



Off Menu – Ep104 – Martin Freeman

Ed Gamble 00:13

Welcome to the off menu podcast, opening the yoghurt of chat and licking the lid of humour I'm Ed Gamble and over there is James Acaster,

James Acaster 00:21

Right here's a thing Ed, you normally take a while to think of those ones. And just then Benito said right, let's go and you said that straight away. Yet, was that off the top of your head, or had you come into this recording session prepared?

Ed Gamble 00:34

I thought about it just before we started recording. I was like, great, because obviously there's the old structure of, there's some humour involved. There's some chat involved. It's a sort of metaphor, but realised we've not done yoghurts yet. And I love a yoghurt.

James Acaster 00:47

Well done, man. We've already got some merch out but we should get some new merch and put that on a T shirt that says, licking the lid of humour.

Ed Gamble 00:53

Yeah, we should. And then yes, like a cartoon of the great Benito licking a yoghurt lid.

James Acaster 00:57

Yeah, absolutely. That will be the main thing. Him licking it and giving a little thumbs up because he loves it so much.

Ed Gamble 01:02

This is a food podcast James

James Acaster 01:04

It's a food podcast, and we ask the guests their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert and side dish and drink. And this week's special guests is Martin Freeman

Ed Gamble 01:16

Martin Freeman. I mean it's Martin Freeman. What else is there to say he's got such a huge and brilliant and varied CV, James. Some of our favourite things.

James Acaster 01:25

Yeah, crazy man. The Office, Fargo, Sherlock, The Hobbit, Black Panther.

Ed Gamble 01:31

Start Up never got the shout outs it deserved.



James Acaster 01:34

Yeah, this is exciting. We're gonna ask him about food. But also, I plan to ask him about everything he's ever done.

Ed Gamble 01:41

Are you gonna nerd out as well?

James Acaster 01:42

I'm gonna nerd out. I don't care about it. Even though, if he says the secret ingredient, I'll have to put the nerdin on hold and kick him out of the dream restaurant and I'm not happy about that.

Ed Gamble 01:52

I really hope he doesn't, because the secret ingredient this week is Bombay mix

James Acaster 01:55

Bombay mix.

Ed Gamble 01:56

I hate it, never liked it. I remember the first time I had Bombay mix when I was a little boy and we were going to pick up a takeaway curry from a restaurant. And there was a big glass bowl of Bombay mix. And I think my mom said that's a snack. You can have a bit of that and I put some in my mouth and I was like this is unacceptable. What is this?

James Acaster 02:15

My eight year old nephew has massively got into Bombay mix during lockdown.

Ed Gamble 02:19

Of course he has, because he's a member of the Acaster family, so he's an absolute weirdo.

James Acaster 02:24

He was telling me over zoom how much he loves Bombay mix the other day, and he didn't know where I was finding it so funny. Obviously, it's because he's just telling me something that he likes. I love Bombay mix, I could eat a whole bag. He would say stuff like that I was really laughing. Also Ed, I mean, in real time again, I've just got another message on my phone. This is from my sister, saying Mr. Gamble is a ridiculous boy. Of course he could blow those seeds off of his plate because I think she's listening to the Jess Fostekew episode where you claim that you wouldn't be able to blow hemp seeds off of your plate.

Ed Gamble 02:54

Someone's also just sent me a video of them blowing some seeds. So I imagine thats -

James Acaster 02:59

You might get a lot of kickback



Ed Gamble 03:00

that's the thing sometimes we record the episode so far in advance that I've forgotten what we've talked about. And then suddenly we'll get a volley of messages saying like, you can blow seeds off a plate Why did I claim I can't blow seeds off a plate? They must think I'm mad.

James Acaster 03:14

You were very adamant that the time, I remember, I mentioned seeds and you were adamant you wouldn't be able to blow them off the plate.

Ed Gamble 03:19

Anyway enough seed chat.

James Acaster 03:22

Yes,

Ed Gamble 03:22

If Martin Freeman says Bombay mix, we're kicking him out the restaurant and you know, when I was growing up watching The Office at university I think I always knew that I'd say that phrase.

James Acaster 03:32

Yes. Always destined to say that

Ed Gamble 03:34

Martin is in the second series of Breeders, a brilliant comedy show and Season Two of breeders will land as a box set on Sky and be available to watch on SkyOone and Now TV from the 27th of May so go get that, watch it.

James Acaster 03:48

lovely stuff, but in the meantime, let's hear his menu and pray doesn't say Bombay mix. Here is the dream - oh god I don't know how to do this bit.

Ed Gamble 03:57

Why are you trying to do it again, it's my bit that I do and you do it and you always mess it up, this is -

James Acaster 04:02

the yoghurt of humour.

Ed Gamble 04:04

This is the off menu menu of Martin Freeman.

Ed Gamble 04:16

Martin Freeman Welcome to the dream restaurant.



Martin Freeman 04:20

Thank you very much, lovely to be here.

James Acaster 04:23

Martin Freeman. Welcome to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Martin Freeman 04:28

I'm not that late, am I?

Ed Gamble 04:29

No not at all, you're actually our promptest guest on one of these. We arranged to start at 11am and we started 11:01

Martin Freeman 04:36

Oh good. Well I suppose you have a lot of comedians on, so that's probably why. I'm an actor we value timekeeping.

James Acaster 04:41

Yeah, it's that, instantly shots fired. Actors are better than comedians. You putting that out there?

Martin Freeman 04:48

At some things, and not others. But yes, yes. Yeah, I would say some things. personal hygiene, discipline, timekeeping, without question acting, with some exceptions. There are some very good actors who are comedians. But, I mean generally, like, you know, in the way that I just wouldn't assume I can be really good at football, just because I've watched it. I think sometimes people think acting is easy in the same way that I would, for a moment, think that getting up on a stage with a microphone is easy, not for one single second. And over the years, well in the early years, people thought I was a comedian. And then people said, Well, do you want to stand up? No, because that's not a skill that I want to acquire. Because it's, I know, it's hard. I like I know, it's really hard. It's, it's about a lot more than just being occasionally funny with the mates. And acting is, if you do it, right, it's it looks deceptively easy. And it ain't.

James Acaster 05:41

Yeah, cuz of being a comic, sometimes we get auditions. And you know, I've watched loads of TV. I've seen people act.

Martin Freeman 05:48

You've seen people act, yeah.

James Acaster 05:49

And I've watched it and gone. And you watch it, don't ya? And you go, that was some good acting. Yeah, see what I did there. So I asume I pretty much understand it now. And then I get an audition, and I sit down in it, And I feel like, I'd say, an idiot when I try and do the acting. It's really really difficult. I



feel very self conscious. And I find it hard. Completely just not be aware that I'm sitting in a room in front of some people pretending to be somebody else.

Martin Freeman 06:15

Yeah, I think that's very true. I think, yeah, it's really true. I think getting rid of the self consciousness is, is one of the most massive parts of it, I think. And also, you know, if your job is a stand up, and you know I think there are various levels of show offs, aren't there, you know, and I definitely have a spectrum of show off, otherwise, I wouldn't be in a job that was like, shut up everyone and listen to me, do this. Stand up is the apex of it, you know, with all due respect, and I know and love a lot of stand ups.

Ed Gamble 06:40

No, you're correct. You're correct.

Martin Freeman 06:41

But it is there's no getting around it is it. Shut up, everyone while I make you laugh. It's not your job to sort of disappear, do you know what I mean? It's your job to appear very big and broadly, you know, and God bless you for it.

James Acaster 06:52

Out of all the actors you've ever worked with? Who has lost themselves the most?

Ed Gamble 06:58

Yeah, follow up question, Who's the tallest?

Martin Freeman 07:00

Well Steve Merchant

James Acaster 07:01

Who's the tallest? Stephen Merchant. next question.

Martin Freeman 07:02

And he and he is the same. And he lost himself in the Og monster in the office, quite deeply. Who's lost themselves? I don't know. It's a funny one, you know, because I think when you're younger, or in my case, when I was younger, and I think it's quite common to feel that completely losing yourself is kind of the goal, and something to try and attain, because it feels grown up and it feels proper. And then the older I've got, the more I - I dunno - the more I don't really look to that. Anyway, to be honest, it's quite a pain in the arse when someone really loses themselves. I mean, it is a massive pain in the arse, because it's not, it's no longer than a craft and a job. And it's a job and it overlaps with art and overlaps, you know, and I'm very happy to be called an artist by some people, or even if some people want to consider me an artist, I'll very happily take that. But you know, within this time, and this time of the day, you've got to get shit done. And if someone's busy losing themselves, depends to what extent. It's just a pain in the arse. And I think it's a highly impractical way of working, which is why I think it belongs more to the student stroke academic side than the practicability side. Because most certainly British



actors, you know, and there are there are cultural differences between actors, I guess, but most British actors I've ever worked with, sort of just want to get on with it and get it done. Dya know what I mean? And I don't mean get it done cos we don't love it. We've fuckin love it. But there's a real pleasure in getting it done as opposed to, you know, only call me by my character name for five weeks and never talk to me outside of - you know - never have coffee with me, never do anything. We didn't become actors, because it was the only thing left at the job centre. Dya know what I mean? We became actors because it's fucking really enjoyable. And it's really fulfilling and it can be fun and it can be funny, and that's not fun for me, man. That is 100% penance, and that's not to say sometimes you don't take it. Sometimes you have to go to a place without question. That's very true.

Ed Gamble 08:55

Have you seen the Jim Carrey documentary about him making man on the moon?

Martin Freeman 09:00

Oh, yeah.

Ed Gamble 09:01

All I can think when I was watching that is just imagine being anyone else working on that film. Just like fucking hell he's coming in again.

Martin Freeman 09:07

You can see their faces as well Ed, you know, you know when it comes on the makeup bus, and there's proper grown up actors just going, oh for christ. You know, like, he's not only doing this he's brought a fucking camera with him, you know? And music. For me and I'm sure, genuinely sure Jim Carrey is a lovely and smart person, but it was the most self aggrandizing selfish, fucking narcissistic, bollocks I've ever seen. And the idea that anything in our culture would celebrate that or support it is deranged. I mean, literally deranged? You know, I am a very lapsed Catholic but the idea is like, if you believe in transubstantiation, right then then you're going somewhere along the line of, I lost my - I became the character, no you didn't. You're not supposed to become the fucking character. Because you're supposed to be open to stuff that happens in real life, you know, because somehow at some point, someone's gonna say cut. And it's no good going, what does cut mean? Because I'm Napoleon. It's like, shut up man. You know, you need to keep grounded, I think, in reality and that's not to say that you don't lose yourself for the time between action and cut, but I think the rest of it is absolute pretentious, nonsense. And I think it's highly amateurish. It's essentially an amateurish notion. Because it's not perfected, you know what I mean? Like, it's not, for me, it's not a professional attitude, you know, get the job done, man, fucking do your work, you know.

James Acaster 10:28

he should have got fired.

Martin Freeman 10:29

He totally should have got fired, can you imagine if he had been anybody else under the line? I mean, he would have been sectioned, let alone fired. He would have he would have been got rid of, you know.



Ed Gamble 10:38

if it was one of the cameramen sort of getting into the character of a really famous camera man. Yeh, he always filled with his trousers and pants off, so can you just leave me to my process please?

Martin Freeman 10:49

Yeah, so no, I think it is that yes. But it's partly that. It's a ridiculous leeway that is given to some people and of course, you know, I'm, I'm one of them, you know, like, we all get cushy gigs. And we all, you know, to a certain degree or or another, we're all very fortunate in that we get a little pass in some situations where other people wouldn't - I understand that. But Christ, I mean, that there's such a thing as pushing it. I just think when you are challenging, and that's what that Jim Carrey thing looks like to me. At the very, very end, I can't remember what he does. He does or says something that is sort of pertaining to his Christ-like self grandure. And he does or says something that makes me think at the very last segment, is all this a windup? Is this is a joke? Because he was clearly a very funny person he knows absolutely where funny is all the time, but you sort of think, oh God has he lost himself in this delusion of thinking is a guru or a faqir? And coz a fair few people do, you know, a fair few people do once you get to the top of the mountain, and you know, what you're going to do then? You know, because what else gives your life meaning? Because essentially, you could argue what we do is - Yes, it's not curing diseases or whatever, but I still think it's has a nobility to it. And it's reasonably important, but if it's not, then you got to go with it, you know? Jim, you should have paid more attention at school if you wanted to do something more important, you know, I hope he was joking.

Martin Freeman 12:12

Yeah. We all hope he was joking. Although, just keeping everything that we've said in mind. Welcome to the podcast where one of us pretends to be a genie for the whole thing. So...

Ed Gamble 12:22

James does lose himself in the genie role.

Martin Freeman 12:24

Yeah. Yeah, that's your saving grace, I think. As long as you don't go too far in to the genie role, then I will still have respect for you. If you really start thinking you're a genie for this hour. I'm gonna think, nah, I didn't, I didn't like that.

Ed Gamble 12:38

You just see him slowly pushing a sort of pot of blue pain out of the way going, no no don't worry, i'll be absolutely fine. You're our second star of Breeders on the podcast. We've interviewed Michael McKean early last year.

Martin Freeman 12:51

Yes, he's lovely, int he?

Ed Gamble 12:52

He is a lovely man. And he very much enjoyed the experience of working on Breeders, I believe.



Martin Freeman 12:56

Well good.

Ed Gamble 12:57

How did you find the experience of working with Michael McKean, bearing in mind, he's not going to be on the podcast again, so slag him off all you like.

Martin Freeman 13:04

Well, obviously, as I'm sure you both were, I was delighted. Everyone was delighted and very excited. Everything I've seen him do ever has been brilliant. But obviously I go back to being. The first time I saw Spinal Tap it was I was 15. I was watching it with some of my siblings in Brighton in one of their flats and I sort of couldn't believe it, couldn't believe it. I couldn't believe how much I loved it. And I couldn't believe how much it was making me laugh. You know, it's one of those sort of five or six things in my youth, that made me laugh so much. I thought I was going to die, you know. So I will always have a massive affection for Michael McKean for that; for that alone. And everything I've seen him do since he's, he's an extremely good actor. He's not someone who's winking at the audience. I don't think he can hear the applause in his own head. As he's giving you this devastating zinger or whatever. He is always in the scene, He's in that character and he wants to serve the scene, and I love him for that. But he also has amazing comedy chops, and we were all really, really excited to have him on you know, and he couldn't have been lovelier. Was he nice on this? Or was he a terrible bastard?

Ed Gamble 14:08

Oh no, he was horrible, absolutely awful, awful man. He saved up so much bile for us. Yes.

James Acaster 14:13

It was upsetting Martin.

Martin Freeman 14:15

I bet. Yeah, it's the Wosley family, more adventures of what it is to be a parent and sort of that in between stage when you're in your 40s of like, you know, if your your folks are still alive and and you're bringing up kids as well, and all the sort of family machinations. And I think we go a bit deeper into it this year, I think it's, you know, there were bits last year that were hopefully funny, I hope it's funny, but there are bits that are, you know, decidedly not funny and not trying to be funny and there's the same sort of balance about this year, I think we want to be unafraid to have some really funny bits and then have some bits that make you go, Jesus Christ, that was upsetting or that was frightening or whatever, you know. Not frightening in a horror way. We haven't gone down that genre, we're not doing Saw.

Ed Gamble 15:03

That would be a real left turn, wouldn't it? If you just suddenly threw in a Saw themed episode.

Martin Freeman 15:07

We're saving in that for if we do get a third one, that's what we're saving it for. Yes, it's more of you know, if you liked the first Breeders, there's more of that sort of thing. I think this time better. And if you didn't like the first Breeders, you don't have to watch it. It's fine.



Ed Gamble 15:20

What a plug.

James Acaster 15:21

If they didn't like it, this, this one's even better.

Martin Freeman 15:23

That's what I meant to say.

James Acaster 15:24

Yeah, come back and give it another shot.

Martin Freeman 15:25

That's what, exactly.

Ed Gamble 15:26

if you don't like something, do you want to see a better version of it? Because if you don't like it, if you're just improving all the elements of something that someone doesn't like, you don't want to see it, do ya?

Martin Freeman 15:35

I don't think you do. I don't think so. I think if I watched something that I didn't like, I'd resent it if I thought they'd got better.

Ed Gamble 15:40

It's a real thing, isn't it? When they're like, okay, right, you're gonna hate the first three seasons of this, but when you get to season four it's going to blow your fucking mind.

Martin Freeman 15:47

Yes, that's true.

James Acaster 15:48

Here's the question.

Martin Freeman 15:49

Yes.

James Acaster 15:50

When it comes to that kind of stuff. You were in the first season of Fargo and it was brilliant.

Martin Freeman 15:54

Thank you.



James Acaster 15:54

Your voice was amazing in that, by the way.

Martin Freeman 15:56

Thank you. Thanks.

James Acaster 15:57

That was insane. Like, I'll get onto my actual question. But like, I'm obsessed with that show and I love it. And one of the main things that you think every time there's a new actor in it is, let's see how they pull off this voice. Let's see how they do it. I honestly, I think yours is still the best one in it. Yeah. we're three season in and here's what happened, every five seconds, watching you in that, I went, that's a really good voice, out loud I would say it. With whoever I was watching it with. Yeah. I couldn't believe how good it was.

Martin Freeman 16:26

Did you say it that high?

James Acaster 16:28

Yeah, it got higher each time I said it, because I couldn't believe it. You kept not believing it?

Ed Gamble 16:33

Is that then technically a bad performance from Martin, because he kept pulling you out of the performance by being too good.

Martin Freeman 16:39

Maybe so. So I'm a victim of my own genius.

James Acaster 16:42

Pay a compliment, but ended up slagging you off.

Martin Freeman 16:44

I'll take that compliment. Thank you. A friend of mine saw it and he's in music. And he saw it and he, you know, we're very fond of each other and he's a big supporter of mine and all that. But he saw it and thought, Oh dear, Martin's American accent is pretty terrible. And it was only when it had to explain to him that it was a specific, sort of regional accent. I think he thought I was doing a sort of - I don't know what he thought I was doing. But I can see what he means if he thought I should just sound like an American newsreader, or whatever. Or an anchorman. Yeah, that's a pretty funky one, because it is quite a funky accent. There's bits of Scandinavian bits of Irish bits of all sorts.

Ed Gamble 17:21

But then there's like everyone else is doing it as well. So did he think your accent was so bad that the director had pulled them all to one side and said, just copy Martin for a little bit.

Martin Freeman 17:31



Yeah, don't make the Englishman feel left out. I don't know what he thought. You know, he's quite easily distracted is this man. But yeah, he had it explained to him. And now of course, he knows I'm amazing. You know? Yeah. Like James does. Yeah.

James Acaster 17:43

Like I do. I assume his voice gets higher by the day goes up an octave each time.

Martin Freeman 17:48

It does. Well sometimes he gets lower, the more impressed he is, he sound so that by the end of Episode Six, he was like Barry White.

James Acaster 17:55

Yeah. Here's my question, though, about that. We talkin about the seasons and stuff like that. And sometimes seasons are getting better, with Fargo they're contained stories each season, different cast each time, as somebody was in the first one, do you watch each season go, I really hope it's not as good as my one. I hope they mess it up this time.

Martin Freeman 18:11

No, I don't genuinely, because I like the people in it. But I mean, of course, it's nice to think that whatever you do yourself, whatever we're doing has a special place in people's hearts. But genuinely No, because Noah Hawley, who's a sort of writer extraordinaire behind it, and a show runner. No, he's a good guy. And he's a smart guy, so I want success for the show. That's my story. And I'm sticking to it.

James Acaster 18:36

If you watch it and listen to the accent

Martin Freeman 18:38

Yes James, I do. Yes, I do and go. No, that is at least 100 miles to south.

James Acaster 18:46

Yeah, good stuff. We should talk about food really, shouldn't we?

Ed Gamble 18:49

I'll be honest, Martin, I don't want to excite anyone. But this is the closest to a natural interview we've ever done. Yes. Normally, by this point, we are screaming at people about their water choices. But we've asked you some genuine questions there. And I think we've actually done really well.

Martin Freeman 19:01

Do you think it's because we've never met? Maybe, because we've never met, so we're sort of being formal? Yeah. Because we're sort of strangers to each other, personally, so we're probably being formal and polite.

James Acaster 19:12



Well, I don't know. There's a lot of people that we've interviewed on this podcast that we've met for the first time and we have not been polite to them. And we have just asked them about food and given the shit for what what they said they want to eat. I mean, it just, I mean, I guess you just been in some good stuff, man. And we can't help but ask about it.

Martin Freeman 19:34

Thank you. I'll take the respect. I mean, maybe it's better if you start insulting me because then I'll feel like, ah, they really like me these guys. These boys really take to me because they're cussing me out.

Ed Gamble 19:45

gloves off

Martin Freeman 19:46

I though you said clothes off.

Ed Gamble 19:48

Clothes off, let's do this. Let's do this off menu style.

James Acaster 19:54

Still or sparkling water?

Martin Freeman 19:56

If it's a choice of those, then I'm going to go sparkling. Normally, I'm a tap person, because I sort of do resent paying for still water. I think it's I think it's silly. You know the way people did in 1989, if you could remember that. But paying for water, what a lot of rubbish. And that sort of feel that a bit now, except if I'm going sparkling I'm prepared to pay for that because the bubbles give you oxygen and wake you up. But there is there is something in that you have a fizzy drink with no sugar. I think it's quite good.

Ed Gamble 20:24

So the bubbles that you think are giving you oxygen, as in like they're giving you extra oxygen. You're getting more than you get when you breathe.

Martin Freeman 20:31

Fairplay. I've not completely thought this through, I've not studied it. But I am pretty sure it gives you extra oxygen. Yeah, if I'm -

James Acaster 20:39

extra?

Ed Gamble 20:41

So do you think if you took a big mouthful of sparkling water and left it in your mouth, could you then go underwater for five minutes?

Martin Freeman 20:47



I dunno, ask David Blaine. I don't know this shit.

James Acaster 20:49

Very concerning, Martin, you said you we're homeschooling your children, what have you been?

Martin Freeman 20:56

I just think is there not some truth, you university twats, in the idea that it's oxygenated right? Gives you a little pep.

James Acaster 21:06

Is it oxygenated?

Ed Gamble 21:06

I thought it was carbon dioxide.

Martin Freeman 21:09

Okay, yeah, you could be right. Carbonated so what does that do?

Ed Gamble 21:12

It gives you less oxygen.

James Acaster 21:13

Opposite, poisons you,

Ed Gamble 21:15

Poisons you.

Martin Freeman 21:16

Lass oxygen. I see. Right. Well, it's definitely still for me. No, sparkling, fuck it. I'm going to live on the edge. I'm gonna say sparkling because it is like a little treat.

Ed Gamble 21:26

What we can do for you, Martin, because this is the dream restaurant. We can get you sparkling water and then we can get you an oxygen tank as well to take little gulps out of every time you have a sip.

James Acaster 21:34

Would you like that?

Martin Freeman 21:35

I would now, now I've heard of it. Yeah,

Ed Gamble 21:38

Like meatloaf, when he does a gig. You can have an oxygen tank just off to one side.



Martin Freeman 21:42

Is that what he really does?

Ed Gamble 21:43

Yeah, he's big lad. And he really goes for it still

Martin Freeman 21:45

smaller than he used to be. Yeah,

Ed Gamble 21:47

yeah. But when I think when he was at proper big meatloaf size, had a little towel for the sweat and an oxygen tank off at the side of stage. No sparkling water.

Martin Freeman 21:56

No, I bet none. I bet none was knocking about 1979 for the loaf. Yeah, all right, sparkling in an oxygen tank. Thanks.

James Acaster 22:04

When you were filming The Office did big Keith have to go off and have an oxygen tank?

Martin Freeman 22:10

No, he didn't. He didn't.

Ed Gamble 22:13

what a question

James Acaster 22:14

Just a question.

Martin Freeman 22:14

No, we'd hang out in our little grief hole, that was sort of acting as a green room that was adjacent to the set. And because it wasn't, you know, it's not a real set. It was just a group of boxes. We had to be really, really quiet and talk, you know, very, very hushed-ly, or Asher Tanner or Steve Merchant would come and say, can you keep it down? And that's, you know. So you never really got any time off on The Office. It wasn't like, you got scene off, go to the green room, you just had to go off and sort of whisper and that included big Keith, Ewan Macintosh, hello Ewan.

Ed Gamble 22:45

thinks there's oxygen in a scotch egg?

James Acaster 22:47

How many times did you have to have to film that? That's a famous blooper, isn't it? The amount of times you laughed in that?



Martin Freeman 22:54

Yeah, that was a lot. I don't know. It wasn't a crazy amount. That was probably like eight, whereas there were some, and it's only it's on YouTube, because it was on the DVD extras. There's a scene between Gervais and myself, that was just that, that was ridiculous. It was absolutely again, where if he hadn't been the star of the show we definitely would have got fired. It was 75 takes or something. It was absolutely stupid. Because he just couldn't leave it alone. You know, he sees different ways to make you laugh, and ruin the scene, and keep you there for longer, he'll do it. So yeah, that was the worst one ever. But The Office was full of occasions where you would just be trying to try not to laugh, so every scene that's in The Office, every scene that made it to TV was just the triumph of people managing not to corpse, that was what it was. It wasn't even especially good acting, It was just like, right did we get it? Good.

Ed Gamble 23:49

Yeah, just one good one and that'll do

Martin Freeman 23:51

One good 158 ruined ones.

James Acaster 23:54

Popadoms or Bread? Popadoms or Bread, Martin Freeman? Popadoms or Bread?

Martin Freeman 23:59

Well what sort of, this is any sort of restaurant isn't it? It's whatever it's a whatever restaurants. It's not themed.

Ed Gamble 24:03

it's whatever restaurant you can dream up. Yeah,

Martin Freeman 24:05

Bread. I mean, I like poppadoms. But I suppose that would set my brain thinking a certain way. And I don't think I'm going to order that way today. So bread. There's loads of ways to do bread. And now of course, you're going to tell me there's loads of ways to do poppadoms, Martin. Ignorant. But as far as I'm aware, there's loads of ways to do bread and I like bread and butter. I went during the last time that we could actually go out, I took my family out to a restaurant in London and just had, sometimes when bread and butter is the best thing, you don't need anything else, you don't need the rest of the meal and you just think I'll just have another piece. It was that good. With a nice butter, lovely bit of bread, I just think, fuckin hell, why are we bothering doing anything else?

Ed Gamble 24:47

So did you leave after the bread and butter

Martin Freeman 24:49

we did Ed, yeah. We did. And they were dissapointed.



Ed Gamble 24:52

I'd love that. I'd love that story. Somebody working in a restaurant going, you know Martin Freeman. Right? He came in with his family, sat down he had the bread and butter and then they all fucked off.

Martin Freeman 25:01

Sodded off, he sodded off. No, we didn't. No, I foolishly kept going. And I kept saying to my kids, can you stop that? Because it's just going to ruin your your meal. So can we not have any more. Can I have some more bread, please? I was breaking my own rules as I was making them. And of course Yeah, by the end of the main course stuffed, but I'm still gonna go with bread and I'm going to ask one of you to, you have permission to say, Freeman, go easy on the bread.

Ed Gamble 25:28

At what point? Is there a telltale sign in your eyes?

Martin Freeman 25:31

No, after two little, like, that sized slice of bread and butter. You may say to me, should we take that away? And I'll go Thank you very much. I'll thank you for it. Otherwise it just ruins the meal.

James Acaster 25:40

Would you like bread and butter from that specific place? You were just talking about?

Martin Freeman 25:44

Yeah, I would To be honest, because I think actually that it was the best. You know, it's a poncey West End London restaurant, but it's, well actually not poncey, It's just a very nice restaurant. And the quality of butter is just the right amount of saltedness, Oh man, so gorgeous. It's like a meal in itself. You know, sometimes when you have like tomato soup and just bread and butter dipped in it, and yeah, it doesn't get much better than that.

James Acaster 26:11

I love seeing the the marbled effect of the butter on top of the tomato soup.

Martin Freeman 26:17

Yeah, Agreed.

James Acaster 26:17

Whoa mumma

Martin Freeman 26:18

Agreed. Yeah. The little sort of grease bubbles. Yeah,

Ed Gamble 26:22

I prefer James's description of the marbled effect, rather than grease bubbles.

James Acaster 26:28



Yes, I like the grease bubbles. They're full of oxygen.

Martin Freeman 26:34

I've got this wrong, haven't I? I'm gonna have to rethink my whole oxygen theory.

Ed Gamble 26:39

Have you based your whole menu on oxygen?

Martin Freeman 26:41

Basically yeah. Because I'm assuming, I thought this restaurant was in space. And so I just assumed that I was gonna need as much oxygen as possible.

Ed Gamble 26:48

Do you remember the name of the restaurant where you had the lovely bread Martin?

Martin Freeman 26:51

Yes, it was The Wolseley.

Ed Gamble 26:52

very nice.

Martin Freeman 26:53

which is next to the Ritz. And it's a really lovely place. Nice to go there. And the food's great. And I said, it's poncey, It's not pretentious. It's kind of, it's a bit zhuzhy of course. The kind of place where it justifies making an effort, you know, so that's another nice thing. I like not slobbering about, you know, I like people making an effort, because I think it's good for one's own sense of pride, and self esteem, you know, to not just wadge about in trackies all the time. I mean, I don't mind trackies. But you know, this, come on man, let's step it up. You know, if we're going to go out for a meal, let's pretend we've got dressed, you know.

Ed Gamble 27:29

if you're gonna go out, pop to The Wolseley and just to hammer down a loaf of bread, you've gotta pop some trousers on, don't you.

Martin Freeman 27:34

You may as well dress like a baker. Yeah, it's nice. Yeah. I mean, I like I like having a bit of an effort.

Ed Gamble 27:44

do you dress the whole family up in the same sort of outfit?

Martin Freeman 27:47

No. Well, it was it was butcher, Baker, candlestick maker. And my daughter got the candlestick maker and she wasn't happy because she was covered in wax. My son was covered in blood, and I was covered in flour. But I encouraged them to sort of do whatever their version of making an effort is, you



know, so if that just means a really crisp clean tracksuit for my son, then that's fine. It doesn't all have to be the same, but make an effort. You know, I sort of feel that about a lot of things.

James Acaster 28:16

You said it was next the Ritz this place. Is there a turf wars between the two?

Martin Freeman 28:20

There is because the postcode changes in the road down the middle and it does get, oooooooh, I it does get pretty tasty. Yeah, it does. Yeah. It's like who's the poshest?

James Acaster 28:30

Yeah. I would imagine one of your co-stars, Cumberbatch. I bet he's a Ritz boy and you're a Wolseley lad. That's what I would imagine.

Martin Freeman 28:39

I don't know. I imagine Ben would definitely, I can see Ben at the The Wolseley. I'm not sure if I've ever been to the Ritz, except I did an interview in the Ritz early on in my career, like tea at the red sort of thing. But I don't think, I don't think I've ever actually eaten at the Ritz and nothing against it. I want to at some point, I'm want to have tea at the Ritz, but I can see Ben at The Wolseley. Yeah. Because, to be honest, I think it's a fairly wide range of people at The Wolseley, theres everyone there from agents to actors. Bases are covered. I mean, all the basic social groups. I can see him there. Yeah.

James Acaster 29:13

He'd get jumped. He'd walked in and they'd go, it's a Ritz boy, and they'd all chase him out.

Ed Gamble 29:19

Yeah, but he can escape easily, right. He can wriggle out of any situation

Martin Freeman 29:22

and Ben can fit in. He's a chameleon. He can play both sides. Yeah.

James Acaster 29:26

I can't think of him as Ben.

Martin Freeman 29:28

What, do you have to think of him as a Benedict?

James Acaster 29:30

Yeah, it's Benedict Cumberbatch,

Martin Freeman 29:32

Or just Mr. Cumberbatch.

Ed Gamble 29:33



He books The Wolseley, but as Ben is back to Benedict as soon as he walks through the doors of the Ritz,

Martin Freeman 29:37

I book The Wolseley as Ben Cumberbatch. I get a better table when I pretend to be him.

James Acaster 29:44

If I imagine a Ben I imagined like, you know, a little scrappy kid with a catapult or an old man old kind man, old Ben. Yes, old Ben.

Martin Freeman 29:54

So you've got Ben Kenobi. Ben Kenobi is your old wise man.

Ed Gamble 29:57

Yeah, Uncle Ben. Uncle, uncle,

Martin Freeman 29:59

Uncle Ben. He's an old wise man. Yeah, who's a scrappy little kid who's a scrappy kid then?

Ed Gamble 30:04

Ben ten.

Martin Freeman 30:04

Ben ten. Oh, I hated Ben Ten. I absolutely loathed to Ben Ten. Because my son is 15 and he was sort of, when he was like two or three, I suppose, he was interested in Ben Ten. I absolutely loathed it.

Ed Gamble 30:21

And what's Ben Ten's vibe again? because I obviously missed out on Ben Ten. Is it that he is just 10?

Martin Freeman 30:25

No, I don't think he is, I don't think he is 10. Maybe there's 10 of them or something. I don't know. I think there might be 10 of them in his crew, I'm not sure. But man, I fucking hated that. And nothing against it. No, but I just was the wrong age. I wasn't three.

James Acaster 30:39

How much of your thoughts did Ben Ten occupy around that time?

Martin Freeman 30:44

Well, let's say if it was over 3% it was too many because you know, like, any percentage is too much.

Ed Gamble 30:50

I once when Benedict comes, Ben, Benedict's was recording the Penguins of Madagascar. I got hired to go in and read in all the other voices.



Martin Freeman 30:58

did you?

Ed Gamble 30:59

And no one told me when I should start or stop. And there was one where he didn't have a line for 10 pages. And I just read all 10 pages while everyone stared at me and it was probably the most awkward 20 minutes of my life.

Martin Freeman 31:11

Did you do different accents and stuff?

Ed Gamble 31:13

Yep. Did all the different penguins. There about 10 different penguins. I was doing all of them just out there riffing on my own. Yeah, while everyone looked at me. Awful. I mean he said, Well done at the end, but it felt like a waste of time.

Martin Freeman 31:24

I mean, he gave me an award. Sure. And you were supposed to just give him his cue, presumably?

Ed Gamble 31:29

I think so. But no one was specific. Because there was a scene I think where he had a line at the beginning and then right at the end, and you know, when does the cue start? When does the cue begin so I just did the whole thing.

Martin Freeman 31:39

Can I ask why? why they asked you to do that. We you we use sort of then or now, were you more in this sort of acting bit or what?

Ed Gamble 31:48

No, I mean, I do, like James says, I do the awkward auditions as well. I didn't have to audition for that. I'd done a couple of things where they just call you up, go down there read in some lines, i think.

Martin Freeman 31:58

That's pretty good.

Ed Gamble 31:59

But I don't think it helps. I think he probably had to re-record it.

James Acaster 32:02

Ed's being modest, Martin. He's done a bit of voice work. Does the term Cazoo, yeah you can, mean anything to you?

Martin Freeman 32:12

It does and it doesn't.



Ed Gamble 32:13

I don't know if you're in the market for a second hand car, Martin. But I reckon I can sell you on it now.

Martin Freeman 32:19

Cazoo, yeah you can.

James Acaster 32:20

Cazoo, yeah you can.

Ed Gamble 32:22

Cazoo, yeah you can.

James Acaster 32:23

Oh yeah, that's it. Sorry. Sorry that I tried to do that Ed. I would give anything to hear that recording of you doing all the voices of the penguins of The Penguins of Madagascar.

Martin Freeman 32:32

So would I now. Yeah.

Ed Gamble 32:34

It makes me feel ill thinking about it. Especially when you get to the part that Ken Jeong supposed to be playing and you have to make that decision. I didn't do it. I didn't do it.

James Acaster 32:45

We come to your starter, we're still at the beginning of the meal Martin. We've had some lovely bread from The Wolseley. Now we come to your starter.

Martin Freeman 32:54

I'm going to, do they call it a carpaccio if it's just meat? But I basically want smoked salmon, I wan't smoked salmon and some onions and capers. And then there's a bit more bread because there's usually a little bit of toast with it. Yeah, so I like that and a bit of squeezed lemon and ground pepper and all that because it's quite lean, right? It's not it's not too heavy, because I am, what I like to call, a fat pig. You know, and so I love food, and I love just eating food a lot. Right? So I've got an leave space to be a fat pig. later on. So like smoked salmon quite lean.

Ed Gamble 33:26

with this bread though. Martin, you've entered into a pact with us in the restaurant to stop you eating anymore bread.

Martin Freeman 33:31

That's true, but I didn't say toast, did I? I didn't say toast. there's a there's a little sort of quarter peice of toast with no butter on it.



Ed Gamble 33:40

Yeah, but this sounds like an addict thing now. You know, you tell your friends, don't let me smoke again. And then they come around and you're chewing tobacco.

Martin Freeman 33:48

I didn't say not cigars. Yeah, yeah, I didn't say no crack. Yeah, no, no, this little bits of sort of delicate toast. I think they're fine.

James Acaster 33:57

You can't have them. Sorry, Martin.

Martin Freeman 33:59

Oh shit. Really?

James Acaster 34:00

You told us to do it. You said, no matter what I say.

Martin Freeman 34:04

You're my gatekeeper.

James Acaster 34:05

That no matter how hard I plead don't let me have any more bread.

Ed Gamble 34:08

Lock me in this cage, and no matter what I say if I start turning into a werewolf, don't let me out of here.

Martin Freeman 34:13

Okay, fair enough. Yeah. hoist by my own petard. I shouldn't have brought that up. And you're quite right.

Ed Gamble 34:19

But would you still like the smoked salmon even though there's no bread available? Yes, please.

Martin Freeman 34:22

Yeah, Because you know some food? I'm sure. Well, no, I was gonna say I'm sure it's a myth. Well, it's true. Some food is just not, it's tasty and it's filling but it's not, you know, you don't feel leaden afterwards. And a nice bit of smoked salmon without loads of other carby bits around it is really nice. sets off your palate nicely. Gives you a little tingly feeling of wanting more, but it hasn't completely filled you up. Do you know what I mean?

James Acaster 34:48

I absolutely love it. I love smoked salmon. I love eating it straight from the pack by the sheet. Sheeting it into my mouth.



Martin Freeman 34:56

Yeah. Yeah, Yeah

James Acaster 34:57

So here's a question for you about smoked salmon. When you're buying it in the supermarket, so I find now sometimes I'm thinking I'm just gonna eat this on its own, I know that I'm going to eat it on its own. There's quite a lot of different options in the supermarket. And some of it is like the sheets and they've got like loads of pepper on them and lemon. And some of them are like, have got honey on them and stuff like that. What are you looking for when you're in the supermarket? What's your favourite type of smoked salmon to get off the shelf and take home and eat by the sheet?

Martin Freeman 35:25

Cheap. Just a bargain. No, I don't really like, I don't want to buggered about with really, I just want it straight. And I want enough so that, cos you know sometimes you buy packets or smoked salmon and they're not quite big enough. So once you've had little snack, it's almost all gone. So I quite like big ones. And I buy a couple of bigger ones to go through a few breakfasts, you know, because I like having it for breakfast. I like putting it in scrambled egg and you know, all that. Or just maybe on the side

Ed Gamble 35:54

During the first lockdown when it was difficult to get food delivered and stuff. Me and James actually both started using a thing called food chain which is like used to deliver to restaurants so it was for trade. So you'd go on there and there'd be all the different things and I just ordered some smoked salmon and then it arrived It was like a metre a metre of smoked salmon. I just saw it in half like a magician and freeze half of it, it was brilliant.

Martin Freeman 36:17

God, thats a real touch.

Ed Gamble 36:20

that was best the best day of lockdown.

Martin Freeman 36:21

Yeah, Jesus Christ. Was it was about 500 quid? Were you thinking why is this so much?

Ed Gamble 36:27

Oh yeah, I'm bankrupt now. Bankrupted myself on a metre of smoked salmon.

James Acaster 36:31

To be fair, you are possessed by the soul of 1000 penguins. So it's okay for you to eat that many fish in between your whole penguin clan.

Ed Gamble 36:40



I just went along the whole thing, different characters along each sheet. Get the slice in before you do Ken's voice.

Martin Freeman 36:47

Yeah, so anyway, smoked salmon, caper.

James Acaster 36:49

talk about your relationship with capers, please.

Martin Freeman 36:52

I'm kind of getting over them. Like I'm learning to tolerate them. I think at first, I say first, you know, probably when I was 30. I was like, What the fuck is - no. And then that's one of those things that I'm trying to incorporate into my taste buds just because I don't really like leaving bits on the side of a plate. It just looks a bit fussy. And so I think, no, mind, you can get over this. Open yourselves up. I've tried with anchovies can't manage it. Can't manage it.

James Acaster 37:20

similar thing

Martin Freeman 37:21

because I think that they're just too salty. Too salty. For me.

Ed Gamble 37:24

I love it. I've always loved it.

Martin Freeman 37:26

Anchovies?

Ed Gamble 37:27

capers, anchovies, marmite. Just get em in. I can't get enough salt.

Martin Freeman 37:31

yeah, no, I do like salt. Do you like ready salted crisps?

Ed Gamble 37:35

Not really. I've always been a bit fancy when it comes to crisps.

Martin Freeman 37:38

Oh, Jesus Christ. Here we go. He lures you in, like oh my salt, salt, salt. And then it's like, the most obvious thing and he's like, nah, I don't like the Beatles.

Ed Gamble 37:50

I am a salt, salt, salt. But you get salt, salt, salt on the other flavours as well don't you, but you get a bit extra.



Martin Freeman 37:55

Yeah, but I just think there's something about, genuinely something about just plain ready-made crisps that are phenomenal. And they go with everything. They go with a bagel. So that'll be smoked salmon, cream cheese, tomato bagel, packet of crisps on the side. Jesus Christ, and a coke. God Almighty. Amazing. So nice. Yeah, not healthy. But it's very nice. Yeah.

James Acaster 38:18

Who cares if it's healthy or not? That's a nice way to spend your lunchtime.

Martin Freeman 38:21

It's a really nice snack. Yeah.

James Acaster 38:23

So when you're 30, you're putting the capers on the side of the plate. And then you start to get them involved a bit more. And now it's part of your dream meal. That's quite a journey for ya. At what point were you like, I'm a caper guy?

Martin Freeman 38:38

I reckon about two years ago.

Ed Gamble 38:40

Wow.

James Acaster 38:40

And you went around telling people you were a caper guy?

Martin Freeman 38:42

Yeah, I guess I did. And I did do that. You're absolutely right. I did do that. About two years ago, I became a caper guy and just would have caper capers, and where caper capes and all that, and it's changed my life. I am a new man. And I wasn't expecting that in my, you know, so it was it was quite a shock for that to be such a change in my life. You know, more so than becoming a father.

James Acaster 39:03

Absolutely. You don't know until it happens.

Martin Freeman 39:06

The capers, no, exactly. You don't know. There's before capers and after capers,

James Acaster 39:10

it's hard to explain to people who aren't into capers. How it feels to be into capers. They won't understand

Martin Freeman 39:15



they don't understand and they can empathise.

Ed Gamble 39:17

It's a new kind of love, isn't it?

Martin Freeman 39:18

It is really, Yeah, it is. And I didn't think, because I thought I'd been in love. I assumed I'd been in love, but not until I just had those salty berries down the throat. I thought, hello. This is a this is a new thing. It is nice because they genuinely do, they set off, I don't know, I'm not a food scientist as we've established for my oxygenated water. But it does something, it sets off a nice little chemical reaction on the salmon.

Ed Gamble 39:43

What's your thoughts on caper berries? Martin, the big fat ones.

Martin Freeman 39:46

Oh, no, but aren't the little capers that we're talking about, they're just a smaller version of that right?

Ed Gamble 39:51

I think so. But the big one, you know, when you get the big ones and you bite in and they've got all bits in them.

Martin Freeman 39:56

Oh, maybe I haven't had a really big one. Maybe I've not.

James Acaster 39:58

I haven't had that. It's the first I'm hearing about it, Martin.

Martin Freeman 40:02

How big are they?

Ed Gamble 40:03

maybe I've imagined them.

James Acaster 40:04

You think of a tomato Ed?

Martin Freeman 40:06

A green tomato

Ed Gamble 40:07

green tomato covered in salt. That's what I'm thinking. No, they're like, they're like, you know, I'd say three times the size of a normal caper.



Martin Freeman 40:15

Okay, I think I've only had the little fellas.

Ed Gamble 40:17

Stick with the little fellas. Not worth your time the big ones.

Martin Freeman 40:21

Okay. Thank you. That's shortcutted that.

James Acaster 40:30

Let's move on to the main course, now that Ed's told you that

Martin Freeman 40:32

Salmon and spinach linguini. Not salmon, not salmon, prawn. Prawn and spinach linguini. Yeah,

Ed Gamble 40:39

I know it's too much. That would have been our first double salmon.

James Acaster 40:42

Guys gone double salmon.

Martin Freeman 40:43

I've gone salmon, prawn, a lovely sort of prawn linguini and white wine sauce on a lovely bit of linguine. Yeah. It also works with tagliatelle. It works with all sorts works with penne for Christ's sake, you know, but I'm gonna go for linguini today.

Ed Gamble 40:57

I was gonna say, it's the dream restaurant so if you would like a mix up of all your favourite pastas, we can do that for you as well.

Martin Freeman 41:02

No, no. Don't patronise me, you god damn dirty ape. No, I'm just gonna go for linguini, thanks.

James Acaster 41:09

When you said the prawns, I thought oh, Martin likes a lot of seafood so far. I'm going to ask him about seafood. And then here's how my brain went; I went, i'll asked about seafood, and then I started imagining you, eating your meal and singing the song under the sea from the little mermaid, that popped into my head out of nowhere and started making me laugh before I even asked you a question. Would you sing under the sea while you were eating your meal?

Martin Freeman 41:34

I don't know enough of it. I know bits of it. But then it becomes when Homer started singing it in an episode of The Simpsons, he started saying it. So I think the real version and homers version get mixed



up in my mind. So I wouldn't be able to run you through under the sea. Would you? Do you know all the words under the sea?

James Acaster 41:52

No. Under the sea, Under the sea? Down where its better, down where it's wetter. Take it from me.

Martin Freeman 41:58

Okay.

Ed Gamble 41:59

I think you'd have to fill in some bits being like Martin is better, down where it wetter, under the sea. Yeah, you'll just have to riff some bits.

Martin Freeman 42:07

Also, I don't quite know where, I don't know. I'm not exactly sure of that melody line of, dya know what I mean? Like we can say we can blag it, but I don't know what's actually written down on the piano. So I don't think I could carry that tune properly.

James Acaster 42:19

Yeah, well, there's new one coming out, int their? Live actions coming out soon and Devine Diggs is gonna sing that song.

Martin Freeman 42:24

Well, no, no, it's me. I'm singing that song. So i'd better learn it.

James Acaster 42:28

Oh, yeah, totally.

Martin Freeman 42:29

I'd better learn it very, very quickly.

Ed Gamble 42:31

You're playing Sebastian the crab.

Martin Freeman 42:33

No. Who is it? Who's doing it? Who's doing that?

James Acaster 42:35

The Devine Diggs?

Ed Gamble 42:37

Did you audition for it, Martin, and this is the first you're hearing of it.

Martin Freeman 42:40



I feel like you and then penguins, Ed. I feel betrayed.

James Acaster 42:46

How big are these prawns?

Martin Freeman 42:47

They're quite big

Ed Gamble 42:48

Do you want them in the shell Martin, Or do you want them deshelled and in your pasta.

Martin Freeman 42:51

I'd like them deshelled, because I think when you've got to do your own shelling, that's a different thing. Tuck a napkin in there so not to, because it flies everywhere. It's like cutting a tomato, it just goes berserk. So when you do that, when you take a prawns head off, there's always a bit of risk of ricocheting, you know, of friendly fire. So no, I just want to in the sauce with the spinach, and the white wine.

James Acaster 43:14

Do you want this from anywhere in particular? Is there somewhere where you've had the best prawn linguini you've ever had, and you want that exact dish for your dream meal.

Martin Freeman 43:21

It might actually be somewhere in Sorrento, the name of which I can't remember, but I like to, um. Me and my kids like to go to Sorrento, it is truly a place where I feel very relaxed. And that doesn't happen very often, where I can really switch off when I can just sort of be invisible for a large part.

James Acaster 43:39

Because you must get a lot of that, we've already fanboyed out on you quite a bit today. All your different things you've done. What is the one that you get the most?

Martin Freeman 43:49

Probably Sherlock, you know, it was a bit like, I dunno. The Office was a bit like being in a band, because it felt quite cool. And lots of music people liked it. But Sherlock is like, I dunno, like being a big band. I don't know. Not Glenn Miller Big Band, just a big huge band. I think when Sherlock was at his height, that felt like the most definite, wow, flippin heck. This is something else, you know, and people really let you know, people really, really let you know.

Ed Gamble 44:18

Did you realise when you're in Sorrento, finally relaxed and the waiter came over and put your seafood linguini down and went, Dr. Watson.

Martin Freeman 44:29

I thought, now I've made it.



Ed Gamble 44:30

Yeah, now I can't relax here.

James Acaster 44:33

Over here, please sir. We need to speak to you, the chef wants to speak to you. And then you've got taken off to the side and a little room and he went, how did he survive jumping off of the building? I do want to ask about Sherlock jumping off the building so I still don't understand what happened. Is it the crash mat thing? Isn't the thing that basically he does it that they they move a massive crash mat round and he jumps on that and someone distracts you because that makes me angry.

Martin Freeman 44:59

Okay, A) Why does it make you angry? That fine, I like anger. But B) what do you hope is?

James Acaster 45:04

We all spent a year of our lives thinking about that every single second of every single day. I trying to figure out how that had happened and thinking, oh my god, this is so cool. What is happening? Moriarty really checkmated him. Oh, God, how was he behind the tree at the end? And then he got a billion people, a whole cast of people to help him. And he jumped off a building. He jumped onto a crash mat. And I was like, it's like, whenever any magician reveals that trick. You go, what, thats all you were doing? And then you get wound up. So I was like, aw man.

Martin Freeman 45:35

Yeah, I think it was that wasn't it? Yeah. And there was another corpse from the hospital that Molly Hooper had, you know. Yes there was a lot of, you know, a willing suspension of disbelief is needed. But yeah, I mean, a lot of organisations

Ed Gamble 45:50

There was once a Jonathan Creek where someone jumped out of the building and then disappeared. And it turns out there was a trampoline under the grass.

Martin Freeman 45:56

So he landed on the grass, but

Ed Gamble 45:58

no, they opened up the grass then they bounced on the trampoline, and then they shut the grass again, absolutely infuriating. Making it up as they go along.

Martin Freeman 46:07

Yeah, that is generally the nature of fiction.

Ed Gamble 46:12

Can't you just base some Sherlock on facts?



Martin Freeman 46:15

Dickins, he's making it up as he goes along. Yes. Yes. And it's bought me a cottage

James Acaster 46:23

sometimes do you think it would have been really cool if like they came back after that break and it's just that he didn't do a trick he just did jump off and die. Add that add that the rest of it is just you solving crimes on your own.

Martin Freeman 46:34

I did suggest that to Mark and Steven, they didn't go for it.

James Acaster 46:45

Your dream side.

Martin Freeman 46:46

Chips.

Ed Gamble 46:48

simple

Martin Freeman 46:49

Chips because sometimes it's good to do a sort of carb overload. Pasta and chips as well, that's another thing I love. A creamy sort of white sauce pasta and good sort of nicely done fat chips, Jesus, or even fries actually, but I'm gonna go for a fatter chip today.

Ed Gamble 47:06

Fat chip

Martin Freeman 47:06

I mean, I just think that absolutely gorgeous. You can, you know, a mouthful a pasta a chip, heaven.

Ed Gamble 47:12

Now, after you've specifically asked us not to let you have any more bread. It really feels like you're exploiting a few loopholes here.

Martin Freeman 47:19

It does. This is like an addict. You're right. It is like an addict. I'm just trying to get I'm just gonna get round my own rules. But I'm up to main course now so I'm in the bulk of it. I'm in it now. Whereas I didn't want to ruin it. Before with the with the bread and the starter.

Ed Gamble 47:34

Is your drink gonna be a pint of mashed potato?

Martin Freeman 47:37



I mean, if it could be, Yeah. I mean, I love mashed potatoes so much. I might even have a coke. I might even have a bottle of Coke, to be honest. If this, you know, if you're paying for this meal, or if it's free, so I'm going to push the boat out. And if I don't have anything to do for the next couple of days, then I'm just going to be a real fat pig.

James Acaster 47:58

When you have a bottle of coke Do you have to clear your diary for the next few days, usually?

Martin Freeman 48:03

No, I'm just thinking because this is going to be a big blowout and I just, you know, as long as I don't have to get up early tomorrow or you know, do anything impressive.

James Acaster 48:11

You just going classic coke. You're not going Pepsi?

Martin Freeman 48:14

No, I mean, I don't mind Pepsi, but not No, no coke max. Coke Zero. None of that shit. No. It's Pepsi Max and Coke Zero. No, I'm not interested.

Ed Gamble 48:23

It was nice that you call them all shit and then went back to make sure you had their names right.

James Acaster 48:29

Absolutely load of shit, with all due respect.

Martin Freeman 48:34

Yeah, with ice in lime is in lime in my coke. Yeah. Nice. Why haven't you asked me what I want to drink?

James Acaster 48:41

we are.

Martin Freeman 48:42

Yeah, but I brought the coke thing, you didn't ask me if I wanted wine. You didn't ask any of that. What sort of sommelier have you got over there? Jesus Christ.

Ed Gamble 48:50

I thought what we'd actually done is quite smoothly moved into the drink portion of the menu. but you're annoyed because we haven't officially asked you, right?

Martin Freeman 48:57

Yeah, cuz there wasn't a heading.

James Acaster 49:00



I can appreciate that. And also appreciate that on this podcast. We do ask about the drink pretty late in the day. You've had your starter and your main course and your side and then we go, what would you like to drink?

Martin Freeman 49:12

And then it occurs to you, Oh, maybe you'd like a wine, I forgot. It's a bit much, mate. I'm gonna have a glass of Pinot Noir. I've got into Pinot Noir. I worked in New Zealand for a long time. And they all know about wine in New Zealand, like young people, normal people know about wine in a way that I don't feel we do. I certainly didn't. And yeah, Pinot Noir was what I really discovered in New Zealand and that's kind of been my go to since then.

James Acaster 49:40

This is when you're doing the Hobbit.

Martin Freeman 49:42

I mean, I don't like to talk about it. But yes, James. Yes.

James Acaster 49:46

What do hobbits eat?

Ed Gamble 49:48

Yeah, good question, actually

Martin Freeman 49:49

Everything. I mean everything. They eat like a sort of Dickensian gentleman's feast. Like my character Bilbo Baggins, or, if you will, The Hobbit, he has his own,

Ed Gamble 49:59

The main guy, let's not let's not mess around. He's The Hobbit.

James Acaster 50:04

The OG

Martin Freeman 50:06

The OH. Yeah, he's got his own. He's got his own sort of walk in larder. I mean they take food very very seriously. Yeah, second breakfast all that. Yeah, they eat a lot. So yeah, as a result they're they're kind of a bit portly, or maybe that was just me. Because I think, Elijah Wood wasn't very portly. But yeah, I think by the time you get to Bilbo, Bilbo, he definitely likes some grub. Yeah.

James Acaster 50:30

So you having in the Pinot Noir or the coke.

Martin Freeman 50:33

Both, can I have both? This is a dream restaurant, right?



James Acaster 50:35

Yeah, well, we'll let you have it.

Ed Gamble 50:36

mean, that's this this is this is this sort of floor in the format in that it is a dream restaurant, but we do tend to ask people to stick with one thing. There are limits.

Martin Freeman 50:45

Fine, red wine. I would choose the red wine over the coke

Ed Gamble 50:48

We will let you have both.

Martin Freeman 50:49

Thank you.

Ed Gamble 50:49

Are you going to double park them? Are you going to go sip of the wine sip of the coke? Or are you going coke to start?

Martin Freeman 50:54

Coke to start. I think Coke is going to come with the water. So there's going to still going to be a little bit of coke left over when I'm on the wine and pasta, because it's just, again, it peps you up because, I don't know if you know, but Coke is carbonated. And it's got sort of like, but it's also got sugar in it. Right. So it's got, you know, it's two things; air and sugar.

James Acaster 51:16

We arrive at your dessert. It's been such a journey. I also kind of want to ask you if you can still do the Fargo voice these days or can you not?

Martin Freeman 51:27

It takes a bit of a run up to be honest, James. It takes a little bit of a warm up.

James Acaster 51:30

I don't know make you perform for us, Martin.

Ed Gamble 51:32

It was fairly, it was obvious at the beginning of the episode that you're angling for that James. We all ignored it and we all moved on. Martin was very classy. He just decided to sort of segue into the next bit.

Martin Freeman 51:43

What would really make me happy is you trying it.



Ed Gamble 51:46

Oh yeah, that would make me happy

James Acaster 51:47

I'm very bad at accents.

Martin Freeman 51:49

But that's why it's going to be fun. Why don't you say, what would you like your dessert, as a Minnesotan?

Ed Gamble 51:56

Me and Martin have naturally braced ourselves if you've noticed.

James Acaster 51:59

it's really hard. I can't really get past Okay then. Okay. Marty, what be. I kind of need to know your dessert choice there Martin. I need to know you're

Ed Gamble 52:20

It's not bad.

Martin Freeman 52:21

It's a bloody gallant effort.

James Acaster 52:23

I'm trying my best. I'm genuinely trying.

Martin Freeman 52:25

I think you hit the Rs more, hit the R sound more. On my name and on the dessert.

James Acaster 52:31

Mar, Mar, Martin. No coz I miss the rest of it.

Martin Freeman 52:35

Martin, Martin.

James Acaster 52:37

Oh, that's good. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Martin Freeman 52:39

Martin, Martin, Dessert.

James Acaster 52:40

Ya dessert. I'm getting better in real time.



Martin Freeman 52:44

Improving, yeah, definitely.

Ed Gamble 52:45

Imagine if you're in a restaurant, the waiter came over and just started going. Okay. Okay. Okay. Yar, yar. Oh, Oaky, Yar

Martin Freeman 52:52

Getting into character.

Ed Gamble 52:53

what be? What be you want for dessert there?

James Acaster 52:56

No, I don't know. I don't know.

Ed Gamble 52:57

Can I see the manager, please?

Martin Freeman 52:59

This is a lot of fun. I like you doing accents. Can we just throw accents at you?

James Acaster 53:03

If you want to? I mean, it serves me right for trying to make you do the voice. So yeah, I think so.

Martin Freeman 53:08

But can you do the thing where you don't pause because, let's let's face it. It's a bit more serious for me if I do a load of shit accents because it's my job. Right? You got nothing. You've got your own thing going on. James. You're untouched by like, Okay, he does a bad Welsh, no one gives a shit. So if I just say an accent, a region. I'll keep it in Britain. I'll keep it in Britain. And you've just got without pausing. Just ask me, what I want for dessert in that accent. Okay.

James Acaster 53:35

Yeah. Okay. Yeah.

Martin Freeman 53:37

Belfast,

James Acaster 53:38

Aw fuck off. Just start off with the one that will get me the most trouble.

Ed Gamble 53:43

It's good. That's the sort of thing they say, but you need to work on the accent a bit more.



James Acaster 53:46

Why would you like for dessert?

Ed Gamble 53:48

What the hell was that?

James Acaster 53:51

I'm trying not to think.

Martin Freeman 53:54

One more, Birmingham,

James Acaster 53:55

what would you like for dessert?

Ed Gamble 53:57

Wow,

Martin Freeman 53:58

They are all quite similar. There's a definite similarity between all of them. And which just goes to show we're all one big family. The human race is one big family.

James Acaster 54:05

When I'm not allowed to think about it. I really do surprise myself with what comes out my mouth. And I'm not allowed to think about it at all. And I just have to go for it, It's a shock to me when it happens.

Martin Freeman 54:15

Well, and to all of us. But I think it's quite good to not let your brain get in the way and just go for it. Dya know what I mean? And we all admire that more. The fact that you've, you know, you've gone for it.

James Acaster 54:26

We should ask you your dessert properly, really, but I also want to know how long it took you to do the Fargo accent. Really all I wanted to talk about on this episode is the Fargo accent.

Ed Gamble 54:35

Yeah, we know

James Acaster 54:36

And I don't know why everyone's getting in the way.

Martin Freeman 54:37

You could have got my number from someone James, I'm sure we've got mutual friends. And you could have just texted me, Do you want to hear my dessert.



Ed Gamble 54:44

We would.

Martin Freeman 54:44

I would like a lemon meringue pie, please. That's what I would like.

James Acaster 54:48

Thank you and goodbye. Martin Freeman, you've been a wonderful guest. I love lemon meringue pie. I don't know if anyone's chosen it properly yet. I think some people have done little shout outs to it.

Martin Freeman 54:59

I think a wellmade lemon meringue pie is quite gorgeous, you know. It's got that that zesty flavour of the lemon. And you know, the sort of the sugar overload of the meringue, again. The pastry, the nice sort of crust pastry, Its just gorgeous, man, I really like it. And also, it feels sort of light. And it's good. I'm in a restaurant because that doesn't limit me to one piece. If I have a home, then I'm just going back for seconds and thirds, you know, so it's quite good to sort of, you know, be a bit restrained. But yeah, well cooked piece of lemon meringue is amazing.

Ed Gamble 55:29

Yeah, I think we talked about on the podcast before. The lemon meringue pie, Gloria, a restaurant in Shoreditch, where they have the normal lemon bit and then the meringue bit is probably about 30 centimetres high. So that's well worth checking out. You can have one slice but then, you know, that's as a lot of sugar.

Martin Freeman 55:46

Yeah, that's three courses by the sound of it. You want the pastry too be good, you want all the all the different parts of it to be really onpoint.

James Acaster 55:54

Aw man, if they get all the different parts of the onpoint.

Martin Freeman 55:57

Yeah.

55:58

Wooow, I can eat it forever.

Martin Freeman 55:59

Yes, it is a really good thing. But then I think that about everything I eat James, I think that about everything I eat. Fish and chips. Why would you want to eat anything else? Japanese? Why would you? In the moment you're having it. I'm just basically like a chimp, and all I can see or think about is what I'm in the moment of there.



Ed Gamble 56:17

This is why you need to hire someone to tell you to stop eating stuff. So you can move on to another thing.

Martin Freeman 56:22

Ain't that the truth? Yeah. And my kids help with that. My girlfriend helps with that a little bit, because I give people licence to say steady on, because I will, I don't know whether it's a bit cliché, because I'm the youngest of five, and I was always quite small. And yeah, usually in big families, and if you're the youngest, there is that thing of just wanting to pack it all in your mouth. But also I think, when I was a kid, I think I found it vaguely impressive that I was so small, but I could eat loads and grown ups and teachers would say, oh, you're like a little hamster, arn't you? Where do you tuck it all? I think I saw that as a badge of honour when I was about two foot one. That at least, okay, I'm not tall, but I can eat. And I think I still have a bit of that. And of course, without being too serious or self righteous about it. I like most of us, I can't stand waste. I can't stand it. And it's not like I never waste anything, I sometimes do. But I sort of hate doing it. You know that when people have beans on toast, right? And there's just like, so they've had the toast, they've had the beans, but there's still there's still some beans, and quite a lot of bean sauce. Why are you doing that? There is no fucking reason on God's green earth that you would leave, like, oh, because it's not important. Of course it's important. It's still there. It's on the plate. I just don't get it. And I don't know if that is just because I'm a pig or because I have something about you know, you shouldn't throw food away.

Ed Gamble 57:42

You can be sort of, you know, a conscious pig

Martin Freeman 57:45

I tried to be.

Ed Gamble 57:45

Socially aware, socially conscious pig.

Martin Freeman 57:48

I tried to be an aware pig. Yeah,

James Acaster 57:49

Sometimes I've had beans on toast and it doesn't look like there's enough beans but they don't completely cover the toast, and I think right, I've got to really ration this, I've got to make sure each bite, I have some beans but I can't go mad. And then at the end of that loads of beans, cuz I completely didn't do it properly. And then I'm like Oh man, this last bit of toast last mouthful is gonna be drenched in beans like over beaned it.

Ed Gamble 58:13

What I love about this is that we do have to wrap up now we're getting messages saying, we've got to wrap up and James's thought no, we need we need this anecdote about me having too many beans.



James Acaster 58:23

I really connected that observation.

Ed Gamble 58:28

Who would have thought, we got to do this beans anecdote. If we don't get this.

Martin Freeman 58:31

You've got to have the beans bit. When we take this on the road when lockdowns over, the beans bit it's gonna kill. It's gonna kill.

Ed Gamble 58:37

We're gonna have to open with the beans bit, otherwise people are gonna go mad.

Martin Freeman 58:40

yeah and maybe close as well, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ed Gamble 58:42

Yeah like the one and only, like Chesney Hawkes.

James Acaster 58:45

Sometimes on this podcast, someone brings something up but I really connect with it. And when Martin talked about the beans, when Martin talked about the beans, I was like, aw man, and I know on the zoom chat we're getting constant flashes up from Benito saying do the menu, read his menu back, we really have to stop now. But he said the beans thing and I thought man. I really connect with that. No one's ever bought a beans on toast on the podcast before

Martin Freeman 59:08

Sorry, I said it.

James Acaster 59:09

I have to seize my opportunity.

Martin Freeman 59:11

Yeah, but now I see that you're excited.

Ed Gamble 59:13

I don't like beans.

Martin Freeman 59:14

Wow, do you not ?

Ed Gamble 59:15

Don't like em. I've got some beans actually, at home though. We bought some beans at the beginning of the pandemic because we thought it's a sort of thing you should have just in case everything goes



wrong. But we've not eaten them, so if you don't like waste, Martin, you're very welcome to come over and pick up a tin of beans.

Martin Freeman 59:27

Can I?

Martin Freeman 59:27

Yes you can.

Martin Freeman 59:28

Thanks, any loose beans I'll gratefully receive. Yeah.

Ed Gamble 59:33

They're not loose. We can tip them outside the door if you want you can just come come and collect.

Martin Freeman 59:36

I'd rather that, I'd rather that to be fair. Yeah, just into my hand.

James Acaster 59:41

Water. You would like sparkling water with an oxygen tank.

Martin Freeman 59:45

Yes please.

James Acaster 59:45

Popadoms or bread, you want bread and butter from The Wolseley. Starter; smoked salmon with onions and capers, delicate toast that we then confiscate and don't let eat. Main course; prawn and spinach linguini with white wine sauce in Sorrento. Side dish of chips; big chunky chips. Drink; a glass of Pinot Noir and a bottle of coke with a glass of ice and lime, And dessert; a lemon meringue pie where all the elements are made to perfection.

Martin Freeman 1:00:10

Sounds good, right?

Ed Gamble 1:00:12

Does sounds good. I'd be very happy with that. The chips are a rogue element for me, but I'm,

Martin Freeman 1:00:19

really? Yeah, but you don't like beans,

Ed Gamble 1:00:21

I don't like beans.

Martin Freeman 1:00:22



You're not fully to be trusted there, Benito. So who's Benito. Oh, Ben was on the call yeah,

James Acaster 1:00:26

Benitos the producer.

Martin Freeman 1:00:27

Sorry, Ed. Yes, yes. Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble 1:00:29

Theres too many characters.

Martin Freeman 1:00:29

Beacuse I'm only seeing you, and you seem like the one who's in charge of this operation. And James, keep referring to the great Benito and you do seem a bit like an Italian fascist to me, only to me. Yeah. I'm sure not to everyone else.

James Acaster 1:00:40

So for this entire podcast you have thought that Ed is the great Benito.

Martin Freeman 1:00:45

No, no, I know, Ed is Ed. But maybe I was thinking, is that your pet name for him? Because he really has invaded north african countries.

Ed Gamble 1:00:52

Theres a lot going on in this universe. But yeah, I'm in Italian fascist, Dr. Watson.

Martin Freeman 1:00:57

Why not, someone's got to be.

Ed Gamble 1:01:01

thank you very much Martin.

James Acaster 1:01:02

Thank you so much Martin.

Martin Freeman 1:01:03

Thank you, gents. My pleasure. Thank you.

Ed Gamble 1:01:10

Well, James, Martin Freeman came into the dream restaurant, and you absolutely, you wouldn't leave him alone. You fanboyed all over him. We barely got to chat about food because youw were like, oh tell us about the time you did different voice.

James Acaster 1:01:24



Yes. I wanted to know about the voice. And I got my answers. I got what I came for. I might not get to talk to Martin Freeman again. I wanted to know about the voice from Fargo. I wanted to know about Sherlock jumping off the building. I wanted to know about big Keith and I asked all of those questions. And I was very happy about it.

Ed Gamble 1:01:40

Well I'm glad, I thought that was a wonderful episode, actually. And it genuinely felt like we were professional interviewers at points.

James Acaster 1:01:46

Yeah, at times. I felt like this must be what it is like to take your podcast seriously.

Ed Gamble 1:01:52

Well look, it was a great episode. Thank you very much Martin Freeman, for coming in. Remember everyone Season Two of *Breeders* is on Sky and it'll be available to watch on Sky One and Now TV from the 27th of May as a box set. And Martin earned that plug because he didn't say Bombay mix.

James Acaster 1:02:08

Can we get back in touch with Martin and ask them about Black Panther because I'm a bit annoyed that I missed out Black Panther. I want more. I guess what I want to do, I want to do a redemption episode. I want to talk about Black Panther and I want to talk about beans on toast a bit more.

Ed Gamble 1:02:23

You want the great Benito, who's not me, to email Martin's representation and say, Can we get Martin on board for a live streamed episode? Specifically to be asked about Black Panther and beans.

James Acaster 1:02:36

Yes, yeah.

Ed Gamble 1:02:37

Okay, well, we have merch, go and get some merch. Go onto our website, offmenupodcast.co.uk. And you can see how to buy some lovely t-shirt designs and all that sort of business.

James Acaster 1:02:49

When we told Martin Freeman we've got merch he was like, great. I haven't seen him since the office. That's what he calls Stephen Merchant as a nickname.

Ed Gamble 1:02:56

Thank you very much. Goodbye.

James Acaster 1:02:57

Goodbye.