

Off Menu – Ep129 – Jason Reitman

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu Podcast where this host, Ed Gamble, has completely run out of ways to give a fun food-themed introduction and is now just saying things, that sort of just make sense, to do with food.

James Acaster

But this host, James Acaster still respects him very much and thinks he's an excellent host and I'm awe of him every single day.

Ed Gamble

Thanks, buddy. I'm in awe of you too.

James Acaster

Thanks, buddy.

Ed Gamble

This is the food podcast where we ask a special guest-,

James Acaster

Their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish and drink, and this weeks guest is Jason Reitman.

Ed Gamble

Jason Reitman. That's right, man. It's Jason Reitman.

James Acaster

Jason Reitman's a fantastic director. He's directed amazing films like Juno and Up in the Air and he's directed the new Ghostbusters movie that's coming out soon.

Ed Gamble

Wow-wee, what a coup for the Off Menu boys.

James Acaster

We reeled in a big one, but I tell you what, Ed, if he mentions the secret ingredient, we'll kick him out just like we do anybody else-,

Ed Gamble

Yes we will-,

James Acaster

Mark my words.

Ed Gamble

And the secret ingredient this week is Muesli.

James Acaster

It's dry, it's dusty, I don't like it, and not Bircher muesli. I'll let him get away with that but just the normal just flaky, white, dry, horrible muesli that no type of milk can ever bring to life. That's it. I'm done.



I disagree with that. I like Muesli. It's only dry because you've not put anything on it yet.

James Acaster

Even when you put the milk on it, it's still dry. That's what's amazing about muesli. You can cover it in milk, and it's still dry as the desert.

Ed Gamble

I don't agree with that at all. I think you're missing the bowl with the milk, or something. A bit of milk, bit of yogurt, yes.

James Acaster

I wish I was wishing my mouth with the spoon when I'm eating muesli. I hate it.

Ed Gamble

How often do you persist with muesli?

James Acaster

Three meals a day. Hate it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, your an idiot. So, if Jason says, muesli, we will be reluctantly be removing him from the restaurant, but fingers crossed he doesn't.

James Acaster

Fingers crossed, plus, Ed, I don't know if you know this, but this is one of the episodes that we have recorded here in Los Angeles, in America.

Ed Gamble

I do know this, yes.

James Acaster

Here we are and we're talking to Jason from our Airbnb in LA.

Ed Gamble

Yes, the great Benito's got his wine shirt and his trunks on with a big pineapple with a straw sticking out of it.

James Acaster He loves it.

Ed Gamble Yes.

James Acaster He's doing a little hula-hula, baby.

Ed Gamble 'Oh Benito.'

James Acaster 'Lovely Benito.' Aqua Benito. Ed.

Ed Gamble Yes.



Someone's at the door.

Ed Gamble What?

James Acaster

lt's Jason Reitman.

Ed Gamble

Welcome, Jason, to the dream restaurant.

Jason Reitman Thank you.

James Acaster Welcome, Jason Reitman, to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Jason Reitman

I didn't expect it to just formulate around me like that.

James Acaster

Right, look at that. Did you like it? It's scented as well. Breathe it in.

Jason Reitman

Well, the only thing I'm-, how can the food live up to the environment? That's impressive.

Ed Gamble Yes.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble

The dream restaurant's based on what you want in a dream restaurant as well. So, it's like your Google search history. When you type in the thing and there's a drop down box, so everything in here has come from your mind.

James Acaster Yes.

Jason Reitman Now, that's kind of depressing, actually.

Ed Gamble: What would you see?

Jason Reitman We really create the realities we want, you know.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Reitman Alright. Low ceilings. Dim light. Got it.



Yes, you never would have thought -

Jason Reitman

It's exactly what I would have thought.

James Acaster

Right, exactly what you would have envisioned.

Ed Gamble

I'm into low ceilings and dim light in a restaurant.

James Acaster Yes, you like that.

Ed Gamble Yes. I enjoy that, yes.

James Acaster

How come?

Ed Gamble

It's often with big airy dining spaces. I like the look of them, and then, there's, like, a lot of wood, but then you can hear glasses clinking too much and you can hear too much cutlery and it bounces all around the room. I like a dead sound room.

James Acaster

You just like no sound.

Jason Reitman

You know, it's better for a movie theatre showing a comedy too.

Ed Gamble

Yes?

Jason Reitman

Yes, you want a lower ceiling. I always find when I played theatres with high ceilings, you lose the laugher. It just, kind of, evaporates (talking over each other 04.20).

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Reitman

Is it that way for-, I mean, I know you're a genie, but if you imagine for a moment being a comedian.

James Acaster

Okay, I can imagine that.

Ed Gamble

Yes, for stand-up it's definitely better to have a low ceiling, I think.

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely. Yes, well-,



Unless it's, like, a proper, proscenium arch theatre, but then you've got seats all the way up to the top.

James Acaster

Yes, but, yes, definitely. You want a low ceiling. As low as possible and a high floor.

Ed Gamble

Yes, a stage I call that.

James Acaster

No, no. High floor. Low ceiling. Is that a technical term?

Ed Gamble

High floor, low ceiling.

James Acaster

High floor, low ceiling, yes.

Ed Gamble

But you don't want to be, like, cradling your neck against the ceiling, do you?

James Acaster

As squashed as possible. If it's just you and the audience just in a cool space. Like, you're going potholing, like that, together. Yes, and then everyone's laughing, having a good time - and you're the one who knows the way out and they want to keep you happy.

Ed Gamble

A lot of people, when they watched the film, The Descent, were quite scared. We watched that and thought, 'That'll be a great space to play.' It's a good gig.

Jason Reitman

-availability. My mum once insulted the lighting in my home by saying, 'Your home is lit like a restaurant.'

James Acaster

Wow.

Jason Reitman

Yes, she said, 'You're home is lit like a Chinese restaurant.'

Ed Gamble

Wow, so it's a specific one, yes.

Jason Reitman

It is insulting and slightly racist.

James Acaster

Yes. So, you took down all the lanterns. 'Fine mum.'

Ed Gamble

You took the ducks out of the window.

Jason Reitman

I like dragons.



That little cat is, like, doing the waving thing with it's hand. The golden cat.

Jason Reitman

'Get rid of it.'

James Acaster

Would you consider yourself a foodie, Jason?

Jason Reitman

I love food. You know, it's a tricky term, right? You know, I will say this, perhaps controversial, I'm not sure how often you guys do that on this podcast, I hate home-cooked food.

James Acaster

No one's said this yet.

Ed Gamble

That's great.

Jason Reitman

I don't get it. People love it. People rave about it. People say, 'I wish it tasted like back home,' and the people who cook at home are amateurs. They're not professionals. Like, you have the opportunity to go to a place where there are professionals, who, they're entire life all they've done is work towards learning how to prepare food at the highest order, and then, not only that, this sounds like a bit that I do all the time. This is not. I'm saying - They literally perfect the exact meal that you are about to have and yet the fact the people'll be like, 'No. I want it by the person who raised me, who doesn't know much about cooking, and kind of just is this-,' I don't get it. Also, my parents don't cook, but -

James Acaster

Sure.

Ed Gamble

Right, okay. That might have something to do with it.

James Acaster

-window here. Knowing you're family ever cooked and you've always eaten at restaurants. You hate home cooking.

Jason Reitman

Hold on a second. No, but I've had friends invite me over, 'You have to have my grandmother's this,' or, 'My mum's or dad's this,' and I was like, 'Yes, have you ever been to this restaurant? They do a great version of the thing that your grandmother does.

Ed Gamble

It's their job. It's, literally, their job to do it.

Jason Reitman

Yes.

James Acaster

You know, I'm guessing you're, kind of, running the risk of, like, if you completely-, I might get in a co-dependent relationship with the restaurant people if I'm trying to replace my parents with-



Yes, you're calling them up and telling them your problems, and stuff.

James Acaster

Yes, calling them up and being like, 'I've had a really tough day,' and they're like, 'We just make you your food. That's all we do.'

Ed Gamble

That's all we do.

James Acaster

'Yes, but I thought you'd be better at everything. I heard you do a better version of what my grandmother does.' I just want to speak to you about my problems.

Jason Reitman

But, imagine if we applied the same logic to anything else that we enjoy. Imagine if we applied that to movies. Sure, do I like Spielberg films? Yes, but more often than not, I just want to see a movie the way that my grandma used to make.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

The video my dad filmed on the beach in 1987. Yes, so much better than Indiana Jones.

Jason Reitman

That's a video.

James Acaster

I'd like to see that. I'd like to see your dad make a-, your dad's quite a character.

Ed Gamble

He is quite a character.

James Acaster

I'd like to seem make his own Indiana Jones with his iPhone, or something.

Ed Gamble

Yes. There's a holiday video of my dad somewhere, and I don't know why he did this, he looks down the camera, he's got his glasses on the end of his nose and he says, 'The name's Strange. Dr. Rick Strange.' No idea why he did that.

James Acaster

That's, like, Ed's dad. That's all you need to know about him.

Jason Reitman

He grew up to become an actor, right.

James Acaster

That's all you need to hear about Ed's dad.

Ed Gamble

I prefer that to Dr. Strange the film.



Dr. Strange - Also for you, the movies one is quite a bad example, of going like, 'No, don't go and watch movies. My dad's going to make a movie.' That's, like, the worst example you could have chosen.

Jason Reitman

Yes, alright that's-,

James Acaster

I'll just watch a movie my dad has made, shall I?

Ed Gamble Yes, like some home-cooked movie.

Jason Reitman That's fair. Yes, I lost that one.

James Acaster

Yes, and then, sometimes your parents hand the recipe down and you get to make the same dish years later.

Jason Reitman And that was the moment I was, 'I should try home cooking.'

Ed Gamble Yes, maybe do that.

James Acaster So, we always start with still or sparkling water on the podcast.

Jason Reitman Right. Sparkling.

Ed Gamble Sparkling water. Straight in.

Jason Reitman Does anyone go still?

Ed Gamble Yes, loads of people.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble I'd say more people go still than go sparkling.

Jason Reitman Why?

James Acaster Really? I think it's been kind of 50/50 -



Ed Gamble You think, yes?

Jason Reitman Sorry, am I gong to be charged for this imaginary meal?

Ed Gamble No not at all.

James Acaster Yes. No, sorry, no.

Ed Gamble You've got to pay a tip. You'e got to tip the genie.

Jason Reitman Okay. Well, also, if I'm not paying, then, I'm going sparkling.

Ed Gamble And I like how baffled you are at the idea of anyone selecting still water.

James Acaster But I think I'd just prefer still water.

Jason Reitman Did they just go for a run?

Ed Gamble Is that the only time you can imagine drinking a still water.

Jason Reitman Yes, if I just ran. Like, I'm getting out of yoga. I don't know, like what-,

Ed Gamble I think some people don't want to appear fancy.

James Acaster Absolutely perplexed. Completely gobsmacked that anyone would choose still.

Jason Reitman Maybe it's breakfast, then you wouldn't go sparkling water.

Ed Gamble No, I think some people just prefer still water to sparkling water.

James Acaster Tell Ed what the pros are of sparkling over still.

Jason Reitman It's delicious. It's an experience. I also don't like water.

James Acaster Here we go again.



I think this is going to be a trend.

James Acaster

There's always, a secret, like, little twist at the end of it that explains all.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

'I've never liked water in the first place. I prefer bubbles to water and then one of them's got bubbles in them.'

Ed Gamble

My parents only drink milk.

James Acaster

'Don't like water.'? You live in LA, though. Everyone's hydrated here.

Jason Reitman

Yes, I suppose. Although, I mean, yes, the ocean is there, but it's not as though I grew up near Lake Arrowhead.

Ed Gamble

But you don't have to grow up near a lake.

James Acaster

I don't know why I pretended to know what lake Arrowhead is.

Jason Reitman

No, but he implied that I was surrounded by water.

Ed Gamble

I was thinking about, everyone drinks water.

Jason Reitman

Like you see a little well and there's people walking around, and it's like, you know, buckets on their head. No, I don't feel surround by water.

James Acaster

I don't think that everyone in LA is going down to the ocean and drinking, like buffalo in the Serengeti. Is that a thing?

Ed Gamble:

- confidence

James Acaster

I should have Googled that first.

Jason Reitman

But if I was in The Rocky Mountains I would want water, you know, because then I would trust the water coming out of the faucet, more than I would in Los Angeles.

James Acaster

Okay, so - but here it's a bit-, you're a bit hesitant.





Jason Reitman

Yes.

James Acaster

So, you don't like water. So, in your day to day, what do you normally drink instead of water? Are you drinking other stuff or are you drinking water down and thinking, 'I have this so much.'?

Jason Reitman I'm presuming I can use brand names here?

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble Sure, yes. If you use brand names we'll probably get some free stuff sent to us, so –

Jason Reitman

Hold on. So, let me list a few. Starbucks. That's always a friendly face anywhere I go, and then, Coke Zero.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble Instead of water?

Jason Reitman I mean, it's far tastier.

Ed Gamble Yes, I completely agree.

Jason Reitman Have you heard the story, by the way, about Coke Zero?

Ed Gamble No.

Jason Reitman About, like, why there is Coke Zero? Do you know the story of new Coke?

Ed Gamble No.

James Acaster

- story

Jason Reitman

Okay. I'll tell this fast, or you'll cut it out.

James Acaster

No. You'd be surprised. I've told some boring Coke stories in my time, but Benito's always kept them in.



Jason Reitman

Let's start 50 years back then. So, in the 80s, there was a moment where Pepsi started to beat Coke, and in that moment, Coke created a new formula. You may remember this, they created something called, New Coke, and it was a disaster, and in response, they came out with Classic Coke, the original formula. When they came out with Classic Coke, they did not change the flavour of Diet Coke. So, Diet Coke tastes like New Coke. So, if you want to taste the failed formula of the 1980s New Coke, try diet Coke. That's what it tastes like.

Ed Gamble

That what it was.

Jason Reitman

And then, recently, Coca-Cola realised, 'We have the technology to create a zero calorie beverage that tastes like Coca-Cola and they came out with Coke Zero. So, that's why there is Coke Zero, but they didn't know how to market it because they couldn't pull Diet Coke off the shelf because there's people who love Diet Coke. They love New Coke, and so, they had to figure out a new way to market it, and so they came up with this Uber masculine black can thing, and that's why you have Coke Zero.

James Acaster

I knew that Diet Coke tasted like normal Coke. I told you, Benito. I told you this. It's the thing, you see. Right, I cut caffeine out of my diet in 2013.

Jason Reitman

You wouldn't know it.

James Acaster

Yes, - caffeine, right. Well, this is the thing, five years later 2018, I fell off the wagon. What I did was start drinking Diet Coke. So, I didn't start drinking anything else but I was like, 'I'll have Diet Coke. That's got caffeine in it, but I'll have that anyway.' I hadn't had Coke in 5 years, so Diet Coke tasted like regular Coke to me and this is what I've been saying on this podcast for ages, of how it taste like normal Coke to me, and now it's been confirmed that the reason why is because it's New Coke. That's what I've been drinking the whole time.

Ed Gamble

But when did this New Coke thing happen?

Jason Reitman

In the 80s.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so that's not why, James. That was in the 80s.

Jason Reitman

No. Diet Coke to this day tastes like New Coke.

Ed Gamble

But he's never had New Coke, that's what I'm saying.

James Acaster

Yes, I have. Diet Coke. I drink it all the time, baby.

Jason Reitman

But he knows it doesn't taste like regular Coke.

I feel like I'm being ganged up on here.

James Acaster

Bad luck.

Ed Gamble

I think, regardless, James, that's still a very boring story.

James Acaster

No, no. It's a great story, and do you know what, it's the main running thread through the whole podcast is that story.

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Ed Gamble

You'd be amazed. It actually is.

James Acaster

Yes, I hardly ever bring it up myself. It just comes up out of nowhere, and basically, we just, like, had a prequel to it. That's exciting for the fans at home -

Jason Reitman

We got in the DeLorean.

James Acaster

Yes, we got right in the DeLorean. We hopped back in time and we learned why it tastes like regular Coke to me.

Ed Gamble

That is exciting.

James Acaster

I'm excited.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so, instead of water, would you like us to get you a Coke Zero.

Jason Reitman

I'll be good. Instead, I'm going to have this water (talking over each other 14.50).

James Acaster

Sparkling water was the choice, really - Poppadoms or bread, Jason? Poppadoms or bread?

Jason Reitman

I don't know what you're asking -

Ed Gamble

As has happened with every American guest we've had, James has shouted, 'Poppadoms or bread,' at the top of his voice and they've looked at me for a translation.

Jason Reitman

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Ed Gamble

Poppadoms, are you aware?



No. I still don't know what you're talking about.

Ed Gamble

Poppadoms are crispy-,

Jason Reitman

Is this like a home-made food? Is this something that your grandparents would make?

Ed Gamble

Like a crispy Indian snack that you'd get at the beginning of a meal. It's like a large chip.

James Acaster

They bring it out the same time that people would bring out bread. This is basically-,

Jason Reitman

That sounds fantastic.

James Acaster

The time in the meal where they'd usually bring out some bread. Just think of any version of that that you've had at different restaurants. It could be chips and dips. It could be prawn crackers in a Chinese restaurant, whatever. Whatever your favourite thing is to have, that pre-meal thing that they bring out, that's what we'll get you.

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Jason Reitman

Well, I want what you just described. Poppadoms, please.

Ed Gamble Have you ever had them?

Jason Reitman I don't know what you're talking about, but it sounds great.

James Acaster This is great. Someone -

Ed Gamble

So, they're very crispy. They're, like, big. You, like, break them up and you dip them in chutney.

Jason Reitman Yes, I'm in.

James Acaster Yes, and, like, so, minty yogurt dip.

Jason Reitman

Can it be for the first guest who just tries new things today.

Ed Gamble Yes. Sure.

James Acaster Yes, I think that's a great idea.



We'd love that. Yes, that's really good.

James Acaster

Have someone say their dream meal is some stuff they didn't know existed until they came in here. Are you not a big bread guy, in general? You're not into bread before the meal?

Jason Reitman

No. I'm in.

James Acaster

So, you're into all of this.

Jason Reitman

Yes, I am so down right now. Love this place. Love the restaurant. Love the change. Love your outfit.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much.

James Acaster

The poppadums. I mean, how many of them do you want? They're about, like-, I'm trying to show you the size of them, there. They're like that big -

Jason Reitman

I mean, let's start with one. Let's not go crazy.

James Acaster Start with one.

Jason Reitman I want to save myself for this meal.

James Acaster Yes, that's -

Ed Gamble Okay, we'll bring you two and then you can decide to leave -

Jason Reitman Don't be offended if I don't finish the second one.

Ed Gamble That's fine. I'll have it. I'll eat it in the back.

James Acaster

Like, if you go out to eat, have you had this attitude before where you're like, 'I've never head of that. Let's do it. Let's try this.' Has it ever backfired on you?

Jason Reitman

That's a new thing. I think, up until 30 years old I would have said, can we just go to McDonald's's, and then I kind of had a breakthrough in my 30s. I started dated someone who pushed me to try new things. I tried yoga. That changed my life. That's something I would have just mocked up until then, and then I got into trying new things, and lo and behold.



Have you ever, in a restaurant, ordered something blind that you didn't know what it was, hadn't tried it before, and then, actually, it was real bad and you really regretted it?

Jason Reitman

I'm sure I have. I mean, again, as I've got older, I've had more confidence to say, 'What's the best thing on the menu. Bring that. That sounds great.'

James Acaster

Right.

Ed Gamble

I think I need to start doing that because I think I'm still preoccupied by looking like I'm know what I'm talking bout, so I'll be like, 'That looks good. I'll get that,' whereas I should go, 'Bring me the best stuff.'

Jason Reitman

Yes, you know what's funny, there's a word that I always though was, kind of, a dirty word, and then, I have started to learn to be more confident to use it and that is, 'What's the most popular thing you have here?'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Reitman

And there's a tendency for us to think that popular is, somehow, a bad word and you wouldn't want to have what was most popular and it's like, 'No. Give me the most unpopular thing.' If you can get off that and say, 'I've never been here. I'm not sure if I'll be back.' Maybe I'm in a new place a new town, 'What do I have to have? What's the most popular thing on the menu?' You're going to do alright.

James Acaster

Yes, that's true, and I would say, like, especially, you don't like ordering the same thing as someone else on the table.

Ed Gamble

Hate it.

James Acaster

You hate that. He's getting better on this trip.

Jason Reitman

What's the problem with that?

Ed Gamble

Well, say, so, we're away. You know, we're in LA, we're in New York. We're going to a place that we probably won't ever go back to again, a new place. If everyone orders the same thing, you're only seeing one small part of the menu.

Jason Reitman

So, you're presuming you get to try everyone else's meal?

Ed Gamble

No, I don't even mind just seeing it.



Yes.

Ed Gamble

But I want a full experience. Maybe a few selections form the menu just to see what's going on.

James Acaster

He likes to survey it. Look around.

Jason Reitman

I knew a couple where a husband was vegan and the wife was not and he would encourage her constantly to order things that he just wanted to see and hear her describe as she ate them, despite the fact that he would never have it himself.

Ed Gamble Yes, I think that's lovely.

James Acaster That sounds creepy. Even though they're together, he's a creep.

Ed Gamble You watch ASMR videos, that's basically what that is.

James Acaster No, that's different -

Jason Reitman Have you ever heard about super tasters?

Ed Gamble Yes, we've had a super taster on this podcast.

James Acaster We've had a super taster.

Jason Reitman No?

James Acaster Right, guess who it was.

Jason Reitman Wait, who's the super taster?

James Acaster Rose McGowan.

Jason Reitman Come on.

James Acaster Rose McGowan got hit in the head with a car door and became a super taster.

Jason Reitman Wait, it was the result of injury?



Yes, she wasn't before.

Ed Gamble

But, she also lost her sense of smell but maintained her sense of taste and the taste became super.

Jason Reitman

Come on.

Ed Gamble

Look, this is what Rose told us.

James Acaster

In a valet accident.

Jason Reitman

And now she can, like, eat something and be like, 'I think the cook used this soap before he made the dish.'?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, like she has to have very simple ingredients like, you know, three or four ingredients, maximum, in each dish. She's been to, like, universities where they've done tests on her tongue.

Jason Reitman

Come on. Well, okay.

James Acaster

This is what she said.

Jason Reitman

Apparently, these are sought after people. Like, companies will look for super tasters to hire to analyse their food and see what'll be popular for the public, and what could be taken out.

James Acaster

And Rose McGowan's one of them. Rose McGowan might be trying food that one day you'll eat. Right now, she might be sampling it and deciding what's going to be good.

Jason Reitman

I used to direct commercials and I directed some of the worst commercials you've ever seen. Commercials that if you saw, you'd say, 'You're not allowed to direct movies,' and then, somehow, that happened, and I directed a campaign for Baskin-Robbins-,

James Acaster

Great. I'm on board.

Jason Reitman

And they took us to their lab where they design their ice-creams, and I met this woman in, like, a white lab coat and she was beautiful by the way, and she was-,

James Acaster

She was - in the ice-cream, yes.



Jason Reitman

Designing the ice creams and she said, 'You know the best way to have ice cream?'

James Acaster

I've had this dream. I'm in the Baskin-Robbins inventions (talking over each other 21.19) a beautiful lady looks at me and says, 'Do you know the best way to have ice cream,' and then I wake up and try and go to sleep and go back into the dream again but I can't. That's how much I love it.

Ed Gamble

Go on. What did she say to you?

Jason Reitman

A golden spoon, and the reason is because apparently gold doesn't conduct temperature as much as other metals and because of that, you taste the spoon less.

James Acaster

Wow. I have never wanted anything made of gold before-,

Ed Gamble

You're going to get a golden spoon.

James Acaster But now, yes.

Ed Gamble -around your neck. He's just going to carry it around everywhere.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Like, you know, like Lemmy from Motorhead used to have a coke spoon, James is going to have an ice-cream spoon around his neck.

James Acaster

Made of gold.

Ed Gamble Yes.

Jason Reitman

Is that ice cream.

James Acaster

Yes. Ha ha. I can't wait. That's exciting. A golden spoon. I wonder if there are people in the world eating ice-cream with a golden spoon -

Ed Gamble

That's-

Jason Reitman

Or, who refuse to eat ice-cream if they don't have a golden spoon.



I wonder if there are people in the world eating ice-cream with a golden spoon -

Ed Gamble

That's -

Jason Reitman

Or, refuse to eat ice-cream if they don't have a golden spoon. I love it. No, I'm sorry.

James Acaster

Do you have a golden spoon? 'No.'

Jason Reitman

'Clearly you don't like ice-cream.'

James Acaster

Yes, 'Well, you wouldn't know what you're on about.'

Ed Gamble

Think how much you love ice-cream now, and you've never had it with a golden spoon.

James Acaster

Yes, I mean, it would have to be a golden spoon that I own and always carry around with me because, like, if it wasn't, then if I had some ice-cream with a golden spoon and then I had to give it back and it was the best ice-cream ever, I wouldn't want to ruin ice-cream for myself. So, from then on I was tasting the spoon all the time I'd be like, 'No. This is disgusting.' You know, so I wouldn't want to always have the golden spoon.

Jason Reitman

And you don't want to share someone's golden spoon.

James Acaster

No. Well-,

Jason Reitman It seems a little personal.

Ed Gamble Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, it does. Yes, when you have your own golden spoon.

Jason Reitman

You know what's weird, why is a spoon more personal than a fork?

Ed Gamble

I know what you mean. I guess, you're more likely to lick a spoon.

Jason Reitman

Yes, I mean, you're more intimate with a spoon.

James Acaster

Yes.



You are more intimate with a spoon. Your whole mouth's going around it. You might drag it out-

Jason Reitman

Yes. You're the least intimate with a knife.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble Yes. Hopefully. I mean, you know, you don't want any of these knife lickers round you.

James Acaster There are some knife lickers. I got told off as a kid if I licked my knife.

Ed Gamble Did you?

James Acaster

Yes. Big time. 'Don't lick your knife.' That was my mum's catchphrase.

Ed Gamble Yes, nice bottom of the table.

Jason Reitman Fork, friendship.

Ed Gamble Yes.

James Acaster Yes.

Jason Reitman Spoon, completely romantic.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble Because fork you might spear something and then just, literally, bite the thing off the fork.

Jason Reitman Yes.

Ed Gamble Spoon, you are getting your mouth on every surface -

Jason Reitman Yes.

Ed Gamble Apart from the handle.



James Acaster Yes, well who knows.

Ed Gamble Yes.

Jason Reitman No. Judgement.

James Acaster Yes, no judgement.

Ed Gamble How deep can you go, you know.

James Acaster

Okay. So, we come to your starter. So, the actual meal begins now. We'll see which one of those utensils you're using first as well.

Ed Gamble

We know for a fact it's not going to be home cooked.

Jason Reitman

There is a little dumpling stand in Flushing, Queens, called the White Bear-,

Ed Gamble

Great.

Jason Reitman

And they have these little spicy dumplings. It's the only thing they have on the menu and I fantasise about them. I fantasise about getting back to New York and trying these dumplings.

James Acaster

Yes, perfect.

Ed Gamble That's ideal.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble

I think anywhere that only does one thing, I mean, you know it's going to be-, it'll be awful if you went somewhere and they go, 'We only do one thing,' and it's shit. So bad.

Jason Reitman

Here's the best part, they have a menu board up in the stand-,

James Acaster

Yes, great.

Jason Reitman

With about fifteen things on it. This is right, so I went and I'd heard I have to have the dumplings, and I knew, 'Alright. That's why I'm here. I made it all the way out to Flushing. I am clearly going to order the thing that everyone talks about on Yelp. While I'm here, maybe not on, like, you and



you're, kind of, 'Why don't we all order something different. I want-,' I mean, this is clearly the restaurant. 'What else do you have,' and so I asked about, 'What about, you know, number three?' 'What about number seven?' 'What bout number twelve?' and it was a family-operated thing. It was husband and wife. He cooks. She takes the orders, and for everything else I asked about, she said, 'We don't have enough time. We don't have enough time. We don't have enough time,' and then I finally said, 'Do you ever have enough time,' and she said, 'No,' and then I said, 'Why don't you change the menu,' and I swear to God she says, 'We don't have enough time.'

Ed Gamble

Her life is just 24 hours a day making those dumplings. They've got not time for anything.

James Acaster

Yes, there's so many dumplings, she's like, 'I don't have enough times to answer these questions. I can't believe you made me do this.'

Jason Reitman

You know what else is great bout this restaurant, and this is, you know, again one of my favourite things, dumplings until they run out. What are their hours? 'Until we run out.' It's like a barbecue place in Texas.

James Acaster

Yes. I think that's always exciting because you're more eager to get there. You don't know if they're going to be shut yet as well. Certain times of day you, kind of, like, rolling the dice a bit.

Ed Gamble

You end up eating dumplings at, like, 8am.

Jason Reitman

Well, that's always the thing, also. So, imagine, you do all the work to get there. They run out and then a block down, there's, like, another dumpling place, and you're like, 'I was really in the mood. I know they're not going to be great,' and then it'll almost be better to go for a burger at that point.

James Acaster

Yes, sure.

Ed Gamble

That's how that other dumpling place does all their business is disappointed people coming in going, 'I guess I'll get these dumplings,' they're just hanging around like a vulture.

James Acaster

'Come on in, we've got time. Loads of time in here everybody. Come on.'

Ed Gamble

'Whatever you want off the menu.'

Jason Reitman

'They just ran out. I guess we've got to open up the shop.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

They should just get to the other dumpling place super early and buy all the dumplings, then just lead everyone away like the pied piper.



So, these dumplings, what kind of dumplings are we talking of? Are they quite crispy? Are they soft?

Jason Reitman

No, no. They're very soft. You know, whatever that rice noodle, and quite spicy, and frankly, like, some of the best Chinese food when you have that one unique taste where you go, 'Wait a second. I've never had this taste in mouth ever before, and I don't think I ever will again.' That's how it tastes.

Ed Gamble

And at what point were you at White Bear and you're looking around going, 'Where did you get your lamps?'

James Acaster Yes, 'I love the lighting in here.'

Jason Reitman It's like being at home.

Ed Gamble

What's actually in the dumplings? Are they meat? Are they veggie?

Jason Reitman

I don't know. I'm sorry, considering-,

Ed Gamble

No, that's great.

Jason Reitman

I should know that. I'm presuming pork because most dumplings are, but I don't know.

James Acaster

It seems to be mainly the thing that draws you to it is that indescribable flavour you've not had anywhere else and that's, like, the thing that would make you choose this place above anywhere.

Jason Reitman

What drew it to me first was, there is this thing. It is fantastic. It's not easy to get to. They run out quickly. You need to go now. You need to plan a trip around it, and that got me excited. I was excited about the adventure.

Ed Gamble

That is exciting.

James Acaster

Yes, those kind of places when it is, yes, that, kind of, someone tells you all those things. That just, like, lures you in immediately.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Also, with those kind of places, I find, like, when I'm on my way there, I'm thinking, I've already decided this is one of the best meals I've ever had.

Jason Reitman

Yes.



So, like, I've already decided this is one of the best meals ever.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Reitman

But also, 'Will they still have dumplings? Will they still be open?' So, you are creating, like, a Hitchcockian scheme to your own meal. You know, 'There's a bomb under the table. Will it go off?' I mean, like, that is now part of the adventure I'm getting, as opposed to,'I'm just going to grab some food. They're open. I have money. This is going to be fine.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It feels like there's a sort of knock about comedy film in trying to get the dumplings, like, a sort of, Jingle All the Way, but for Chinese food.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Reitman

Dude, where's my car?' Was a script that came in a couple of times to me. I believe that falls into the genre.

Ed Gamble

Yes, definitely, of trying to find something.

Jason Reitman: Yes.

James Acaster: No, it's Harrold and Kumar who go to White Castle isn't it?

Ed Gamble: Yes, they go to White Castle.

James Acaster: Which I've never been to White Castle before, but it made me want to.

Jason Reitman

Okay, so White Castle falls into a very specific category and I'm not sure if you've gone over this category before on your podcast. A type of food that if you grew up in the region, you think is brilliant, and if you did not, it's just shit. It's just horrible. Like, where you can hear all your life from people who are from a White Castle location going, 'My God, they're the best,' and then you go to try them, you're like, 'I'm finally there. I'm on the East Coast. I'm going to try White Castle and it's not only, like, not great. It's actually awful.'

Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

Do Philly cheese steaks fall into that category?

Jason Reitman

Philly cheese steaks are just heavy and messy, and I feel like they are just experientially overwhelming in a good way, and I think that's why they're-, you've had Philly cheese steaks?



No.

Jason Reitman

You've gone to that street corner in Philadelphia?

James Acaster

I've seen people eating them on TV and thought I'm not sure I would enjoy that.

Jason Reitman

Okay. So, I went to the street corner in Philadelphia where there are the two Philly cheese steak places. I can't remember their names.

Ed Gamble Is one called, Pats?

Jason Reitman Patty's, Patties and-,

Ed Gamble I think, Pats, but, it's two guys. It's always -

Jason Reitman I can't remember it, and-,

Ed Gamble I think, like, Pat's and Tony's, or something.

Jason Reitman

I had one. I think I had the wrong one too. I had the one where, like, then, you tell from the people go from Philly are like, 'Which one did you go to?' 'I went to that one.' 'You went to the wrong one.'

Ed Gamble Right, yes.

Jason Reitman And yes, it was fun.

James Acaster Okay, yes.

Jason Reitman I don't need to go back to that.

James Acaster But it wasn't the White Castle, 'That is shit.' You didn't have that reaction? 'That is awful.'

Jason Reitman

No. White Castle is just like, 'What are we talking about here.'

James Acaster Right, okay.



Jason Reitman Second controversial statement of the podcast. It's like coffee from Dunkin' Donuts.

James Acaster Now, some people have come on this podcast and said-,

Ed Gamble Some people love it, right.

James Acaster That they love the Dunkin' Donuts coffee.

Jason Reitman You just lost subscribers.

James Acaster The great Benito loves them.

Ed Gamble The great Benito here loves Dunkin' Donuts coffee.

Jason Reitman Really?

Ed Gamble Absolutely loves it.

James Acaster Yes, he-

Ed Gamble

I had an iced Dunkin' Donuts at the airport, at JFK when we were flying here and it was fine. There was nothing good about it. I wasn't like, 'This is the best coffee I've ever had.'

Jason Reitman Right, but if you grew up in Massachusetts, you would think it was the greatest coffee ever made.

James Acaster Right.

Ed Gamble

Do you just have that drilled into you at an early age. Like, 'This coffee's amazing and then you want to represent your area by shouting about the Dunkin' Donuts-,

Jason Reitman

What's your version of that?

James Acaster

Well, so, I mean, there's no real, kind of, like, around Kettering where I grew up, there's no real local-, well, Weetabix.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Have you had Weetabix cereal?

Jason Reitman

James Acaster

So, it's just these bricks of compacted wheat that you put in a bowl. Like, maybe you have between two and four in a bowl, and then you'd pour milk over them and that's your cereal, or you don't have to pour milk, you can put whatever you like on them. So, people like to put milk, or they put, like, yogurt, or chopped up fruit, or anything, and I used to have joke about it, where, I said, 'You basically just put anything that tastes better than Weetabix on them.' That's what I used to say, and then the Weetabix people heard that I did a joke about them. Didn't know what the joke was and then sent me my own box of Weetabix with my name on it, and now I love Weetabix.

Ed Gamble

But, like, they're really dry, and then you put milk on them and they immediately go soggy. There's no nice in between stage where they're the perfect. It's just the awful mush.

Jason Reitman

It's not one of the painful cereals that actually physically hurts your mouth?

Ed Gamble

If you ate it dry it would.

James Acaster

If you ate it dry, but no one's orally doing that. Some people are, like, wood-chippers, but most people aren't doing that, yes.

Jason Reitman

There are some cereals that are, like, early forms of BDSM, right. Like Captain Crunch where, like, you know-,

James Acaster

They're mad. Absolutely mad, but like, no, Weetabix is actually quite a sensible cereal, really. It's one of the more healthier cereals.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

That's true, but yes, kind of, Kettering's probably a bit more, we're quite proud of it. You know, it's made its way around the world a bit. People love it, but a lot of people who don't come from Kettering would say that they think Weetabix stinks.

Jason Reitman

Do you know, is it, Hay-on-Wye.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster Hay-on-Wye, yes.



Jason Reitman

Hay-on-Wye. I went to a festival there. There's a huge literary festival.

Ed Gamble

Yes -

Jason Reitman

- there's more book stores per capita there than any other place in the UK or Europe, and they also show films, and I went there once as a film-maker which it feels so second hand to be a film maker at a literary festival. It's like, 'We're also showing movies in this tent,' and I remember the food of Hay-on-Wye was this mutton stew that had a rough odour to it and you could smell it anywhere in town, and so my whole association with that town is-,

Ed Gamble

Stinky mutton stew, yes.

Jason Reitman

Books and mutton stew.

James Acaster

They'll be very proud to hear that.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Reitman

They might be, though. I think they were proud. I mean, when I got there, they're like, 'You have to have the stew.'

James Acaster

I've done gigs for the people in Hay-on-Wye and they'd be delighted.

Ed Gamble

Yes, we've done stand up gigs there.

James Acaster

Yes, we've done stand up gigs there.

Ed Gamble

You feel weird being a film-maker at a literary festival, imagine being a comedian at a literary festival. They do not give a shit about you.

James Acaster

It's basically a load of bemused readers and Jay from Five.

Ed Gamble

Yes, just go, 'Well, this book is awful.'

James Acaster

We should probably tell you who Jay from Five is.

Jason Reitman

I laughed. I went with it.



Yes, it does sound funny. They were a boy band in the 90s called Five-,

Jason Reitman

That was my guess.

James Acaster

And Jay was, like, the one who would do the rapping bits, but you know, he wasn't strictly a rapper.

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Jason Reitman

How's he doing?

James Acaster

He lives in Hay-on-Wye now, and he doesn't like it if you point out at a comedy gig that he's Jay from Five. That's how he's doing.

Ed Gamble

All due credit to Five, I think they were one of the first boy bands to use the number instead of the letter. So, five was spelled, the number five, I, V, E.

James Acaster

Was that before or after the movie Seven came out?

Ed Gamble

Good question.

James Acaster

I would love it if Five influenced the movie Seven, if that was the influence.

Jason Reitman

Kevin Walker is at home writing Seven, he's like, 'Wait a second, this soundtrack of my writing has actually been this all along.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, 'Everybody get up singing, one-,'

James Acaster

Yes, no one knows but actually, Slam Dunk Da-Funk by Five is bout finding Gwyneth Paltrow's -

Ed Gamble

Yes. That's what it's about.

James Acaster Yes, it's all about that.

Jason Reitman

Were they popular in 1995, post-1995?

James Acaster

They were 1995, I think. I think Five were round then.

Ed Gamble

Yes, maybe Seven just pre-dates Five. I mean, it's even worse if the boy band Five were influenced by the film Seven.

James Acaster Yes, you can't really hear that in their music -

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster 'I like that film it's really good.' So, your main course. We come to your main.

Jason Reitman Yes.

James Acaster Brilliant starter.

Ed Gamble Yes.

Jason Reitman God, I have three options here. I'm going to throw two out there-,

Ed Gamble Yes, go for it.

Jason Reitman As options. You tell me which road you'd like to go down.

Ed Gamble

Okay, sure.

Jason Reitman

One is in Tokyo. One is a restaurant that no longer exists in Albuquerque, New Mexico and has a very funny name.

James Acaster Well, you sold one a lot more than the other.

Ed Gamble I know which one you're pushing us towards.

James Acaster Albuquerque.

Ed Gamble We might go over to Tokyo after.

James Acaster We definitely want to hear bout both at some point.

Jason Reitman The restaurant in Albuquerque was called, Charlie's Back Door.

James Acaster Love it.





Yes, well, we made the right decision.

James Acaster

Yes. Glad we're here.

Jason Reitman

Charlie's Front Door was a restaurant, and a successful one, at which point they were able to buy the next door space and open Charlie's Back Door. Charlie's Back Door was a very dark bar with year round Christmas decorations, a low ceiling, and very little light. Old weird paintings, and like every place in Albuquerque, New Mexico, had green chilli in everything, particularly my favourite dish which was their green chilli, sour cream, enchilada, which sounds awful, but was phenomenal, and it breaks my heart that I can't go back.

James Acaster

Yes, so is Charlie's back door and front door both shut to the public?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Reitman

Both the front door and the back door are shut.

Ed Gamble

Did they go at the same time or did the front door go first, and then they were like, 'We're going out the back door on the way out.'?

Jason Reitman

I wish I was more of an expert, but I know, if you ask someone from Albuquerque, because sometimes I'll forget the name, shocker, and I'll say, 'There was a place in Albuquerque I loved. It had a horrible name,' and they would say, 'Charlie's back door.' It was also in a strip mall which made it even kind of stranger. So, it was, imagine, you know, an open parking lot with a two storey structure that also probably had, you know a dry cleaner and a massage parlour and then, Charlie's front and Charlie's Back Door.

James Acaster

Wow. So, what was it about the enchilada that made it, like, such a good meal?

Jason Reitman

God. Great question.

Jason Reitman

First of all, it had the taste of green chilli, and green chilli, like, if you haven't had it before, there's this very specific thing to New Mexico. They have the world's best green chilli.

Ed Gamble

Great.

Jason Reitman

On top of that, it as a sloppy mess. You really didn't know where the enchilada started or finished. It looked like something you could drown in. It was soupy and gross and befitting of the décor of the restaurant, and somehow, also delicious.

James Acaster

Right, yes, well that sounds great.



Yes, that sounds amazing.

James Acaster

Also that, the green chillis has really sold it to me, like, but it's also the opposite of what you're talking about earlier. Like, a place where something that comes from a place, everyone in that place says it's great, but it is legitimately great.

Jason Reitman

Yes.

James Acaster

Like, everybody goes there is like, 'These green chillis are amazing here and better than anywhere else.'

Jason Reitman

It is the opposite of White Castle.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble That sounds phenomenal.

James Acaster The backdoor.

Jason Reitman Now, the Japanese restaurant-,

Ed Gamble Yuki's Back Passage.

Jason Reitman You've been preparing that. You have.

Ed Gamble

Been working on that for a while -

James Acaster All the way thorough that chat, I was like, 'Ed's a bit quiet. What's going on here? What's he doing?'

Ed Gamble Man, sorry.

James Acaster

- Yuki's back passage ready to go. You didn't hesitate for a second - Yuki's back passage.

Jason Reitman

You know, there's two ways to win, like, a hand of poker. One is to slowly unfold your hand and the other is just to flick the cards down as quick as you can too. So, in Tokyo, there is a restaurant called Mikawa and it's a tiny place in a suburban neighbourhood that is hard to find, and inside is a small temporary restaurant with a bar that seats, maybe, six people and two top tables, and it is a temporary restaurant in which the chef sits behind the bar. There is one thing, you just say, 'I'm



having whatever he's giving me,' and he just takes something and he dips it into the tempura batter and then sets in on a little piece of paper in front of you, and you eat it, and then he takes something else and he dips that in the tempura batter, and your really don't know one thing from the next and he could have literally have just have dipped his boot. I mean, like, he's just like, 'And now, this,' and what I liked about that is, we talked about trying new experiences and the fear of trying new experiences and this is one of those, 'I don't want to be insulting. I'm definitely going to eat whatever he sets in front of me and I'm going to try-,' and at one point, there was an entire fish. It was a small fish about three inches long. Six or seven centimetres long and he just dipped the whole fish, set it in front of me, and then I ate the whole fish.

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble Amazing.

Jason Reitman

Yes.

James Acaster

And it was delicious?

Jason Reitman

Amazing. Amazing. I mean, and so much food that I felt genuinely sick at the end of it, but pure experience, start to finish.

James Acaster

And there were no dips that you then dipped it into some sauce, or anything like that. It was just whatever he'd dipped into the batter as it was?

Jason Reitman

And the sauce you made yourself. So, if you think about a tempura sauce, that it has some kind of flaky bits in it, and it has some kind of chopped up green. I don't know what it is. I didn't grow up in a home where they cooked food, so no idea what that stuff was. You make your own. So, they have all the ingredients for your sauce, and you're like, 'More flaky bits, more of the green stuff,' and then you just dip whatever you just fried into the sauce and then you eat it.

James Acaster

Great.

Ed Gamble

Amazing. That sounds incredible.

James Acaster

That does sound very good.

Jason Reitman

It was incredible, and somehow, light and heavy at the same time. Like it's tempura, but there was a lightness to it and he just did it right in front of you. I mean, as far away as you and I are from each other. Dips. Sets it down, and then you eat it.

Ed Gamble

I feel like Japan is so geared towards those new sorts of experiences, though, as well because quite often, you get there and, like, it's so different. You don't really understand what's going on-,



Jason Reitman

Yes.

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you just walk in somewhere and just let it happen.

Jason Reitman

Right.

Ed Gamble

Whereas, you know, in America, I'll be constantly Googling stuff and constantly finding out what the best place to go is or what I should be doing, whereas, in Japan I just think you can let things to unfold a bit more.

Jason Reitman

Why do you think you'd be more willing to do that, though, in Tokyo, than you would somewhere in Germany or somewhere in Peru. Like, there's something about being in Tokyo, you're like, 'Alright. Hit me.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. I guess, like, I haven't been, but everyone who has been tells me that they didn't have a bad meal there. So, I guess, if I went there, I would be more like, 'Feel like I'm not going to go wrong here.'

Ed Gamble

I told you I only had one bad meal, though.

James Acaster

Yes, that's at the Pokemon restaurant.

Ed Gamble

At the Pokemon restaurant.

Jason Reitman How bad was it, though?

Ed Gamble

It was pretty bad. I mean, I had a Katsu curry and the rice was in the shape of Pikachu's face and-,

Jason Reitman

Sounds like a good meal to me.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I don't know. I think-,

James Acaster

The first bite's with the eye, Ed.



We had just arrived. So, I was super jet-lagged. So, the first bite nearly was with my eyes. It was a weird sort of experience to have for the first arriving time.

Jason Reitman

Did you go down to the fish market and have sushi at 5 in the morning?

Ed Gamble

No. We didn't do that and I feel gutted.

Jason Reitman

That's one of the great experiences. You go down to the fish market, you know, at the crack of dawn and you walk around, you watch the fish getting auctioned, and you eat sushi.

James Acaster

I want to do that when I go, Ed. I'm not going to the Pokemon-, actually I will go to the Pokemon restaurant as well because I probably catch some Pokemon then. I love Pokemon.

Ed Gamble

James Loves Pokemon.

James Acaster

Got it on my phone. Play it all the time.

Jason Reitman

Was that your introduction to Pokemon or were you already a fan?

James Acaster

I was already a fan. Well, actually, no, it was, like, last year, I was on tour and I just needed something to do and I was in the car all the time, and also, I found that by playing Pokemon I could bond with my nephews when I went home.

Jason Reitman

That's sweet.

James Acaster

So, it was a real win-win.

Jason Reitman

Yes. Did you see Detective Pikachu?

James Acaster

Yes, one of my nephews visited me in London and we round for the day and there was like a popup Pokemon store, and I'd told him we're going to go to this thing. We'd got there and there was a queue. We went to join the queue and the guy was like, 'No, we've closed the queue for the day. That queue's been closed since 10am, and it was, like, 5pm at that point. Those kids had been there all day and they were letting kids in, like, about two kids every hour. The store was virtually empty with two kids walking around with their parents. It was insane, and then so, to make it up to my nephew, I bought Detective Pikachu on Blu-ray. Went back home and watched it.

Jason Reitman

That's how it should be seen.

James Acaster

And now it's in my flat.



Jason Reitman

I like that you went full quality.

James Acaster

Yes, I had to. I wasn't going to DVD and jip - him. He's been disappointed. And do you know what? It's a good film. I loved it. I've still got it in my flat now and I'm not going to put it past me watching it without him one day.

Jason Reitman

How were the special features?

James Acaster

I haven't even got through those yet.

Ed Gamble

Pikachu does an amazing commentary.

James Acaster

Yes. I'm going to save those for-, saving those for the next time I disappoint him. All the special features out. Here's a little solution to your problem here, right? Because you just mentioned two different restaurants. You're not sure but you said that you like to try new things. How about this? You go to the restaurant in Japan. They pull out the enchilada from Charlie's Back Door. They dip it in the tempura and they give it to you.

Jason Reitman

Oh, my God.

James Acaster

Have I just solved it? Have I just solved your problem?

Ed Gamble

I mean, you nearly did but you used the phrase, 'They pull out the enchilada from Charlie's Back Door.' That really spoiled it with me.

James Acaster

That doesn't sound great?

Jason Reitman

Looks like where it came from. And it's really true. Although half of Charlie's Back Door was the experience of being in that dark, sad bar. It was really a fantastic dive bar.

James Acaster

Okay. We are taking that chef and we are putting him in the dive bar.

Jason Reitman

Now we are talking.

James Acaster He's got it all set up.

Ed Gamble

Poor guy. He's got no idea what's going on.



He's like, 'I can't believe I'm now working here. This is quite the demotion. We are at a strip mall in Albuquerque,' and he dips it in the batter going-,

Ed Gamble

He's on Google Translate going, 'Charlie? Oh, my God.'

James Acaster

'Yes. What does this mean here? Oh, man.' I mean, is that-, are you tempted to have that as your dream main course?

Jason Reitman

Oh, I'm in.

James Acaster Yes. The enchilada dipped in the batter.

Jason Reitman

I guess this is the beauty of having a genie is that-,

James Acaster Yes.

Ed Gamble Yes.

James Acaster I can put those two places together for you and now you're in that place with that chef.

Jason Reitman Yes.

James Acaster I'm delighted.

Ed Gamble Tempura enchilada.

Jason Reitman

I want movies like this too. I want to just be able to pull characters from my favourite movies and then throw them-, can I have, like, a Marvel universe except it's all Alexander Payne films?

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely. Yes. You'd have Jack Nicholson's character, like, you know, having a car crash with the guys from Sideways.

Jason Reitman Oh. Oh, my God. I'm so in.

James Acaster

- in Vegas clowning to them when they're drunk driving.

Jason Reitman

Yes, yes, yes.



If you could do that with your movies, and take one of the characters of you from your movies and put it in another movie you've done, what would you be most tempted?

Jason Reitman

I would have Juno drag the audience to go see some of my other movies that no one else saw.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes. Perfect. Your side dish.

Jason Reitman

Oh, okay. City Bakery in New York has a thing called the pretzel croissant. I'm not sure if this counts as a bread but-,

Ed Gamble

You can have it on the side.

James Acaster

Absolutely, you can.

Jason Reitman

I appreciate it. This is exactly as I described it. It is a croissant that is then crispy and has sesame seeds on it and it's a pretzel croissant. It's delicious. It's amazing.

James Acaster

So, is it still made with, like, the same pastry that croissants are made with or is it, like-,

Jason Reitman

It's more croissant than pretzel.

James Acaster

So, it's more croissant. But so, they've treated a croissant like a pretzel.

Jason Reitman

Kind of. I think they just call it a pretzel croissant because it's salty.

James Acaster

Yes. Okay.

Jason Reitman

And but it's fantastic. And there was a brief moment where they had it in Los Angeles and then they closed the City Bakery here.

James Acaster

Oh, God.

Jason Reitman

And now I have to get to New York if I want to have one.

James Acaster

Do you have anything in this? Do you put, like, butter in there or-,

Jason Reitman

No. I mean, some might. I'm good as is but I think that's how I would be about most things like that. That's how I'd want a traditional croissant.



James Acaster Sure.

Ed Gamble There is a lot of butter in a croissant anyway.

James Acaster They're buttery.

Ed Gamble Yes.

James Acaster Is this a particularly buttery croissant as it is?

Jason Reitman No, it's drier.

James Acaster It's a bit dry.

Jason Reitman It's dry. It just crumbles in your hand and it's salty and it's delicious.

James Acaster How much flake do you-, when you've eaten one of these things-,

Jason Reitman Oh, you're done. You're done.

James Acaster You're flaked up?

Jason Reitman Oh, absolutely. You could almost create another pretzel croissant from what you find on your lap.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes. Love it. And also, it's a pretzel croissant. It would go very well with your mash up of the tempura enchilada as well.

James Acaster Yes.

Jason Reitman Oh, I like where this is going. I listen to girl talk and eat. I'm in.

James Acaster

They're all Frankenfoods. Have you seen Frankenfood? The TV series?

Jason Reitman

Oh, I thought you just made that up.

Ed Gamble

Me too.



Oh, you didn't know about it? A short lived TV series called Frankenfoods. I watched it about five years ago now. I really got into it. I think they only ever made, like, six episodes. And it was one of those where there's a panel of judges. Three people who are involved in food in some way and then just members of the public coming out in front of them and saying a food they'd invented by taking one dish and smashing it together with another dish. And some of them delicious, some of them-, literally it's the only show I've seen where the judges have a sick bucket in case, like-, they could puke in this bucket.

Ed Gamble

Hang on.

James Acaster

Because sometimes they'd bring disgusting things.

Ed Gamble

Would they bring the food or would they just describe it?

James Acaster

They'd bring it.

Ed Gamble

Oh, right. I thought you meant they just describe it and it's so horrible that someone has to be sick.

James Acaster No, no, no.

Ed Gamble 'I can't even think of it. Ugh.'

James Acaster Yes, yes.

Jason Reitman Wouldn't it be great if American Idol had a sick bucket?

James Acaster

Yes. It would. Ugh. 'Does this mean I'm through or not? Does this mean my dreams-, ugh. Please, listen. I'm doing this for my mum.'

Jason Reitman

So, Frankenfood is a common aspect to American ball parks. If you go and see a baseball game, you are going to try a Frankenfood. That's just a common thing. It's a way to get people-, and recently, major league baseball had an event where they took the best item from every major league ball park and they had a, kind of, food Coachella where you could go down. And if you'd bought a ticket to this event and waited in line, you could then go from stand to stand and try each great item from every American ball park. Yes. There was one that was a hot dog wrapped in a pickle then deep fried like a corn dog and then mustard sprayed on it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Reitman That was my favourite.



Yes, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

Is that like a, sort of, state fair thing as well? Like fairs have mad foods as well, right?

Jason Reitman

Absolutely, absolutely. I mean, the one I've never tried, I've only heard about is one ball park where they took a hamburger, removed the bun, then replaced the bun with a sliced glazed doughnut and then deep fried the whole thing.

James Acaster

Wow. I mean we've heard about-,

Ed Gamble

The doughnut burgers but not the deep frying.

James Acaster

Not the deep frying. Taking it to that extreme. You know what? I like the sound of that pickle hot dog so much that I'm prepared to throw it in as a bonus dish.

Ed Gamble Are you?

Jason Reitman Woah.

James Acaster That's how much I like it. I've never done this before.

Jason Reitman

I think it's called a dilly dog.

James Acaster

Uh, Ed? If you were on the fence I think you've hopped over into the garden now.

Ed Gamble

Well, I know that it being called a dilly dog appeals to you so much.

James Acaster

It's called a dilly dog. Because it's in a dill.

Jason Reitman

Yes.

James Acaster

Oh, I love a dilly dog. I would order dilly dogs all the time even if I didn't like them.

Ed Gamble

So, that's deep fried as well, right?

Jason Reitman

Yes, I think you either have to go to Dallas or Houston for it but that's on the way home.

Oh, you've got to go to Dally for a dilly dog?

James Acaster

Yes. Don't dilly dally on the way. Going to dally for your dilly dog.

Ed Gamble

Don't dilly dally to Dally for your dilly dog.

James Acaster

There is one guy on Frankenfood, one contestant who I've never forgotten. He was a guy, probably in his, like, late fifties with his round spectacles, a little goatee beard that was, like, quite pointy in the end. And he had invented-, it was just a cheesecake full of all of his leftover Halloween candy. And he was wired. He was this guy. He was just so, kind of, like, just spoke so fast. Eyes just completely popping out of his head and speaking to the judges who are like, 'We've got to get this guy out of here as soon as possible.' And obviously, they all said, predictably, 'Oh, weirdly enough, it's too sweet.' It's absolutely insane.

Ed Gamble

You know one day you're going to be looking in the mirror and you're going to realise that guy was you.

James Acaster

Yes. It was me. I'd travelled back in time and I became that guy. I bet that guy's got a golden spoon at home.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes.

James Acaster I bet you he's eating that with -

Jason Reitman

And you don't want to use it.

Ed Gamble

No, no.

James Acaster

No, no, you wouldn't. You probably wouldn't go anywhere near it.

Jason Reitman

Is Halloween candy the same in England as it is in the US?

Ed Gamble

Halloween is, sort of, less of a thing I would say. Like, it's less of a-,

James Acaster

And the candy is different just in England in general to here. So, like, yes, I'd say it's pretty different. And we don't have, like, special Halloween candy either that's, like, for Halloween. Whereas, like, that's more of a thing here, right?

Jason Reitman

Oh, no. You can get bags of Halloween candy.





Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes. We can, sort of, do that but it's-,

James Acaster

Sometimes you get stuff that's, like, shaped like a pumpkin or whatever.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes.

James Acaster

But I think it tends to be American-, like, Reese's do the pumpkin shaped ones.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

But then it's still American, like, you know, candy in the first place.

Jason Reitman: We take some of our holidays very seriously here.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I like that. Especially with Halloween because it's just such a dumb holiday. It doesn't really mean anything. And I like the fact that you've just gone all into it.

Jason Reitman

You don't believe in the cultural history of it.

Ed Gamble

No. My fiancée loves Halloween and I think is trying to push a big American, sort of, Halloween thing in our house. Like decorated our house.

Jason Reitman

So, can you go door to door, for instance?

James Acaster

Yes, you can but it's-,

Jason Reitman

But if I'm in Hay-on-Wye-,

Ed Gamble

You could go door to door and trick or treat but they will just give you a bowl of mutton stew.

James Acaster

Yes. That's what you're getting as a trick or a treat.

Ed Gamble

And a book.



Yes, yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

They serve the mutton stew in a book. You've got to just, sort of, lick it out of the book.

James Acaster

Yes. To see what the book is at the end. To find out what-, that's your real treat. It's if it's a good book. Sometimes it's a bad book and you know you've been tricked.

Ed Gamble

Yes. My fiancée will do things like go on Amazon and buy pumpkin shaped peep marshmallows. But they have to import them from the US so they end up costing, like, £25. And then they'll just sit there and she'll never eat them because they've got nice faces. And then we'll just have to throw them away six months later. Yes, happy Halloween.

James Acaster

It's not going to last.

Ed Gamble

Sort of, James's catchphrase on this podcast.

James Acaster Yes. Just a little running joke.

Jason Reitman

I see why you guys like each other so much.

James Acaster

Yes. Talking about Ed's relationship like I don't believe in it at all.

Jason Reitman

Is it because you're worried that she's going to steal him away from you?

Ed Gamble

Is it that obvious?

James Acaster

Is it that obvious that that's how I feel? Of course I feel like that. Even though I came along second. I still feel like she's going to steal you off me.

Ed Gamble

If I said to her, 'James is worried that you are going to steal me away from him,' she'd say, 'Just go to him.'

James Acaster

Yes, it's alright. Just leave it.

Jason Reitman

By the way, clever.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes, well, she knows we'd both be miserable within seconds.



Jason Reitman

That's the way to play it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes. Think so. Yes.

James Acaster

So, your favourite drink.

Jason Reitman

Oh, favourite drink? Okay. There is a restaurant in Calgary-, I just shot a film in Calgary. And Calgary is an amazing food town.

Ed Gamble

Really?

Jason Reitman

Yes. And I say it that way because people are always surprised when I say it. This is not an insult against Calgary. I think if you think of Canadian cities, you presumably first think of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. Calgary is gorgeous and has amazing restaurants. I went to an Indian tapas restaurant there that was just mind-blowingly good and one of the best Japanese meals I've ever had in my life was in Calgary, Alberta at a place called Shokunin. And they have a drink there. It's a smoky Old Fashioned where they put an Old Fashioned inside a glass sphere and then they somehow inject smoke, like, into the glass sphere and then they roll the beverage around in this sphere so that the Old Fashioned soaks up the smoke. And then they pour it out into your glass and the smoke overflows. There's an experience to it.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes.

Jason Reitman As a genie, you'd dig that.

James Acaster Yes, yes, yes. I'm smoking all the time.

Jason Reitman And it's delicious. It's the best Old Fashioned I've ever had.

Ed Gamble

I like the theatre involved in that.

Jason Reitman

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Also, it actually tastes good. Because okay, there's a place in London that-, do you know the place I'm about to mention?

James Acaster

Yes, I know.



That does those burgers. And they think this is a great idea. It's awful. They put the burger under a bell jar and then they pump smoke into it. The burger and fries are under the bell jar, they pump smoke into it, and then they, like, take it off and it just doesn't-, it's awful. It's such an awful idea.

James Acaster

None of it absorbs the flavour. It doesn't taste like smoke. All that happens is they bring it along and you go, 'Eurgh,' and then you're covered in smoke and then you eat it and go, 'The smoke taste isn't in this. None of it's actually had any effect.'

Jason Reitman

Do they say something as they remove the bell jar?

James Acaster

Yes, they go, 'Gotcha! Suck it!'

Jason Reitman

Speaking of theatre and restaurants, have you heard of a restaurant-, I think it's still around, I'm not sure, called Ninja in New York?

James Acaster

Oh, someone mentioned this. But we've not been.

Ed Gamble

Someone mentioned that. Yes, yes.

Jason Reitman

Yes. So, this is a restaurant in New York where you are meant to believe that you are in some dark Japanese forest. Maybe, you know, hiding near a fortress. And as you enter and move through the restaurant, ninjas jump out from behind walls and scare the shit out of you. I brought my daughter there and the first ninja just jumped out at us and she just started crying.

Ed Gamble

Oh.

James Acaster

Oh, God.

Jason Reitman

And then we got the new experience which was ninjas feeling bad and just, kind of, taking us to our table and reassuring her that it was all going to be okay.

Ed Gamble

Taking the mask off and being like, 'No, it's fine. It's fine.'

James Acaster

Ninjas feeling bad is like-, I would watch videos of that for ages.

Ed Gamble

Yes, ninjas feeling bad.

James Acaster

Yes. YouTube videos, 'Ninjas feeling bad.' 'Oh, sorry, little girl. Are you okay? Ah. Please don't cry. Please. My boss is coming along in a minute. Please. Please. We are all happy over here. Hold on,



I'll buy you Detective Pikachu on DVD. How does that sound? We can watch it together.' So, Old Fashioned is one of my favourite cocktails.

Ed Gamble Same.

Jason Reitman Oh, alright.

James Acaster

So, already I'm sold on that even if you'd just said Old Fashioned.

Ed Gamble

Yes. And the smoke, of course, lends itself to whisky so it's the perfect combination.

Jason Reitman

And because they can swirl the beverage inside this sphere, it does take on the smoke.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. Sounds very effective.

Ed Gamble

That sounds absolutely delicious.

James Acaster

Well, that's teed us up nicely for your dessert now. Always my favourite course but I don't know if that's been apparent throughout the episode.

Jason Reitman

I'm going to throw you for a curveball.

Ed Gamble Yes. That worries James sometimes.

James Acaster It really worries me, Jason.

Jason Reitman

Is that because it's, like, a baseball reference? You don't know what I'm talking about, is that it?

James Acaster

A, I don't understand it but B, I'm a big puddings guy. If you're about to choose something savoury I am going to go ballistic.

Jason Reitman

I'm throwing you for a curveball because it's my grandmother who used to serve it all the time.

James Acaster Oh, okay. I'm relaxed.

Ed Gamble It's uncooked.

Jason Reitman No.



Is it revenge?

Jason Reitman

But she would hand it to me so I associate it with her.

James Acaster

Right, okay.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

Jason Reitman

And it's a Hungarian pastry called kugelhopf and I have found it nowhere else but in Toronto where my family is from but it is Hungarian and it is, like, a cake. But the bread part of the cake tastes like bread. It doesn't taste like cake and it is marbleised on the inside and the chocolate inside is the richest chocolate I've ever had in my life. It's so rich if you put it between your thumb and your fingers and you rub them together it would almost be granular like a-, I don't know why. And it is phenomenal. It's delicious and it's not savoury but the bread is bread.

James Acaster

That's great. I love this. It marries the two together because what you want if it's normal bread is really rich chocolate. For those two to complement each other.

Ed Gamble

The chocolate is doing the heavy lifting, sugar wise.

Jason Reitman

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And the bread is just accommodating the chocolate.

Jason Reitman

Yes and there is a bit of a surprise though, when you cut it open. If you get a slice. Because if the whole family is there, because of how it's made, it's not a perfect dish. All the chocolate could be on one side of the kugelhopf. So, you may get a bread heavy piece. You may get a chocolate heavy piece.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, okay.

Jason Reitman

So, there's a bit of a roll the dice in there too.

James Acaster

It's a bit like are they going to have dumplings, are they not kind of thing?

Jason Reitman

Everything is tying up here.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. You want to always go in with a bit of uncertainty. You don't know if you're going to get-, you want to feel lucky at the end of this meal.



Jason Reitman

Well, if you think about my movies, my movies are really designed around one moment at the end that's supposed to punch the audiences in the solar plexus and kick them out of the audience and then just, kind of, pleasantries all the way up to that moment.

James Acaster

Right, yes, sure.

Jason Reitman

That's how I'm-,

James Acaster

Bread, bread, bread, bread, bread, chocolate.

Jason Reitman

Yes. Oh, I think of it as chocolate, chocolate, chocolate, bread. Goodbye.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes, so when you were eating bread with that dessert you were like, 'Oh, it kind of feels like I've just decided finally to to commit to a woman and gone to her house and she's actually got a family.

Jason Reitman

That's exactly it.

James Acaster That's Up in the Air.

Ed Gamble

Yes, no. I know Jason's movies.

James Acaster

I know my movies.

Ed Gamble

For a minute I thought Jason didn't realise what you were talking about.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. You were like, 'I didn't direct that. That's a Farrelly brothers film.'

Jason Reitman

That's my father who directed that.

James Acaster

So, for this meal, would you like-, would it make it better if, for the dessert, other people are there and you've got the perfect balance of chocolate and bread and they've all got ones that you'd rather, you can see that they're all eating ones you're like, 'I'm glad I didn't have that piece.'

Jason Reitman

Oh, of course.

James Acaster Yes.

Yes. You've got to win the dessert, right?

Jason Reitman

Yes. I mean, that's part of it. It's like, 'Oh, no. That's the one you got? Sorry.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes. That's good. And with the dumplings, would you rather you're eating the dumplings and other people are turning up and the lady's saying, 'Bad luck.'?

Jason Reitman

Oh, yes. 'I was the last one in line. Oh. It was so-, if you had only been here. You didn't get a parking spot?'

James Acaster

Yes, yes. Also, this dessert. What temperature is this at? Is this hot?

Jason Reitman

Great question. I would normally get it room temperature but I have reheated it. It's good either way.

Ed Gamble

What, good either way?

Jason Reitman: Not cold. You wouldn't want it cold.

James Acaster

Right.

Ed Gamble

So, hold on. I'm trying to imagine it. Is it like babka? Is it, sort of, that kind of thing?

Jason Reitman

It is but it isn't. So, this is what happens. If you go into a Jewish deli or a Jewish bakery, and you said, 'I want kugelhopf,' they will say, 'Oh, we have babka.' And that's kind of like the moment where you're like, 'I'd love to have a coke,' and they're like, 'We have Pepsi.'

Ed Gamble

Right, okay. Yes, yes, yes. Just slightly off.

Jason Reitman

Yes. And I don't know. Maybe that's the feeling I've been chasing my whole life. The idea that there is something that I had at home and nothing quite like it really matches. And I'm starting to understand home cooked food. I think this is just finally hitting me. And you search everywhere and no-, I get it.

James Acaster

You get it. Suddenly, you understand home cooked food at the end. I'm going to read your order back to you and you tell me how you feel about it. You would like sparkling water. You would like poppadoms which you've never tried before.

Jason Reitman

Can't wait.





Starter. You would like the spicy dumplings from White Bear in New York. Main course. You would like Charlie's Back Door enchilada dipped in Macau tempura batter and laid before you. A side of pretzel croissants from City Bakery in New York. Bonus dish. A dilly dog.

Jason Reitman

I mean, we can set the pretzel croissant aside. I think we're going dilly dog.

James Acaster I'm definitely going dilly dog.

Ed Gamble Yes, we're all going dilly dog.

James Acaster Drink. Smoky old fashioned from Shokunin-,

Jason Reitman

Shokunin.

James Acaster

Shokunin in Calgary. And dessert. Hungarian pastry kugelhopf, presented to you by your grandmother.

Jason Reitman Ah -

James Acaster Feels good?

Jason Reitman Yes, no. Yes. Lovely.

James Acaster That is a great meal. I'd like to try a lot of-,

Ed Gamble

And hearing it back, breadier than I remembered.

James Acaster

Yes. Good choice going poppadoms early on and then just, like, surging head first into bread.

Jason Reitman

I'm glad that I lived up to your expectations as someone who does eat bread which, in Los Angeles-, not a lot of people eat bread here. I'm one of the rare ones.

James Acaster

Yes. We're kind of like-, you know, we're almost like drug dealers here.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Pushing bread on people and they're like, 'Oh, these guys. Don't fall in with those guys. They're the wrong crowd.'

There's one bakery in Los Angeles and it does one loaf a day.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

When it's gone it's gone and it's quite often not gone.

James Acaster

Yes. It's still there at the end. That guy is really sad.

Ed Gamble

'Oh, pack up my loaf and back tomorrow.'

James Acaster

Yes. Same loaf as it's always been for a year. Steadily the same loaf.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much for coming to the dream restaurant, Jason.

Jason Reitman

It's been a pleasure. Lovely to call.

Ed Gamble

Well, well, well, there we have it. The Off Menu menu of Jason Reitman. Very exciting menu, very exciting guest.

out keru

James Acaster

Absolutely. And crucially, he did not say the secret ingredient, muesli. So, thank you, Jason.

Ed Gamble

No, he did not. Thank you, Jason. Who are you going to call? Charlie's Back Door.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

That was a little Ghostbusters reference there.

James Acaster

That was very good.

Ed Gamble

Because Jason's directed the new Ghostbusters film.

James Acaster

I'm sure you're all excited about it anyway.

Ed Gamble

No, man, I think we are going to be bringing people over to the course.



In case anyone is sitting on the fence about seeing Ghostbusters, we'd like to push you over into the garden.

Ed Gamble

You want to watch it.

James Acaster

Yes, you want to watch it.

Ed Gamble

You love it. Oh, and it's not the first one either. You should go back and watch the others.

James Acaster

You should go back and watch all the others. I've enjoyed every single-,

Ed Gamble Love it.

James Acaster

Ghostbusters film.

Ed Gamble

Making me laugh that we are plugging Ghostbusters.

James Acaster

Very funny. Telling people, 'I love all the Ghostbusters movies. You should try them out.'

Ed Gamble

Check out @OffMenuOfficial on Instagram and Twitter as well and offmenupodcast.co.uk on the internet.

James Acaster

Like and subscribe.

Ed Gamble

I'm not sure. I think that's YouTube. I think you can subscribe to the podcast on, like, iTunes and stuff. That would be good. Give us a five star review.

James Acaster

Yes. I'm just telling them to like it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, like it.

James Acaster

Yes, just I hope you like the podcast in your heart.

Ed Gamble

That's a good message to end on. We hope you like the podcast in your heart. We'll see you again sometime soon. Goodbye.

James Acaster

Bye.