kind of sexual looking female? What the fuck does that even mean?

Storm 41:22

Inside myself, you probably do the same thing. I know how people describe me, to me. And I look in the mirror nowadays, even though I'm old as fuck, I'm looking in the mirror, I'm like, ah, if I squint, I probably look alright right now, you know, I'm tired but... I don't see myself the way people see me. They're just like, oh my God, you're so hot, and like, right on, thanks. I feel like a dude! I still feel like a dude inside.

Amanda 41:52

I am a dude.

Storm 41:52

Yeah, dude. Right? Look at my giant hands! I mean, I know I'm a woman, but I feel like a... And I'm not even speaking in terms of gender. I'm speaking more of identity.

Amanda 42:05

No no no no no, I know you're not, and of course I'm not either, but I have always felt like I am perceived basically as a man.

Storm 42:14

Yeah.

Amanda 42:15

It's fine.

Storm 42:15

And it is fine. I get treated, because people are like, what kind of sexism do you encounter, in the music business? I'm like, what kind of sexism do you encounter in the newspaper business? What kind of sexism at the bank? It's all the same.

Amanda 42:30

It is all the same.

Storm 42:31

It's all the same. But when I did get psychoanalyzed, the punchline to the beginning of the show, when I was psycho-analyzed before being on reality TV, the result was hilarious, because I was sure they were going to disqualify me because of my mother's mental illness. But the doctor pulled me into the office after the results were done, of this psycho-analysis. And he said, okay, so some interesting stuff came up. And I go, oh... like what? I can't imagine! He goes, well, no, okay, so you're a typical kind of artist, you're very sexual, you're a little self-centered, and you're you're very emotional, and highly sexual, blah, blah, blah. But the interesting thing that came up is... No other way to say it, but you're a man. And I said, I'm a man? And I was like, well sexually I like both male and female, does that mean I'm does that mean I'm like a lesbian, and I'm just kind of wasting my time with all this dong? And, because I like the dong! Don't get me wrong, I love it!

And he goes, no, it has nothing to do with your gender, your sexual preferences or whatever. It's how you move through the world. It's how you problem solve. It's how you act throughout your life. It leans way more on the spectrum of a man.

Amanda 44:0

Well, does he mean cultural spectrum? What the fuck test was that?

Storm 44:02

Behavioral. It was several personality tests, including the...

Amanda 44:11

[Myer-Briggs?](#)

Storm 44:12

Myer-Briggs, all these different things, and it was mostly to ascertain if you were under too much stress, would you hurt yourself, or someone else? Really, that's what it was all about. So when he told me, he's like, you are a man, he's like, the way you problem solve, he's like, there are cultural norms of masculine and feminine. I mean, maybe it is really colored by the patriarchy, but there's just sort of...

Amanda 44:36

Sure. Do you have a problem asking for driving directions, is the question.

Storm 44:39

No, but you want my fucking button? My quickest button to make me tell someone, look motherfucker, you dial nine and one, and with whatever, I don't break. You can maybe dial the other one, if you stand here too much longer. And it's when someone fucking tries to tell me how to parallel park. I'm like, bitch, I will dust you off like an old rug in front of your girlfriend. Your girlfriend will be screaming at me to please stop kicking your unconscious body around the street if you don't get away from my car. Because I can parallel park with a goddamn boat being towed,

Amanda 45:20

I can parallel park the shit out of things, and I am so proud of it!

Storm 45:25

It's awesome!

Amanda 45:25

And I also love nothing more than kicking a man out of the driver's seat, like, listen, I got this.

Storm 45:29

I got you, I got this.

Amanda 45:32

You know, enough with your seven point turns.

Storm 45:33

Yeah, man. Let me clamp-splain something to you, bro.

Amanda 45:38

I'm happy we also have that in common.

Storm 45:39

Yeah, clamp-splaining.

MUSIC BREAK - Drowning In The Sound

Amanda 45:48

So to take it back to the question, when the things changed for you, you talked about that story, and crying, and feeling the light. What changed?

Storm 45:58

The reward that I was accustomed to, being a big performing person, finding my voice and finding my legs on stage, using my body and using my voice, and learning how to engage an audience, I learned that there was this whole other set of tools that I had that I never ever used because I thought it was gonna make me look weak. And I thought people were gonna be like, oh god, boring! Another fucking woman singing about her fucking period or whatever. It really made me feel more powerful.

Amanda 46:39

Well, cos it is.

Storm 46:40

It is more powerful! And watching you do your abortion stories, and being so vulnerable, and being so transparent... As live performers, the people in the dark who are... I used to think they're hanging their fantasies on you, they want to be you, they want to fuck you, there still is that. But they were like, tell me, what is it in me? Tell me what's in me. And they recognize it in us, and other performers, and artists, and even paintings, poetry, just on the written page, they're like, I feel that, and that means I'm not fucking nuts. I'm not alone. I am not alone. We're all in the dark. It was so funny, I was sitting with Fiona, your friend, and she and I were both crying at the same moment. And that's when you had the good thought to thank me for everything, and she was crying so hard that I got up and I took off my shirt and gave it to her. And then you of course introduced me with my shirt off, but that's okay. I'm used to that. But that shared...

Amanda 47:57

What moment was that? Do you remember?

Storm 47:58

For me it was when you said there was a girl, maybe 14, in line at the abortion clinic. And I thought, did somebody not untie her? And I fucking... the floor dropped out. And I think for Fiona too, and she was already just in that place, and so part of me felt better that I could be a stronger support for her, but it's so powerful, and people can really abuse it, in a way, by making it overly maudlin, but you stated everything so plainly, from your experience, from your personal

experience, that it left so much room for everyone else to fill in the blanks of their experience. And we all mourned together, and we all celebrated together, and we all laughed together, we've all been that silly, or that lost, or that broken, or that fucking badass.

Amanda 49:07

Yeah, it's this thing where... There's such a paradox about getting older as a performer, songwriter, whatever you call this job thing that we're doing, because the industry and culture wants us to believe that we sort of time out, and our heyday is gonna be when we're young and sexy and in our 20s. And then like, oh my god, like check it out, she's 50 and she's still rocking it! Look at these amazing miracle female singer-songwriters, still going strong at 50! And I'm like, this is just at the point, I'm in my mid 40s now, and I think I'm starting to figure this out.

Storm 48:56

Yeah, starting to get there.

Amanda 49:58

And I also think I have enough time and distance, but also those experiences are far enough behind me, and de-charged enough, through the water going over the stone a million times, and I understand so much more about life now, that I can tell you the story of me at 14, and me at 17, in a way I was not able to. I either wasn't able, or I just didn't feel authenticated enough, to tell you when I was 25, or 35. But now I can. I can take that, and do this, like, watch me!

And there is this bizarre paradox that I don't understand, where every other artist, artists craftsperson who makes a thing, just just collects more and more respect as they advance in their particular lane. And when it comes to female stage performers, it's like, we're lucky if we can get a gig past 50, because who wants to see that? Who wants to watch that?

Storm 51:12

They do it with men too. I've heard people talk so much shit about the Rolling Stones, oh my god, are they touring again? I'm like, fuck you, Mick Jagger just had his heart, like, operated on, and then he's working out and stuff.

Amanda 51:24

And the question is, why not?

Storm 51:27

Yeah, why not?

Amanda 51:29

And the question, too, is like, why do we not say that about architects? Like, wait, he's 70, and he's still designing a building? Who's gonna get in that building? But it's not, it's the opposite, it's like, woah, step aside, the expert is here! This one, he's got 50 years of experience.

But also, the Rolling Stones, and rock and roll, fucking live fast, sex, drugs, die young, fuck everybody old!

Storm 51:58

Die at 27! Right, exactly.

Amanda 52:02

But we did that! I blame rock and roll!

Storm 52:05

It's true, because the patina of rock and roll, even if we get classified as cabaret performers, because we're storytellers, we're raconteurs. You know, I do a rock and roll show, but I also do [standards with Michael Feinstein](#) and stuff like that. Being on stage, there's an expectation of sexuality, of fantasy, of...

Amanda 52:29

Youth.

Storm 52:30

Youth! And our screaming out into the darkness is our youth raging against, why is it this way? And now, we are at a place where we kind of know why it's been that way, and where we were, where we can re-examine ourselves back when we were raging and freaking out. And we're so fucking fortunate to be in this position, I consider myself very fortunate to be my age and still be in demand. But it's the thing that people... you could just blame it across the board on patriarchy, whatever, but it is the youth, even if you're performing jazz, even if you're performing Brecht, there is something about youth, and that energy to galvanize everyone. I think I'm so much of a better fucking performer and writer and person now, and I think everybody kind of gets to that place, but there's still that judgment amongst, not our fans, but amongst...

Amanda 53:36

I'm so happy and excited about the idea that I am currently erasing that. At least that expectation for myself. And a lot of it has to do with the way we gather an audience. Back in the mid 80s, it was you, and the machine, and the audience, and between you and the audience always stood the machine. The labels, and then the promoters, and the promo, and there was only one avenue to the people, and you kind of had to go through the system. Unless you were scalable as a folk singer, and were just gonna go around and do the folk shows in that scene.

Storm 54:23

Can you yodel? Can you yodel like Jewel, or shoegaze, or blah blah blah.

Amanda 54:28

But I've bypassed that, and I'm like, well, it doesn't really matter what the system prescribes, or thinks, or what Rolling Stone does or doesn't put on a list. I'm never gonna be in Rolling Stone,

ever. I'm just not even going to be part of that world. And, if fucking 2000 people in Portland, Oregon want to hear what I have to say, that's it! That's it. That's all it's about. And hopefully, this generation of performers who can more directly offer their wares, and their stories, and their businesses, to whatever audience is going to fucking show up, is going to, if not break the mold, at least create an off grid potential.

Storm 55:17

Well, it's already happening. And like, when you and I were young and starting out, we had no empirical evidence of proof of concept, of somebody who wasn't beautiful and sort of normal, and fit this pop profile with this kind of music, and this kind of appearance, and this kind of appeal. There was no reason for us to believe that we could do absolutely anything, but we did anyway, because we're like, well, fuck, it's either that or OD, right? And so I guess I'll just do this until I OD, or something. And so, that's why we're still carving. And we're on the path that was carved before us by Patti Smith, and by other artists who dare to continue to be in public or whatever. But people are still gonna say, so and so, age 56

Amanda 56:12

Still rocking it! Amazing, looking great at 56!

Storm 56:13

Look at her, look at her, oh, let's look at the bikinis, who's got cellulite, blah, blah blah, that's just society.

Amanda 56:17

I may get in trouble for bringing this up. Here we go!

Storm 56:22

Uh-oh. Do it. Bring the pain!

Amanda 56:24

Bring the trouble bomb. But I also say it with all the compassion in the world. And she was my idol growing up, especially when I was young, the way Madonna has handled moving into... she's 60 now, moving into her older age, I'm just mad at her. I love her. But I'm mad. Because I feel like she sets a certain tone, in the 'what would Madonna do?' department for a lot of younger women. And I'm like, I don't want you to look 25. I don't want you to. I want you to go like, I'm the fucking queen, I get to set the rules. I get to do anything I want. I am going to brazenly not Photoshop. I'm going to brazenly step into this power of non-youth.

Because once a woman is in her 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s, she's just not 25. She's not gonna look 25 she's gonna look hopefully 60, 70. But there is also, the danger in this is that I'm shaming her for making the choices that she's making aesthetically about her appearance. And she's amazing. She's working so hard, and she's just entertainment's hardest working fucking, she's just like, she's just at it, and at it, and at it, and working, and like discipline, and art, and she just

doesn't stop. But I also just want to give her a hug, and be like, stop being so perfect. You've earned it. I don't know. And yet, it's so hard, because I don't want to see anyone giving Madonna shit, I don't want to see me giving Madonna shit!

Storm 58:28

But I don't feel like you're giving her shit, I feel like you're just like, I fucking love you so much. You don't have to...

Amanda 58:36

You don't have to do that for me. Or anyone!

Storm 58:38

You've done it.

MUSIC BREAK - I'm Having To Do It All By Myself

Storm 58:47

I got hot really late in life, like in my 30s. I was always fat and titless and angry and bad hair, but I was just like, grungy and whatever, and that was my aesthetic.

Amanda 58:59

Are you saying titless is bad?

Storm 59:01

No, but I was...

Amanda 59:04

Thank you tits.

Storm 59:05

No, I'm built so broad-shouldered and muscular, and I just I always kind of described myself as a meat triangle, cos I was just really strong and big, and I obviously have a very skewed view of myself. So the attractive thing became apparent really, really, really late. So it was almost like, oh my god, wow, I better fucking enjoy this, because as soon as I noticed it, I was like, and now I'm decaying. Because I was in my 30s, and my 40s, and there it goes, okay.

Amanda 59:35

What changed? What changed about your body? Or what changed about the way you felt about your body?

Storm 59:42

I lost a bunch of baby fat, I held on to baby fat for a really, really long time. In my family, it's kind of a thing. And then I started to do yoga, and do it a lot, and really loved it, and I found it really

calmed my mind as well. And then I started to notice more people noticing me in a sexual gaze, male and female. And I was like, huh, that's weird. I always wanted to be beautiful, because I thought if I was beautiful, someone would love me. It was like this thing.

Amanda 60:20

I can relate to that.

Storm 60:21

Yeah, I was like, if I were beautiful, someone would love me. Then I started to kind of look like a movie, like 50s, because I had a chubby face and whatever, but I was starting to get attention, like hot people got attention, and I was like, what the fuck? This is cool, but don't get used to it, because it's transient. You're getting it late, you're gonna lose it early, whatever.

But as far as... I get that you're disappointed in Madonna, it's her journey, I can't explain why she would do it. But it is an interesting...

Amanda 60:57

Well, and to be fair, it's my problem. It's not Madonna's, and anytime I want, I can just go to channel Patti Smith, and be like, there's that too. There's that too. I mean, Patti Smith is just so...

Storm 61:15

So in her power.

Amanda 61:16

So in her power. So, so fine. Her self.

Storm 61:22

Right. And that's that's the goal really, is to be fine with yourself, because at the end of the day...

Amanda 61:27

In whatever shape.

Storm 61:28

In whatever fucking shape. And we have such a hard criteria we want to meet in terms of being better, doing better, doing more, finding more, working more, going farther. And it's weird, because I'm not a competitive person, unless we're playing Scrabble, then I'm fucking violent. But I've never thought I was so beautiful that I could do X, Y, Z, or such a great singer that I could do this, or be better than, I was never like, I'm never going to be better than anybody else, there's so many, there's always gonna be someone younger, prettier, better, smarter, more hooked up or whatever, that I just want to put my head on the pillow at night and be like, I fucking worked. I worked so hard. And even then I might not leave myself alone. So there's something that keeps her head from hitting the pillow with any peace. And I pray for that. I see

little snippets of videos of her with her kids, and sometimes I'm like, she looks happy. And sometimes I'm like, something's up. And I don't know what. And I don't follow her as closely, but she got the shit kicked out of her coming up. She still killed it, and a lot of people who she encountered along the way, they don't have nice things to say about her. I don't know, I've never met her. But she got the shit kicked out of her, all the time. All the time! And that's gonna fuck you up.

Amanda 62:52

And all pre-internet. I mean, she was also patient zero for let's all pile on this artist.

Storm 63:00

Exactly. And especially as she dared to get older, she might actually be getting all this plastic surgery to be like, fuck you, guess what, I did it again! Because I get to do what I fucking want with my face, and you're going to talk shit about my age, and you're going to show your hand anyway, doesn't fucking matter. You're going to try and catch my thigh with a dimple on it. Fuck you, you won't, because I do so much yoga, and I'm just always gonna be better looking than you or whatever. It might be her little fuck you.

I will probably get, I mean I got boobs installed on my person, and I love them, and they made me feel like I could wear a little dress, and it's just my thing. I got so much shit from my lesbian fan base. Not all of them, but there were some women that just got in my face about my boobs, and they were just like, how could you fucking do that, people look up to you, and why would you do that, fucking make yourself more decorative to the male gaze or whatever? And they were tattooed and pierced within an inch of their lives. And I go, did you scrape out of your mom looking like that fucking tackle box you got going on around your neck, dude? Fuck you! What's this? Just because a guy might look at me and want to fuck me frontways, that doesn't make me part of the problem. It doesn't!

Amanda 64:17

Well, but then the question really comes down to, and this to me is the giant question of all of fucking feminism and humanity... For who?

Storm 64:26

Right, for who?

Amanda 64:27

Do you know for who? For you, for him, for everyone? To be loved? To just feel more beautiful because of today's cultural beauty standard?

Storm 64:38

It was for me. Oh, it was absolutely for me. You know, I had a boyfriend at the time and he was like, it was just in the early stages of YouTube and that kind of thing, and he's like, you know, I googled what they do to you, when you get a boob job. He's like, do you want to see what

they're gonna do to you? I'm like, no! I want to be asleep! And he's like, I just think it's really kind of rough what they do, and I'd be worried that you might lose sensitivity in your nipples, and stuff like that. And I was like, I'm gonna work it all out. But he was... it wasn't for him. He was like, you're hot, I love your body, there's no problem with your body. I'm like, there is no problem. I just want boobs. I've always wanted boobs! And I had a little coin purse boobies, they were really cute, and they were great. But as I've got thinner, as I got older and lost more baby fat, they just got a little less dramatic in clothing, that I wanted to.... I wanted to fill up clothes. It was a thing, it's like a drag thing. It was like, I wanted to have a certain profile. It was for me. And yeah, sure, maybe it was the patriarchy, or heteronormative expectations of sexual appearance that informed that thing that I wanted, but I always wanted it, and I could afford it, and so I did, and I love them, and they're fun, and everyone loves boobs!

Amanda 65:54

You are good at sharing them.

Storm 65:55

You're welcome.

Amanda 65:56

I have gotten to press my face and self against those boobs multiple times in staying at your house.

Storm 66:02

These boobs have done so much comforting.

Amanda 66:04

You're pretty generous with them.

Storm 66:05

Yeah, man. They have comforted generations. And it's just people who are trying to make your choices into what's wrong with the world. Now, if I'm a lawmaker, and I'm like, if your boobs are small, you can't have food stamps. You know what I mean? Like, that's a super over simplification. If I'm working to alienate, and to limit the rights of...

Amanda 66:38

Fully, fully pro choice. Across the board. As long as you're not hurting anybody, do your thing.

Storm 66:46

Do your thing! Don't hurt anybody, and elevate people's voices, and when people are like, what's your advice to young girls, coming up? And I was like, always try to say, everyone's gonna say, just be yourself. But the whole fucking world is going to tell you who you should be, how you could be better. The world will tell you how to be better at something. So the most important thing when you're growing up, is know who you are not. It's easier to find out by

process of elimination, who you are, by knowing who you are not. If something doesn't feel right, and going on further to say, as rough as you have it, and as fucked up as you feel, as crazy as you believe you might be, there is guaranteed somebody in a worse place. Look for those people, and help them. Help people who are in a worse place than you. And that, I think, especially amongst girls, it seems to be getting better in terms of mentorship and women helping each other instead of acting all scarce and competing and whatever, but...

Amanda 67:59

It depends where you go looking. I mean, we've been discussing this for the last couple of days, but there's a bunch of people out there eating their own, right?

Storm 68:11

Oh my god, I know. Yeah, if you're not exactly the shade in the rainbow that it speaks to the entire, at all times, you are like, two clicks away from being a Nazi.

Amanda 68:21

Cancelled.

MUSIC BREAK - Intermission Is Relative

Amanda 68:29

I wanna get back to what you were talking about, when you felt that shift, and you realized you had a bigger toolbox. How did that manifest? What did you notice changing? Like, in your life, in your performances, in your writing? What happened?

Storm 68:50

Well, in life, I had always, if I cried, or was sad, even if I was seriously hurt, or heartbroken, I would always apologize. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm crying, I'll get over it, just don't look at me. Just don't look at me. And I had friendships, close friendships, I had lovers.

Amanda 69:18

Even with them, would you do that?

Storm 69:18

Oh, yeah. I was a strong one. I was the one, I could hold someone's guts. My neighbor got stabbed in front of my place in San Francisco, and I held his guts in, and I talked to him and got the ambulance, and kept my shit together and everyone was like, we're not freaking out, but I'm just like, JJ, I got you, I got you, man, you're gonna be fine, you're gonna be fine. And I was the one that, I take care of you, I'll pay the bill, even if I don't have any money, I'll figure it out. Because growing up, I was like, no one's gonna take care of me. No one's gonna take care of me, I am either gonna die, or I'm going to just have to figure this out.

And so that sort of also informed my attempt to muscle my way through everything, but not in a bully weigh, in a I want to be loved, but I know I probably won't be, so at least I won't get beat up any more. And then making yourself useful, and funny, and gregarious, and good in bed, or whatever. Then maybe you have some use in the community. But don't break down, because if you break down, then they're gonna have to stop to make sure you're okay? Bullshit.

Amanda 70:24

And then you're your mom.

Storm 70:25

Yeah, then I'm my mom. Then I'm someone's sad story over a meal. It's like, oh, no. And so it started really, really, really late. But I was 37 when I was on that TV show, and so into my 40s, that's when I started writing Crazy Enough, they asked me to do a one woman show, and I...

Amanda 70:52

'They' is...

Storm 70:52

Portland Center Stage. They wanted to commission a one woman show, based on, I had played Sally Bowles in Cabaret. And in the rehearsing and all that stuff, we were talking about the scenes and stuff, and I go, oh yeah, it's such a fucking stretch, a drug addled showgirl, how am I ever gonna convince anybody?! And so, talking in the scene work, and stuff kind of came out about my mom, and how things kind of were when I was growing up, and so after the show wrapped, they were like, we really want you to write a show for us, we'll pay you, and I was like, cool, like sex, drugs, rock and roll, super funny, haha, and dirty, and whatever, and I'll make some jokes about dicks. And they were like yeah, maybe a little bit of that, but uh, how about we talk about your mom? And I'm like, nobody wants to hear about that! That's a sad story. That's, not rock and roll, that's not cool. And they really kept pushing and pushing and pushing. And my partner James Beaton, who you met today, finally he knew exactly how to get me to do it, because he thought it was a great idea. And I said, Yeah, I'm not gonna do it, dude. And he goes, you know, I understand if you're scared. Right, exactly! It's like, I get it if you're scared, I'm like, scared of what? And he's like, dude, it's it's sensitive material. I get it. I mean, I wouldn't want to do it, who would want to do it? That's so sensitive, and I get it if you're too scared to do that. I know.

And I was like, fuck you, I'm not chicken! And like, literally the next day, I'm like, I'll fucking do it! And so it was such a revelation, because I'm sitting there going, this is so sad, nobody wants to see me being sad, that's boring, and that's awful, oh, no! But oh my god it, just blasted open further, and further, and further, the nakeder, and nakeder, and nakeder I got, and I was always an oversharer anyway in life, I talk very graphically about sex on stage and don't give a shit, I wasn't...

Amanda 72:53

But you hadn't been vulnerable.

Storm 72:54

No, I hadn't. Cos being that graphic, and that bold, and honest, was defensive. It was like, people were like, how the, why the, woah, that's... okay, you just pulled that out of my head, I would never say that out loud.

Amanda 73:10

But it can be defensive, and it can disarm others.

Storm 73:16

Yes, exactly.

Amanda 73:16

It's like an offensive defensive move.

Storm 73:18

Yeah. Like, you're never gonna find any dirt on me, because it's all over my fucking face, and dribbling out my mouth. Hi, wanna make out?

Amanda 73:25

That's so funny, I have a thing that I used to say about why I've never had bad stalkers. It's like, because no one wants to rifle through my trash, or my dirty underwear drawer, because I've already waved it in your face and let you smell it. There's just no mystique. Just not attractive, to be a stalker with no mystique.

Storm 73:50

Yeah, they want you to be inaccessible. They're attracted to you if they can't figure you out or whatever. But that's also assuming, I understand because I have had a couple of weird stalkers, but that was when I was on television. Because I was just basically tits and ass and rock and roll, long hair, and the big tough girl, but still very sexualized, and so I had stalkers from the TV show, and that was a little scary.

Amanda 74:17

I am sorry about that. I've had some weird things happen, but I've never had to deal with a legit stalker situation.

Storm 74:22

It was actually, I got a letter, mailed to my house, apparently if you own a house it's so easy to find out where you live. So anyway, I started getting these letters from somebody, basically saying his fantasy, he didn't say this is my fantasy, he said, I had a dream about a beautiful woman who could sing, and then I turn on the TV, and there she was in real life. And the letters started to get advanced, more and more, he sent me a little present. And then he said, I know

God is so good, that if anything ever happened to you, that he would take me at the same time, and so instantly you're like, talking about mortality!

So when I was like, in between tours, I'd come home, and have creepy mail, like, fuck! And then I'd go, oh, man, and so I went to the precinct for my neighborhood, and I talked to the captain there, it was a sergeant or whatever, and she was like this big old girl and, and she goes, okay, well, because he would sign it and give his address and everything, and so she's like, okay, let's run his name, see if we got something. And so she comes back in, and she goes, okay, good news, bad news. And I was like, okay... And she goes, alright, so he does have a record. But it is not violent. He doesn't have, as far as we can tell, he doesn't have a weapon, and never has had a weapons charge. But he does have a record, and he's in a very non security sort of assisted living facility. So he can just come and go as he pleases. Good news, he's about 64 years old right now, and he's probably around 120 pounds soaking wet. So if he showed up on your porch, you could kick the shit out of him, I'm pretty sure. And I was like, well okay, cool. That's awesome, thanks!

But they put a thing on my address, so if I ever called, anyone ever called 911 from that address, every possible available cop would show up.

Amanda 76:22

Damn. What a terrible feeling, though, to just even have to go through that.

Storm 76:23

Yeah. It's upsetting. But people have had it worse.

MUSIC BREAK - Feeding The Dark

Amanda 76:39

You really think I'm braver than you?

Storm 76:40

Yeah.

Amanda 76:41

I don't.

Storm 76:41

I do. I do. Maybe, I think you're braver with your ideas. I am so self conscious about writing. I know I can pretty much sing anything.

Amanda 76:55

Dude, I just read most of your book. You're a really good writer.

Storm 76:59

Thank you. But I'm like...

Amanda 77:01

You're still in imposter-writer-land.

Storm 77:03

Yeah, I won the Oregon Book Award for creative nonfiction that year. [Cheryl Strayed had released *Wild* that year](#), so Cheryl Strayed was gonna sweep everything. And I love Cheryl, and I got nominated with Cheryl for creative nonfiction. And I was like, well, Cheryl's gonna win that, and we were doing some work in the studio that day, of the awards. And James was like, well, what are you gonna wear? Don't you gotta go? And I'm like, no, I'm not gonna go, I'm not an author, they don't want to see my stinky ass there. He's like, you got nominated for a real fucking book award, you should go. And I was like, no one wants to see me there, man. And he goes, you should go and congratulate your peers. And I was like, you son of a bitch. Cos he's always so fucking right.

So I went, and I was late. And I was supposed to sit with my friend down, like, really close to the front. So I was that guy, like, oh, excuse me, excuse me, excuse me, whatever. And the way they announced the winners, they would read a passage, to announce the winner for Best Creative Nonfiction.

Amanda 78:13

Before announcing the name.

Storm 78:14

Before saying the name.

Amanda 78:15

Oh, Jesus.

Storm 78:15

And so, they started, they say, nominated for creative nonfiction, blah, blah, blah, Storm Large, Cheryl Strayed, and everyone's clapping and clapping. And so she started to read. And I'm with my friend Larry Colton, who is an amazing author, and he was the one that kind of fucking forced me, and tricked me to write the book. And Larry's just looking at me. Just staring at me. I'm sitting next to him, I'm like, what are you looking at? And they start reading it. And all the blood drained.

And I just, I looked at Larry and I said, fuck you. And he said, fuck you. And I go, fuck you. And he's like, fuck you, get up there! And I was like, oh my god! And I was sobbing, I was shaking, I don't even, there's a picture of me somewhere where I'm literally just holding this piece of paper and going.... like at the podium, like, what am I... And I said something like I am a tourist here. I

can't thank you enough. I came here just to congratulate the other writers, and get a drink, and I'm sorry, I have literally no idea what to say, but thank you, and there were definitely people who were golf clapping in the back, there like... they did not like me, they did not like that I was there. Cheryl was amazing, and she was just like, you did it, I loved your story, you're so great! And she's so yummy, and so loving, and I was just, I couldn't fucking believe it, but I'm still, in terms of songwriting too, I'm terrified. I thought, if it's not amazing immediately, no.

MUSIC BREAK - Drowning In The Sound

Amanda 80:08

So, something that's changed since I started my Patreon, and I think it's also like, a side effect of just having put out a lot of work, but I'm not afraid to put out un-amazing work any more.

Storm 80:27

I am absolutely terrified.

Amanda 80:28

Like, the perfectionist in me has been schooled. And I'm like, you just stay in the closet.

Storm 80:35

How did you get there? How did you get there?

Amanda 80:38

My fans. I don't think I did it. I think they did it. Which is also why, when I hear people talking about their communities, and their patrons, with fear, like, well, no, but then they'll be unhappy, or they'll leave, or they'll judge me. I'm like, there is a group of people out there who actually love you. Those other people that you're thinking about might be real, but fuck them! They're not your people, they're not your tribe. And it doesn't matter if your tribe is small. If they're gonna support you, and go with you, then it doesn't matter if you write a song that's shitty, and then a song that's funny, and then a song that's sentimental and vulnerable, and then a song that's fucking Bowie and rock and roll, like, you're a fucking artist! Just have fun! Just do what you want!

Storm 80:35

This is why you're braver, right? This is why I see you as more courageous. Because I have thrown myself on the slings and arrows of criticism, you know, all the time, we all do, by daring to be public, daring to even show up and do anything in public. So we're already sort of asking people to hold our hearts, and hold our souls, and we will give you the best we fucking can, possibly. But I still absolutely have that unworthiness, and what am I even thinking?

Amanda 82:14

So I think I have had to walk through the gauntlet of so much criticism, for so many years. I mean, from the day the first Dresden Dolls, not even record, but review, and being in the Boston

music scene, and people have just always criticized, and had shitty things to say about me, my songs, my voice, my body, my life, my everything. It hasn't mattered. And I think for a long time, I was like, oh no, but one day, I'm going to make a song so good, and a record so beautiful, that they're gonna get it. They're gonna love it, and they're gonna finally write, like, holy shit, Amanda Palmer can really write a good song.

And then one day, I was like, wait... That may never happen. But these people, they're already telling me, we love what you say, and how you have to say it. And I'm like, yeah, when is Rolling Stone gonna understand? And then finally, one day, I was like, oh. It will just never... It took me 20 fucking years. And then I was like, right! Even if they do wander over one day with their wand of authentication and hand me an award, I didn't need it. Because I fucking bypassed that, and went to the people who I was trying, in my imagination, to reach anyway. It's almost like it's like the poison of being raised in a Blockbuster era of the 80s is like, Rolling Stone and MTV will authenticate me with their magic wand, and then the people, the audience who read Rolling Stone, and watch MTV, will know I'm real.

Storm 84:11

Yeah, but I'm almost the opposite. I was like, no one's ever gonna fucking write about me. No one's ever gonna pay any attention to me, but these people are like, I fucking love you! And I was getting laid, and getting drinks, and food, and I had a place to stay, and I was like, what, this is amazing!

Amanda 84:26

Occasionally paid!

Storm 84:27

Yeah. And when you start getting paid, you're like, no way! But I never assumed that anyone would ever write about me. I wanted press, but...

Amanda 84:35

But what about your relationship with that audience?

Storm 84:38

For me, I think the fear isn't the audience. The audience will fucking... We would experiment with music and stuff, and just fuck around in front of a live audience and jam and stuff, in San Francisco especially, we would do jams, and we would collaborate with other hip hop artists and jazz artists, and just make shit up. Make shit up, we didn't give a shit. And sometimes it would fall apart, and we didn't care, because the audience was totally with us. They had us, and they loved us, and that was it.

The problem for me, is me. My head. I'm like, I'll never be good enough to be like, I did want - Hold on. I did. I love the face you're making, I wish we had a camera.

Amanda 85:17

What's it look like?

Storm 85:18

You're like, like you eat a persimmon, but you still want to kiss. But no, but I was like, for my Carnegie Hall debut, I was gonna sing Kurt Weill, Seven Deadly Sins with the Oregon Symphony. I was going to do it in Seattle, and Oregon, and then Carnegie. A command performance for the Oregon Symphony, and they asked if I would be the soloist and I was like, fuck yeah I'll be the soloist, I'll sing whatever!

And then a couple months before the show, the Oregon Symphony said we don't have the budget to bring everybody to Carnegie. So we're going to do Seattle, and Portland. And we're not going to do Carnegie. I'm sorry. And I was like, well, and I remember so well, I was like, well, you know, it makes sense, I mean, who am I? I'm not gonna fucking sing in Carnegie Hall. I wasn't really thinking...

Amanda 86:14

Carnegie Hall is your Rolling Stone. It means something.

Storm 86:16

Right, well, it means something, I think, to every artist. So it's like, there was a lot of venues that I would never go to, I'm like, I'm not going until I can play there. And Carnegie was one of those places. And so I was like, oh, I guess I'm not going to Carnegie, but well, who the fuck am I anyway, whatever, I'm just a shithead.

And then, the day after Oregon canceled the Carnegie trip, Carnegie fucking Hall called me, and said we are really disappointed that Oregon won't be coming for the festival. And I said, well, thank you for that, yeah, I'm disappointed too. And they said, we were hoping, actually, that you might consider singing with another orchestra, and still coming to Carnegie anyway.

Well, yeah, and I'm driving, and I was like, hold on, I'm gonna pull over. And I pulled over, and I said, so wait a minute... Explain this to me. And he said, we were excited about Oregon because they're a great orchestra, but we were really excited to have you. And so I know it's a weird question, but could you consider possibly performing with one of the orchestras that's already going to be there anyway?

Amanda 87:33

I'll think about it.

Storm 87:33

And I said, alright, if I start to really swear a lot, in the next couple seconds, will I lose the gig? And he laughed, and he said, no, and I go, fuck yeah, I'll sing with whoever the fuck you got! I'll fucking walk there, I'm starting walking there now, are you fucking kidding me?! I'm like, shit!

[And so I ended up performing with the Detroit Symphony.](#) And I got off the phone with him, and I was about to get back on the road.

Aanda 88:03

How old were you when this happened?

Storm 88:04

This was like six years ago? And I was gonna start driving again, and I was like, wait. And I pulled down the visor, and I picked up the mirror, and I looked at myself. And I said, Storm. You did this. You did this. Feel fucking good, dude, you worked hard. And you did this. You got this. No one gave this to you. You fucking earned this. So I gave myself that. I was like, okay. All right.

MUSIC BREAK - Look At All The Women In The Street

Storm 88:50

But in terms of writing, the book was amazing, and it was a horrible experience writing it. Being a performer and then trying to write a book is like making a dog be a cat.

Amanda 89:02

Oh, I hated writing my book. It was so lonely! So lonely! And no one claps! Even when the book comes out!

Storm 89:11

No, and you don't get laid because you're so drunk, you just fall in a bed, drinking, drinking, drinking. And sending emails at four in the morning to my editor going like, so, is it normal for me to think that like, my book is gonna be so bad that there are gonna be like, torches and shit coming for me, because I'm so stupid? Anyway, good night, I'm drunk.

Amanda 89:29

Writing a book is hard and boring, I don't really want to do it again and I think I might be about to be doing it again, and I'm just like, why am I doing that? I had friends. I told at least half a dozen friends when I was in the middle of the editing, I was just like, no matter what I say, don't let me do this again. I'm so unhappy right now. And I'm so not doing what I want to do with my life. So I know the book's gonna come out, and people are gonna think it's great, but don't let me do this again. I fucking hate this.

Storm 90:00

It's terrible, but you know what, there's a story. I mean, we could do podcasts all goddamn day, and blogs and things, and you are super vociferous, on stage and off, and super communicative, and there's all kinds of books already being written in your head, moment by moment. There's a lot of stories that... there is something about the focus of telling one story.

Amanda 90:22

Yeah, totally. Whether on stage or in a book.

Storm 90:23

We are some tangential motherfuckers, we can go in all directions.

Amanda 90:26

Oh god, every time I went in to edit my book, I made it 50 pages longer. And another thing! And you know that reminds me of? There was this time! And there's this! And it connects!

Storm 90:37

It's like a Hydra. The trouble with Tribbles.

Amanda 90:39

I would go in to try and shorten my book, and it would magically come out like, 10,000 words longer every time, and it was it was a fucking hellhole.

Storm 90:47

But yeah, we'll probably end up writing another.

Amanda 90:49

Are you gonna write another book?

Storm 90:51

Yeah, I'm gonna write another book. I didn't want to either, but...

Amanda 90:53

What's the next book?

Storm 90:54

Well, it's kind of what we're talking about. I think. I mean, I have it in my head, of an idea. Basically I'm gonna call it Tales From A Broad, trademarked already. Tales From A Broad, about what it's actually like to be, cos I'm not famous in the Madonna sense, we're not like, Bruce Springsteen famous. We're not like legendary status famous, famous. We have our levels of fame here and there and in certain markets, but we are the empirical evidence, proof of concept, hard work, talent, grit, courage, vulnerability, whatever, that you can have a life as a creative. You can find your living, in not being fake, or not having to pretend to be something that you're not. You can authentically find your voice.

And it's taken me a really long time. I remember, St. Mark's is where I grew up, St. Mark's school in Southborough, Massachusetts. I hated going there. Oh my god, I was just like, oh, I grew up there, so it was my playground, and my backyard, and I I'd only known this place.

Amanda 91:58

And this is where your dad taught?

Storm 91:59

Where my dad taught and coached. And when I went there, oh my god, fuck! I had people saying, oh, I was accused of things I didn't do, I was so alienated and oh, I hated it. And they didn't like me, it was a really bad fit. And I didn't even think that I could go to another school, because my dad was like, no, you're gonna go here, you go here for free.

Amanda 92:22

This is it.

Storm 92:23

This is it. And I got Fs, and I was not stupid, but I was just like, I hate it, I'm so unhappy, I'm so unhappy, and my mother was really in a bad place at the time, so it was really emotional mayhem going on.

So anyway, fast forward, 20-something years later, I'm coming back from a European tour, and the school reaches out, and says, hey, we understand from your dad that you're going to be in town, would you like to come talk to the kids? And I go, really? You want me to come and talk... Okay. You sure? Okay. I will. Happy to do it.

Amanda 93:03

I wish I had a recording of it.

Storm 93:06

I maybe swore a little bit. I really tried to behave in terms of not being just like, you know, but I was really sick, and I was really tired from tour. But I got up, and I said, do me a favor. Before we get started, raise your hand if you feel like you do not belong here, that you are an alien, or just some kind of creature that just doesn't belong, and you feel totally out of place. And like, two kids raised their hand kind of sheepishly, and I was like, really? Just two? Like, seriously, who here feels like everybody else knows how to dress, how to be in school, how to be a teenager, how to participate, how to like...

Amanda 93:54

Make friends?

Storm 93:57

Talk, and make friends, and everybody's got some secret code that you didn't get out of the box. Who feels like that? Three or four more people raised their hands. I was like, wow, really? Okay, alright, is your hand up? Okay, so 1, 2... 8? Really? Okay. You eight are gonna do better than everybody else here. And everybody else is like, what! And I was like, fuck you! If this is easy for

you, if this is a cakewalk, if this cabal of judgment and horror show terror of, I'm so exposed here, everyone sees me every day, I'm growing pimples like I'm a pimple farmer, I don't know what I'm doing, I really masturbate a lot, I don't know what it means, and I'm really freaking out about life, and I'm doing really well in school, but that means I'm gonna have to fucking stay here. These things interest me, and I've heard people say, you know, whatever. Whatever.

Look, if this is easy, you're gonna run into some serious road bumps, my friend, out there in the world. But if you are getting through this, you know, I'm hoping for all of you guys, you have support, and you have some friends, you have good family, because it's a lonely thing, man. I was you. I was you, and I grew up here. I am a legacy student here. And I hated it. And they hated me back, with passion. Not to say anything bad about the school or the criteria, because it's apparently a really great school, but I did not experience any of that, because I was miserable, and I made them miserable.

But I was like, if you can get through this, you know how to think creatively. Because you're not going to get through the way someone who's good at lacrosse, who's got beautiful skin, you're not going to get through with the kid that's just a kickass math whiz, computer genius, or whatever. Your path is gonna be broken glass and grit from the walls, you're going to have to get through, and then the kids behind you will be like, wow, I didn't know there was a door here. There wasn't. You have to go through that wall, and find your way. And that's harder. But so much better.

Amanda 96:26

How did they react to this whole speech?

Storm 96:27

Oh, they loved it. And the kids loved, because there was a lot of... Everyone fucking feels that way.

Amanda 96:32

They were just afraid.

Storm 96:33

But they're not gonna raise their hand! They're gonna get shit!

Amanda 96:35

The reason that those eight kids are gonna make it, because they're fucking brave.

Storm 96:40

Yeah. That's me.

Amanda 96:42

They're honest.

Storm 96:43

Yeah, right.

Amanda 96:45

Not afraid to look foolish. Or not afraid to look afraid.

MUSIC BREAK - All The Things

Storm 97:13

And god, thank god that we didn't have fucking Twitter in high school, the way bullying happens...

Amanda 97:21

Yeah, I mean, it's a really interesting thought experiment, to imagine what it would be like, to go back. And not even that, like, I desperately wanted to be seen. I was an obsessive music collector, listener, I taped everything, I listened to music obsessively, but there was no way I could share my music. It was just I had made my tapes.

I made my tapes, and I made album covers for tapes that no one ever heard. I made tapes! And I was like, this is my tape, but like... And had I been able to put that shit up on SoundCloud, I actually don't know if I would have incubated. I don't know, I might have, it might have been great, I might have connected with some freaky goth kids in Iowa who were like, we really like your songs, I don't know.

But there was also so much time that I spent just like, reading books, and drawing, and listening to music, and listening to lyrics, and just like, being with my own head, and improvising on the piano. And you know what? I don't improvise on the piano now, because I have Twitter. Like, why would I improvise on the piano, and just sit there and play, when I could like, get shit done, and share things on social media, and catch up on my email? And I think that there's something artistically really powerful about boredom and space. And like, the day is over, and here I am in my house. Am I going to cook, read a book, whack off, or write some music? The choices are limited. And now you can always work.

Storm 98:57

Yeah, always. Yeah, that's the thing with... I mean, I'm pretty sure you have the same experience, like, without the internet, we would be totally beholden to record labels. That old dinosaur. We needed the internet.

Amanda 99:09

But we are the only sort of generation, the only set, that grew up without it, and then got to use it right. We're the only ones. We're special. We're so special!

Storm 99:22

You're so special, Amanda. Amanda thinks she's special.

Amanda 99:26

Oh god, even though you're joking, it hurts! I am really special!

Storm 99:37

It's okay, you're so good at parking.

Amanda 99:40

So are you! Storm Large, I fucking love you.

Storm 99:43

I fucking love you too.

Amanda 99:44

And I hope everybody reads your book. I would encourage them to see your show. I mean, this podcast probably isn't going to come out until after your Portland run is over, but if you're ever in a city, and you see that Storm is playing, whether it's her show or with her band, you still tour with Pink Martini?

Storm 99:59

Yeah, not as much as I used to, but I'm still with them, yeah.

Amanda 100:03

If you follow Storm, you can find her.

Storm 100:07

[Stormof69](#)

Amanda 100:07

Her Instagram is also very, very, very, very sexy, and I don't just mean sexy pictures of microphones in giant venues. And she's obviously amazing, and so, you should find her, and read her next book, whenever it may wind up coming out.

Storm 100:27

And I'm all open to suggestions too, like crowdsourcing concepts.

Amanda 100:33

Where are you on the internet? You're on Instagram, are you on Twitter?

Storm 100:36

[Instagram](#), [Twitter](#). I don't do Facebook quite as much any more.

Amanda 100:38

I'm getting away from Facebook.

Storm 100:39

Yeah, I am too. But I still...

Amanda 100:40

And maybe by the end of our dinner, I'll make you join Patreon.

Storm 100:46

You know, I love the idea of it, and I definitely believe in that connection between the artist and the fan, for sure. I don't have the confidence that I could produce enough to warrant that.

Amanda 101:02

It will create the confidence.

Storm 101:03

Really?

Amanda 101:04

Yeah.

Storm 101:05

We're going to talk about this over dinner.

Amanda 101:06

We're gonna go get a bottle of wine and some Peruvian food.

Storm 101:09

I think I'm just gonna go straight for vodka. It's cleaner.

Amanda 101:14

I'll get a martini with you. I really, really love you. I'm so happy to know you.

Storm 101:20

I love you too, I'm really grateful for this time. And it was so good to have all you ladies in my house, and just underwear everywhere.

Amanda 101:30

It was a witch party. Boobs everywhere.

Storm 101:31

It was a full on boobies, butt cheeks and hugs, and just, no boundaries with hugging and loving and smooshing on people, it's so therapeutic, and I don't get to have that very much.

Amanda 101:43

And I don't either. I also have a kid now, and a house, and that's all I want most of the time, I just want a pile of happy, share-y, naked people, just listening to music and drinking wine.

Storm 101:59

Come on over.

Amanda 102:00

It was the best way to end my North America tour that I ever could have thought of, you gave me such a gift.

Storm 102:06

You gave it back to me, too.

Amanda 102:10

Thanks, Storm.

Storm 102:12

Love you, Amanda Fucking Palmer.

Amanda 102:16

This has been the Art of Asking Everything podcast. Thank you so much to my guest, Storm Large. First of all, please check out her Performers Emergency Fund at gimmeshelterpdx.org, to help support, and if you found her as fascinating as she is, go buy her book, Crazy Enough.

Our interview was recorded by Ryan Mauk, at Digital One Studios in Portland, Oregon. The theme song that you are listening to is my own, it's the instrumental to a song called "Bottomfeeder", from my 2012 album, *Theatre Is Evil*.

This podcast was produced by FannieCo.

Thanks are always due to Team AFP: Hayley, Michael, Jordan, Alex, thank you guys so much for everything you do for me, and for this community.

And this whole thing would not be possible without my patrons, currently 15,000 of them, who are making it possible to have no ads, no sponsors, no censorship, all of the things that keep this good.

We are the media.

Please go to Patreon and become a member. That will also get you access to the live follow-up chat that I'm doing with every guest, and also the book club.

I've been putting up a post on my Patreon for every single one of these podcasts with transcripts, and notes, and pictures, links, and more stuff about the guests. Please go there, and see all of the things.

Signing off, I am Amanda Fucking Palmer. Please, for the love of the baby Jesus, keep on asking everything.