

Okay guys, we're gonna do this next podcast from our pool, so do you have your towels and your sunblock?

I got the floaties.

Wait Sean, you're supposed to be wearing no trunks?

Yeah, no, I don't want any tan lines.

I don't want anything.

Okay, man.

Well, this is not...

Well, why are you wearing a two-piece?

Because I want to cover my meats and cheeses.

That's why.

Ooh, this is gonna make a big splash, this wonderful Sean.

Thank you.

You're gonna come smartless, everyone.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Hey gang.

Hey Jason.

Will, why do you have green screen behind you?

Are we doing an animation episode today?

Yeah, we're gonna do a full...

Because I just wanted people to feel free to do whatever they want behind me.

Oh.

That's been happening for years.

So we can put in like...

Why is that there?

I gotta do a junket this afternoon.

Would you put like a background behind you?

Like an image?

Yeah.

What would that image be?

It's of an ice cream truck.

Oh, so it's a drama?

I have the same one.

Is it like a fourth quarter prestige film?

It's the Sean Hay Story.

That's what you have the jacket about?

The history of ice cream.

So there's a lick it joke in there somewhere?

No.

But no, no, no, it's for twisted metal.
So there's the big ice, you know, sweet tooth is my character.
Oh yeah.
That's your new nickname.
Sweet tooth.
Now, do they send you the green or do they ask you to go to a hobby shop and get a nice...
They sent me the green in this light, this big bright light that you see?
Don't make like you don't know what a ring light is.
I think it's all, they're all over your house.
I've never had one.
That's not true.
I had one before, but I haven't used one since pandemic.
Speaking of pandemic, Sean, what are you eating?
Cheez-Its.
Cheez-Its.
But they're white cheddar cheez-Its.
Am I wrong?
All right.
Oh, they looked white.
Have you had the white cheddar cheez-Its?
Is there such thing?
No, are they good?
I don't know.
Is there such thing?
I just don't know.
Asking for...
You know me.
Asking for a friend if you have them, please send them.
I do want to just do another shout out to our friends at Chex Mix, slash bugles.
Did you guys get like a big box of that?
Oh my God.
I had the cool ranch.
Was it cool ranch bugles?
They sent everything, like onions and everything.
You know what?
I'm going to stop talking about it because my instinct right there was like, oh, I would never eat that stuff because I'd hold water in my face for five years for that.
I'm not going to do it anymore because people now are coming up to me after the doc has said, hey man, so sorry to hear about your food disorder, your food issues.
That's not true.
Yeah.
And I said, well, you know, a lot of it's true, but comedy kind of lives in the exaggeration.
And so I'm leaning into it and you know, kind of playing my role.
Yeah, just for the record, we've all seen you eat candy and other stuff.

Yeah, I eat like a fucking shit pig most of the time.
He does.
Not most of the time.
But when I want it, I have it.
It should be noted because I'm often at the sharp edge of that point that is puncturing you, that I have seen you devour more shit than anybody I know.
But I love giving you because what happens is as you say that there's a larger person inside of you waiting to get out.
And so you've got three of them.
And so you're trying not to feed the beast as much as you can, as hard as you can.
If you unzip me, you'd find three after school specials of teenagers that wake up.
I brought it before.
Do you remember when we, like when we were up in, we were up at Pebble and you had kind of a, you had an off week.
You got to sort of, and we would sit down.
They go, can we, this is my favorite.
They go, as soon as we sat down, not even the way or the somebody go, hey, can we start with some ice water?
You go, yeah.
And if you got a basket of bread back there, you'd be like, hey man.
That's right.
Do you remember that restaurant?
It was like immediately.
Yeah.
And I looked at you like, who are you?
They were still handing out the menus.
Yeah.
You were at ballet.
I was at ballet.
We don't have bread in the house.
I got super, super, super, super stone with Reina, my friend Reina.
This is years and years ago.
We were in New York.
I was high as a kite and I was starving.
We walked down the street.
We walk into a restaurant and the matriot, he goes, how many?
And I go, Caesar salad.
Not even joking.
I swear to God, I wasn't even joking.
And Reina grabs my arm.
I'm like, what?
I go, I just wanted to start off like so before we went to sit down.
It's the Caesar.
They're waiting.

I do like a Caesar salad mix at the table.
I think there's something very, very refined about that.
Caesar salad mix at the table.
Get your salad chopped in the kitchen.
So they bring it to you.
Chopped.
That's also right.
I do like my dressing on the side.
That doesn't give me food issues.
Does it?
I just think that people overdress salads.
Yeah, I agree.
It's too soggy.
And it should be noted that in a town, and by town of Minela,
in a town where a lot of people, when they get burgers or they get stuff,
they're like, no bread.
Can I get that wrapped in lettuce or whatever?
Every time on the off weeks, on Sunday nights, when we do burgers,
Jason always gets full bun, and he has at least two burgers.
I know.
No, I do the single.
I do the single.
Watch it.
You've had two burgers.
I've seen you do two burgers.
Oh, two burgers.
No, but not double patty.
No, I do double patty.
I do two burgers.
I do one patty per burger because that's proper ratio with the bread.
That's right.
Only a full would have double meat.
It's too much meat.
Tell that to the Big Mac.
Well, he's got another piece of bread in there.
He does have a piece of bread in there.
It is.
I'm sure.
Yeah.
Yeah, some cool with Big Mac.
It's the bread.
He knows what he's doing.
All right.
All right.

So where do you guys get a load of this guest?

Wait, wait, wait, wait.

But I just wanted to, I want to show you guys.

Yeah, Sean, I saw you were playing with the,
wait, but look, it's all our faces are on this Rubik's Cube.

It's the Rubik's Cube.

It's the Rubik's Cube with our faces.

And then, isn't that cool?

Listen.

The world's smartest game for the world's dumbest.

Yeah.

We don't, we don't know how this all happened,
but we're not going to question it too much.

Here's the deal.

Yeah.

Right.

The smartest toy of all time just got smart less guys.

So in celebration of the smart less podcast third year
anniversary, we have partnered with Rubik's Cube to make a
limited edition limited quantity smart less Rubik's Cube.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I've always wanted to be one of those people that can solve it
in like three seconds.

You ever see those guys?

Wait, can you do that?

Oh yeah.

I've seen those.

No, but there's a, there's a way to do it.

I can't, I don't know.

I want to learn how to do it.

No, they, they, they, they mix it up and then they solve it
in three seconds.

Yeah.

Can you just have a new record last week or something?

He looks at it and he goes, yeah.

And he goes and puts it down.

Yeah.

I saw that.

I saw that.

It's fucking.

It's amazing.

And by the way, it's a little bit of a cheat though,

because you can see our faces.
We're not smart enough to do it.
But listener, if you're smart enough to do it,
or you want to try to get smart enough to do it,
go ahead over there to that merch store, you know,
that smart list shop and buy one.
Well, don't, you can't do a buy.
Do we need to tell them what it was?
It's www.shopsmartlist.com.
Anyway, Jay, sorry we interrupted.
You're, it's okay.
Yes.
I apologize.
I apologize to our guest.
Hey guys.
I don't know if you, I don't know if you like,
if you guys, wait, hang on a second.
We're still wrong.
We're going to start.
Back to one.
Hey guys.
I don't know.
Hey, hey guys.
I don't know.
Tighten up mystery guests.
Here we come.
I don't know if you guys like folks.
Hey guys.
Hey guys.
I don't know if you like folks with talent,
people or people who, god damn it.
Let's just reload.
Hey guys.
Here we come.
Here we go.
I don't know if you guys like folks with talent,
period.
But, that would be a comma.
I don't know why I write these.
Why do I write?
I should just freestyle it like Willie.
Hey guys.
Hey guys.
I don't know if you guys like folks with talent,

people who are funny, smart, care.
This sounds insincere, but it is sincere mystery guest.
I don't know if you guys like folks with talent,
comma, people who are funny, smart, charismatic.
I don't take them till after four.
Funny, smart, charismatic and sparkly.
I do.
So, I've invited one to join.
You wrote, I do.
I do, comma.
So, I've invited one to join us today.
She's not yet 40, but she's already written nine movies,
directed for them, starred in four of them,
gotten three Academy Award nominations for them,
and I'll bet there's more of those coming for her new one.
She was born in Sacramento, but lives in Brooklyn.
She was interested in dance, but was competitive in fencing.
Almost pursued musical theater,
but instead got a degree in philosophy
from Barnard College at college,
despite the destructive and reckless influence
of dorm mate Kate McKinnon.
Please welcome Miss Greta Gerwig.
Greta.
What?
Oh, my God.
Pretty good, right?
That was amazing.
It was great.
Also, I'm so nervous behind my little sheet of paper.
I'm nervous.
Why? Don't be nervous.
Oh, my God.
We're hard-hitting journalists with a lot of research.
Yeah.
Okay, and we're going to bring the hard-hitting questions.
You can see we take our craft very seriously.
Get ready.
I'm ready.
Greta Gerwig, it's so nice to meet you.
Yeah, great job.
It's so nice to meet you, too.
And I have to confess, I have a circle light behind me,
which I didn't even know existed.

You're allowed to have ring lights.
And they sent one to me.
They sent one.
That's what happened to me, Greta.
Is that a baby crib off to the side there?
Yes, yes.
That's a baby crib.
That's where Noah sleeps.
You know, Sean, they drop the baby.
They just say crib.
Yeah.
Okay.
They don't say baby crib.
Everybody knows when you say crib,
that you're talking about it for you.
Well, some people might say,
I think it's your house.
No.
Now Greta's got two baby boys.
Yeah, and a stepson who's 13.
Got it.
Wow.
So you're swimming in testosterone over there.
That's why I made Barbie.
Hey-oh.
Yeah.
No, it's great, though.
I actually, having a bunch of boys around is so fun.
Oh, and I apologize.
You can hear sirens because they're already in trouble.
Are you currently under indictment?
Are you?
No?
No.
So you're in Manhattan.
You have two sons and a fun partner.
Yes.
Yes.
We call Noah fun, right?
Yes.
Yes, he's fun.
And you've got a really fun movie coming out.
Oh, God, I love the trailers on this thing.
I know me.

Thank you.

All right.

We're going to get to that.

Where are we going to get started here?

Let's see what kind of hard-working question I've got.

Let's start at the beginning.

Let's go back to the beginning.

I want to know.

Greta, I sadly don't know enough about you yet.

We're so bad at this, and we probably won't find out more because we'll end up talking about ourselves.

But what?

I want to know, like, from when you start, when you were a kid, what were you drawn to most, the acting or the writing, or were you drawn, because you're such a brilliant writer, were you drawn to writing right away as a kid?

Like, were you like creative arts class or something?

Well, I didn't.

I was sort of drawn to the whole thing of it.

Like, I did grow up in Sacramento, and there was a really healthy and vibrant community theater scene there.

So I spent a lot of time going to community theater and participating in community theater, because if you liked it, that's sort of the way in, you know?

Yeah.

And now don't you look back on the shows that you've done in community theater and be like, you know, they're great and great experience, but it's like high school. It's like high school theater.

No, but it was also like sort of the purest art,

I think I've ever done.

Like, it's the most, you know, I don't know.

There's something like really, it's like everybody has like a secret sort of like Clark Kent Superman identity, like a substitute teacher might in the night to Tennessee Williams for all you know.

And there's something about that that I was always like, I love it.

Yeah.

I used to play piano for auditions for community theater shows.

And you're right.

It was just like waiting for government.

It's like people like moms and dads and dentists
and everybody would come in.
You didn't see Joseph and his Technicolor coat in Sacramento
because Jessica Chastain saw that in Sacramento.
She did.
Oh, that's right.
I think she saw the Walnut Creek Theater,
which was, which was a little outside.
But I did see, but fun fact, I saw Jessica Chastain
in community theater when she was like 15 or 16.
No way.
Yeah.
And I saw her and you can't take it with you
at the Chautauqua Theater Company.
No way.
Yeah.
And she played the ballerina.
Yeah.
I was in, I was in,
and a high school and had one line and I was a G-man.
And it was,
you were a Wright chief.
They have enough gunpowder down there to blow up the whole town.
That was my only line.
Right.
I think you can't take it with you later in high school.
I'd love to get one more take on that, Sean.
Let's just have fun with it.
Here we go.
Still rolling.
You're a Wright chief.
They have enough gunpowder down there to blow up the whole town.
Got it.
Thank you.
Check it.
Sorry for that.
That's cool.
So what were you in,
so you were in you can't take it with you.
Yeah.
I think I played,
it's been a minute since I've seen the play.
Is there a Russian woman in it?
Yes.

Because I have a memory of being Russian.

Yeah.

Wow.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Is a bold choice if there wasn't.

Yeah.

But it was,

so it was going to start with,

it did start with acting and then when did it go to writing?

Well, I was always writing,

but I didn't really have,

I didn't know,

there wasn't really an outlet for,

in terms of like my high school and everything,

there wasn't like, you know,

and here the plays are students have written,

but they did let you do like,

I wrote all the homecoming sketches for homecoming rallies.

Like that was my way of like,

being sort of a writer.

And then it wasn't until actually I got to college at Barnard

that I was taking an acting class and I was writing scenes

and I wrote on my own monologue to audition

and they were like,

that's not, you're not meant to do that.

And I was like, oh, and then they said,

one of the teachers who was great was like,

I think you want to take a playwriting class.

And then I started taking playwriting in college

and that was like an instant love.

Oh, wow.

At what point in Sacramento

or what got you excited to leave Sacramento?

Like, did you know when you were,

you're like, I'm limited here.

I know there's only a certain, you know,

place I can go here.

Well, I had,

my dad actually had,

one of his best friends was a math professor at Columbia

and we went to New York City when I was five

and I had a just a really strong memory

of waiting for like rush tickets for Broadway plays.

And I saw, I saw like,
Tyne Daily in Gypsy
and I saw Jerry Orbach in 42nd Street
and all the rush tickets, you'd be sitting in the front row
and looking sort of straight up.
And I remember I was like,
I gotta get back to Broadway.
That was sort of what I felt.
I just was like, like it never in my life.
And it was 89.
So I also think it was like,
there were still kind of like the neon strip bars
in 42nd Street and like everything.
And everything was like, I just was interested.
And so I kind of had it in my mind for really little time.
It was still kind of grimy
and kind of like exciting in that way.
Yes.
And I remember I said in a cab,
we were in a cab once and I said to my mom,
I had this like,
Take me to LaGuardia.
No.
It was, I was five
and I remember I had a,
my favorite outfit was pink
and had guitars all over it.
And I called up my rock and roll outfit
and I said to my mom,
I was like, can I wear my rock and roll outfit tomorrow?
And the cab driver said,
I'll wait for you.
I'll marry you later.
And I was like,
Oh, this cab driver is going to marry me.
Which in retrospect was maybe gross.
Yeah, pretty gross.
I thought it was amazing.
He was arrested.
I'm going to marry that cab driver.
And his name is Noah Bomb.
And we will be right back.
SmartList is sponsored by BetterHelp.
So it's just wrapping up my Broadway run here

and, you know, it was a very successful,
fun, incredibly rewarding experience.
And then I'm going to go home to Los Angeles
and I think it's going to hit me.
I'm just going to be like, wait, when am I doing here?
I'm sitting on the couch.
I'm nothing to do.
Who am I?
How do you define yourself?
If you define yourself as an actor
and you're not acting, who are you?
Right?
That's what I always think about.
It's like those little gaps when you're not working.
Who are you?
What do you do?
All of those kinds of ethereal questions
that we ask ourselves, right?
Sometimes in life, we're faced with tough choices
and the path forward isn't always clear.
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that align with your values is like anything.
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I've benefited from therapy like crazy.
You guys always hear me talk about it.
And I'm sure I'm going to bring this topic up
with my therapist when I get home.
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She's always going to give me great advice.
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You know, I have a lesser known talent
than a lot of people know.
I can cook stuff.
I'm not like a great chef,
but I will make stuff that will blow your mind.
And like, for example, sloppy joes.
I have the greatest old school sloppy joe recipe
that I'm going to keep it secret.
But it's a lot of work.
It has like tons of ingredients and stuff in it
that you don't, it's not just from a can.
Like I make it from scratch people.
So I just wanted to say from like soft skills
to hard skills like sloppy joe making,
it takes all kinds of talent to make a business successful,
especially if you're going to open a restaurant of sloppy joes.
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Smart list is sponsored by Smart Water.
So, you know, it's summer right now.
It's so effin' hot outside.
Everybody feels it.
Everywhere you go, we're breaking records.
It's hot, hot, hot.

It's so important to hydrate your body.
And a lot of the times when it's summer and it's hot,
everybody likes to go out and drink, right?
You go to bars, you hang out, you go to parties,
and you drink, which makes you more dehydrated.
So now you're outside.
You're drinking a beer or wine or a cocktail or whatever,
and it's making you more dehydrated along with the heat.
So you gotta hydrate, folks.
Go party, but hydrate, right?
Smart Water.
Here on the podcast, we are smart lists,
but not smart water lists.
Smart Water is 100% vapor distilled with a pure crisp taste.
It's pH balanced and offers added electrolytes for taste.
So for me, right now, I'm headed out the door.
I'm going for a long walk to the theater.
I'm gonna grab a smart water and it's gonna work.
It's going to hydrate my body.
And it says here, we're not allowed to say
that smart water makes you smarter,
but we can say it's for sipping while you're listening
to your favorite podcast, of course.
Keep it smart with smart water.
And now back to the show.
So if I'm a young writer and I want an aspiring writer,
would you recommend writing plays
or trying to write like a dialogue scene
before you start to take on sort of the formatting
of a feature and stuff like that?
Well, I think it's really useful,
just in terms of like, it's very cheap to do
in terms of like seeing how it works with actors.
You know, I...
Because your dialogue is so great.
It's so easy. It's so natural.
You're also saying something like that.
That's a great little trick, right?
You have something, people actually talk like that,
but then you sort of trojan horse in something
actually pretty profound and like, oh my God,
and realize I'm now crying and, you know,
or laughing and like, you make it seem very, very easy.
And did that start...

Yeah, and also stop sneaking messages in, Greta.

Yeah.

You know what I mean?

It's too much for us.

We need to be ready.

We can't take it. We're too sensitive.

So a lot of that come from trying with being a playwright
and doing mostly dialogue with that,
not to be a little bit over it.

Yeah. I mean, well, I think actually doing community theater
or doing theater at school was also memorizing
really great text, even in like scene classes.

Amazing, because it kind of makes you realize why it's great
is because it...

I don't know.

I haven't had this experience that many times as an actor,
but like, I remember like doing, you know,
I don't know, Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams
or Edward Albee or something like that
when the text sort of opens up to you
and you realize like you could make so many decisions
as this character and they're all right
because it's rich and it's sort of full
and it's there for you.

And I think I was like, oh, that's a gift to an actor
if you can kind of find words that make them feel free
and not constrained.

And yeah, for me, writing...

Again, it was all in college.

It was really lucky.

One of my playwriting professors was like,
because we'd all read each other's work
and also Kate McKinnon was,
she was also doing playwriting classes with me
at the same time.

Yeah, wait, no matter.

She's a problem.

She's trouble.

I'm really glad you got away from her.

Congrats on that.

Wait, so that was in Jason's intro.

You were roommates?

Yeah, yeah, we went...

Well, she was at Columbia and I was at Barnard

and then we ended up, you know, I don't know,
you like go in for housing together, you know,
she tried to pull you in, right,
and take you down the path
and good for you that you stayed away.
She was always the funniest,
most talented person I'd ever met
and like, good at everything.
So funny, my gosh, so funny.
And I also saw her do drama.
Like, she could do anything.
She was like Meryl Streep.
She was like, unreal.
And yeah, but we would do these playwriting classes together
and you read each other's work out loud
and then our teacher organized for real professional actors
to come read our plays, which was like...
Real professional actors?
Real professional actors.
And the actor, I don't know if you know him,
he's a wonderful actor, Michael Cherness.
Sure is.
Yes, yes.
He's amazing and he came and he read my play
and I was like 19 and he was amazing
and I thought I was the best writer
because he like made it even more wonderful.
It was like, it was so exciting.
Let me ask you a question.
Have you cast Michael Cherness in one of your films yet?
Actually we did.
Jason.
Yes, I had no idea.
Good for you to call Jason's bluff.
Good.
A movie called Mistress America and we cast him
and I told him, I was like,
do you remember coming to Barnard College one fall?
And he said, oh my God, that was you.
That's so crazy.
You know, I just saw an interview yesterday
with Matt Damon talking about when he wrote Good Will Hunting
and he wrote that in college as a,
he was doing like a, they had to write one act plays

and he was talking about the fact
that he wrote this sort of 40 minute thing
and he says to his professor, I think I've failed
because I've got this thing and I don't know what it is,
but I think maybe it's a screenplay
and then he ended up taking it back
and writing with Ben
and what was interesting was talking about the process of
then Ben looking at it going,
I think we should work on this together
and then talking about the discovery as young writers
and going and Ben saying to him like,
if your character says this,
I think the other guy should say this
and then having, and as you know, as a writer
that so much of it is just that, right?
Is just trusting your instinct in those moments
of like understanding who that character is and going,
and I thought it was very valuable to say out loud
to young writers, just that process is really that, right?
And having the confidence.
Or like Chuck Martin used to say,
writing's just talking, was that Chuck Martin?
Jim Valley. Jim Valley.
Yeah, the great Jim Valley.
No, that's all, I mean, I think it is,
I always said, you know,
I'm probably stealing this from someone,
but like writing is listening.
That was me.
You have to sort of, that was you.
No, you kind of have to listen to the characters
talk to each other and I think,
and in a funny way, or for me anyway,
directing, like I can't,
for me, the writing process
and the directing process are different,
they're very separated,
and I don't really want to direct something
until I feel like the script is good
and like worth doing.
And I think because they're kind of
separate parts of my brain,
there's times as a director where I'm like,

I knew something as a writer a year ago
or six months ago, which I don't know anymore.
And I sort of have to trust the writer part of me
that they knew what they were doing
and not tinker with it later.
Like any edits I've done in the directing process,
I've always regretted.
I've always gone back to the original script
and I'm like, what was I trying to do?
Yeah, I get, you know, it's funny,
I mean, you write,
I imagine you always write alone, right?
You write by yourself only.
Unless I write with Noah,
he's the only other person I've written with.
So you do write with, yeah,
because I write with Chappy.
You talk about, I know, bringing up Chappy,
but I get so much value for me.
Now he writes some stuff on his own as well,
but he and I write together
and I get so much value out of those conversations
in those moments.
So that later when we do stuff
and when we actually shoot stuff,
that we've got each other to go back and go like,
wait, what was I think,
what were we thinking in that moment?
And one of us will catch the other one and go,
we're doing it because bubble blind,
it does make sense.
And I think we are right on this.
You need that, you need that sounding.
Yeah, it's kind of what you're talking about a little bit.
Exactly.
Look, Greta, what about when the directing,
do you let the directing win over the writing
or is it the other way around?
I mean, you may have just answered this,
but like, what if while you're directing something,
you figure, oh, you know what,
we're actually saying that with this performance
or saying that with this camera shot.
So we don't actually need to literally say it.

Let's cut the line.

Yeah, I mean, I feel like it's not really the like director side of me wins as much as when you kind of expose it all to air and bring actors in.

I think it's often more that I feel that the actor, usually I shoot what's on the page.

I'm pretty good at, because I'm like, wow, you know, but then often because I've gotten to work with such great actors,

you find that the actor has done it without,

you know, you've written all these lines

and the actor, the audience knows right away

what the actor is feeling.

They're communicating it anyway.

But yeah, it's really with like actors

that I feel like it changes.

What interests me is, so I haven't,

I've said like everybody else,

I've seen the trailer for Barbie and I haven't seen it yet,

but it looks amazing.

And it's so visually, first of all visually,

it's so stunning.

There's so much to look at.

And so I'm curious,

because I've never worked on something like that before

where there is such a visual element to it

that how you approach that as you're writing it,

how much of that ends up on the page.

And if you're directing,

you don't really have to explain it,

although you do have to walk everybody else through it, right?

A little bit.

In some ways it was on the page.

Yeah, there were things on the page in a sort of general sense,

but I found that for Barbie in particular,

it was, I had a very long time working

with a production designer before,

I mean, I think I started talking to the production designer

in the, at least a year before we started shooting

and this DP, at least a year,

and same with the custom designer.

And so a lot of the things that got worked out in the movie

were things that came out of just like tons of meetings

of like how, even things like,

there are these incredible sets that they built.
And they also built,
it was like a combination of like large scale sets
that are on these sound stages.
And then also we built a lot of miniatures,
which was amazing and I've never built miniatures,
but I love them.
Like those pictures of like when they were making,
you know, Star Wars,
or if you watch the like ILM documentary,
you're like, all I want to do is glue little things
with the best star.
Did you watch the ILM documentary?
I love the ILM documentary.
It's incredible.
Incredible.
Incredible.
It's like my favorite.
Those guys are like, I just love them.
Unbelievable.
And they're all so special.
And they were all like in college,
just like in a warehouse going like, let's make this.
Well, we can't make that.
There's no, it doesn't exist.
Well, let's build it.
Well, what?
They just built a camera that makes it do what you want to do.
It's just phenomenal.
It's also like, I think it's also, I mean,
I have to say like in terms of documentaries
about making things, Disney Plus is killing it.
They've got the ILM doc and also the Get Back,
the Beatles doc.
Yes.
Did you see the Pixar doc?
No.
That's incredible.
That's incredible.
Did you guys see the doc about the Pixar doc?
No.
Yeah, they did a doc about the making of the Pixar doc.
Wait, since we're on the Barbie thing,
I just have to ask an obvious question.

First of all, when somebody approached you
or did you come up with the idea?
How did it happen?
And weren't you because someone like me sitting back
was like, they're making Barbie a movie?
Like a live action movie?
And then you see the trailer.
Oh my God.
This is so cool.
Blaster.
But like at first, weren't you like, wait, what?
Well, actually it was Margot Robbie invited me into this
because she's a producer.
And I had met her a few years earlier.
And I mean, I loved her as an actor.
And then when I talked to her as a producer,
it was just, she's really wonderful and smart
and everything you hope a producer can be.
And then she, so she got the rights and was going to make it.
And she came to me and said, do you want to write?
Would you be interested in writing it?
And then I, that was like shortly after the birth
of my first child.
And I must have said yes.
And I'd like Noah to write it too.
Which then later she kind of was like,
am I writing a Barbie movie with you?
Just the Ken parts.
And I was like, yeah, it's going to be great.
And he was like, what are we going to do?
I don't know.
But then I sort of had a, I don't know,
I just had a feeling about it.
Mostly I had a feeling about Margot.
And it sort of seemed so outrageous.
I thought, well, I don't know, it could be interesting.
And then Noah and I started writing it really,
we started writing it in March of 2020.
So it was like very much shut down,
lockdown time.
And then, yeah.
And then anyway, I didn't know I was going to direct it
until we were done writing the script.
And I was like, well, this is, I really like this.

And I don't want anyone else to do it.
And what, any fears about it?
Like any fears about like.
Well, so many fears.
I don't have his fears.
I still have fears.
The fears are continuing.
No, no, it's, it's, it's a, yeah, it's terrifying.
How you got, you and Noah are both incredibly good
at keeping things real, keeping things smart,
sophisticated, nuanced, blah, blah, blah,
all the things that you would not think of first
when you think of Barbie, which is for kids
and something that is, I think by design,
supposed to be very sort of base and primary.
Was there a, I'm sure there was a very interesting discussion
between you and him about, okay, how are we going
to take something that is really sort of, again,
generic by design and, and put in all the stuff
that we're really good at and known for?
Was that an exciting kind of opposite situation
for you guys?
Well, thank you for, for all of that.
I mean, yeah, I guess I've, I've always feel
like there's something exciting about things
that appear unlikely, or things that appear
sort of like, how's that going to work, you know,
or I think that sometimes those are where
really interesting stuff comes from.
And I think part of that has to do with,
because of, honestly, community theater,
just doing, like sort of like, well, we're going
to do it with what we've got, let's go, or,
but you know, and I think that kind of, I don't know,
it's like that challenge of, of finding your way
into something that seems kind of like, this is an odd.
Right, like everybody's got a preconceived notion
of what that is, kind of what you were saying, Jay.
Like everybody's got this idea, Barbie is this, et cetera.
We all have, and so by taking something that we all
have such a relationship with, or we have a preconceived
notion about.
Yeah, like you guys are so, so incredibly good
at writing stuff that is very sort of adult,

or questions that adults are capable of processing.

Imagine the studio was keen on keeping intact
an appeal for children with this.

Right.

Yet you and Noah are both so great and known for the other.

And so was there, was there a negotiation with the studio
about kind of merging the two, or were you and Noah
excited about kind of just doing that even without asking them?

Well, I mean, I think from the outset we knew we were,
we were going to make a PG-13 movie.

Got it.

So that it wasn't exactly, I mean, it wasn't like, you know,
a hard R or anything.

Yeah, or a soft PG.

Yeah, it's like a PG-13 could kind of occupy that space.

I mean, I think also the movies, you know,

I love a lot of PG-13 movies.

And when I think about certain, like, I don't know,
like even like Clueless, which was a big one for me,
is like, I didn't understand a lot of those jokes,
but I also loved it and thought it was hilarious and great.

And I felt like there was a way to do something that's kind
of sophisticated and broad in that way.

But the truth is, we really just amused ourselves
and wrote something that we loved.

And we, and again, because of the pandemic,
there was a real sense of like, I don't even know if any
of this is like, like possible, like I don't know
if we're going to go back to the movie theaters.

And I think in a way it sort of freed us also

because it was Barbie, we were like, let's just go for Brooke.

Let's make the craziest, most un-makeable thing we can write.

And then see what happens.

And so there was no kind of sense of like needing to please anyone.

And you also didn't think that you were going to be stuck
with directing it either at the time.

They were like, oh, let's just write something that we both like
and we don't have to direct it.

Exactly.

I was like, well, this is somebody else's problem.

Somebody else has to figure out how to build all this stuff.

And then, and then like, and you're absolutely not able
to fake this, but like, I didn't need to make a, you know,
I didn't need to make a Barbie movie.

I was like, well, I want to make this one.
And if you guys don't want to make this one, then I don't.
And then like, and then you hire Rodrigo Prieto.
It was like, like, I mean, the movie is so again,
by design, perfectly like colorful and flat and bright.
And, you know, he's like, you know,
an incredible cinematographer that can shape light,
like the best of them.
Was he excited to do something that was completely opposite
from what he's known for, too?
Well, he's always been a dream DP for me to work with.
Yeah.
I mean, he really lights with Godfingers.
He's got one of those abilities and he's just, you know, extraordinary.
And I approached him about doing this.
Not, I sent him the script and I said, you know,
and he thought it was funny and he was interested.
We started talking and, and he, and he just, I mean,
it was, he just funny.
I'm imagining his face as he opens up the envelope
and it just says Barbie.
And then he's like page one.
Screaming at his agent.
Yeah.
But he was like, but he, we started working on it
right after he, he finished shooting
Killers of the Flower Moon with Scorsese.
And it took me a full week to like,
I had to like step aside with him and we were
shot listing and talking and working on things.
And I was like, Rodrigo, I'm having a lot of trouble
because I just have to look at you and say,
okay, so then Barbie is going to walk through it.
Like, I could, I was like, I was on the beach.
And he was like, I want to be here.
I want to be doing this.
And he did.
Great.
I have a question.
When, when, when you're on set or what, how, are you guys,
are you ever open to actors changing lines?
Are you like, if an actor is like, you know what,
I don't know that I would, I do fight back.
You like, just, just say the lines is written.

I promise the word.

You know what I mean?

Your mouth actor, hit your mark, say your line.

No.

You say that.

I hear you say that.

I don't say that, but I do.

I try to do as much as I can build in rehearsal because

I find that I like, I like people to be open to, to do.

I mean, honestly, I mean, from theater, like table work, just like, what, you know, any questions and how does this work?

Yeah.

And I think if there's improv that comes out of that, that then wants to get worked into the script,

I really do like words to be written just because it is like, you know, movies are so, you can really get pulled in different directions and also seduced by how talented everyone is that you can be like, wait, are we telling the story or am I just letting you get like, and I, and I think, so, but I, so I like, I like building it in rehearsal.

And then certainly I've like, if there are certain actors who are like, I want, can you let me just play a little, I'm more, I would say I'm more open to it than Noah.

I think Noah's much more like, say these lines.

A long time ago, a friend of mine worked with Robert Tenero many, many, many, many years ago.

And this person said that Robert was like, they'd be rehearsing right before they shot it.

And he go, no, no, no, no, no, I'm not saying that.

And you don't say that either.

Let's just talk how people talk because when you say a line and I wait and then I say my line and it doesn't sound real.

It sounds like you're waiting for a line to be said.

Was that Joe Pesci doing that?

No.

You know, so I found that.

Did you have Joe Pesci on Hi-Po-Con?

Was it Joe Pesci?

Yeah, it was Hi-Po-Con.

Joe Pesci.

Yeah, he was.

Now, did you, did you know, did you know, did you know that Ryan Gosling was as funny as he is?

Or did you just hire him because he's a hot, hot dude.
That's a perfect Ken because he's a funny MF-er.
Yeah.
I know.
I knew, I knew, I did.
I really, I felt like I knew because we knew we were writing the part for Marco.
So we actually, in writing it cast Ryan, we wrote his name into the script and everything.
It was like the thing that I was like, it's Ryan.
It's Ryan Gosling.
I know.
Wait, how did you write his name?
Imagine a Ryan Gosling?
No, I said Ken Ryan Gosling.
Wow.
Ken Ryan Gosling type.
Ken Ryan Gosling.
And it was everywhere.
We handed him the script.
It gave him a little bit of leverage.
Oh, that's so wonderful that you know Ryan.
And I was like, oh, I don't know Ryan.
I've never met Ryan.
I have no idea.
But actually the thing that made me, I mean, I've always thought he was like, you know, those actors, you can, I mean, they're always my favorite actors, whether they're do comedy or not, you can feel they have funny rhythms in them.
You can just sort of feel that they know what's funny.
And I always felt that about him.
And then I'm a big fan of all of his SNLs.
Like, I always thought he was great on SNL.
And like, he did, I think he did guy that just got a boat on weekend update.
Oh yeah, I remember that.
And it was so good.
And I love SNL.
I watch every week.
And I just, I always thought he was great.
So I had this idea.
And then it took him so, he was like, he was not sure.
He was like, I don't, I'm not current.
I can't do this.

And I was like, I actually, Marko and I just were like, we'll do anything.
And this is, we want you to be in this movie.
How was he, during his first wardrobe fitting, was he excited or upset about the colors and the materials?
Honestly, we had been texting for like a year and talking on the phone and he'd been sending pictures and we'd been going back and forth.
But then I had this like the night before he showed up. I had this terrible thought.
I was like, what if he comes in and says like, I'm not wearing any of that.
And he showed up and I think the very first outfit he wore was like an all pink sailor outfit.
And I was like, wow, he's really doing this.
Get out of my closet.
Committed.
But yeah, he did it.
He went for it.
So Greta, what was the first feature film that you directed?
And what was that sort of moment where you went, okay, I got to direct this.
I got to do this.
Well, the first one that I did sort of write and direct on my own was Lady Bird and that was.
Hold for a while.
Good.
Yeah, no kidding.
So that was your first?
That was my first.
I had co-directed before and I had written before and then I just, it took me a long time to say like I want to direct.
I think because I love, I love movies and there's a kind of fear around it that you're going to, I don't know, mess up the form. You're going to ruin the history of film.
The history of cinema went right up until 2017.
And then that was it.
Were there, were there parts of it?
Because you're clearly incredible at it, but you didn't, as you said, you didn't really know if you were going to be.
And what, what part of it do you think you surprise yourself with being not bad at and what part do you surprise yourself with being a little kind of, well, that's, that's less comfortable for me than I thought it was going to be.

Well, I think the, the whole thing is uncomfortable.

I mean, you know, you directed like it's the whole thing sort of uncomfortable because it's a lot.

Yeah.

And also there's really no way to, I mean, you can go to school for it, but it's also just doing it is the only way you can really get through it and kind of figure out what works and what doesn't work.

I always, I think the thing I've always been envious of is like the people who I don't know any other way to describe it, but that there are some directors there where I feel that they're like native speakers of cinema, that they understand it in just such a deep way.

I mean, one of your, Steven Spielberg is obviously that.

I mean, he almost invented that the like modern cinematic language.

And I always feel slightly like I'm in transit translation.

Like I feel like, okay, I'm the script.

I feel like I can get to a place that feels worthy to shoot.

And I feel like I'm, I'm good as a director, but I always feel like there's just one layer of translation, which is actually okay.

Because, you know, sometimes there can be things that are quite beautiful that comes out of that.

And it's like, I do think, I think something that's always scary about directing, but always exciting about directing is there's no, nobody knows.

There's no, there's no secret, a crib sheet where you can say, well, if you follow these things, it's gonna work.

It's a, you know.

And as you said earlier, the audience, the audience will take whatever you give them.

They're wide open and generous right at that first moment when the screen goes black and then the first image comes up.

They'll take whatever you give them, just don't drop them.

You know?

Yes, exactly.

That's real.

And one of your influences I read, someone I really like, or at least his quote, Howard Hawks, where he says, you know, a good movie is just three great scenes and no bad ones.

Nothing too boring in between.

Yeah.

Yeah.

It's just, it doesn't matter what, what subject matter it's on, what genre.

It's just, you just can't have any bad scenes and just have a few that are great.

By the way, what if you just, you're gonna step out of the house, please.

Please come out of the building.

Hands, hands, hands.

I know, I know.

It's very, it's, it's an intense.

You got a deal on the apartment.

Yeah.

It's just above the station.

Like I was saying to Jason and Will the other day,

like me and Scotty are watching all the Indiana Jones movies from the beginning to Europe for the new one that's coming up.

Yeah.

And I was watching, we were watching the third one last night or something.

You guys each in your own sleeping bag.

Sorry.

When you're doing this.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Okay.

Sorry.

We got little treats.

Yeah.

But anyway, so, you know, all these space superhero, whatever movies, which I'm a fan of, but it's like you, you watch these Indiana Jones movies, like they're just really great, like written and great, you know, amazingly shot movies that were still action, but they were down here on earth.

And so I think that if anybody wanted to like take, you know, people by surprise, they do something like that again, instead of up there, they do it down here.

Well, I think there's always like, I agree.

And I also think like, you know, I mean, one of my favorite director's movies is the Mad Max Fury Road recently. How he establishes, I mean, and there's certainly, you know, great young directors who can do this, and I've never done anything like this.

But the way he establishes space, and you don't even notice that you understand the relationship between everything into like, it's, but then you realize, oh, he's, that's great.

Like if you know, because I'm not inherently interested in car chases, just as a person.

But if you don't establish a geography, there's no suspense.

No idea.

Exactly.

But I always felt like in Fury Road,

I know where everything is all the time.

I understand what is happening.

And from the first moment where he like runs through that maze of stuff,
I'm not confused, even though it's shot very close
and you know, it has a strong stylistic choices.
And I think, I think even just tethering things to earth
in terms of like geography is thrilling for an audience.
Like, and I think like to Indiana Jones,
you can always know where you are.
And I think I find that, to me, when I talk about sort of like people
who are like, you know, understand cinema in that way,
it's that they just instantly can establish space.
When you, when you see, when you see that sort of like craftsmanship
when it comes to filmmaking, like I was watching somebody was breaking down
that scene in the birds, you know, Hitchcock,
and seeing the guy outside getting attacked at the gas station
and the way he cuts it and he keeps cutting back to inside and everything.
And then you see the gas going down to the thing.
Yes.
And then the guy stepping out of this and everybody's like,
don't light the cigarette.
And he blows up and then it blows, sorry, spoiler alert.
And then he blows up the gas station
and then you end up at the perspective of the birds.
You are the villain by the end.
Right.
And it's so mesmerizing to see that kind of, as the guy broke it down,
he was like, don't you get it?
You're the villain.
And I was like, oh fuck.
Yeah.
So, yeah, it's really impressive.
I know.
I also think it's impressive when it can be like a Hitchcock thing
or like Indiana Jones or whatever,
where you're so caught up in the storytelling
and it's in service of the storytelling,
but now you never say to yourself, well, look at that shot.
You're just in it.
Yes.
And I think that that's like, I always think of like in Jaws,
the shot where the car comes on the ferry and then it's one shot.
It's like a five shot that becomes a three shot,
that becomes a two shot.
And it's like, they didn't cut the whole time
and you never think about it.

You're never like, he's doing a wonder.

Yeah, I know.

It's just great.

And I think that kind of thing and that like to Howard Hawks or Preston Sturges or Ernst Lubitsch or those guys who made those wonderful, like, I think we'd call them talkies, but they were also so cinematic that it's this combination of like the highest respect for words.

And then also just clean, beautiful storytelling with great ideas for shots that aren't fussy.

And I think that that kind of unfussy filmmaking that's language first, but yet also gorgeous.

It's like, I always think of that like a high watermark.

Yeah.

When it's understated like that, when you don't know and you can just appreciate it for what it is, but it doesn't stick out.

It's like wearing a really great shirt, but with no logo.

Do you know what I mean?

Like you don't need to advertise it.

It just happens to look good.

I think the analogies holds up.

Or beautifully cut suit or something.

Yeah.

Unless the shirt or the sweatshirt or whatever said, smart list on it.

But anyway, go to the merch store.

Go to the merch store.

Go to the merch store.

Hey, Greta, do you know where the word movie comes from?

No, I don't.

So the original studios were in Brooklyn, right?

They were in LA.

They were in Brooklyn.

And the people working on the set who walked around, they were...

What the fuck is...

They moved, right?

They called all the people that moved around the set, they called them movies.

The people, they called them movies.

The people would move around.

I see.

Movies.

Brooklyn, I know.
I love that.
That's something to cut.
Hey, Greta.
Greta, when you're in love movies so much,
if you couldn't make movies or act in them,
what else would you do?
Yes.
Huh?
There's a question you've never had, huh?
Well, I mean, this is not a job that's available anymore
because the world has changed.
But like, in the...
Blacksmith?
I think I've always liked...
Copper?
I like...
No, no, no.
Like, old-timey newsrooms.
Like, if they were like, get the paper out every day.
We got to rush this one.
What's the deadline?
Yeah.
So you want to be a copywriter?
Yeah.
Yeah.
A big reporter.
Like, one of the ladies and all the president's men
who was like, you know...
But I do like that idea of like,
we got to get it out every day.
And like, we're going to go to press,
and then we're going to get scooped
and like, all of that stuff.
I think it's also that kind of like pressure
of every single day there's a deadline.
Extra, extra.
Yeah.
Now, what about when you're...
What about when you are making movies
and how do you decompress when you get home?
I know you got those two wonderful kids to deal with.
Yeah.
But what else...

What would you do?
What about when they're down?
And then mommy needs to take it easy
and she needs to refill her bucket.
We're turning on TV.
We're reading poetry.
We're...
So I do...
No, and I do watch a lot of movies together.
I think like my sort of...
That's something I read a lot of books.
But I also really...
Here it comes.
Love...
Love is blind.
You love love is blind.
Yeah.
You can't stop watching that.
You can't stop.
I love it so much.
Sure.
I love people falling in love.
Right.
On television.
In the dark.
In their hearts.
It just makes me so happy.
Well, it's like The Bachelor.
It's so real.
I've never seen The Bachelor,
but actually Ryan Gosling,
when we started talking about Ken,
he said that Ken...
I had never seen him and he was like,
oh, Ken reminds me of the men on The Bachelorette
when the woman is in a round.
They don't know what to do with themselves
and they get like stressed out.
And they're like...
I just start drinking.
That's what dudes do.
And they kind of like are competitive with each other
and it's like if one guy wears glasses
and then another guy wears glasses,

he's like, no, you took my thing.
I'm the guy with glasses.
Oh my God.
The top knot.
I probably would love The Bachelor and The Bachelorette,
but I've never seen it.
But I love Love Is Blind.
I mean, that's like,
that's not a very exciting answer,
but I do love it.
Well, the first season of Love Is Blind,
there's one couple that's still together.
I know.
That's wild.
I know.
They're in love.
Lauren and Cameron.
Exactly.
Lauren and Cameron,
wherever you are, best of luck, huh?
Best of luck, huh?
Best of luck.
They're doing great.
Greta, you're...
This has been a very fast album.
Oh my gosh.
You're a very quick chat.
Very fast.
Yeah.
This is wonderful.
You've got real chat skills.
Yeah.
The directing and the acting doesn't work out.
Maybe radio.
Please, please.
It's going to work out.
Please don't stop making movies
and writing and directing and acting all of it.
You're so good.
I also can't wait for Snow White.
You're so great at it.
Oh, yes.
Oh, thank you.
Well, I'm...

That's next.
And I'm excited to see you
in your Tony Award-winning performance.
Go see it.
Go see it.
Go see it.
I know I am.
And also, I've just started
because my son's now four months old.
I've just started being able to go out at night.
Doing stuff.
Yeah.
I've got a date to see Parade.
So then right after...
I'm getting them in.
Good, good, good.
But yeah, I can't wait.
Well, thanks, honey.
It's so nice to meet you.
Well, you're the greatest.
You're super-duper talented,
very, very kind to do this with us.
Incredible.
Thank you very much.
Thank you, guys.
This is...
It was like being at my own surprise party on the...
Thank you for doing this.
Thank you.
Best of luck with Barbie.
Cannot wait to see it.
Yes.
Best of luck.
Thank you, Greta.
You guys are going to like it.
I can't wait to see it.
I'll be there first day.
We're going to be there opening weekend.
Yes.
Great.
Yeah.
I'm going as Ken for Halloween.
I'm already tapping it.
No one else can take it.

And he's got the outfit on now for it.
Yeah.
Thank you, Greta Gerwig.
Thanks, Greta.
Thank you, Greta Gerwig.
Thank you, guys.
Bye.
Bye.
She's got a very exciting movie coming out.
I just think that Barbie is a monster.
I think it's...
Yeah, that's really good.
Yeah, that's going to be huge.
Yep, it's going to be huge.
I mean, think about it.
She's just writing and making these incredible films,
and it's so exciting to be...
I mean, but she's an actor, too.
No, I know.
But I'm just saying...
Like Jason.
Wait, so sorry, Sean.
Are you eating?
Sorry, yeah.
Oh, yeah.
Is it lunchtime?
We're almost done.
You were killing...
During the show, you were killing a big Coke.
Yeah.
You got a big Coke going?
Big glass of Coke.
Huh.
And then what are you chewing?
Cheez-Its.
Oh, right.
It's still on the Cheez-Its.
Yeah.
What a fun snack.
Is it a...
Is it an all-you-can-eat endeavor we got here?
Yeah, there's a buffet in my kitchen.
Cheez-Its.
Different flavors of Cheez-Its.

I just go down the line.
I'm like, Scotty, you almost...
Can you move the line along, please?
Scotty, lining up for food in your own kitchen.
I'm happy because I thought that the film...
You know, it's Barbie, but I...
Because when I first saw it, I thought that it was...
Barb.
No.
Bye.
That wasn't very good.
Barb, bye.
It wasn't very good.
No, you can't go on that one.
I had a better one.
I had a better one.
Go ahead.
You know, I'm so excited to see Barbie.
That key doesn't work the door.
I've never been tonight.
I was so excited that she did Barbie.
I'm so excited to see it, you know.
And I was worried because it's such a big, huge, you know,
franchise and important to a lot of people,
but it looks like something she really did right.
Bye.
Right by.
Oh, did right by.
Yes, she did do right by.
Right by.
That will go.
You think that's better than mine?
Well, the key worked, the door's open and out we go.
Bye, y'all.
Smart.
Smart.
SmartLess is 100% organic and artisanly handcrafted by
Rob Armjolf, Bennett Barbaco and Michael Grand Terry.
SmartLess.
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He feared he'd be back in time to take his wife Denise out to celebrate,
but he never came back.

Friends and loved ones feared he met his fate through bad luck
and a group of hungry alligators leaving his young family behind,
except that's not what happened at all.

And after 17 years, a kidnapping and the uncovering of a secret love triangle,
the truth would finally be revealed.

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