



Off Menu – Ep 232 – Stuart Laws

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast. Taking the cheesecake of humour, dipping it in the batter of the internet, and frying it in the hot oil of conversation.

James Acaster

That is Ed Gamble, my name is James Acaster. We own and run a dream restaurant.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And every so-, and I don't usually say that we run it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Every week, we invite in a guest. We ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish, and drink. Not in that order. And this week, our guest is Stuart Laws.

Ed Gamble

Stuart Laws, a wonderful comedian. He's got a special available on YouTube produced by 800 Pound Gorilla, and it's called 'All In'.

James Acaster

Stuart Laws, when we-, you know, we started stand-up together. I've watched him blossom into the comedian he is today.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

He's also, you know, a man of many talents, produced all of my stand-up specials.

Ed Gamble

And my one.

James Acaster

What?



Ed Gamble

Well, he-, you know, they filmed it. Turtle Canyon.

James Acaster

Yes. He did produce yours.

Ed Gamble

Turtle Canyon, one of the hottest production properties in UK comedy.

James Acaster

Yes. That's not hyperbole.

Ed Gamble

No. They're the go-to.

James Acaster

Yes. So, we've got the Steven Spielberg of UK-,

Ed Gamble

Troubles.

James Acaster

UK comedy specials. However-,

Ed Gamble

He eats like shit.

James Acaster

Huh?

Ed Gamble

He eats like shit.

James Acaster

Yes, he eats like a fucking-, I mean, Ed once said on this podcast that I eat like a bin. Stuart Laws eats like a full on garbage disposal in the most disgusting house in the world.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so we'll be asking him about that.

James Acaster

Yes. Look forward to this.



Ed Gamble

We do have a secret ingredient that if he says, we're going to kick him out.

James Acaster

Yes, and this week, the secret ingredient is Block O'Choc.

Ed Gamble

Now, I've only just found out about Block O'Choc, James.

James Acaster

Yes. Now, I'm using my inside knowledge of Stu. I've known Stu for a long time and I know about Block O'Choc. I went into his office once, and he had this, literally the size of a brick, block of solid chocolate.

Ed Gamble

And it looks like a brick as well, right?

James Acaster

Yes. Looks exactly like a brick. They've designed it to look like a brick. So, there's solid chocolate on his desk. I asked him, 'What's that?' He said, 'That's Block O'Choc.' I said, 'Wow. Why'd you get that?' Something about the internet and the Block O'Choc people contacting him and asking him to Instagram about the Block O'Choc. They'd sent it to him, he hadn't Instagrammed it yet, I was like, 'Right, let's do something for the Gram with this, with the Block O'Choc,' and then we spent the whole day eating it and it was actually delicious. So then I wanted to get him one for his birthday, which I did, which was the following week. He got another Block O'Choc, but, also, it was quite a palaver getting the Block O'Choc because the only way you can buy it, as of the time of recording, is that you have to Bacs the man directly and transfer him on your banking app the money so that he then sends you the Block O'Choc. You know, I think Stu might, for a joke-,

Ed Gamble

Pick Block O'Choc?

James Acaster

Yes. This is one of the ones where I think that he actually might do it and we might get him, so I'm going to-,

Ed Gamble

We've got to get someone, man. I'm hungry for blood in here.

James Acaster

It'll be fun to get him, so I'm saying Block O'Choc, thinking that he might-, you know, it depends what Stuart Laws shows up here today. It could be-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, because could be trolling.



James Acaster

Yes, he's a bit of a troller sometimes and so sometimes we could get him. He might turn up and he might do his genuine dream menu, what he would like to eat, but he might turn up and go, 'I'm going to do a joke dream menu and mess around,' and if he does that, I think he'll choose Block O'Choc for, like, a main course or something, and then we kick him out, and then it'll serve him right for not taking the format seriously.

Ed Gamble

Yes, bad luck. Well, let's see if he falls into our trap. This is the Off Menu menu of Stuart Laws.

James Acaster

Welcome Stu to the dream restaurant.

Stuart Laws

Thank you so much, man.

James Acaster

Pssh!

Stuart Laws

Ah, here he is.

James Acaster

Welcome Stuart Laws to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Stuart Laws

Have you?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Well, certainly in the early days of this podcast you had a habit of every time we put a clue for a guest, replying to the tweet saying, 'it sounds like Stuart Laws. Can't believe I'm the guest in the dream restaurant tomorrow'.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

And I never was.

Ed Gamble

No. Until today.



James Acaster

And this'll be the first time you don't do it, I guess.

Stuart Laws

Yes, I'll keep this one secret.

James Acaster

The clue will go out, you'll-

Stuart Laws

I'll keep this one secret because, yes, it's a toxic atmosphere here. Let's bring that up straight away.

Ed Gamble

Well, because quite often we have guests in that we don't know and that we respect and we're trying to be nice to, and with you today, we know you so well that we've just put you on edge massively by telling you we've got a great secret ingredient and we're desperate to kick you out of this.

James Acaster

You're definitely going to pick it and you're going to be out on your ass pretty quickly.

Stuart Laws

Yes. You get all of these Hollywood people in and you're like, 'Oh, Mr Rudd, we'd love you to stay here forever.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, we would have done. What a lovely man.

James Acaster

That would have been great. Great guy.

Stuart Laws

But with me, a volley of texts telling me I'm getting kicked out straight away.

Ed Gamble

Well, we're recording three today. You're two of three, so it would really help us if we got this wrapped up in about ten minutes so we can have a rest.

James Acaster

Yes, get you out on your ass, get Jimmy Famurewa. My speech impediment is not good with that.

Ed Gamble

It's not ideal name-wise.



James Acaster

An R and a W close to one another, I'm absolutely fucked.

Stuart Laws

Okay, so your secret ingredient's not going to be raw veggies?

James Acaster

You're right there.

Ed Gamble

But James could do with maybe an extra hour to practice Jimmy Fram-, oh no.

James Acaster

What do you think the clue's going to be that Benito's going to tweet out about you?

Stuart Laws

It'll be like, 'one of the nicest people I've ever met. Didn't deserve what happened to him in the episode'.

Ed Gamble

Well, we like people to be able to guess, so there's no point in tweeting absolute bullshit.

Stuart Laws

Jacked, this next guy's jacked.

Ed Gamble

The thing is, the early joke that you had about saying, 'I can't believe I'm in the dream restaurant tomorrow,' has been superseded now everyone just tweets 'is it Mark Watson?' all the time, but the real rub is, you've finally got on Off Menu and we're never having Mark Watson on because we love that people guess it's him every time.

James Acaster

Yes, we love that people always guess it's him, so we're going to keep it going that he never comes on.

Stuart Laws

Whereas I did a short-lived bunch of tweets which I thought was funny and then got bored of it. Didn't get bored of something though, listening to the podcast. What a wonderful podcast.

Ed Gamble

Don't you try that bullshit now, Stu. It's too late, we've picked the secret ingredient.

Stuart Laws

I love listening to it. Every time, you two are great hosts and you're so kind to your guests and you just embrace their quirks, their foibles.



Ed Gamble

Every other guest we've had, we're like, it's been a relaxed experience where they just feel free to chat about the stuff they like, you know, the food that they want on their menu. With you, I want you to feel like you're in a film about Vietnam and you're walking around desperately watching around for Viet Cong traps.

Stuart Laws

And is that what the secret ingredient is? Like, Vietnamese food?

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's pho.

Stuart Laws

I wanted to say that, but I was unsure on the pronunciation. I was like, 'I don't want to be the guy coming on a food podcast going, and is it the foe?'

James Acaster

Now, we know your food habits.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Disgusting.

Stuart Laws

What? No, really advanced. Delicious. Here's what I think the secret ingredient's going to be. Water.

James Acaster

It needs to be water. We need to get you on that immediately.

Stuart Laws

Straight away.

James Acaster

If only we had the guts to-, you know, we wouldn't get away with that. I think we'd have to say water with something in it.

Stuart Laws

Right, yes. Nerds.

Ed Gamble

Water with nerds in it?



Stuart Laws

Yes. I'd drink that, yes.

James Acaster

That is something that the listener needs to know, that Stuart is-, I mean, if you think I like desserts and sweets, you ain't seen nothing yet. This is my Emperor Palpatine.

Stuart Laws

This is why I don't think you want me kicked out, because you know there's no way I'm picking cheeseboard.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Bro, there's no way.

Ed Gamble

I'm really fascinated to hear what you pick, man, because you're the only person I know who-, I mean, similar ages? At our age, we'll eat Domino's for lunch on a workday.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And then have to carry on working.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And do you feel fine after that stuff?

Stuart Laws

I feel like hell. I feel like absolute hell on earth. That's why I don't get my work done.

Ed Gamble

Yes?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

And you're an exercise enthusiast, so you're exercising all the time and then I'm doing it at lunch time.



Stuart Laws

That's the only reason I exercise, to stave off what I'm doing to my body with my diet, and every time my friend who is my PT, he says, 'You know, you just need to sort your diet out and you'll be fine?' And I'm like, 'Yes, but that's the key isn't it? I'd have to sort my diet out.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, but then what do you have in your life?

Stuart Laws

Yes, exactly. Nothing.

Ed Gamble

Diet and exercise at the same time, what's the point? People do that for life.

James Acaster

Yeah, you can't do it for life.

Ed Gamble

I can do bursts of that, but-

James Acaster

Yes. Little bursts, I feel great.

Stuart Laws

Yes, little bursts, and I've sort of adjusted slightly. I used to give myself like stabbing pains in my chest because of how much salt I ate.

Ed Gamble

Back in those days, talk us through a normal salty day.

Stuart Laws

So, at breakfast, a packet of Frazzles.

Ed Gamble

Are you serious?

Stuart Laws

I've done that, yes.

Ed Gamble

I laughed at the joke, James immediately knew it wasn't a joke.

Stuart Laws

Then, you know, maybe go to the cinema, have a large salt popcorn.



Ed Gamble

After breakfast?

Stuart Laws

Like an early showing, yes. That's the next food I'm eating that day.

Ed Gamble

Yes, a salt popcorn.

Stuart Laws

Probably then a Domino's of some sort, and then end with like- this is bad. Alright. One time, my friends came around to mine when I was a teenager and my parents had gone away, and they came while I was eating food and I didn't know how to cook, so I was just eating a bowl of salted minced beef.

James Acaster

What? Did you cook the minced beef?

Stuart Laws

I cooked the mince beef.

James Acaster

And then you just put salt on it?

Stuart Laws

And then I salted it. That was the seasoning. Now, I'm better now-, And now I can do other stuff.

Ed Gamble

That sounds like something the Liver King would do. Do you know the Liver King?

Stuart Laws

I don't know who the Liver King is, but I like the sound of the guy.

Ed Gamble

He's this big social media guy. He's this big ripped guy, and he only eats, like, offal. He looks like a caveman. The Liver King.

Stuart Laws

Yes, that was me as a teenager, just hunched over.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you were the Liver King.



James Acaster

Yes, you base your diet on people who are ripped, but on their cheat days. So the Rock's cheat day, that's what you eat most of the time.

Stuart Laws

Look, I'm better than that now, and I've tried to cut out things like biscuits and crisps. Things like that where you just sort of snack. Try and get rid of those snack things, but it's still so bad. It's so bad, but it's not like-, James is here, pretending he's all that with his food podcast. You are pretending you're that all the time, look at you.

Ed Gamble

You are.

James Acaster

I don't pretend I'm all that. The listeners know, the listeners know who I am. They've got the measure of me. I'm not fooling anyone, but-,

Ed Gamble

James, he'd never eat a bowl of salted minced beef.

James Acaster

I'd absolutely never do that.

Stuart Laws

That is fair.

James Acaster

And have never. I couldn't start the day with a packet of Frazzles. My brain, I couldn't do that.

Stuart Laws

No, I couldn't do that now. I don't really eat breakfast now. I find that more difficult these days, so that's why I just had breakfast just now. 1.30.

James Acaster

Yes, saw you eating it. What was the pastry you were eating?

Stuart Laws

A pain au chocolat. What's it? A pain au choc?

Ed Gamble

Pain au choc.

Stuart Laws

There's a little reference to your podcast.



Ed Gamble

Just to prove you're a fan.

Stuart Laws

Just to prove. James one time was like, 'Let's go out for a nice meal.' Took me out to Spaghetti House.

Ed Gamble

What?

James Acaster

No, he's absolutely done me there on that story, because that's not what the story is.

Ed Gamble

When was this?

Stuart Laws

Spaghetti House.

Ed Gamble

This better have been pre-2018.

James Acaster

No, listen, the story isn't, 'Let's go out for a nice meal.' No.

Stuart Laws

He said, 'Come on, you're a good friend, it's been a tough old few months, let's go and treat you.'

Ed Gamble

'Let's go a for a lovely slap-up meal'

James Acaster

We were going to see a film at the Vue in Westfield, and I may have said, 'Let's have a nice meal beforehand,' and then looked around and was like, 'Let's go there.' I just chose Spaghetti House because I'd never been there before. 'Let's go to Spaghetti House.'

Stuart Laws

They looked flummoxed. They hadn't had a customer all day.

James Acaster

Yes, I'd forgotten about that. Yes, we went to Spaghetti House.

Ed Gamble

How was Spaghetti House?



James Acaster

I can't remember now. I can't remember what I even ordered.

Stuart Laws

What's the ranking like? Bella Italia, Spaghetti House, Zizzi?

Ed Gamble

Hang on, are you going up or down?

Stuart Laws

Going up now.

Ed Gamble

I think Spaghetti House is lower than Bella Italia.

Stuart Laws

You think?

Ed Gamble

Spaghetti House is lowest of the low, I think.

Stuart Laws

Well, this is what I thought.

Ed Gamble

It's called Spaghetti House.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

You know what you're getting.

Stuart Laws

I couldn't believe it.

James Acaster

Is Spaghetti House where the fourth little pig lives?

Ed Gamble

Stu, you've got a special out on YouTube.

Stuart Laws

Yes, I do.



Ed Gamble

Tell us about it?

Stuart Laws

Okay, yes. I mean, it came out a while ago, and it was my 2019 show so it's a long, long time in the making and I cut out a routine from that that was affected by the pandemic, but when Ed came to see it, he came to see it in Edinburgh in 2019, and it was something about in 2019 your greatest fear is not being invited on your friends' podcasts, and then everybody in the audience just looked over at Ed.

Ed Gamble

But also I would say they looked over at me because you looked me directly in the eye when you did that bit.

Stuart Laws

Probably yes.

James Acaster

You thought he'd done a, 'What's he looking at?'

Ed Gamble

Yes, 'What's he looking at?'

James Acaster

'Who's that guy?'

Ed Gamble

Also, I think when you walked on stage and saw me, you basically said, 'Hello.'

Stuart Laws

'Oh, hello.'

Ed Gamble

Absolutely always distracted by everything. Just look right at him and go, 'Hello'.

Stuart Laws

'Oh, Ed's here.'

James Acaster

That's most of us anyway when our friends are in. If we walk out and we see them. We're deliver the whole show-, if not delivering the jokes to them, we're looking at them after every joke.

Stuart Laws

Yes. 'They like that bit?'



James Acaster

Yes, especially if they're comedians.

Ed Gamble

Yes, or doing a joke that you know that they'll like and delivering it with way more gusto than you normally do, because it normally does when it's us.

James Acaster

Yes, so you do it in a voice, you know, because you know they'll laugh at it. Yes, that's where, I mean, you know, where we did my specials and you produced them. Ed and Nish were there.

Stuart Laws

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

As many people have noticed, because that's pretty much what I'm doing for the whole show. Deliver this with more gusto, there we go, got them.

Stuart Laws

Now, your specials are available to watch online, is that correct?

James Acaster

Yes. You produced them.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Again, just quick credit where it's due to the listeners.

Stuart Laws

Credit where credit's due. You can get four of them on Netflix.

James Acaster

Yes, let's promote yours.

Stuart Laws

Okay, mine's on YouTube.

James Acaster

Yes, not everybody can get it.

Ed Gamble

'Stuart Laws All In'.



Stuart Laws

'Stuart Laws Is All In'. I mean, I think it's good.

Ed Gamble

It was a great show when I saw it. It's good.

Stuart Laws

But it's difficult. It's a structural masterpiece.

Ed Gamble

Okay, nice.

James Acaster

Great.

Stuart Laws

And that has been a review quote for it so let's not do that bit down.

James Acaster

Who reviewed it? Who said that? Who said, 'structural masterpiece'?

Stuart Laws

It'll be like Ed-, not the big-,

James Acaster

Ed Gamble?

Stuart Laws

Ed Gamble.

Ed Gamble

Yes, 'structural masterpiece'.

Stuart Laws

I think you said, 'It won't be for everyone,' the last time I came on to promote it, on the show you were on.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it won't be for everyone. Yes.

Stuart Laws

What else could I promote? I've got something to promote, surely.



James Acaster

You want to promote other stuff?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Okay.

Stuart Laws

I guess I'm probably doing my new show at this time.

James Acaster

Yes? What's it called?

Stuart Laws

Yes, you should come and see that. 'Stuart Laws, is that guy still going?'

James Acaster

Right again, same really.

Stuart Laws

What have you got to complain about for that as a show title?

James Acaster

No, you're backing yourself.

Ed Gamble

You don't want to promote Putting Zoo?

Stuart Laws

Putting Zoo, the show that I didn't do but got nominated for an award for it.

Ed Gamble

Did you hear about this James?

James Acaster

Yes, I did hear about this. Do you want to explain it to the listener?

Stuart Laws

So in 2022 in Edinburgh, I was up there filming and directing a bunch of shows, and while I was there I just thought, 'You know what, why don't I just pretend that I'm doing a show and just see how foolish or pathetic the industry is in terms of, if you promote yourself as if you're doing really well, how well people will see you as doing?' So I paid for a billboard with my poster which was a really shit poster that I



decided to make for a show called Putting Zoo which doesn't exist, and just talked it up to everyone that I saw. Turns out, I really am quite good at promoting myself when it doesn't exist. People were like, 'This guy's doing great this year.'

Ed Gamble

When you know there's nothing to back it up with. Yes, no stakes.

Stuart Laws

And then the comedians choice awards came out and you could be nominated for that by other comics, and so I just got a few people, I was like, 'Do you mind putting me forward for this?' And then enough people did that I got shortlisted for the main best show award, and then as a final prank they were like, 'Yes, great. You have to come and do it in London,' so I had to then invent a show.

Ed Gamble

You went and did it?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I invented a show that I said doesn't really work because my twin lives up in Edinburgh and so I've had to tweak it a little bit, and I did-, you know, in The Prestige, the transported man?

James Acaster

Yes, I know that. Yes. I mean, I watched The Prestige. I love The Prestige, but I also know about The Prestige because, good luck ever meeting up with Stuart when he doesn't mention it. He loves it. He loves The Prestige so much.

Stuart Laws

I use it as a structural basis for everything I do, and I did the transported man but I was like, 'Obviously some bits at the start, some of this shit won't work because my twin's not here,' and then just had my friend and comic, Rhiannon Shaw, wearing the same clothes as me, step out from the other side of the stage to pick up the ball that I'd rolled across and then carry on doing the show as me.

James Acaster

I thought you were going to say that no one was there because in the film Christian Bale does the thing where he bounces the ball across the stage, he goes in a door, and then out the other door the other side of the stage, he walks out of it again and catches the ball. I thought you were going to do it where you go in the door, the ball just bounces off stage and no one comes out the door.

Stuart Laws

Maybe I should have done that. I rolled a golf ball and Rhiannon stepped out, picked it up, said, 'Honk honk,' and then did some material and then went, 'Oh actually, I'm going to get changed back into the other gilet,' and then I came back on stage.

Ed Gamble

It's not for everyone.



Stuart Laws

It's not for everyone.

James Acaster

Still or sparkling water, Stuart Laws?

Stuart Laws

Just still, please.

Ed Gamble

Just still?

Stuart Laws

Yes, thank you.

James Acaster

Get out.

Ed Gamble

Not messing with the sparkling? You're not a sparkling boy?

Stuart Laws

No, I've never liked sparkling and it always puzzles me when people pick it. I've tried every now and then, I'm like, 'You know what? You're in your late thirties now, it's time to be a grown up, have some sparkling water,' and then I try it, I'm like, 'Ew,' and I spit it out.

Ed Gamble

Do you see it as grown up water?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Really? I think still water is more grown up.

Stuart Laws

Like wine and beer, I don't like wine or beer either.

Ed Gamble

You don't like wine or beer?

Stuart Laws

And I feel like that's what I'll grow up and like.



James Acaster

He loves cocktails? You started having cocktail nights.

Stuart Laws

I love cocktails. I'll have a cocktail night every now and then. Made margaritas. You didn't have them, you had the old-fashioned, didn't you?

James Acaster

I had a margarita earlier on in the night.

Stuart Laws

Yes? People called it lethal juice.

James Acaster

Yes, it was unacceptable. I said, 'That's not a margarita.' It was just pure booze.

Stuart Laws

It was perfect. It was exactly to the recipe.

James Acaster

Yes, I'm sure it was.

Ed Gamble

Was it your recipe that you invented?

Stuart Laws

Yes. It's lime and then the same amount in triple sec, and then double that in tequila. That's a margarita.

Ed Gamble

Is it?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Well, look, that's what it tasted like for sure, those ingredients that you just listed there.

Stuart Laws

It was delicious.

James Acaster

Yes. I mean, maybe it was so delicious that it instantly made me make the wrong decision and have ten old-fashions or whatever it was afterwards. It was not a good next day.



Stuart Laws

Would you say that you reacted well to all of that alcohol and then sort of felt good the next day?

James Acaster

Didn't feel good the next day, and in the evening I definitely, you know, the morning after where you're having a go, 'Okay, let's go back over everything I said yesterday and see if I have to apologise to everyone,' and the only person I was mean to was you, so no apologies.

Ed Gamble

No apologies necessary.

James Acaster

I made fun of him because I found out that he's got-, you know people used to have those CD wallets?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

He's still got one full. Absolutely full to the brim.

Stuart Laws

Not full of CDs though. DVDs.

James Acaster

Oh, DVDs, but, like, he'd just show you a-, it's just like book after book of CDs.

Stuart Laws

I didn't get it out-,

James Acaster

You did.

Stuart Laws

As like a, 'Everyone, now time to look at this.'

Ed Gamble

It sounds like you did and they thought, like, it was a photo album.

Stuart Laws

It was discovered and then I had to go through it and explain why I had so many seasons of Family Guy in there, Eastbound & Down. Just like page after page of Eastbound & Down.

Ed Gamble

It sounds like a really good night, I'm sorry I couldn't come.



Stuart Laws

Yes, it's a shame.

Ed Gamble

Lethal margaritas and then look at Stu's DVD collection.

James Acaster

DVD wallet.

Ed Gamble

DVD wallet, yes.

Stuart Laws

Alphabetical order.

James Acaster

P is absolutely full because Prestige he's got about 50 times .

Ed Gamble

Do you think you'll ever be grown up enough to enjoy sparkling water? Do you see that as the next step in your life?

Stuart Laws

That would be, I think, after the mid-life crisis. That's when you readjust everything. Suddenly I eat really clean all the time and I'm fully into oat milk. At the moment, I'm halfway-house.

Ed Gamble

Are you? What, cow's milk?

James Acaster

A cow that's been eating oats?

Stuart Laws

I'll have some oat milk, I have some cow milk, and then I'll switch between. At the moment it's full still. Maybe I'll put some cordial in with the sparkling. Would that work? Does that count?

James Acaster

You can do that.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes. But if you want still water, just have still water.

Stuart Laws

No, I don't have still water, that's just there.



James Acaster

But if you want-, if what you would prefer is the cordial.

Stuart Laws

Well, here's where I'm seeing things, right? I'm in this restaurant all day in my head.

James Acaster

What? Okay, that's not part of the rules.

Stuart Laws

So, the dream restaurant is a town. I'm in a town. The whole town is the restaurant, and it's a whole day that I'm there. So I'm waking up, I'm having some still water.

James Acaster

Are you in the town square?

Stuart Laws

To start off with, I think.

James Acaster

Or are they in a restaurant?

Ed Gamble

Where are you waking up?

Stuart Laws

In a B&B in the town.

Ed Gamble

Okay, lovely.

Stuart Laws

I'm having some tap water, some still water. I've progressed from tap to still. A bottle of still just outside the door. The B&B owners left it there and it's chilled.

Ed Gamble

That's nice. Can you tell us more about the B&B owner and the town?

Stuart Laws

Yes. He used to live in my area and so he wants to talk about that loads.

Ed Gamble

He sounds so annoying. This is in your dreams? An annoying B&B owner who leaves you water and waits for you to talk about your town?



Stuart Laws

Yes. It gives me a chance to practise interacting with people in a normal way.

Ed Gamble

Okay. Do you need that first thing in the morning?

Stuart Laws

Because yes, I've got plans for the rest of the day. I need to be match fit for talking to people.

James Acaster

Talking to the Airbnb owner who's annoying?

Stuart Laws

Yes, and he's saying stuff like, 'Oh yes, I used to go down Ruislip lido,' stuff like that.

James Acaster

Fucking hell.

Stuart Laws

And I'm like, 'Oh yes, it's very popular. It was very popular during lockdown,' and he's like, 'Yes, I heard about that actually,' and I'm like, 'Fucking hell, I'm blending in. I am blending in right now.'

James Acaster

Blending in? In a conversation just you and one person?

Stuart Laws

Yes, who barely notices I'm there.

Ed Gamble

'I'm blending in here.'

James Acaster

Okay. So, you don't want any cordial?

Stuart Laws

No, no cordial. Was that the secret ingredient?

James Acaster

No. Is there a reason why you've chosen to have it a whole day in a town?

Stuart Laws

Partly because my starter, if I ever get to it, I don't really like starters.



Ed Gamble

Get out.

Stuart Laws

So, it's a slight shift on that.

James Acaster

Okay, so we'll find out why you're having a whole day in a town.

Stuart Laws

I can Aykroyd this if you want.

James Acaster

No, don't Aykroyd it. We can't afford to do that again.

Ed Gamble

Imagine if we tried to kick Aykroyd out halfway through his monologue.

James Acaster

So, tap water and then still water waiting outside.

Stuart Laws

Yes, so I've probably got a little glass by the bed that I've filled up the night before. A little swig of that, that gets the system going. Start pissing myself.

James Acaster

Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms or bread, Stuart Laws? Poppadoms or bread?

Stuart Laws

Bread. Okay, every single time. I'm like-, that's going to be-, so tense about the bread. That's where I thought it would be.

Ed Gamble

You thought we were going to pick water or bread as the secret ingredient?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I don't know. I know I wouldn't put anything past you. Also, I imagine now there is a possibility that the secret ingredient's so random that it would never be picked by me and it's all psychological warfare.

Ed Gamble

The thing is-, yes, whatever way round it is, it works for us because if you get kicked out because we put a really obvious secret ingredient in, great. If you're constantly tense for the whole episode, great.



Stuart Laws

Is that what you want?

James Acaster

I'll tell you what the secret ingredient is. I won't tell you what it is, but it'll be like a Derren Brown trick for you. When you get kicked out, you'll go, 'How did they predict that?'

Stuart Laws

And then I'll respect it.

Ed Gamble

It'll be just like The Prestige.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Oh, it would be just like The Prestige.

James Acaster

It won't be like-, won't be a trap that just anyone could have fallen for.

Stuart Laws

Is one of you a twin and never revealed it?

James Acaster

It's also not like something that is famously your favourite thing. It's something that you will be like, 'How did they know that I was going to pick it? I can't believe this has happened to me.'

Stuart Laws

You've just got yourself now a timid little mouse as a guest.

Ed Gamble

Not for the first time.

Stuart Laws

So, I'm picking bread.

James Acaster

Yes, great, and I wouldn't have known actually whether you would have picked poppadoms or bread because I know that you like crisps. You're sat there with Frazzles. I mean, you could have had Frazzles here.

Stuart Laws

Could have done. Back in the day.



Ed Gamble

You could have had poppadom with Frazzle dust on it.

Stuart Laws

If you had me on as a teenager, that would have been it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that would have been weird.

Stuart Laws

It would have been weird. It was pre-podcast time, I didn't know either of you, but yes. Get a little email to agent_laws@yahoo.com. It'll be the little bread that you get in the rack at a B&B.

Ed Gamble

So, is this in the B&B still?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I'm still there.

Ed Gamble

Are you now basing your choices on the fact you're in a B&B?

Stuart Laws

Yes, that one.

James Acaster

Because it doesn't sound like it could be anyone's actual favourite.

Ed Gamble

Do you mean toast as well?

Stuart Laws

Yes, toast.

Ed Gamble

You mean toast, yes.

James Acaster

You've painted yourself into a corner where you're spending the day in a town and you're in a B&B, and now you're having to go, 'Okay, so now I'm in the town, so what would I have? If I'm starting the day, I have the water. Then my bread's got to be in the B&B still, so I've got to have the B&B bread,' even though it's not your favourite bread.



Ed Gamble

And it is toast.

Stuart Laws

Potentially the favourite-, right, here's the alternative. So I go do Park Run quite regularly. It's a 5k run, 9am on Saturday. The toasts they have at the Rickmansworth Aquadrome café are just a delicious sourdough, delicious butter. That's why I run it. I'm getting there, I'm having that every single time with either marmalade, but what will I do? I'll leave a little quarter of each one with no marmalade on just so I can enjoy it with the butter. Right? Then, I'm into the marmalade or to the raspberry jam.

James Acaster

Okay.

Ed Gamble

It's perfectly possible that in the B&B that you've invented in your mind what they're putting in the rack is the Rickmansworth-,

James Acaster

Aquadrome.

Ed Gamble

Aquadrome-,

Stuart Laws

Cafe.

Ed Gamble

Cafe toast that you have after or before you do parkrun.

Stuart Laws

I'd love that but there's also something incredibly evocative about that, sort of, wholemeal half slice that's slightly soggy in a B&B.

Ed Gamble

Well, you can get-,

James Acaster

You're getting provocative.

Ed Gamble

The joy about that is when you're in a hotel or a B&B and they say, 'Do you want white or brown bread?' I'm always back with mixed.



Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you can have a mixed rack. You can have the Aquadrome white and then the B&B wholemeal.

Stuart Laws

I'll actually go with the seeded sourdough, which is slightly wholemeal-y.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Not to pick you up on that at all in any way.

Ed Gamble

It's fine, it's your dream B&B.

Stuart Laws

Thank you. It's just a new podcast.

James Acaster

Hold on, what is it?

Ed Gamble

It's toast.

Stuart Laws

It's the rack but it's sourdough toast.

James Acaster

But it's not the Rickmansworth Aquadrome cafe toast that you'd have.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Is that the secret ingredient?

James Acaster

No. No, that would be very Derren Brown, if we knew that. Hand you an envelope and it says Rickmansworth Aquadrome Cafe toast.



Stuart Laws

Just checking under my chair for an envelope.

Ed Gamble

Is the owner of the B&B talking to you throughout all of this?

Stuart Laws

No, they've left me, I've put my AirPods in.

Ed Gamble

So, they might still be there?

Stuart Laws

Okay, but I'm listening to case files because I'm in town to solve a case.

James Acaster

What's the case?

Stuart Laws

Someone's disappeared. One of you has disappeared and I'm here there solve it.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Who?

Stuart Laws

James has.

Ed Gamble

James has disappeared.

James Acaster

I've disappeared? In the town?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

What town is it?

Stuart Laws

It's up in North Oregon.



James Acaster

I was never there anyway.

Stuart Laws

No, you were.

Ed Gamble

You were.

Stuart Laws

No, you were.

Ed Gamble

You were. James, you need to work on your improv, man.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Just on stage, 'I'm not there.' 'No, you are.' 'I'm not there.'

Ed Gamble

'I've never eaten there.'

James Acaster

That's why I'm missing, I've never been there.

Stuart Laws

That's where you've been tracked to anyway.

James Acaster

Yes, okay.

Stuart Laws

So, I'm there to solve the case, and Ed can't do it because he's doing Great British Menu or something. And he's, like, 'I can't-'

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, I'm not there at all?

Stuart Laws

Yes, you're on the gravy train.



Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

So, your dream meal is spending a day in a town where I've gone missing.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I love this idea.

James Acaster

And you've got to solve it?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, this isn't going to be a meal as much, so much as a day of eating while you try and solve a missing person's case?

Stuart Laws

Yes, but it will fit your format perfectly.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Kind of.

Stuart Laws

Unless I get kicked out.

James Acaster

Well, not perfectly because you've-

Ed Gamble

I like this solving a case thing. Yes.

James Acaster

Yes? You're not the one who's gone missing.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's true.



James Acaster

Or will you be the one in-,

Stuart Laws

The only evidence we have at the moment is DNA evidence of where you've been.

Ed Gamble

What sort of DNA?

Stuart Laws

Cum.

James Acaster

I knew it, I knew it before you said it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, why do you think I asked?

James Acaster

Where did you find it?

Stuart Laws

You don't want to know where it is but some of it's on the ceiling.

James Acaster

I would like to.

Stuart Laws

Some of it's on the ceiling.

James Acaster

Yes, that's mainly where it ends up.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Like a rocket.

Ed Gamble

So, you've had this toast.

Stuart Laws

Yes.



Ed Gamble

You've fueled yourself for the day's investigations.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Done a quick 5K to get myself ready.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

And now, it's out, I'm on the beat.

James Acaster

Now your starter. I was on the beat, that's how they found my-, your starter.

Stuart Laws

Is cherry pie with black coffee.

James Acaster

Now, this we could have predicted, the earlier sweet entries.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

I respect it. I'll respect it but that's a dessert. That's a dessert as a starter.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

But when am I having it? About 11:00-ish?

Ed Gamble

Yes, but then it's not a starter, is it?

James Acaster

No, but he's having it-,

Stuart Laws

It's a starter to my day.



James Acaster

Yes, because he's having a meal throughout the day. This is what he's done. So, this is why he's done the whole thing-, revolves around this one choice. The whole setup of it. So, an entire day, and I'm in a town, and someone's gone missing. None of that would exist if he didn't want cherry pie as his starter.

Ed Gamble

No.

Stuart Laws

That's a 100% true.

Ed Gamble

Where are you getting the cherry pie and black coffee?

Stuart Laws

From the diner.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but-,

Stuart Laws

There's a diner.

Ed Gamble

Is there a real place, first of all?

James Acaster

That we can beam it in from, like we did with the Rickmansworth Aquadrome cafe.

Stuart Laws

There's not a real place. Any time I'm in America, I will go to a diner and have cherry pie. I tried to go to the place where Michael McKean recommended in Oregon, and I started driving. It was, like, an hour-and-a-half drive south of where I was staying, and I was, 'I'll do that, there are some nice sights on the way, I've got nothing to do.' Started driving and then went, 'Oh, I should actually check that it's open.' Closed that day.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Stuart Laws

Just random Tuesday, closed.

James Acaster

You do a lot of holidays by yourself in America.

Stuart Laws

What are you trying to say?

James Acaster

Nothing. I was just trying to get into-,

Ed Gamble

It's the truth.

James Acaster

Just trying to open up more about your life to the listener.

Stuart Laws

Yes. I love going on holiday by myself.

James Acaster

To America specifically.

Stuart Laws

Specifically, yes. I'll do it anywhere, but America specifically because it's got that, sort of, romantic vibe to it, right? I like going to small-town America, I love crumbling Americana, I love all of that stuff.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you're in the local diner of this town?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, it's just, like, a standard American diner?

Stuart Laws

Yes. Pulling up outside, kicking the door closed, looking back at it, 'Ah, fuck, rental company is going to be annoyed at that, I've put a hole in it.'



Ed Gamble

There's a policeman sat in there as well.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Smoking inside. That's nice as well, we want that. There's smoking inside but only by police officers.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

And there's a woman, she's about 80/85 behind, and she's, like, 'Hey, how you doing there, partner?'

James Acaster

What the-,

Ed Gamble

And where's she from?

Stuart Laws

She's from Australia.

James Acaster

Even I-,

Ed Gamble

Yes. So, Shrek's in there.

Stuart Laws

'What am I getting you? Black coffee, cherry pie?' I'm, like-,

Ed Gamble

So, have you been there before?

Stuart Laws

Yes. The day before.

Ed Gamble

Okay, because otherwise she's got your order exactly right.

James Acaster

Yes.



Stuart Laws

It's like with The Prestige.

James Acaster

She's done really well with her-, The Prestige.

Ed Gamble

I've not seen The Prestige.

James Acaster

Yes, but-,

Stuart Laws

You should, it's really good.

James Acaster

It's what happens, one of them guesses a cherry pie, and then everyone goes crazy trying to figure out how they did it. So, is it, like, a big slice of cherry pie?

Stuart Laws

It's a sixth of the pie.

Ed Gamble

That's a good size, though.

Stuart Laws

That's good size.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Yes, it's a good size.

James Acaster

Warm?

Stuart Laws

Warm, yes.

James Acaster

Ice cream?

Stuart Laws

No, just because, this time of day, you've got the black coffee, you're not having any dairy involved with it. Yes.



James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Cherry pie, black coffee, no dairy.

James Acaster

What's the pastry like?

Stuart Laws

It is quite flaky, actually, now you asked, James.

James Acaster

Yes?

Stuart Laws

Yes, there's a flake to it, which is nice. But there are a couple of bits where it's very well done, right on the rim. The rim of the pie, quite well done.

Ed Gamble

You would have to push down on it with your spoon on the plate, and then it would snap and maybe a bit would ping off and hit the policeman or something?

Stuart Laws

Yes and he's immediately pulled his weapon.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Yes, he shot it out of the air.

James Acaster

That classic cherry pie filling, do you want to see bits, you know-,

Stuart Laws

I want visible cherries.

James Acaster

You want visible cherries?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

You don't want it just to be-,



Ed Gamble

I rarely have a cherry pie, you know, but it is delicious.

James Acaster

It's great.

Stuart Laws

The problem is, when you are a single person who lives alone most of the time, cherry pies over here they're only sold in big pies.

Ed Gamble

Of course.

Stuart Laws

So, what am I supposed to do, go crazy for three days?

James Acaster

Okay, you can make out like that's a problem for you. We'll just all pretend that that's a quandary.

Stuart Laws

That's a three-day cherry pie fest.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, definitely. Obviously I'm annoyed when people waste the opportunity of a starter to have a dessert.

Stuart Laws

What would you have in this small town?

Ed Gamble

It's not my dream to be in this small town.

Stuart Laws

What are you having? Bacon and waffles?

Ed Gamble

What you've done is you've given yourself a day's work to do.

Stuart Laws

Yes, well, I want to save my friend, he's gone missing.



Ed Gamble

Yes, but then I'd find him first and then have a big slap up meal at the end of the day.

Stuart Laws

How are you finding him?

Ed Gamble

Well, I don't know because I don't know any of the clues yet but I imagine we'll get some of the-,

Stuart Laws

Well, yes, as I say, I've got my cherry pie-,

Ed Gamble

There's all the cum all over the ceiling obviously but I don't think that's going to help.

James Acaster

Well, I don't know.

Ed Gamble

You've got to follow a trail of cum like he's a big snail.

James Acaster

Maybe I tried to write a message in it, get the blue light on or whatever.

Stuart Laws

Yes, I'm about to go through the photos. We've got the case, they're in that, like, brown folder.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you've got your pie, you've got the pictures of your friend's cum, and you're just, like, leafing through-,

Stuart Laws

Yes, and then the case file next to it.

James Acaster

Hold on. We haven't had a guest on who's said, 'I'd like to be looking at picture of,' my cum during the thing.



Stuart Laws

Maybe that's why I don't want any cream or ice-cream with the cherry pie. It's putting me in the wrong mindset.

James Acaster

My God. Can't believe I'm letting this go as easily as I am, actually.

Ed Gamble

So, you've cherry pie, black coffee.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You're in the diner.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Then a bit of investigation?

Stuart Laws

A bit of investigation. So, got the Dictaphone obviously.

Ed Gamble

Yes?

Stuart Laws

I'm playing back some recordings that I've done. I just did a couple of brief interviews the night before.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Who did you interview?

Stuart Laws

Well, the town mayor. He just happened to be in the bar I was in, so I just interviewed them, just to get an idea of the town.

James Acaster

The mayor?



Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

What's the mayor's name?

Stuart Laws

Billy Grunson.

James Acaster

Mayor Grunson.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Lived there since he was a kid. Mayor since he was a kid as well, actually.

James Acaster

How old is he now?

Stuart Laws

He's just nineteen now.

James Acaster

Nineteen?

Ed Gamble

He's nineteen now.

Stuart Laws

Yes. He couldn't drink. I bought him a drink and he was, like, 'I can't have that. I'm the mayor, can't be seen to have that.'

James Acaster

But he's in the bar? So that's suspicious.

Stuart Laws

Yes. He's in the bar, he's allowed. Yes, big chains. Had a little chat with him. Then, of course the high school football star.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes. What's his name?



Stuart Laws

She is called-, because they've got a female team now over there, and they're trying to do their bit for equality over there.

James Acaster

That's good.

Stuart Laws

Her name is Shirley Grunson.

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

Okay, Shirley Grunson. Is she related to Billy Grunson?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

How?

Stuart Laws

Mother.

Ed Gamble

Shirley Grunson, the high school football star is a nineteen-year-old's mother?

Stuart Laws

Because the star is actually the coach. So, everyone really admires the coach. She's come in because she used to coach NFL.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

She's come in and she said, 'I can turn this town around.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.



Stuart Laws

So now both the teams, the men's and the women's teams, they're being drafted into the NFL the next year. College football teams.

Ed Gamble

The whole team?

Stuart Laws

Yes. But as their whole team.

Ed Gamble

What does Shirley Grunson have to say for herself?

James Acaster

So far I'm suspecting the Grunsons.

Stuart Laws

Shirley says, 'Look, there was a truck that came through town the night before with, like, a dangerous load on it.'

Ed Gamble

Hang on, what? Was it all his or-

James Acaster

Yes, we'll let everyone do that joke in their head.

Stuart Laws

Basically it's-

James Acaster

I don't call it the truck.

Stuart Laws

There are a couple of military towns based around the area, so, like, there was some stuff going through potentially to these military bases. Some stuff fell off. So, we don't know what that is.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

Stuart Laws

But Shirley noticed that.

Ed Gamble

Shall we put a pin in it and ask you what your main course is?



James Acaster

I should have put a pin in it, then it wouldn't have gone off all over the ceiling.

Ed Gamble

What's your main course, whereabouts in the town are you eating it, and which Grunson do you meet during this?

James Acaster

You really should have come up with a storyline before you got here.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Because now you've got the armed forces involved. You've got to figure out how that-,

Stuart Laws

I did come up with it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Okay. So, the casino is trying to be built in the town and the armed forces are involved in some way, and the Grunsons, the coach, and the mayor-,

Ed Gamble

Her son, the mayor.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Her son, the mayor. They coach. In a way, he's coaching the town to be better townsfolk.

Ed Gamble

Yes. So, they're coaches by nature.

Stuart Laws

So, yes, this is, like, 05:00pm, so I spent the day out on the beat.

Ed Gamble

Yes. You've not had a lot so far.



Stuart Laws

Yes. So, as I said, I'm slow to get going. Slow to get going, have a late breakfast/brunch.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Then I'm out on the beat. So, I've had my water and bread, cherry pie and coffee, so now I'm finding the Indian restaurant.

Ed Gamble

I would say that small-town America is not necessarily famous for its Indian food.

James Acaster

It's going to be shit.

Stuart Laws

It's weird that this place has got a really good one.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

This one has got a really-,

James Acaster

Have you got one from back home that's been transported there?

Stuart Laws

Yes, it does. Yes.

Ed Gamble

What particular restaurant is it?

Stuart Laws

Okay. So, there's one that's in the old town in Amersham where I used to live, which was great. Called Raj Gate. Delicious, used to always order in from there. I think it's got to be the one in Gerrards Cross called Malik's is just great. It's top end.

James Acaster

It's your favourite.



Stuart Laws

Absolutely delicious.

James Acaster

So, you want that in the town?

Stuart Laws

Yes, let's get that over there.

James Acaster

yes?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

What are you ordering from it?

Stuart Laws

Well, this is where I'm now gauging whether or not I go in there and order a completely different meal to an Indian meal because that might be the secret ingredient. I'm trying to gauge your faces.

Ed Gamble

You can't get Malik's over-,

Stuart Laws

And then make them do, like-,

Ed Gamble

And make them cook-,

Stuart Laws

A chorizo broccoli pasta.

Ed Gamble

Make them Domino's.

Stuart Laws

I'll have a lamb madras.

Ed Gamble

Lamb madras from Malik's.



Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

That's the standard go-to for me. Any Indian restaurant I go to, that's what I'm having if I can.

Ed Gamble

Why?

Stuart Laws

Or in that-,

Ed Gamble

Did you decide that very early on, because you had one lamb madras you liked, or did you go on a tour around the menu and work out what you liked?

Stuart Laws

What I did I think I hit on that very early on, and then occasionally I take a little detour. A little detour, have a little look what's happening around, and then always come back to the lamb madras.

James Acaster

What were other ones you tried and didn't-,

Stuart Laws

lamb, Everest lamb, all the biryanis-, the tikka masala is too sweet, isn't it? That's-,

James Acaster

Yes, sure.

Stuart Laws

I'm saying it's too sweet, that's me saying it.

Ed Gamble

That's useless, man. You've had cherry pie for your starter.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Now I'm going in there. What am I having with it? Poppadoms obviously. That's coming in with it. All of the accoutrements. Onion bhajis. We're just having that as a full meal because it's always good.

James Acaster

Rice?



Stuart Laws

Yes, rice is going in there..

James Acaster

What kind of rice?

Stuart Laws

Is this a trick?

James Acaster

I'm just asking you.

Ed Gamble

What kind of rice?

James Acaster

Just relax man.

Stuart Laws

Just a nice rice. Just nice rice.

Ed Gamble

Nice rice?

Stuart Laws

Yes, nice rice.

James Acaster

What does that mean?

Stuart Laws

Just nice rice.

Ed Gamble

But do you want, like, mushroom rice or-,

James Acaster

Pilau rice?

Ed Gamble

Pilau rice?

Stuart Laws

Whatever comes.



Ed Gamble

Well, James.

Stuart Laws

Probably not mushroom rice. Don't like mushrooms.

James Acaster

Special rice?

Stuart Laws

What's the special rice?

James Acaster

Often there are peas in it, maybe some-,

Stuart Laws

If you're offering that to me, I'll have that, yes.

James Acaster

This suspicion thing. Fuck, it kills the flow because you're genuinely worried.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

We've never had an episode where someone is so on edge.

Ed Gamble

No. It's nice, different energy.

James Acaster

Peas?

Stuart Laws

Chuck some peas in there if you want.

James Acaster

Prawns?

Stuart Laws

No. Trying to stay off the old seafood as much as possible. For the good of the land.

Ed Gamble

What does that mean?



Stuart Laws

Because if they get too comfortable, they'll come on land.

James Acaster

That's what you're scared of?

Stuart Laws

Yes. That'd be terrifying.

Ed Gamble

But surely then you should eat more of them, so then there's less of army to come on the land.

Stuart Laws

I want them to not blame me at any point. If they come on land, I don't want them to look at me and be, like, 'Beware, this guy has been at us.'

Ed Gamble

I see. So, it's not for the good of the land?

Stuart Laws

It's for the good of me.

Ed Gamble

It's for the good of the Stu.

Stuart Laws

Yes. And for the planet, let's respect nature.

Ed Gamble

Sure.

Stuart Laws

Am I eating beef all the time? Yes. I love beef, beef is delicious.

James Acaster

But you're famously-, you're not going to have kids.

Stuart Laws

Yes, I've ticked that box.

Ed Gamble

So, let's respect nature, lamb madras.



Stuart Laws

Lamb madras. Kill a nice little lamb. Sometimes you go into an Indian restaurant, you can tell that the sauce has come from a tin or something like that, sort of, thinner, runnier, sort of thing. You want the proper-, they've made the sauce in-house, lovely stuff, chunky. Just that level of heat where you're just, like, 'Wow, okay,' some sweat starts to come out but it's not like you're having to take breaks.

James Acaster

Who have you been to Malik's with?

Stuart Laws

I go to Malik's with-, There's a group of people I'm friends with who-, we do a lot of running, but we will occasionally go for a curry together, a little celebration. We went to one in High Wycombe. A few of us were there and the table next to us was-, basically it looked like two men who almost definitely voted to leave the EU, that sort of the vibe. They'd been out drinking all day. Late fifties. Then their wives as well, who didn't seem like they were allowed to talk. The lads, they were just on it, shouting, everything like that. But there was an uneasy atmosphere there. They sat down and the plates were put out for them, and I was just looking over and one of them, bald head, just, sort of, looked like he was vibrating a little bit.

James Acaster

Pulsing?

Stuart Laws

Yes, pulsing just like that. The plate got put out in front of him and he just immediately vomited five pints of lager onto it.

Ed Gamble

Oh my God.

Stuart Laws

It just hit the plate, and the plate acted as, like, a reflection. It just burst out all over the two women opposite, and, sort of, almost hit our table as well. We were so close. His friend immediately stood up and just announced to the entire restaurant, 'My friend has taken ill. His night is over.' Like, he was trying to be as formal as possible so they didn't get kicked out.

Ed Gamble

'My friend has taken ill.'

Stuart Laws

And then he looked over at our table and went, 'Your night is over too.'

Ed Gamble

Was he right?



Stuart Laws

We got moved to another table.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

But, yes, for a little while we thought, 'Yes, maybe our night is over.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

I just loved that confidence of being, like, 'We fucked up badly, so we're going to just end everybody else's night.'

James Acaster

Do you want them there?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I'd like them there. But it's happening in the background because then they were taken out and then they kept coming in to, sort of, apologise and to try and clean up. There was a lot of back and forth, I'd love that, sort of, hubbub happening. Because I think going out for a curry is always a pretty good social occasion. My football team would always do end of season dos at a curry house in Beaconsfield.

James Acaster

Christian football team.

Stuart Laws

Christian football team. Shout-out to Gold Hill FC. It's always a good vibe.

James Acaster

Stuart's an atheist.

Stuart Laws

Non-religious on a Christian football team. Played for 21 years for them.

Ed Gamble

You're a ringer. You're an atheist ringer.

Stuart Laws

I was a manager for a while, but they couldn't make that official.



Ed Gamble

I don't think they think you're the manager. I think there's another big guy for them.

Stuart Laws

Yes, big shout-out to the big guy, Paul, who's in charge of it all.

James Acaster

Shirley Grunson. Are you questioning anyone in the restaurant?

Stuart Laws

Yes, whole time. Guess who are prime suspects?

James Acaster

The guys who said your night was over?

Stuart Laws

Yes. So-,

Ed Gamble

What are their names?

Stuart Laws

Barry and Terry.

Ed Gamble

Grunson?

Stuart Laws

No. Barry and Terry Slough.

Ed Gamble

Barry and Terry Slough.

James Acaster

So, they're brothers?

Ed Gamble

Brothers? Married?

Stuart Laws

They're brothers. Married to sisters.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

Who are called?

Stuart Laws

Shirley.

James Acaster

Shirley again, here we go.

Stuart Laws

There's another Shirley. And Barbara.

Ed Gamble

Shirley and Barbara.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

What's their surname?

Stuart Laws

Reading.

Ed Gamble

Shirley and Barbara Reading. Barry and Terry Slough.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Slough and Reading.

Stuart Laws

Yes. It was a match made in the stars.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

What did they say when you questioned them?



Stuart Laws

They said that they'd seen someone the night before interacting with some of the equipment that had fallen off the lorries, and that they'd scurried away like a little raccoon. You know, when raccoons scurry off and they've got something in their front-, they're running on their back legs. That was that. But it was a human. So, they should have been able to do that anyway.

James Acaster

into Stuart's YouTube history there.

Ed Gamble

So, to boil it down, someone took something?

Stuart Laws

Yes, someone took something and ran into the new-build, which is the casino, it's not finished yet.

Ed Gamble

Yes, okay.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

I've got a side drink to the main.

James Acaster

Yes?

Stuart Laws

It's an ice-cold Pepsi in a glass bottle. The one I'm thinking of is from a petrol station in a Ugandan village near Lake Victoria. Is it Lake Victoria? Let's hope so. So, I was there doing some work and it was extremely hot, I think we were going out onto the lake to do some filming or something, and I was, like, 'I need to go and get something to drink.' Pop into this little petrol station, tiny little place, and the fridge was the coldest fridge I've ever experienced. Couldn't believe it. Couldn't believe my luck.

James Acaster

Was it a freezer?

Stuart Laws

It didn't cross the Rubicon.

Ed Gamble

What's the tipping point there?



Stuart Laws

It was probably 0.7 degrees.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Also, as well, like, the Pepsi that's not from the UK always tastes better. I don't know what the ingredients are.

James Acaster

This has got a massive coincidence. So, we're doing three podcasts today, you're the second one. The first one, we had Toheeb Jimoh on off Ted Lasso fame, he chose as his dream drink a glass bottle of Fanta from Nigeria, and he said it tastes different, it's better when it's in the-,

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

The glass bottle.

Ed Gamble

Agreed.

Stuart Laws

Maybe it's the same, maybe African Pepsi is different.

James Acaster

Like, Benito's now having to google that, even though earlier he had to google Nigerian Fanta, and now he's googling Ugandan Pepsi. Also, the amount of time between the two of them, about two hours, is quite weird on his-, it's going to show up as a bit weird on his search history. Dream side dish?

Stuart Laws

Okay, so this is taking place now, nine o'clock-ish.

James Acaster

In the evening?

Stuart Laws

Yes. So, I've done some more investigating. I've found out that most likely you are hidden there somewhere in the basement of the casino.

James Acaster

Okay.



Ed Gamble

Alright.

Stuart Laws

Yes. It's because you naturally object to gambling.

James Acaster

Yes, sure, I'm anti-Gamble, as Ed knows.

Ed Gamble

What?

Stuart Laws

That's where you've ended up. So, I need to get there but obviously I'm hungry because I've only had a curry three hours earlier. So, it's time to get on my evening meal. This is where I'm coming alive, right, the brain is alive.

Ed Gamble

So, the side dish is the evening meal?

Stuart Laws

It's the evening meal.

Ed Gamble

Okay. Just getting it all straight in my head. As well as the case and all of that.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

By the way, I feel like we should have a palette cleansers in between, like, a Kendal Mint Cake or something like that.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Just in between each course, because it's.

Ed Gamble

Yes, with the heaviest, sweetest thing available.

James Acaster

What kind of Kendal Mint Cake are you having?



Stuart Laws

Just the pure.

James Acaster

Just the white one?

Stuart Laws

Just the mint. Yes.

Ed Gamble

Jesus, man.

Stuart Laws

But it's a palette cleanser, it's not to keep me going.

Ed Gamble

It's not a palette cleanser.

James Acaster

It's not cleansing anything.

Stuart Laws

What do you mean? Okay, alright-,

James Acaster

The sweetest mint in the world, a block of mint and glucose.

Stuart Laws

Okay, let's have an amuse-bouche in between, then.

Ed Gamble

Well, no, because you've already amused your fucking bouche.

James Acaster

Yes, that doesn't go there.

Ed Gamble

Your bouche got amused, like, hours ago when you had toast and then cherry pie, and then a full curry. Then you're saying you're having a Kendal Mint Cake before your side dish.

Stuart Laws

Okay, can I have a-,



James Acaster

If you want a Kendal Mint Cake as a palette cleanser-

Ed Gamble

Yes, have a Kendal Mint Cake, you're walking around the town all day, you're on the beat. You know, you need the energy.

Stuart Laws

I need the energy. Am I allowed to snack as well in this restaurant?

Ed Gamble

Yes. It's not a restaurant, it's a whole town.

James Acaster

It's a whole town that you're solving a missing person's case in.

Stuart Laws

So, I'm having a snack. I'm having like a-, no, I'm not going to say, actually, because then it might be the-

James Acaster

What?

Stuart Laws

No, not going to say that one.

James Acaster

What are you snacking on?

Stuart Laws

I'm just having some chocolate just during the day.

James Acaster

Well, just say what it is.

Stuart Laws

Just having a Freddo. There you go. With some marshmallows.

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

So, you've got those in your pocket?



Stuart Laws

The Freddos the bread and the marshmallows as the filling.

James Acaster

What, you've got two Freddos and some marshmallows in between?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Are you melting that?

Stuart Laws

Yes, we melt it a little bit?

Ed Gamble

Where are you melting it in the town?

Stuart Laws

On the town bonfire.

Ed Gamble

I don't like this town.

Stuart Laws

It's got a massive bonfire.

James Acaster

It's an awful town.

Stuart Laws

It's not stopped burning for 15 years.

Ed Gamble

Is it a tire fire? Is it, like, the tire fire?

Stuart Laws

No, not the tire fire. It's previous buildings that they don't need anymore.

James Acaster

Okay.

Ed Gamble

They set fire to them?



Stuart Laws

So, as industries disappear and are not needed. So, there was the big MP3 player factory.

Ed Gamble

God, it's like a Bruce Springsteen song, this.

Stuart Laws

Yes, exactly. Yes. So, there are loads of musicians that are singing about their dads working at the MP3 factory, making MP3s. I think for my side, my evening meal, supper, I think it's closed now, the Ginger Man in Boston. They had buttermilk chicken sliders with hot sauce and pickles, and then, like, a roasted Brussels with a balsamic reduction and bacon. So, that's the side.

Ed Gamble

That'll be one dish?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

I'll let him have that.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Of course you would, you're the ginger man.

James Acaster

Case closed.

Ed Gamble

Yes, chicken sliders with hot sauce and pickles. That's it?

James Acaster

Perfect.

Ed Gamble

More and more in my life now, all I want my food to do is just tear my mouth apart.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Then, the next day, tear-,

Ed Gamble

Oh dear.

Stuart Laws

The other side apart.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Dick.

Ed Gamble

I want my food to tear my dick apart.

Stuart Laws

Having a piss the next morning, 'Oh fucking hell, had a curry last night.'

Ed Gamble

'Jesus Christ, the pickle is coming out of here.'

James Acaster

I've really got into just having a big jar of pickles at home lately.

Ed Gamble

Yes?

Stuart Laws

Have you?

James Acaster

Yes. Just started doing it.

Stuart Laws

My dad was obsessed with pickles as a kid. It sort of put me off them a little bit.

Ed Gamble

Really?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You'll love this. I worked with someone recently who was so obsessed with pickle-backs that if she goes into a pub with her friends and they don't have the pickle juice to do pickle-backs, she'll go to a supermarket and buy a jar of pickles, so she can use the brine. Someone texted her and said, 'Have you been in this pub recently?' She was, like, 'Yes, how do you know?' She went, 'I just found half a jar of pickles in the toilet.'



Stuart Laws

That's why the backs of toilets are often covered, so you can't put your pickles down.

James Acaster

Yes. That's the deleted scene from Godfather as well. They don't serve pickle-backs, he goes in, they've got him taped to the back of the cistern.

Stuart Laws

Are you just dunking in your, like, fork trying to spear one?

James Acaster

If I'm eating something already and I've got a fork handy but otherwise I'll just put my fingers in.

Stuart Laws

Really?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. Because no one else is eating those pickles in the house, I'm the only one who's into them.

Ed Gamble

Private Pickles.

James Acaster

Yes, my private pickles-,

Ed Gamble

Is he on the case as well?

Stuart Laws

Yes, he's there.

James Acaster

Private Pickles, any clues?

Stuart Laws

Yes. He actually didn't get accepted by the army, so he's staying nearby and he keeps doing the tests to get in. But he can't get in.

James Acaster

He can't get in. That's a shame, poor guy.



Stuart Laws

For Halloween, would you do that big bowl of pickle brine, and then pickles in it, and then dunking in to try and get a pickle.

James Acaster

It's a complicated question.

Stuart Laws

It's a yes/no.

James Acaster

Well, if I walked into a Halloween party, and that was already set up, yes.

Stuart Laws

Yes, but you're not setting it up?

James Acaster

I'm not doing that. I don't want to do it enough that I'm going to do it.

Stuart Laws

Because it's a statement. If people turn up at yours, and you've set that up, they're, like, 'Fucking hell.'

Ed Gamble

Well, you're not having anyone over for a start.

James Acaster

I'm not having anyone over. I wouldn't want to, but if someone was like, 'Yes, you've got to do this,' forget it. If I walked in, and it was just there, and people were like, 'We're all doing this. Do you want to bob for pickles?' I'm like, 'Yes.'

Stuart Laws

Before they even look back at you, your head's fully submerged.

James Acaster

Yes, I'm already in, and I'm definitely getting one. I'm definitely going to get one. I'm not going to not get a pickle.

Ed Gamble

Yes. It would have to be different sized pickles as well, to make it harder for some people.

James Acaster

Those little tiny ones.



Ed Gamble

Cornichons.

James Acaster

Cornichons, they'd have to be in there.

Stuart Laws

Yes, tiny little cornichons.

Ed Gamble

Those big ones you get in petrol stations, where you get one pickle in the packet.

James Acaster

Yes, I like those.

Stuart Laws

I bought a couple of them for my sister's birthday the other day. She loves them. I don't understand. One of them's called a Sour SIS. I don't know why you're both looking at me like this.

Ed Gamble

Did you buy her anything else?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I got her tickets to Groundhog Day.

Ed Gamble

No one's ever bought that present. Tickets to Groundhog Day and two big pickles.

Stuart Laws

What about-, and there are pickled eggs in there as well?

Ed Gamble

What, in the big pool? In the bobbing pool?

Stuart Laws

In the bobbing pool.

James Acaster

I've never really had a pickled egg, actually.

Stuart Laws

Really?



Ed Gamble

I don't think I've had a pickled egg, you know.

James Acaster

So, I think I would do it just because that would be a bit of a fun element. I don't know if I'm going to get a pickled egg for the first time while I'm blindfolded, while I'm bobbing for pickles.

Stuart Laws

What's the worst thing that you could bite into that's been pickled in there?

Ed Gamble

A finger.

Stuart Laws

A little pickled finger?

James Acaster

Yes, I guess, like, if someone's pickled a person.

Stuart Laws

Alright, let's stick to vegetables.

Ed Gamble

I'm not a massive fan of umeboshi, which is the sour pickled plums in Japan. Not a big fan of those. It's almost too much flavour for me.

Stuart Laws

So, it's sweet and sour?

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's sweet, and sour, and very salty. You'd like it.

Stuart Laws

Yes, I could be up for that.

James Acaster

I don't think I've ever had anything pickled that I don't like really. I think I've been lucky, and I'm blessed.

Stuart Laws

Yes, you are actually, apart from in this town.

Ed Gamble

How many sliders? Is it, like, on a bed of-,



Stuart Laws

Three sliders.

Ed Gamble

Three sliders on a bed of roasted Brussels from the Gingerman?

Stuart Laws

Yes. I love balsamic reduction. Big fan of that. When I discovered that was a thing, I couldn't believe it. So, I've got a little one of those-, I identify as a man, so I've got a skillet. That's what we have. That's how we identify ourselves.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

I love chucking the onions-,

James Acaster

Years of knowing him. Still don't know where each sentence is going.

Stuart Laws

I love frying up the onions on that, chucking on the balsamic. It's the best. Why did no one tell me about that earlier?

James Acaster

Then you reduce it on the-,

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

What's the thing about the balsamic reduction? Is it sweeter?

Ed Gamble

It's sweeter.

Stuart Laws

Yes, that's what it is.

Ed Gamble

But he's just having syrup on something.

Stuart Laws

Yes, but it's got a bit of tang as well, a tiny bit of tang.



Ed Gamble

Yes, but it's mainly just quite sweet, isn't it?

Stuart Laws

Yes, it's really sweet. What's the drink with that? A bottle of prosecco.

James Acaster

A bottle of prosecco?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

How are you doing any investigating, because-

Stuart Laws

By celebrating.

James Acaster

I'm fucked. I'm absolutely fucked.

Ed Gamble

Curry, I'm done. Curry is the end of the night. I've never had a curry for lunch.

Stuart Laws

I've gone for a run after the curry.

Ed Gamble

You've gone for a run after eating-

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You've already done a 5K.

James Acaster

You've been sick, I imagine.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Stuart Laws

Yes, I've done a heart-rate run, where you run really slow, keep your heart rate slow, just to, sort of, process it all, and also I need to investigate some stuff on the outskirts of town.

Ed Gamble

Does it make you ill?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I've been puking the entire-,

Ed Gamble

Is Barry behind you on the run, going, 'My friend has been taken ill.'

Stuart Laws

'His night is over.'

Ed Gamble

You've gone, 'It's not. I've not had my side dish yet.'

Stuart Laws

Then, my drink, a bottle of prosecco, has got its own side. Is that okay?

Ed Gamble

Hang on. So, your side dish, which is, by the way, two side dishes-,

Stuart Laws

Well, no, it's on top of it.

Ed Gamble

Has got a drink.

James Acaster

Which is a whole bottle of prosecco.

Ed Gamble

Which is a whole bottle of prosecco. And then you're saying the drink also has a side?

Stuart Laws

Yes, the drink has a side.

James Acaster

Well, what is it?



Stuart Laws

Chambord.

Ed Gamble

Chambord?

Stuart Laws

Yes, the raspberry liqueur.

Ed Gamble

Raspberry liqueur. Will you be mixing that with the prosecco?

Stuart Laws

Yes, I am. Thank you.

Ed Gamble

Well, that's fine. That's one drink, so you can put a little bit of that in the bottom of the glass.

Stuart Laws

Yes, thank you. So, really got into that when I went to an Everyman cinema for the first time. I wouldn't do that all the time. I don't like them, actually.

Ed Gamble

Quite a cinema-based-

Stuart Laws

Quite cinema-based.

James Acaster

That shouldn't be surprising. He's a cinephile.

Stuart Laws

We went during the day. I'd just moved into my flat, and my friend, Matt, had helped me move in, and then, as part of that, we were going to go and watch Hell or High Water, which was, like, 14:00 in the afternoon, go and watch that. No one's there.

James Acaster

Is that Chris Pine?

Stuart Laws

Chris Pine, yes. Great film. Really good. Then, at the beginning-, you know they come out and do the announcement, like, 'Thank you for being here. We're going to play this film. Who here with like-,



James Acaster

At the fancy ones they do. Benito looks confused, at the fancy ones they do that. They send out some poor bastard, shaking.

Stuart Laws

Yes, I hate it. It makes me feel anxious for them. I'm like, 'I just want to watch the film.'

Ed Gamble

I was at the IMAX last night.

James Acaster

Yes, they do it at the IMAX.

Ed Gamble

Yes, they do it at the IMAX. 'Britain's biggest screen.'

Stuart Laws

Is it worse if they love doing it, or worse if they hate doing it?

Ed Gamble

Worse if they love doing it, because I completely understand the people who hate doing it. When they love doing it, and they're trying to do, like, five minutes-,

Stuart Laws

Yes. They came out, and they said, 'By the way, we're celebrating Chambord Monday. Who'd like a cocktail?' So, I celebrate Chambord Monday every Monday now.

Ed Gamble

Do you?

Stuart Laws

As much as I can. Obviously, I feel bad when I don't get to celebrate, and that is-, basically, the cocktail they were offering was just prosecco with Chambord.

Ed Gamble

Was it free?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Because it was Chambord Monday?



Stuart Laws

Yes, and because Matt was driving, he was like, 'You can have mine.' So, big shout out to Matt, the man who eats so much chocolate that he gives himself an enormous migraine. On the last day at university, all his friends had be led in, one by one, to his darkened room, because he'd eaten so much chocolate he'd given himself a migraine that was making him want to die. They had to all say goodbye one by one, like he was the Godfather.

James Acaster

Matt, of course, is who we-, when Ed and I were on the run, we tried to get him to help us, because it turned out that he knew one of the hunters. We tried to get Matt to give us the hunter's phone number, and he was very responsible, and wouldn't do it, even though we kept ringing him up to ask, and calling him a pork rind bastard.

Ed Gamble

Now we know. We could have just bribed him with a Toblerone, or something.

James Acaster

Well, that's what happened. When we got caught, and the hunters were chasing us-, when they were chasing me, at one point I said, 'We know Matt,' and it was the only time I saw this hunter break character, and look confused. He went, 'What?' Then, when he caught me, he was like, 'How do you know Matt?' Eventually, I told him we knew him through you, and then he was like, 'That guy eats so much chocolate.' I was like, 'Yes, I know. It's the main thing I know about him.'

Ed Gamble

How much chocolate is he eating?

Stuart Laws

Literally, you cannot leave any chocolate around. I've had, like, a bar of chocolate, sat around his, and I've looked away for a couple of seconds, and he's eaten it all. It doesn't matter. He will just go through it. He is like a dog, in that he has no off switch for that. So, he will just, sometimes, be like, 'I can't do anything because I've eaten too much chocolate.'

James Acaster

You know how you talk about how you can't start a Tony's Chocolonely, because you'll just finish the whole thing.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And it's mainly just with Chocolonely?

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

That's any chocolate thing for Matt. If he starts it, he's absolutely screwed.

Ed Gamble

It's gone. It's a crushing disability.

James Acaster

If you got him, like, a Toblerone from an airport, like, the massive-,

Ed Gamble

It's gone.

James Acaster

They're gone.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

If you go to Selfridge's, you can personalise one, have your name put on the packet.

Stuart Laws

That is pretty good.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I mean my name's Ed. So, it sort of feels-,

James Acaster

It's probably not your own name, is it?

Stuart Laws

Cheap.

Ed Gamble

Yes, cheap, but also it doesn't really look good on the packet. There's a lot of blank space.

Stuart Laws

Edlerone.

Ed Gamble

Edlerone, that's good. I could put Edlerone on it.

Stuart Laws

Well, he's actually the name of the local police chief in the town



Ed Gamble

Edlerone?

James Acaster

Is he not called Toby Lerone?

Stuart Laws

No, it's Ed Lerone.

James Acaster

Toby Lerony?

Ed Gamble

Very clearly, Ed Lerone.

James Acaster

Now we're going on to your dream drink.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

So, it's not that?

Stuart Laws

It's an old fashioned. I'm celebrating by this point.

Ed Gamble

You're celebrating? That's why you've got the-,

Stuart Laws

I'm in the hotel.

James Acaster

Have you found me?

Stuart Laws

I've found you.

James Acaster

Good news for me.

Stuart Laws

I've found you. Do you know who was the guy who stole you?



James Acaster

Who?

Stuart Laws

Ed Lerone.

James Acaster

Ed Lerone, the police chief.

Stuart Laws

The police chief. And do you know why?

Ed Gamble

A character we've just been introduced to.

James Acaster

Because he's fresh in your mind?

Stuart Laws

Yes, because Billy Grunson was obviously the big-

James Acaster

The mayor?

Stuart Laws

The mayor who was our big suspect.

James Acaster

You don't have to remind us who Billy Grunson is. We know who Billy Grunson is.

Stuart Laws

Well, he was the big suspect, because Billy Grunson's seen all your specials. So, he was seen as-, but, actually, Billy was delighted you were in town, and was hoping to come and see you do a show, but you were like, 'I'm not doing a show here. No way. I hate doing stand-up.' You kept screaming, 'I hate doing stand-up.' It was weird, unprompted, which is what drew a lot of attention to you, and that's when Ed Lerone, who's trying to get promoted, up to head of the army-

Ed Gamble

From police chief?

Stuart Laws

From chief of the police.



James Acaster

Yes, that's the way it goes.

Stuart Laws

Thought, 'If I can get you to put a gig on, then Billy Grunson will promote me.'

James Acaster

Okay.

Ed Gamble

So, the mayor is in charge of promoting the chief of police to the head of the army?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

How did he get me? How did Ed Lerone get me?

Stuart Laws

Well, you were wanking. So, your back was turned.

Ed Gamble

Let's not forget, you were wanking.

James Acaster

Yes. Well, I was wondering how that factored into it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stuart Laws

So, you were feeling at your weakest.

James Acaster

What, I was in the B&B wanking?

Stuart Laws

Yes, but a different B&B.

James Acaster

Okay. What, I'd finished?

Ed Gamble

B&B stands for 'bashing the bishop'



James Acaster

Bashing and bishop?

Stuart Laws

Bashing a bishop.

James Acaster

So, I've done it. I've collapsed back onto the bed in ecstasy, and then-

Ed Gamble

Hang on, you've collapsed back onto the bed?

James Acaster

Well, I've been sitting up in the bed.

Stuart Laws

You've been stood, staring into the mirror.

Ed Gamble

You're stood up.

James Acaster

No, I'm sitting on the bed.

Ed Gamble

You're sitting on the bed.

Stuart Laws

Sitting on the bed.

James Acaster

Sitting, not shitting.

Stuart Laws

I didn't say 'shitting'. You're sitting. It seems so formal.

James Acaster

I can't see myself in the mirror if I'm lying down.

Ed Gamble

But your, the is very formal, sitting on the edge of the bed.

James Acaster

I can't look at my reflection-,



Ed Gamble

Bolt upright.

James Acaster

Ed, if I'm lying down, I can't see myself in the mirror.

Stuart Laws

What are you doing with that little bit at the end of the bed that's for your shoes to go on when you lie on the bed?

James Acaster

I put my shoes on it.

Ed Gamble

So, you collapse back onto the bed in ecstasy.

James Acaster

Yes, and then Eddie Lerone bursts in and gets me, does he?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, has he been waiting?

Stuart Laws

So, he's grabbed that shoe protector thing. He's wrapped that around your face straight away, and then he's hit you around the head with your own shoe, like I just did with the microphone.

James Acaster

At which point I came a second time .

Stuart Laws

And that hit the ceiling, because now your angles are wrong.

James Acaster

Yes, I don't know I'm surprised.

Ed Gamble

Yes, because you collapsed back onto the bed.

James Acaster

Yes, I've already got the mirror, now I've got the ceiling.



Ed Gamble

So, is Ed Lerone listening outside, waiting for James to be at his weakest?

James Acaster

Ed Lerone has just become, like, a normal name now. We're saying it like it's-, so, that's when Ed Lerone's caught me?

Stuart Laws

Yes, because obviously Ed Lerone's got the skeleton key for the whole town.

Ed Gamble

Yes, of course. Well, he's got everything, hasn't he?

Stuart Laws

So, he's straight in. So, he can get in any door. That means he could get into the casino, Eddie's Casino.

Ed Gamble

Eddie's Casino?

Stuart Laws

Yes, Eddie's Gambling Casino. They just love British comedians over there. They absolutely love it. There's a Goldsmith's down the road.

James Acaster

Yes, Goldsmith.

Stuart Laws

And other places. I'll record some later, you can drop it in. Yes, then we discovered you down there, strapped up to the roulette table, and the wheel constantly going around, and Eddie Lerone saying, 'If it hits 36, I'm killing him.'

James Acaster

What?

Stuart Laws

I said, 'You're not killing him,' and we saved you. Then, to celebrate, we go into the big hotel, in the middle of town, by the bonfire, I'm having an old fashioned.

Ed Gamble

Lovely.

James Acaster

Am I having one, or am I in my room beating off again?



Stuart Laws

Yes, you're having one as well. You're there.

Ed Gamble

I imagine you have to go for a shower first.

Stuart Laws

Yes, obviously.

Ed Gamble

Because he stuck a bag over your head, and then just dragged you straight to the casino.

Stuart Laws

Yes. So, you're having a quick shower, but, obviously, you know, nature takes its course.

James Acaster

Yes. I have a celebratory wank in there.

Stuart Laws

You come down, and you're like-,

James Acaster

Finish it. As soon as I relax, Grunson storms in, bag over my head, takes me to the mayor's offices.

Ed Gamble

You've not learnt your lesson, have you?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stuart Laws

Yes, you come down. It's got the massive ice cube in it. Massive ice cube.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I love a massive ice cube.

Stuart Laws

Really great.

Ed Gamble

With a stamp in the top? Have you seen that?

Stuart Laws

No.



Ed Gamble

Where the bar will put-, they stamp their ice.

Stuart Laws

I'd love that.

Ed Gamble

Put a little logo in the top.

Stuart Laws

The last time I had-, which was a massive one, was in a very fancy hotel in Seattle. I was due to fly home, but the flight got cancelled, and then you get, like, £500 allowance, if it's 24-hour delay. Keep receipts, claim it back. So, I was like, 'I don't really need anything. I'm going to spend it all on a hotel.'

Ed Gamble

Great.

Stuart Laws

Never been in a hotel that costs a lot of money, that much money, before. So, I spent about £450 for a night in this hotel, and I thought, 'Got to do it.' Take the book down, sit in the bar, have an old fashioned. I'm sure someone, some femme fatale will come over and talk to me.

Ed Gamble

Yes, they often do that when people are reading a book.

Stuart Laws

Yes. Don't worry, I didn't read the book. I just looked at my phone.

Ed Gamble

Yes, of course.

Stuart Laws

I had the old fashioned, and then just went, 'I'll just go back to the room, I guess.' I just watched Netflix up there.

James Acaster

Was it a good old fashioned?

Stuart Laws

Great old fashioned.

James Acaster

Do you want that old fashioned?



Stuart Laws

Yes, let's do that.

James Acaster

The Seattle one?

Stuart Laws

Yes. I think it was the Olympic Hotel, or the Olympia, or something like that. I think that no hotel room is worth more than £200 a night. I got in there, and I was just like, 'This is fine. I've just got a sitting room I'm not going to use.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, I agree with that, especially if you're by yourself. Sometimes, when I'm on tour, occasionally you'll just get a better room, randomly, and there'll be, like, a sofa in there, and whatever, and you're like, 'Well, I'm just going to sit on the bed.'

Stuart Laws

Yes, sit on the end of the bed.

James Acaster

Yes, the good times roll. Worth every penny. Your dream dessert.

Stuart Laws

This is difficult, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes, it's difficult. You're a sweet-toothed boy.

Stuart Laws

So many options.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I mean, you've already had cherry pie.

James Acaster

Let me tell you this, and I wouldn't normally tell people this, but you've been so tense the whole episode, this is where we could get you.

Stuart Laws

Why didn't you tell me that at the beginning?

James Acaster

So, tread very lightly.



Stuart Laws

Some of those awkward silences-

James Acaster

I'll tell you why we didn't tell you at the beginning, because I thought every course was going to be a dessert.

Stuart Laws

Did you?

James Acaster

Genuinely, I expected something like that. I'm not surprised you had a cherry pie for your starter.

Ed Gamble

Tread very lightly. To your left might be a covered up pit with spiky sticks in it.

Stuart Laws

Well, that's part of the town.

Ed Gamble

Yes. To your right might be one of those ropes that I don't know how anyone sets up, but you step in them and then it whips you up into a tree.

James Acaster

Yes, I don't know how they set them up actually.

Ed Gamble

How do they do that? Amazing.

Stuart Laws

That's the town's rope trap, near the bonfire. So, this is a problem, because, when I was a kid, at school, I, for lunch, had a box of After Eights.

James Acaster

What? For lunch, at school?

Stuart Laws

Yes. They weren't even After Eights. They were the Woolworths own-brand After Eights.

Ed Gamble

Stu? For lunch?

James Acaster

Who sent you in with them?



Stuart Laws

By parents didn't, like, box up some After Eights. I just had-

James Acaster

Well, where else were you getting them from?

Ed Gamble

Well, they come in their own box.

Stuart Laws

I'd not taken anything. I didn't have any money. All I had was enough, and I went into Woolworths, and I was like, 'I could afford that, and I want that, so I'm going to have that.'

Ed Gamble

There must have been something else in Woolworths that wasn't that.

Stuart Laws

Almost definitely. I could have gone to the bakery next door and just got, like, a roll, or something like that, but I went, 'No, I want that right now,' not thinking about what that meant for the rest of my day.

Ed Gamble

And your life, probably.

Stuart Laws

And my life.

James Acaster

Well, you're at school. You're not thinking about that.

Stuart Laws

No.

Ed Gamble

Did you eat all of the After Eights for lunch?

Stuart Laws

Yes, and also that much of that sort of mint fondant stuff, I think, has some sort of laxative effect. I think it's not good for you.

Ed Gamble

No. It's just like eating glue. It's like eating a whole box of glue.

Stuart Laws

Look, I really like-, from a nostalgia point of view, I really like a Frosty from Wendy's



Ed Gamble

I don't really know what a Frosty is. Is it, like, a milkshake?

Stuart Laws

Sort of, like, halfway between a milkshake and an ice cream. I like the chocolate one there. Whenever we went as a family, as a kid, it was like-

James Acaster

Similar to a McFlurry?

Stuart Laws

No, because you'd have a spoon to get it out, but it wasn't-, I don't know, it's not actual ice cream, but I don't know what-, I just like the flavour. I liked the vibe of, like, 'We're going to Wendy's,' which was a restaurant we didn't have here. A 'restaurant', a fast-food place. They had Dave, the guy who runs it, and it was all very homely. I liked all of that, sort of, Americana stuff, so it felt nice, but I think I just have to build my own enormous sundae.

James Acaster

That's what you want to do?

Stuart Laws

I think that's what I want to do, build a huge sundae.

Ed Gamble

Take us through the sundae.

James Acaster

Here we go.

Stuart Laws

So, when I went to the Isle of Man when I was younger, there was a restaurant on the dock, where you could buy an ice cream that was, like, this big.

James Acaster

Which is how big, for the listener?

Stuart Laws

That is about 40 centimetres wide, circumference-, not circumference, radius, centrifuge sort of thing.

Ed Gamble

Diameter.

James Acaster

Yes, about the size of a beach ball.



Stuart Laws

Size of a beach ball, diameter, yes. So, it would probably be that sort of size, and we'd have a bunch of people around it, celebrating your return. We're talking raspberry ripple ice cream. That's going in there. We're talking vanilla ice cream. You've got to have that as your base, you've got to think like that. Then, you're not going anywhere, like, mint chocolate chip. If I was to have just a scoop by itself, maybe mint chocolate chip, but if you're building a sundae, you've got to think about the wider context.

James Acaster

Yes. I just remembered that me, Stu, and our friend Al, on a text chain, did this once, building our dream sundaes and sending them to each other.

Ed Gamble

I love it.

Stuart Laws

You're chucking honeycomb in there. You're chucking marshmallows. There's raspberry sauce. There's chocolate sauce.

Ed Gamble

Second appearance of marshmallows in your meal.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, let's not forget the pocket Freddos with the marshmallows.

Stuart Laws

That's building up into a mountain.

Ed Gamble

What else is going to make-, are things-,

Stuart Laws

We're probably putting-,

Ed Gamble

Are you putting, like, callbacks in the dessert to the rest of the meal.

Stuart Laws

Yes, there's a tiny bit of madras at the bottom. It's all sitting in pickle juice.

Ed Gamble

Yes, cherries. You could have cherries from the-,



Stuart Laws

That would be nice. Let's chuck some cherries in there.

James Acaster

I'm still having trouble visualising this sundae.

Ed Gamble

Massive, it is.

James Acaster

So, what's the sauce that goes in the bottom?

Stuart Laws

That's chocolate sauce.

James Acaster

Okay. So, now you're putting a scoop of ice cream. What's that?

Stuart Laws

Now we're doing-,

Ed Gamble

There'll be, like, loads of scoops, right?

Stuart Laws

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's massive.

Stuart Laws

We've got, like, ten scoops of vanilla.

James Acaster

It's half a beach-ball-sized bowl. Like in Home Alone.

Stuart Laws

Ten scoops of raspberry ripple.

Ed Gamble

Do you remember when, on Man v. Food, when he did the kitchen sink challenge?

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

I'm imagining it like that.

Stuart Laws

Then, there's bits of brownie in there, there's honeycomb, there are the marshmallows, and we're building it up, building it up, and then we're doing raspberry sauce over it as well.

James Acaster

How much of this do you reckon you're going to eat?

Stuart Laws

Well, it's for the community. We're coming together.

Ed Gamble

So, the Grunsons are there?

James Acaster

The Grunsons. Obviously not-,

Stuart Laws

You're there.

Ed Gamble

Ed Lerone's not there.

James Acaster

Ed Lerone's not there. He's incarcerated. I'm there.

Stuart Laws

Ed's finished filming. So, he's on a chopper.

James Acaster

The Slough brothers are there, with the Reading sisters.

Stuart Laws

The Slough brothers are there, but I don't want them near the sundae.

Ed Gamble

The Reading sisters are there, though, right?

Stuart Laws

The Reading sisters are there, because I feel bad about them, because they've had to put up with a lot of stuff earlier on in the night. I'm like, 'Get over here. Get yourself a spoon.'



Ed Gamble

Yes. The 85-year-old lady from the diner?

Stuart Laws

I don't want to go into what's happened to her, but let's just say she won't be greeting me the next morning.

James Acaster

You shagged her?

Ed Gamble

You shagged the old lady from the diner? Man, you can never go back to this town again.

Stuart Laws

Yes, we are-,

Ed Gamble

Was the policeman from the diner at the beginning-, was that Ed Lerone or another policeman?

Stuart Laws

Was that Ed Lerone?

Stuart Laws

Another policeman.

Ed Gamble

Is he there?

James Acaster

Fucking Ed Lerone man.

Stuart Laws

No, the police officer at the beginning's Tammy, last name Timmy.

Ed Gamble

Is Tammy Timmy there?

Stuart Laws

Tammy Timmy's there, but, again, has just got-, she's got her eye on the outside.

James Acaster

So, most people aren't eating this ice cream. It's you, and the Grunsons, as far as I can make out.



Ed Gamble

And the Readings.

Stuart Laws

You're there, and the Readings, and Ed's on his way in the chopper.

James Acaster

There are six of us, that's fine. Okay, and we're all eating this-,

Stuart Laws

Yes. Long spoons, that's the key, long spoons, real nice.

James Acaster

It does sound a bit-, what were the ice creams again?

Ed Gamble

Raspberry ripple, vanilla.

Stuart Laws

Vanilla, and then I think then it's, then we're going round the table, and we're saying, 'You can chuck three scoops in, but it's got to all be the same.' So, what are you chucking in? It's got to complement it. So, I'm thinking, you know, it might have a Biscoff one in there, or something like that.

James Acaster

Well, just choose them yourself. Don't try and influence my ice cream, if you're going to say, 'We can all have three scoops each.'

Stuart Laws

I don't want you to pick one that's going to upset the balance of it, because I've been in a gelato-,

James Acaster

Don't say to everybody, 'You can have three scoops of what you want.' Just make it yours.

Stuart Laws

Okay, you've got three within-, I'll pick. You've got a caramel-y one, a Biscoff-y one-,

Ed Gamble

I was going to say salted caramel.

Stuart Laws

Yes, salted caramel. That's going in. Lovely. The cherry one, the cherry-, whatever that is, stracciatella.

James Acaster

No, that's a different one. That's not the cherry one.



Stuart Laws

No, that's another one I'm offering.

James Acaster

I'd want-, actually-,

Ed Gamble

Oh no, he's really into it now.

James Acaster

While you're in Seattle, in the hotel, getting the-, I think take a trip down to Molly Moon's, a great ice cream place in Seattle, and get the-,

Stuart Laws

Which one?

James Acaster

Molly Moon's.

Stuart Laws

No, which ice cream though?

James Acaster

The mocha chip.

Stuart Laws

Get out of here. That's my secret ingredient. You're out of here. I wrote it down at the start.

James Acaster

Oh guys, I've been kicked out.

Ed Gamble

At least it was on the dessert.

James Acaster

It was Block O'Choc. The secret ingredient for you was Block O'Choc.

Stuart Laws

Look, the Freddo and the marshmallows was going to be Block O'Choc with marshmallows.

James Acaster

Was it, genuinely?



Stuart Laws

100% genuine.

James Acaster

Are you serious?

Stuart Laws

100% serious.

Ed Gamble

And you changed it?

Stuart Laws

And I just went, 'There's something about Block O'Choc. It's got such a community atmosphere to it that-, it's so wholesome and lovely, that surely that's got to be on the list.' Also, Five Guys was on the list. I was like, 'Surely that's going to be potentially somewhere on there.'

Ed Gamble

Block O'Choc. And that was early, because we were thinking maybe Block O'Choc would be your dessert, but it was a snack.

James Acaster

We could have got you on your walk-around snack.

Stuart Laws

Genuinely.

Ed Gamble

We never would have solved the case. You would have still been missing.

James Acaster

I'd still be there, with Ed Lerone having his way.

Stuart Laws

I didn't even know Ed Lerone existed at that point.

James Acaster

But you were going to pick it?

Stuart Laws

I genuinely was going to pick it.

Ed Gamble

Man, that would have been perfect, but I'm glad we got to the bottom of the case.



Stuart Laws

Yes, that is good. There was a part of me, obviously, that was like, 'That would be thrilling to be kicked out.' When you kicked Jade out-, one of the highlights of the entire podcast, but I was like, 'I'd like to talk about something. I don't want it to be-,

James Acaster

This feels like one of those Derren Brown tricks, where it doesn't work, and then he says to them, 'Were you thinking of this at some point?' And they go, 'Fucking hell, I was thinking of that.' So, I think we've, kind of, half-Browned it.

Ed Gamble

Made it seem more real.

James Acaster

I'm going to read your menu back to you now. See how you feel about it. You want tap water, then still water. Poppadoms or bread? Seeded sourdough toast with salted butter, marmalade, strawberry jam, from Rickmansworth Aquadrome café. Starter, warm slice of cherry pie and a black coffee. Main course, lamb madras, poppadoms, onion bhajis, steamed rice from Malik's, ice cold Pepsi in a glass bottle from Uganda on the side. Your side dish, you want buttermilk chicken sliders with hot sauce and pickles, and Brussels sprouts with balsamic reduction from Gingerman, plus a bottle of prosecco and Chambord. Drink, an old fashioned with a massive ice cube from the Olympic hotel in Seattle. Dessert, a bring-your-own sundae, build-your -own.

Stuart Laws

Yes.

James Acaster

But they're also bringing their own ice creams, aren't they?

Stuart Laws

Yes, in a way. We haven't even talked about the Kendal Mint Cake as a palette cleanser.

Ed Gamble

Did you say the Freddos there?

James Acaster

Yes, you also-, you've got the Freddos with the marshmallows as your pocket snack.

Stuart Laws

But first option was Block O'Choc with marshmallows.

James Acaster

Yes, but you can't say that now.



Stuart Laws

No, but playback to that point. There's a moment where I hesitated, because I was like, 'Am I going to say Block O'Choc or Freddo?'

James Acaster

I feel like I gave it away a bit. You said chocolate, and I went, 'What chocolate?' I think there's a little thing-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, but you were doing that for everything else.

James Acaster

I was doing that with everything, but I felt like-, you know when you know what you're going for?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I felt like, 'Is there a tell here, that I'm hoping he says Block O'Choc?'

Ed Gamble

Well, you did it Stu. Well done.

James Acaster

Also, if you had the-, because you were saying about having the Freddos and the marshmallows in your pocket. If you had the Block O'Choc in your pocket, you could call it Pock O'Choc.

Stuart Laws

Pock O'Choc. A big block of Pock O'Choc.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Instead, you've got Frog O'Choc.

Stuart Laws

Frogga Chogga. Do you know what Block O'Choc is?

Ed Gamble

Yes, he's shown me Block O'Choc.

James Acaster

Yes, we spoke about it in the intro.



Stuart Laws

I think it's rude to pick, as a secret ingredient, a thing you'd bought for me as a gift.

James Acaster

Yes. You introduced me to it first. I did buy it for you, Bacs'd the guy.

Stuart Laws

Yes, big shout out to Block O'Choc. This guy's got no idea what's coming for him.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much Stu.

James Acaster

Thank you Stu.

Stuart Laws

Thanks for having me.

Ed Gamble

Well, there we are, Stuart Laws, our first ever mystery.

James Acaster

Our first ever mystery, our first ever set over a whole day walking around a town. First ever guest terrified for the whole thing.

Ed Gamble

Throughout, and that's how we like it.

James Acaster

That he was going to get chucked out, and then he did nearly choose-,

Ed Gamble

He nearly chose Block O'Choc.

James Acaster

He was going to, and maybe if we hadn't made-, sorry, maybe if I hadn't made such a big deal of, 'We're going to chuck you out,' he would have been relaxed and just said Block O'Choc, and then he would have been gone.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but also because I think-, because it was a snack, I think he changed his mind because he wanted a portable chocolate that he could put marshmallows in between. I've only seen a picture of Block O'Choc, you aren't cutting that open and putting marshmallows in it.



James Acaster

It's the size of a brick. You need to cut it up with a kitchen knife.

Ed Gamble

Smash it on the floor.

James Acaster

You can't put it in your pocket. So, he didn't choose Block O'Choc. Fair enough. And I guess that means we should plug his special.

Ed Gamble

Yes, Stuart Laws Is All In is available on YouTube. It's an excellent show, which I have seen, as mentioned. So, go and watch that.

James Acaster

Yes, thank you Stuart, lovely menu, lovely boy.

Ed Gamble

Lovely menu, lovely boy. Well done you.

James Acaster

Yes. Sorry to my mother, who listens to every episode. I'm sure she'll have a lot to say about this one. So, apologies for the content.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes, cum.

James Acaster

Yes, she won't like it.

Ed Gamble

Thank you for listening. We'll see you next week. Bye bye.

James Acaster

Goodbye.