



SLEEPLESS CREATIVES: FINDING PEACE IN WORDS COME RAIN OR SHINE



By Florence St Leger
Voice Actor

*You know that saying;
“when it rains, it pours”?*

2020 was a hard year; the pandemic struck and the performing arts industry took a huge hit, dragging everyone’s mental health and sleep schedule along with it.

Theaters closed, tours were canceled mid rehearsal and all final year graduations came to a grinding halt.

I was in my last year at drama school half way through rehearsals for our final two shows, when we got the email telling us exactly what we’d been dreading; due to Covid, school is closed and all shows are postponed until further notice.

So I packed a bag, said goodbye to my flatmates and jumped on the first coach back home - then came the government announcement: lockdown.

The rug had been yanked from underneath us, broken into tiny pieces and thrown into a black hole, would we ever be normal again?

I remember scrolling through social media and seeing downtrodden actors, directors and other creatives vent about how they were losing hope and could feel their inner spark dimming, some even considered quitting their career altogether.

Hearing this broke my heart, because becoming an actor changed my life.

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My sleep pattern had completely gone down the drain, and in my search to find some kind of respite I started looking at podcasts, after trying a few different ones I came across a show called Dreamful Bedtime Stories, which I got into the habit of listening to every night.

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“Having a podcast would be cool” I thought to myself, but how could I think of something that people would actually want to listen to? I started mulling over the idea for a sleep podcast of my own, but I was painfully aware of how many of them there were already, I needed to find a very specific niche, something that nobody had tried yet.

I cast my mind back to my training days for some inspiration and remembered something a teacher had once said:

If you’re having trouble with a character or feeling stuck, go back to the script and look at the words.” Can we apply that principle to our lives?

Then it clicked; a sleep podcast by creatives for creatives, each episode featuring different pieces of text and literature such as poems, plays, monologues and adaptations all focused on the performing arts and creative industry - which takes us back to the script, serving as a reminder of the words we love to perform.

I did a quick search for sleep podcasts for actors high and low on every platform I could think of...zero, I’d found my niche. So I unboxed my microphone and set up a starting space in my bedroom, and in February 2021, the Sleepless Creatives Podcast was born.

So don’t be afraid of the rain, sometimes we need it to grow tall.

The first few episodes were a little wobbly, I didn’t have a great recording space yet and I was still learning about audio editing, but I made do until I was able to set up my very first recording studio with all the bells and whistles.

It hasn’t been all smooth sailing due to things like Audacity crashing which resulted in losing an episode I had spent an hour recording (don’t be like me, save your work). I also almost quit the podcast at one point because I felt like nobody was listening, but I was pulled back by some kind words from a listener who said she loved the show and even recommended it to her friends, which made me squeal with delight.

Almost four years later, the show has come up in popularity and gone from strength to strength since its creation. I get to do what I love and help others in the process.

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Goodnight you beautiful creators, go back to the words...and drift off.

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www.sleeplesscreativespodcast.co.uk