



Off Menu – Ep 279 – Stephen Graham

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking the tortellini of conversation, pouring into the boiling water of humour, bubbling away for just a few minutes until all of the great anecdotes float to the surface. It's the Off Menu podcast tortellini, bowl of tortellini.

James Acaster

That's Ed Gamble. My name is James Acaster and, together, we own a dream restaurant.

Ed Gamble

Oh no.

James Acaster

And every single week, we invite in a guest and we ask them their favourite ever starter, main course and side dish.

Ed Gamble

So aggressive.

James Acaster

And drink, not in that order, and this week our guest is Stephen Graham.

Ed Gamble

Stephen-,

James Acaster

Uh oh.

Ed Gamble

Now-,

James Acaster

Uh oh.

Ed Gamble

For those who may not be across all of Off Menu lore, you might not know that James, on multiple episodes of this podcast, has said he can beat Stephen Graham up because of something Stephen Graham said to Romesh Ranganathan on an episode of Jonathan Ross.



James Acaster

He said that it's Romesh's fault for not being funny if the audience aren't laughing and they're shouting and they're heckling him in Liverpool. Well, bad luck. He didn't bank on me seeing that episode. I have called him out many times on this podcast, and that I'd beat him up for that, and now he's walked straight into the lion's den and I'm the lion.

Ed Gamble

Yes. We're assuming that Stephen doesn't know about this.

James Acaster

He's going to know, he's about to know.

Ed Gamble

Is he?

James Acaster

Yes, he is about to know.

Ed Gamble

Is he really? Because there's a lot of bravado coming out of you.

James Acaster

Ed, if you call someone out on-,

Ed Gamble

Because you like Stephen Graham's work as well and I think when you actually meet Stephen Graham, I don't think you're going to be able to say anything to him.

James Acaster

I think-, Ed, wrong. I've said it on a podcast about three times, four times. Benito put a section on the Best Of of me calling him out. That is basically saying it to his face. I know that when I say that, he's going to hear that.

Ed Gamble

So-, okay, so if he has heard it and he's coming in, what does that say to you about his level of confidence that it's not going to be an issue for him?

James Acaster

That says he's coming with his tail between his legs to apologise for what he said on Jonathan Ross about Romesh and, guess what? It ain't going to cut it. No apology is going to cut it. I said I was going to beat him up and that is what's going to happen. Two hits.

Ed Gamble

Two hits?



James Acaster

Me hitting him, him hitting the ground.

Ed Gamble

Okay, well, I think maybe things might be different when you meet him.

James Acaster

Well, we'll see, won't we? You'll be eating your words on this food podcast. Have that as your starter, main course and dessert, Ed. Your own words.

Ed Gamble

Do we-, me?

James Acaster

Yes. You're saying I'm not going to do nothing.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I'm having my own words, am I?

James Acaster

That's what you're going to eat.

Ed Gamble

Okay, yes. Are we going to bother with the secret ingredient then? Because if it's you hitting him and him hitting the ground early doors then he's going to be out of the dream restaurant straight away, isn't he?

James Acaster

He will be out of the dream restaurant straight away but, in the meantime, just for-, let's-, I'll give him a sporting chance.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

The secret ingredient, which if he says he's going to get kicked out, a knuckle sandwich.

Ed Gamble

A knuckle sandwich? Okay.

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Well, that's what you're going to give him anyway, right?

James Acaster

Yes, he will get that anyway.

Ed Gamble

So, is it still the secret ingredient if you put it on his dream menu?

James Acaster

I'd say I'm not going to punch him.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so he's out the dream restaurant. So it's not if he selects it because he's not going to pick a knuckle sandwich, is he? Or is he doing-

James Acaster

He might as well save himself the embarrassment and pick it because at least then it looks like he wants it. At least then it looks deliberate.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

That would be my advice to him. You should pick a knuckle sandwich, mate. You should order one.

Ed Gamble

Stephen Graham is, I would say, a national treasure so I'm absolutely devastated if you ruin this for me.

James Acaster

Yes?

Ed Gamble

I absolutely can't wait to meet him. He's done so much good stuff. He's got so much good stuff coming up, James. You love This is England. You love Time. You love all his work that he's done with Martin Scorsese.

James Acaster

Snatch. Yes, all the Scorsese stuff. He's in Gangs of New York. He was in amazing scene in the Irish Man with Al Pacino. That's in a restaurant. We can talk about that if I wasn't about to-

Ed Gamble

We're not going to talk about it though because you're coming in all guns blazing, apparently.



James Acaster

Correct, yes. Correct. He's not going to get a chance to talk. You might as well turn this mic off, Benito, for when he sits in because he's not going to be saying anything. Do you know what else he's doing? He's got some stuff coming up, Ed. A Thousand Blows launches on 21 February on Disney Plus.

Ed Gamble

Anything you want to say about the title, A Thousand Blows?

James Acaster

Yes. Two blows.

Ed Gamble

Two.

James Acaster

No and he also stars in, and has co-written, Adolescence. A four part Netflix series which is coming soon.

Ed Gamble

All the episodes in one shot, it looks fantastic. And, A Thousand Blows, he's playing a bare knuckle boxer and I was led to believe he's got in amazing shape for that to truly play a bare knuckle boxer and he's done all the training and stuff so, yes, looking forward to this episode.

James Acaster

What the fuck.

Ed Gamble

This is the Off Menu podcast of Stephen Graham.

Ed Gamble

Welcome, Stephen, to the dream restaurant.

Stephen Graham

Thank you, it's lovely to be here.

James Acaster

It's a pleasure and a privilege, Stephen.

Stephen Graham

Thank you very much.

James Acaster

Thank you for coming to the dream restaurant.



Ed Gamble

Now, normally at this point, James-, James is a genie in this and he bursts out the lamp and I don't know why he hasn't done that.

Stephen Graham

Oh, there's a lamp there. Should I-,

James Acaster

There's a lamp there, yes, I just forgot this episode.

Ed Gamble

No, he normally interrupts the guests by, sort of, going, 'Pshhhh,' and bursting out the lamp and he's not done that with you and I'm intrigued.

James Acaster

Oh, I thought it seemed rude. Just didn't seem appropriate.

Stephen Graham

Is that your only reason, yes?

James Acaster

Yes, I just thought it wasn't appropriate to do that today.

Stephen Graham

Okay.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. So-,

Stephen Graham

You threw him under the bus there, didn't you?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I've absolutely thrown him under the bus because our listeners will be going- Because every single other episode in, I mean, nearly 300 episodes, I'd say Stephen, he bursts out the lamp. But, for some reason, he seems to have a quiet reverence around you that he's never had for a guest before.

Stephen Graham

But, we do have the lamp, so-

James Acaster

Yes, it's right there. I can do it-,



Ed Gamble

Do you want James to try and get in to that lamp and then burst out?

Stephen Graham

Yes. We'll just give it a shot.

James Acaster

Okay. The listeners will have to believe me that I'm getting in to the lamp. Benito, put some sound effects in post that I'm squeezing in there. Let's talk about A Thousand Words.

Ed Gamble

No. Burst out the lamp, man.

Stephen Graham

We want you to come out of the lamp. So, shall we-, okay. We're talking. Go on, ask me.

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the dream restaurant, Stephen

Stephen Graham

It's-

James Acaster

Welcome, Stephen Graham, to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

James Acaster

You like that? That was good?

Stephen Graham

Fucking hell.

James Acaster

You can swear.

Stephen Graham

Sorry.

James Acaster

You can swear.



Stephen Graham

Wow. How did he come out the lamp, I've never seen it before.

James Acaster

That was good, weren't it? It's actually quite good.

Ed Gamble

That was good. We got there in the end, didn't we?

James Acaster

Yes, yes but I just wanted to say it was an honour first.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's very nice of you. Yes.

Stephen Graham

It's an absolute pleasure to be here.

Ed Gamble

Thank you, Stephen.

James Acaster

Thank you for coming on. A Thousand Blows, I'm very excited about. A bit intimidating. No, I'm not intimidated actually. You're a bare knuckle boxer in it.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Yes, there is a lot more to him than just a bare knuckle boxer but I'm-, no, look, it was a wonderful project to be a part of and it, kind of-, it came from, me and Hannah, we got sent a photograph of Hezekiah Moscow, who is played by Malachi Kirby, who was a young man who came over from Jamaica during the 1800s and it was a photograph and an image of Hezekiah in his, like, his boxing attire and stood there in this beautiful, kind of, regal shape and form that he was in. So, we got sent a photograph of that and two paragraphs. One about Sugar Goodson and one about Treacle Goodson, these two brothers who also existed at that time who, kind of, ran the underground boxing scene, to an extent, in East London. You know, I worked on a programme with Danny Maze called-,

James Acaster

Top Buzzer?

Stephen Graham

No. It was-, that was the first time-, oh, wow. Top Buzzer. You know Top Buzzer?

James Acaster

I love Top Buzzer, man. That was my introduction to you guys. You, Maze, Trencrem from the Independent. What was that guy's actual name?



Ed Gamble

James Glance.

Stephen Graham

James Glance.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Stephen Graham

Ashley Walters?

James Acaster

I watched that. Me and my friend, Jake Ashton. Shout out to Jake Ashton if you're listening to this.

Stephen Graham

So, did you and Jake used to smoke a bit of weed?

James Acaster

We watched Top Buzzer. Let's just say that.

Stephen Graham

Because I still-, every now and again I get someone come up to me and go, 'Oh, mate, we used to love watching Top Buzzer when we were stoned,' and I was like, 'Oh, thanks mate. Well, that's kind of the audience we were aiming at. So, thanks.'

James Acaster

Yes, that's when I saw this, the cast, I was like, 'It's a Top Buzzer reunion'.

Stephen Graham

It's similar, yes.

James Acaster

For me.

Stephen Graham

So, it kind of-, it came from that. You know, that was it within its embryonic stages, and then Hannah kind of went, 'This is really good. This could be really interesting,' and I was like, 'Okay.' And they were looking for a writer and she said, 'I know who'll write this'. And I was like, 'Okay. Who's going to write it?' And she went, 'Steve Knight'. And I was like, 'Shut up, love. Behave yourself. There's no way he's going to write. How are we going to get Steve Knight to write this?' And then she was like, 'Well, I've been talking to his assistant. They want you to do Peaky Binders,' and blah blah blah. And she went, 'I think he would really love this. You know, I know what kind of stuff he likes and I'm going to see what he



says.' And I just, kind of-, you know one of them ones where you go, 'Okay', although she is the brains behind everything, do you know what I mean?

Yes, she's phenomenal, but I'm always like, 'Okay, love. Nice one.' And then literally, three days later she went, 'Oh, look at this', and I walked over and there was an e-mail and it was off Steve Knight saying, 'I would love to write this script. This sounds right up my street.' And that's, kind of, how the process began. Do you know what I mean? So, if it wasn't for Hannah making that marriage in the first place, we probably wouldn't be sat here now.

Ed Gamble

You need someone who has that belief sometimes, don't you? It's, like, 'Yes, I can definitely make this work.'

Stephen Graham

Yes, completely, but also, she knew who'd be ideal to write it. Do you know what I mean? And thankfully, he said yes.

James Acaster

I've got some of the press shots here. There's you swinging the punch.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Oh, okay.

James Acaster

Did you have to do a lot of training? Do you train up for this one?

Stephen Graham

Yes. Yes, it was-, yes, it was a lot of training. A lot of eating and a lot of training. You know, to get in to that shape it took six months. So it was, like-, it was done properly. I had an amazing trainer, Rob. He did all my training and also all my diet and everything and then I had a good friend who did all of my boxing training with me, Graham. I was with him, like, three times a week and I was training five/six times a week as well but we-, I got all my bloods tested and everything and my kidney and my heart. You had to go through a full MOT for this and then we slimmed down and then we, kind of, built up the muscle as we went along. But, it did, it took-, the total process was six months.

Ed Gamble

Did you feel like, by the end of the training, that you could enter into a bare knuckle boxing match?

Stephen Graham

It's cameras, mate. You're not really good, you know. I really appreciate, you know, the dedication and the work that goes in to that pugilism but MMA and boxing and all of those, kind of, martial arts is



unbelievable. The technique and the ability, do you know what I mean? And the stamina and the determination. Just that, you know, it becomes a regime. You have to eat as healthily as it says. You just follow everything that they tell you to do, do you know what I mean? But, it's loads of protein. Lots of chicken, fish, vegetables, small amounts of carbs and you just have to keep eating these on a regular basis and lots and lots and lots and lots of protein.

James Acaster

And, are you enjoying-, because, like, it's a food podcast. So, like, when you are doing that, does it stop being enjoyable? Like, eating food? Or, are you still looking forward to it? Are there certain little treats?

Stephen Graham

In the beginning, the slimming down, and the losing the weight, was kind of hard and then when we got to that next stage of, like, 'Right, now we're going to build from that structure,' then the rice and the chicken and stuff, and the broccoli, it was okay and then you're throwing in a wholemeal bun as well or cob, whatever you call it.

James Acaster

That's the treat, yes.

Stephen Graham

That's your treat but then after a while, do you know what I mean-, and in between them, you've got to make sure that you get your protein. When it comes to 10:30/10:00pm at night and you've got to eat another 120mg of natural yogurt with two scoops of whey and one Malteser is your treat, it's a bit hard. Do you know what I mean? Forcing that down you. But, yes, it was a great experience and it was just that-, you know, I really, really admire and appreciate what goes in to achieve that look or for athletes more.

Ed Gamble

How quickly would you say you managed to-, once you didn't have to eat like that and you'd finished filming, how quickly did you destroy all of your six months of work?

Stephen Graham

I didn't, really.

Ed Gamble

You didn't? You just kept going with it, that was amazing. Yes, yes.

Stephen Graham

I, kind of, mostly managed to keep it together a little bit, do you know what I mean, to that extent.

Ed Gamble

So you're still in boxing shape?



Stephen Graham

I wouldn't say I'm fighting weight, no. My chrimbo has just finished. There's a bit of turkey but, yes-, some crackers and cheese and all that wrapped round me a little bit but it's something that I've kept on doing, do you know what I mean? I've kept going to the gym and stuff and I will maintain that.

James Acaster

Nice. Also, Adolescence will be coming out in 2025 which is something that you co-wrote as well. Every episode, one shot? A one-r?

Stephen Graham

Yes. There are four episodes and each episode is one take. And, again, I mean, it's a bit of a heavy subject in many ways.

Ed Gamble

What was the decision behind making them one shot episodes? What about the project felt like it needed to be that?

Stephen Graham

Well, it was because of-, we did a film. We did a little film called-, which, actually, is very relevant. Boiling point, which was set in a kitchen.

Ed Gamble

Which we loved.

Stephen Graham

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

We spoke to-, we had Izuka Hoyle on the podcast and spoke to her about that as well. Yes, absolutely brilliant film.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Ah, thank you very much. Thank you. You know, that was a pleasure and it was an honour to do. And, we got approached about doing something in a similar vein but I didn't really want to do that. I wanted to try and tell a story along the process of eighteen months, or thirteen months, and just jump in to this story on that timeline. Maybe for an hour every time because that's all you have, and try and progress that story along within the context of what we have to say within that time. Do you know what I mean? And keep the audience with you. And, I just thought-, I'm obsessed with 24 Hours in Police Custody. I love it. It's great, isn't it? As soon as you-, you know, it just drags you in and I just thought, because I love that-, and, look, procedural dramas, police dramas, are great. They've been going for years. Crackheads, you know what I mean? Prime Suspect.

All of those great programmes that I was brought up on. It's trying to find the new way of telling that same story, do you know what I mean? So, we just thought it would really work well with the one shot.



It's our job then, and we're under the obligation, to keep the audience involved but also tell that story and have that story moved along. So, I just thought it'd be a really good way to tell the story, basically.

James Acaster

Well, let's see if we can do this episode in a one shot. Maybe Benito won't edit anything out. We always start with still or sparkling water, Stephen. Do you have a preference?

Stephen Graham

Still, please.

James Acaster

Still?

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

How come?

Stephen Graham

It's a bit like AlkaSeltzer or something, isn't it? Do you know what I mean? I don't want to start my stomach rumbling before I've even had my dinner. Do you know what I mean? Personally.

James Acaster

Sure. Would you call it mineral water, sparkling water?

Stephen Graham

You call it if you want to, yes.

James Acaster

So, you're saying that you don't have the minerals, Stephen Graham?

Stephen Graham

I see what he did there.

Ed Gamble

James is coming for you this episode, Stephen.

Stephen Graham

Yes, he is. Isn't he?

James Acaster

No. No, no, no.



Stephen Graham

You want to see if I've got the minerals, son.

James Acaster

Yes, he did it. He said the line.

Stephen Graham

What was the actual line?

James Acaster

'You want to see if I've got the minerals.'

Stephen Graham

'You want to see if I've got them minerals?' Yes. Oh, that was it. Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that was it. Yes. 'You want to see if I've got them minerals?' Yes.

James Acaster

That's a good moment for Tom. He comes in, brave moment.

Stephen Graham

Yes, he finds himself. Do you know what I mean? He gets to stand there and, yes, be what he always wanted to be.

James Acaster

That character, which, for the listeners, the character is Snatch, knows about-, well, maybe not food but drink. A whole monologue about milk that you have in that.

Stephen Graham

Yes, that's right. What was it, pasteurised? Yes, that was a great monologue, that. I remember the day we filmed that, yes, and he takes the cartoon of milk off me, doesn't he, and throws it out the window.

James Acaster

I've never researched what Tommy says about milk, I've just taken it as gospel.

Stephen Graham

Yes, and so you should.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

So, when I drink milk, I think, 'The human stomach has not evolved to cope with this, I shouldn't be drinking this.'

Stephen Graham

They've only been domesticated for however long it was.

James Acaster

Yes, however long cows have been domesticated for.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

I think, 'Ugh, have I learnt nothing? Why am I still drinking milk?'

Stephen Graham

You shouldn't drink it.

Ed Gamble

James learns all his facts from Guy Ritchie films.

Stephen Graham

Yes, and that's how it should be. Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, that's all I know.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

Including that's why I'm a genie now, because he made Aladdin.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

So, now I'm-,



Stephen Graham

Now I see it, yes.

James Acaster

I've based it all on that, just based my life on Guy Ritchie's career choices.

Ed Gamble

Whenever he's cutting bread up, he says, 'Guns for show, knives for a pro,' don't you?

James Acaster

Yes, I do say, 'Guns for show, knives for a pro.' Yes. Do you want anything in your water? Do you want some ice, do you want some fruit?

Stephen Graham

No, just on its own, please.

James Acaster

On its own.

Stephen Graham

Yes, let me just enjoy.

James Acaster

Tap?

Stephen Graham

Depends where we are, I suppose.

Ed Gamble

This is good. So, where's the dream tap for the water?

Stephen Graham

Well, now I'm going to sound really-, do you know, me and Hannah have just come back from-, we went to-, I can't pronounce the name of the place. In Finland.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

Stephen Graham

Right next to Father Christmas' house.

Ed Gamble

Rovaniemi?



Stephen Graham

That's you? Well done.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Wow.

Stephen Graham

Yes, good lad.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I know. My wife worked there, she went and did a TV job there, and yes, she loves Rovaniemi, and they went and met Santa.

Stephen Graham

Absolutely, what a beautiful place.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

And we stayed in this really lovely hotel, this tree-house hotel. It was beautiful, and the lights gorgeous. It was amazing, but the women said at the desk, 'You won't need to drink the bottled water,' and we were like, 'Oh, okay,' and she was like, 'No, when I say-, ' how do you pronounce it?

Ed Gamble

Rovaniemi.

Stephen Graham

She said, 'Rovaniemi-, ' see how I said that there, yes?

Ed Gamble

Just leave that in.

Stephen Graham

She said, 'Rovaniemi has the most purest water in the world.'

Ed Gamble

Wow.



Stephen Graham

And I was like, 'Really?' And she was like, 'Yes,' and I was like, 'Okay, alright.' So, obviously we're getting into the room, and in my head I'm going, 'No chance, there's no way. It's not happening, no way.' I literally put the case in, I went, 'Cheers, mate. Thank you very much.' Shut the door, ran in the bathroom, grabbed a glass. I had a sip, and I was like, 'Oh, Hannah, she's right,' and she's off doing some-, she's like, 'What?' And I went, 'The women at the desk, she's bang on. This water's gorgeous.' So, yes, and I would have tap water from-,

Ed Gamble

Rovaniemi?

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

And for the listener, by the way. We got to see some proper-, you pretended to drink some water there. Now, I'm not even lying here. I'm not saying this to be a smartarse.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I genuinely thought you'd swallowed some water. And I knew you hadn't, I knew you'd mimed a cup.

Stephen Graham

Thank you very much.

James Acaster

But you did it proper.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

When you have the Rovaniemi water, do you want Father Christmas to be there?

Stephen Graham

It depends what time of year it is, really.

James Acaster

Sure.

Stephen Graham

Do you know what I mean?



Ed Gamble

Yes, it would be weird to see him in summer, wouldn't it?

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

I don't want to see Santa in the summer.

James Acaster

In a Hawaiian shirt, and sandals, and Bermuda shorts.

Ed Gamble

That's alright.

Stephen Graham

There's a good character there though, isn't there?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

What does Santa do when he's off?

Ed Gamble

Summer Santa.

Stephen Graham

Yes, summer Santa. Yes. Yes, I like that.

Ed Gamble

Maybe it would feel slightly different to your other work, the body of work. I feel like if suddenly-, it would be a real left turn if you played summer Santa in something.

James Acaster

We could still do in in a one-er.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

A one shot, with Santa on a holiday.

Stephen Graham

Santa on holiday.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes. What do you reckon he'd do? Do you reckon he shaves his beard? Because you're not going to be wanting to get recognised by everyone, are you?

Ed Gamble

No, and if you're in a hot-, if you're going to Hawaii, or something, you don't want a big, white beard.

Stephen Graham

He doesn't want a beard like that.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you don't. Yes, you don't want that.

James Acaster

Be boiling.

Stephen Graham

Okay, so he shaves the beard off.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Where's he going, Hawaii?

Ed Gamble

I think, yes. Hawaii maybe, I think. He wants to go somewhere warm, I guess.

Stephen Graham

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Or on safari, maybe?

James Acaster

I don't know if that would be-, his job is so gruelling.

Stephen Graham

Don't you reckon Mrs Claus has picked where he goes? Because she's the one who's doing all the graft really, isn't she, back home?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Do you know what I mean?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

So, if it's anything like our house, she's decided where he's going, he just goes along.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Do you reckon he gets told to shave before he goes?

Ed Gamble

I'd imagine so. I'd imagine what happens is he gets told to shave every year, then he complains about having to shave, but when he arrives, he's like, 'Oh, thank God you told me to shave, because it's so warm here.'

Stephen Graham

Yes.



Ed Gamble

But then he forgets by next year, and he's like, 'I'm not going to shave this year.' 'Do you remember what happened last year, Santa?'

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

So, it must be weird for him to choose a location. Because he can get anywhere-, he can get the whole world in one night, if he wants to.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes, of course. Yes.

James Acaster

So, it's weird for him to go, 'Are you serious? We're only going to choose one place, for a week?'

Stephen Graham

Yes, but then look at it, right?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

He's, kind of, someone that works as a cabin crew. Does that make English?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I think that makes English.

Ed Gamble

That makes English.



Stephen Graham

Okay, let's keep that English then. He's, kind of, a cabin crew person, and then they don't always get to stop off, do they? They have to clean the gaff, clean the plane, get everything done, and then they're back off again.

James Acaster

Sure.

Stephen Graham

So, they don't-, when you go, 'Oh, you must see some lovely countries.' 'Not really, no. No, we stop, we have a little-, get ourselves together, have a coffee, and then we're back off again, and we're back home, and we're in our own bed by 9:30, ten o'clock.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

So, it's the same for Father Christmas, isn't it, really?

James Acaster

It is the same. I mean, even worse.

Stephen Graham

Even worse, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, he's just seeing chimneys, and fireplaces, if he's lucky.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

He's just necking brandies. He's so pissed by the second country, that he doesn't remember any of it anyway.

Stephen Graham

And smashing carrots.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Because Rudolph's not eating all of them, is he?



James Acaster

No.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Santa's getting back to the sleigh, Rudolph's going, 'Any carrots in there this time?' 'None this time, Rudolph. I'll let you know if there's some in the next one.'

Ed Gamble

The world's changed.

Stephen Graham

'Here's a biscuit though.'

James Acaster

Yes, 'Have one of those.' Poppadoms, or bread, Stephen Graham? Would you like poppadoms, or bread?

Ed Gamble

Now, James normally shouts this. The whole thing is he shouts it at the guest.

James Acaster

Well, there's not a need to shout it every time, and I think I can just say it to Stephen.

Ed Gamble

What's happened is, Stephen. He's seen the pictures of you boxing.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Of course, yes.

Ed Gamble

And he's got scared. Because, I mean, you're almost certainly not aware of this, but James has called you out on the podcast before.

James Acaster

What? When?

Stephen Graham

Okay.

Ed Gamble

He's called you out for a ruck.



Stephen Graham

Ooh.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Hold on a second. When did-,

Stephen Graham

Is this fact?

James Acaster

I don't remember this.

Ed Gamble

It's happened. It happened on Izuka's episode.

Stephen Graham

Do you have backup, with a recording of this?

Ed Gamble

Yes. It's been out, it's out there.

Stephen Graham

Can we play the recording?

Ed Gamble

Can we play the recording?

Stephen Graham

Can you find the recording while we're in conversation? We'll just put this on hold for a minute.

James Acaster

Well.

Stephen Graham

Just for a minute, we'll just put this on hold for a minute.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

James, shut up, lad. I'm talking.



James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

We'll just put this on hold for a minute. If you find what he said-,

James Acaster

Whoa.

Stephen Graham

Hang on. You've had your minute. We'll find what he said, and then we'll come back to it, but for now we'll carry on as normal.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Alright? We're still mates.

James Acaster

Okay.

Stephen Graham

Just for now.

James Acaster

I think Izuka might have said it.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Maybe you've got it-, your wires crossed.

Ed Gamble

You said it, and Izuka laughed in your face.

Stephen Graham

Okay.

James Acaster

I think he's got his wires crossed, Stephen, but we will carry on.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Let's carry on as normal.

James Acaster

We'll carry on as normal.

Stephen Graham

Let's carry on as normal.

James Acaster

I think you've got your wires crossed, Ed.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

You might have said it, actually.

Ed Gamble

I apologise if I've got my wires crossed, but I think we both know that I haven't.

Stephen Graham

Okay, alright. That's alright. Well, we'll find out, because we've got factual-, ooh.

James Acaster

What?

Stephen Graham

You've got it.

James Acaster

You've got it?

Ed Gamble

Which one, which episode? Because it's probably happened on about five episodes.

James Acaster

I don't think this will be-

Stephen Graham

Can we all hear this?



(Recording played aloud 25.37-27.01 From Izuka Hoyle episode of Off Menu)

Hmm.

James Acaster

I think that might have been Ed, said that. That sounded like Ed, to me.

Stephen Graham

No. So, what did I do to Romesh?

James Acaster

I don't know.

Stephen Graham

No, come on. You're saying it.

Ed Gamble

Come on, it's all out there.

Stephen Graham

So, what did I do to Romesh?

James Acaster

I think that-,

Ed Gamble

It's out there now.

Stephen Graham

Your arse went then, didn't it? What did I do to Romesh? Answer the question.

James Acaster

Well, I think maybe what that was a reference to-,

Stephen Graham

Was?

James Acaster

I think you might have gone on Jonathan Ross with Romesh.

Stephen Graham

Yes, I did. Yes.



James Acaster

And Romesh may have said-, this is just my memory.

Stephen Graham

Go, ahead, because I'm with you now. I remember this fucking thing. Go, ahead. What happened? Come on.

James Acaster

I think Romesh might have said that Liverpool audiences aren't good-, he doesn't like playing in Liverpool.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

And he said because they heckle, and they don't listen, and stuff. And I think you said-, this is my memory. I'm just trying to remember. I think you said-,

Stephen Graham

No, I'll tell you exactly what I said. I said, 'Maybe if you were fucking funny they'd laugh.' I rest my case, bollocks. It's over. Yes? That's what I said.

James Acaster

Yes. Well, let the-,

Stephen Graham

That's all I said. Look, and I know some of you have this attitude where it's like, 'I'm just doing my job'. No, you're a comedian. I've paid fucking £25, £30 here. I've brought my missus. That's £70 before I've even fucking sat down and I want to have a laugh. So, make me laugh. That's your job, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

So, fucking make me laugh.

James Acaster

I agree.

Stephen Graham

Thank you. And that's not just Scousers, that should be all over the bastard country. If I'm paying money to go and watch a comedian, I mean, you're like fucking Duracell. Do you know what I mean? You're going on and on and on about bollocks. I don't want you doing that, I want you to be what you



should be. Ronseal, do what it says on the fucking tin. Make me laugh, bastard. End of story. Can we carry on now with the show, please?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Are you okay, James?

James Acaster

I'm good. I agree with you.

Stephen Graham

Okay.

James Acaster

I think that's a fair-

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

That's a good point, well made.

Stephen Graham

It's a fair comment, isn't it?

James Acaster

A good point, well made.

Ed Gamble

I always had your back, Stephen.

Stephen Graham

Thank you, Ed. Thanks.

James Acaster

In my defence, I think Benito edited that to sound weird.

Stephen Graham

That's alright, Benito.



Ed Gamble

I think you should just admit you made a mistake and we'll move on, James.

James Acaster

Yes, I probably just made a mistake.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Okay.

James Acaster

Poppadoms, or bread?

Stephen Graham

I'll have poppadoms, please.

James Acaster

Let's get into your main meal proper now. Let's get into your main meal.

Stephen Graham

Okay.

James Acaster

Your dream starter?

Stephen Graham

Dream starter?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Okay. Now, I come with an unfair advantage, because I've played this game quite a lot. We call it something different, we call it death row dinner.

Ed Gamble

Oh, great.

James Acaster

Lovely.



Stephen Graham

And on set it's a great game to play, you know, when you're meeting new people and it's between takes and all that. So, my dream starter is-, I was in New York a few years ago, and I was in Chinatown, and I absolutely love wonton soup. I love wonton soup, and when I used to go to a Chinese with my mum, back in the day when I was a kid and stuff, we used to test the quality of a Chinese by its wonton soup. So, we'd start with the wonton soup, and I found this restaurant. It was up some stairs, and I went into this Chinese restaurant and I asked for a wonton soup. And it came and it was like I'd found the Holy Grail. It was this gorgeous bowl with some beautiful design on it, and it was just a lovely-, I can still see it now. It just had the dumplings, just floating in it just right. Little bit of bok choy, little bit of spring onion and stuff, and it was just-, it was beautiful. And I tasted it and it was absolutely gorgeous. So, that's my starter.

James Acaster

Can you remember the name of the place?

Stephen Graham

I can't, no. I could probably never find it again.

Ed Gamble

It's almost like that's better, because it's just a complete hazy dream.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And it's almost like it wasn't real, just the perfect wonton soup.

Stephen Graham

Exactly.

Ed Gamble

That sounds beautiful.

Stephen Graham

It happened once, and it'll never happen again.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

But, look, I'm salivating.

James Acaster

You are happy. You've got a far away look in your eye thinking of wanton soup.



Stephen Graham

It was wonderful. I had found the Holy Grail of wonton soups.

James Acaster

I think everyone's got that with one food item. Where they were trying to find the best one, wherever they go, and when you do find that one, it is very special. I've talked about it on the podcast before. Milton Jones and I, on tour, did it with custard slices. We found one in a service station in Wales, it was the best one. We've never been able to find it again since. It's like that services has vanished, like it was a ghost services.

Stephen Graham

Whereabout in Wales were you?

James Acaster

It was literally the first services we got to, when we went into Wales, over the bridge, and it was the first one we came to, and it's like it's not there any more. We can't figure it out. We didn't log in our heads what the services was called, because we were just so high on custard, and now, it's like we just haven't seen it again. But yes, it was so great, and I know what you mean, it probably is best that you don't even remember the restaurant.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And it's the surroundings as well sometimes, isn't it?

Stephen Graham

Of course.

Ed Gamble

If you're in New York, in Chinatown, it's so evocative, and yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

What were you doing in New York? Were you working?

Stephen Graham

Yes, we were filming Boardwalk Empire.

Ed Gamble

Nice.



Stephen Graham

And so, it was quite a while ago.

James Acaster

Al Capone?

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You weren't still in character as Al Capone when you were going for a wonton soup?

Stephen Graham

No, not at all. No.

James Acaster

And dodging your taxes?

Stephen Graham

No.

James Acaster

Did you keep that in your mind when you were playing Al Capone? Did you go, 'Remember, I'm not paying tax?'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Does that help with the character?

Stephen Graham

No. No, I never thought that.

Ed Gamble

Because he was up to other stuff as well, wasn't he?

Stephen Graham

He had a lot of other things going on, yes.

Ed Gamble

Syphilis.



James Acaster

Syphilis, of course.

Stephen Graham

Yes, he did. Yes.

James Acaster

He went mad.

Stephen Graham

And he got that from a very young age, actually.

James Acaster

Did he?

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

I didn't know that.

Stephen Graham

And his scars were-, very interesting how he got his scars as well. They were around about when he was seventeen, eighteen, or nineteen I think, back in New York, and he used to work in a restaurant. And there was a fella who was there with a young lady, and he was a bit flippant, Al was, and flirting with this young girl in front of this fella, and the fella actually sliced his face.

Ed Gamble

Oh my goodness.

Stephen Graham

Three times, yes.

James Acaster

In the restaurant?

Stephen Graham

Yes, it was like a, kind of, restaurant, café, where he worked. Yes.

James Acaster

Not our restaurant, not the Dream Restaurant.

Ed Gamble

No, that would never happen in the Dream Restaurant.



Stephen Graham

That wouldn't happen in the Dream Restaurant.

Ed Gamble

Unless you wanted it to.

James Acaster

If that's your dream, we're not going to stand in the way of it.

Ed Gamble

People have rarely asked for that.

Stephen Graham

No, I should imagine.

Ed Gamble

What would you want your dream restaurant to look like, and who do you want to be with for the meal as well, what are the surroundings?

Stephen Graham

Obviously I'm there with Hannah, my missus. Okay. So, who-, well, it's a dream, isn't it?

Ed Gamble

Yes, totally.

Stephen Graham

Well, my mum. It would be nice to see my mum again. So, yes. Hannah, my mum, and my dad, I think, and my two kids, yes, and we're sat there. Shall we make it someone's birthday?

Ed Gamble

Yes, for sure.

James Acaster

Of course.

Stephen Graham

Okay. Not mine, I don't want the attention. Let's make it Hannah's birthday.

Ed Gamble

Hannah's birthday.



Stephen Graham

Hannah's birthday, yes. No, okay. So, now I'm bringing a lot back from the dead here, aren't I? Alright, let's have Hannah's mum, and her dad as well. Do you know what I mean? So, I've brought three from the dead.

Ed Gamble

You don't want to have to explain to Hannah that you've had this power, and you've not brought her mum and dad.

James Acaster

That you've forgot.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Well, exactly. That's why I've done it (ph 34.06). That's what my brain quickly did and went brrp brrp brrp. Yes. So, it was like, 'Okay, we'll have all of us then.' Okay. Yes.

Ed Gamble

And it would be nice for your mum to taste the New York wonton soup as well, right?

Stephen Graham

Of course.

Ed Gamble

As the fellow wonton soup fanatic.

Stephen Graham

Yes, and she'd go, 'Ooh. Well done, lad, you've found it.' Yes, so that's who's there, and we're in a nice round table, with one of those-, what are those lovely-,

Ed Gamble

Lazy Susan.

Stephen Graham

Lazy Susan. I love a Lazy Susan. That's a great name, isn't it?

James Acaster

It is a great name.

James Acaster

It's fun to turn it round.

Stephen Graham

Who came up with a Lazy Susan?



Ed Gamble

It wasn't Susan.

Stephen Graham

Definitely wasn't, because she was like, 'I'm not fucking lazy, you cheeky bastards.'

James Acaster

She was running late to the meal. Arrived.

Stephen Graham

It moves round in the middle, and who said, 'Hmm, I think we'll call that a Lazy Susan?' But anyway, one of those great tables, and let's stick with the theme. Let's make it all-, although none of the rest of the food is, but let's make it a lovely, kind of, Chinese restaurant.

Ed Gamble

Yes, nice.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

And what does make a great wonton soup? What is the criteria that you're looking for, every time you've had?

Stephen Graham

Flavour, pure flavour, but then not being stingy with the little wontons. Make sure that they've got a nice, big-, you know, they're solid.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Good filling.

Ed Gamble

You don't want to be looking for them, right?

Stephen Graham

No.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Stephen Graham

Because then it's all, isn't it? Do you know what I mean? Yes, nice, packed wontons.

Ed Gamble

Yes, nice.

James Acaster

You don't want it to leave you wonton more.

Ed Gamble

How are we feeling about that?

James Acaster

I'm feeling bad about it, as soon as I said it.

Ed Gamble

How do you think that would go down in Liverpool?

Stephen Graham

That's why I'm silent.

Ed Gamble

Yes. We were doing so well.

James Acaster

It probably wouldn't go well in Liverpool, if I said that.

Stephen Graham

I don't think that would go well in any fucking country.

James Acaster

Your dream main course?

Stephen Graham

Okay.

James Acaster

Stephen.

Stephen Graham

Now, I'm torn between two. Hannah's roast dinner is phenomenal.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Stephen Graham

She makes an amazing roast dinner, but I think I'd be too full, and I want to doss on the couch after it. So, that's not going to happen, but it is amazing. So, what I am going to do is I'm going to pull it from the memory banks, and again, it's in New York, but I can mix it about with other things, can't I?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

So, me and my mate, Buck, we went down to the Chelsea Harbour, is it, I think?

Ed Gamble

Okay, yes.

Stephen Graham

To this wonderful fish market, and we bought lobsters.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

Stephen Graham

Right? But they weren't, like, ridiculously expensive, and they were two big, massive lobsters, huge lobsters, and he brought these lobsters, and he brought some potatoes. Because I think we'd been to a restaurant a couple of nights before, and we had lobsters, and it was lovely. Lobster's my favourite, it's delicious. And he was like, 'We should buy some,' and I was like, 'What? Where from?' And he was like, 'We'll go to Chelsea Harbour,' and I was like, 'What, you can cook lobsters?' And he was like, 'Yes, we've got a big pot, we'll just do them.' So, we bought these massive giant lobsters, and he bought some potatoes, and he filled the pot, and he literally, you know, it's not the nicest thing when it comes to cooking lobsters. It's not very-,

Ed Gamble

But you do have to do that bit, otherwise it's even weirder I think.

Stephen Graham

Well, of course, yes. Yes, that would be very weird.

Ed Gamble

I don't want to be cruel, so I'm just going to eat it like a big apple.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Yes, that wouldn't-,

James Acaster

In the Big Apple.



Stephen Graham

In the Big Apple.

James Acaster

That gets something in Liverpool, that joke. If I did eat it like a big apple in the Big Apple, surely that would get something.

Stephen Graham

Do I look like I'm laughing?

James Acaster

No. No, you don't, to be fair.

Stephen Graham

So, when you make me laugh, I will laugh.

James Acaster

Yes, that's fair.

Stephen Graham

Ed's done it a good few times, and I have, haven't I? You've seen me laugh, haven't you?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I love gigging Liverpool.

Stephen Graham

Well, I'm capable of laughter. We are all capable of laughter if we are made to laugh.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Stephen Graham

Okay, so back to the story.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

He throws the lobsters in the pot with some potatoes, and then we cracked them open, and we had with a little-, that was it, so those lobsters, and he some potatoes. But what I would have with my lobster, I'd have that lobster from, I'd have my Auntie Vera's chips because they're just unbelievable. They were unbelievable, they were the best chips ever, they were phenomenal, my Auntie Vera's chips. They were thick, crispy, crunchy, but dead soft in the middle. They were the perfect chip.



James Acaster

She had, like, a fryer at home?

Stephen Graham

Yes, she did, yes, like, the old-, none of this air fryer, you know, it was proper old-fashioned, big proper chip pan. Better than chippy chips.

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble

That's a big call.

Stephen Graham

And I'm saying it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes, I'm saying it.

James Acaster

That's huge.

Stephen Graham

Better than chippy chips.

James Acaster

Wow.

Stephen Graham

Well better. These were gorgeous chips, so we'll have them, and then I'd have some broccoli, some long stem broccoli, little bit of fresh chilli, and some parmesan on the top.

Ed Gamble

Lovely.

Stephen Graham

And that's it. I'm giving you a lemon, just to squeeze gently over the lobster.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.



Ed Gamble

Are you putting butter on the lobster as well?

Stephen Graham

I'm not, Ed, just because we're in training for, you know, we've got to lose a little bit of weight, so I'm not.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

But you're more than welcome to.

Ed Gamble

Sure.

Stephen Graham

You can even do a Thermidor sauce if you want.

Ed Gamble

I always think that's, yes, I mean, it's not like I'm eating lobster everyday or anything, but just the meat of it is so good, with a bit of butter is delicious, so good.

James Acaster

If it's really good quality, and the thing has just got loads of flavour in it anyway, you, kind of, don't want to cover that up.

Stephen Graham

No, you don't want to mess with it too much, do you?

James Acaster

Sounds really nice.

Stephen Graham

Do you like that?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, oh, God, yes, that sounds amazing.

Stephen Graham

He's getting stuck into that.



James Acaster

I'd get stuck into that. Are you putting on a bib for the lobster? Are you a bib guy?

Stephen Graham

Yes, yes, yes. Yes, you want to get stuck right into it, don't you?

James Acaster

Yes, and I like the fact you've got your Auntie Vera's chips with that as well, like, you've got two memories going on at once there, simultaneously.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, you've clearly always thought, 'What if I could just combine those chips with this?'

Stephen Graham

Well, yes, that was exactly it.

Ed Gamble

Are your Auntie Vera's chips, do you think about them every time you're having chips?

Stephen Graham

I haven't had chips for a long time, but my Auntie Vera used to make the best chips bar none. My mum was alright, but she didn't have a patch on my Auntie Vera's chips.

Ed Gamble

Yes. So, that's almost good that you've had the best chips you'll ever have.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, now, when you're in training and you're not having chips, you don't worry about it because they're going to be as good.

Stephen Graham

No, and even to the extent, when I took my-, Grace and Alfie, when we go to Liverpool, occasionally, and when my Auntie Vera was around and we'd go to our Vera's, the first thing those two kids would say was, 'Vera, can we have some chips?' And she'd go, 'Yes, alright.'

James Acaster

So, your dream side dish.



Stephen Graham

Can I have some spinach?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Okay, I'll have a little bit of spinach then as well, with garlic, fresh garlic, yes, mixed in there with the spinach.

Ed Gamble

I do love spinach more and more, I'm a big broccoli and spinach guy, because growing up, you're like, 'Just get that down.' You know, you're supposed to eat it, if you want everything else, but now, I look forward to the broccoli and spinach.

Stephen Graham

Yes, it's nice, isn't it?

Ed Gamble

Yes. It's a good vehicle for garlic and butter essentially, yes, yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Great vehicle. See, that's funny, he's funny.

James Acaster

What, with the vehicle?

Stephen Graham

Yes, I liked it.

James Acaster

Because he said vehicle, are you sure?

James Acaster

That was like a small-

Stephen Graham

Hang on, do I have to explain? I just thought it was funny, he said a vehicle, and I just saw some little broccoli sitting on some, you know, some garlic sitting on a broccoli. It's a vehicle, it's-.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's what I was doing.



Stephen Graham

He played with the words, he was very clever.

James Acaster

That's you doing the work. He didn't mean a little bit of garlic sitting on the broccoli.

Stephen Graham

No, that's not me doing the work, it's given for my head to go, 'Aha, that's funny.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, sometimes you just have to plant the seed when you're a funny comedian.

James Acaster

What the-,

Stephen Graham

Funny is natural anyway, you know, some people are naturally funny.

Ed Gamble

No matter what I'm saying-,

Stephen Graham

Ed and Gene Wilder don't have to work at it, you do.

James Acaster

Ed and Gene Wilder.

Stephen Graham

That's what I've said, yes.

James Acaster

What the-, you in that echelon now?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Listen, I'm your biggest fan, Ed, I big you up all the time.

Ed Gamble

That's true.

James Acaster

But Wilder?



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

We're talking Gene Wilder.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And you're saying yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Wow. Fair enough.

Ed Gamble

Wonka. I'm Wonka.

James Acaster

You're Wonka now.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Holy moly. Well, congratulations.

Ed Gamble

Thank you.

James Acaster

I didn't know you were the new Gene Wilder.

Ed Gamble

Sometimes, it doesn't matter what you say, if you're funny, it just-,

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It just seeps out your pores, doesn't it, Stephen?



Stephen Graham

It's just a natural ability.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

So, you meant to put in the image of a little bit of garlic riding on some broccoli like a vehicle?

Ed Gamble

No, the broccoli is the vehicle, yes.

Stephen Graham

The broccoli's the vehicle. Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, so the broccoli is riding on the broccoli.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but now you're explaining it, you've made it not funny, which is just-,

Stephen Graham

With the chilli and stuff. It has to just hit you subliminally, do you know what I mean? I just saw them sitting on that vehicle.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Stephen Graham

He brought the garlic and the chilli to life.

James Acaster

Put yourself in my shoes. If I'm seeing Romesh on a chat show, and he's my friend and he's getting absolutely destroyed, like, torn limb from limb. The audience applauded your comment.

Stephen Graham

I think they found me funny, and I think that's, like you know.

James Acaster

Did you speak to Romesh in the green room after?

Stephen Graham

Yes. Me and Romesh text often, he's a lovely fellow, yes, we get on really well.



Ed Gamble

So, Romesh didn't mind, and you've gone on this campaign.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

On Romesh's behalf, you haven't even checked with him.

Stephen Graham

In the defence of what?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I'm defending all comedy, all comedians.

Ed Gamble

Stephen likes comedy.

Stephen Graham

I love comedy.

James Acaster

Yes, I guess I can't say you don't because you did find the vehicle joke funny.

Stephen Graham

And at the time, it was funny.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I do accept full responsibility for running the joke into the ground and removing the humour from it.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Wilder wouldn't do that.

Stephen Graham

And you can tell I like comedy because I plucked out Gene Wilder from nowhere, and even you were impressed.



James Acaster

I was quite impressed, it did come out of nowhere.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

I was like-,

Ed Gamble

Not nowhere, I'm similar to Gene Wilder.

Stephen Graham

And only a true comedian could know how funny Gene Wilder actually was.

James Acaster

Yes, that's true.

Stephen Graham

That's why it hurt you.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

See, what I've done is I've beaten you without raising a finger.

James Acaster

Yes, that is what's scary about it. It's, like, the fight has already happened in a way.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

It's psychological.

James Acaster

It's psychological.

Stephen Graham

And it's over, we now don't need to fight.

James Acaster

Completely in my own head.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

It's, like, you know, because we were talking about food, and now I'm just defeated, and you know in This is England and you're talking about the food.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

With the scene with Milky. You're talking about rice and peas and making food.

Stephen Graham

Of course, yes.

James Acaster

And that's how I feel.

Stephen Graham

Yes. Can I tell you a quick little story about that?

Ed Gamble

Please.

James Acaster

I think I know this.

Stephen Graham

Oh, do you?

Ed Gamble

Well, what an awful interview technique.

James Acaster

Sorry.

Ed Gamble

Imagine that having a guest on, and them saying they're going to tell a story, and going, 'I know this. I think I know this one before you tell it.'



James Acaster

I'm just sorry, I'm just too in my own head. I can't even interview people now. I'm just letting them-, I'm just spoiling people's stories. I mean, Graham Norton knows everyone's stories before he-, Graham Norton is just setting people up. He never says, 'Stop you there, I know this.'

Ed Gamble

I know this one, the researcher told me it.

James Acaster

I know this one-,

Stephen Graham

Yes, he's never done that, has he?

Ed Gamble

No. I don't know the story, Stephen.

Stephen Graham

Okay, I'll tell you.

Ed Gamble

Thank you.

Stephen Graham

The night before we did that scene.

James Acaster

Yes, I know this.

Stephen Graham

Okay, but I shall tell it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

I asked Shane and I asked Shimmy, who played Milky, because we were filming in Nottingham I think at that time, and I asked if we could go to his nana's house, and his nana could make us some proper rice and peas, and we sat down and had a really lovely, lovely dinner and I met his family. And it was, kind of, you know, for me, I wanted to do that so we could have that experience, and then also, in the same respect, I wanted his nana and his side of the family to know what we were going to do the next day because we didn't really know what we were going to do. We had an idea of where it might go, but the beauty and the genius that is Shane Meadows, that's how we work, you know? You improvise it so



you're never sure what's going to happen. You don't really have an end goal, it's all about where we go to and how we get there creatively as a collective, which is beautiful, which is a wonderful way to work.

So, it was for me to explain that whatever happened that next day, that's not how Stephen thinks, that's all, and that's not where Stephen comes from, just to really explain it to them. But also, you know, to share that-, there's something lovely about sharing a meal with someone else's family, isn't it, do you know what I mean? They accept you into their family, and it was really beautiful, and also, I felt it was vital and important for me to explain that I'm mixed race as well, do you know what I mean? So, they completely understood where I was coming from, and then it just gave us that, kind of, sense of when we were talking about it within the scene, we have that emotional connection and experience with it because we did it last night. So, I know what it's like to be in his joyous family, and he's speaking about what his family are like and how lovely it is, because I met his aunties, his uncles, his nana, so I saw that, do you know what I mean? And then we took that, kind of, knowledge and information, and that emotional connection, with sitting round together, into the experience of the scene, which just gave it that real sense of gravity as well, I suppose, do you know what I mean? It came from a place of truth and authenticity, which is something I think every actor is striving for.

James Acaster

When you did the TV series for This is England and the character came back, is it the same process there with the improvising? Because I remember, because I love the film so much, and then the TV series was almost another magic trick where you go-, because obviously, you always go, 'Oh, I hope that they don't undo what happened in the film.' And especially bringing your character back, and trying to reconcile with that character, and I felt that by the end, it was the perfect end to it, but it could have gone so many ways. Were you improvising that as well, what those characters were doing in the TV series, or did you have a really clear thing of this is where we want this to go between these two characters?

Stephen Graham

No, again, it's that same, kind of, process. Jack as well, Jack Thorne, who wrote that with Shane, they have a structure, and we have an idea of what's going to happen in the scene, but then, again, we're allowed to improvise and create in that process, but we do have a rough idea where we're going to go to, and it's about us finding the same objective to get it to get there, do you know what I mean? But it's all improvised. Jack writes so beautifully. You absorb his writing, and then you speak within the scenes, and you suddenly realise that oh, yes, I'm saying a lot of the stuff that I've read, but you're also adding on top of it, do you know what I mean? So, yes, and that was one of the key reasons I did say-, because like you've just said there, I had that same fear thinking, 'Is it going to be good as the film? Surely, the film is on its own, we should leave it alone.' But when it was explained, and for me, it was more about then getting to follow the other characters, and letting them all have a moment in the sunshine, do you know what I mean? And I thought it was a beautiful series, I thought it was so well done, the television series.

James Acaster

That whole final series, you know, for me, when I was watching it, it's this is all about forgiveness, and I just think that's an important thing for all of us to just keep in mind in this room, with each other.



Stephen Graham

I see what you've done.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

I see where you're going.

James Acaster

Just life in general.

Stephen Graham

Yes, no, I get that, and you've done really well, but, you know, I think one of the key aspects of forgiveness is to make sure that the other person, as well as yourself, accepts full accountability for their behaviour.

Ed Gamble

Yes, because then they're still holding onto something, and you can never truly-,

James Acaster

Oh, fucking pipe down, Wonka, I'm trying to defend myself here.
Your dream drink, Stephen Graham.

Stephen Graham

Where my nana used to live, on a road, on my nana's road, the lemo van used to come round, and the lemo van, I think it was Schofield's lemonade, and it was a red van, and back in the day, where you'd get crates of lemo delivered, do you know what I mean? And if you gave the bottle back, it was 10p, the bottle was 10p and you got your 10p pence, but there used to be all these lovely flavours, but I'm just thinking about it, and I remember during the summer, running round the block and that, and playing footie, and just running everywhere, and we were about thirteen, twelve, probably about eleven, twelve, ten, eleven, twelve. Running into my nana's, grabbing the lemo out the fridge, and just taking the top off, and just, you know that guzzle where you feel you're about to have a heart attack, but your eyes are popping out, you've got tears coming down your face, and you're just-, and then you put it down, and then that lovely bit in Elf, and you just had this almighty burp, didn't you? From nowhere. That, and the particular flavour that I used to hope was in the fridge, I think it was pineapple.

James Acaster

Oh.

Ed Gamble

Pineapple lemonade.



Stephen Graham

Pineapple lemonade.

Ed Gamble

Great.

Stephen Graham

Full of thousand of E numbers, I mean, of course it was.

Ed Gamble

Was it bright yellow?

Stephen Graham

Bright yellow. Each kid was getting a hell of a head rush and a buzz from it straight away, do you know what I mean? It was our first dabble with drugs really, lemonade with the amount of stuff that must have been in it, the amount of sugar and that, but that was it, and it was Schofield's lemonade. It was Schofield's lemonade, and it was the pineapple flavour.

Ed Gamble

Was that the best tasting burp from the lemonade?

Stephen Graham

Yes, deffo.

Ed Gamble

Yes, proper taste of pineapple when it comes back up.

Stephen Graham

Yes, and it was from the depths of your sole as well, wasn't it? It wasn't just like a little oops, excuse me, it was-,

Ed Gamble

I can't imagine how excited I would have been if there was a lemonade van coming round my house. I'd be at the window all day.

Stephen Graham

It was great.

James Acaster

Sounds great. I've never seen a lemonade van before, I'd absolutely love it.

Stephen Graham

Every week the lemo van used to come round, and also, you'd jump on the back of it as well and get a little ride and get shouted at and have to jump off. Yes, on the back of the lemo van.



Ed Gamble

Poor lemo van driver.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Every street he'd go to.

Stephen Graham

What are you doing you little shits? Get off my van.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

'Oh come on it's a taky', yes, that's what we were like when we were little.

James Acaster

Constantly having to tell kids to get off his van.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

What were the other flavours, do you remember?

Stephen Graham

Yes. They had American cream soda.

Ed Gamble

Nice. Oh, I love cream soda.

James Acaster

I'd be on that.

Stephen Graham

Which was green.

Ed Gamble

Wow.



Stephen Graham

Fluorescent green. Then they had your traditional lemonade, you had, not Coca-Cola, you had a cola. Oh, and then there was a kind of defunct-, oh dandelion and burdock.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

James Acaster

Course, yes.

Stephen Graham

Dandelion and burdock, and then they had this, kind of, like, Tizer, but not quite Tizer, because it wasn't Tizer.

Ed Gamble

Was it orange?

Stephen Graham

Oh, they had an orange, they did have an orange.

Ed Gamble

Oh, okay.

Stephen Graham

But then they had another flavour, like a red, maybe it was raspberry, but it wasn't quite raspberry, do you know what I mean? Yes, so they had a crate, we used to get a crate, my nana used to get a crate every-, I don't know, it must have been Friday or something like that.

Ed Gamble

Great.

James Acaster

And was Schofield's a local-, was that that guy, or was it-,

Stephen Graham

I don't know if he was that fella, it must have been the make of the-, it must have been the company that made the lemonade, and the bottles, they had Schofield's on the bottle, Schoey's bottles. I remember that because Drew Schofield lived across the road from my nana, and at first, when I was a kid, I used to think they were his. Drew Schofield is one of the reasons why I'm an actor today, you know, he's from Liverpool, he's a wonderful actor, and he was in a thing called Scully when I was a kid, and because he lived across the road from my nana, and I'd see him, I knew that being an actor could be achievable. It was obtainable because there's Drew, and he lives across the road, so if Drew can do it, maybe I can do it. I even said that to the careers officer, when the careers office went, 'So, what do you want to do?' And I went, 'I want to be an actor.' He's like, 'No, come on, lad, what do you want to



do?' I was like, 'Yes, I want to be an actor.' He was like, 'No, no, come on, proper job.' You'd be a bricky or an electrician or something. I went, 'No, I want to be an actor.' He went, 'No, you can't be an actor.' I went, 'I can, Drew's an actor.' He had no fucking answer to that, did he? Because Drew was an actor, and Drew is an actor, and he's a phenomenal actor. His name is Drew Schofield, that's the connection.

Ed Gamble

But he's not connected to the lemonade?

Stephen Graham

I don't think so, I'll have to ask him, but no, I don't think the lemo had anything to do with him.

Ed Gamble

If you'd found out he was, that might have destroyed your dreams of being an actor because you're like, 'Of course, he's in the biz.'

James Acaster

He actually runs a lemonade stand.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Well, maybe that could have been his cover, do you know what I mean?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. I had a teacher at school tell me that I couldn't do any of, you know, I was saying I wanted to do comedy and a bunch of different things, she said, 'You can't do that, it's not going to happen.' And then she turned-, no, I'm not sure what you're going to think of this story, actually.

Ed Gamble

You are so in your own head. You've never said that. You've never pre-empted one of your stories by saying, 'I'm not sure what you're going to think of-,'

James Acaster

Well, we'll see what your opinion is.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Oh, by the way, I've heard this one.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. You know this one.



Ed Gamble

I know this one.

James Acaster

You know what happens.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

I was on tour, I went on stage in Cambridge and someone had not just their feet but their entire legs on the stage. I looked, and it was her, my teacher from school who told me I couldn't do this. And I looked down, it was her, with a bunch of her mates, they were hammered. And they just ruined the whole show, the whole show just heckling and then when I tried to deal with them they'd turn serious and go, 'Show some respect, that's your teacher.' At the time I was, like, I don't know, 30. I was like, 'I'm 30 years old, they don't teach you any more.' Like, 'Ah, shut up.' They ruined it, and I came off stage and I was still on Facebook at the time. And I had a message from her, because she had followed me on Facebook after I'd left school. And she said, she was hammered, she was like, 'That was great, we had a great night, we're in the pub across the street. Come and have a drink with us.'

Stephen Graham

Oh, hang on, where's this going?

James Acaster

Yes, and now she's my wife. I got him. I got Stephen Graham. I got him, everyone, he's laughing. Gene Wilder, come with me and you'll be in a world of pure imagination. But basically, I said to her, 'I'm not going for a drink with you.' I didn't go for a drink with her and then she said, 'The people next to us, they bollocked us for ruining the show. They said we ruined the show, they don't know what comedy is.' And I said, 'Actually,' and I would never do this now, I'd just ignore the message. But I went, 'Actually, you did, kind of, ruin it.' She was like, 'No, we didn't.' And she was like, 'That's what comedy is about.' And I was like, 'Well.' And this went on for a week, back and forth, kept replying to her, arguing with my old school teacher. She was like, 'You don't know what you're on about, we were great.' And then a local Cambridge newspaper wrote a review of it, the gig, and the headline was something like, 'Sadly,' or, 'Tragically,' it started off.

Stephen Graham

Oh, god.

James Acaster

'Comedian's gig tragically ruined by ex-teacher,' was the headline.

Ed Gamble

Oh, okay, I did not know this story, that was amazing.



James Acaster

The whole article slagged her off. So, I just forwarded it to her. So I just had to forward it and went, 'I think some people agree with me that you did ruin it.'

Ed Gamble

Any response from her?

James Acaster

She did, she said, 'Well, fair enough then, I'm sorry.' And that was it. I never saw her.

Ed Gamble

Oh, so she did apologise.

James Acaster

She did apologise at the end, yes.

We arrive at your dream dessert, do you have a sweet tooth, are you into desserts?

Stephen Graham

I can be, yes, occasionally. But there are two. One sounds quite poncy and the other one's really, kind of, yes. I'll go with the poncy one first.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

Stephen Graham

I've forgotten the name of the restaurant, hang on.

Ed Gamble

Where is it?

Stephen Graham

You've got the BAFTA building there and it's just down that way a little bit. And it's called.

Ed Gamble

The Wolseley?

Stephen Graham

That's it.

Ed Gamble

Oh, wow.

James Acaster

Got it.



Stephen Graham

Well done.

James Acaster

Well done, Ed.

Stephen Graham

Well done, Ed. Yes, well done.

Ed Gamble

Not bad.

Stephen Graham

And you can't just pull it out of my head, can you.

James Acaster

He did. Ed can do, yes. He just pulled it out of your head, it's amazing. I've got to admit that that was good.

Ed Gamble

Come with me.

Stephen Graham

Okay, so it's in there, it's in the Wolseley which is a really lovely establishment.

Ed Gamble

It is.

Stephen Graham

And it is a mille-feuille.

James Acaster

Ah. You looked so happy just remembering it there.

Stephen Graham

Well, because it's absolutely delicious, yes. The particular one that they do is gorgeous.

James Acaster

And what is it, what is that dessert?

Stephen Graham

Ed, do you want to describe the perfect mille-feuille?



Ed Gamble

Puff pastry layers with sweetened cream, would you say, in-between. Sometimes with fruit, maybe with raspberries or something like that, dusted with icing sugar on the top.

Stephen Graham

It's got to be dusted.

Ed Gamble

Yes. And, like, beautiful soft, creamy centre but then also the real texture of the snap of the puff pastry.

Stephen Graham

Yes, it's perfect. What a description, yes.

James Acaster

That's well described.

Stephen Graham

Yes, top marks. So, that's one of them. The other one is my nana's apple crumble.

Ed Gamble

Beautiful.

Stephen Graham

You know, it was just so lovely and I just remember it so much as a kid. I have such fond, vivid memories of being in my nana's kitchen. We come from a big family, a huge family, and Sundays and that, she used to make dinners but it would be all different times. You know, people would be coming into the house at different times and all that and everything. And she'd make a wonderful Sunday dinner, but her apple crumble was unbelievable. Absolutely unbelievable. It was just the perfect consistency. There was loads of crumble because I hate it when they just give you the tiny sliver of crumble. The crumble was thick and you could really get your teeth into it, but then the apples were soft but still slightly, just enough, you know, that al dente type at the beginning. Just for that initial, but then it was like. Yes, and her layer of pastry as well at the bottom was perfect, it just used to add that right density to it and it was just delicious. And the custard was always, always home-made.

James Acaster

Beautiful.

Stephen Graham

Always home-made. No disrespect to you, but none of the Ambrosia out-of-the-tin stuff, do you know what I mean? Or these days, out of the carton, which I find it strange.

James Acaster

Yes, it comes in the carton, it feels weird.



Stephen Graham

What are they doing? What are you playing at? Custard in a carton, no, no, no don't do that. Don't do that. But they do. But this was proper made from scratch and it was absolutely delicious, yes. So, I think that has to be up there. And I just remember, you know, in my nana's kitchen as well, she used to make little lemon tarts and jam tarts and loads of little fairy cakes and stuff like that. And mixing the stuff in the bowl, mixing it all together in a bowl, and then about three or four of us stood there waiting to get the spoon. It sounds terrible these days, but get the spoon and she'd take it back and give it to the next one. Yes, it was lovely.

James Acaster

It was the best, getting the spoon. I remember once, and this isn't really going to do me any favours in trying to sound tough, I mean that ship's sailed, but I was in the Scouts for ages. I remember there was one night where they had us making something, I don't know, it was probably cakes or something or it was Pancake Day or some shit, and we all wanted to just have the mixture. And there was this Scout Master who was a bit stern and he said, 'If you eat that, you will die.' I remember it really vividly because we were all like, 'We've been eating this all our life. We're all fine.' He was like, 'Do not eat that, that is basically poison and if you do,' he was very serious about it.

Ed Gamble

The amount of raw dough I ate as a child, love it, absolutely love.

James Acaster

It's great, it's the best bit. I was like, 'Don't cook it, mum. We just want that.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

So, when Ben and Jerry's started doing cookie dough in ice cream, I was like, 'Finally, someone gets me.'

Stephen Graham

Yes, someone understands who I am, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, I love sweet stuff, I've got a big sweet tooth, it's a big part of the podcast. I can tell you, the only sweet thing that I don't like, Stephen, and it makes me wince just thinking about it.

Ed Gamble

It's mille-feuille and Stephen's nana's apple crumble.



James Acaster

Imagine. Imagine if I tried that right at the end.

Ed Gamble

You can get away with the mille-feuille but stay away from the nana.

James Acaster

Absolutely. Taking my life in my own hands, all the bare-knuckle training comes in, I'd be dead. No, it's the sugar in the kettle, in the water, in Time. That makes me wince. Every time I think about that, it's one of the most painful scenes I think I've ever seen in a TV show, in a film, anything. Like, obviously, the performance of the person who has it chunked on them, they just do it so well.

Stephen Graham

Shot brilliantly as well, wasn't it.

James Acaster

Yes, it was so fast.

Stephen Graham

Because we're in there as well, we're in the room, we come in, we see the kettle, we see it open like, 'What are you doing, what's going on?' And then we go in and then we see the action of and we come back with person and we hear the scream. Chilling.

James Acaster

It's so quickly done, horrible.

Stephen Graham

Jimmy McGovern, what a marvellous writer.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

But, again, that's based and those things that really happens in those situations.

James Acaster

Yes, which I didn't know. I, obviously, didn't know anything about that.

Stephen Graham

James Nelson Joyce, who's also in A Thousand Blows.

James Acaster

Oh, wow.



Stephen Graham

He plays my brother in A Thousand Blows, James. He plays Treacle. I play Sugar, he plays Treacle.

James Acaster

Yes, keep you two apart.

Stephen Graham

Yes.

James Acaster

Actually, sugar and treacle, that's nice.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's true. We shot something there, do you remember?

James Acaster

Oh, yes, we did.

Ed Gamble

In the prison in Shrewsbury.

James Acaster

In the same prison that you shot Time in, yes, we did Celebrity Hunted, Ed and I, where you get hunted by professional manhunters.

Stephen Graham

Oh, I've seen that on Channel Four, I've seen the trailers of it, was it good fun to do?

James Acaster

Yes, but they always want to start it somewhere different and they were like, 'This is going to be you're all in a prison and you break out of a prison.' And as soon as we got there, that's the first thing I said, 'They shot Time here.'

Ed Gamble

Well, one of the cells has signs up saying.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Yes, but he was in that cell.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

Sean's character was in that cell.

James Acaster

Yes. So, yes, they're very proud of it there, as they should be.

Stephen Graham

How did you get on with it?

Ed Gamble

We tried to be funny, Stephen-

James Acaster

So you can imagine, one of us did well. Yes.

Ed Gamble

We lasted a week.

Stephen Graham

Did you?

James Acaster

Yes, we lasted a week.

Stephen Graham

Now, be honest with me then, is it like, 'Okay, filming's finished now, go back to your hotel?'

Ed Gamble

No, not at all. So, you've got to find places to stay along the way by a certain point when they stop filming.

Stephen Graham

Legitimately?

Ed Gamble

Legitimately, yes. So, we'd basically be in a race to get to where we wanted to go to be able to sleep. So, we were going to pubs and begging for a room and all of that sort of stuff. It was more real than I thought. If I'd known how real it was, I wouldn't have signed up for it.

James Acaster

It was really good watching him realise that. It was fun. But, yes, I enjoyed it, I had a lovely time, and we had some good food and drink there. The best pint I've ever had was on the run with Ed, at the Timothy Taylor.



Ed Gamble

Yes, there's nothing more refreshing than a pint after a long day on the run.

James Acaster

Yes, I love that. Running for your life. I'm going to read your menu back to you now, see how you feel about it. You would like tap water from?

Ed Gamble

Rovaniemi.

James Acaster

You would like poppadoms, we didn't really talk much about that. Starter, you would like wonton soup from Chinatown in New York. Main course, you would like lobster from Chelsea Harbour, Aunty Vera's chips on the side, your side dish we've got the long stem broccoli with the chilli and the parmesan with a bit of lemon to go over all the lobster. And spinach and garlic, as well, on the side. Drink, Schofield's pineapple lemonade. Dessert, the mille-feuille from the Wolseley and nana's apple crumble with home-made custard.

Ed Gamble

Beautiful.

James Acaster

What do you think about that?

Stephen Graham

I think that sounds really nice, yes.

James Acaster

That does sound really nice.

Ed Gamble

The two desserts sum up your menu really nicely because there are some fancy things in your menu and then some stuff that means loads to you from being a kid, as well. That's a really nice mix of the two things.

Stephen Graham

Yes, I never thought about it like that.

Ed Gamble

Like, the lobster and Aunty Vera's chips.

Stephen Graham

Yes.



James Acaster

And, look, I'd like to take this opportunity, Stephen, to apologise for what I said to Izuka Hoyle in that episode, I think that was-

Ed Gamble

Oh, but he doesn't know about the other episodes yet.

Stephen Graham

I think we can both safely say that, you know, we'll put this behind us.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stephen Graham

I just want you to know, though, James, that I do find you funny.

James Acaster

Thank you, Stephen.

Stephen Graham

I might not show it that often, but I do find you funny.

James Acaster

Thank you. You're a gifted actor, and you're an inspiration to-

Stephen Graham

Some of us.

James Acaster

Ed, you're pointing at Ed.

Stephen Graham

Are born great. And some of us achieve greatness, and some of us just have greatness thrust upon us.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Which one is James?

Stephen Graham

He's not in any of them.

Ed Gamble

Thank you so much for coming to the Dream Restaurant, Stephen.



Stephen Graham

It's been an absolute pleasure,

James Acaster

Thank you so much, Stephen.

Ed Gamble

So, how do you think that went, James?

James Acaster

Well, we don't have to release all the episodes we record, do we? Bonito?

Ed Gamble

I mean, that one.

James Acaster

We don't have to release all the episodes.

Ed Gamble

Well, we don't have to, but that one, I think, ranks probably in my top three. Top one, actually. To be honest, top one, that is the most fun I've had during a recording of this podcast. What an amazing man he is, we're releasing this episode, James.

James Acaster

I think the listeners should bear in mind that the way stuff sounds on audio isn't necessarily how it is in the room.

Ed Gamble

But I'm here to say that it's exactly what it was in the room. That was so much fun, man.

James Acaster

Yes, well, of course it was fun for you. You were called Gene Wilder.

Ed Gamble

Yes, he loved me.

James Acaster

And you came up with that brilliant garlic vehicle bit.

Ed Gamble

I didn't dare say it at the time, but that wasn't supposed to be a joke.

James Acaster

Wow.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble

But, you know, he loved it.

James Acaster

Yes, he loved it. Oh, man, I guess people should go and watch A Thousand Blows on Disney Plus.

Ed Gamble

I mean, I was going to watch it anyway but I'm going to watch it with a whole new appreciation of what it's like.

James Acaster

I don't know if I will be able to watch all of it. I mean, just a still image of him is like he's trying to punch out the camera.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's your POV, mate.

James Acaster

It's my POV.

Ed Gamble

I think he's still outside.

James Acaster

Oh, God, he is.

Ed Gamble

James genuinely looked.

James Acaster

I did look, yes. I thought he might be outside still.

Ed Gamble

Watch A Thousand Blows on Disney Plus from 21st Feb and watch Adolescence on Netflix, that is coming soon. Both of them look absolutely amazing and what an episode. Listen to this episode again, and I cannot wait to see what clips Benito picks for this episode.



James Acaster

Benito, don't put any clips out. There's no need to put clips out of this episode.

Ed Gamble

I think a mega mix of all the times where Stephen got angry and was dead staring at you. Because a lot of people won't be able to appreciate that from the audio when he was just absolutely dead staring at you. I think, a mega mix of all of those things strung together and we release it and say, 'Most awkward podcast of all time.'

James Acaster

Benito, do not do a mega mix and do not say, 'Most awkward podcast.' Don't try and make this a bigger deal than it is.

Ed Gamble

This is viral beyond viral.

James Acaster

Some episodes should be allowed to fly under the radar, that's all I'm saying.

Ed Gamble

Not this one. This is way above radar.

James Acaster

Does that mean it's also not on the radar? It's so high above the radar it's not on there?

Ed Gamble

No, it's on radar.

James Acaster

Oh, God.

Ed Gamble

It's, like, this is a commercial passenger jet.

James Acaster

Okay, well.

Ed Gamble

He didn't say knuckle sandwich, did he?

James Acaster

No.



Ed Gamble

So, if you tried to give him a knuckle sandwich, he would have avoided eating that.

James Acaster

Yes, I don't think he would have eaten that, necessarily, if I'd offered him a knuckle sandwich.

Ed Gamble

Lovely menu, as well, got to be said.

James Acaster

Yes, to be fair, the menu was pretty delicious.

Ed Gamble

Really nice, some wonderful stories and memories from across Stephen's life.

James Acaster

You dropped me in it.

Ed Gamble

I didn't drop you in it.

James Acaster

You dropped me in it, I was just having a nice chat with him and you dropped me in it.

Ed Gamble

You were terrified from the beginning.

James Acaster

I was being nice and civil, you dropped me in it. And then Benito, the little snitch, played him the audio.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that was snitch-y, actually.

James Acaster

He's a snitch.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

You dropped me in it first and then he played the audio and that ruined everything. And if you hadn't done that.



Ed Gamble

It would have been a lovely episode anyway, but from the beginning, I think we had to tell him why there was an atmosphere created by you in the room. Because you didn't burst out the lamp, you didn't shout, 'Poppadoms or bread?' Because you were scared.

James Acaster

You can't prove I was scared.

Ed Gamble

Well, you went big in the intro, as soon as he walked into the studio, you looked like a little boy, quaking.

James Acaster

He's different in person, when you see him in person, he's actually quite tough.

Ed Gamble

Lovely, we got on really well, really nice man. Well, hopefully we have someone that you can overpower next week.

James Acaster

Who's next week? Benito, who's next week on the schedule?

Ed Gamble

Well, look, you need to go and have a little lie down, that was absolutely amazing, I loved every single second of that. The menu, meeting Stephen, his reaction to you. It was absolutely perfect. This is why, years into the game, we're still the best podcast out there.

James Acaster

We're still the best pod-

Ed Gamble

Oh, no, but unfortunately it's the final episode because James is now so in his own head he can't speak English. Also, before we go, please never, when a guest says, 'I've got a story about that,' say, 'I know this one.'

James Acaster

I did know it.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Listeners, I'll just step out of it quickly. Obviously, that was really fun. It was amazing meeting Stephen, it was amazing he went with that and improvised these incredible monologues, just what a talent that man is. And a lot of the stuff James was doing, big silly, what a great guy James is. Wonderful comedian, pitched it perfectly, eonito was the perfect snitch. But when James said, 'I know



that story,' that wasn't him trying to egg on the situation. He genuinely, a guest said, 'I've got a story about that,' and James went, 'I know that one.' That was total instinct from James.

James Acaster

So now I'm getting a real dressing down. I've had a load of comical ones and we've all been having a laugh but at the end of it I still get told off for real? I will put my hands up, it was insane that I said that.

Ed Gamble

Yes, we were having such a laugh. I mean, I really hope we can release some sort of clip where it shows Stephen laughing and enjoying it. Because to go from acting like he's going to kill James to laughing, just what an amazing thing to switch into, and such a nice, smiley man.

James Acaster

I love you, smiley man.

Ed Gamble

I don't know if you can tell, I'm buzzing after that episode.

James Acaster

Do you know what, I am going to say that now as well, at the end of the episode, he was a lovely man. A lovely, smiley man, we were all in on that. It was all fun, and I'm only saying that because I don't want another on our hands. I don't want everyone trolling Stephen Graham because they think he was mean to me.

Ed Gamble

No, they'll be trolling you, mate.

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

They'll be trolling you, because no one else in the UK is stupid enough to try and have a go at Stephen Graham. We'll see you next week, don't pre-empt guest stories.

James Acaster

We'll see, I make no promises.

Ed Gamble

Bu-Bye.

James Acaster

Goodbye.