



# Off Menu – Ep 174: Mel Giedroyc (Christmas Special)

**Ed Gamble**

Welcome to the Off Menu Podcast, heating up the brandy of conversation. Lighting it with a flame of humour, and pouring it over the Christmas pudding of the internet. Happy Christmas James!

**James Acaster**

Ho ho ho Ed Gamble, happy Christmas. This is the Off Menu Podcast. We own a dream restaurant, and invite a guest in every week and ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish, and drink, not in that order, and when it's a Christmas episode we also ask them their dream Christmas meal as a little extra course. And this week, our guest is Mel Giedroyc.

**Ed Gamble**

Mel Giedroyc. Mel, of course, it's Mel. We're back in the territory, aren't we?

**James Acaster**

It's national treas- territory, of course it is.

**Ed Gamble**

Nice to complete the Mel and Sue set as well, we started collecting a while ago.

**James Acaster**

Yes, and it took us a while to complete the two person set.

**Ed Gamble**

Especially as there's only two in the set.

**James Acaster**

But what an honour.

**Ed Gamble**

What an honour, I cannot wait to hear what Mel has to say about her dream foods.

**James Acaster**

And of course, when Sue was on the podcast, she chose for her dream dessert, Christmas pudding.

**Ed Gamble**

Very true.

**James Acaster**

So, you know, is this going to be a full Christmas menu, even though we're just having one little course as a Christmassy shout-out. Dream Christmas meal, but is Mel as Christmassy as Sue is?

**Ed Gamble**

Who knows? Who knows? Can't wait to find out.

**James Acaster**

But, even though it's Christmas, if Mel says the secret ingredient, an ingredient which we deem to be unacceptable, then we will have, with a heavy heart, to kick national treasure Mel Giedroyc, out of the dream restaurant.



**Ed Gamble**

Into the snow, like Tiny Tim.

**James Acaster**

Little Tiny Tim.

**Ed Gamble**

Tiny Mel.

**James Acaster**

Tiny Mel. Miniature Mel.

**Ed Gamble**

Mini Mel.

**James Acaster**

Mini Mel. This week, the secret ingredient is satsuma.

**Ed Gamble**

Satsuma.

**James Acaster**

Little satsumas in the stocking, hate them.

**Ed Gamble**

Hate it.

**James Acaster**

Don't put a satsuma in the stocking, I want chocolates, and presents, little presents in there. Wow, that was the biggest sneeze he's ever done, he did it with his whole body.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, big sneeze.

**James Acaster**

Don't put those satsumas in the stocking.

**Ed Gamble**

No. And I can feel them, don't think you're sneaking them in.

**James Acaster**

Yes, we can feel them, we know that they're in there.

**Ed Gamble**

I don't get a stocking any more.

**James Acaster**

No? That's a shame.

**Ed Gamble**

It is a shame, isn't it? But all grown up boy now.

**James Acaster**

I get one, I'd kick off if I didn't.



**Ed Gamble**

What do you normally get in your stocking apart from the satsuma?

**James Acaster**

Chocolates, hot sauce sometimes, little things like that, little things for the kitchen. Maybe a little classicy travel game. Good stuff.

**Ed Gamble**

All the good stuff, may as well empty it directly into the bin.

**James Acaster**

No way, I eat it all.

**Ed Gamble**

The travel game?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I eat that, like a Kinder Surprise.

**Ed Gamble**

Hopefully we won't have to kick Mel out, but if she says a satsuma in a stocking, she's out of here.

**James Acaster**

Yes. And we're risking it there. It's possible she might say that and it'll feel very un-Christmassy.

**Ed Gamble**

It will. It will indeed. Without further ado, this is the Off Menu Christmas menu of Mel Giedroyc.

**James Acaster**

Mel Giedroyc.

**Ed Gamble**

Welcome, Mel, to the dream restaurant.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm loving it in the dream restaurant.

**James Acaster**

Welcome, Mel Giedroyc to the dream restaurant, we've been expecting you for some time.

**Ed Gamble**

Here we are. Pretty impressive genie, right, that we've got here?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Absolutely. I'm moved, I'm a bit emotional, I love the genie.

**Ed Gamble**

What is it in particular about the genie that you're finding very emotional?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I love the fact that the genie's wearing a mustard yellow top, I'm getting into a lot.

**Ed Gamble**

Rare for a genie.



**Mel Giedroyc**

And I'm loving the fact that you seem like a very good presence.

**James Acaster**

Thank you.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You're a very good presence.

**James Acaster**

Would you describe me as a good presence, Ed?

**Ed Gamble**

Sometimes.

**James Acaster**

Thank you, I'll take that.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Do you give good presents?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I think so.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Do you?

**James Acaster**

I'm very thoughtful about presents, yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

What's the worst present you've ever given for Christmas?

**James Acaster**

Given to someone?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Given, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Well I've only recently got into wrapping presents.

**Mel Giedroyc**

What do you mean? So what did you do before?

**Ed Gamble**

Well I genuinely think it's pointless to wrap presents.

**James Acaster**

Wow.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's so Scrooge.



**Ed Gamble**

Well it's not Scrooge, I actually think it's more Scroogey to wrap something, because then you're covering up your mistakes. I think you should just be honest about what you've given and just hand over the thing.

**James Acaster**

People aren't lying when they wrap it up.

**Ed Gamble**

They are. Especially if you're just dropping presents off with someone and then going, 'Here's a concealed parcel, bye bye, have a nice week.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

But the concealment, that's all the fun. The unwrapping is more fun than the actual thing itself, often.

**James Acaster**

Are you going to stop wearing clothes?

**Ed Gamble**

Well no, that's not-

**James Acaster**

Are you lying to us, by wearing those clothes, Ed?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, thanks James.

**Ed Gamble**

I am, yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

So what do you do, you just leave a pile of stuff?

**Ed Gamble**

No. I'm not good at wrapping, it's labour-intensive.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You've got to practice.

**Ed Gamble**

Well I don't want to. So I went through a period of wrapping things in tin foil because then you don't need to tape anything.

**James Acaster**

Wow.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No offence, but that's like a student, wrapping it in tin foil.

**Ed Gamble**

Well yes, it was probably when I was a student.



**Mel Giedroyc**

I've been there, I know.

**Ed Gamble**

But also, it's made for wrapping things easily, right?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because you don't need Sellotape.

**Ed Gamble**

You don't need Sellotape, you can just pinch it off, lovely job.

**James Acaster**

Not lovely job.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I love the expression, 'Pinch it off.'

**Ed Gamble**

Pinch it off, not normally used in wrapping.

**James Acaster**

But appropriate given how awful your presents are.

**Ed Gamble**

Thank you.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Guys, you should see, I've got a special wrapper's cupboard.

**Ed Gamble**

Of course.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Wrapper's cupboard at home, so open up the cupboard, and then you've got-, I'm going to take you from right to left. We have boxes, we have boxes, bags, Sellotapes, pens, we have see-through wrapping, which is similar to your non-wrapping but at least it's something. It's not cling film, it's the crackly-,

**Ed Gamble**

Cellophane type stuff.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Then, we've got our Christmas papers, and then we move into birthday papers. And then into slightly wacky, off the wall papers.

**Ed Gamble**

The issue is, I do now wrap, but sometimes my wife will receive her birthday present in Christmas paper.

**Mel Giedroyc**

See, I'm not having that. If you've got a wrapper's cupboard, then you won't fall into that mistake.

**James Acaster**

Where in the wrapper's cupboard is the tin foil?



**Mel Giedroyc**

Nowhere.

**James Acaster**

Oh, that's interesting isn't it?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Nowhere James.

**James Acaster**

Why is it nowhere?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because it's not good enough.

**Ed Gamble**

Or is it too good?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Tin foil should stay in the kitchen, my friend.

**Ed Gamble**

Well that's where I do my wrapping, so.

**James Acaster**

He's got us there.

**Mel Giedroyc**

In the Sellotape-, sorry, am I going on too much about this?

**Ed Gamble**

No, absolutely not.

**Mel Giedroyc**

In the Sellotape section, I've got a Sellotape which you attach to your finger like a large ring. And it's so cool, you just pinch it off with your thumb, you just go like that and it's on your finger, so you don't even have to do that ghastly thing of finding the bloody end, and all that stuff. It's just there, on your finger, on the ring, and then just with your thumb.

**James Acaster**

But then, hold on. So it's on your pointing finger, you roll the Sellotape with your thumb to get the tape off.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You actually click it, you go click, click, click, click, click.

**James Acaster**

Then how far can you pull it out though? Because then you could only pull it out as far as your thumb can reach.

**Ed Gamble**

You pull it out and pinch it off.



**Mel Giedroyc**

You pull it out and pinch it off.

**James Acaster**

Well how do you pinch it off?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I actually don't remember. I know it's in there somewhere, somebody gave it to me, you've scuppered me.

**Ed Gamble**

Because it's the end of the wrapping cupboard chat.

**Mel Giedroyc**

But it's a clicking action, like a dog training clicker, click, click, click, click, click, that the Sellotape emerges on each click. That's how you get the length. As for pinching it off, I can't ruddy remember.

**James Acaster**

You've got to get the other hand involved, I guess.

**Ed Gamble**

But that's holding down the-

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well that's not the point of the thing. I love wrapping, love it.

**Ed Gamble**

How many presents would you wrap at Christmas, average Christmas?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've got an enormo, silly enormo family. 56, something like that.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh my God.

**James Acaster**

How big is your house?

**Mel Giedroyc**

The house is, at the moment it's a bit empty-nesty, so it feels big, if you know what I mean. Because the kids have gone off to uni. But obviously they'll be coming home for Christmas, which is lovely. Didn't answer your question. I didn't want it to appear too big.

**James Acaster**

Did the wrapping cupboard come in before or after the kids left?

**Mel Giedroyc**

After.

**James Acaster**

Sounds like it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

James, oh my God.





**Ed Gamble**

You've replaced your kids with wrapping.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Wrapper's cupboard came in after. And I went through all the dressing up boxes, there are about three of them, and I trimmed those back as well. That was another job.

**Ed Gamble**

I thought you were going to say you put all the costumes on. That's literally where I thought you were going, 'I went through all the dressing up boxes, and I put everything on.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

That'd be so sad. There's some crackers in there though, some real good ones. And some good Crimbo related ones.

**James Acaster**

Yes? Which ones?

**Mel Giedroyc**

There's a habitable Christmas tree, you can get into it and then put your arms through, that's good. There's a High School Musical Christmassy pair of balls, pom-pom balls.

**James Acaster**

Okay.

**Mel Giedroyc**

There's a load of stuff.

**James Acaster**

That sounds good.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Harry Potter cloak. Not very Christmassy, but you can get away with it.

**James Acaster**

It's invisible.

**Ed Gamble**

There's snow, it feels Christmassy, right?

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's sadly not invisible.

**James Acaster**

I heard they're making a genuine invisibility cloak. It's what I heard.

**Ed Gamble**

Do you mean the military?

**James Acaster**

No no, for people to buy, invisibility cloaks.

**Mel Giedroyc**

But do you know what that's going to be? That's going to be Emperor's New Cloak, i.e. here's an empty box, yes there's an invisibility cloak in it, and they charge you £240.



**Ed Gamble**

Exactly.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh I'm not sure about that, all that merch.

**James Acaster**

I don't like the sound of it.

**Ed Gamble**

Well it sounds like you would have had to have bought that, but now your kids have gone to uni right, so you don't need to worry about that sort of tat anymore.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Although, no, they do still like to dip in, Halloween, you know. They used to call me Melvin, it was my sort of alter-ego.

**James Acaster**

Your kids?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, the kids, they'd call me Melvin, because I'd get really overly involved in, for example at Christmas, making a Christmas costume. And take over, and get really humourless.

**Ed Gamble**

So why does that-, why are you called Melvin?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't know.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter) I had to ask James' permission there, because I thought I might be missing something massive there.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, you didn't, they just call me Melvin.

**James Acaster**

It was like if someone said, 'People call me Trevor, because often when I go skiing, I'll always be the first one down the slope.' What?

**Ed Gamble**

Okay. So why Trevor?

**James Acaster**

I do not know.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That is so Trevor, always first down the slope.

**Ed Gamble**

That's actually a perfect example, because Trevor would be first down the slope.



**Mel Giedroyc**

Trevor's a bit of a show-off isn't he?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, Trev's a real show-off.

**James Acaster**

It's quite hard to think of something Trevor doesn't do, actually.

**Mel Giedroyc**

We had Trevor and Sheila, and I'm not just saying this because it's the Christmas podcast, they used to come over and visit us in the 70s from South Africa, at Christmas time. Trevor did not say a ruddy word. Really lovely guy. And I always remember he spent about six hours doing the lighting for my doll's house. He did like, a full electrician's job on the doll's house.

**Ed Gamble**

Completely silent?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Totally silently. Isn't that amazing.

**Ed Gamble**

That is amazing. Is it creepy or is it not? I haven't decided yet.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't know, that was Trev.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**James Acaster**

What he was like. Didn't say goodbye when he left.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, he was the electrician to the dolls. Gorgeous.

**James Acaster**

And was it a good-, it didn't go faulty, the electric, it worked for ages?

**Mel Giedroyc**

It was amazing. And he had two big 1970s batteries, and Sheila, she wore the trousers, 'Go on Trev, go off and do something useful.'

**James Acaster**

We were all hoping that accent was going to come out.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, very glad it did.

**James Acaster**

Because Trevor doesn't talk, so you're like, 'Oh God.' And it's the last thing you want to hear, when someone goes, 'So there's two South African people.' 'Okay, great.' 'one of them doesn't talk.' 'Oh, fuck's sake, come on.'



**Ed Gamble**

'Sheila better be a chatty Cathy.'

**James Acaster**

'I'm really hoping that Sheila gets a line in this story.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh God. I think it was on Christmas eve. That's quite a dull thing to have do to do on Christmas eve, isn't it?

**Ed Gamble**

Not for Trev, it sounds like.

**James Acaster**

It sounds like he voluntarily did it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think he was relieved.

**Ed Gamble**

Because he's not being useful in conversation, is he?

**Mel Giedroyc**

He's not, really.

**Ed Gamble**

He clearly doesn't want to be hanging out with people.

**James Acaster**

Maybe he didn't like the family. Maybe it was more Sheila's thing.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, maybe it was more Sheila's thing.

**Ed Gamble**

Maybe he talked to the dolls.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm going to have to unravel 40 years of family mythology here, when I get home.

**James Acaster**

How did they know your parents?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it was through work. God, maybe that was right.

**Ed Gamble**

I love that, as a kid, you don't even question things like that. 'I think it was through work.' Just two South Africans turned up on your doorstep every Christmas. 'No idea how they knew them actually.'

**James Acaster**

'Hello!'

**Mel Giedroyc**

We had Beryl and Ralphy every Christmas as well.



**Ed Gamble**

Of course you did.

**James Acaster**

Beryl and Ralphie?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Beryl and Ralphie, they were absolutely gorgeous.

**Ed Gamble**

'And they were from the Caribbean. But luckily they were both silent.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

They were from Esher.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, okay, there you go.

**James Acaster**

Where's Esher?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Esher's in Surrey.

**James Acaster**

Okay.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because we were in Leatherhead. And they were so nice. They were childless, so they gave massive presents to us. Bigger than our own parents.

**Ed Gamble**

Hang on, bigger than the presents that your parents gave you, or physically bigger than each of your parents individually?

**Mel Giedroyc**

(Laughter) I mean, bigger than our parents gave us. So for example, lovely, and I don't want to diss my Mum, but times were tough, it was the 70s, we were four kids, there was a lot going on.

**Ed Gamble**

Couldn't even afford to power a doll's house.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Thank you. So I got, it was really lovely, it was a set of paints. It was a set of paints, that is a lovely present to get, isn't it?

**James Acaster**

Yes, it is lovely.

**Ed Gamble**

Nurturing your creative side.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Exactly. It was small, I think there were only six paints. But anyway, in come ruddy Beryl and Ralphie



with like, skateboards, princess dolls, they gave me a music box with a ballerina that went round and round. Really kind.

**Ed Gamble**

Your parents have got to be angry about that though.

**Mel Giedroyc**

They were furious. I think they had a word actually.

**James Acaster**

'Listen, come over here, listen Beryl and Ralphy. I know you're childless, but don't you come here giving bigger presents that we can't-, I've got a fucking bank, you're shitting me! Don't have to upstage us in our own fucking house.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it was a bit upstagey.

**Ed Gamble**

Anyone else pop over for Christmas?

**Mel Giedroyc**

So, Trev and Sheila, that was usually in the day. Beryl and Ralphy in the evening, and Bob and Gwen.

**Ed Gamble**

Of course, how could we forget Bob and Gwen?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Bob and Gwen, so nice. Welsh. And they were neighbours.

**Ed Gamble**

What sort of things would they say?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well, I loved Gwen, she was so lovely. She always gave smoked salmon and things like that. Bob, slightly Grinchy, but no they were great. And I think they used to help Father Christmas fill the stockings, so that was fun.

**James Acaster**

That's good.

**Mel Giedroyc**

We'd hear all sorts going on as they filled the stockings.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't want to give away about Father Christmas.

**James Acaster**

You don't want to give away, to our listeners?

**Mel Giedroyc**

In case your listeners don't know.



**Ed Gamble**

We have a lot of families who listen.

**James Acaster**

So for the listeners?

**Mel Giedroyc**

They were Father Christmas' helpers.

**Ed Gamble**

Bob and Gwen were Elves.

**James Acaster**

Everyone knows all the Elves are Welsh. That's the way it goes. It's like, in the new Lord of the Rings series, people are learning that all Hobbits were Irish. People don't know that all Elves are Welsh. North Pole Elves anyway.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I never got through The Hobbit, I couldn't do it.

**Ed Gamble**

Book or film?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Book. I couldn't do it.

**James Acaster**

Pretty short book.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I mean, have you read it?

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, Ed?

**Ed Gamble**

My Dad read it to me, so I don't know if that counts.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's lovely.

**James Acaster**

If I'm honest, my Mum read it to me.

**Ed Gamble**

So we've both done the audiobook, in a way.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's so lovely. God, I've never read a book that long to my own kids, that makes me feel bad.



**James Acaster**

No?

**Mel Giedroyc**

No. Like eleven pages max.

**James Acaster**

What?

**Mel Giedroyc**

You know, like a picture book. Not a big tome. Too much commitment.

**Ed Gamble**

It's quite short, The Hobbit.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Guys, it's two hundred and-

**James Acaster**

Are you thinking of Lord of the Rings?

**Mel Giedroyc**

The Hobbit's like 300 pages isn't it?

**Ed Gamble**

I'm not sure it is that long.

**James Acaster**

No, it's pretty short.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Good for you though, good for your parents, that's brilliant.

**James Acaster**

Would your kids every say, 'Mummy, can you read this book to me?' 'No. I've been up all night wrapping.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

I always found that reading books was quite tiring. Because you want to invest in the characters, you want to go large, you want to do all the voices.

**Ed Gamble**

As we've already seen with Bob and Gwen.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Exactly. So if you're going to take on something like the ruddy Hobbit, that's full on.

**James Acaster**

And making all the characters Welsh and South African. 'Mum why are they, every single book?'

**Mel Giedroyc**

I like Frodo, I love Frodo.

**James Acaster**

It's a good name to say.





**Ed Gamble**

That's a good accent you've got there.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Thanks very much. So are there some key things I should know about Lord of the Rings?

**James Acaster**

Don't worry, we've got you covered.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Can you give me some stuff? Just some little bits and bobs. Catchphrases.

**James Acaster**

One of the main catchphrases is, 'Spear them in the penis!'

**Mel Giedroyc**

'Spear them in the penis'?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. It's the Orcs.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Lord of the Rings?

**James Acaster**

They go for their penises with the spears, throw the spears at their penises, at their dicks.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I thought it was a kids' film.

**James Acaster**

That's why they say penis.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh I see, 'Spear them in the penis!' Guys, are you winding me up?

**Ed Gamble**

Also, they tickle the Orcs, it makes them go rigid. You know like those goats? That's what it's based on, they tickle the Orcs, they go rigid, and then they spear them in the penis.

**James Acaster**

J. R. R. Tolkien used to work with goats, on a little goat farm, so he based most of the Orcs on goats.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, really?

**James Acaster**

Yes. He based the trees on Lewis Carroll, actually C. S. Lewis.

**Mel Giedroyc**

C. S. Lewis, Narnia.



**James Acaster**

Yes. But he based the Orcs on the goats.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Guys, are you winding me up like a bloody kipper?

**James Acaster**

It does sound far-fetched.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It sounds ludicrous.

**James Acaster**

As we say it, I think it sounds ridiculous.

**Ed Gamble**

But you know they're trying to get a ring into a volcano, it's pretty far-fetched anyway.

**James Acaster**

It is silly.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And the baddie is, it's not Voldemort, no?

**Ed Gamble**

There's Sauron, who's the big eye. He's like a flaming eye.

**James Acaster**

And Clabcakes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's just made up.

**James Acaster**

No, Clabcakes isn't made up.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Is it Mordor or is it Morrrdorrr?

**Ed Gamble**

That's where they have to throw it into Mount Doom. But to get past, they've got the Orcs obviously, and Clabcakes, and then they finally get to Sauron.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Clabcakes sounds like a sort of Scottish delicacy. 'Will you be having a clabcake with your bridal slab?' Clabcakes?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Who played Clabcakes in the film?



**Ed Gamble**

It's one of those CGI.

**James Acaster**

Yes it was a CGI person, but it was the person, do you know Jack from Lost?

**Ed Gamble**

You know the Hobbits were Elijah Wood, another guy from Lost, the Scottish guy from Lost.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Ewan McGregor?

**James Acaster**

Dominic.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, Dominic Monaghan and Alan Davies were the three main Hobbits.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Alan Davies the comedian?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Boom. That's a great gig.

**James Acaster**

Yes. And he's very modest about it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I had no idea. He's a dark horse. And didn't they all have a tattoo done, anyone who was in the film has got the same tattoo.

**James Acaster**

Yes. 'Spear them in the penis.' Was tattooed on their arm.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't know if I believe any of this, I'm going to have to go and read it, oh my God. It's not Christmassy though, is it?

**Ed Gamble**

No, it's not Christmassy.

**James Acaster**

Five gold rings.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, yes.

**James Acaster**

Quite Christmassy.



**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, A Child's Christmas in Wales, that's a lovely book to read the kids.

**Ed Gamble**

Is it?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. It's a bit old school. I was about to say Bob Dylan, it's not Bob Dylan, it's Dylan Thomas.

**James Acaster**

Dylan Thomas. When we were kids, we went to Dylan Thomas' house, mum and dad took us there, and all day long my brother, who's the youngest, thought we were going to see two people called Tim and Thomas.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Tim and Thomas? And was he really excited?

**James Acaster**

Yes, it's like, 'Oh, we're going to go and visit our friends Tim and Thomas.' And we got there, it's like, 'What the fuck? No one's even here, it stinks.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Were you allowed to go in it, or was it just like, 'Oh, we're standing outside'?

**James Acaster**

I actually can't remember at all. I just remember that's the story that always gets told, he was like, 'We're going to see Tim and Thomas today.' And very confused when we got there.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh bless him.

**James Acaster**

Speaking of names, my sister's family have loads of chickens, and they've named them all steadily after Bake Off presenters, judges.

**Mel Giedroyc**

So you've got your Prue, your Mary, your Paul.

**James Acaster**

Paula, because they're all chickens, so they had to go for Paula. Mel and Sue obviously.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Matt and Noel.

**James Acaster**

Sandy, Noel. I don't think there's been a Matt. I texted my sister about it before this, so she said that the only ones that are alive now are Paula and Sandy.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh dear.

**James Acaster**

They're the only two that are still alive.



**Mel Giedroyc**

That makes sense, they're the real gritty ones aren't they?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Mel was a very good layer.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Did Mel die?

**James Acaster**

Mel died of old age, as did Sue and Mary. Noel on the other hand died of fright during a thunderstorm.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

What about Prue? Prue's still going, surely.

**James Acaster**

Prue was egg-bound, and the egg got stuck, and because of all the pressure and the straining, she died.

**Ed Gamble**

So Prue exploded.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I didn't know that a chicken could die like that.

**James Acaster**

She was egg-bound.

**Mel Giedroyc**

So she was in the process of laying.

**James Acaster**

First ever egg. Didn't come out.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh no. And the cloaca got absolutely jammed.

**James Acaster**

Yes, that's bad.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Scientifically, that is that exactly? What happens?

**James Acaster**

What?



**Mel Giedroyc**

Well she's not getting choked, is she, she just can't release the egg. So why would you die from that?

**James Acaster**

All I've got here from my sister is, 'Something to do with the pressure and straining.'

**Ed Gamble**

Sometimes I find myself in that situation, and I think, 'I'd rather be dead than go through this.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Christmas can be quite an interesting time for that. Isn't it? Because you forget to drink water, you're just solidly on the ruddy booze, aren't you? And you're eating all that stuff, all the chocs, all the stuff that can bag you up.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, truly egg-bound over all of Christmas.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Really egg-bound. Let's remind people to drink water at Christmas, because you don't want to be like that chicken.

**Ed Gamble**

No you don't.

**James Acaster**

Prue.

**Ed Gamble**

Prue the chicken.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Prue. Prue. Prunes are always good.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Prunes, prune juice.

**Ed Gamble**

So remember, Prune Leith.

**James Acaster**

Remember that everyone. Prune wreath for Christmas.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've suddenly remembered something, seriously this is true just because we're chatting, I've just suddenly remembered. Have you ever done Christmas with a girlfriend/boyfriend that you know you're not meant to be with, and you go to them for Christmas? And you just know it's not right.

**Ed Gamble**

I have not.



**Mel Giedroyc**

I was at a boyfriend's for Christmas once, I always do Christmas at home, always, always, always. When I was single or with a partner or whatever, always at home. It's just natural, isn't it? If you're lucky enough to have a family and get on with it and stuff, so I always did it at home. I went to his for Christmas, oh my God. And I knew it was over when the whole family, absolutely true, before Christmas lunch, in the morning, fried up some steaks, and started eating the steaks at like, 10:30 in the morning. And I was like, 'What's going on here?' And they said, 'We always do this, we like to stretch our stomachs before Christmas lunch so we can eat more.'

**Ed Gamble**

But I don't understand that, because isn't it just eating loads of food?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

You can't eat more.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Isn't that horrible? I kind of knew it was over anyway before I went, but that was the absolute-, that was the nail in the coffin that I thought, 'I'm out of here.'

**Ed Gamble**

Were you going out with The Rock?

**James Acaster**

I've heard people say you've got to have breakfast, breakfast is meant to stretch your stomach so you can eat more later on in the day, I've heard people say that. But I don't know why this family decided it has to be a steak. Such a creepy thing to wake up and they're all frying steaks going, 'We're stretching our stomachs.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

I know, it's horrid.

**Ed Gamble**

But other people's Christmases are weird.

**Mel Giedroyc**

They are, and they must never be sampled. That's what I learnt, they must never be sampled. Never ever ever have Christmas at anyone else's.

**Ed Gamble**

I've been to my wife's family a couple of times for Christmas, and quite often when I was having Christmas at my Mum's, we're quite close to their family geographically so we can literally just, I can drive over, spend a bit of time there, drive back. But then we spent Christmas there, and it's pretty similar, but they eat so late.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh no, I can't bear that. Like what, Christmas lunch at 5:00?

**Ed Gamble**

I know my Mother-in-law will be listening to this, but we have Christmas lunch so late.

**Mel Giedroyc**

What time, 6pm?



**Ed Gamble**

It was late late, it was like 5:00.

**James Acaster**

I remember this, because I was literally getting texts while it was happening going, 'Still haven't had it, absolutely trembling.'

**Ed Gamble**

It was worth the wait, absolutely fantastic. My Mother-in-law had made some compromises for me, because I had mentioned I like parsnips, and she was like, 'What? We do not have parsnips for Christmas lunch.' So then she made some parsnips.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh she did?

**Ed Gamble**

But a little gesture like that can make you feel at home at Christmas if you're at someone else's.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. I'm never going to do it again though. Never. Never, ever, ever, ever. We have, my husband actually I know, he's never said it, but I know he finds it weird, we have a tradition. And again, it's the 70s, the 70s coming into play, we always have, with Christmas dinner, a tin of sweetcorn.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, see, I think I'd walk out.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You see, I can see in your faces, I know he cannot bear this, but I have to. Because it's tradition, it's what we did, it's what we always did, it's what my Mum did.

**Ed Gamble**

But how did that happen?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't know. Mum probably, a few sheries down the old gullet, just thinking, 'Just throw the sweetcorn', I don't know. It's lovely with gravy and mashed potato.

**James Acaster**

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

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't like water.

**Ed Gamble**

Wow, here we go, a big swing already.

**James Acaster**

Now, you and Claudia Winkleman.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, did Winkles say that?

**James Acaster**

Winkles hates water.





**Mel Giedroyc**

You see, I will have a sparkling water with a dash of something. I'll have a sparkling water with a dash of, let's say, elderflower. Sparkling water with a dash of, I don't know, essence of raspberry, something like that. But neat sparkling water? No thank you ma'am.

**Ed Gamble**

And neat still as well, you feel the same about neat still?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well it depends how thirsty you are. Look, if I'm super thirsty, I would drink anything, I'd drink a puddle.

**James Acaster**

You'd drink a puddle?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Actually no I wouldn't, I'd never do that. Would you?

**James Acaster**

No.

**Ed Gamble**

Depends where the puddle is.

**James Acaster**

I wouldn't drink a puddle.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes it depends where the puddle is.

**Ed Gamble**

Where's the puddle in this scenario?

**Mel Giedroyc**

If it was in Iceland, super clean.

**Ed Gamble**

I'd drink an Iceland puddle.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've often thought, as I prepare the dogs' water bowls, 'If I was desperate would I drink their water?' Do you know what I mean? Would you?

**James Acaster**

If I'd seen them drink out of it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Exactly.

**James Acaster**

I think not.



**Ed Gamble**

I'm just struggling to understand the scenario where you're letting your dogs have a drink, and then you're so desperate for a drink that you push your dog out of the way.

**James Acaster**

And let's not forget the use of the word, 'Often', in this setup. You've, 'Often', thought this. Is this every time you fill up the water bowls you think, 'Could I? Could I do this?'

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, because the dog bowls are around the whole time, aren't they? They're just there in the kitchen the whole time, so whenever I go into the kitchen I'm just like-, I just think, 'Would I? Would I if I was desperate?'

**Ed Gamble**

So, say they've shut the water off, and all that's left is the water in the dog bowl.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Would you drink it? Of course you would.

**James Acaster**

I don't think I would.

**Ed Gamble**

Would you, Mel, here's a really good question though, if you absolutely had to, do you think you'd have the wherewithal to bend down, pick up the bowl, and drink it like a human, or would you go hands and knees?

**James Acaster**

I'm going to be honest while you're thinking, it didn't even occur to me to drink it like a human.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Really?

**James Acaster**

Yes, I just thought, 'I'm getting down on my hands and knees and I'm taking it like a dog.'

**Ed Gamble**

You're drinking the dogs' water, you've got to show respect to the dogs.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well I'm with you James, I would get on all fours, go down and lap it up. And don't dogs-, hang on, there's a difference between a dog and a cat.

**Ed Gamble**

There are loads, yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Doesn't a cat use its tongue and sort of cup it up towards itself so the tongue bends into itself?

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, I don't know actually. I've got a cat, I should've noticed this really.



**Mel Giedroyc**

So they go, like a sort of scooping action. But doesn't a dog do it the other way?

**Ed Gamble**

Up and in.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, lap, lap, lap, and then scoop, scoop, scoop. That's something to think about when you're down there in the dog bowl.

**Ed Gamble**

I often think, Mel, when I'm scooping my cat's litter tray, 'If I was desperate, could I go toilet in this litter tray?'

**Mel Giedroyc**

I thought you were going to say, 'Would you eat it?' Oh of course I would.

**Ed Gamble**

You'd go in the litter tray?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Oh, come on team, let's not be- James, come on.

**James Acaster**

Number one and number two?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Both. It's in your own house. You're worried about that?

**Ed Gamble**

I would actively like to have a wee in the litter tray, because the litter is clumping, so it all solidifies into a big ball. I'd like to see what happens if I went for a wee.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You must have done it, Ed.

**Ed Gamble**

I've honestly not done it. If I'd done it, I wouldn't have brought it up, I would've just told you I'd done it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've never owned cats, so I've never had that conundrum.

**Ed Gamble**

Maybe this Christmas, maybe after a Christmas party, or being a bit drunk, and decide to use the litter tray.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Does it have a lid of it, or is it just open?

**Ed Gamble**

It does, it's quite a deep thing. It's got a lid on it with a hole in the top, and he goes into the hole and sits there, so you just see the tops of his ears while he's in the toilet.



**Mel Giedroyc**

So would you go through the hole, or would you take the lid off?

**Ed Gamble**

It's not that big.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Okay.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, I was assuming when you said, 'It's not that big.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

What's not that big?

**Ed Gamble**

The hole. But I thought you were asking me, 'Would I fully get inside the litter tray?'

**Mel Giedroyc**

No!

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh dear, visual geometry, it was never my strong point.

**Ed Gamble**

I don't even understand what you thought I might have been saying in relation to the hole.

**James Acaster**

I think you thought Ed would be squatting over, with the lid on, and pooing into the hole.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, I was imagining aiming number onesies through the hole.

**Ed Gamble**

And I was suggesting that my penis was so small I couldn't aim it anywhere.

**James Acaster**

But you looked so apologetic.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I got embarrassed.

**James Acaster**

When Ed said, 'It's not that big.' You looked, 'I'm so sorry that I made you have to talk about your tiny penis.'

**Ed Gamble**

Yes Mel, I have a micro penis, and I can't even get it with my fingers.

**James Acaster**

He wouldn't be able to aim it through any hole, because that's how small it is.



**Ed Gamble**

I have to lie flat on my face with my crotch in the litter tray.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That was very confusing.

**Ed Gamble**

You thought I was saying something different as well.

**James Acaster**

No, I thought Mel was saying you would squat over and dump into the hole, or whatever, and when you said, 'It's not that big', you were talking about the hole isn't that big.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. But I was assuming Mel was saying, 'Would I get fully into the litter tray?' Obviously not, because it's not that big.

**Mel Giedroyc**

(Laughter) Crouching in the litter tray.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, I would probably take the lid off.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Take the lid off, and then-

**Ed Gamble**

Go toilet in it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, okay. I think it's open season. If you've got cat litter there, just make use. As a lady of a certain age, who these days, sorry gang to share with you lovely young'uns, it gets tricky, you know, what am I trying to say? I often wazz in the garden.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because I can't make it in to the front door, guys. Welcome to the menopause.

**Ed Gamble**

'What am I trying to say? I often wazz in the garden.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh no, I'm sorry.

**James Acaster**

You had two choices there, who you were going to make eye contact with, thank you for making it me.

**Mel Giedroyc**

But honestly, it's like Pavlov's dog, AKA-, I don't know why I keep saying that but anyway, I quite like it. You have your front door key ready and waiting.



**Ed Gamble**

So that makes you need a wee?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I get the key out, because I think, 'I'll be really efficient.' And I go around the corner, I see the house, and then things just escalate, and one doesn't sometimes make it through the door. Hence, it's like the cat litter. Your garden is your own, isn't it?

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Look, you can water your garden.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

But is this your front garden?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Front garden.

**James Acaster**

As in, I'm not doing euphemisms. It's your front garden, are you risking being seen by your neighbours?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've grown a Quince tree.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

You can get under that, full coverage. It's a very good grower, it's growing quickly. Can I just say something? And it's very much related to this. I was quite shocked. Ordered an Indian takeaway the other night from a place that we love. Love it, it's our local, really nice, family run. And was really excited, and a couple of friends were coming round, which is also lovely. And the door went, opened the door, and my friend Lisa had the takeaway in her hand, she went, 'Get inside, get inside, get inside.' So we got inside, and shut the door, and the guy that had delivered the food had taken a wazz in the front garden.

**Ed Gamble**

No!

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Under the Quince tree?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Not even under the Quince tree, by the bins. Not even into a flower bed.



**Ed Gamble**

Oh no.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And do you know what, I'm so ruddy British and polite, I never even phoned them to complain. And we ate the food.

**Ed Gamble**

And you'll get another takeaway from there won't you?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. I think that's bad though.

**Ed Gamble**

It is bad.

**James Acaster**

It's awful.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Deliver a takeaway and then take a wazz in the person you've just delivered to.

**James Acaster**

It is awful.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's really bad. It's delicious though, it's good food.

**James Acaster**

Can't complain. And then, you know, once you've digested the food, you dumped it in the same place anyway didn't you? Right near where he'd gone.

**Ed Gamble**

No wonder that Quince tree grew quickly.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh God. I can't believe he did it on concrete though, there's something really disrespectful. If you're going to do it, at least do it into a flower bed.

**Ed Gamble**

Also for yourself, you don't want splashback do you?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Exactly.

**James Acaster**

That's disgraceful.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, it was. Oh dear.

**James Acaster**

Poppadoms or bread?! Poppadoms or bread Mel Giedroyc? Poppadoms or bread?



**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh God. Okay, have we got the chutneys?

**James Acaster**

Yes, you've got whatever you want.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, you've got the chutneys.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well, of course, it's pops.

**Ed Gamble**

Is it pops all the way?

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's pops all the way. Because you have the beautiful array of your lime, you lime chilli, your lime chutney, your mint chutney, your yoghurt minty.

**James Acaster**

Yes? Mango chutney?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. With your breads, it's a bit, I don't know, it's a bit Route 1 isn't it, with the breads? What do you do with the breads? There's nothing to go on the breads.

**Ed Gamble**

I think it's butter.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I suppose there is butter. No, it's too claggy as well.

**Ed Gamble**

Okay, so you want the crispy textures.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Crispy. Yes, crispy snacky, love that.

**James Acaster**

I mean, you just ate a packet of Mini Cheddars, you want to talk about claggy.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Have you heard a Mini Cheddar when it's in action? It's a snapper.

**James Acaster**

They get claggy in your mouth. It's a snapper and then it clags up.

**Ed Gamble**

It goes snap to clag very quickly.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't think it goes to clag, a Mini Cheddar. Not when I'm masticating, definitely not.

**Ed Gamble**

You swallow them pretty much whole though don't you?





**Mel Giedroyc**

I go very fast. I woof them down. I love a Mini Cheddar at Christmas actually.

**Ed Gamble**

Do you?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

The big tubs of Mini Cheddars they sell at Christmas.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. In fact, thank you for tubs. Any tub at Christmas is a joy isn't it? A tub of Twiglets, a tub of Chedds, tubs of Twigs.

**Ed Gamble**

Tubs aren't year round, if you eat a tub during the rest of the year, you feel pretty gross, I'd say.

**Mel Giedroyc**

A tub of Jaffa Cakes, you know those elongated, like a tube, only at Christmas. Those are great.

**James Acaster**

They're good.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Really good.

**James Acaster**

What's the biggest Toblerone you've ever eaten?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it was in the 80s, everything was a bit oversized, a bit flash, flash Harry. I don't know where that came from. He was in Blackadder wasn't he?

**James Acaster**

Flash Harry was? Flashheart.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Flashheart. Harry Flashheart. I loved him, Rik Mayall. I would say it was a real big'un.

**James Acaster**

Not Ed's then.

**Ed Gamble**

No, not mine.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it had come straight from Switzerland.

**Ed Gamble**

Had it?



**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Somebody had been, it was the 80s, on a skiing holiday.

**James Acaster**

Trevor.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It was probably Trevor.

**Ed Gamble**

Definitely Trevor.

**Mel Giedroyc**

They would definitely go on skiing holidays. And my Mum and Dad would be a little bit disapproving. It was a little bit like, 'Oh, great!' That kind of vibe.

**Ed Gamble**

They might have even brought you that big Toblerone, you never know.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't think it was them, actually, but they could have done.

**Ed Gamble**

This is post-that.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

What are we talking, like a big airport boy?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm actually-, I'm salivating. I'm salivating. So good. But do you know what I love? And I don't know when it came in, you guys can probably tell me. When the dark Toblerone came. Which year was that?

**James Acaster**

I think I was-, which year was that? 90s? In the 90s, I was still a kid.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it might be later than that.

**Ed Gamble**

Was dark pre-white?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, white, blech.

**Ed Gamble**

Too sweet. Far too sweet.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I can't even-, anything white chocolate, guys.



**Ed Gamble**

Really?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Anything, blech. It makes me feel so ill. I could actually make myself sick, live on your podcast.

**Ed Gamble**

Imagining white chocolate?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Imagine being forced-, you know Bruce Bogtrotter in Matilda, imagine if that chocolate was white.

**Ed Gamble**

Listen to this. There's a company in Leeds called Get Baked, and they do a cake called The Bruce, which is inspired by the Bruce Bogtrotter cake. Twelve layers of this chocolate fudge cake thing, and they only sell it in slices because it's so massive, and they sent me a slice, and it's the best thing ever.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Is it?

**James Acaster**

Ed sent me a photo of it when he got it.

**Ed Gamble**

It's insane.

**James Acaster**

And, am I wrong in thinking, Ed, there's white chocolate icing on the outside?

**Ed Gamble**

I was sent The Bruce wearing a white tux, which is the different version which has a bit of white chocolate on the outside.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's evil. That is wrong. That reminds me of the cakes they used to make for their dogs on Blue Peter.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

When the icing was always white.

**Ed Gamble**

Thank you to Get Baked.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, I'm sure Get Baked are amazing, and I would never ever diss a baked good. But 12 layers?

**Ed Gamble**

Oh it was big. I want to hear more about these dog cakes though. What?



**James Acaster**

Also, I think it's pretty rich that you're turning your nose up at dog cakes when you'd happily drink out of their bowls and shit in the cat litter.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh God.

**James Acaster**

Let's go onto your dream menu proper, your dream starter.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Sorry, it's all that talk of white chocolate, it's making me-

**James Acaster**

Do you know what one of my favourite out-takes to watch online is you burping on Taskmaster. You're just sitting there on Taskmaster, you burp in the studio in front of everybody.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, awful. Just awful. Awful, awful. Dream starter? Oh dear, it's backing up. It's backing up, guys. It's the talk of the white chocolate. I'm thinking, in my mind's eye, of the dog cake on Blue Peter. Oh dear. Dry crackers, we need dry crackers.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, I thought that was your dream starter.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well, I'm going to say a cracker with mackerel paté on. Is that weak? Is that a weak starter?

**Ed Gamble**

I don't think we've ever had a starter that starts with, 'A cracker with.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Cracker with a mackerel paté.

**Ed Gamble**

I love a mackerel paté. You're absolutely preaching to the converted here, I love a mackerel paté.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Do you make it?

**Ed Gamble**

No. Do you?

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's quite easy. Would you go for chopped hard-boiled eggs inside it? Do you like a chopped hard-boiled egg?

**Ed Gamble**

I do.

**James Acaster**

Yes, but I wouldn't necessarily think of it in a mackerel paté. I don't hate the sound of it.



**Mel Giedroyc**

It's a nice little addendum, it's lovely.

**Ed Gamble**

I do love a mackerel paté, it's a very good choice.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I love a mackerel paté. I would go for that. I'd go for that, I was going to say, 'Or', but no, I'm going to go for that.

**James Acaster**

There's no 'or'.

**Ed Gamble**

On a cracker rather than little toasts, or bread?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh now you're talking. But having dissed the bread, and gone for the poppadoms, do I look like a hypocrite by saying toast?

**Ed Gamble**

No, I don't think so.

**James Acaster**

Don't worry what people think about you, just go for what you want.

**Ed Gamble**

Because you've already had the snap of the poppadoms, you can afford a little bit of softness in the toast.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, I want to keep it snap.

**Ed Gamble**

Cracker.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Pop. What about a little French toast? Which is really-, I love a French toast. But the starter that I'm thinking of, it's kind of a build your own. I don't want to be presented with a plate with crackers and mackerel paté pre-done. I want to build it myself.

**James Acaster**

Okay, so how much mackerel paté do you want?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Tons.

**James Acaster**

Tons?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, and a whole Christmas tub of crackers so I can just go (imitates spreading paté and eating).



**Ed Gamble**

Like a whole sleeve.

**Mel Giedroyc**

A sleeve, thank you. I want a whole blouson sleeve of crackers for my starters. Although, one doesn't want to fill up too much.

**James Acaster**

Sure.

**Ed Gamble**

And it's easy to do when there's lots of little bits.

**Mel Giedroyc**

If they go in quick, then that's fatal.

**Ed Gamble**

Just posting them in.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Posting. So yes, maybe seven, seven or eight.

**Ed Gamble**

What sort of crackers are they?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think I mentioned before Ed, I would like French toast please.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh sorry, yes, the blouson sleeve.

**James Acaster**

Now, the French toast, do you mean Melba toast?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Melba toast. That's the same as French toast isn't it?

**James Acaster**

No.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No! Oh my God what am I talking about? French toast is with cinnamon and stuff.

**Ed Gamble**

But I knew what you meant, I wonder if you can call that a French toast as well.

**James Acaster**

Maybe you can as well.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I wouldn't like the sweet one with a mackerel paté.

**Ed Gamble**

No, probably not.



**James Acaster**

Although I've had a savoury French toast before and it was delicious.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Was it?

**James Acaster**

Yes. A café in Manchester, can't remember what it was called.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Café de Melba?

**James Acaster**

Yes, yes.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**James Acaster**

And that was good stuff. That was with mushroom, and truffle.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Champignon, le truffe, c'est bon.

**James Acaster**

You speak fluent French don't you?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I speak French.

**James Acaster**

Taskmaster again, that's how I know that. You and Desky.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, Desky. God, don't you love Desk.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, truly, what a wonderful man.

**Mel Giedroyc**

He's absolutely great isn't he? I was so chuffed when I found out that I was doing Taskmaster with Desky. I just thought, 'Everything's going to be fine.' Do you know that thing?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. So funny when you were calling him Desky as well. Just back to the studio, 'What's all this?'

**James Acaster**

He didn't love it.

**Ed Gamble**

No. He'd kept that secret for years, you completely blew it.

**James Acaster**

Now he's Desky.



**Mel Giedroyc**

Desky! It is a terrible name isn't it.

**James Acaster**

Your dream main course.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Scotch eggs.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

What? Guys, what's the problem? What is the problem here? Have you ever had a home-made Scotch egg?

**James Acaster**

Yes, and they're amazing.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And you have to pronounce it, 'Scotchegg', as if it's just one word.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, Scotchegg.

**Mel Giedroyc**

We went on tour, Sue and I went on tour with a brilliant band once, and Denny, the guitarist, always said, 'Scotchegg.'

**James Acaster**

Tales from the road.

**Mel Giedroyc**

'Alright Den?' 'Yes, I'm fine, I'm just going to have a Scotchegg.'

**Ed Gamble**

How often was Denny having a Scotch egg?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Daily.

**Ed Gamble**

But these weren't the home-made-

**Mel Giedroyc**

No. This would have been absolute, stop in your old petrol station, follow the feet on the floor to the microwave, one of those.

**Ed Gamble**

But you're talking about one from a restaurant, a hot one, runny middle.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm talking poncy, man. I'm not going to be all disingenuous and say, 'One from Tesco's fine.' I want an absolute, expensive, humdinger of a Scotchegg. Come on.





**James Acaster**

I mean, they're delicious.

**Ed Gamble**

It's great.

**James Acaster**

You're having it hot from the fryer?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Of course.

**James Acaster**

Nice soft yolk, not running out of it, but it's like that perfect kind of-

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, it's got to be perfect.

**James Acaster**

What's the meat? Because you can get loads of different ones.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well, interestingly, I was very fortunate enough, Big Zuu, his amazing chefs, they made me a Scotchegg, and it was lamb. And do you know what, I'm not going to lie, before I had it, I thought, 'Will this be as good as the Scotch eggs that I'm used to?' It was better.

**James Acaster**

Right.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It was spicy lamb mince. Not mince, meat. Lamb meat.

**Ed Gamble**

But it would be mince.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It would be mince?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it'd be mince, yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

James you're so sweet, really encouraging going, 'Yes, it's mince.'

**Ed Gamble**

Because you've got to shaped it around the egg right? So it's got to be mince.

**Mel Giedroyc**

But with herbs, guys, with herbs.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, with herbs. Shout out to Tubsey and Hyder.

**James Acaster**

Tubsey and Hyder, man.



**Mel Giedroyc**

Ahh, Tubsey and Hyder.

**James Acaster**

I mean, you said you love tubs at Christmas, Tubsey's coming to town.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I love those two.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, they're great. It's such a fun show to do. And they really do make some excellent food.

**Mel Giedroyc**

They make some incredible food.

**James Acaster**

I burnt the roof of my mouth on the first bite.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, what did you have?

**James Acaster**

Well they did my a poppadom bread thing, because of the podcast.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh of course.

**James Acaster**

I stuck it in my mouth, delicious, instantly burnt the roof my mouth.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Stuck to the roof.

**James Acaster**

I went in too fast. So took a layer of skin off the roof of my mouth, in pain for the rest of the episode eating everything. It was all delicious, and luckily the final dish was loads of ice cream, so I really went-, I ate the whole of that.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Smoking.

**James Acaster**

Yes, I ate all of that. 'Thank you Tubsey and Hyder, thank you Big Zuu.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Do you know what, talking of hot foods that one eats too quickly, I remember this so clearly, it was November the 5th, bonfire night. Chowd into a baked potato, fainted. Blooming fainted. And my Mum thought I was mucking about, because I literally just went at the dinner table. And I just remember waking up out of the faint to my Mum going, 'Stop it Melly! Stop it.' You know, getting attention again, sort of thing.

**Ed Gamble**

Because it was so hot, you fainted?



**Mel Giedroyc**

Because it was so hot. It was really unpleasant.

**James Acaster**

So hot you fainted?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. I'm really greedy. My Mum timed dinner once, in the 70s. Could have been the 80s. Timed our dinner, a family dinner. So there's six of us round the table.

**Ed Gamble**

Just a relaxing, chilled out dinner.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Relaxing, chill dinner, seven minutes. Start to finish.

**James Acaster**

The whole family.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because it used to bug the absolute crap out of her, because obviously she went to the massive effort of cooking beautiful, lovely food, every single day, and we just went, 'Grrrr', like that.

**James Acaster**

So she timed it. Did she tell you she was going to time it?

**Mel Giedroyc**

No.

**James Acaster**

So when it's finished she went, 'Right, let's have a look, that's seven minutes.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it might even have been less than seven minutes actually. That's quite bad. Do you know you're supposed to chew something 40 times?

**Ed Gamble**

It's crazy. However many times you're supposed to chew something, it's mad.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Have you tried that?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it takes ages.

**Mel Giedroyc**

But it's disgusting.

**Ed Gamble**

It's horrible by the end, yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

40 times. Imagine eating Christmas dinner and having to chew every mouthful 40 times.



**Ed Gamble**

No, it's awful. Everything down in seven minutes, pass out at the table, job's a good'un. Mel just burped again.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Onto the cat litter.

**James Acaster**

Every time Mel burps, she just looks over at me, looks right at me, does it again.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh it's awful. It's not clever, and it's awful, I'm sorry.

**Ed Gamble**

Do you want the Big Zuu, Tubsey, Hyder lamb Scotch eggs for your main course then, your dream main course? Or do you want a selection of posh Scotch eggs?

**James Acaster**

You said, 'Scotch eggs', plural.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think Scotch eggs. Let's go plural. Let's go for Tubsey Hyder, and let's go for-, oh I went to a lovely pub in Gloucestershire about a year ago, and they did a super Scotch egg. Handmade. I'd go for that again. I can't remember what the pub was called, but it was one of those really cosy-wosy, fire on, Cotswold stone. Do you know what I mean? One of those.

**Ed Gamble**

And was that like a traditional pork Scotch egg?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it was a bit poncy actually. It was a bit poncy, really delicious.

**Ed Gamble**

I had a very good Scotch egg, there's a bakery in Bristol below Temple Meads Station, called Hart's Bakery.

**Mel Giedroyc**

In the subway bit when you go to the platforms?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, so you walk down the slope, and then you can go back in, just under the slops is Hart's Bakery, which is fantastic. They did a Scotch egg with Naga chilli, so it was quite spicy. Fantastic.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Hart's?

**Ed Gamble**

Hart's, yes, H, A, R, T.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'll remember that. I will travel for a Scotch egg. I will.



**Ed Gamble**

And it's pretty easy because it's right next to the train station.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I love a Scotch egg. Even a cheapo. Your shirt, James, is the colour of a Scotch egg.

**James Acaster**

Is it? The yolk?

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, the outside.

**James Acaster**

The outside?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, you look like a lovely Scotch egg.

**James Acaster**

Oh dear me, that's why you keep looking at me, and burping.

**Mel Giedroyc**

My eyes keep locking with you across the table because you're wearing a Scotch egg.

**James Acaster**

I'm wearing a Scotch egg.

**Mel Giedroyc**

There's something about that initial purchase of tooth into outer casing. Isn't there?

**James Acaster**

Well let's talk about that, because that first bite of a Scotch egg, I want to get egg in there, and I don't like it when sometimes I bite, and I just get the meat, and the egg stays inside untouched. I'm like, 'God damn it.'

**Ed Gamble**

I don't know how you feel about this, but with the big posh Scotch eggs in restaurants etc. when they're hot, how do you feel about the slice in half, and then you bite a half. So you get a cut through, you can see everything, but your first bite you get everything.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, I'll go for that.

**James Acaster**

Yes, that's good. That's very satisfying actually.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, I'll definitely go for that.

**Ed Gamble**

I've had a black pudding one recently as well. So instead of sausage meat it's black pudding around the outside, very very good.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, I've tried one of those. Unbelievable.



**Ed Gamble**

We can whack one of those on there for you as well if you want.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Let's have a sort of pyramid of Scotch eggs.

**Ed Gamble**

Like a Ferrero Rocher pyramid of Scotch eggs?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Thank you. And somebody comes in and says, 'What's the catchphrase?' 'The ambassador's always delighted to see you.'

**Ed Gamble**

But it should be, 'The ham-bassador.'

**James Acaster**

Let's hear what Mel thinks the catchphrase is.

**Mel Giedroyc**

What is it? Hang on. What is it? 'The ambassador is always delighted to see you', or something.

**James Acaster**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

That sounds wrong. Really lame catchphrase. What is it? Oh, 'The ambassador's reception is-' something about the ambassador's reception.

**James Acaster**

Go on.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Was it a voice-over or was it actually somebody speaking? I think it was a voice-over wasn't it? 'The ambassador's receptions were always highly talked about.'

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Something like that.

**Ed Gamble**

And then someone would come in and say, 'The ambassador is always pleased to see you.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

It wasn't that, was it?

**Ed Gamble**

Close enough.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Do you know?



**James Acaster**

'Oh ambassador, with these Ferrero Rochers, you're really spoiling us.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh James! Oh God, of course it is. That really annoys me.

**Ed Gamble**

No, I think you're pretty close with, 'The ambassador is always very happy to see you here.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

What is it again James?

**James Acaster**

'The ambassador's receptions were always highly talked about.'

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

(Laughter) What was the real one?

**Ed Gamble**

'Oh ambassador, with these Ferrero Rochers, you're really spoiling us.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's exactly it. 'Oh ambassador, with these Scotch eggs, you're really spoiling us.' Okay.

**James Acaster**

There you go.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's the, 'Spoiling us', isn't it? That's the key.

**James Acaster**

Yes. It's the Christmas episode, so we're going to hear about your Christmas dinner now, we've had a lot of nice Christmas chat. What would be your dream Christmas meal? What are you having?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Okay. Right, this is what I'd love to do on Christmas. With your Christmas dinner, you've got to have everything, AKA all the trimmings.

**Ed Gamble**

All the trimmings.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's a kind of thing, you have to. You've got your potatoes, you've got your sprouts, you've got your carrots, you've got your parsnips, you've got your turkey, the whole darn thing.

**Ed Gamble**

You've got your tin of sweetcorn.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And your tin of sweetcorn, thank you Ed. What I would like to do is just do away with the slightly boring elements, and just go for the highlights.



**Ed Gamble**

Okay, take us through what the boring elements are.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Boring elements, potatoes.

**James Acaster**

Wow.

**Ed Gamble**

Woah, that is huge.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Sorry.

**James Acaster**

That's a big swing.

**Ed Gamble**

That is huge.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I sense hostility in here.

**James Acaster**

No hostility.

**Ed Gamble**

No hostility here, I think it's about time someone remixed the Christmas dinner. I just feel like there's going to be a lot of people listening-

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's a bridge too far isn't it?

**Ed Gamble**

That is sacrilege.

**James Acaster**

Mute all your socials when this goes out.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm not on any.

**James Acaster**

Well, congratulations.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm not on a single platform.

**James Acaster**

Sue Perkins is going to get a load of shit off the back of this episode.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm going to be, just prepare for this guys, buckle up, I'm saying do away with the turkey. Potatoes and turkey, and sprouts.





**James Acaster**

Okay.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And carrots, and parsnips.

**Ed Gamble**

So you're just going to have a tin of sweetcorn for Christmas dinner?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm going to go for pigs in blankets, stuffing, gravy, tin of sweetcorn.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because those are my highlights. And the bread sauce, oh I love bread sauce.

**James Acaster**

Apologies to the Quince tree, with this load going in. Just pigs in blankets and a tin of sweetcorn.

**Ed Gamble**

Well actually I think the Quince tree will get about a month off.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I love bread sauce guys. I could literally upend a vat of bread sauce, I love it. With gravy. In fact, let's do away with the pigs in blankets.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh no. Now you've gone too far.

**James Acaster**

Here we go.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And possible the sweetcorn. And just have the bread sauce and gravy.

**James Acaster**

Bread sauce and gravy is your dream Christmas meal?

**Ed Gamble**

Have you got stuffing?

**Mel Giedroyc**

And stuffing.

**James Acaster**

Bread sauce, gravy, and stuffing, that's your dream Christmas meal?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, I could do that.



**Ed Gamble**

Just like Christmas dinner in an old people's home, it's all nice and soft stuff you can chew with no teeth.

**James Acaster**

Now, here's what I'm about to ask you. We have only just met today, I feel a little bit hesitant asking you this.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Go on. 'Am I free for a drink after the show?'

**James Acaster**

Yes. When Sue came on, she told a story that was very memorable to the listeners, about a shaman who blew raspberry vodka up her bum.

**Mel Giedroyc**

So good.

**James Acaster**

You've just chosen for you Christmas dinner gravy and bread sauce. How would you like to consume that?

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**James Acaster**

Do you want to upend the vat, like you said, or do you want to get the shaman out?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I forgot she said that.

**Ed Gamble**

The shaman is not available to all of our guests.

**James Acaster**

No, the shaman is only available to you.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And Perks.

**Ed Gamble**

And Perks.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'd worry about the clagging if the shaman was involved. Because bread sauce, there's a lot more volume to it, isn't there, than raspberry vodka.

**Ed Gamble**

And also, because he'd be under the surface of a hot tub, wouldn't he?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.



**Ed Gamble**

So even if the bread sauce wasn't going where it's going, I wouldn't be confident that he could blow bread sauce through a straw into a hot tub anyway.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, I'd worry.

**Ed Gamble**

It'd globule pretty quickly.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Abso-ruddy-lutely, thank you for globule. I would like it out of a shoe.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

You know how in those really glamorous films, you see people drinking champagne out of a shoe.

**Ed Gamble**

Out of a shoe, out of a high heel, yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It's Christmas, let's get it in a shoe.

**Ed Gamble**

Bread sauce in a shoe.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Upend it. Let's go mad.

**James Acaster**

Like a curly Elf shoe?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Something like that. A Christmassy related shoe.

**Ed Gamble**

Is that the bread sauce and the gravy in the stew- shoe?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Not in a stew, Ed.

**Ed Gamble**

Sorry, I heard gravy and I went with stew.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Actually that's a thing, they must be slightly separate, I don't like it all mushed up together. You want to have your gravy, your bread sauce, and your stuffing. Those are the highlights of the meal, guys.

**Ed Gamble**

I was on board with you until you got rid of pigs in blankets.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That was rash.



**Ed Gamble**

Rasher.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That was rasher, wasn't it? It was. Let's bring those back. Can we have them back?

**Ed Gamble**

Oh, absolutely.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Let's bring them back.

**James Acaster**

Also, and it's a pun that's already been done on Taskmaster but, Mel and Shoe?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Mel and Shoe.

**James Acaster**

Are we going to say that again?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Actually, I'm now thinking, the shoe is a bit comedy comedy. No, I just want it on a plate.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

I was trying to outdo Sue's anecdote, is what I was trying to do. I was trying to be more off the wall. You can't be more off the wall than a shaman blowing raspberry vodka up your noo-noos.

**James Acaster**

Absolutely.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Was it the noo-noos? Or wherever it was.

**James Acaster**

It was up the bum.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Up the bum. So I'm not going to say shoe, I'm going to say just give me a good old-fashioned plate.

**James Acaster**

Mel and Plate.

**Ed Gamble**

But because you want everything divided, do you want a prison tray?

**Mel Giedroyc**

That would be nice.

**Ed Gamble**

You're welcome, merry Christmas.



**James Acaster**

Prison tray. So festive.

**Mel Giedroyc**

A grey, metallic prison tray.

**Ed Gamble**

You can have someone just slam it in.

**James Acaster**

Bread sauce, gravy, stuffing, that's it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Oh, and also, boxing day for your sandwich.

**Ed Gamble**

Very important.

**Mel Giedroyc**

The same. Bread sauce, gravy, stuffing.

**Ed Gamble**

How are you going to keep them separate though?

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, then you're allowed to mix them. Then you weave a little bit of cranberry sauce in there too. Oh I love a boxing day sandwich with all the stuff you've eaten the day before.

**Ed Gamble**

Well congratulations, you've just invented the sloppiest sandwich known to man.

**James Acaster**

It's more of a savoury trifle.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, that's horrid.

**Ed Gamble**

You're not getting that to your mouth before it all falls out of the bread back onto the plate again.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Turkey's overrated though.

**Ed Gamble**

Well, you know, I've had good turkey, I've had bad turkey.

**James Acaster**

This from the person who turned their nose up at dog cakes earlier, and the dogs' birthday cakes on Blue Peter, and then, 'What I would like to eat is bread sauce, stuffing, and gravy.'



**Ed Gamble**

That sounds like a dog cake.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh does it?

**James Acaster**

That sounds like the dog cakes on Blue Peter.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Does it? Does it sound weird?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, because you've got the gravy and the meat element, stuffing's basically dog food for humans, mash all that together, and then the white outside which is the bread sauce. You've created a new dog cake.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's actually what I want, isn't it? That's weird. Oh, guys. That's a worry isn't it?

**James Acaster**

Yes, that you might actually want to be a dog on Blue Peter.

**Mel Giedroyc**

The best turkey I've ever eaten was, it's a Nigella Lawson recipe actually, I have to say. She marinades the whole ruddy turkey. Have you done that?

**Ed Gamble**

No.

**Mel Giedroyc**

For 48 hours, it's sublime. In a bath of herbs and spices. It is su-ruddy-blime.

**Ed Gamble**

You don't want that on your Christmas?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I can't be arsed. I can't be arsed.

**James Acaster**

There's no effort on your part, just so you know.

**Mel Giedroyc**

No, I know. But even just saying it, I just think of all the effort that's gone into it, and I don't want to put anyone through that.

**Ed Gamble**

Fair enough.

**James Acaster**

Even Nigella.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Even Nigella. It takes too long, bless her, she's got other things to do. I'll just stick to, as I said, the bread sauce, the stuffing, and the gravy.



**Ed Gamble**

On a prison tray.

**Mel Giedroyc**

On a prison tray.

**Ed Gamble**

Beautiful.

**James Acaster**

Boxing day, all together.

**Mel Giedroyc**

In a sandwich.

**James Acaster**

In a sandwich. Your dream side dish.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Hugh Grant.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter) It's a loophole that no one's utilised before on the podcast.

**James Acaster**

Yes, you can use that, absolutely.

**Ed Gamble**

You want Hugh Grant to come in?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Granty.

**Ed Gamble**

To share a Scotch egg with you?

**Mel Giedroyc**

If he was curled up on a little plate, just being his normal little self, just, 'Very posh, very very posh.' I would love that. I'm objectifying him a bit, and I do apologise to Hugh.

**Ed Gamble**

When you say, 'He's all curled up on a plate', you want a little Hugh Grant, or normal-sized actual Hugh Grant?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Actually, do you know what I'm thinking about? We were talking about Taskmaster. In our Taskmaster, series four, Noel was on it, Noel Fielding, do you remember when he disguised himself?

**Ed Gamble**

Camouflage, the camouflage task.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Camouflage banana.



**Ed Gamble**

Yes, as a banana.

**Mel Giedroyc**

And he ends up in the fruit bowl. I'm seeing Hugh Grant, a mini one.

**Ed Gamble**

So a mini Hugh Grant on a plate. Are you going to eat the mini Hugh Grant?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think that would be wrong.

**James Acaster**

Okay, but are you going to do it?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I might lick him.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**James Acaster**

A little lick.

**Ed Gamble**

That's a great side dish.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, Hugh Grant.

**James Acaster**

Hugh Grant.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Now, if I may, and tell me if this is a step too far, you've got a little Hugh Grant there, a shaman comes in-

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've got cramp guys, hang on. I've actually got really-

**James Acaster**

Oh no.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh no.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Sorry team, let me just-

**Ed Gamble**

That's alright.





**Mel Giedroyc**

I think it was the talk of Hugh Grant.

**Ed Gamble**

Well don't touch your house keys and we'll be alright.

**James Acaster**

Don't go anywhere near those house keys, keep your hands where we can see them.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've just cramped up my right leg.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh no.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Sorry gang, that's lack of Potassium or something isn't it?

**Ed Gamble**

You just had a bag of Mini Cheddars, so I doubt it.

**James Acaster**

While you're walking it off, do you want to talk about Baked Alaska-gate?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh my lord. Baked Alaska-gate. Now, sorry about that, I don't know what happened there. It was just the Hugh Grant chat cramped my leg up. Baked Alaska-gate, I mean the drama. It was outrageous. It was outrageous. I'm saying all this, because I'm trying to remember exactly what happened.

**James Acaster**

Sue said that she tried to talk him down.

**Ed Gamble**

Do you remember the incident yourself?

**Mel Giedroyc**

I like the way she puts herself into the centre of the drama there, I'm sure that was me trying to talk him down. He was in a bad mood, Ian, from the moment he walked in that morning. He just was, you could see it all over his-, his eyebrows were very, 'Grrr.' You know when people knit their eyebrows, you just know, 'Hello, give them a little bit of space.' You can just tell.

**Ed Gamble**

So are you saying when people are in a really weird, bad mood in the Bake Off tent, people know to steer clear of them, right?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Or you go up and make some terrible pun about what they're baking, either or.

**James Acaster**

Those days were over by the time I got in there. No one was punning any more.



**Mel Giedroyc**

They made some weird ice creams that day. Somebody was making a goat milk ice cream which stank.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

I can't remember who that was. You know when you can recall a smell, a smell brings you back to a place more than anything, almost, doesn't it? I can't remember who it was, once of the benches had this disgusting goat milk ice cream. Anyway, Ian, growling away. And it was something like 32 degrees. You know, of all the days to be making Baked Alaska.

**Ed Gamble**

I always feel terrible for them on those days.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Awful. Like when they're trying to temper chocolate.

**Ed Gamble**

Tempering chocolate, anything ice cream based.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Nightmare. And, back in the day, I don't know what it's like now, but I think the budget's a lot bigger isn't it, on Channel 4?

**James Acaster**

I'm not sure.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Back in the days of the BBC Bake Off, classic, there wasn't enough freezer space. There literally wasn't. They hadn't thought it through. So they were all desperately trying to get freezer space, and I can't remember what happened.

**James Acaster**

Someone took his out for a second, I think, to put- someone thought that his was done, took his out.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Diana. Diana thought- his had sesame seeds in it, I remember now. It was a sesame seed and something ice cream. Paul and Mary then said that there is no way-, it was out for 31 seconds I think, there is no way that if the ice cream had been properly made, it would have melted in that time, even in 32 degree heat. That's why they said his wasn't any good.

**James Acaster**

That was it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

But silly man, because he made a lovely sponge. And he binned it.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, it all went straight in the bin, straight in the bin.

**Mel Giedroyc**

He ruddy binned it.



**James Acaster**

Do you remember how you felt when it went in the bin?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Quite, 'Yes, this is going to make good telly.'

**James Acaster**

You loved it!

**Mel Giedroyc**

And it was one of those bins, I seem to remember, that was a pedal bin. So you saw the foot just, 'Woof!' And the top, 'Crack!' Like eating a Mini Cheddar, just fell swoop. Paul actually said, 'Ian, you could have brought up the contents of that bin to be judged and we'd have put you through.' But he just threw the baby out of the bathwater. So he was a goner.

**Ed Gamble**

He was a goner.

**James Acaster**

Your dream drink. You've got little Hugh Grant there as your side dish, you've given him a lick, what are you washing that down with?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Bacardi and Coke. Bacardi and diet Coke, I should say. Oh it's a fun drink.

**James Acaster**

Yes?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Because you've got your-

**James Acaster**

Ben's having a great time.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, Ben's loving this.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Ben's great. You've got the joy of the Bacardi that gives you the, 'Woo hoo hoo!' It keeps you really, sort of, 'Woah.' And then the diet Coke keeps you going. Like the young'uns these days would have, let's say, a Jägermeister and a Red Bull.

**Ed Gamble**

Or an espresso Martini, that sort of stuff.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Thank you. So you've got your fun, and then you've got your, 'Let's keep going with the fun.' The fun prolonger, if you will, all in one drink.

**James Acaster**

So are you partying after your dream meal?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.



**James Acaster**

Are you going to hit the town?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Partying throughout it, I would say.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. But would you have Bacardi and Coke with the meal?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well I like a cup of tea with a meal. I'm sure you've had loads of people on the meal who said a cup of tea.

**Ed Gamble**

Not many, a couple of people.

**James Acaster**

Yes, not many people pick that.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't think drinks should be boxed away into, 'This is just a drink. And you can only drink the drink when you're having a drink.' I think drinks should be allowed to be drunk with food.

**James Acaster**

Do you know what? I hope that gets typed out in its entirety, and posted online as an inspiring quote.

**Ed Gamble**

I'd hang that in my toilet.

**James Acaster**

All that was missing there was a comma and the word, 'Ambassador', at the end of it.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

Ambassador you've really spoiled us with these-, it was one of those Euro adverts wasn't it?

**Ed Gamble**

You got the quote wrong there again, by the way.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh, was it?

**Ed Gamble**

It wasn't, 'Ambassador, you've really spoiled us with these.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

What was it again? James, what is it?!



**James Acaster**

'Ambassador, with these Ferrero Rochers you're really spoiling us.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

Spoiling us! 'Ambassador with these Ferrero Rochers you're really spoiling us.'

**James Acaster**

I'd love to see a sketch of you in that advert, getting the line wrong every time.

**Ed Gamble**

Every single time. 'Right, cut! Mel-'

**James Acaster**

'Ambassador, that's what I call food.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

'Ambassador, you're so kind.'

**Ed Gamble**

And then the punchline is, you finally get the line right, and knock the pyramid over.

**James Acaster**

Yes, you lean on it and go straight through it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh I do love a Ferrero Rocher, can we have those for pudsies?

**James Acaster**

Is that, your dream pudding is another pyramid? It's the second pyramid of the meal.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, let's stay with the pyramid. Let's do a pyramid of Scotch egg.

**Ed Gamble**

Well Bacardi and Coke, you know like a champagne pyramid?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

You could do that with-, all the glasses have got Bacardi in them, and then you pour the diet Coke from the top and it all floods in.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That's good.

**James Acaster**

That's exciting, isn't it?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Have you ever drunk off a frozen swan?

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.



**Mel Giedroyc**

Have you.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I've never done that, like a vodka.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, a vodka ice sculpture at a Halloween party that my agency threw.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Was it nice?

**Ed Gamble**

It was fun.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'd love to drink out of an ice sculpture.

**James Acaster**

I did a-, Mock the Week had thrown a party.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You guys and your comedy parties, come on.

**James Acaster**

Actually no, it wasn't. After recording Mock the Week, we learnt that QI were throwing their party upstairs, so we all snuck in, and they had a swan ice sculpture.

**Ed Gamble**

What?!

**James Acaster**

That people could pour booze in and it would come down, but it was a doubler. So it would be two swan heads, and two of you had to do it.

**Ed Gamble**

How the other panel shows live.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well this is unbelievable. I thought the Beeb had really cut back on their-

**James Acaster**

This was years ago.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh it was ages ago? Still, an ice sculpture.

**Ed Gamble**

Now there's only one swan head at the QI party. That was a sad day.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Was that in Fry days, or Toksvig days?



**James Acaster**

This was, I think it was Fry days, TGI Fridays, but he wasn't there at the party. I remember Rhod Gilbert was there, he was on the panel, Noel was there, who was on the panel, and then died of a heart attack during a thunderstorm. Alan was there, he was at the time regaling everyone with stories of playing a Hobbit in the Lord of the Rings films.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Amazing.

**James Acaster**

But I remember at the Mock the Week drinks, there was a couple who had come to watch Mock the Week, they'd been given free tickets and backstage stuff, because there was a news story about how the guy was up late watching Mock the Week in bed, and because of that, he realised that his house was on fire. And was able to get everyone out of the house. And if he'd not been watching Mock the Week, it wouldn't have happened. So there was a news story about-

**Ed Gamble**

Well he would have been watching something else.

**James Acaster**

Yes, probably. He probably had to say, 'It was Mock the Week I was staying up watching on my own, in a room away from my wife.'

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)

**James Acaster**

But in the news story it was, 'Mock the Week saved our lives.'

**Ed Gamble**

He can't go to the set of what he was actually watching.

**James Acaster**

They got invited.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh so they were there, the actual couple?

**James Acaster**

Conveniently his laptop burnt up in the fire as well.

**Ed Gamble**

And his trousers and pants.

**James Acaster**

'Shit, my trousers and pants were in there!'

**Ed Gamble**

'I had them on, and they just went up in flames!'

**James Acaster**

'I had to roll around.' And the reason why we all crashed the QI party was because they had heard the rumours, and they clearly wanted to-, because they were like, 'We heard-', It wasn't that demeaning for us, because we never really knew-



**Mel Giedroyc**

Hang on, they sound quite crafty.

**James Acaster**

They were like, 'We've heard there's a QI party up there, Noel Fielding's up there, that's our favourite comedian.' And we were like, 'Come on then, let's go upstairs.'

**Mel Giedroyc**

That fire, was it arson? Did they do it themselves?

**James Acaster**

In order to meet Noel Fielding? In order to time it with the QI Christmas party? Might have been actually.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It all fits. I'm thinking back to panel shows, and it's literally a plastic cup, tumbler, of quash, isn't it? I'm not even sure I've had booze, of late, on a panel show. This is unbelievable.

**Ed Gamble**

Surely on your panel show, you can do a bit of flexing on it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I don't think we've got the budge, gang. I don't think we've got the budge.

**James Acaster**

You should tell them, 'I'll walk otherwise.' If you're not getting an ice sculpture that we pour gravy and bread sauce down.

**Mel Giedroyc**

'I'm walking. I'm bloody walking.' Do you know, I don't think we've ever-, Oh yes they do have drinks. I don't think I've ever been to them.

**Ed Gamble**

No because I guess, did it start during the height of Covid, right?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Absolutely. There was absolutely no mingling at all. I literally barely saw anyone, it was bizarre. You know, you worked through that, weird. Really weird.

**Ed Gamble**

I did Unforgivable during all of that.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes we did.

**Ed Gamble**

And part of the distancing was, you had to put a microphone on a long stick to interview some of the contributors from the public who came on. And you got this long microphone pole, and you thrust it in this woman's face, and then she told you that she had a genuine phobia of foam. (Laughter)

**Mel Giedroyc**

(Laughter) It was a foam mic, she had a phobia.





**Ed Gamble**

She was absolutely terrified.

**Mel Giedroyc**

She was scared, wasn't she?

**Ed Gamble**

Mel just losing her mind laughing, wiggling this big foam thing so it was just going up and down in her face.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It was. Well remembered, Ed.

**Ed Gamble**

It was fantastic, I'd never forget that.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Of course, series one, it was absolute madness.

**Ed Gamble**

Oh my God it was so funny. Is it a pyramid of Ferrero Rocher for dessert then?

**James Acaster**

It is. And your Taskmaster sandwich of course, for dessert.

**Ed Gamble**

The exotic sandwich.

**Mel Giedroyc**

The exotic sandwich.

**James Acaster**

Do you want that for dessert, the exotic sandwich?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, go on.

**James Acaster**

Yes? Chuck it in there? M&M up the nose?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh dear. Oh dear. Double Deckers, I just remember the Double Deckers being the absolute needle on the camel's back. No, the straw that broke the camel's back. Double Deckers.

**Ed Gamble**

Even worse if it was a needle though.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I forget in yours, you ate stuff didn't you?

**Ed Gamble**

No, we didn't have any eating in ours.

**Mel Giedroyc**

You didn't have any?



**Ed Gamble**

No, no eating.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Did you, James?

**James Acaster**

Yes. Some of ours ones-, actually they don't make us eat anything, but I did a lot of eating. We had to make a Christmas cracker, and I chose the Christmas cracker contents to be a Christmas dinner. So I ate a lot of that while I was making it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes, I remember that.

**James Acaster**

I'm going to read your menu back to you now, see how you feel about it.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Okay.

**James Acaster**

You would like sparkling water with a dash of something, maybe elderflower. Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms with all the dips. Starter, Melba toast with mackerel paté. Main course, a pyramid of expensive Scotch eggs. Humdinger Scotch egg, lamb mince Tubsey and Hyder, one from the Gloucestershire pub, and the black pudding one that Ed mentioned.

**Ed Gamble**

I'm going to just suspect that Benito had a bit of trouble keeping up with this, writing it down, by the rhythm in which you're reading it.

**James Acaster**

Also, it's a build your own Melba toast with the mackerel paté.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Thank you.

**James Acaster**

Christmas, stuffing, bread sauce, gravy, in a prison tray.

**Ed Gamble**

Pigs in blankets are back as well.

**James Acaster**

Boxing Day sandwich the next day.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Thank you.

**James Acaster**

Side dish, tiny Hugh Grant, give him a lick.

**Ed Gamble**

(Laughter)



**James Acaster**

Drink, a pyramid of Bacardi and diet Cokes. Dessert, a pyramid of Ferrero Rocher, and your Taskmaster exotic sandwich just to finish it off.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I'm not going to change a single thing.

**Ed Gamble**

Well you shouldn't.

**Mel Giedroyc**

That sounds absolutely ideal.

**Ed Gamble**

That's perfect, isn't it?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. Oh yes. Oh there's so many highlights there.

**Ed Gamble**

So many pyramids.

**Mel Giedroyc**

So many pyramids.

**James Acaster**

A lot of pyramids, it's precarious that meal.

**Ed Gamble**

Will tiny Hugh Grant maybe go and scale one of the pyramids, do you think?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Yes. He'll be Howard Carter, he'll go in in a sort of pith helmet and discover the tomb of Tutankhamun or something, I don't know.

**James Acaster**

And once more, what's the catchphrase?

**Mel Giedroyc**

Oh. Okay. 'Ambassador, with these Ferrero Rocher you are truly spoiling us.'

**James Acaster**

Yes!

**Ed Gamble**

Yes!

**Mel Giedroyc**

Will that do?

**James Acaster**

In fact, that might be more accurate than what I was saying.

**Mel Giedroyc**

It wasn't, 'Truly.' Definitely not, 'Truly.'



**James Acaster**

But I think, 'Truly', sounds better.

**Mel Giedroyc**

I think you were right.

**Ed Gamble**

I think you got it absolutely perfect, and it's a wonderful way to end the podcast.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Well the key thing is to remember that spoiling us comes at the end. Because if you do spoiling us at the beginning, then you end up with a real old hash. 'Ambassador you're spoiling us with these amazing chocolates that you've brought in on a plate.' It doesn't have the same ring to it.

**Ed Gamble**

Mel, thank you very much for coming to the Dream Restaurant, and merry Christmas.

**James Acaster**

Merry Christmas Mel.

**Mel Giedroyc**

Merry Christmas to both of you.

**Ed Gamble**

What a wonderful Christmas menu, in a way.

**James Acaster**

Yum yum yum. In a way.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

In a way.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

The menu itself, not ideal perhaps.

**James Acaster**

Kind of mad, a lot of pyramids.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, a lot of pyramids.

**James Acaster**

The worst Christmas dinner I've ever heard.



**Ed Gamble**

I actually was on board with a lot of the Christmas dinner. It's a shame to lose the potatoes, but I would happily just have a big bowl of pigs in blankets, stuffing, gravy, bread sauce.

**James Acaster**

Sure. Pigs in blankets, yes I'm happy with that being in there. I'd probably put them number one on my own personal list. We've done it before.

**Ed Gamble**

We've done it before, and we'll do it again.

**James Acaster**

We've ranked them all. Yes, it was an odd menu, but so many highlights along the way. Tiny little Hugh Grant I'm sure enjoyed himself. We didn't ask if Hugh Grant was allowed to go around and eat the food.

**Ed Gamble**

I'm sure he would, if there's so much stuff on the pyramid. But I would be worried he would gnaw away at the foundations of the pyramid.

**James Acaster**

And it would topple on him.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes. Poor little Hugh Grant.

**James Acaster**

He'd be taken away in a tidal wave of Rochers.

**Ed Gamble**

I had too many questions about the tiny Hugh Grant that I didn't get to ask.

**James Acaster**

Yes. Apologies to the listeners if you're thinking we should have really drilled down into the Hugh Grant thing a little bit more. Maybe we'll have to get Mel back in the future for something, and we can really find out more about tiny Hugh Grant being the side dish.

**Ed Gamble**

Is it actual Hugh Grant? Is it a tiny representation of Hugh Grant? Do you release him back into the wild afterwards?

**James Acaster**

Is he allowed to just do his own thing in between courses, when it's not the side? Is he allowed to just walk around doing stuff?

**Ed Gamble**

If he needs to go to the toilet, does he have to go out to the Quince tree? So many questions. First time we've ever had a person as a course.

**James Acaster**

Yes, that is the first time we've had a person. I think no one's chosen cannibalism.

**Ed Gamble**

You are right.



**James Acaster**

Yes? But also, didn't say satsuma in a stocking.

**Ed Gamble**

No, exactly, didn't say satsuma, very happy about that.

**James Acaster**

And we might have another Christmassy episode coming up soon.

**Ed Gamble**

Yes, next week, we definitely do.

**James Acaster**

Maybe, if you wish upon a star. Christmas time, you be nice, not naughty.

**Ed Gamble**

Be nice, not naughty, but we will be back next week with another Christmas episode.

**James Acaster**

If you're lucky.

**Ed Gamble**

With another absolutely belting guest.

**James Acaster**

Yes.

**Ed Gamble**

See you next week! Merry Christmas.

**James Acaster**

Merry Christmas!