



Off Menu – Ep 261 – Natalie Cassidy

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking the calves liver of conversation. The bacon of friendship. The mash potato of chat. And pouring over the onion gravy on the Internet, James. I think I'm just thinking about things I'd like to eat.

James Acaster

And that's not a particular dish. As you were saying that I was, like, 'Is this a dish I don't know?'

Ed Gamble

Yes, calves, liver and bacon with onion gravy and mash potato. Lovely.

James Acaster

It does sound lovely. That is Ed Gamble. My name is James Acaster. We own a dream restaurant together. Every single week, we invite in a guest. So, we ask them a favour, have a starter, main course, dessert, side dish and drink. Not in that order. This week our guest is Natalie Cassidy.

Ed Gamble

Natalie Cassidy, of course, James. A wonderful actor. She's been in EastEnders for many years playing-

James Acaster

Yes, she was in my Springleaf audio sitcom.

Ed Gamble

Playing the iconic Sonia Fowler. And, also, she was in Springleaf, your audio sitcom.

James Acaster

Yes, she played an excellent gangster.

Ed Gamble

Yes, she did.

James Acaster

I was beyond honoured to have Natalie on that podcast.

Ed Gamble

And we can't wait to chat to Natalie about her dream meal, James.



James Acaster

Yes, very exciting. I have no idea what Natalie is going to pick. We didn't really talk about food when we were doing Springleaf, the audio sitcom.

Ed Gamble

No. Yes, Springleaf the audio sitcom, which is available as a podcast, of course. And Natalie has her own podcast, Life With Nat, which she records.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I mean, she's going to tell us all about it.

James Acaster

Yes, there are a lot of familiar faces from her life.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think so. And she records it at home. Very exciting to chat to her about that and her dream meal. But if she picks a secret ingredient, which we have pre-agreed upon, and that Benito has suggested this week, then she will be removed from the dream.

James Acaster

Benito suggested this.

Ed Gamble

Benito suggested it, so don't come at us. Come at Benito and he will send you a signed chopping board.

James Acaster

Saying sorry.

Ed Gamble

Saying sorry, I'm Benito. And the secret ingredient this week is Guineafowl-er.

James Acaster

Err, Guineafowl.

Ed Gamble

Guineaowl, err, Fowler, Sonia Fowler.

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Yes, Benito suggested that.

James Acaster

Natalie's character is called Sonia Fowler. So, Benito said we should be Guineafowl, because, like, Guineafowl-er.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And Ed was, like, we're not doing that. And Benito went, 'Are you serious?' That was his response.

Ed Gamble

So, to make a point, we are doing that. And, also, we couldn't think of anything else.

James Acaster

We couldn't think of anything else, so we're doing Guineafowl-er. I like the Guineafowl I've had. I think I've had it a couple of times, you know?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think I must have had it a couple of times.

James Acaster

So, we're choosing it because we don't like it.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

It's because it has got such a strong link to Natalie because of Sonia Fowler, Guineafowl-er.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. I mean, you know, you can't think of Sonia Fowler without thinking of Guineafowl, so that's why we've gone for it.

Ed Gamble

And it's also, it's a proper slap up east-end dish.

James Acaster

Yes, it is.



Ed Gamble

So, hopefully, she doesn't say, 'Guineafowl-er.'

James Acaster

Hopefully, yes.

Ed Gamble

Are we going to hold her to-, if she says, 'Guineafowl.' Are we going to let her get away with it?

James Acaster

No, I'm still going to kick her out.

Ed Gamble

You're going to kick her out for Guineafowl, even though she's not said, 'Er.'

James Acaster

If says, 'Guineafowl.' I'm going to shout ehh, really loud, and then go, 'Get out.'

Ed Gamble

Well, I'm looking forward to meeting her. I've never met her before, James.

James Acaster

I have when we were recording Springleaf, the audio sitcom.

Ed Gamble

Oh, dear.

James Acaster

Available wherever you get your podcasts.

Ed Gamble

This is the Off Menu menu of Natalie Cassidy.

James Acaster

Natalie Cassidy.

Ed Gamble

Welcome, Natalie, to the dream restaurant.

Natalie Cassidy

Thank you for having me.

James Acaster

Kaboom, welcome Natalie Cassidy. We've been expecting you for some time.



Ed Gamble

Kaboom.

James Acaster

I've just eaten a salad that had more garlic mayo on it than I was anticipating.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, okay.

James Acaster

So, I didn't want to do my normal noise, which would be to big explosion noise that, kind of, could just, like, end up spraying you with, you know?

Natalie Cassidy

Garlic aioli.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you've got to avoid that. But that's the first time you've not done the noise.

James Acaster

Yes, I was just very self-conscious about all the garlic.

Natalie Cassidy

What, the first time ever he's not done the noise?

Ed Gamble

Yes, this is a huge moment in Off Menu history.

James Acaster

You're the first kaboom.

Natalie Cassidy

Wow, people are going to hate me, aren't they?

Ed Gamble

No, they'll know it's a special episode.

Natalie Cassidy

They're creatures of habit.



Ed Gamble

Yes, I think kaboom feels like a good, fresh, new format point.

Natalie Cassidy

Okay.

James Acaster

Yes, they'll like kaboom.

Ed Gamble

They'll like kaboom, definitely.

James Acaster

And, also, I wanted to point out, it was, you know, it was advertised as a chilli chicken salad. I was expecting a chilli sauce. So, I didn't deliberately have the garlic aioli. I didn't do that deliberately.

Natalie Cassidy

What was that, sorry?

James Acaster

I didn't deliberately have the garlic aaaaaioli.

Natalie Cassidy

Fine.

Ed Gamble

There you go, second time, you absolutely nailed it.

James Acaster

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

Where would you put garlic in your worst smells for other people to have?

Natalie Cassidy

I think that's a hard one, garlic because I love garlic, but garlic doesn't love me. I am someone I wake up and I stink of it, can't get it off. I brush teeth a few times even the evening before, very aware of how it's going to be in the morning.

Ed Gamble

Yes. It's not just out the mouth though, is it, garlic, when you wake up? It's out the skin, it's out the whole body.



Natalie Cassidy

It's out the pores.

James Acaster

It's out the pores.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Red onion is not good either, is it?

Ed Gamble

I'm alright with red-, I mean, to be honest, I just eat raw red onion quite a lot.

Natalie Cassidy

Wow.

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble

I just don't think I care about-,

Natalie Cassidy

What, like an apple, like the Grinch?

James Acaster

Yes, like the Grinch.

Ed Gamble

Exactly, I live like the Grinch at home.

Natalie Cassidy

Right, okay.

Ed Gamble

Yes, terrible Christmases at my house.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.



James Acaster

Yes, I mean, you've instantly done something that Ed loves, which is say that you stink. He loves it when anyone says that they stink or someone stank.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Okay, cool.

Ed Gamble

I love the word stink.

James Acaster

Yes, he loves it when people say that they stink. It's his favourite.

Natalie Cassidy

I don't stink all the time. For instance, today, I smell quite nice.

James Acaster

Yes, you smell nice today.

Natalie Cassidy

But if I'd have a huge pot of aioli, aioloi perhaps-,

James Acaster

I don't know what you're talking about. I don't know what that is.

Ed Gamble

You didn't trail off towards the end of the word, so James doesn't understand it.

James Acaster

No, it's an infinite word. People don't know that. You decide when to stop, but that was a bit short. That was a bit too short that one.

Ed Gamble

We've got stuff to talk about. Are you a foodie, Natalie?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, very much so.

Ed Gamble

You are.



Natalie Cassidy

I love my food.

James Acaster

Look, obviously, people expect us to ask you what you eat on the square.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, yes, not much, really. We find it quite difficult because when you're doing lots of scenes and you've got a lot of food involved, you know, if you forget a line or whatever, you have to go back to the top. So, you don't want to eat a lot. Then you're setting yourself up for eight times that-, you know what I mean? So, you'll see a lot of sipping, a lot of fork-holding, not loads of eating.

James Acaster

Is that why everyone is so angry because they're not eating properly?

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, we eat off set okay, you know?

James Acaster

You sure?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

Some of those people seem very angry.

Natalie Cassidy

They're very depressed and very angry sometimes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's about other issues though, I think. I don't think it's hanger a lot of the time.

Natalie Cassidy

No, it's usually affairs, murders, it's that, sort of, thing.

James Acaster

They should do a hangry storyline.

Natalie Cassidy

Hangry?



James Acaster

Yes, they haven't done a hangry storyline yet, if it's always affairs and murders. But, like, they could do a hangry one where that's the reason the person's angry.

Ed Gamble

Is that enough for a doof-doof?

Natalie Cassidy

I have to say, a few years ago, Denise Fox was quite poor and she was found, you know, picking stuff out of a bin food-wise. So, it's not really hanger, but was, kind of, a food-led story.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Was her character angry as well?

Natalie Cassidy

I think she was quite angry that she was so poor.

James Acaster

Oh, there you go. There you go.

Natalie Cassidy

So, yes, I'm afraid they've already done it, James.

James Acaster

A bit of hanger in there, they've already done it. They've been running a long time.

Ed Gamble

I'd love that if that was a doof-doof at the end of an episode. If someone was really hungry and then their Deliveroo arrived and they'd brought the wrong one, you know? Like, that feeling-

Natalie Cassidy

Like, Phil Mitchell-, Deliveroo turns up and he smashes the guy's face in because it's the wrong burger. That sort of scene.

James Acaster

And that's his cube off his back, throws it across the square. But the guy has got his helmet on still. And then takes his helmet off, Grant Mitchell.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.



Ed Gamble

That'll be a great return for Ross Kemp.

James Acaster

Yes, what a return.

Ed Gamble

He's the Deliveroo man.

James Acaster

You're no stranger to podcasts. You have your own podcast.

Natalie Cassidy

I do.

James Acaster

And you say you've got a studio at home as well. That's exciting.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I've got a little table, and a little setup, and one of those little RODECaster's. It's all very posh.

James Acaster

Acaster.

Natalie Cassidy

No, the-,

James Acaster

Huh.

Ed Gamble

The RODECaster.

James Acaster

It's Acaster, people pronounce it wrong.

Natalie Cassidy

I'd love to have you in a little cupboard at home to get you out and be on it all the time. That would be brilliant if you want to come over.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

That would be good, wouldn't it?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I think you'd be really good to have in a little cupboard, genuinely.

Natalie Cassidy

It would be great to get James out and make you laugh. I'd love that.

James Acaster

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

It would be so good.

Ed Gamble

Or just make you feel better because you're sad a lot of the time.

James Acaster

Thanks. Ed knows me better. Nat and I have worked together a few times, but, like, you know, maybe not to the extent where I've shown her how sad I am.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

No, I've not really seen you sad. I'm pleased about that. Maybe I'll keep this distance and just see you once every six months, something like that. It's best.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You'd have to knock on the cupboard. And if it's one knock he's happy, you can get him out. And if it's two knocks, you leave him in the cupboard.

James Acaster

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

It's a good game.



James Acaster

I can be sad sometimes, you know? But, you know.

Natalie Cassidy

He'd hear me rustling around, or hear a conversation where I've been out for garlic and he'd always do two knocks so he didn't come out the cupboard because I'd be stinking.

James Acaster

Yes, I was, like, 'She's going to stink.'

Natalie Cassidy

I'm staying in.

James Acaster

I'm keeping the door shut, she's going to stink.

Ed Gamble

Tell us a bit about your podcast, Life With Nat, right?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, Life With Nat. So, it's just me talking to my family. I talk to my other half. I talk to my kids. I talk to nieces, sister-in-law, and we just chat about life in general. Things that aggravate people, queuing, you know, traffic, socks that get lost in the washing machine. And stuff, you know, mum guilt. I have people on. I've only been doing it now for about nearly three months. So, it's really, really early days. But I've got a lovely little community already and people really like it. I've got a WhatsApp number, so people message me, which is getting quite a lot now because I'm doping it all myself.

James Acaster

What?

Natalie Cassidy

So, yes, I'm responding to-,

James Acaster

Your listeners can WhatsApp you and you respond to them?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

What? What?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, you know, obviously, I go through. It's a bit like pinball because you can't-, not pinball.



Ed Gamble

You're not looking at all of them?

Natalie Cassidy

Wham am I thinking of? Roulette, sorry, not pinball.

Ed Gamble

Roulette, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

I can't look at all of them all the time because that's all I'd be doing. But I find some really good people, and then I'll get them on the show for a Zoom. I have them on to talk about stuff if they've got a good story.

James Acaster

What's mum guilt?

Natalie Cassidy

Mum guilt is where you have children and no matter where you are, you feel like you're doing the wrong thing.

James Acaster

Do you feel like you're doing the wrong thing right now?

Natalie Cassidy

No, not really because I'm quite excited about this.

James Acaster

Yes, this is exciting.

Natalie Cassidy

But, you know, just in general.

James Acaster

Yes, if you're having fun.

Natalie Cassidy

They're at school. Just fitting everything in the time it takes to fit everything in. Have you got kids?

James Acaster

No, never going to happen.

Ed Gamble

No.



Natalie Cassidy

No, no kids for either you.

Ed Gamble

No, no plans.

Natalie Cassidy

No, that's good, well done.

Ed Gamble

Yes, thanks.

Natalie Cassidy

It's a really good choice.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

It's really good. I love my kids, but it's fucking horrible out here.

James Acaster

Yes, I don't doubt it for a second. It is the right choice. Maybe we will need guests on our podcast at one point. If we run out of guests, we'll have kids so that we can get them on like you've done. That's a smart move.

Natalie Cassidy

It is. But I think to actually ruin your life and have kids for the rest of your life and that responsibility, which obviously, I don't think either of you are capable of, it's probably best just to get other people's kids on.

James Acaster

Ah, yes, your kids could come on this podcast.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

A friend of mine, well, a friend of the podcast, John Kearns, suggested to us this week that we do kids' episodes.

Natalie Cassidy

I think it would be really good. And I think if you did, you'd have to have my Joanie on. She is seven and she's actually hilarious.



Ed Gamble

Is Joanie a foodie? Does she know her stuff?

Natalie Cassidy

Joanie likes food. She's got quite fussy of late, which is really annoying. They, kind of, just change their minds, you know? You can make a really nice lasagne and she'll just go, 'Don't like that now.' You go, 'What you talking about, I've spent four hours making it and you're going to eat it, otherwise, I'm going to kill you.'

James Acaster

We always start with still or sparking water?

Natalie Cassidy

I'm going to go sparkling, please. Can I have a slice of lime in it, please?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Thanks.

James Acaster

A slice or a wedge.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, no, wedge.

James Acaster

Wedge.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Are you picking the wedge out and squeezing the lime into the water, or are you just leaving it bobbing around?

Natalie Cassidy

No, I'm leaving it bobbing around, depending on what I'm eating next. Do you know what I mean? I don't want too much lime in there. But I do love a fizzy-, it has got to be a very, very fizzy water. You know, some are awful, so you need a San Pelle.



Ed Gamble

Sam Pelle all the way.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. Although, the lid when you've got that at home is really annoying because it doesn't screw on, does it, any more?

James Acaster

When you put it back on?

Natalie Cassidy

Once it's open, it's finito. So, I need to do the 1.5.

Ed Gamble

Does it? I don't know about this lid problem.

James Acaster

Yes, it's not the strongest of lids.

Natalie Cassidy

It's not the strongest of lids. Once it's opened, it's open.

Ed Gamble

Well, that's no good.

Natalie Cassidy

Well, it is if you're really thirsty and you're going to use it all. But it is quite annoying if you're going to waste it because obviously, the next day, that's it, it's over, isn't it? It's poor.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's over and done with, it's flat.

James Acaster

I quite like flat sparkling water, though.

Natalie Cassidy

What, like a soda water?

James Acaster

Like a soda water, but leaving it to go flat because it tastes different.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, okay.



Ed Gamble

We've mentioned it on the podcast before. I don't know why that when you leave sparkling water to go flat, it should just taste like still water, shouldn't it? But it doesn't, it has got its own flavour.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I don't like that.

James Acaster

What do you think of Ed, that he likes it? What do you think of Ed now? Has it changed your opinion of him?

Natalie Cassidy

I'm wondering how you got there. And I'm wondering if you had a pint of sparkling water next to your bed that went flat and then had it and liked it. Do you remember how that happened?

Ed Gamble

You know what, it might have been maybe in a hotel or something on tour where, you know, you go into a hotel and there might a bottle of still and a bottle of sparkling. I'm drinking the still flirts of all, and then I might get back later and be, like, I'm going to have some water and it's sparkling, couple of sips, oh, I can't have sparkling before bed. Pop it on the bedside table, wake up in the morning, oh, I need some water, 'Hello'.

Natalie Cassidy

So, yes, I'm right.

James Acaster

That's him saying hello to the water.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

Not to, like, the cleaner or someone who has come in.

Natalie Cassidy

No.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

The hotel manager.



Ed Gamble

And knowing me, I would say hello to the water out loud if I was by myself.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I say hello to inanimate objects quite a lot of the time.

James Acaster

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

Can you remember some inanimate objects you've said hello to?

Natalie Cassidy

I like to do it if I've got coats on the banister, I'll talk to them. I'll go, 'Right, come on, time to get you away.'

James Acaster

Time to get you away.

Ed Gamble

I love that.

Natalie Cassidy

Because they're on the banister, so let's get them in the cupboard. I go, 'Come on now, let's get you away.'

James Acaster

Stop hanging out on the banister, you've had your fun.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, you've been out for long enough. You've had your airing, get back in the cupboard.

James Acaster

That's good. I'm trying to think if I speak to any inanimate objects.

Ed Gamble

Yes, we do need to hear that. You've got four cats though, so I think you get a lot of your talking out.

Natalie Cassidy

Have you?



James Acaster

I've got four cats.

Natalie Cassidy

Four, how lovely.

James Acaster

I had a friend stay for five days recently and that made me realise how often I say hello to the cats. It's every time I see them. I say hello to them individually by name. And I realised how much it was, not annoying my friend, but, like, how he must think I'm just bonkers that I'm just constantly saying hello to them walking round the house.

Natalie Cassidy

That's what children do to parents.

James Acaster

Right, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

So, I won't really say, 'Hello, Eliza.' Every time I see her or, 'Hello, Joanie.' I don't do that. But they go, 'Mum, mum, mum, mum, mum, mum, mum, mum, mummy, mummy, mummy.' And that's what you're doing to your cats, sort of.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Even in the course of one conversation. So, they'll get your attention with mum, you'll say something back, and then they'll say mum again and say something.

Natalie Cassidy

They say mum all the time.

James Acaster

Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms or bread, Natalie Cassidy? Poppadoms or bread? Sorry, Ed, I cut you off there. I didn't expect to.

Ed Gamble

No, it's alright. That's the poppadoms or bread bit, isn't it? You've got to cut people off.

James Acaster

I was trying to make Natalie jump. It didn't work.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

I did have a slight jump.

James Acaster

Did you?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

Ed Gamble

From where I was sitting, you were absolutely stone cold, just like, must of just letting that not phase you at all.

Natalie Cassidy

Okay.

James Acaster

The jumping must have happened mainly in your feet or something that we can't see.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Inside.

James Acaster

Internal jump, yes. What were you going to say?

Ed Gamble

I was going to say that I used to really annoy my mum by saying mum loads and loads until she said yes. And then I'd say nothing, it's just a story about a mum.

James Acaster

It's just a story about a mum.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, God, that's annoying. Your poor mum.

James Acaster

It doesn't make sense, does it?



Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Just saying nothing would be funnier.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

So, going mum, mum, mum, mum. Mum going, 'What?' Nothing. That's funny.

Ed Gamble

I used to do that one as well. But, you know, you've got to graduate up to something else, haven't you? And it's just a story about a mum still makes me laugh.

James Acaster

If you ever go and see Ed live, his stories are very annoying, but he's just doing stand-up.

Ed Gamble

Same word over and over again.

Natalie Cassidy

I'll look forward to it. I'll come along.

Ed Gamble

Hold on to the bread.

Natalie Cassidy

What bread are we talking about? Can I have any bread I want?

Ed Gamble

Any bread you want in the whole world.

James Acaster

Any bread you want in the whole world.

Natalie Cassidy

I never, ever understand this from you two, can I just say? I don't get poppadoms or bread, I never have.

James Acaster

Well, me neither, to be honest.



Natalie Cassidy

I don't understand it.

James Acaster

What do you mean?

Natalie Cassidy

I don't know why you ever went with a poppadom or bread. They're so different that it's just-,

Ed Gamble

I think James did it in the first episode, and then we couldn't stop doing it.

Natalie Cassidy

Fine.

James Acaster

You get them at that point in the meal.

Natalie Cassidy

I know. It so depends on what you're having.

James Acaster

Yes, well, you just go for whatever based on what you're having.

Ed Gamble

Look, this is also the dream restaurant, so we're not being, you know, held by any rules. You know, we're not held by any conventions.

Natalie Cassidy

No.

Ed Gamble

So, you know, a lot of guests, actually, have had poppadoms and then gone on to have a non-Indian meal.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, yes, I know that, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

So, this is the joy of the dream restaurant, you know?

Natalie Cassidy

You can have what you want when you want.



Ed Gamble

Yes, we don't care.

James Acaster

You can have prawn crackers at this point.

Ed Gamble

We're relaxed, pop your shoes off.

James Acaster

Yes, nachos.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, okay.

James Acaster

People have chosen different things. Olives, you know, those, kind of, pre-meal things.

Natalie Cassidy

Pre-meal things.

James Acaster

Things that they bring out, you know?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, of course, but I thought I had to go for bread. But, alright, do you know what I'll do then? If you don't mind, could I have-, I'd like some arancini balls, some deep-fried arancini balls that sit in, kind of, a truffle, buttery sauce.

James Acaster

Here's what I like about this because we were talking about my pronunciation earlier. I would say arancini.

Natalie Cassidy

It is arancini, yes.

James Acaster

But I'm a genie, so I like you're calling them arangenie.

Ed Gamble

They've got to be arangenie balls.

James Acaster

A genie called Aron, you know? I like that.



Natalie Cassidy

My sister-in-law is from Italy as well, and I know they're arancini balls. But, yes, I say, because I'm lazy, arangenie balls.

Ed Gamble

We've got to go with arangenie.

James Acaster

Arangenie's balls.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Oh, no, has that ruined it for you now you think of a genie's balls?

Natalie Cassidy

A little bit.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. Well, normally, genie's have just got wispy tails. I think you're alright. I think they're-, those kind of balls.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I don't think there's a lot of genitalia down there.

James Acaster

Yes, I don't think it's that kind of balls.

Ed Gamble

If you found a lamp and rubbed and a genie came out, obviously you'd be excited.

Natalie Cassidy

So excited.

Ed Gamble

Right. But if the genie had a big old pair of nuts on him, would that take away some of the excitement for you?

Natalie Cassidy

I don't think I'd be worried about it. I think I'd just be so excited to see the genie. I think the balls would go out the window. It wouldn't bother me. I'd be thinking about what wish, wouldn't I? I wouldn't be going, 'Oh, look at his set of balls.'



Ed Gamble

I'm just thinking about his balls going out the window now.

Natalie Cassidy

His knackers down there.

Ed Gamble

You wouldn't use one of your wishes to make the genie's balls disappear.

Natalie Cassidy

Absolutely not, what a waste. Nothing to do with me.

James Acaster

First of all, first wish, get rid of those balls.

Natalie Cassidy

Imagine wasting a wish on a set of balls that have got nothing to do with you. It doesn't matter if he has got balls. It doesn't matter what that bit looks like.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Why do boys always giggle about balls, balls and willies.

James Acaster

Funny.

Ed Gamble

It's funny though, isn't it, because also I'm just imagining him just having balls.

James Acaster

Yes, I imagine just having balls. Can't see his dick or anything, it's just his balls.

Natalie Cassidy

Just massive balls.

James Acaster

Yes. Just this visible, like, I'd imagine, like, when a dog hasn't had his balls off yet.

Ed Gamble

You see the back of the dog.



James Acaster

And you see the back of the dog and you're, like, woah. That one still has got its balls. A bit like that if you see a genie. I'd imagine them like a set of dogs balls on the genie.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. I'm, sort of, imagining, kind of, the genie from Aladdin that we all love, the blue one.

James Acaster

Yes, love him.

Natalie Cassidy

Where would they go? Where would they sit? I suppose, in that area before the wisp.

James Acaster

Yes, the area before the wisp.

Natalie Cassidy

Wouldn't they? Part of that triangular as they narrow down. It would, kind of, be there, wouldn't it?

Ed Gamble

Or the end of the wisp. It wisps down and you looked at the wisp and then they're just swinging off the end.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm not sure about that.

James Acaster

Not the end of the wisp, no.

Ed Gamble

Sorry, that was a stupid thing to say, sorry.

James Acaster

Not at the end of the wisp, that's ridiculous. That's where his feet would be.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, that's really stupid.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I'm an idiot. I can't believe I said the balls would be on the end of the wisp.

James Acaster

I also think it would be, like, when you see them on a dog, so you basically see it from the back. So, the genie is, kind of, speaking to you and it all seems fine. And then you're, like, okay, cool, I've got this,



I've got three wishes, I understand. And he's like, yes, cool. And he just turns round to look at something or whatever, and then you see his balls and you're like, 'Oh, man.'

Ed Gamble

Maybe it's the genie's main aim. Like in Aladdin, where he really wants to be free. He wants someone to use one of their wishes to be free. This genie really wants someone to wish his balls away because they're quite cumbersome.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

Doesn't make for an easy time in the lamp.

Natalie Cassidy

Also, when he squeezes back into the lamp. Exactly. Can you imagine? His face is there with the balls in his face. Uncomfortable, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes. It all gets squeezed up together.

Ed Gamble

Is he putting them in the spout first or if he pulling them in last, when he gets back in?

Natalie Cassidy

I think when he gets back in. I reckon everything goes in and they're the last things, like, 'Shit.'

Ed Gamble

Yes. Got to proper yank them.

Natalie Cassidy

Like, they're really heavy. Over the rim of the lamp. Onto the top of his head.

James Acaster

Really undignified.

Ed Gamble

Oh, no. Poor guy.

James Acaster

Poor guy.

Ed Gamble

Let's talk more about these aran-genie balls, though. So, in like a truffley-, a truffle butter type thing?



Natalie Cassidy

Like a truffle butter. Yes, please.

Ed Gamble

Yes? And what's in-, is there anything inside the arancini ball in terms of-,

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, they're usually, kind of-, rice, obviously, because it's risotto rice, isn't it, an arancini ball. With bolognese. Or you get them with ham and cheese. So, I think I'll go bolognese, please.

Ed Gamble

Nice. A little secret bolognese pocket in there.

Natalie Cassidy

But they're quite small. You know, I wouldn't-,

Ed Gamble

They're little snacks. Little snack starter.

Natalie Cassidy

We've got a lot to get through. So, yes, just a little snack.

James Acaster

Dream starter then?

Natalie Cassidy

So difficult. I've been trying to, over the weekend, I was-, someone said to me, 'What are you doing now? What are you writing?' I said, 'I'm trying to write my menu. It's really important. Really thinking about it.'

James Acaster

Who was this you were talking to?

Natalie Cassidy

I was talking to my daughter, Eliza. I said, 'Got to write my menu.' And I wanted it all to, kind of, fit in. But I just don't-, I think it's impossible to do that, because then it just becomes boring. So, I think I've got to go for different things for each course that give me joy. So, for a starter, I'm going to go for-, it's a bit off the wall. I've had my aran-genie balls, but if this is my last meal or my dream meal, I think I've got to have a bacon roll. Like, a bacon sandwich or roll.

Ed Gamble

I love this.



Natalie Cassidy

So, I'm going for a crusty roll from the bakers, like a white crusty roll from the bakers, with thick salted butter. Proper butter. Room temperature, obviously. There's nothing worse, is there, than a hard butter that you can't spread.

Ed Gamble

You're spreading it, it's ripping up the roll.

Natalie Cassidy

I can't bear it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's got to be room temp. I mean, well, the worst is as well, if it's on toast and it's cold butter, then I'll just end up slicing the butter like cheese and-

Natalie Cassidy

Putting it on, yes.

Ed Gamble

Laying it on and watching it melt, and then, you've had, what, half a pack a butter on one slice of toast.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's quite nice, actually.

Natalie Cassidy

It is nice. It is really good.

James Acaster

Every cloud. I'm going to say what the listeners' going to be thinking and yelling at their phones right now.

Natalie Cassidy

Go on.

James Acaster

Why don't you switch round your bread course and your starter and have a bacon roll as your bread course, because that's the bread and the butter in there, and then have the aran-genie balls as your starter, because that's-



Natalie Cassidy

I could do. I could do that. I could do that, but I feel the arangenie balls are too small, really, to be the starter.

James Acaster

Fair enough.

Ed Gamble

I think you should-, I'd stick to your guns, I think.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm going to stick to what I'm doing. But I really love a bacon roll. Thick, crispy, organic bacon.

Ed Gamble

What type of bacon are we talking?

Natalie Cassidy

It's usually from the-, I don't know if we can say names of things.

Ed Gamble

Yes, we love it.

Natalie Cassidy

I like The Ginger Pig. I think The Ginger Pig do excellent bacon.

Ed Gamble

Is it streaky? Is it back?

Natalie Cassidy

No, it's back.

Ed Gamble

Back, nice.

Natalie Cassidy

Unsmoked.

Ed Gamble

Unsmoked. Interesting, okay.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm going unsmoked, yes.



Ed Gamble

Why?

Natalie Cassidy

I don't mind a smoked bacon. But for a perfect bacon roll, for me, I like it unsmoked.

James Acaster

Is the fat all crispy?

Natalie Cassidy

Very crispy, yes.

Ed Gamble

There's so many things to talk about with a bacon roll. There's so many variables, aren't there, for something that's quite a simple staple food. How many rashers?

Natalie Cassidy

I like to pack it out.

Ed Gamble

Pack it out.

Natalie Cassidy

I do like to pack it out.

James Acaster

The whole packet?

Natalie Cassidy

No, not a whole packet. I'd say-, they're very thick actually and they're quite large from in there. So, in a small bakers white roll, I reckon three. And that's quite a lot of bacon.

James Acaster

That's good. That's cool, though.

Natalie Cassidy

I reckon three.

Ed Gamble

But you want to feel, like-, especially with back bacon, because it's thick anyway. You want to feel like you're getting in there and having a bacon roll.

Natalie Cassidy

You're getting in and having a good old mouthful.



Ed Gamble

Yes. I went to university in the North East and there was a place that I found towards the end of me being there, which was a little hatch in the wall and you could buy a bacon sandwich from there and they were open until, like, midnight.

Natalie Cassidy

Amazing.

James Acaster

Last thing this guys needs.

Ed Gamble

The best thing in the world. And it was a baguette. You go and get a baguette, and I'm not joking, they'd put a whole pack of bacon in it.

Natalie Cassidy

Lovely.

Ed Gamble

It was the absolute dream. To finish a night out-,

Natalie Cassidy

Unbelievable.

Ed Gamble

With a baguette and a whole pack of bacon. Joy.

Natalie Cassidy

I like it. I really like it.

Ed Gamble

True joy.

James Acaster

Wakes up the next morning. Hello. It's half a baguette and half a packet of bacon next to me.

Ed Gamble

I wasn't leaving any of that, mate.

James Acaster

No, no. I knew you weren't.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I'd need the water though. I'd be saying hello to a big old bottle of water the next day.



Natalie Cassidy

You would.

James Acaster

Saltiest mouth.

Natalie Cassidy

Still or sparkling. You wouldn't give a fuck, would you?

Ed Gamble

No. Just something, anything. Sauce? Are you having sauce on it?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Now, this is always controversial.

Natalie Cassidy

It is really controversial, this.

Ed Gamble

What are you putting in it?

Natalie Cassidy

This is mad.

James Acaster

I'm hoping for brown sauce.

Natalie Cassidy

I love brown sauce, but if I'm true to myself, I am going tomato sauce and mayo.

James Acaster

Oh my Lord.

Ed Gamble

Almost a Marie Rose.

James Acaster

Wow.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm not mixing them up, but they're in there.



Ed Gamble

The mayo's a curveball, isn't it? Because I thought we were going so traditional with the bacon roll.

Natalie Cassidy

I know.

Ed Gamble

Either brown or red sauce.

Natalie Cassidy

I know.

Ed Gamble

Mayo?

James Acaster

Wow.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm obsessed with mayonnaise. If I didn't eat mayonnaise, I reckon I'd be thin.

Ed Gamble

What?

Natalie Cassidy

Seriously. I think if I gave up mayo, I reckon I'd look like Kate Moss.

Ed Gamble

How much mayo are you having on a daily basis?

Natalie Cassidy

I have cut it down of late.

Ed Gamble

Okay, well, I don't want to hear about what you've cut it down to. I want to hear about what you were on before.

James Acaster

At your worst. At your lowest ebb. How many-, how much mayonnaise were you getting through a day?

Natalie Cassidy

I mean, I reckon it-, I reckon, I'd have a chicken baguette. I'd make myself a chicken baguette, roast chicken, with lettuce and I would pile on the mayo on that.



Ed Gamble

Talk us through the pile on, though. How much would you say? Could you estimate?

Natalie Cassidy

If we've got a jar, I reckon 6 tablespoons.

James Acaster

Fucking hell, Natalie.

Ed Gamble

Wow. That's a mayo sandwich.

James Acaster

Yes, the chicken is the condiment there.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, it's really bad. Loved it.

Ed Gamble

And would that be it for the day or then-,

Natalie Cassidy

No, that would be lunchtime. That would be lunch. I was heavier back then.

James Acaster

Still got the rest of the jar to get through.

Natalie Cassidy

I was 4 stone heavier back then.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes?

Natalie Cassidy

I was, yes.

James Acaster

And you cut mayo out your diet and that's it.

Natalie Cassidy

I haven't cut it out. But I've-, now, don't be silly. Let's not get silly.

Ed Gamble

You're not on 6 tablespoons in a baguette.



Natalie Cassidy

No.

Ed Gamble

But would you have some for dinner as well, then? Would there be mayo involved in dinner?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. Probably.

Ed Gamble

No matter what it is?

Natalie Cassidy

Well, if chips were there or wedges.

James Acaster

How much mayo is in this bacon roll?

Natalie Cassidy

We're going tomato sauce, just a little, like we do, a little (whistle noise), you know.

James Acaster

What? Little?

Natalie Cassidy

(Whistle noise). I just imagine that's the bottle. I don't really know how to describe.

James Acaster

Yes, you're doing a little spiral, is what you're miming there.

Ed Gamble

Yes, a little spiral.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, a little spiral round. And then, mayo, the same over the top. A little spiral round. Not much.

James Acaster

No, so, it's not-,

Ed Gamble

You really have cut back on the mayo.

Natalie Cassidy

No, I've really, really cut back. It pains me to say it. But, yes, I have.



James Acaster

But you need it in there. If you don't have mayo in there, you're going to be upset with this bacon roll.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. Because I like everything to amalgamate. I like the butter and the mayo and the tomato sauce all to go together. Heart attack in a roll.

James Acaster

That's fair.

Ed Gamble

Does sound good.

James Acaster

It has to be a bacon roll. You don't want some sausages in there? Some eggs?

Natalie Cassidy

No, thank you. I don't like-, I don't know-, I don't trust people who have egg sandwiches and egg rolls.

James Acaster

You don't trust the people?

Natalie Cassidy

No. I don't understand it.

Ed Gamble

What's your issue with it?

Natalie Cassidy

Do you know, I don't really know. Just don't-, I don't like it.

Ed Gamble

Is it the pop of the yolk?

James Acaster

But you like everything mixing together.

Ed Gamble

You know when you see someone having an egg and bacon sandwich and they bite down and then, the yolk pops.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, maybe it's that.



Ed Gamble

And it all spills out the other side.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, it makes me feel a bit sick.

James Acaster

That's only in Withnail and I.

Natalie Cassidy

'Get in the back of the van.'

James Acaster

Yes. It's that kind of thing.

Ed Gamble

That's happened to me. The fried egg sandwich pop.

Natalie Cassidy

I think it's the yolky thing and sometimes the yolk, if it's not cooked, looks like snot. It's just that-, I don't know. The yolk thing. I love a poached egg, don't get me wrong, and a scrambled egg. You know, I like eggs, but I'm-,

Ed Gamble

You're not putting them in between bread?

Natalie Cassidy

I'm just not putting them in between bread, no.

James Acaster

Okay, fair enough. I mean, for me, when I was-, I don't know how old I was, a kid. When I had my first bacon and egg roll, I thought, 'This is the best thing in the world. I never, ever want to go back. This is incredible.' I've never met anyone who is that opposed to it before.

Natalie Cassidy

Do you have a bacon and egg roll now?

James Acaster

I would go for it if it-, yes, if that's the option. And I'd have some sausages in there.

Natalie Cassidy

Lovely.



James Acaster

I'd just go full, like, breakfast.

Ed Gamble

Full. Yes, full breakfast in a roll.

James Acaster

Breakfast bap.

Natalie Cassidy

Would you have baked beans in it?

James Acaster

You know what, if someone offered it, sure.

Ed Gamble

I wouldn't.

James Acaster

No, I think it'd be a bad idea. But if someone said, 'Do you want baked beans in that?' I'd be like, 'Yes, go on.'

Natalie Cassidy

Would you? Smash them in?

James Acaster

Why not? Let's try it. It would be bad.

Natalie Cassidy

It wouldn't be great, all the bean juice.

James Acaster

No. You really only need those 3 things I think. That's the maximum you need.

Ed Gamble

I don't know. There's a couple of cafes in Edinburgh where you can get, like, the square sausage in there or black pudding in a roll, as well.

Natalie Cassidy

I love black pudding.

Ed Gamble

Bacon and black pudding roll.



Natalie Cassidy

I love black pudding.

Ed Gamble

Oh, my God.

Natalie Cassidy

It's so bad, but so good.

Ed Gamble

So good, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

There's a pub near me, local pub, but it's a really lovely foodie pub, and they do a starter. It is ridiculous. It's so big that you couldn't-, I mean, I've had it and gone, 'You expect me now to have a main meal?' The black pudding is, kind of, a tube size. If you can imagine, to your listeners, that sort of size going round. What's that size? What would do you say it's like?

James Acaster

It looks like a boomerang.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, like a boomerang.

James Acaster

But like a black pudding of boomerang.

Natalie Cassidy

Well done, James. Thanks. That's absolutely perfect.

Ed Gamble

Thanks, I was going to go in a different direction.

James Acaster

Yes, of course you were, just like a boomerang.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes.

James Acaster

That's beautiful. That's a wonderful starter. I felt very nostalgic, even though I still eat them. But, you know, it makes you feel homely.



Ed Gamble

Yes, it does.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, and it reminds me of my mum as well, going back to that, going over to the bakers. And I lost my mum when I was 19. So, she'd go over the bakers when I was about 10, and I'd nick her Embassy Number 1s and smoke under the cooker hood, while she went to the bakers.

James Acaster

Under the what?

Natalie Cassidy

You know, remember the cooker hood?

Ed Gamble

Yes, the extraction.

Natalie Cassidy

I used to think-, the extractor fan. And I used to think, 'She won't know that I'm doing this.' And I was about 10.

Ed Gamble

I mean, she definitely knew, right?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I think so.

Ed Gamble

The extractor fan is not magic. It doesn't completely remove all smell. And she probably noticed her fags went.

Natalie Cassidy

I just always remember-, we lived on Essex Road. So, I'd look out the window, in Islington. So, you'd look out and I could see her. So, I could just finish up. 'Oh, she's on her way back.' You know. Good old memories.

Ed Gamble

A cig and a bacon sandwich. Come on, that's-,

Natalie Cassidy

I wasn't eating a bacon roll when I was having a cig.

James Acaster

Fucking hell. That's absolutely-,



Ed Gamble

That's going to be on my next dream menu, I tell you. An Embassy Number 10 and a bacon sandwich.

James Acaster

Absolutely get that kid to audition for EastEnders. 'Right, you're going to be in EastEnders.' Just fucking chain smoking at 10.

Ed Gamble

You're going to be in a Dot Cotton prequel.

James Acaster

Bacon baps and fucking chain smoking. There you go, get in there.

Natalie Cassidy

Made for it. Made for it.

James Acaster

Dream main course?

Natalie Cassidy

I've ummed and erred with this because I'm such a pasta lover, but a part of me is a bit-, I go, 'Is that really boring to go for a pasta dish?'

James Acaster

No.

Natalie Cassidy

And I love steak. I really like a good steak. A rib-eye or something. So, then I thought, is there any possibility that I can have, maybe, some pasta on the plate with some-,

James Acaster

You can have a pasta course, Natalie. Some people have hacked this in the past and asked for a pasta course, because that is a thing.

Natalie Cassidy

It is a thing, yes.

James Acaster

And then, a main course. So if you want.

Natalie Cassidy

I know, but I've had a bacon roll now. Be stuffed, won't I?



James Acaster

Well, yes, you'll be, but-,

Ed Gamble

Look, this is the dream restaurant. It's a once in a lifetime meal.

James Acaster

I'm a genie. I can take away you being full. I can't take away my own balls, but I can take away you being full, so that you won't be full for this meal.

Natalie Cassidy

Alright. Let's have a pasta course in there, then.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's what we like to here.

Natalie Cassidy

Let's have a pasta course in there and I would like the tagliolini. So, not the tagliatelle, but it's thin. So, it's, like, a flat spaghetti, isn't it, a tagliolini. It's smaller. That's my favourite pasta. And I would have a lobster chilli pasta.

Ed Gamble

This is great.

Natalie Cassidy

Now, I shouldn't. This is a dream menu because I love crustaceans, but they don't love me.

James Acaster

A lot of things don't love you that you love.

Natalie Cassidy

They really don't. No I'm, not allergic, what is it? Intolerant to a lot of things, but I just ignore it. I can't do it. I shouldn't eat gluten, I shouldn't have pork, I know I shouldn't have lobster or crab.

James Acaster

This entire menu.

Natalie Cassidy

Most of the menu.

Ed Gamble

Yes, lobster pasta for someone who shouldn't have gluten and crustacean.



Natalie Cassidy

And a bacon roll.

Ed Gamble

And a bacon roll, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, you've just polished off a bacon roll and now, straight into the lobster pasta.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. If I was eating this meal, the next day, you wouldn't see me out of that toilet for the whole 24 hours.

James Acaster

Fair enough.

Natalie Cassidy

But it's worth it, you know.

Ed Gamble

It's got to be worth 24 hours, hasn't it?

Natalie Cassidy

It's got to be.

James Acaster

Reflecting on the meal the whole time. It's good.

Ed Gamble

Just shouting, 'Worth it' every time you do a shit. So, it's lobster and chilli and garlic, I'm presuming? Which doesn't love you either.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. Chilli, garlic, lobster. Not really, no.

James Acaster

Yes, lobster doesn't love you.

Natalie Cassidy

And a lovely tagliolini.

Ed Gamble

Beautiful.



Natalie Cassidy

Really, really nice. Not too big. Let's have a little one because we don't need to be greedy here. It's just that lovely, but quite chunky lobster. I hate it when you get a lobster dish and you can't find it.

James Acaster

Yes, agreed.

Natalie Cassidy

Locanda Locatelli does a lovely lobster spaghetti.

Ed Gamble

Whereabouts is that?

Natalie Cassidy

That is Regency Hyatt. I can't remember what square it's on, actually. You'll have a look. The Hyatt Regency Hotel in the West End and then, the Locanda is off of that. Giorgio Locatelli's little restaurant. Surprised you've not been there.

Ed Gamble

No, not been there.

James Acaster

No, not been there.

Natalie Cassidy

Have you not even been there?

James Acaster

No.

Ed Gamble

No.

Natalie Cassidy

You should go there for the bread basket and the pasta, boys.

Ed Gamble

Alright.

Natalie Cassidy

For sure.

Ed Gamble

Do it. That sounds lovely though. That's a great pasta course.



James Acaster

Any sauce in this pasta?

Natalie Cassidy

No. It's usually quite-,

James Acaster

So, then, oil?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, it's just a little bit of oil. Some lemon on it, maybe. And lots of black pepper.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you don't want to be-,

Natalie Cassidy

No cheese. If anyone puts fucking parmesan on fish pasta, see you later. Bye.

Ed Gamble

Bye bye. Yes, that's like-, this is proper traditional Italian, right? Because Italians go mad if you do that, put cheese on a fish pasta dish.

Natalie Cassidy

You can't do it. So stupid.

Ed Gamble

From one of my favourite-, I appear to be on the algorithm on Instagram of getting videos of people with Italian partners doing things that they know are going to annoy them.

Natalie Cassidy

Okay, good, I like this.

Ed Gamble

So, the classic is filming in the kitchen and the man is Italian and he's stood in the background, and a woman gets pasta and breaks it over the pot. Like, snaps it in half. And he'll go, 'Ah, no.' Like, go absolutely crazy. It's brilliant.

Natalie Cassidy

Well, is this-,

James Acaster

How do you end up on that algorithm?



Ed Gamble

I've got no idea, but now I'm on it.

Natalie Cassidy

I want it. It sounds great. No, if I were to snap the pasta up, my nieces hate me.

Ed Gamble

Oh, really?

Natalie Cassidy

Because they're half Italian. They're all half Neapolitan and they just slag me off, really, when I cook, if I'm honest. Don't do anything right. They just stand behind me going, 'That's not right. How many of them? How many potatoes? There's 12 of us. Is that all the potatoes you're doing?' It's like, 'Leave me alone and let me cook this dinner.'

Ed Gamble

'How much mayo are you putting on that?'

James Acaster

Yes. 'Jesus Christ. You've gone through 5 spoons.' So, your main course then, after the pasta dish.

Natalie Cassidy

So, I think I would go for a rib-eye steak. A really nice rib-eye. I do like a fillet. I don't mind a sirlon. I don't mind a sirloin.

James Acaster

No, just back yourself.

Ed Gamble

Look, this is your dream menu. We're have aran-genie and we're having-,

Natalie Cassidy

It's not a sirlon. We've got to back up. No, we're not. We're backing up.

James Acaster

Aran-genie. Sirlon.

Natalie Cassidy

I do like a sirloin. But I don't think you can beat the flavour of a rib-eye.

Ed Gamble

Preach.



James Acaster

Yes, agreed.

Natalie Cassidy

Agreed?

James Acaster

Yes. Love it.

Ed Gamble

Always rib-eye for me. If it's an option on a menu, always getting rib-eye. Nice marbled fat through that.

Natalie Cassidy

Beautiful.

Ed Gamble

So tasty.

Natalie Cassidy

I do like a chateaubriand. Now, don't get me wrong.

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble

We would never suggest you don't like a chateaubriand.

James Acaster

I actually don't know what cut that is. What is that?

Natalie Cassidy

I don't know what the cut is. But it comes, usually, for two.

Ed Gamble

Big. It's a big boy.

Natalie Cassidy

It's nice. It's a big one. Usually, on Boxing Day, or the day when all the family come to me, I will do a cote de boeuf. A big, big bone in cote de boeuf and I'm very good at cooking a roast dinner. That's my thing.

Ed Gamble

So, your nieces leave you alone when you're doing that?



Natalie Cassidy

No, they're still in the earhole. They're still talking away. But they don't muck about with the beef. They don't talk about the beef. Because I'm good at doing the beef.

Ed Gamble

The beef's your thing? Absolutely.

James Acaster

Medium rare? Rare?

Natalie Cassidy

No. Medium. I don't like blood in it. I'm really sorry.

James Acaster

Wow. There we go.

Natalie Cassidy

I know. There we go.

Ed Gamble

I think medium's respectful, though.

James Acaster

No, it's not.

Ed Gamble

With a big cut of meat, and I-, look, this is something I'm finding out as I get older. I used to be rare or nothing, then I crept to medium rare. Now, I don't mind if it's erring in between medium rare and medium.

James Acaster

Who's this? I don't recognise this man any more.

Ed Gamble

Anything about medium can absolutely fuck off.

Natalie Cassidy

But you're happy with no-, I'm very happy. It could be as pink as you like. So, if it's well rested, it can be medium rare. As long as there's no blood on my plate, I'm happy.

Ed Gamble

This is what I mean. It's fine.



James Acaster

Fair enough.

Natalie Cassidy

Do you see what I mean? So, if it's completely rested. I just don't want any blood. I don't want to cut in and there be liquid on my plate. I'm not having none of it.

Ed Gamble

But there shouldn't be, should there? Even with rare, if you've rested it properly, it shouldn't.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes. If it was completely rested, as long as there is no liquid on my plate, I can eat it.

James Acaster

I saw a film the other day where the main character has it almost raw, his steak. Blue.

Natalie Cassidy

Was he a bear?

James Acaster

No. Jesse Plemons. And then, his wife comes back. She's been away for ages and he doesn't trust that it's his wife, so he asks her to cut off her finger and feed it to him, and she does it. If your partner, if you were away for a bit and you got home and your partner said, 'I don't believe it's you. Cut off your finger and feed it to me.'

Natalie Cassidy

Sorry, why-, what's happened with the character? Can we wind back a bit?

Ed Gamble

I've still not seen this film, so you're ruining it for me.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, but I don't understand why-,

James Acaster

No, everyone knows this happens.

Natalie Cassidy

Why doesn't he believe-, what, is he locked in a room? Is he blind? I don't-,

James Acaster

Doesn't believe it's her. She's acting weird. She's acting different. She's eating chocolate cake. She never used to eat chocolate.



Natalie Cassidy

Right.

James Acaster

Her shoes don't fit her any more.

Ed Gamble

It's a weird film though, isn't it?

Natalie Cassidy

Sounds it.

James Acaster

Bit weird.

Ed Gamble

Weirder than EastEnders.

James Acaster

Like, less realistic.

Natalie Cassidy

Okay.

Ed Gamble

Has there ever been a cannibal on EastEnders?

Natalie Cassidy

Not that I know of, no.

James Acaster

Oh, you've got to do that.

Ed Gamble

Come on.

James Acaster

You've got to do it.

Natalie Cassidy

You could come in and do that, James. Why don't you come in and be a weirdo that moves into the Square and he starts to-, like, has a-,



James Acaster

Gladly.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm not saying your weird. You'd be acting, obviously.

Ed Gamble

No, no. He is.

James Acaster

Hey, listen, I'd gladly play a cannibal in EastEnders.

Natalie Cassidy

Who would you eat?

James Acaster

Who wouldn't I eat, more like.

Natalie Cassidy

You could eat Sonia.

James Acaster

Well, listen. Yes. Sonia, first to go. I'd be like-,

Ed Gamble

What a CV that would be for you, James.

James Acaster

Already full of garlic. Delicious. Coming out the pores.

Natalie Cassidy

Filled with mayo.

James Acaster

Yes, love that.

Natalie Cassidy

I'd be quite good, I think, to eat.

James Acaster

Who else is still knocking around on the Square?

Natalie Cassidy

People at you know might because, like-,



James Acaster

Ian Beale still there?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, Bealey's there.

James Acaster

He's got to be eaten.

Ed Gamble

Woodyatt. Are you having a chunk of Woodyatt?

James Acaster

Yes, I'd have Woodyatt. Maybe that'd just be it. I'd just eat Ian Beale. Because I think, like, longest serving cast member?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, very much so. One of, yes. I mean, it's a good-,

James Acaster

I think, what an ending for his character. I'd at least give it a go and try and eat him. I think that, you know, maybe EastEnders isn't ready for actual cannibalism. But a cannibal character who tries to eat Ian Beale, I think that's-, you'd get a lot of people watching that.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, you would, just from the listeners of this, to be fair.

James Acaster

Yes. If I've got him in a big cauldron, in a pot, and he's, like, bound at the ankles and wrists.

Natalie Cassidy

He's got a phrase that he says. He'd be going round in the cauldron. He'd be going, 'I've got nothing left. Got nothing left.'

James Acaster

Yes, and I'm like, 'Keep on crying, Beale. It just seasons the pot.' I'd love it.

Ed Gamble

I'm not sure EastEnders is ready for a cannibal, actually.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, no, I'm not sure either. Purely because it's on at 7:30.



Ed Gamble

Yes. I think, maybe, a storyline where someone thinks that someone is a cannibal and they suspect someone of being a cannibal. It could be, like a bit of a comedy storyline. Because their wife goes on holiday and they don't know and they're like, 'Oh, he's eaten her' or something.

James Acaster

Yes. If everyone thinks I'm eating people because there's just different stuff that I'm doing.

Natalie Cassidy

But I think you should stick to what you know, boys, because I think the storyline isn't working probably-, they're okay at EastEnders.

Ed Gamble

Well, look, take that to them, anyway.

James Acaster

Take that to them.

Natalie Cassidy

I will. I will let them know.

James Acaster

Let them know that the Off Menu boys have got an idea and it's that there should be a cannibal.

Natalie Cassidy

They'll probably be very excited.

James Acaster

Or that everyone thinks there's a cannibal on the Square.

Ed Gamble

Hey, this was exciting in my house, many years ago. I had the same dressing gown as Sonia.

Natalie Cassidy

Excuse me?

Ed Gamble

I had the same dressing gown as Sonia. My mum was like, 'You've got the same dressing gown as Sonia.' That was exciting. That was big new in our house.

Natalie Cassidy

What colour was it?



Ed Gamble

It had a pattern. It was quite patterned.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm trying to think what one it was.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it was like-,

Natalie Cassidy

Why did you have a female's-,

Ed Gamble

Well, I'd say it was a unisex dressing gown. It was probably around the same time as the trumpet came in.

Natalie Cassidy

Well, we're looking maybe '95. How old are you, Ed?

Ed Gamble

I'm 38.

Natalie Cassidy

Are you really? I'm 41. So, you're-,

Ed Gamble

This was probably when I was 9 or 10, maybe.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, so I would have been maybe 13, 14, Sonia would have been.

Ed Gamble

Same dressing gown.

Natalie Cassidy

Wow.

Ed Gamble

Mad, isn't it?

Natalie Cassidy

It's incredible. It's such a shame that we haven't got a visual of this. Have you got a picture of it?



Ed Gamble

I know. I'm sure-, I'll ask my mum. I'm sure-,

James Acaster

Benito, Google 'Sonia, 13, dressing gown.'

Natalie Cassidy

Be careful.

Ed Gamble

I was planning on bringing that up, but I couldn't find a moment for it to come up naturally, so I just said it.

Ed Gamble

So, I just said it off the back of the cannibal chat.

Natalie Cassidy

I think it works perfectly.

Ed Gamble

Are you having any sauce with this steak, by the way?

Natalie Cassidy

I do like a béarnaise sauce.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

I don't know if I'm a bit sauced out from the mayo, tomato ketchup. I think I'm going rib-eye. With the rib-eye, I know I've got a side. I know I have a side, as you say. Is that it on the plate?

Ed Gamble

No, you can have-, well, tell us what you want and we'll-,

Natalie Cassidy

Well, I don't know. I'd really love a rocket and parmesan salad.

James Acaster

Yes, great.

Natalie Cassidy

Can I do that?



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

A couple of little piccalilli cherry tomatoes, a bit of red onion.

Ed Gamble

Yes, nice.

Natalie Cassidy

So, yes, I'd have a nice salad with it.

Ed Gamble

Great. This is going to blow your mind, Natalie. That's what I'm having for dinner tonight. I've got a rib-eye in the fridge and I've got some rocket and some tomatoes and some parmesan.

Natalie Cassidy

What with this and the dressing gown, I think we're meant to be, Ed. We have to have a chat.

Ed Gamble

Yes, right. Yes, this is brilliant.

Natalie Cassidy

I think we're mates, soulmates.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think so.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

You might be the same person. That could be the twist at the end.

Ed Gamble

That would be a big twist. Big twist. I'll suggest that to the storyline people.

James Acaster

Me and Benito are humouring you but we know it's just-,

Ed Gamble

Okay. So, this is a good storyline. I turn up in the square-,



James Acaster

Don't preface it with, 'This is a good story.'

Ed Gamble

It is. I'm there for a couple of months. I'm getting up to all sorts. Then, big twist-

James Acaster

He's getting up to all sorts, remember that. Keep that in mind.

Ed Gamble

I'm part of Sonia's imagination. Like Fight Club.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, okay, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, but EastEnders. What do you reckon?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, could work, yes.

James Acaster

EastEnders hasn't done that yet.

Natalie Cassidy

No, we've had a few, kind of, breakdowns and things with people visualising other people but no, we haven't had-

Ed Gamble

No big twists where a new character turns out to be someone's imagination, no?

Natalie Cassidy

Imagination? No. That could work.

James Acaster

Your dream side.

Natalie Cassidy

If I'm going my dream-, it doesn't really go with the food, but I do love a dauphinoise potato. I really like it.

James Acaster

That goes with-



Ed Gamble

That goes with it.

Natalie Cassidy

Well, it does, but I could have a very, very nice just a lovely skinny fries. Sometimes I don't think you can beat a lovely salty skinny potato fry. Not a sweet potato fry. I don't mind-, I like a sweet potato fry.

Ed Gamble

You can't get them as crispy though, can you?

Natalie Cassidy

No, you can't. Although, the air fryer does well.

Ed Gamble

Does it?

Natalie Cassidy

For the frozen ones now. They're quite good.

James Acaster

I've never tried an air fryer.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, it is good. I know it's boring and all that.

James Acaster

Ed's got material about it. I don't want to tread on his toes.

Ed Gamble

People are over the top about them, I think.

Natalie Cassidy

I agree with you, but I chuck in some nuggets and some chips in a drawer with not a lot of washing and it is ready in ten minutes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, convenient.

Natalie Cassidy

It's very convenient for all the children. It's great.

Ed Gamble

Yes, fair enough. But we're not having that on the side of the dream meal, though.



Natalie Cassidy

No, we're not.

Ed Gamble

We're either going to have skinny fries or the dauphinoise potatoes.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm going to go dauphinoise because I'm having a dream-, and it's something I don't cook a lot because it's a ball ache to make. I love them but fucking hell, it takes a while.

James Acaster

You've got a routine about dauphinoise.

Ed Gamble

I've got a routine about dauphinoise as well in my new show because I cut my thumb on a mandolin.

Natalie Cassidy

This is unbelievable stuff.

Ed Gamble

This is crazy.

James Acaster

I'll tell you what I admire because in my stand-up shows now I, kind of, steer clear of food because I think I've got to save all my food stuff for this pod. Ed is confident.

Natalie Cassidy

All over it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's all I've got.

James Acaster

He's confident, man. He just does food routines. He's, like, 'I'll generate new stuff. I'll generate new gear.' He knows he will.

Ed Gamble

It's my brand now.

Natalie Cassidy

The food stuff?

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's my brand.



Natalie Cassidy

You should start presenting Master Chef.

Ed Gamble

No, I can't. I'm a judge on Great British Menu.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, are you?

Ed Gamble

They're warring factions.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, shit, I didn't know that.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

How long have you been doing that for?

Ed Gamble

Three years.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, that's embarrassing, sorry.

Ed Gamble

It's going into my fourth year.

James Acaster

Yes, he's done quite a few series of it.

Natalie Cassidy

I haven't watched that for a long time, though. Genuinely, I haven't watched that for a long time. I'm going to start watching that now.

Ed Gamble

Well, you know, it feels like a fresh format. It's a whole new show.

James Acaster

He's doing food jokes on that. He's doing food jokes here. He's doing food jokes in his stand-up show.



Natalie Cassidy

But, listen, don't knock it, if it works.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I'm not knocking it, I'm admiring it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

It's great. What are you doing then?

James Acaster

Nothing,.

Natalie Cassidy

What's your sort of material?

Ed Gamble

Sad. He's sad.

James Acaster

I just talk about how sad I am.

Natalie Cassidy

Fair.

James Acaster

Your dream drink.

Natalie Cassidy

Okay. I think if I'm having a nice meal I would really like a lovely cold glass of Meursault. It's quite a posh wine. It's quite a rich and creamy wine. It reminds me of Christmas. It's something I buy maybe once a year, a bottle of for Christmas day that I like to drink. If I was being nostalgic, though, I would have my dad's cup of tea that he used to make me because it was just a lovely cup. And he'd go, 'Do you fancy a cup of tea, squirt?' And I'd go, 'Yes, please, Dad.' He used to live with me. So, I would do that.

Ed Gamble

That's lovely.



Natalie Cassidy

I'd have my dad's cup of tea.

Ed Gamble

I mean, it would be a shame not to have both of those things, I think.

James Acaster

You can have both.

Ed Gamble

What about-, I mean, the cup of tea would go very nicely with the bacon roll.

Natalie Cassidy

The bacon roll. Can I have that? Could I have it there?

Ed Gamble

Yes, absolutely.

Natalie Cassidy

Great, thank you. You're very good. Like, the rules are-, no desert island discs, is it?

Ed Gamble

Yes, but I think it-,

James Acaster

We want it to be people's actual dream meals. Like, we don't want it to be, you know, the rules are there to guide you, but we want people to actually have their dream meal.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, it's nice.

Ed Gamble

With the bacon roll as well, do you also want a ciggy stood next to the extractor fan?

Natalie Cassidy

No, thank you because I don't smoke any more.

James Acaster

Yes, but we can make it so that, you know, you're ten years old when you used to smoke the most.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, no, it was horrible.



James Acaster

When you're at the height of your smoking at ten years old. We could have it for that course, you're ten.

Ed Gamble

Just the cup of tea and the bacon roll?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, that would be great.

Ed Gamble

That's a nice starter.

James Acaster

Can you describe the cup of tea your dad would make? Was it, like-,

Natalie Cassidy

It would just be a lovely, you know, nice strong, Yorkshire Gold cup of tea. Left in for ages, not too much milk, but, you know, just a nice builders tea.

James Acaster

Sugar?

Natalie Cassidy

No.

James Acaster

Any sugar? No sugar? Good on you.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm sweet enough, James.

Ed Gamble

Do you think it was the way your dad made the tea that made it a nice cup of tea or was it the fact that your dad was making it for you that made it nice?

Natalie Cassidy

Both. Both things, yes. It was just because he would make me a cup of tea and even up until, you know, he was 83 or whatever, I'd be running around. He'd say, 'Oh you don't stop, do you? I'll make you a nice cup of tea.' And it, you know, was quite a nice thing that he'd do.

Ed Gamble

That's lovely.



Natalie Cassidy

Really lovely, yes.

James Acaster

I've never had this wine before. I've never heard of it.

Natalie Cassidy

Have you had it, Ed?

Ed Gamble

I think I have had Meursault, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

It's nice. It's quite rich. It's quite full-bodied. It, obviously, again, depends what wine you're having, but the one I've had before has been really lovely.

James Acaster

Right.

Natalie Cassidy

I usually, on a-, in the summer and stuff I would go for, probably, a nice Sancerre or something like that, a Pouilly-Fume. But I feel like my taste buds with wine are changing weekly.

Ed Gamble

How so?

Natalie Cassidy

Well, I just feel very snobby about it and I don't mean it, but I used to have a Sauvignon Blanc and be happy with a Sauvignon Blanc and now I can't. It tastes like piss.

Ed Gamble

All Sauvignon Blanc tastes like piss to you now?

Natalie Cassidy

A lot of it. Everything, like, yes. You know, like, pub wine. You go, 'What have you got?' They haven't got a Gavi. Their most expensive wine in the pub is, kind of, the Sauvignon Blanc. I don't like Pinot Grigio. So, I'd have one of them and I'd think, 'Oh, this is awful. It's like petrol,' which is why I know I'm not an alcoholic because I'd rather have a Diet Coke.

James Acaster

That's why you-,

Natalie Cassidy

Do you know what I mean, no?



Ed Gamble

No, I think that's a good clue.

Natalie Cassidy

You know, you go, 'Well, actually, if it's rubbish, I'd rather have a Ribena.'

Ed Gamble

You're not drinking to get drunk.

Natalie Cassidy

To get drunk, no.

Ed Gamble

You want to drink a thing that you actually enjoy, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I do. It's a bit like gins, isn't it? I don't like rubbish gin and rubbish tonic. Do you like gin and tonic?

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes. I love a gin and tonic.

Natalie Cassidy

What's your favourite gin and tonic? What's your favourite gin?

Ed Gamble

My favourite gin is Harris Gin which is from the Isle of Harris. It's, sort of, made with kelp which is like seaweed. So, it's got that, sort of, seaweedy slightly salty taste to it.

Natalie Cassidy

Nice.

Ed Gamble

Absolutely delicious. It comes in a beautiful bottle. I would have it with tonic, but it's better, I find, doing, like, a gin martini and then you get the full hit of the gin.

Natalie Cassidy

That's nice.

Ed Gamble

But then I do them at home and you're, like-,

Natalie Cassidy

I know.



Ed Gamble

I'm pretty sure there's four measures of gin in that and I've just drunk it in four minutes.

Natalie Cassidy

It is true.

Ed Gamble

And then you're just walking around your house going, 'I'm absolutely hammered.'

Natalie Cassidy

After two drinks, like when you get the old Negroni's on the go.

Ed Gamble

Yes, saying hello to everything.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh my God. Oh my goodness me.

James Acaster

But just to be clear, you're not an alcoholic?

Natalie Cassidy

No, not an alcoholic.

James Acaster

No.

Natalie Cassidy

Knee for his head, we were just chatting about gin.

James Acaster

Yes, you're just getting shitfaced in your house.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but I'm drinking the nice stuff.

James Acaster

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Do you not drink, James?

James Acaster

Yes, I do. Yes, I drink.



Natalie Cassidy

Yes? Do you like gin?

James Acaster

Huh?

Natalie Cassidy

Do you like gin?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

He drinks, yes.

James Acaster

Harris Gin, seaweed. I like Harris seaweed gin.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, okay. I know what's happening here.

Ed Gamble

No, they won't send me any. I have to buy it.

James Acaster

I have a question about the Sancerre.

Natalie Cassidy

Sancerre?

James Acaster

Yes. You said sometimes you'll order a Sancerre. Does the barman ever go, 'A Sancerre for Sonier?'

Natalie Cassidy

No, but that's very funny, James.

Ed Gamble

Would you like that if the barman did do that?

Natalie Cassidy

No.

Ed Gamble

No, probably not.



James Acaster

We arrive at your dream dessert. My favourite course.

Natalie Cassidy

Are you a sweet tooth?

James Acaster

I am.

Ed Gamble

He's a sweet boy.

Natalie Cassidy

Is he?

Ed Gamble

Through and through.

James Acaster

Yes, one ticket to sweet town, please.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, boring.

James Acaster

What? Boring? What? What are you talking about?

Ed Gamble

I knew Natalie would be on my side. We already know. We're the same person.

James Acaster

Yes, evidently, what are you talking about it?

Natalie Cassidy

I'm not a dessert person. I'm not interested.

James Acaster

What do you mean you're not interested?

Natalie Cassidy

Not interested.

James Acaster

What?



Natalie Cassidy

My Marc, he bakes well. He bakes cakes. He does a marmalade and whiskey cake.

James Acaster

Lovely.

Natalie Cassidy

He'll bake, you know, and he'll take stuff to work.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

What a lovely man.

Natalie Cassidy

He is a lovely man. I should have brought you a cake in if I'd known.

James Acaster

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Next time.

James Acaster

Next time.

Natalie Cassidy

Well, you don't get guests on twice, do you? So, I guess that's it.

James Acaster

Well, we'll see. If they bring cakes.

Natalie Cassidy

So anyway, yes, but there's lots of cake around and my daughter was on the Junior Bake Off as well. So, she did really well.

Ed Gamble

She was amazing on that.

James Acaster

Okay, well, whatever.



Ed Gamble

She was brilliant on Junior Bake Off.

Natalie Cassidy

Oh, did you watch it?

Ed Gamble

I love Junior Bake Off.

Natalie Cassidy

Do you?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think it's brilliant. I think it's better than normal Bake Off.

Natalie Cassidy

I love Harry Hill on it, that's why.

Ed Gamble

Yes, Harry Hill's incredible. I think Liam and Rav are brilliant hosts as well.

Natalie Cassidy

Brilliant. I agree.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I love it and the kids are always funny. There's always one chaotic one who just drops everything but doesn't care. I think it's fantastic.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, it is good. Anyway, yes, so I'm not really into desserts. I haven't really got a sweet tooth.

James Acaster

This better not be going where I think it's going.

Natalie Cassidy

I do love a fruit and nut in the fridge.

Ed Gamble

Is that alright with you? Sorry, I wasn't expecting fruit and nut in the fridge. It really made me laugh.

James Acaster

You said it like it was an innuendo. It's not, but, like-,



Natalie Cassidy

It's not.

James Acaster

Look, I'll-,

Natalie Cassidy

Do you like chocolate in the fridge, James?

James Acaster

Yes, I do. I do like chocolate in the fridge, actually. Yes, I do. I do like chocolate in the fridge and if that is your dream dessert-,

Natalie Cassidy

No, that's not my dessert, woah.

Ed Gamble

Woah, back up James.

Natalie Cassidy

That is not my dessert. I'm just saying out of-, if we're going into chocolate or sweet things, okay, I'll have that in the fridge or I would go for, you know, those-, is it Bonne Maman? They do the little French-, oh, bollocks, like a mouse, blackcurrant mousse. Why are you laughing?

James Acaster

Well, because you said bollocks out of nowhere. The most unnecessary bollocks I've ever heard.

Natalie Cassidy

Sorry.

James Acaster

Ah, bollocks. Not as unnecessary as the bollocks on a genie. But, like, it was just out of nowhere. It was just, like, muttered under your breath.

Natalie Cassidy

Sorry, yes, it's because I'm thinking. It's a blackcurrant mouse they do.

Ed Gamble

The Bonne Maman blackcurrant mouse, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, and that's lovely.



James Acaster

That sounds great.

Natalie Cassidy

That would go in there. Lovely, it's okay.

James Acaster

Great.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

However-,

James Acaster

Don't however because, like, I'm very scared now.

Natalie Cassidy

Why?

James Acaster

That you're going to go savoury and-,

Natalie Cassidy

I am.

James Acaster

Oh.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes. It's been a while since we've had this.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm going savoury.

James Acaster

I don't like this, Natalie.

Natalie Cassidy

I want a cheeseboard.

James Acaster

No.



Ed Gamble

Yes. We're the same person.

James Acaster

You motherfucker.

Natalie Cassidy

What have you got against cheese?

James Acaster

What the fuck?

Ed Gamble

It's been so long since this has happened.

James Acaster

It's not a dessert. You know it's not. Oh my god.

Ed Gamble

Talk us through the cheeseboard.

Natalie Cassidy

When I go into a restaurant, James.

James Acaster

Yes?

Natalie Cassidy

When I went to the Ledbury.

Ed Gamble

Here we go.

James Acaster

Yes?

Natalie Cassidy

Wonderful restaurant, by the way.

Ed Gamble

It is. Best restaurant in London, I reckon.

Natalie Cassidy

My favourite, brilliant.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I hope it burns down.

Natalie Cassidy

Is that your favourite restaurant?

Ed Gamble

Genuinely, yes.

James Acaster

I hope it burns to the ground.

Ed Gamble

Same favourite restaurant, James.

Natalie Cassidy

Same favourite restaurant, James.

James Acaster

Fucking hell. Jesus.

Natalie Cassidy

So, when you go to a nice restaurant, why is there a cheese course, James, at the end? What's the problem?

James Acaster

Because they're pretentious dickheads and they're just putting it on there, if anything, just to test. I think it's fine to have a cheeseboard after you've had a dessert. That's absolutely fine or even before, as a bridge into the dessert course. But to not have a dessert at all and to just have a cheeseboard is absolute sacrilege and I can't believe this is happening.

Natalie Cassidy

I can't believe how angry you've got considering that I've ordered aran-genie and then a fucking bacon roll and a cup of tea.

James Acaster

Those things were great. I was alright with those things.

Ed Gamble

What do you want on this cheeseboard, Natalie?



James Acaster

I can't believe this has happened.

Natalie Cassidy

I would like-, there's some sweet stuff on the board, James, if that helps you.

James Acaster

Oh, if you think quince jelly is going to-,

Ed Gamble

Natalie's doing proper Mum voice at you now.

James Acaster

Yes. I don't like this at all.

Natalie Cassidy

A little dried apricot. A little dried figgy.

Ed Gamble

A little dried figgy, James.

James Acaster

What the fuck? A little dried figgy?

Natalie Cassidy

A little figgy fig.

Ed Gamble

Little figgy fig, James.

James Acaster

This is revolting.

Ed Gamble

I also like the biscuits, kind of, the crackers, biscuits, savoury things that we have with cheese with the fruit in.

Ed Gamble

Those ones that are called biscuits for cheese? Those ones?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, those ones.



Ed Gamble

Yes, they're really nice, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

They're great, aren't they?

Ed Gamble

Yes, and there is a little bit of sweetness in there, isn't there?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, there can be a little date in there or there can be a-

James Acaster

There's not sweetness in those.

Ed Gamble

It makes it feel like a pudding, doesn't it when there's a bit of sweetness?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, like, a little bit of raisin because that's enough sweetness for me.

James Acaster

Oh, fucking hell.

Natalie Cassidy

So, I feel like that's a pudding.

Ed Gamble

Yes, rounds off the meal nicely.

Natalie Cassidy

Maybe a few fresh grapes, but I'm not overly bothered about that.

Ed Gamble

Just leave them, they're decoration, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

I prefer a little apple slice.

Ed Gamble

Yes, nice.

Natalie Cassidy

If I was going for any kind of fresh fruit.



Ed Gamble

Goes nice with, like, a cheddar, yes. So, like, a blue cheese?

James Acaster

Absolutely horrible.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I would really like an extra mature cheddar, a really good one.

Ed Gamble

Yes, me too.

Natalie Cassidy

I love an extra mature cheddar.

Ed Gamble

With, like, the crystals in it sometimes.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, please.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

I'd go Cornish Crunch. If I'm going into it, I'd go a Cornish Crunch from Marks when I'm buying.

Ed Gamble

Yes, the number five. If it's got five on it, yes.

Natalie Cassidy

The black one, five.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Thank you.

James Acaster

This is absolutely tragic. This is tragic.

Natalie Cassidy

And then I'd go for a lovely-,



James Acaster

I feel sorry for you.

Natalie Cassidy

I'd go for a lovely nice strong blue.

Ed Gamble

Yes, like a Stilton or something?

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, I'd go Stilton and then I'd probably go for a little Gorgonzola, a little runny one.

James Acaster

This is sad.

Ed Gamble

Oh, lovely. Yes, really nice. Really tasty.

James Acaster

This is sad. This is sad stuff.

Natalie Cassidy

You don't need much, do you? Just a few things.

Ed Gamble

No, you need the classics.

Natalie Cassidy

As ridiculous as it sounds, I even like a Wensleydale with cranberries.

Ed Gamble

Yes, nice, and that's sweet. That's almost like a dessert.

Natalie Cassidy

I mean, that is a dessert.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

It's not a dessert. None of this is dessert. None of this is a dessert. Fucking hell.

Natalie Cassidy

So, yes, I'd have a few slivers of that.



Ed Gamble

Lovely.

Natalie Cassidy

A little bit of fig, some lovely thin, crispy crackers, those biscuits with cheese.

James Acaster

This is my doof-doof.

Ed Gamble

This is your doof-doof?

James Acaster

I'm getting doof-doofed all over the shop by both of these fucking pricks.

Natalie Cassidy

That's unnecessary. I've travelled down here from where I live. It's taken me an hour and a half to get to you and you call me a fucking prick?

James Acaster

Yes. You're lucky. I'm reigning it in.

Ed Gamble

He is reigning it in. Normally he just storms off.

James Acaster

I'm reigning it in. You're lucky I'm still even fucking here.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

My God.

Natalie Cassidy

He must be really hard to work with, Ed.

Ed Gamble

He is sometimes, yes, especially when people pick a cheeseboard.

Natalie Cassidy

I'm not going to change it, James.



Ed Gamble

James, you've got to try and lift the atmosphere now for the ending of the episode because you've got to read Natalie's menu back to her.

James Acaster

She's lucky if I read that back to her.

Ed Gamble

Well, I can read it back if you want.

James Acaster

You don't do it like I do it.

Natalie Cassidy

Would I be able to, with that course, can I just have a little glass of port with that?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

Damn right.

James Acaster

Well, that's-, yes, I'm okay with the port.

Ed Gamble

Yes, is that nice?

James Acaster

Yes, the port's nice. This is just mind-blowing. We were doing so well. The San Pellegrino with the wedge of lime, the bolognese aran-genie with the truffle. Bacon roll with the white crusty roll, salted butter, unsmoked Ginger Pig bacon, tomato sauce, mayo, with your dad's cup of tea. What a lovely beginning. And the pasta hack with the lobster and chilli tagliolini or something. That sounded great. Rib-eye steak, medium with-

Ed Gamble

Imagine a genuine waiter checking the order like this.

James Acaster

I'll let the medium slide but then you've got your rocket and parmesan salad's nice. Dauphinoise potatoes, I thought that was lovely even though you weren't backing it. I thought that was good, that



goes with the main. A cold glass of Meursault wine. I've not tried that, but I assume it's nice and then what-, just to get to the end of it and you've got a fucking cheeseboard.

Ed Gamble

Lovely.

James Acaster

With a glass of port, but how-,

Ed Gamble

It's classic. This is a classic, delicious meal.

James Acaster

That is not delicious.

Ed Gamble

We're in France, Baby.

James Acaster

We're not in France, Baby.

Natalie Cassidy

Do you not eat cheese, then?

James Acaster

I eat cheese.

Natalie Cassidy

You like cheese. You like a cheeseboard, just not for dessert, okay?

James Acaster

Not for dessert. I ain't having it as a dessert.

Natalie Cassidy

No.

James Acaster

It's insane that you-, if I ate that-,

Natalie Cassidy

You've got a lot of anger issues, James. I think you need to-,



James Acaster

If I ate that-, yes. This is why I should be a character on EastEnders. I'd be good. They should write me as the cannibal.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but a cannibal can't get angry about someone having a cheeseboard.

James Acaster

I think he could. He'd be very angry about that.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

James Acaster

I think even more angry than me.

Ed Gamble

No, no way.

James Acaster

A cannibal, yes.

Ed Gamble

He's got no basis to be angry about a cheeseboard if he's eating humans.

James Acaster

You were about to say, 'He's not got a leg to stand on,' and then realised that was a cannibal pun.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I didn't want you to chime in with it.

James Acaster

Yes, I would have done it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I didn't want to give you the room to do that.

James Acaster

Yes, I read you like a fucking book, mate.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

I saw the idea literally enter your head.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Written out like out a cartoon in a little thought bubble.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and I wasn't going to let you have it.

James Acaster

Well, I got it anyway. You can't hide your thoughts from me, Ed Gamble.

Ed Gamble

So, you're going into EastEnders as a cannibal and I'm going in as a figment of Sonia's imagination.

James Acaster

Yes.

Natalie Cassidy

Wearing the dressing gown, please.

James Acaster

Yes, wearing the dressing gown. Absolutely, I'd be wearing the dressing gown.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes, you'll have to find it, yes. That's the point where people know. It's when I come down the stairs in the dressing gown and you're in the same dressing gown, that's the big reveal.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but I should be wearing the child-sized one.

Natalie Cassidy

Well-,

James Acaster

As an adult?

Ed Gamble

As an adult.



Natalie Cassidy

We don't want to reveal too much. It's half seven.

Ed Gamble

Do you mean storyline-wise or-,

Natalie Cassidy

Well, no, I'm thinking if it's-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, my aran-genies.

Natalie Cassidy

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Natalie, thank you so much for coming to the dream restaurant, and I'm so sorry it's ended on such a sour note with James being a very grumpy little boy.

Natalie Cassidy

Well, thank you so much for having me. It's been so lovely to see you both, and sorry James.

James Acaster

Thank you for coming, Natalie. May you burn in hell.

Ed Gamble

There we are, the brilliant Natalie Cassidy. Oh, dear, James. That turned sour at the end, didn't it?

James Acaster

Look, I felt betrayed because when we did Springleaf, the audio sitcom, she never once mentioned that she likes cheeseboards. So, I was blind-sided there.

Ed Gamble

Yes, if she had, would you have let her carry on?

James Acaster

No, I would have fired her.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I'd have fired her during Springleaf, the audio sitcom, and got someone else to do the part.



Ed Gamble

That is, of course, available wherever you get your podcasts.

James Acaster

Wherever you get your podcasts.

Ed Gamble

Wherever you get your podcasts, Springleaf, the audio sitcom. Very, very good it is indeed, too, a wonderful cast.

James Acaster

Wonderful cast.

Ed Gamble

And Life with Nat is also available wherever you get your podcasts. So, go and listen to that. Thank you very much for listening to this week's Off Menu.

James Acaster

Well, hey-,

Ed Gamble

I'm so sorry James was such a horrible egg.

James Acaster

What, the ending?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, horrible, but at least she didn't say guinea fowler.

Ed Gamble

Yes, she didn't say guinea fowler and I was worried for a second there.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I wasn't.

James Acaster

What, do you think that would have been on the-, if that was on the cheeseboard, I would have loved it.



Ed Gamble

Oh, we're going to pop a whole guinea fowl on it.

James Acaster

If she'd said, 'Oh, also, do you know what? I'm feeling flush. Put a guinea fowl on there.' I'd have been like, 'Ha-ha, you fell for the oldest trick in the book. Get out.'

Ed Gamble

Why would she be feeling flush and put a guinea fowl on?

James Acaster

I don't know. Isn't that something people in EastEnders say?

Ed Gamble

Feeling flush? Do you mean like got a big of money knocking around?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Or do you mean, like, they've gone red?

James Acaster

Yes. I thought it was got a bit of money knocking around.

Ed Gamble

Yes, do you mean feeling flash?

James Acaster

Oh, is that what it means? Is that what the saying is?

Ed Gamble

No, I think feeling flush could be you've got a bit of money knocking around.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But why would that have-, she's like, 'Oh, yes, let's-,'

James Acaster

Splash out on the guinea fowl.



Ed Gamble

'Let's splash out on a guinea fowl. Put it on the cheeseboard.'

James Acaster

Yes, it's like an option on the menu.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Extra £10.

Ed Gamble

Add a guinea fowl.

James Acaster

We'll put a guinea fowl on the cheeseboard for you.

Ed Gamble

What a fucking weird restaurant.

James Acaster

Yes, well, hey, this is a crazy restaurant man.

Ed Gamble

Well, thank you so much to Natalie for coming on. We will see you next week.

James Acaster

What, to Natalie? Are you saying that to Natalie? Because we won't see her next week.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

We will never see you ever again on this podcast or socially.

Ed Gamble

No, I think we get her back on to chat about cheese some more.

James Acaster

Over my dead body.



Ed Gamble

Because whenever people pick a cheeseboard you have your tantrum and then I don't even get to talk to people about cheese properly.

James Acaster

Well, why don't you do that as a spin-off series? Just you and all the people who chose cheeseboards talking about cheeseboards really in-depth. You can do that.

Ed Gamble

Yes?

James Acaster

I won't stand in your way.

Ed Gamble

We'll add it to our Patreon.

James Acaster

Oh, yes. Make sure you sign up to the Patreon and we love all of our patrons. Thank you to our patrons.

Ed Gamble

There isn't a Patreon, yet.

James Acaster

Yet.

Ed Gamble

Yet. Never say never.

James Acaster

Never say never.

Ed Gamble

But one of the additional things will be the cheeseboard files.

James Acaster

There will be the cheeseboard files and also multiple chances to win signed chopping boards by the great Benito, just let us know if you've received your ones from the fruit salad competition because we're a bit worried that those haven't got to people.

Ed Gamble

We're a bit worried that Benito lost track of when the fruit salad-, how many things were in the fruit salad, when the fruit salad was over. We're a bit worried Benito lost track of that.



James Acaster

Yes. So, make sure we get those fruit salad chopping boards out to the winners. So, just let us know if you've received one. If no one lets us know, we'll assume that it's not been done properly and we'll get Benito to go through the emails again.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and if you've missed out on a chopping board, we're going to send you another chopping board.

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely. We'll send you another one, for sure.

Ed Gamble

That says, 'Sorry.'

James Acaster

That says, 'Sorry from the great Benito.'

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much for listening, goodbye.

James Acaster

Thank you. Goodbye.