



# Off Menu – Ep 260 – Rachel Stevens

**Ed Gamble**

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking the duck liver parfait of humour, spreading it onto the brioche toast of friendship and-, oh, that's nice.

**James Acaster**

Quack a doodle doo.

**Ed Gamble**

Quack a doodle doo. Of course, why didn't I say quack a doodle doo? That's what everyone would say.

**James Acaster**

That's Ed Gamble. My name is James Acaster.

**Ed Gamble**

Duck liver parfait.

**James Acaster**

Together, we own a dream restaurant, and every single week we invite in a guest, and we ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish, and drink, not in that order, and this week our guest is-

**Ed Gamble**

Chutney would have been nice on it.

**James Acaster**

Rachel Stevens.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel Stevens, of course, from S Club, a successful solo career. She's an icon James.

**James Acaster**

Yes. Obviously, we grew up watching the S Club TV show, watching them perform their songs, all over the television. Back in our day, when there wasn't no internet.

**Ed Gamble**

Who's this guy?



**James Acaster**

An old man. An old man watching telly. Sorry I'm making him northern and-, well, I mean, people will probably listen to that and go, 'I don't think that was northern James. You can't do an accent,' but there you go.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel, you might think, 'What's Rachel got to do with food?' Well, she's working with Activia at the moment, James.

**James Acaster**

Well, yes, nice to hear it. Promoting good gut health.

**Ed Gamble**

She's promoting good gut health. Will that come up? It rarely does on this podcast. I'd say this podcast, if anything, promotes bad gut health.

**James Acaster**

Yes, this is slightly balancing the scales, but not really.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, but, you know, maybe-, we need Rachel in here to tell us how to make our tummies feel nice.

**James Acaster**

Yes. So, hopefully we'll learn about that. However, maybe we won't even get that far, because if Rachel says a secret ingredient, an ingredient which we deem to be unacceptable, we will kick Rachel out of the dream restaurant, as is the rules. This week, the secret ingredient is party rings. S Club party.

**Ed Gamble**

S club party. I can't believe we got that at the same time. That's amazing.

**James Acaster**

That was quite good, wasn't it?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. Party rings, S Club party.

**James Acaster**

Ain't no party like an S Club party. So, therefore, we have gone for party food, and the epitome of party food is party rings.

**Ed Gamble**

Party rings, of course, because there's 'party' in the name. Hopefully she doesn't say that, James, because I'm looking forward to talking to her.



**James Acaster**

Surely, if you're promoting good gut health, party rings aren't on the menu.

**Ed Gamble**

Surely they're low down. Yes, too low down. This is the Off Menu of Rachel Stevens.

Welcome, Rachel, to the dream restaurant.

**Rachel Stevens**

Thank you for having me.

**James Acaster**

Welcome Rachel Stevens to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

**Rachel Stevens**

This is exciting.

**Ed Gamble**

Are you excited to be in the dream restaurant?

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm so excited. What are you cooking me? What you cooking me? What you making me?

**Ed Gamble**

Well, this is all up to you, Rachel. It's your dream. So, we'll cook you whatever you like.

**James Acaster**

Otherwise it would be-, maybe we should do that in the future. We decide what the guests have.

**Rachel Stevens**

That would be good, and you make it, and then hopefully you don't poison us.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. Do you think that would be a good podcast, though, to get guests in and tell them what they're eating?

**James Acaster**

Yes. We should try it once, at least, and go, 'Okay, starter, you've got this. Now you just talk about how feel about that.'

**Rachel Stevens**

I love this. We're designing a whole new podcast as well. Love this for us. This is great.



**James Acaster**

It's called the On Menu, and then we just do it-, we flip it.

**Rachel Stevens**

I love it. Amazing.

**James Acaster**

We've got to keep reinventing ourselves.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, that's true.

**James Acaster**

Also, we're talking to Rachel Stevens here. You've managed to keep yourself relevant, keep going for years. We need advice from you of how we're going to keep-, have a long career as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

God, good question. Can you teach me some comedy?

**James Acaster**

No. We are-, not many people find us funny.

**Rachel Stevens**

I do.

**Ed Gamble**

We can't teach you that Rachel, but can you teach us how to stay relevant?

**Rachel Stevens**

How the hell-, I don't know.

**James Acaster**

Keep packing out those venues.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, it's great being back out with S Club again. It's been so great, after all the-, 25 years was when we all started. So, to be back out there again has just been absolutely incredible.

**Ed Gamble**

What's the fanbase like now? Obviously, you had, like, a younger fanbase when it all started. Have they all grown up and come with you, and then brought along-,



**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. It was so lovely, actually. Before the shows, we'd do meet and greets, and, obviously, all the kids who were, like, five and six, are now grown up, with their own kids, and would share stories with us of how, you know, we were their childhood, and what we'd got them through, and it was really, really special, actually. It was lovely.

**Ed Gamble**

They're bringing their kids as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

Bringing their kids. A whole new generation of S Club fans, yes. So, it was great.

**James Acaster**

What was the most fun show to go on when you were starting out as S Club? Now, you know, they're wheeling you round these podcasts. We apologise. Probably not as fun as Live and Kicking, and stuff. What was the one you'd look forward to the most when S Club was starting out?

**Rachel Stevens**

The Saturday morning TV was so fun. SMTV, CDUK. It was such an exciting moment in time. All the big party-, like Party in the Park, all those big, massive shows in the park, all the roadshows. We were just always on, always go. It's so different now, yes, with everything being on social-, social media, we didn't have all of that back then. So, we were literally-, if we were going on a radio tour, we would go to every place. So, we were all over the place. You couldn't get rid of us for a while. We were everywhere.

**James Acaster**

You enjoyed your TV show.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

So, that's like-, nowadays, if you were literally on social media, trending every day. If you had a TV show back then, that's absolutely huge, whereas now there's so many TV shows.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, too many.

**James Acaster**

Now, if a band was told, 'You've got a TV show.' They'd be like, 'Oh, we're dead.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. That would be it. That would be the end.



**James Acaster**

'That's it. Our career's over. No one's going to watch that.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Back in the day, it was how it started, right?

**James Acaster**

Yes, you were on that as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

When you went on SMTV, did you ever do the sketches? I imagine you would have more skills in that department, because you had your TV show.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, we did all the-, what was it called, the-, you're probably too young.

**James Acaster**

Chums. We're not too young.

**Ed Gamble**

We're not too young. That's absolutely our-, that was our sweet spot, Chums.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh yeah, of course. How old would you have been, then?

**James Acaster**

Secondary school?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I remember-, that's when I wrote the Cat Deeley poem, secondary school.

**Rachel Stevens**

The Cat Deeley poem?

**James Acaster**

Yes. I sent it in, but they didn't read it out.



**Rachel Stevens**

Was she your crush?

**James Acaster**

Yes, of course she was.

**Rachel Stevens**

She's gorgeous, yes.

**James Acaster**

I was a red-blooded teen.

**Ed Gamble**

Not made of stone.

**James Acaster**

Not made of stone.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, she was gorgeous, wasn't she? She is gorgeous.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Do you remember the poem, James?

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, share. Share with the group.

**James Acaster**

No, not going to share.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, come on.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel Stevens is asking you to share the poem about Cat Deeley.

**James Acaster**

No, no, no, no, no.



**Ed Gamble**

Now, I know you've refused to do it in the past.

**Rachel Stevens**

Share a line. Just one line. Just give us a little taster. Come on.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, that's great, a little taster.

**James Acaster**

Well, I'll tell you what, there's a food line. So, that's relevant to the podcast.

**Ed Gamble**

I want the most embarrassing line.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. Come on.

**James Acaster**

Well, it's all embarrassing. 'And whilst eating my bowl full of pasta, looking at you, my heart would beat faster'. That's one of the lines.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's not embarrassing. That's really sweet.

**Ed Gamble**

What was the first bit? What is it? Something, eating my bowl of pasta?

**James Acaster**

'And while eating my bowl of pasta-,

**Ed Gamble**

'And while eating my bowl full of pasta-,

**James Acaster**

'Looking at you, my heart would beat faster'. They didn't read it out. I sent it in. I was pretty sure they'd read it out.

**Ed Gamble**

No, they probably put you on a watch list.

**James Acaster**

Yes. I'm probably not off that list.





**Rachel Stevens**

Love that.

**Ed Gamble**

Would you like that, if someone wrote you a poem that said, when they were eating pasta, their heart beat faster?

**Rachel Stevens**

I would love that so much. I would really love that. I was just thinking it wouldn't work if-, because you're from up north, right?

**James Acaster**

Yes, midlands.

**Rachel Stevens**

So, if you were saying 'faster', it wouldn't work.

**James Acaster**

Yes, 'paster'.

**Rachel Stevens**

'Paster', 'faster', yes.

**Ed Gamble**

'Eating my bowl of paster, you make my heart beat faster'.

**James Acaster**

That could work.

**Ed Gamble**

That's what I would have said, yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes, I'm never doing more than one line an episode. Any time SMTV gets brought up-,

**Ed Gamble**

Right. Well, I'll bring up SMTV every single episode.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, you'll finally get the full poem.

**Ed Gamble**

We'll piece together the whole thing, exactly.



**James Acaster**

I'm not giving you it in order. So, it's like Mr Chips.

**Rachel Stevens**

Did she ever hear this poem?

**James Acaster**

I don't know. I hope so. I hope someone read it to her.

**Rachel Stevens**

I think you need to send it to her now, if you've still-,

**James Acaster**

Do it again?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

I think that's weirder, maybe.

**James Acaster**

That is send it to her now?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes, probably would be.

**Rachel Stevens**

Did you say weird?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, and wonderful. Weird and wonderful.

**Ed Gamble**

That's why you want him to do it, right?



**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, that's weird. Yes.

**James Acaster**

We'll have to get her on this.

**Rachel Stevens**

I think she'd be very flattered. Yes.

**James Acaster**

Then I'll recite the whole thing.

**Ed Gamble**

Well, if that's a guarantee-,

**James Acaster**

Of course it's a guarantee. If we get Cat Deeley on the podcast, I'll recite the whole poem, but, listen, I'm not here to think about Cat Deeley. We've got Rachel Stevens in front of us.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

True.

**James Acaster**

Before we were going to start recording this, Rachel, I was going to ask you a question, and Benito made me save it for the podcast. So, I'll do this. I asked you about Sweet Dreams My LA Ex, your solo song. I've had this bit of trivia in my head about it for years, ever since it came out, to the point where I don't even know if it's true. Was it written by the same person who wrote Toxic by Britney Spears?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, Cathy Dennis.

**James Acaster**

There you go. Saved it for the pod. Well, I told you it was boring, but that's what I've always had in my head.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, but that feels like information that you could have found out for sure.

**Rachel Stevens**

And Can't Get You Out of My Head.



**James Acaster**

Wow.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, she had a good weekend.

**Ed Gamble**

That's amazing. You couldn't get it out of your head, and she wrote Can't Get Me Out of Your Head.

**James Acaster**

That is incredible.

**Ed Gamble**

That's incredible, and you couldn't get Cat Deeley out of your head.

**James Acaster**

No, never will be able to, and I wouldn't want to. Do you remember the first time you met the other members of S Club, what you thought of them all, individually?

**Rachel Stevens**

I met Hannah in the toilets at Pineapple Studios.

**James Acaster**

What? Pineapple Studios?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. We were at-, so, four of the band were already together. So, they held auditions for S Club. I didn't know about the audition process. I wasn't going for auditions at the time, or anything like that. I was working in fashion at the time, just started working, left college, and my brother was working at Sony Records, in the canteen. I used to go in for a free lunch every day. I was just sitting in there, minding my own business, and got approached by these two producers, who asked me if I could sing. I was like, 'Yes, sign me up,' having no idea whether I really could sing properly.

**Ed Gamble**

You've got to say yes though, just in case.

**Rachel Stevens**

You've got to, right?

**James Acaster**

Good on you.

**Ed Gamble**

Just say yes, and then learn how to sign in the gap.



**Rachel Stevens**

Exactly. That was exactly what I did, and then S Club was being put together, and then I met Simon Fuller, and then, literally two weeks later, I got a call from him saying, 'I'm putting this band together. Would you like to be in it?'

**Ed Gamble**

Wow, that's amazing.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

It's amazing how quickly these things happen. When there were only four of them, were they called S Club 4, or did they call you S Club 7 before they'd got the other three?

**James Acaster**

Good question.

**Rachel Stevens**

Very good question. It was always going to be S Club. It was originally going to be five, and then Jo and Brad joined later, and then we became S Club 7.

**Ed Gamble**

My mum used to call you 'Sclub'. That was her funny joke.

**Rachel Stevens**

Sclub? Really?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, Sclub.

**Rachel Stevens**

I love that.

**James Acaster**

Surely you've heard that before. Surely people have called you Sclub before, right?

**Rachel Stevens**

Sclubbers. Well, we call ourselves all different names, but, yes, Sclub-, I love that.

**Ed Gamble**

That was my mum's funny joke, Sclub.



**James Acaster**

It is a funny joke for Anne Gamble.

**Rachel Stevens**

Was she an S Club fan?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, of course.

**Rachel Stevens**

Good.

**Ed Gamble**

Also, it was very much, like, Capital Breakfast show era. So, in the car on the way to school, all of that sort of stuff, and, you know, always Capital on in the kitchen. Sclub was big news.

**Rachel Stevens**

Sclub was big news. Love that.

**James Acaster**

Sang Never Had a Dream Come True in The Gang Show.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh my god, I forgot about that.

**Rachel Stevens**

In the what?

**James Acaster**

In the Gang Show.

**Rachel Stevens**

What's the Gang Show?

**James Acaster**

It's a variety performance put on by the Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts, to be fair, and the Kettering one, at McKinlay Theatre, which isn't there any more-, got bulldozed. There's a bunch of houses there now. Yes, we sing various songs, and, one year-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Who's we?

**James Acaster**

All the Scouts.



**Rachel Stevens**

Okay.

**James Acaster**

No, not Ed-,

**Ed Gamble**

No, I wasn't-, no, we didn't meet in the Scouts, but when James was in the Scouts-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Who sang LA Ex?

**James Acaster**

No, we didn't sing LA Ex.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, you didn't?

**James Acaster**

That's too raunchy.

**Rachel Stevens**

Right, yes.

**James Acaster**

We sang Never Had a Dream Come True. That's a nice song.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. You couldn't do LA Ex.

**James Acaster**

We weren't getting up at eleven years old-, 'Sweet dreams my LA Ex.' Are you kidding me?

**Rachel Stevens**

So true, no.

**Ed Gamble**

Even back then, that wouldn't have been right.

**James Acaster**

That wouldn't fly.

**Rachel Stevens**

That would just be a no go, for sure.



**Ed Gamble**

Even though I'm sure you'd see some money off it, but you don't want the Scouts singing Sweet Dreams my LA Ex.

**Rachel Stevens**

No.

**James Acaster**

You don't buy it from-, a Boy Scout from Kettering-, you're like, 'You don't have an LA Ex.'

**Rachel Stevens**

You don't have an LA Ex. No, fair enough.

**James Acaster**

Absolutely no way.

**Ed Gamble**

They are only singing it about the airport.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

LA Airport, or-,

**James Acaster**

One day. One day it would be nice to go to that airport. It would have been like, 'I went out with someone in LA, and now they're my ex.'

**Rachel Stevens**

And you're eleven, yes.

**James Acaster**

We always start with still or sparkling water, for your dream meal. Do you have a preference?

**Rachel Stevens**

It would have to be still. Yes, cannot do sparkling. Sparkling, to me, tastes like soluble, like, paracetamol that you put in your glass.

**Ed Gamble**

That's good. I know what you mean, but I think I quite like the taste of soluble paracetamol.

**Rachel Stevens**

Do you?





**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

You like the medicine?

**Ed Gamble**

I like medicine.

**Rachel Stevens**

You like medicine?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, because it's making you better.

**James Acaster**

You can't argue that logic, Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

You can't, but do you honestly like the taste of it, honestly?

**Ed Gamble**

I don't mind it. I see what you mean, like, with the fizzy water, and sometimes that soluble paracetamol almost makes water taste milky. Do you know what I mean?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

It's, sort of, a little bit gross.

**James Acaster**

If there was some medicine that you had to just eat recreationally, just like-, you don't need it to get better, but you've got to eat it-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Funnily enough, when I was younger, I used to pick the Calpol up. I did, yes, even if I didn't have a headache, in case I got one, I would hit the Calpol. Just in case, yes. Always thinking ahead.

**James Acaster**

So, you weren't just because it was delicious-, most of us, we just wanted to glug that-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Well, it was that as well.



**James Acaster**

It was so tasty.

**Rachel Stevens**

It was, wasn't it? It's addictive, I think.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

As a parent, that Calpol is epic. Calpol, Nurofen, yes, as a parent now-,

**Ed Gamble**

Always on the go?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, my god.

**James Acaster**

Is it still as good?

**Rachel Stevens**

I don't taste it any more. You mean the flavour?

**Ed Gamble**

You must be tempted, Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

Do you know what, I'm not.

**James Acaster**

What?

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm not. No, I'm over it. I've moved on from there.

**Ed Gamble**

Giving Calpol to your kids. You must be like, 'Go on, have a little shot of Calpol.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Not a shot, in those little, kind of, spatula things.

**James Acaster**

Want to see if it tastes as good as you remember, surely.



**Ed Gamble**

Next time you will. Now we've said that, that will be in your head now.

**Rachel Stevens**

Now, I'll be like-, yes.

**James Acaster**

Do you not want to admit it on this podcast? Are you worried there'll be, like, a controversy if-,

**Rachel Stevens**

It's quite controversial.

**James Acaster**

S Club have been stung by that in the past. I don't want to bring it, but, like, do you remember that? Of course you remember it.

**Rachel Stevens**

We don't talk about that. Yes.

**James Acaster**

That was great.

**Rachel Stevens**

Wasn't it?

**James Acaster**

I was the right age, as well. I'd come up with S Club, and then, when that happened, I was like, 'They're still cool.' That was really cool.

**Rachel Stevens**

Spliff Club 7. Brilliant.

**James Acaster**

While walking past a cop car. Absolute legends. Absolute legends, blazing up outside of the rozzers.

**Rachel Stevens**

Right? So blatant.

**Ed Gamble**

I don't think Calpol would have the same impact in the tabloids.

**Rachel Stevens**

We were busy-, us girls were just minding our own business, you know, working hard, and they were just-,



**Ed Gamble**

Unbelievable.

**Rachel Stevens**

Unbelievable. Did they get a telling off or what?

**James Acaster**

Well done guys. So, you would like still water.

**Rachel Stevens**

Still water, with ice.

**James Acaster**

How much ice are we talking?

**Rachel Stevens**

I've got this funny thing that, if I have a cold drink, it has to be freezing cold, or if I have a hot drink, it has to be boiling hot. There's no in between.

**Ed Gamble**

Really? No lukewarm?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I get that.

**Rachel Stevens**

Do you get that?

**James Acaster**

I've started-, because I've only just recently discovered that I love, more than life itself, coffee.

**Rachel Stevens**

I do think, with coffee, though, it's something that you can grow-, it's a grower, isn't it? It's a real acquired-,

**Ed Gamble**

He's grown. He loves it. Every time he has a sip, he says, 'I love coffee.'

**Rachel Stevens**

You're, like, adulting now.

**James Acaster**

I just say how much I love it all the time, yes. Yes, I really do. I'd write it a poem.



**Rachel Stevens**

Do you find that with every coffee, that you enjoy it? Some coffees are really good, and some coffees are really bad, I find.

**James Acaster**

Yes, but this is part of the joy of loving coffee, that suddenly I can tell those two apart. I never used to be able to. It was all just, like, a mess. I didn't know what was good, what wasn't, and now I do know what's good.

**Rachel Stevens**

You've got an acquired taste for it.

**James Acaster**

So much joy in it, and pleasure. I just know where to go and find the good coffees. Now I know that I like it extra hot. I never used to-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Really? So, if you have-, you couldn't have, like, just a mid-,

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

I could. I prefer lukewarm coffee. So, when I make coffee, it's too hot for me. So, I need to leave it for, like, ten, fifteen minutes, and then I'll neck it.

**Rachel Stevens**

You're one of those.

**Ed Gamble**

It's functional. I just want to get a buzz of it, really.

**Rachel Stevens**

Right. So, it's not for the taste.

**Ed Gamble**

No, not really. I'm not that bothered about good-, quite often, good coffee-, I find you go to a good coffee place, there's not enough of it, and it tastes weird.

**Rachel Stevens**

Not enough of it? Not strong enough?



**Ed Gamble**

Not strong enough, or they just go-, it's just, like, half a cup, or something, and they're like, 'This is the best coffee ever.' I don't really care. I just want to feel like-,

**Rachel Stevens**

I get that.

**Ed Gamble**

I just want to feel like my brain's about to pop out my head. That's what I like. Yes.

**James Acaster**

I know what you mean about it not being enough sometimes, but it always tastes delicious. When it's really good coffee, it's really nice.

**Ed Gamble**

You love coffee.

**James Acaster**

I love coffee.

**Rachel Stevens**

How do you have your coffee?

**James Acaster**

Well, I'll have like, a-, you know, I'll go for a flat white, or a latte. I'll have it extra hot. I've started saying that now, because I saw Sindhu Vee say it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, I love it.

**James Acaster**

Yes, high five. S Club high five.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes, I went for coffee with Sindhu Vee. Sindhu Vee asked for it extra hot. I really respected it, so I copied Sindhu, and I've started saying extra hot now.

**Rachel Stevens**

Who's Sindhu?



**James Acaster**

She's a comedian.

**Ed Gamble**

She's a comedian. She's got a lot of natural authority, and I find it funny that James thought it was cool that she went, 'Extra hot please.' So, he's copied her.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

So, you'd think I was cool too, then, if we went for a coffee together?

**James Acaster**

Yes. Well, I already think you're cool Rachel. I grew up thinking you were cool. You're the OG cool. The definition of cool.

**Rachel Stevens**

The OG, I love that.

**James Acaster**

Not as cool as the boys, because they smoked the doob outside the cop car.

**Rachel Stevens**

Fair.

**James Acaster**

But you're still cool.

**Ed Gamble**

Coffee makes your heart beat faster, as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

It really does, doesn't it?

**James Acaster**

Imagine if I was drinking coffee, eating pasta, looking at Cat Deeley.

**Rachel Stevens**

Smoking a doobie.

**James Acaster**

Yes. Well, that would slow me down.



**Rachel Stevens**

That's true.

**James Acaster**

The doob would but the brakes on.

**Rachel Stevens**

Balance.

**Ed Gamble**

That's when I'd recommend a doobie, you know, when you're watching Cat Deeley with the bowl of pasta and a hot coffee.

**James Acaster**

Cat Doobie. Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms or bread, Rachel Stevens?

**Rachel Stevens**

That's a really tough question, because if I'm having an Indian, then it's got to be poppadum, right?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, of course.

**Rachel Stevens**

I know that's an obvious thing to say, but we'll go bread. Bread, yes. I mean hot, buttery, salty, delicious bread.

**Ed Gamble**

What type?

**Rachel Stevens**

You can get bad bread, right?

**Ed Gamble**

You can. Now, it's different to coffee this. So, I'm not eating bad bread and going, 'That's fine, it's just bread,' like I do with coffee. You can get bad bread. What's the worst bread you've ever had?

**Rachel Stevens**

I try and be really healthy, but you can't be healthy when you want a piece of bread. You've just got to go, 'I'm having bread with loads of butter.' So, I think I get a bit confused when I'm trying to be healthy. No, just don't do that. You've just got to go for it, haven't you?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.





**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

I do love a sourdough, toasted, with just-, dripping with proper, proper salted butter, with a bit of salt on it.

**Ed Gamble**

Nice. Salted butter with the extra salt as well?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, just for the crunch.

**Ed Gamble**

You need the flakes for the crunch.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes, that's proper good stuff. Maybe, by the end of this podcast, we'll have-, I'm worried that we'll have, you know, converted you to just being unhealthy, because you'll be talking about all this food.

**Rachel Stevens**

Well, it's not that it's unhealthy, is it? I think everything-, I love food. I'm such a foodie. So, I think everything in moderation, and food brings so much joy, doesn't it? Yes, I think, when it comes to bread, I'm always trying to find a healthier alternative, but-,

**Ed Gamble**

Something that you can eat regularly, as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, like one of those really posh breads.

**Ed Gamble**

Like the seed breads, and all of that business?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, but they just taste like cardboard. They're not good. So, I've, kind of, given up on that.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. If I start on nice bread, that's it. I'm eating the whole thing.



**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, but I love breakfast. Breakfast is my-, I could eat cereal for breakfast, lunch, dinner. I love it.

**Ed Gamble**

Right. Well, we're going to have to rank the cereals then.

**James Acaster**

Yes. Let's hear your favourite cereals.

**Rachel Stevens**

Well, the thing is, I'm quite dull. It's not, like, any exciting-, well, Raisin Bran's probably my favourite. You can't get that here. It's only in America, right?

**Ed Gamble**

No one's expecting Raisin Bran, Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

Really?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, because when I think cereal, I think fun.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's what I mean. No, I'm very minimalist with my cereal.

**Ed Gamble**

Raisin Bran?

**James Acaster**

Rachel, what the hell?

**Rachel Stevens**

I know. Listen, I'm not apologising for it. I'm sorry. I'm not apologising for it. Sorry.

**Ed Gamble**

No, you shouldn't.

**Rachel Stevens**

I love a Weetabix.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes?



**James Acaster**

Oh my goodness.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, I love a Weetabix.

**James Acaster**

It's my home town, grew up next to the Weetabix factory.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I've been there, I've been in the factory and a guided tour.

**Rachel Stevens**

Really, how was that?

**James Acaster**

It's great. Talked to a bloke who showed me all the bix at different stages. Made me eat it all as well, not very nice until it's finished properly.

**Rachel Stevens**

No.

**James Acaster**

But, like, you know, in for a penny.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

What do you have on your Weetabix?

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm just a classic girl, I'm sorry.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes course. Yes, I saw that coming, I saw that coming.

**Rachel Stevens**

No, milk.



**James Acaster**

Not even raisins?

**Rachel Stevens**

No, not on Weetabix.

**James Acaster**

No?

**Rachel Stevens**

No, just milk.

**James Acaster**

What we talking? Skimmed, semi-skimmed, whole?

**Rachel Stevens**

Whole.

**James Acaster**

Wow.

**Ed Gamble**

Now there's a twist.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, yes, yes, yes, see.

**Ed Gamble**

I wasn't expecting that, I was expecting skimmed because of the Raisin Bran, Weetabix.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god, no, no, no. No, no, no.

**Ed Gamble**

Whole milk.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, freezing cold.

**Ed Gamble**

Of course because it's either freezing cold or burning hot, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, that's right.



**James Acaster**

And how firm do you like your bix? Do you let it soak up the milk proper?

**Rachel Stevens**

Not too much, just a bit of both.

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, a bit of give to it.

**Rachel Stevens**

A bit of crunch and a bit of sogginess.

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I'm with you there.

**Rachel Stevens**

What's your favourites?

**Ed Gamble**

If I'm eating cereal, which I don't really eat cereal, but, I'd go for a fun one. I'm going coco-

**Rachel Stevens**

Would you go all sugar?

**Ed Gamble**

I'm going Coco Pops.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh yes, you can't beat-, I'm so with you on coco pops.

**Ed Gamble**

You say that, Raisin Bran came out of your mouth first.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, but, well.

**James Acaster**

Yes, don't pretend now.



**Rachel Stevens**

Because I'm annoyingly trying to be healthy right? It goes back to that again.

**James Acaster**

Yes, so, you don't need this guy bringing up coco pops.

**Rachel Stevens**

I would eat coco pops morning, lunch and dinner, trust me.

**Ed Gamble**

Right, well, you said Raisin Bran, so, unfortunately that's-

**Rachel Stevens**

Alright, alright, Jesus.

**James Acaster**

How did you feel when-, do you remember when coco pops changed its name to Chocoa Krispies, do you remember that?

**Rachel Stevens**

Well that's just wrong.

**James Acaster**

Yes, well that's what the UK public said.

**Rachel Stevens**

Are they not called Coco Pops any more?

**James Acaster**

They are now, they reversed the decision.

**Ed Gamble**

They reversed the decision because of the protest.

**James Acaster**

We overturned it as a nation.

**Rachel Stevens**

Thank god.

**James Acaster**

Yes. Which, you know, people should remember.



**Rachel Stevens**

We don't like change do we in Britain? We don't like change.

**James Acaster**

But, we can overturn big decisions and maybe it's for the best for the country.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I've got Weetabix at home, I'm eating Weetabix at the minute. When I do have cereals in, tends to be the boring ones. Cornflakes, maybe the most exciting one I have is Cheerios.

**Rachel Stevens**

Well hang on, you had a go at me for Raisin Bran?

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, yes, yes. I'm a hypocrite.

**Rachel Stevens**

Fine, right,

**James Acaster**

That can't be your favourite. But, I would say I don't know, if I'm going to actually have a favourite favourite. Do you know what I like? And I always forget that I like them, I don't even know what they're called now. The Quakers, the pillows? Do you know what I'm talking about?

**Rachel Stevens**

Shredded Wheat bite size?

**James Acaster**

No, Quaker bring out these pillowy cereals.

**Rachel Stevens**

With the chocolate in?

**James Acaster**

That the Quaker man does. No, there's no chocolate in it actually. It's really nice.

**Ed Gamble**

Are there raisins in them?



**James Acaster**

No, no, they're just like-, here we go, they're called Oat Crisps. No, they're not called Oat Crisps, they're not the Oat Crisps.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, you really thought you had it then.

**James Acaster**

Also, there's a version of it at Trader Joe's in America. And it's really good.

**Rachel Stevens**

I can't wait to go to Trader Joe's.

**Ed Gamble**

It's the best.

**James Acaster**

Yes man. Is Trader Joe's actually the LA ex that you're thinking about?

**Ed Gamble**

Joe.

**James Acaster**

Oh maybe, Oat Crisp original.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's quite left field.

**James Acaster**

Yes, well because I forget how good they are.

**Rachel Stevens**

We haven't talked about granola and yoghurt.

**James Acaster**

Yes, my girlfriend is addicted, loves it so much.

**Rachel Stevens**

Really?

**James Acaster**

And I think I can have one mouthful and then I've got to stop. I just feel like it's bonkers isn't it?





**Rachel Stevens**

What, filling?

**James Acaster**

It's filling and it feels-

**Ed Gamble**

Sweet, super sweet.

**James Acaster**

It does feel like I'm starting the day with a mad pudding.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Do you think?

**James Acaster**

Even though I like puddings a lot, but, it feels like I've just, you know, smashed a load of biscuits into some-

**Rachel Stevens**

You're not eating the right granola I feel.

**Ed Gamble**

You're eating smashed up biscuits aren't you?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I wish, that would be good. We've got some granola, I don't want to boast, but, it's some pretty good granola that we get from around the corner.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes?

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, yes. I won't blow up my spot and say what it was called.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, no, don't ruin it for yourself.



**Rachel Stevens**

Don't give away your secrets.

**James Acaster**

So, you like granola and yoghurt?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, I love a granola parfait. In LA, I used to have-, oh my god, layers of yoghurt, granola, fruit, two or three layers. Just the perfect combo.

**James Acaster**

Wow.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Like a breakfast lasagna?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, I've never thought about it like that.

**Ed Gamble**

I've seen people that have put breakfast lasagna on menus, genuinely like lasagna for breakfast. And I could, but, once I go down that path, I'm having lasagna every morning. I'm getting up at six in the morning to have a lasagna.

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, you're in trouble.

**Ed Gamble**

You don't think you'd enjoy that?

**Rachel Stevens**

No.

**Ed Gamble**

No.

**Rachel Stevens**

I definitely don't.

**Ed Gamble**

Cold?



**Rachel Stevens**

I don't know. It's weird, as I've gotten older, I don't-, I'm a real breakfast girl, I can't miss a meal. But, I can't eat as early any more. Back in the day, I would eat early, but, now I can't. I don't know how I-

**James Acaster**

What time are you having breakfast now?

**Rachel Stevens**

Like a brunch type time, like eleven ish.

**James Acaster**

Okay.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

But, you're still doing granola at eleven?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

That's alright.

**Ed Gamble**

I love it. Straight away, wake up, straight into the kitchen.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Breakfast.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's what I mean, I used to be that way and now, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, I love it, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

With your lasagna?



**Ed Gamble**

Yes, with my full lasagna.

**Rachel Stevens**

Food always tastes better the next day doesn't it, as well? If you have dinner-

**Ed Gamble**

I completely agree. Curries as well, if you make that curry.

**Rachel Stevens**

All the flavours.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it's like it's marinading in the fridge.

**Rachel Stevens**

What about pizza the next day?

**Ed Gamble**

How are you heating up pizza the next day?

**Rachel Stevens**

I don't know, I don't like re-heating stuff.

**James Acaster**

Yes, do you just have it cold?

**Rachel Stevens**

I have it cold.

**James Acaster**

I'm doing that a lot now with takeaways, cold curry, I love it. I think you get a lot more.

**Rachel Stevens**

I feel like we're bonding so much over food right now, the hot and the cold and the, you know, love this, love this.

**James Acaster**

This is how we want a guest to feel. Do you know what, it's lovely to hear it.

Your dream starter, is this going to be a breakfast cereal?



**Rachel Stevens**

My dream starter. Yes, do you know what? See, I got very overwhelmed when I had to think about all the-, because my brain goes to so many different places.

**Ed Gamble**

We do like to hear that, though.

**Rachel Stevens**

Right, so, favourite starter, burrata with balsamic glaze. With fresh tomatoes, a bit of basil, delicious.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

It's a classic, burrata is just the king.

**James Acaster**

And also, your pronunciation of it is-, that lends itself more to a pub starter burrata.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, I was in a restaurant the other night and my wife said, 'I don't know if for my starter, I want the burrata or the tartare.' Like, we nearly stood up and gave her a full round of applause.

**Rachel Stevens**

Wow.

**Ed Gamble**

I said that makes my heart beat faster.

**Rachel Stevens**

Such poets.

**Ed Gamble**

I know.

**James Acaster**

Ed's wife is Lil' Kim.

**Rachel Stevens**

Lil' Kim.



**James Acaster**

Yes, so, didn't know if you knew that, pretty cool.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes it is pretty cool, a pretty cool relationship. Yes, burrata is the absolute king of the-

**Rachel Stevens**

The starter.

**Ed Gamble**

The starter cheeses, yes. It goes very well with tomata. No, we're not happy with that?

**Rachel Stevens**

I was trying to think of something to rhyme it with, but, there was nothing.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

A lata.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, cheers, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Because your wife did tartare.

**Ed Gamble**

Tartare, she's done that, come with that. Starter and then I've thrown in tomato and I think we've pretty much run out now, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

We've covered the ata's, yes.

**James Acaster**

That does sound delicious, it is delicious. I mean any time I see burrata on a menu, I've got to get it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, white and fluffy and mmm.

**James Acaster**

I love introducing people to burrata as well.



**Rachel Stevens**

Do you?

**James Acaster**

Yes, because sometimes people are like-, I'm like, 'Oh, we've got to get that.' And they're like, 'I don't even know what that is.' Still to this day, yes, people are still learning. And you get to be like, 'Oh, it's like mozzarella, but levelled up.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Like the king of mozzarella.

**James Acaster**

Yes. I love seeing someone have a burrata for the first time.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

And really, you know, see their life get a little bit better.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Do you prefer it when it arrives and it's a whole burrata?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Because sometimes you go and they give you-, they've done the cutting up bit.

**Rachel Stevens**

No, don't do that.

**Ed Gamble**

You want the joy of the-

**Rachel Stevens**

You want to feel the whole experience of it.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, when you cut into it.



**Rachel Stevens**

Totally.

**Ed Gamble**

Explodes.

**Rachel Stevens**

But, you don't want it too watery either. Some of them can be a little bit too watery.

**James Acaster**

Yes, like creamy.

**Rachel Stevens**

You want it to be really creamy.

**Ed Gamble**

Super creamy.

**Rachel Stevens**

Squishy. That doesn't sound like like it should-, squishy doesn't sound right, no.

**Ed Gamble**

Squishy doesn't sound nice, no, you've not made it sound nice.

**James Acaster**

No, squishy sounds too wet.

**Rachel Stevens**

Sorry no. As I was saying that I was like, no, no. But, I had to just go with it.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

But, no.

**James Acaster**

Is that what the S in S Club stands for, squish?

**Rachel Stevens**

Squishy.

**Ed Gamble**

Squish.





**James Acaster**

Squish Club 7.

**Rachel Stevens**

Squish Club 7. Do you know how many times we got asked that question?

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god. That was like, yes, top question.

**James Acaster**

I imagine a billion times.

**Rachel Stevens**

What does the S stand for? Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh not the question, does it stand for Squish Club 7?

**Rachel Stevens**

No, I've never had that one to this day.

**Ed Gamble**

There you go, new question.

**James Acaster**

Squish Club.

**Rachel Stevens**

Squish Club 7.

**James Acaster**

And it's because you love burrata.

**Rachel Stevens**

And some days we do.

**James Acaster**

Yes, what does it stand for?



**Rachel Stevens**

You're like can I ask that yet?

**James Acaster**

I don't know.

**Rachel Stevens**

It is actually the S is the nineteenth letter in the alphabet and Simon Fuller, our management company, was called 19.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh wow.

**James Acaster**

That's why he did it?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

See, he must have known, dude's going to get asked that forever when he did that. And then it's this really cryptic reason as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

And our line was always, 'It's whatever you want it to be.' Was always our line.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh that's nice.

**James Acaster**

That's good.

**Rachel Stevens**

And it's evolved over the years, to Squish Club.

**James Acaster**

Because now obviously whenever we do interviews now, they always go, 'Oh, you do the Off Menu podcast, you ask people their dream meals. We were wondering what would your dream meal be?'

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes.



**James Acaster**

And for one, And you're like, 'Well, obviously I get asked that every single time, so, I don't know why you're asking me that like you're the first one.' Also, that's an hour long podcast, so, you're asking me to quickly do that for you now in an interview, when I'm promoting something else to be frank.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, right? It's too overwhelming because it's a big conversation.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, exactly.

**Rachel Stevens**

It's not just a flippant answer.

**Ed Gamble**

Look, you had trouble deciding on burrata right? Because there were so many different options.

**Rachel Stevens**

Seriously, all night I've been like, 'Oh my god.' You know, it's overwhelming.

**James Acaster**

I'm going to start saying it's whatever you want it to be now. Whenever they ask me, 'What would your dream meal be.' I'm going to say, 'It's whatever you want it to be.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, it can be a good answer for lots of questions, you know.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, every question.

**Rachel Stevens**

Every question, 'whatever you want it to be'.

**Ed Gamble**

'It can be whatever you want it to be'.

**James Acaster**

Very quick press junket for anything.

**Ed Gamble**

Apart from, I'm just going to say when we ask you your dream main course, please don't say whatever you want it to be.



**Rachel Stevens**

Oh I won't, okay.

**James Acaster**

Yes please.

**Rachel Stevens**

I'll let you off, just on that one.

**Ed Gamble**

Please don't do that.

**James Acaster**

Do you think other members of S Club would choose the burrata for the starter in your hearter of hearthers.

**Rachel Stevens**

I love how that rhymes now. I will ask them, I don't know. Yes, actually, do you know what? I think Jo would. Because back in LA days, we were always going out for-, we would have dinner together and that would be, we would share the love of that starter together, yes.

**James Acaster**

What was your thing in the rundown of what you all are? Someone was looking for romance, who was looking for romance, Jon?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I remember Jon was looking for romance.

**Rachel Stevens**

Jon's looking for romance.

**James Acaster**

Yes. What was your one?

**Rachel Stevens**

Tina's doing her dance.

**Ed Gamble**

Tina's doing her dance, which is why Jon was looking for romance I'd imagine.



**Rachel Stevens**

Right.

**James Acaster**

He had to be, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

This is a faster pasta situation isn't it?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, faster pasta. Paul's getting down on the floor.

**Ed Gamble**

Getting down on the floor, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Hannah's screaming out for more.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

That is racy.

**Ed Gamble**

That's very racy.

**Rachel Stevens**

I know.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Want to see Bradley swing.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

You want to see Rachel do her thing.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, of course, you were doing your thing.

**James Acaster**

And that's whatever you want it to be.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, exactly, yes.

**James Acaster**

Are they still the lyrics when you perform it now? Or would you change it up to more reflect your life now? So, Rachel is eating Raisin Bran.

**Rachel Stevens**

Doesn't rhyme.

**James Acaster**

Yes, well it could rhyme whatever the line is before.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's true.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel gives Calpol to her kids, but, doesn't drink it herself.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. We don't do it now, we didn't do it in the tour, we didn't do it.

**James Acaster**

It would be funny if you just like, on your own, in between songs sang Rachel's doing her thing on your own and everyone's like, 'What?'

**Ed Gamble**

We told you we weren't doing that one Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I just want to let them know that I'm doing my thing still.

**Rachel Stevens**

Shall I just bust that on the tour. Okay, fine, I'm going to do that.



**James Acaster**

Yes, do that.

**Ed Gamble**

The crowds would lose their mind.

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm going to say James and Ed told me to do that, yes.

**James Acaster**

If suddenly out of nowhere, you just went, Rachel's doing her thing, the crowds would pop, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

That would go down well I think.

**Rachel Stevens**

Okay, I'm doing it.

**James Acaster**

Don't tell the others though.

**Rachel Stevens**

I won't tell the others.

**James Acaster**

Don't tell them that they've got to do their things.

**Rachel Stevens**

It's our little secret.

**James Acaster**

I mean is Jon still looking for romance?

**Rachel Stevens**

Aren't we all? You know.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it's nice to have a bit of romance in your life.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, it is nice to have a little, that didn't rhyme.



**Ed Gamble**

Yes, I know, I'm just trying to make it rhyme.

**James Acaster**

I think that when Jon does find romance, you should do a-, he should do a solo song about that. That's just like, 'I found it, I found it.'

**Rachel Stevens**

'I found it, I found it', a million percent.

**James Acaster**

That would be great, I'd like that.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, that would be good.

**James Acaster**

And it's just called I found it.

**Ed Gamble**

I found romance.

**James Acaster**

It's like by Jon and it's called I found it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Okay, I'm just going to write notes.

**James Acaster**

And he just sings I found it, I found it over and over again. And the whole music video's just him with his partner.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god, yes.

**James Acaster**

That would be great.

**Ed Gamble**

I've found romance.

**Rachel Stevens**

'I've found it, I've found', yes, brilliant.





**James Acaster**

Your dream main course Rachel?

**Rachel Stevens**

My dream main course would be lobster.

**James Acaster**

Oh lovely.

**Rachel Stevens**

And chips.

**James Acaster**

Ooh.

**Rachel Stevens**

And on the side, oh, we haven't got to sides yet.

**James Acaster**

Well, we can do them both at the same time if you want because if you feel like you need to talk about them at the same time.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Well, now I've bigged it up and it's not that exciting. Broccoli, but, charred with chilli, garlic.

**Ed Gamble**

Nice, like tenderstem broccoli, the long boys.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, oh the long boys definitely.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.



**Rachel Stevens**

Oh god, that's really sexist by the way.

**Ed Gamble**

What, saying they're long boys?

**Rachel Stevens**

Long boys.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, long boys, long vegetables.

**Rachel Stevens**

Long girls. Long vegetables, okay.

**James Acaster**

Yes, I think if Ed had said to you then, the long girls, I'd have been like we need to get Ed off this podcast.

**Rachel Stevens**

Okay, fair enough.

**James Acaster**

I'd have talked to Benito afterwards, I'd have a little emergency meeting. I don't think Ed should be saying that.

**Ed Gamble**

Referring to broccoli as long boys, I don't think many people would bat an eyelid, you're right to pull me up on it though. But, I think if I'd said long girls, that would have been worse.

**Rachel Stevens**

Worse, you can't win.

**Ed Gamble**

No, you can't win here.

**James Acaster**

Well, it's not about you winning Ed.

**Ed Gamble**

I'll just say broccoli, the long broccoli, tenderstem.

**Rachel Stevens**

The long broccoli, yes, or vegetables.



**Ed Gamble**

Vegetables. 'Jon's looking for vegetables.'

**James Acaster**

It's a bit of a mouthful that one.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

But, I'm not against it. Do you remember the first time you had tenderstem broccoli? And did you just look at old, stumpy broccoli and think, 'We're done, I'm never eating you again.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Listen I don't, you know, I think there's room for the old broccoli, the other broccoli too. There's room for all broccoli I feel, if it's cooked in the right way, you know.

**Ed Gamble**

But, the long vegetables, they char so much easier.

**Rachel Stevens**

The long boys.

**Ed Gamble**

The long boys or long girls.

**James Acaster**

Just say what you want to say Ed.

**Ed Gamble**

They char really easily don't they?

**Rachel Stevens**

That's true.

**Ed Gamble**

Old stumpy broccoli, he's not charring.

**Rachel Stevens**

It's not charring as well.

**Ed Gamble**

No.



**James Acaster**

Can you char a massive broc?

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm not good at charring really.

**James Acaster**

No?

**Rachel Stevens**

I wish I was a better cook, I'm not a great cook. But I have just got the air fryer and that is a whole world of brilliantness, love it.

**James Acaster**

Can you air fry broccoli?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, it's great and it comes out all, like, charry.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, nice. What else are you doing in the air fryer?

**Rachel Stevens**

Charry, is that a word?

**Ed Gamble**

Charry, charred?

**Rachel Stevens**

Charred.

**Ed Gamble**

Charred, charred.

**Rachel Stevens**

What else? I stick everything in there. I stick everything in that bad boy.

**James Acaster**

Go on, let's hear it.

**Rachel Stevens**

What else? Spinach, all the veg I stick in there. Sausages are really good, meatballs, that's, kind of, as far as it's got.



**Ed Gamble**

Just piling it all in there.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Not at the same-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Do you have an air fryer?

**Ed Gamble**

Don't have an air fryer.

**James Acaster**

No, not yet.

**Ed Gamble**

Can't spare the real estate in the kitchen.

**James Acaster**

Yes, actually I haven't got any space.

**Ed Gamble**

They're big, they're very big.

**James Acaster**

Are they?

**Rachel Stevens**

But, I have to tell you, if you're going to get anything, get an air fryer.

**James Acaster**

If you're going to get anything, get an air fryer.

**Rachel Stevens**

In the kitchen.

**James Acaster**

In the kitchen, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Appliances. Sorry, I should have narrowed it down.



**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, sure.

**Rachel Stevens**

Sorry, it was out of context.

**James Acaster**

You've got to remember people take the podcast very seriously.

**Rachel Stevens**

People are going to take it very seriously.

**James Acaster**

If you're going to get anything, get an air fryer.

**Rachel Stevens**

In the world of kitchen appliances, you must get an air fryer.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

**James Acaster**

How big are they then?

**Rachel Stevens**

It's just epic, honestly.

**James Acaster**

Are they massive?

**Rachel Stevens**

Well you can get small ones. You know, you can get the ones, the big-, but I've got just a small one like that. Just the one drawer.

**James Acaster**

But, it's still, like, you're noticing it on the counter, right?

**Rachel Stevens**

You are.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, you're having to work around it.



**Rachel Stevens**

But, it gets used. You know those appliances that just sit there and don't-, just sit there.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, pasta machine, that, sort of, stuff.

**Rachel Stevens**

Exactly.

**Ed Gamble**

Ain't been using that.

**James Acaster**

Pasta machine, be faster machine, that's what I thought. Am I making my home-made pasta, remembering Cat Deeley, my heart will beat faster.

**Ed Gamble**

She's never coming on this podcast now man, if she hears about this. Rachel said she's going to text her after this.

**Rachel Stevens**

I am.

**James Acaster**

Great, text her. Can you tell her I've got a poem to read her, come on the podcast.

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm going to.

**James Acaster**

Don't give her context of who I am.

**Rachel Stevens**

I think she's going to be desperate to come on it now.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, I think she'd love to come on and say to her also, 'If you're going to get anything, get an air fryer.' Say that to her as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

I will, I will.



**James Acaster**

Out of context. Well, I mean that's exciting that you're air frying everything as well.

**Rachel Stevens**

It really is.

**Ed Gamble**

Would you air fry a lobster?

**James Acaster**

Oh would you?

**Rachel Stevens**

I don't know if I'd cook-, I wouldn't be brave enough to cook a lobster I don't think.

**James Acaster**

Boil it because that's the thing, people boil them alive.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, but, no.

**James Acaster**

You can't air fry a lobster alive.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god, no, no, no, no.

**James Acaster**

You can't just chuck in a live lobster in the air fryer.

**Rachel Stevens**

But, do you know what, actually.

**Ed Gamble**

The most humane way of killing a lobster is to put it in the air fryer and then just turn it up slowly.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god, that's dark.

**James Acaster**

That is bad stuff, imagine that, that poor lobster.

**Ed Gamble**

The little scream of it.





**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god.

**James Acaster**

'Oh, nice to have a tank, that's a roomy tank, thanks for hooking me up in here Rachel.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Aww, no, but, seriously though, that would be our New Year's Eve dinner. That's what would have been cooked, but, I wouldn't have cooked it. But, it would go straight in and I would have to go out the room because it was just-

**James Acaster**

It's a lot isn't it with the lobster?

**Ed Gamble**

But, so delicious.

**Rachel Stevens**

So delicious.

**Ed Gamble**

So delicious. So, is that how you like it cooked like the steamed, boiled, sort of, one. Because at Burger and Lobster, they do the grilled one as well right?

**Rachel Stevens**

I like it steamed and then lightly grilled.

**Ed Gamble**

Nice, bit of char?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, with the combo. A bit of char, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

A bit of char.

**James Acaster**

I spoke about one of my favourite YouTube channels on here.

**Ed Gamble**

Almost certainly.

**James Acaster**

Where the man got the lobster.



**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

What's that?

**James Acaster**

Fair enough. There's a man who went to a grocery store in America and bought a lobster. And instead kept it as a pet, it's quite a moving channel, it's quite nice.

**Rachel Stevens**

He became friends with it?

**James Acaster**

Well, he just properly learns how to look after it and keep a grocery store lobster as a pet. And has to help it get the strength back in its claws.

**Rachel Stevens**

I don't know how I feel about that.

**James Acaster**

And feeds it the proper food.

**Rachel Stevens**

Part of me is like that's really sweet and then part of me is like that's really weird, I don't quite know.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, although it's quite a weird thing to do, yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes, but, then I guess-

**Ed Gamble**

It's heart-warming.

**Rachel Stevens**

But sweet.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it's heart-warming.

**James Acaster**

It's weird because it's unusual, but, maybe it's weirder that we get them alive and we boil them.



**Rachel Stevens**

Right.

**James Acaster**

And you air fry them.

**Rachel Stevens**

It's all weird. I don't air fry them.

**Ed Gamble**

You put them in the air fryer with spinach and meatballs.

**James Acaster**

The listener couldn't see it, but, you nodded to us when you were going-, when I said you air fry it, you were saying out of your mouth, 'No, never.' And you were nodding going, 'I do that every day.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, I can't win with this one, come on.

**James Acaster**

But yes, it's a nice-, I recommend watching it, it's really nice, him and this lobster.

**Rachel Stevens**

Like the Octopus Teacher, have you seen that?

**James Acaster**

A bit like that, but, I think this guy's got morals. That octopus teacher man, he's all like, he's going in the water, hanging out with this octopus, fully getting involved, being its mate. And then when a bigger shark or whatever comes along to kick the shit out of the octopus. Then he says, 'Well, Attenborough's rules, I've got to step back and not be involved.' You've been involved the whole time man, defend it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, fair enough.

**James Acaster**

Been a bad friend. And I think that he should be ashamed himself, that octopus teacher.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

The student I guess because the octopus is the teacher, so.



**Ed Gamble**

He's the student.

**James Acaster**

Human student should be ashamed of himself for how he treats octopus teacher at the end.

**Rachel Stevens**

For not getting in there with the shark.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

And like, just.

**James Acaster**

He fully got involved with it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, and then he just-

**James Acaster**

And interfered, being its friend and then he said, 'No, it's a documentary, I've got to step back and let nature take its course.' When the shit got real.

**Ed Gamble**

Also, if I was, as a kid that emotionally attached to one of my teachers, I think people would have got involved. You shouldn't have that relationship with your teachers, right?

**James Acaster**

He's an adult though, he's a mature student.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, he's a consenting-

**Ed Gamble**

But still, yes, but, that's still not-, there's still something moral wrong there.

**James Acaster**

Yes, there's still a line there.

**Ed Gamble**

Even if I went to a class now and I got emotionally involved with the teachers, there's still a power imbalance.



**James Acaster**

There's a line there.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

He crossed the line.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes.

**James Acaster**

So, maybe that was it, the octopus deserved it, is that what you're saying?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm glad I didn't say octopus was my favourite meal.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, try getting that in an air fryer. You could actually because they can climb into little jars can't they?

**James Acaster**

So, it could probably climb in itself.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Octopus is delicious though.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, oh god, yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Another great charred food.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my god, yes.



**James Acaster**

But what if it was the octopus from My Octopus Teacher? What if they gave you that?

**Rachel Stevens**

Okay, you're taking this to a whole new level now.

**James Acaster**

I'm just saying, what if they told you-, what if you were like, 'I love octopus, delicious,' and they said, 'We made it for you, but just so you know, before you eat it, it is the one from My Octopus Teacher.'

**Rachel Stevens**

I would be alright.

**James Acaster**

You'd eat it? Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

I'd be alright, you know. It's nature, it had been killed.

**Ed Gamble**

Too late by then.

**James Acaster**

By the shark, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

It would be too late by then.

**James Acaster**

Yes, because the shark killed it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, exactly, and it is delicious.

**James Acaster**

Your dream drink?

**Rachel Stevens**

Ah, see, another one that's really hard to answer. I went in so many different directions. It depends. If it's breakfast, a cup of-, no, not breakfast, a cup of tea, that is one of my favourite drinks ever.

**Ed Gamble**

You really are obsessed with breakfasts, I love that.



**Rachel Stevens**

I'm obsessed with tea. Oh my god, a proper builders brew.

**James Acaster**

Do you want it taken from a builder? Do you want it to be a builder's cup of tea?

**Rachel Stevens**

You know what I mean? Like, I can't do, like, a posh tea.

**James Acaster**

Yes, but with a really proper-

**Rachel Stevens**

It's got to be a proper Yorkshire Gold.

**James Acaster**

It would feel proper legit if it is actually-, if a builder's made it for himself or -

**Rachel Stevens**

I would take that and not feel bad about it at all.

**James Acaster**

Yes, steal it off the builder.

**Rachel Stevens**

If I'm having, like, Asian food, a lychee Martini. Diet coke if I'm having, like, a burger. A freezing cold glass of ice water if you're really, really thirsty, and a glass of wine.

**James Acaster**

Red wine?

**Rachel Stevens**

I love a glass of wine if I'm having a steak or that kind of meal.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Or any meal actually, apart from breakfast.

**Ed Gamble**

Good save.



**Rachel Stevens**

Then it would be a good glass of wine.

**James Acaster**

But you said you would have breakfast for dinner, so that's okay.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, that's true.

**James Acaster**

If you had breakfast for dinner, you could have a glass of wine.

**Rachel Stevens**

But wine and cereal?

**Ed Gamble**

A proper builder's wine.

**Rachel Stevens**

Builder's wine?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

What cereal would red wine go, what, what, the most, like, which cereal? If you had to have red wine with a cereal?

**Rachel Stevens**

I don't really drink red wine.

**James Acaster**

Oh, so it was white wine you were talking about.

**Ed Gamble**

White wine would go better with cereal than red wine.

**Rachel Stevens**

Definitely.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it would pair better.





**James Acaster**

Already, it's easier.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes-,

**Rachel Stevens**

But I think wine with any cereal would just be wrong on so many-,

**Ed Gamble**

I don't know, a nice dessert wine with a bowl of, like-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Can you do dessert wine?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

I find it too sweet.

**Ed Gamble**

I love it, I love it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Do you? If you go for a meal where there's, like, wine pairing and stuff, do you enjoy it?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. We went for a meal together on New Year's Eve and did all the wine pairings and stuff.

**Rachel Stevens**

Did you?

**James Acaster**

I didn't.

**Rachel Stevens**

Where did you go?

**James Acaster**

I made a huge mistake.



**Ed Gamble**

We went to a restaurant called L'Enclume in the Lake District, which is an absolutely amazing restaurant. It's fantastic, and James has just reminded me he didn't do the wine pairing, I did the wine pairing and James got a different cocktail with every single course.

**James Acaster**

I was hammered, Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

I bet you were.

**James Acaster**

I was doing my thing, I was looking for romance.

**Rachel Stevens**

Were you getting down on the floor?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I was doing all of them, I was screaming out for more.

**Rachel Stevens**

Were you screaming out for more? Oh my goodness.

**James Acaster**

I was doing all of it.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, we watched him swing.

**Rachel Stevens**

I would hope so, with a cocktail every-

**James Acaster**

It was too much, man.

**Ed Gamble**

You were swinging all over the place, weren't you?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I was showing them how. I, like, yes, I had a lot of cocktails, and also, any time they had a wine that they were particularly like, 'Oh, this wine's amazing,' I'd go, 'I'll get in on that, I'll have a glass of that.'



**Rachel Stevens**

Dip in and out mid-cocktail?

**James Acaster**

Felt great for the whole meal, but as soon as we got home, I was like, 'Oh, I'm blasted, I'm going to bed.'

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm done.

**Ed Gamble**

It was bad, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

How did you feel the next day?

**James Acaster**

Actually, not as bad as I thought I was going to feel, I think because we had so much food as well. So I was, kind of, I escaped it a bit. I didn't feel fresh as a daisy, but I could have felt worse, I've had worse New Year's Days.

**Rachel Stevens**

Okay.

**Ed Gamble**

He just turned into a dad, like, we were sat round after we'd had the meal, and we were just on the sofa, we were just hanging out, and people were on their phones. He was like, 'Get off your phones, it's New Year's, it's New Year's, have a conversation, get off your phones.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Brilliant.

**James Acaster**

All on your phones, what's that about? Let's ring John Robins. I was doing that, 'Let's ring John Robins.' Our friend, John Robins, everyone's like, 'Don't ring John.'

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, don't ring John.

**James Acaster**

It's, like, 01:00am. We're going to ring, we're going to ring him.

**Rachel Stevens**

So you didn't ring him?



**Ed Gamble**

No, he wouldn't have appreciated that.

**James Acaster**

I feel sorry for-, yes, we have done wine pairings in the past, and I thought this time, I thought, do you know what? You always get sick of wine really early in the wine pairing, don't do it this time, let's just have a cocktail. And then I just went nuts, so-,

**Rachel Stevens**

But then you dipped in with the really good ones that the sommelier was, like-,

**James Acaster**

The dessert wine, for example, they had a dessert wine that was like liquid marmalade, it was amazing. But maybe that would be too sweet for you.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, I want to go to this restaurant, L'Enclume.

**Ed Gamble**

It's fantastic, you should go.

**Rachel Stevens**

I've never been to the Lake District.

**Ed Gamble**

Beautiful part of the world.

**James Acaster**

Sweet dreams, my LD ex. So you got a lot of shout-outs for drinks that are your favourites, but do you have one in particular that's going to be your dream meal drink?

**Rachel Stevens**

My dream meal drink? I'd go glass of wine, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Any particular wine that you're a big fan of?

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm not great with knowing wine, I know what I like taste wise, but I'm not, I don't really know about wines. But definitely white, I know this is really bad for people who are, like, wine snobs, but I like a glass of ice in my wine.

**James Acaster**

Yes.



**Rachel Stevens**

I know, I know, I know.

**James Acaster**

You like it cold.

**Rachel Stevens**

But I do, I like it really cold, it has to be really cold.

**Ed Gamble**

You're consistent.

**Rachel Stevens**

But not enough for it to, sort of, get watery, just a little bit of ice.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, just a little cube, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

But yes, just a nice, well rounded glass of white wine. I like a rosé in the summer as well, yes, I do love my wine, and it's something that I've got as I've gotten older, I just like more and more.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, I really enjoy wine, and I've learnt now to not just keep drinking wine. I can have a glass of wine and be like, 'That was lovely,' and now I can stop. This guy can't with cocktails.

**James Acaster**

No, with wine I can.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, but it is different, yes, because wine hangovers are the worst.

**Ed Gamble**

The worst, especially if it's bad wine, like pub wine, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Sweet, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

And I can taste it immediately now, I was at a thing the other night, I had a glass of red wine there, one sip, I'm like, 'It's going to be a bad day tomorrow,' I'm instantly getting a headache.

**Rachel Stevens**

You feel it straight away.



**Ed Gamble**

Yes, headache juice, really bad.

**Rachel Stevens**

But do you know what I've noticed? Organic wine and biodynamic wine, no headache the next day, and I don't know if it's the placebo effect, but I definitely think that it's cleaner, there's not as much of the crap in there and the sulphites or whatever they stick in it. It definitely does make a difference, so now I do try and drink more organic wine.

**Ed Gamble**

I've noticed that with that, but then I thought, 'Let's really experiment,' and I had, like, two bottles of it, and you do still get a hangover, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Really, after two bottles? Okay.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, if you neck it, it's still bad the next day, yes, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

Good to know. I think I would be, I mean, I am small, I don't know what would happen to me if I had two bottles of wine. I'm a bit of a lightweight when it comes to alcohol.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel was surprised by how tall we were, James.

**James Acaster**

Yes, I remember that.

**Rachel Stevens**

Very tall, how tall are you?

**Ed Gamble**

I'm six-one.

**James Acaster**

Yes, I'm about six-one.

**Rachel Stevens**

Six-one, okay. I'm five foot, so that's why I feel like you're really tall.

**James Acaster**

That's smaller, smaller than us.



**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Benito's only five foot, Benito's only five foot.

**Rachel Stevens**

Five foot nothing, I used to say five foot.

**James Acaster**

He is, he wears lifts, he wears lifts.

**Rachel Stevens**

So do I. They're good, aren't they?

**James Acaster**

He loves theme parks.

**Ed Gamble**

He loves theme parks, Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

Really?

**James Acaster**

Where do you stand on theme parks?

**Rachel Stevens**

I love a theme park.

**James Acaster**

Yes?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes. I'm a bit of a wuss, though. I like fast, but I don't like tunnels, and I don't like upside down, so I ask lots of questions before I go on them. But I love a fast roller coaster.

**James Acaster**

There's a TV show in getting you to do, like, things that are out of your comfort-, like, Rachel Stevens goes out of her comfort zone.

**Rachel Stevens**

There are so many things.



**James Acaster**

Because it feels like, yes, going through tunnels on a roller-coaster, having sugar cereal, having two bottles of wine.

**Rachel Stevens**

I think I'd be in hospital if I had two bottles of wine.

**James Acaster**

Do you reckon?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, I reckon.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel doesn't do-

**Rachel Stevens**

But yes, that is a really good idea, but also really scary, not fun for me. But a very good idea.

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes, I think-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Face my fears.

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

I don't think two bottles of wine counts, I don't think you'd get away with that on TV these days.

**James Acaster**

What?

**Ed Gamble**

An episode where Rachel Stevens drinks two bottles of wine.

**James Acaster**

You name one person who's not watching that.

**Ed Gamble**

No, I'm talking about who's going to make that.





**James Acaster**

I mean, everyone would.

**Rachel Stevens**

You.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, okay, we'll make it.

**Rachel Stevens**

We'll make it.

**Ed Gamble**

Probably online.

**James Acaster**

Independent production.

**Rachel Stevens**

Online.

**James Acaster**

We make it, and then we take it to channels, and then they'll bite our hand off.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes. So, our first episode is Rachel Stevens drinks two bottles of wine.

**Rachel Stevens**

We've got so much out of this, we've got a new podcast, we've got a TV show.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, I know.

**Rachel Stevens**

We're poets.

**Ed Gamble**

We're poets now, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

You know, I mean, it's just so much.

**James Acaster**

You've agreed that you're going to say, 'Rachel's doing her thing,' on stage.



**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my God, yes.

**James Acaster**

Between every song, let's not forget that, oh, in between every song.

**Rachel Stevens**

In between-, do you not think that's a bit much?

**James Acaster**

That's really funny.

**Ed Gamble**

I think it will start to feel a bit much after three or four, but then after five or six, it will start to pick up steam again.

**Rachel Stevens**

Right.

**James Acaster**

Oh my God, Rachel, in between every single song, you turned to the audience, just you, and went, 'Rachel's doing her thing,' every single time.

**Ed Gamble**

It would be brilliant. Who would be most annoyed that you kept doing that? Who would get angry first?

**Rachel Stevens**

Jon.

**Ed Gamble**

Jon, well, he's trying to show off, he's looking for romance, isn't he?

**Rachel Stevens**

No patience. Yes. He's like, 'I'm trying to look for romance, come on.'

**Ed Gamble**

Stop saying you're doing your thing.

**Rachel Stevens**

I'm going to think about that now every time I'm on stage, when we're doing S Club Party, I'm going to be like, 'Is it time? Is it time now?'



**James Acaster**

Ed saw a metal band once who, in between every song, dedicated each song to people who talk shit behind your back, every single time.

**Rachel Stevens**

What was that?

**Ed Gamble**

I saw a band who, every single song they played, they dedicated it to people who talk shit behind your back. But using those words, 'This is for those people who talk shit behind your back,' and then they'd go into the song.

**Rachel Stevens**

Every song?

**James Acaster**

And the song was less than a minute long, as well, so really funny.

We arrive at your dream dessert. Now, this is interesting because you seem like a very disciplined, sensible person, and that does not spell out dessert to me.

**Ed Gamble**

There you go.

**James Acaster**

Well, hold on, let's see. Rachel said she'd have cereal.

**Rachel Stevens**

I have two, I have two, okay.

**Ed Gamble**

Two, is that alright?

**James Acaster**

Well, yes, of course it's okay. I think you've earned it.

**Rachel Stevens**

So apple crumble, with boiling hot custard.

**Ed Gamble**

Of course.

**James Acaster**

Yes, boiling hot, yes, yes, got to be.



**Rachel Stevens**

Or a sticky toffee pudding with freezing cold vanilla ice cream. Classics.

**James Acaster**

Classics, for one, you want them far away from each other, you don't want them affecting each other temperature wise.

**Rachel Stevens**

No.

**James Acaster**

Do you want to eat them one after the other, or at the same time?

**Rachel Stevens**

I wasn't going to have them at the same time, but-,

**James Acaster**

You don't have to, if you want to have one after the other, fine, but then I am going to have to know in what order you want them in.

**Rachel Stevens**

I would dip in and out of each one.

**Ed Gamble**

You would dip in and out. Now, the way you're miming that-,

**Rachel Stevens**

I like sharing food. Are you good sharers?

**Ed Gamble**

No.

**Rachel Stevens**

You are? You're not? No.

**Ed Gamble**

There has to be enough, I have to see that there's definitely enough for me to have as much as I want, and then other people are going to join in. If it arrives and it's quite small, and I know we're going to, I don't know, I don't know if I am. Because when something arrives that you've got to share, people want to act like they're chill about it.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.



**Ed Gamble**

And then, like, 'Oh, yes, we'll share,' then we're just, like, chatting and taking a bit. If something arrives, if there are four of us at a table and something arrives, I immediately, I get the knife and I'm cutting that up into four exact pieces, and taking my bit.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh my God, I love it, and everyone knows where they're at.

**Ed Gamble**

Everyone knows where they're at.

**James Acaster**

Yes, everyone's really grateful when Ed does that.

**Rachel Stevens**

The boundaries are strong, and there's no awkward moment of that last little bit, who goes for that last little bit.

**James Acaster**

There is the awkward moment at the start, when one of us gets a knife and says, 'Right, I'm dividing it into four, and this is how much you're all getting.' That's awkward, but we don't have that awkward moment at the end.

**Rachel Stevens**

Everyone knows where they're at, you know.

**Ed Gamble**

It's good, you've got to draw the boundaries early on.

**Rachel Stevens**

You have, you have, yes, yes, love that.

**James Acaster**

I just think if in the end there's not enough, there's such joy in ordering another one.

**Ed Gamble**

There is.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's very laid back and chilled.

**James Acaster**

It's great, because you go, if you don't have enough of this, and we all feel like that was great but we wanted more, it feels really good to go, 'Let's get another.'



**Ed Gamble**

Yes, but then when the new one comes, I worry about that, then I've got to divide that up, because what if the person who didn't get enough the first time, then you've got to make sure they get enough, right?

**Rachel Stevens**

So more stress.

**Ed Gamble**

So isn't it easier just for you to order one each, I think that's the way to go.

**Rachel Stevens**

So we've discovered you're not a sharer.

**Ed Gamble**

No. Well, I can, but I need the rules.

**Rachel Stevens**

You need the rules.

**James Acaster**

I've seen him share, but he's stressed.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, the stress.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

I feel, yes, I hear that, I do hear that.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, so if you're eating with other people at this dream meal, you want a big apple crumble and a big-

**Rachel Stevens**

I hope I'm eating with other people, that's really sad.

**James Acaster**

You'd be cutting it up into 7.

**Rachel Stevens**

I sometimes like going out on my own for lunch or something, it's nice, yes. Not for dinner, though.



**Ed Gamble**

Oh, really?

**Rachel Stevens**

I have done it, and it's nice too, but-

**James Acaster**

At the end of the day.

**Rachel Stevens**

I just think dinner's a lovely social, in fact food in general, going out, it's one of my favourite things in life is to go out for a meal. It's, like, the best thing. But yes, I just feel like dinner's more of a company social, whereas lunch is a bit more, because you can do your bit of work.

**Ed Gamble**

You're going somewhere else after.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Whereas I think what we're saying is it's sadder to be lonely at night than during the day.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Interesting, yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's what I'm saying.

**Ed Gamble**

Because other people seeing you in the restaurant as well, being like-,

**Rachel Stevens**

I saw an old man in the pub the other day and I felt sad, and, you know, he was probably-,

**James Acaster**

Well, they're pathetic, aren't they?

**Rachel Stevens**

He was really cute, and I love old people, and he was, like, he was, yes, and I felt really sad. But he's probably really happy that he's having a night, you know, but I wanted to talk to him.



**James Acaster**

He would have hated that.

**Rachel Stevens**

He'd be like, 'Who is this?'

**James Acaster**

I think by the time you're an old man, if you're alone in the pub-,

**Ed Gamble**

You're loving it.

**James Acaster**

You absolutely love it.

**Ed Gamble**

You're in heaven, you're in absolute heaven.

**Rachel Stevens**

I felt sad for him.

**James Acaster**

What kind of a pub was it, like, a proper old pub?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, an old pub.

**James Acaster**

He would have absolutely loved that.

**Rachel Stevens**

You think? I hope so.

**James Acaster**

Just staring at his pint.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Rachel Stevens**

I hope so, he had a spaghetti bolognese.

**James Acaster**

Brilliant.





**Ed Gamble**

That is quite sad, actually.

**James Acaster**

Yes, that's actually quite sad.

**Rachel Stevens**

It was a bit sad.

**James Acaster**

I thought he was just at the bar drinking.

**Rachel Stevens**

No, he was eating.

**James Acaster**

Which somehow, in my head, is less tragic than having the spaghetti bolognese. I don't know why that's sadder.

**Rachel Stevens**

I so know where you're going with that, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

But I bet he was really looking forward to that spaghetti bolognese, I bet he was at home all day being like, 'Oh, I can't wait for that spaghetti bolognese at the pub.' He was doing that, he was going, like that, he couldn't wait.

**Rachel Stevens**

I hope so, I hope so, because I felt sad for him.

**James Acaster**

He was doing his thing.

**Rachel Stevens**

Doing his thing.

**James Acaster**

He was doing his thing.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, 'old man's doing his thing'.

**James Acaster**

Eating his bowl full of pasta.



**Ed Gamble**

His heart, God, I hope it didn't go too fast.

**James Acaster**

No, no, he's an old man. What's been the weirdest time, when someone's known who you are and you can't believe that they recognised you?

**Rachel Stevens**

We went to, this isn't weird at all, but it was just, it was, it's like, when people come up to me and say, 'Oh my God, you were my childhood,' and it's like, oh my God, I'm, like, old now.

**Ed Gamble**

Sure.

**Rachel Stevens**

And we went to a school yesterday, so working with a charity, and we went to a school to learn CPR, which was really, really cool. And all the teachers were really excited, because they were like, 'You were our childhood,' and the kids were just like, yeah, whatevs.

**Ed Gamble**

To actually learn CPR?

**James Acaster**

For the first time, recently.

**Ed Gamble**

Learning CPR?

**James Acaster**

No, no, no, I'll never need that.

**Ed Gamble**

You've got to do the pumps in time to S Club Party, that's how it-,

**Rachel Stevens**

Apparently Don't Stop Movin' is the perfect timing to do, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Really?

**James Acaster**

Is that one of yours?



**Rachel Stevens**

117 BPMs.

**James Acaster**

Is that an S Club one?

**Rachel Stevens**

What?

**James Acaster**

Don't Stop Movin'?

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Man, you've got so many hits, man.

**Rachel Stevens**

You knew that, being a proper S Club fan.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, come on.

**Rachel Stevens**

You knew that.

**James Acaster**

I know that song inside out, and there are a load of songs I know that are definitely S Club. That one, I disconnected it in my mind, but when you discover a band's got even more bangers than you thought, respect.

**Ed Gamble**

And that one saves lives.

**James Acaster**

That one saves lives, as well, yes. It would be weird for you, then, if you had to give someone CPR, and you've got to be singing your own song. I mean, if anything, they're getting the best treatment.

**Rachel Stevens**

But comforting.

**James Acaster**

She's going to know the exact BPM, I'm alright.



**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, I mean, I don't think I should sing it while I'm doing it, because I think that would be inappropriate.

**Ed Gamble**

Also you shouldn't, like, have the rest of the guys there to take over when it's their bit.

**Rachel Stevens**

Or, like, that backing dancing or something.

**James Acaster**

In between every compression, you're just, 'Rachel's doing her thing,' in between each one.

**Rachel Stevens**

That's really cool, though.

**Ed Gamble**

Rachel, I'm dying.

**Rachel Stevens**

It was really cool to learn that, though, really, really great life skill to have.

**James Acaster**

If I was in a band, I would probably, yes, find out, like, what's that BPM and write a song specifically for that.

**Ed Gamble**

For CPR.

**James Acaster**

So that I'd be the next one, because obviously it used to be Stayin' Alive by the Bee Gees, I think.

**Rachel Stevens**

Yes, that's the one they played.

**James Acaster**

But now you've overtaken that, you've pushed them out.

**Rachel Stevens**

There's room for all.

**James Acaster**

No, there's not.



**Rachel Stevens**

You know.

**James Acaster**

It's you guys now.

**Rachel Stevens**

Alright.

**James Acaster**

Bee Gees got to accept that, and you've got to own it, that's cool.

**Rachel Stevens**

Okay.

**James Acaster**

But if I was in a band, I'd be thinking, 'I've got to knock S Club off the top.'

**Rachel Stevens**

Got to be between 100 and 120 BPMs.

**Ed Gamble**

Have they specifically picked songs with titles that relate to stopping someone dying, though?

**James Acaster**

Yes, you'd have to call it something like that, yes, Don't Stop Movin', yes. Yes, you'd have to name it something that is, you know, I'd just call the song 'CPR'.

**Rachel Stevens**

Or Pasta.

**James Acaster**

Well, the P would stand for pasta in CPR, now we're thinking what the R stands for.

**Ed Gamble**

What, Cat's Pasta Revival?

**James Acaster**

Cat's Pasta Romance.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, Cat's Pasta Romance.



**Rachel Stevens**

We are so-, the creativeness that's going on here, oh my God, the creative juices flowing in here today.

**James Acaster**

I'm going to read your menu back to you now, see how you feel about it, Rachel, you would like still water with ice, extra cold, poppadoms or bread, you want sourdough toasted, dripping with butter, salted butter with some salt on top of it. Starter, burrata with Balsamic glaze, fresh tomatoes and basil. Main course, lobster and chips, air fried. Side dish, chard, tenderstem broccoli with chilli and garlic.

**Ed Gamble**

Long boys.

**Rachel Stevens**

Long boys, or girls.

**Ed Gamble**

Or girls.

**Rachel Stevens**

Or just vegetables.

**James Acaster**

Drink, a glass of well rounded white wine with a cube of ice in it. Dessert, apple crumble with boiling hot vanilla custard, and a sticky toffee pudding with freezing cold vanilla ice cream, not too close to each other. And the mime that you did earlier, that we didn't really convey to the listeners, is, you were like, you had a spoon in each hand and you were eating them, kind of, at the same time, I cannot lie.

**Rachel Stevens**

Oh, yes.

**James Acaster**

And I hate to come back to it, an octopus.

**Rachel Stevens**

Brilliant, yes.

**James Acaster**

That's what I'd like an octopus to teach me, how to eat multiple desserts at once.

**Rachel Stevens**

I feel seen.

**James Acaster**

It's the only thing I'd want an octopus to teach me.



**Ed Gamble**

Thank you so much, Rachel.

**James Acaster**

Thank you, Rachel.

**Rachel Stevens**

Thank you, it's been really fun, thank you.

**Ed Gamble**

There we are, lovely to speak to Rachel, James.

**James Acaster**

Lovely menu.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, lovely menu.

**James Acaster**

Didn't say party rings.

**Ed Gamble**

Didn't say party rings, I think we gave her some good ideas for the S Club tour, and I think we all know who we are booking as soon as possible. It's Cat Deeley.

**James Acaster**

Yes, listen, I'm a man of my word.

**Ed Gamble**

You're a man of your word, and I will tell you, I have worked with Cat Deeley before, she is absolutely fantastic fun, and she does like food, because I've worked with her on Great British Menu. So I think she'd be a great guest, but the difficulty for me, if we're talking to Cat Deeley, is how quickly I'd bring up the poem.

**James Acaster**

I imagine it will be straight away.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

I think your big challenge is to not bring it up before we start recording.



**Ed Gamble**

No, no, no, I'd save it, man, I'd probably have to go in a different room and just come in for the recording. But I'd save it. But my worry is, if you read the poem to Cat Deeley, Kielty's going to be on your tail.

**James Acaster**

Maybe I'll write a poem for Kielty now, so that I can-,

**Ed Gamble**

Good luck fucking rhyming that.

**James Acaster**

If he's coming for me, I'll read him a poem and calm him down.

**Ed Gamble**

No way you're rhyming Kielty with anything. Fealty? I guess fealty's a word, isn't it?

**James Acaster**

But also, I'd love to see Patrick Kielty again, because, you know, the last time I saw him was with my dad, when we bumped into him in Edinburgh, and I introduced him to my dad, and my dad said, 'Mr Kielty, it's an honour,' and shook his hand.

**Ed Gamble**

It's one of my favourite stories.

**James Acaster**

And I never knew that my dad admired the work of Patrick Kielty until then.

**Ed Gamble**

We've got so much to speak to Deeley about, man.

**James Acaster**

So we'll bring up, 'Mr Kielty, it's an honour,' surely.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, yes, yes. Look, thank you so much to Rachel for coming in.

**James Acaster**

Thank you, Rachel.

**Ed Gamble**

Lovely chat, so nice to meet a pop icon. We will be back next week with another episode of the Off Menu Podcast.





**James Acaster**

Of the Off Menu Podcast, with Ed and James.