

Good morning Sean. Good morning Jason Bateman. Now are you aware not only if we made a cast change here, we've gotten rid of the will, our net, it's just you and me now, but we're also on a cooking show now. That is correct. We're going to do a six can chili. Yep, that's what we're doing with the six cans of chili. Well, we're going to do all the meat and all the veggies you can handle. Okay. We're going to triple the tomato sauce and we're going to put in four kinds of garlic. Did you know there's four different kinds of garlic? No, what are they? Can you name them quickly? Garlic, garlic or garlic ear and garlic ness. I'm a big fan of garlic ness. Yeah, it's going to have quite a kick to it. Yeah. And you're going to be, well, you're going to be busy in the restroom for a while with this, but boy, it's a great weight loss tool. And welcome to six can chili with Sean and Jason. So Sean was just saying how he's, he's a little groggy this morning because he's still wearing his Oscar hair from last night from his, from his play. So he did not shower after a sweaty theater performance. Just climb right to bed. Well, because I'm so fucking tired and I'm so hungry because I don't eat before the show. So I had a massive bowl of spaghetti and ice cream and I think that's why I didn't sleep and I'm exhausted today. They did a Raiders of the Lost Dark Marathon. Was it last night or the last night? And because there were, the AB guy was here all day too. And I was here early and then I get up for that. And I had the show. Who cares? Anyway, who cares? Did you ask your AB guy to join you and Scotty for the marathon? Yeah. Yeah. Don't laugh like that's not something you would do. Now, now let me ask you about the Raiders marathon. And my first question is why? Because the new one's coming out. Sure. You got to get ready, Will. Oh, so you got to get teed up. Yeah. Yeah. I'm so excited. You got to have everything fresh so you can tap your neighbor in the theater. Next thing you go, do you remember in part three where they kind of laid some breadcrumbs for this moment? Oh man. I'm such a grouch. I'm such a grouch about this shit. I just realized that. I'm like, just don't say anything. I'm just such a grouch. You're going to go see the new Indiana Jones, right, Willie? You have to. I mean, I don't know. Is the little boy in you dead? When did you kill the little boy? The guest is laughing. Listen, the guest is laughing. Here it is. So the guest is getting fucking impatient. So here we're going to go. You don't want to piss this guy off, okay? Because today we have our first world famous DJ on the show. What? What? This music master is at the top of his game, spinning and scratching for the fabulous and the famous. He's going to tell us about his passion for music, his land speed record of 180 miles per hour in a Bentley, Will. Are you serious? We're having a DJ? Yeah. That's great. Nice, Will. He is undefeated. He has an undefeated record in kickboxing and his recent moment special. Listen, his recent momentum has been found in a new passion for acting. And this momentum has come in the form of multiple nominations and wins for BAFTA's Emmys, SAG and Golden Globe Awards, as well as box office earnings for his films reaching well over \$9 billion. So he's got some nice speed going here with his new passion. He's got a lot of sound effects going on. He's also one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people in the world and most importantly was recently named People's Sexy Man Alive. All of this in one man and he's here to tell us how he does it. Please welcome DJ Big Driss, AKA Idris Elba. No way! No way! I was like, wait, what? Another classic Bateman intro. You guys had no guesses on that? No, that was so crazy. It does sound crazy. That's crazy. That cannot be me. How much of that was

accurate, Idris? All of it, right? Yeah, kind of. Well, which part? Well, you are undefeated in kickboxing, right? Yeah, I had one fight. Okay, well, you didn't lose and you happen to be a pretty world famous DJ. I led with, you know, that's sort of second. That I knew. Yeah, but I did not know that. I did know that, right? Yeah, the box office stuff is true and impressive. The awards, the nominations, the land speed record, it's all true. It's unbelievable. The land speed. It's a little embarrassing, though, you know, when you put it on one side. Why? Because you're so good at everything. You put it all in one packet. It's like, who is this guy? Idris, did you have a moment of like, who am I? That's why I was using the sound effects to make flatulent sounds to make, break it up a bit. Wait, did you, did you really race cars? Yeah, I did this documentary, which is about, you know, the need for speed and why human beings are into it. And somehow they talked me into trying to break a speed record on a, on a beach in Wales called Penzance Beach. And so Malcolm Campbell did it last. And the idea was to drive the fastest in one mile. So you drive as fast as you can. You get to the one mile, the, the, the beginning of the one mile and then you hit it for one mile and see how fast you get. It's like a flying lap. Yeah. Yeah. It's the most stupid thing to do. Yeah. Why would you do it on an, on an inconsistent surface, like a sandy beach? Yeah, I don't get it. I don't know why they do it at the salt flats in Utah either. Like, how about a nice piece of asphalt? Yeah. So what happens on a beach at a hundred miles an hour, what happens is you start to hydroplane, you know, you like, you literally start to float. Yeah. And then 180 miles. But you said, let's, let's go ahead and go pass that and do 180. Is that right? Yeah. 180. I've done 160. And it was really, really frightening. Yeah. That's, that's not fun. What were you on? I mean, in, sorry. That was me, me, me and our friend, Ben Silverman on, on the Audubon in Germany in a rented Porsche. Still a friend. Perfect guy to have. You know what, you have somebody paying attention. This was a different Audubon trip. I think this might have been, was this Will Adams? It might have been Willie Adams. Anyway, it's scary, but I highly recommend it. Let me just, let me just say right now for the listener who, who cares. Out there, Idris Alba right now has a U87 microphone, which is regarded as one of the, this is, as a guy who does this for a living, that is the Cadillac of microphones. I have one right above me here. Why aren't you using it? No, I don't have it. I've got it in. Why don't we get the benefit of that? I don't use it for this. I mean, he is because, I don't know. Yeah. Because you know what? I did my own tech. Okay. So before you guys come in and grace us all, usually the tech is done for 20 minutes, and it's usually someone that's in here helping that out. But I chose to do it myself showing off. Yeah, sure. And I used my SM. And then, you know, everyone's really impressed because we did the tech in five minutes. It was like, Oh, what are we going to do? And then suddenly my interface for those who care started buzzing. So I had to change for the Cadillac of mics. Thank you for saying that. And listen to how much nicer he sounds than you will. I know he sounds amazing. He sounds amazing. Your voice, your voice, Will, is, it's out there. Thank you. I mean, I'll take the, I'll take the comment from you because I think you've got a tremendous voice. And I'm going to start here. Yes, he does. Idris, I came the first time I saw or became aware of you was in the wire and forgive me because I'm sure that you're beyond exhausted talking about it, but it's one of the, if not the greatest television program ever made. And you in the wire

were absolutely for me. It just, it blew me away. And then to have like two seasons in, someone go, Hey, you know, that guy's English. And I'm like, wait, what the fuck are you talking about? We're obsessed with, with, with Brits who can do incredible American accents. His is the best of all time. Is it, is it difficult doing the American accent? That's our, that's our question. Well, I mean, it is. Yeah. It is to come straight from England and just jump into an American accent and be specific is very difficult. And you know, I had been living in New York and New Jersey for about four years and auditioning like crazy and never getting a job. And I wasn't getting a job because my accent wasn't authentic enough. And it wasn't until I really understood and lived the culture that I could sort of pull off the accent. But here's the thing. And I'm going to say this is a bit controversial because, you know, it has been over the last two decades, this big wave of American English actors come to the States and do pretty good sound in American accents, you know, and, and, and nail it. And usually there's Southern accents because Southern accents and English accents are closer. So I was sort of part of the first wave of English actors doing pretty convincing American. But if you listen to it now, you're going to go, wait a second, because you're hearing things that only now, because our ears are a little more tuned to English acts as doing American accents, you can hear it. I think when I watch the wire or I watch an episode, I go, Oh my God, I don't know how I got away with that. I'll tell you, no, I tell you what, I just watched recently the scene where you call all the, I forget what season is. I may be the third season when you call all the families, all the guys together, who are the dealers, who are running Baltimore and you're running that meeting and you're running it like a business. It's amazing. Jason, I don't think you've seen the wire. It's incredible. I saw the first couple of many years ago, I got to get back in it. And he, and, and you do the scene where you're where you got the kid in the corner and he's on a notepad and you go, motherfucker, are you taking notes of a criminal enterprise? But, but I was aware of it. I'm, this is just randomly, it's within the last week that I saw that scene again and watched it and was like, again, marveling at like, God damn it, is yourself is going to cut off. Do you have a hack for the accent? Is there, is there a certain word that, that drops you into this, the, the great spot you want to be in? Um, it's actually counting to 10 and do in, you know, the vowels, A, E, I, O, U. And because when you do them, you know, they just, if you can flatten that out, then you can pretty much flatten a lot of different things. I bet you eight is a big one, right? Eight is fucking horrible. Eight. Well, the way we say it is to eight. Eight. Eight. Eight. Eight. I'm from Chicago and when I go back to the ferry, yeah. How did the wire come about? Now that was Alexa, Alexa Fogel cast, cast that. Did she not? Yes. Yeah. The great Alexa Fogel. So she saw in you something that we all got to know. So thank you, Alexa. Thank you, Alexa. Yeah. You know, when I was, I got to New York, New York, probably in, how am I going to say, 96, 97, that's when I moved there and the wire wasn't until 2000, right? So I got cast actually in 2000. And I had been auditioning for years. I did maybe Law & Order. Yeah, I did. I did one episode of Law & Order. I did an off-broadway version of Troilus and Cressida. I think you and I were in the same episode. Were we? No. And I didn't get that much work. And Alexa Fogel was one of the casting directors that just kept bringing me back in and saying, you've got something, boy, I love, I love, I love what you do. And then when I got the wire, she told me, she said, listen, when you go for this, you know, the guys are not interested in anyone that's not either from Baltimore or East Coast and not even checking for guys from Chicago. No disrespect. And they're like, we, you need to go in there, just pretend you're from the East Coast, don't be specific, just do your thing. I said, all right,

great. And at that point, you know, I've been living there. I was practically doing that every day. Yeah. So it was a breeze until the fourth audition. And as a producer, there was an Irish guy, late, great. I've got this nasty. He sniffed you out. 100% sniffed you out. Really? It was like the fourth callback. I'm like, I've got this man. I've got this dirty bread. And he was like, Idris, where are you from? And it was that kind of where you from? Are you going to dare lie to us, motherfucker? Or are you going to tell the truth? And I mean, I really paused and I was like, oh, man. And I'm thinking about what Alexa said, please don't tell them, because I'll get fired, blah, blah, blah. I said, listen, I'm from England. I'm from East London. And they, the room exploded. They were like, I told you, I want my money. Obviously they're like, what's going on? No way. And that is so excited. And what did David Simon, was David Simon, how did he take it? Yeah, he was flabbergasted. He was flabbergasted. And it was then they said to me, well, great, listen, we want you to play Stringer Bell, because I was auditioning for Avon, Avon Barksdale. And I was like, Stringer Bell? And he had like two lines in the pilot. I was like, Stringer Bell, okay, which character, what character is that again? And he's like, the guy that's next to Avon. I'm like, okay. Yeah. Now at this point, you even do this a HBO pilot, or you go back to England, we could tell between your legs. And I was like, I'll take it, whatever. Very nice. And then, so the period right after the wire, were there, was it a waterfall of opportunities and offers, or was it kind of slow growing? Um, you know, it was a, it was, it was a good, it was a good time. You know, the wire obviously, the first audience impact was African Americans. Okay, because the wire grew, like it wasn't a hit immediately for HBO. And by the third season, you know, it was, it was kind of fever pitch. I was like a ball player, or a rapper, wherever I went in African American neighborhoods, I was huge. They loved me, right? You're like Stringer Bell. And, and so basically the roles that got offered to me in waterfall were really sort of Stringer Bell type characters, you know, like gangsters, you know, I just, I got offered all of that. And I worked a lot with Will Packer. Sure. And at the time had a production company was making films for, you know, the African American market. And he gave me, you know, my first big lead role in a film. And, and it was, I think it was the gospel. And, you know, from there, I could, you know, I got this Stringer films that were in that market, a little bit here and there, some back home in England, but essentially, you know, it was very much sort of the same type of characters, like my after the wire, after even a big TV show, it wasn't like, you know, everyone wants to offer you jobs. I just wanted to see you play that character, especially a Stringer Bell, no spoilers. We know, I get that, I relate to that, that people want you to do the thing. They're like, do the thing. And I get, I used to get that a lot with like, you know, act like an idiot more. We want to see you act like an idiot all the time. And they'd never seen a rest of development or just like, no, they just see my face. He's pretty dumb. They were just looking at my stupid face. And they were like, be dumb, dummy, be even dumber than you are even dumber. And then I took those, I took that over from Will. So now are you DJing the whole time? So you're, you're, you're, you're into music. I love this. You're playing, playing music as well as DJing before, during and currently, right? Like you've never stopped. Tell us about that. And where that music passion came from. And, you know, I, I was full team and I decided I really want to become an actor. But at that point, I had been DJing, you know, I'm pretty much like 70, like my uncle was a DJ. And I used to DJ with him. He's, you know, African man, African weddings, African, Christian, Christian. And where, where is this? What part of England?

So I'm, I'm from East London, but, you know, the community of West Africans in London was sort of spread out South London, East London. So I used to, you know, go with my uncle and DJ, and basically, you know, whenever he got too drunk to finish the DJ set, I would just be up there just trying to finish up for him. And how old are you finishing up? Dude, I, I started around, I was about 12 and, you know, way into my teens and, and then standing on a box, standing on a box. Actually it was tall. It was a big kid. So, you know, and I had a beard by the time I was 13. So people just thought I was a, wow. Sean too. Sean, you took a beard to prom, right? Yep. Hey, did, did. So when, so you were 14, you decided. I was like two seconds behind you on that. You decided? I caught it halfway through it too. Yeah. So, so you're 14, you're DJing, and then you're like what, you're like watching TV or you're doing, you're taking drama at school, or what's going on that you go like, yeah, I want to do that. I went to a boys' school, Trinity Boys, and, you know, this school was pretty rough. And, you know, it was really sort of sports and academia. But drama, I was good at sports. I was okay with academia, but drama, I was awesome at. Yeah. And my drama teacher, Miss McPhee, she just thought I was very talented and she thought there's something there. And, you know, in a boys' school, everyone just uses drama, drama class to just piss about and have fun, right? But I took that shit seriously. I was like, I really love doing this. And she, when it was time to, you know, do my finals exams and everything, she was like, Idris, are you serious about that? At that time, I was like, no, I'm going to be a radio DJ. I wanted to play music on the radio. That's what I wanted to do. She's like, okay, that's good. But you should not give up on acting. You're very good. And you know what I did? And then last year, I said, actually, Miss, I'm going to, all right, tell me what to do. And I'll do it. So she enrolled me in the next stage, which was a college course that was specific about performing arts. And I did that for two years. And then at that point, you know, I literally, I was 18 years old and I got my first job at 19. And that was wow. Do you remember some of the stuff you were in high school? Like, were you in like classic like plays and musicals that all high schools do? No, no. Our drama classes was more improvisational, you know, and a lot of Neil Simon. Yeah. That's what they all do. I did play Lenny in of my Cemento. Do you know the plays, the foreigner or the nerd? Do you know those two plays? I don't know. Thanks so much for stopping by.

Why Sean? What was your point? Because it was, those were, those are two very, very, very, very huge popular plays for high school. Well, and beyond. And they, that guy, because Jason said Neil Simon, he was supposed to be like the next Neil Simon, Larry Shoe wrote those plays. And there were massively huge successes. And his mom was my Spanish teacher in high school. Oh, so, oh, that's, oh, yes. Sorry, when you said yes. Okay. Yeah. But yeah, you're Spanish teacher's mom. Yeah, for sure. Thanks, Sean. All I want to talk about is Prometheus. Okay, go ahead. We're going to get to that. No, we're getting, we're getting there. We're just, we're inching our way through his life. Hey, listen, first job at 19, first like professional job, like getting paid? Yes, it was, first job was actually this little crazy commercial about getting your bike stolen. And I played a guy that got my bike stolen and run up a hill and did a bit of acting. And then I got a TV show, which was a kids TV show. I was 19, but I was playing someone that was 16. Oh boy. I was part of the gag. I was just a bit big for school. But yeah, but you know, I wanted to go back, you know, I'm really the worst guy when it comes to like, who wrote what, what was in what like, you know, you'll get along with Jason really well.

He doesn't remember anything about Jason. What did you do this morning? What do you, what do you have for breakfast this morning, Jason? Well, I'm still sort of picking it out of my teeth. So that's helpful. It's a little bit of oatmeal. He doesn't remember shit either. I appreciate that. But listen, the podcast is called smart list. I came for the less. Yeah, sure. That's why there's always less welcome to the party. And we will be right back.

Smart list is sponsored by better help. Now, I have had ups, I've had downs, I've had clarity, I've had confusion. Nothing has been more helpful than talking about it with somebody close in my life. And if that person's not around, sometimes a therapist has been and it's been great. Now, nothing could be more convenient than a therapist that's at the other end of a phone, right?

Sometimes

in life we're faced with tough choices and the path forward isn't always clear. You've got a bunch of different options. You're not sure which one to pick, you know, with your dealing with decisions around career relationships or anything else, therapy helps you stay connected to what you really want while you navigate life. So you can move forward with confidence and excitement, trusting yourself to make decisions that align with your values is like anything. The more you practice it, the easier it gets. So trust me, friends, talking to a professional really helps.

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Smartlist gets support from 8 Sleep. We sure do. That 8 Sleep, they're very supportive, right? I mean, look, did you know that temperature is one of the most important factors in improving your sleep quality, Sean? I have an 8 Sleep and science has shown that your body temperature actually needs to drop in the early and middle part of your sleep and rise in the morning so that you can fall asleep fast and get more deep sleep. The pod cover by 8 Sleep fits on any bed like a fitted sheet. The pod cover will improve your sleep by automatically adjusting the temperature on each side of the bed based on you and your partner's individual needs. It can cool down and warm up and adjust based on the phases of your sleep and the environment that you are in. My wife and I like temperatures different when we're sleeping and that changes from day to day. Sometimes I want it cold, sometimes she wants it warm, sometimes she wants it hot. With the 8 Sleep

at the pod cover, there's not a problem anymore. It's easy. That's right. I sleep, I sleep very, like I like to sleep really cool. In life, I run cold. I like to be warm, but at night, for some reason, I get real, real hot. So this is the perfect thing. It figures it out for me and it tracks like REM sleep and when you get up and when you go to bed and blah, blah, blah, all that kind of stuff. Seriously, as we were saying, while temperature is the biggest game changer, the pod cover has other amazing features. For example, thanks to the pod sleep and health tracking, you can wake up to a personalized sleep report for you each morning that offers insights on how certain behaviors like late night exercise or caffeine impact your sleep and overall health. 8 Sleep, they love you every morning, right? They do and right now invest in the rest you deserve with the 8 Sleep pod. Go to 8sleep.com/smartlist and save \$150 on the pod cover

by 8 Sleep. That's the best offer you're going to find folks, but you must visit 8sleep.com slash smartlist for your \$150 off. 8 Sleep currently ships within the USA, Canada, the UK, select countries in the EU and Australia. Smartlist is sponsored by smart water. Now, how about that? Yeah, it seems like this is very overdue. The natural tie-in, welcome smart water. It's nice to have you. And it is nice to have you. And you know, it's nice to have you because I'm, whenever I'm doing Broadway, which is right now, I'm constantly dehydrated, constantly. And I do, what I do is I actually do keep smart water backstage and I drink it. Anytime I walk off stage, I pound it. I pound it because I'm sweating so much and I need to be, you know, you know, in the summer, it's hot, right? And how do you cool down in the summer? You jump in the pool, you shoot the hose on somebody. Sometimes you throw water balloons at them, you know, like, maybe you, maybe I should start filling up water balloons with smart water. That's a good idea. Then when they explode in your face, you just drink them. Here on the podcast, we are smartlist, but not smart water less. Smart water is 100% vapor distilled with a pure, crisp taste. It's pH balanced and offers added electrolytes for taste. Could you, could you say that maybe smart water is partly responsible for your Tony win? A thousand. A thousand. Smart water. Why don't you thank them when you accept your Tony? I thank them. Did you not hear it at my stage? I don't think you thank them when you were at the podium. No, no, I did. Thanks smart water for my Tony. And it says here, we're not allowed to say the 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. Now what about, tell us while we're still on the DJ thing, didn't you DJ for the Royal Wedding? Can you, can you tell us a little bit about that and how that was, how that came about? Do you know what? It was a, I got, you know, Harry is a friend and I was DJing and all these kind of clubs that Harry would show up and be, he was like, yo, I was like, yo. And then, you know, at one point he was like, listen man, I'm getting married. I was like, yo, that's amazing because I want you to DJ. And this is, you know, we're just at this club. Did he ask for your card? No. He made a request. I was like, I don't take, oh, hey man. Now you've got a, you've got this thing on Apple TV plus called hijack. This is, this is a, an intense, I'm going to guess it takes place on a plane a little bit. Yes. Yeah. What, what gave it away for you? I don't know. I just sort of done a little bit of research. Now Sean would like to know, do you have any crazy stories on an airplane? He's, he's basically good for any of the junket questions that you're probably used to answering. I love those. Those are my favorite. I have a great, I have a great plane story. Tell me, my friend. Let's hear it, Sean. Yeah, Idris, can you hold on one second? Sean, this is your time. Okay. By the way, good. It might be good. It might be, it might inspire all of you to tell your airplane stories. Me and my friend, Raina, you all know Raina. We were going to England for the first time. I was going to London for the first time in my life and we got on, what's the airplane? What's the brand? Who flies? British Airways. British Airways. So we're in first class. We're like, oh my God. It's like first class, like a hotel, right? So we're like, let's get on the, let's get the time difference right away. So we took to Ambien and we're drinking wine. We just can't go to sleep because we're so excited that we're in first class on the way to England for the first time and everybody in the cabin was completely flat bed

sleeping, right? So I went around and came mere centimeters from everybody's mouth as they were sleeping and I went and kissed every single passenger on. Air kissing. Air kissing. We were crying. Drunk on booze and Ambien. Was there, was there a cell phone? Was there a cell phone footage of this at all? No. Before cell phones. Yeah. Oh boy. Yeah. Yeah. But you know, honestly, if you're in first class and for anyone that's not been in first class, first class, if you have been and you happen to be up, you're just really curious who else is in here. Now, do you guys have a fix for, I don't like to fall asleep on airplanes, although I do a lot, because you can't help but have your jaw fall open while you're sleeping because you're sitting up. Right? So I've seen some people, I've seen some people, yeah, well, it's just not a great look. I've seen some people sleep with like a sweater over their fat, over their head or something. Over their fat heads. Over their fat heads. Or maybe is that what those little neck pillows are for? So it can kind of keep your jaw shut a little bit? No? First of all, first of all, this is, this is, this is, this is. Sorry, Idris, can you hold on one more second? There's, there's no way. Who are you worried about seeing your jaw open? Distortus on your fucking private plane? What? I don't fly private. Anybody with a cell phone, you know, it would be, who? The pilot on his way back to use the bathroom when it's just, you're the only passenger? What are you talking about? Nice try, celebrities. They're just like us. And what goes on up there in the front of the plane? Anyway, you sleep, do you guys, do you sleep well in the plane, Idris? Are you a good plane sleeper? Yeah, pretty decent. And I usually try, I do fall asleep in that time period between, you know, sitting down and taking off. So there's probably a bunch of pictures of me with my jaw open. Yeah, I one time I was flying over, flying from Newark to Europe and they took an ambient, years ago, took an ambient, like as soon as we, we start taxiing, I'm like, here we go, put the ambient in because I don't want to, you know, we haven't moved from the gate yet, I don't want to get caught in that thing of like something's wrong and then now you're on ambient. We take off, the seat won't go back, it's locked, it's broken. So I'd like ding, ding, and I get the flight that she comes to help me and these two, it was a Scandinavian, these two Scandinavian flight attendants that came in, they just like took my seat apart and manually put it back. Meanwhile, I'm in the aisle and the ambient is kicking in and I feel fucking crazy. I'm like, have you ever been awake on ambient before? It's a nightmare. It's not fun. Well, you know, listen, as I don't condone or take drugs and I, when you say ambient, I kept thinking you were saying amblin as in, yeah. Steven Spielberg? Yeah. Steven Spielberg, just a little piece. Not that. No, no, okay. No, yeah, yeah, no. So I watched, I watched all the ambient movies and those movies. Ambient has produced incredible. Is that bad? That's what I was, yeah. How old, how old were you when you came from England to the States? I was 27 probably. 27. And dumb, dumb question. Yeah. Because I'm obsessed with people's first impressions of the United States. What were the first things they were like, God, this is fucking weird. You go right into New York? I went straight into New York. When I moved to New York, I was 27. When the first time I got to New York was 20. I was 20 years old. And I had just finished this two year performing arts course, doing everything. And in that time period, I learned about the Lee Strasburg institution that lived in 14th Street from New York. And I decided to go there. And, you know, I sort of lived in New York for six weeks, practically in a YMCA around 14th Street, Union Square. In 1990?

Yep, 1991, roughly. How in the world, Will? Idris, I was there at that same time. Serious? At the school, at least? Lee Strasburg, yeah. No way, yeah. Are you serious? I swear to God. Wow, did you guys see each other clearly? Well, here's the thing, here's the thing. I didn't realize that you needed a visa to get in. So I had gone over there, thinking I could just feel like, hey, I'm here, do you mind if I just pay a name? Like, nobody, you need a visa, a student visa, to be here. So I ended up staying in New York for six weeks. And the first thing that struck me, wasn't weird, it was just that it's food obsessed, like food everywhere. Like, you know, I used to go to a place called the Coffee Shop, which is a little spot on 14th Street. It's great, right? You remember, right across the Union Square. And the food was amazing, you know, and for no money too. It's just like, wow, I was just like, this is crazy. So when you go back to England now, did you notice a difference in the food? Like, are you like, you miss American food? Or no? No, I lived in America for 16 years and coming back to England. I guess the variety is just not as good, you know what I mean? The variety in America was just like, yeah, there's so much. There's so much, but there's almost, it's an interesting point. It is, we are sort of food obsessed in that sort of, but it's a very American idea, right? It's just like more and more and more, bigger and more come. And so they're constantly advertising, got it in your face and stuff. And it's not like that. Yeah. It's very, if you like food, it's great because the variety is there. Yeah. There's like seven different sizes of Cheez-It boxes. I always get the biggest one. Is there, Sean? Yeah. Are there? Yeah. What's a Cheez-It? Cheez-Its are like little... It's Colen cement. Hey Idris, are you in England now? I am. I'm in London. All right. Now, do you love going back there and working like Luther you guys shot in England? Okay. I want to get into Luther. When did you do the first series of Luther? Dude, Luther is so excellent. When was that first series, man? First series was in 2011, roughly. And this was at the sort of end of my American journey. Like, you know, I'd been there for 16 years, roughly about that point. And I was just seeing this glass ceiling hit me on the head, you know. I had worked, was, you know, adored, respected. I love America. I had a great time. I lived in LA. I lived in Miami. I lived in Atlanta. I lived everywhere. And I just could see that actually there was something missing in my career that maybe if I went home, I could, you know, sort of patch up. And that was theater. I wanted to go back to the theater. I didn't want to do it in New York. I wanted to go back to the theater. And while I was happening, while I was making that decision, then the script came along and it was, it was Luther. And I was like, you know, the BBC, first of all, you know, being in a lead on the BBC, it was like a big deal. And I hadn't ever done that in my career because I spent most of it in England. I mean, America. So it was a really big deal to be offered a lead role in a big six-part drama about detective. You know what I'm saying? I mean, it was literally that, oh, this is great. I'll take this. And that was the beginning of the second half of my career, I guess, you know, that point. And that was, I mean, for me, that was one of those. And I was already a big fan of yours. So I was in when I saw you, that you were doing this thing. I wanted to watch it. And then watching it, it was so kind of a subloan away, but and also you're doing with the great Paul McGahn as well, whom I adore from, you know, my favorite film of all time, of course, is *Withnail*. And I, and seeing Paul do that with you. Yes. You know what was crazy about being working back in England was that I had to do an English accent. I had to just play an English character. And, you know, Luther's London, kind of like, you know, this kid that his dad was in the armies,

he traveled a bit, whatever. But I couldn't, I couldn't really let go of my Americanisms. Wow. And everyone was like, and the people in the crew that thought that Stringer Bell was American

was saying to me, you're English accent. It's not bad. That's hysterical. That's funny. And I was home. I was like, yeah, it's no, it's not an accent, man. I'm, I'm, I'm English. Like, you're English. No way. Anyway, now how do you like the big, big difference between the grind, the workload

of being a lead in a drama, a one hour drama, where you're in every scene, working 12 hour days, versus the big, huge budget films that you've done, where there's tons and tons of action, where you might only shoot maybe like a half a page, like the course of like two days, you know, where you're kind of sitting around a lot waiting for effects to set up or stunts to set up. What's your preference? Or do you like to just kind of do half and half? I mean, I'm on a film at the moment, which is very big, huge setups, you know, we shoot. What is it? What is it? It's a film called The Heads of State. Yeah. Heads of State. I played a British Prime Minister and John Cena plays. Okay, guys. The American President. President. Yeah. Okay. Stay with me. And it's a big action comedy.

And it's kind of like, you know, very big cumbersome setups, slow, right? And to your point, you know,

Jay, I would come from, you know, TV backgrounds, we shoot very quickly, we move quickly, and we try to achieve the impossible very quickly. And I, I love the pacing of that. I really do. I enjoy it. You got to be good, you got to be good fast, right? You can't be good on pick four. You want to be good fast. And I think there's a real sort of satisfaction to that pacing. But of course, you know, the big films allow you to really dig in and do some incredible, you know, on budgets that are, you know, yeah. It's a weird, it is a weird thing. I remember that first time doing a big budget film and doing Jay, to your point, like coming in and doing like a, you know, maybe an eighth of a page or something on some big setup for the day. And, and there's one line, you and me and the other person in the scene had one line each. We just had this, I said something, then she said something back to me. And they're like, yeah, this is really good. We feel really good talking to the director and the producer is like, we got a great day and we're going to get this thing. And, you know, we should just talk about the script, you know, talk about it. I go, the two lines? What are you talking about? Like, okay, we don't need to have much of a conversation. You guys just want to run that a few times or workshop? Are we talking about, and like to your point, Idris, as you know, you're making HBO and both of you guys know as well. You're going like, you work on shows where sometimes you do nine, 10 pages a day where you're running a gunning, man. Right, right. It's like, what about now you're, you're, you're enjoying directing lately as well too, right? And, and, and are you, are you, are you enjoying bigger scale things, smaller scale things? What type of directing are you, are you excited about right now? I mean, I directed a bunch of small scale things like music videos and short content, small type things. Okay. A little bit of TV. And that was the beginning. And, you know, I just enjoy the process of just, you know, being given a music video. I did a music video for the month and month and sons, for example. I started it. I wrote the treatment. I sent it to them. They said, yes, I put together the budget. I love it. Wait, Jason, was it, wasn't that the one you were in, Jay? Well, for the month and sons? Yeah, me and Will Forte and Jason Sudeikis and Ed Helms

played, played the band members. Isn't that why? And it was like a comedic sort of Western type of thing. Yeah, it was fun. Guys, you know, I, I, my wife and I have this big crush on Jason Bateman. And, you know, we've talked about this a lot. And, you know, we even, we met him at a party and we tried to do Jason Bateman impressions in front of Jason Bateman. It was embarrassing. But my wife was like, dude, you have a massive crush with him. I was like, ah, no, I just like the guy. And now, and now, show him your back tat. Show him the tat to go in your back. Okay. It's on my bum, actually. And now we, we was in the month and sons video. I know. This is just up the ante. I know it really has. Now, does your, your impression of, of Jason, does it sound a lot like a modem from the 90s? Yeah. Or just a dial tone. Jason, that's cute. Did you know that, that, uh, Idris had a. It's not cute. We have, we have met a few times and he's a very, very nice man. This is a nice man. I love that. I didn't know that. You know, with incredible taste, with incredible taste. You're reaching. I'm reaching. I love you too, by the way. No, no, no. I'm trying to get him to, I'm trying to get him to react. Robots don't react. Idris, can I ask you two, two nerd questions? I'm a massive, um, aliens fan. And I love you and Prometheus. And were you a fan of the alien franchise before? What was it like really working with Ridley Scott and being on those sets, which are just so massive and amazing. Yes. I was a massive fan of aliens. I wouldn't say like fanatic. I didn't know, you know, the whole, but I loved the film. I loved the, you really? Okay. I know everything about aliens. I'm going to disappoint you then. But I was a big fan of Ridley, I have and still am. And I'm trying to remember, but I'd worked with Ridley on American Gangster and I'm, he asked me to play a small part in American Gangster. And then I got Prometheus, which is a slightly bigger part, but that was my second time working with him. Prometheus was, I mean, you know, it's just like the scale of it was bonkers. And Ridley's very much an actuality guy. This is just before the sort of like, you know, the sort of virtual production, you know, right, right productions. Yeah. Cause I saw the shot. I saw a picture, a photo of the set. It's just unbelievable. All that stuff is made. You mean like before the thing where they do the projection wall that we talked about with? Yes. With Favreau. Favreau. Yeah. That style of production is taken over and that's fair enough, but Prometheus and aliens, they built these sets, you know, and obviously, and Prometheus was amazing. I remember the guy at the end, you know, the big white alien. Spoiler alert. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. No, keep going. I love it. Do you know, I don't need to keep going cause you know. So no wire, no Prometheus. Don't need to see those. Sean, tell us what happens in the scene. So the thing comes out and it's like, wow. Yeah. And the guy's like, yeah. By the way, do you know how that, the engineer? Tell them how they did it. By the way, you're interested, you know, that according to my calculations, I, Yeah. Sean, I do know that that engineer, the actual man, that engineer in real life is about

eight foot tall. Wow. In real life.

And you know what he's based, he's based on, they designed it based on, partly designed based on the Statue of Liberty. Oh, yes. The symmetry of the face.

I know this. How did you ever land, Scotty? How did you ever get there?

Yeah. What are you? Now, you know, Idris and I have been in a film together. Did you guys know that? No, what is it? What is it? It's called Zootopia, where he used his incredible Golden Pikes to voice the character of Idris. Any more? Captain Bogo actually.

Captain Bogo. Would he was a panther or tiger?

Neither. Yeah, or. Oh, it was a buffalo.

Water buffalo. Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep. Yep.

Can you, can you please tell me it's been rumored that you're gonna be in the New Star Wars movie?

Can you please tell me if that's true? He can't speak about that.

No, I'm not in it. No. No. Really?

There's a rumour. Why? Because there's rumors that you're going to be in the in the news journalism Sean no not so who started the rumor Scotty I just started it now according to the message boards that I started I did read that I did read that a couple places but you you may be coy about it but who knows I don't know now what about who if you could have tickets to any concert tomorrow what would you what what what would they be who would they would they for who's rocking your world right now any concert right now besides Taylor Swift yeah I'll tell us with okay can it be anyone dead of a life yeah yeah okay so first of all in England right now there's this sort of production of ABBA yeah yeah yeah I've heard about this that it's and apparently it's incredible yeah I haven't had a chance to do it and I want to do it because it's a it's a marvel there's holograms and you know just incredible and that would be a real I love music so that would be great are you an ABBA fan are you an ABBA fan that's about the kind of jazz you can give us that's what an endorsement no hold on hold on listen I am but I mean I don't know every word I just you know everyone loves it a little bit of ABBA sure yeah for sure I'm a DJ at weddings as you know so yeah yeah always works well wait isn't that didn't they do that that the movie at Universal about ABBA wasn't it Mama Mia Mama Mia that's about ABBA right yeah based on the musical it's based on a song that ABBA right then they made them yeah and then yeah the fascinating two of those I think what did they they did they call the second one I'm just curious what do they call it it was called daddy me here we go again daddy Mia here we go again that's pretty good here we but it was said but it said more like here we go again

Pierce Brosnan sends his love I love that dude I love speaking of Pierce Brosnan yeah former no seven don't do it come on please was that annoying no what I want to know is I'm not the one because there was all those rumors that forever that interest is gonna play James Bond what I want to ask who is rumors that interest was gonna be yes I remember that for years and years and years yeah I heard that good choice so amazing and so my question is this did you was that process so fucking annoying dealing with everybody asking you every

two seconds um no annoying would be you know being asked about it over and over again on different podcasts while promoting hijacked that we've never spoken about it no I want to ask you about the process of being asked about it yeah yeah um the truth is man I was super complimented for a long time about this I was like you know crazy you know because James Bond yeah we're all actors and we understand that that role is one of those sort of you know coveted type you know it's like being named sexist man sorry about that but but being you know asked to be James Bond was like okay you know you've sort of reached a pinnacle you know that's kind of one of these things that the whole world sort of has a vote in and right and you know essentially it was a huge sort of compliment that every corner of the world except for some corners which we will not talk about we're really happy about the idea that I could be considered the those that weren't happy about the idea made the whole thing disgusting and off-putting you know because it became about race and it became about nonsense dude and I got the brunt of it that's fucking bullshit who did get it who's playing James Bond right now who is it nobody now right no no they haven't decided yeah they haven't I think oh gotcha all right who are you texting Jason are you texting your agent yeah that's crazy if you think for a fucking but wait you know but Idris is not available to play James Bond because he's gonna be busy doing hijacked hijacked because hijack no but hijack is going to be so good is good recently out on apple the smoothest transition I mean right he's also an executive producer on it now as an executive producer are you are you talking about hijacked it's out right now yeah yeah on apple yeah you not seen it yeah yes he plays a a steward right a man a male flight attendant none it no wow hey you know this app that you can apply it to your moving camera and it makes your eyes look like it's looking at the screen yeah but actually it's reading I need to I need to get one of those you can research and speak at the same time about people watching you know any of that stuff this is incredible this is this is a real this is a real smart list chat and giggle what what do you play in hijack are you are you are you helping or are you hurting on high so I play I play I play a male prostitute who there you go no I a guy called Sam Nelson who is works in Dubai always working in Dubai he's a business closer he kind of you know does the last-minute finalities on to merge and a merger yeah he's married but he he and his wife are going through some crazy and he decides to get on a plane to go home to sort it out okay you abandon this business you don't see any of that but you learn it later and on the plane basically there's a hijack and he's so desperate to get home because his marriage is falling apart that he decides it's a good idea to use his business negotiation closing skills to basically figure out who this cell of hijackers are and he decides to do it literally by brain power by trying to wear them down with personality and talking and asking questions and just getting under the skin and that's what happens nice using your fists well that's what we do well if you just talk to people and you're nice if you want to

punching people you can get things and the show is great because it's it's like a real time so six or seven episodes and it happens each hour is in really oh that's cool oh man really cool yeah I love that wait now it just I also remember hearing something about you starting a marketing agency is that true yeah getting any of that right that's why we just announced that actually why you did I that's I read it somewhere like recently why and what's exciting about it okay so we Mark Boyan who is a very successful and owns this very successful marketing company called Maroma and Maroma and I have worked together to create a company called silly face silly face is a marketing agency which is I guess designed to sort of find ways to inject put a real ignite fun back into marketing okay now look you know I'm a guy as you can as you read my my introduction you know I'm intersectional you can say that about me yeah and I think that in this day and age right really smart consumers and brands wanting to be intersectional and trying to do different things you know there's a disconnect you know consumers are like really dark your Mars chocolate why are you trying to sell me music right you know that that whole you know intersectionality needs navigating needs you know and I honestly I find myself in the situation where I can actually speak on this quite intelligently that I think it's okay for people to try different things I think it's okay for you know I don't know brands to want to reach out in different areas and try different ways to reach new audiences but I think it needs to be done of integrity and smart I think storytelling is at the heart of it you know I mean I didn't come here of a marketing degree I'm a storyteller and I still I tell many different stories so as you read me oh so you kickboxed okay yeah I can talk about it intelligently it doesn't make it inauthentic that I did it but you know the story is that I did it here's my reasons why so if a brand is at this junction where they're like hey I want to market into a do a new area I'm not sure who to go to you can go to many marketing companies the world doesn't need a new one however Mark and I have this sort of philosophy around trying to do it in a way that makes sense for the consumer as well as it does for the for the brand you know what I'm saying now were you over were you always super motivated when you were a kid like were your parents did they did they tell you early on like you got it go out there and get what you want and because it seems like you just you have no quit in you I love that great work ethic yeah I think I think the answer is yes if I'm really honest and pardon the overshare but my mom you know she tried for children for a while and it was hard it was really hard I came along and she was like and I think she just I guess she carried this a little bit of sort of you know sense for the children that she didn't manage to bear and just wanted me to be the best I could be and go and go and go and it wasn't like she was out there she's not because she's always telling me you should relax why are you doing so much but she also just said you know my man like you know we're here and then we're not here so do what you want and go for it you know saying and absolutely hundred percent I don't know how that transferred into a work ethic I haven't always I'm an only child so

number one I was always sort of like using my imagination way more than any of my friends I knew I just had the imagination I just kept going oh what if we did this and everyone whenever I would play out as a kid you know go out to you know go out to play with my friends whether it's outside I'd always be the one that's like do we have to go home now we have to go home because I didn't have siblings and so I think that transferred to basically a place where as an artist and here's the thing guys you know this right we as actors are so like spoiled we're privileged we get offered so much that it takes many people years to get yeah business opportunities you know conversations and I look I I'm sitting down with the likes of you guys sorry about that no but I mean it's a it's it's not a everyday bottom before you can push up we promise this will be your bottom but trust me when I say from my perspective to come on here and speak to you guys who you know I respect so much that's a privilege and to take advantage of that is something that I think is it's just kind of like why I find myself taking advantage of an opportunity all the time yeah so I DJ I love DJ I love DJ so someone says to me you want to do the royal wedding yeah tell the story so trust me but I'm not one of these people that just needs to be famous or wants to be famous or just needs to do things just for like the most of the things like really really do I don't really ever hit the news headlines and I prefer that however it is what it is yeah I've noticed that about you you're a massive star and you do not lean into it you don't you don't see a lot of pictures of you out you know movie premieres and cutting ribbons and you know lighting your hair on fire and saying look at me I'm famous you just you just work constantly at the highest level with great people on great projects and you're just doing your work and the fame just just comes with that yeah I take that observation I appreciate that I think I'd say that you know longevity yeah you know that's the goal you know and I think people can get exhausted especially with someone like me that's like oh you're in a rap video now what the fuck you know like yeah people can get exhausted I think I've exhausted the three of you today all right you know my god are you kidding me no I'm serious I don't know I have but the truth is like if you you know I think people tend to find especially now these days we're all sort of a that you know sort of addicted to social media and wanting to feed the engine was talking about press junkets earlier I mean those things are relentless these days they want to know everything everything about you so I just prefer to say less and then when I have to say I speak you know how old are your kids are they looking to get into this business at all yeah I have a nine-year-old 21 year-old and a 30 year-old and my 30 year-old he's an actor and he wants he wants to grow in that space my 21 year-old is in NY use NYU study nice yeah wow she's great and my nine-year-old wants to be a gamer yeah okay uh-huh that was a profession not available to the 30 year-old and the 21 year-old right yeah for us yeah although it's probably don't they make more money on on video games and they do in the in in movie in the movie industry yeah right like it's been a while it's been a while now yeah yeah they first

about like all those big billions yeah game titles well yeah far outpace one of those successful games I think it was called duty a few years ago made more money than all the studios made combined quality good lord
uh Idris we're uh we're 11 minutes over our we have tapped you we're very sorry oh you 11 minutes in your life I'm happy to serve it back to you if you come back out to LA anytime soon 100 said I'd love to do you guys do a live version of this on camera that's all we have done we did that year ago and we may do it again we're thinking about maybe doing it in Europe one of these days but if we do we're booking you in London yeah there's we we shot we filmed it's a doc that's out on max right now sick I'm gonna watch and you know if you want any merchandise let's give him the merchandise address Sean yeah guys
let's send him some merch no no no you know what let's send him a hat let's send him one of his let's for sure send Idris at Idris thank you for being with us my friend can't wait to see you again
yes great so great thank you very much thanks so much guys I hope you can see the smile thank you man all right enjoy your dinner it's here comes dinner time over there right pretty soon I appreciate you guys it was very a lot of fun thank you pal good to see you thanks pal cheers bye all right see you later
now um Idris Elba that's a man that's a man okay that's a giant tall man he's a very big man I met him I met him once briefly I didn't want to bring it up because because there's a really good chance he didn't remember so I just didn't want to embarrass myself yeah well that was pretty cool though you weren't the guy that he beat up in his kickboxing match were you I'm not surprised that he's undefeated there no me neither yeah he's a big dude and I'm saying like he's in that he was saying he's in that video where he's the guy who they gets his bike stolen but the fuck would steal Idris Elba's bike good I know a dumb criminal I think it was called I think the song was called dumb criminal yeah but he's a he's a he's a he's a hero of mine that guy and Willie sounds like you've been following him for quite some time who me yeah oh you're a big fan yeah I'm a massive fan I think I gotta jump back into the wire damn it I know he's he's been in like you know Thor and like literally I feel like every girl I know has a crush on him yeah oh yeah well suicide squad and fast and furious and I mean we didn't talk about his part in the office he did he did some office work it says yeah he's also like the fact that in the marketing company he's all over it's incredible it's very impressive he's just like doing like a million things that's what I said when I was like we're not doing enough no you're not you're really not my favorite line of the this whole episode was Jason calling Cheez-Itz Colin cement in a fun color
Cheez-Itz are great they are great to our friends at Cheez-Itz yeah you get a bowl of Cheez-Itz when you watch a movie like that that's my popcorn is it really yeah I love it it's not popcorn it's not no it's not all that also will back you up quite a bit popcorn popcorn well you know what I just read popcorn's not great for you why no it'll build a plug just really I'm just thinking about it yeah okay Idris Elba is in a movie called hijack I think he's trying to get to

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Idris Elba"

his bye I am right is hijack and his character told us was working in do
bye I actually wrote it down so I wouldn't forget smart smart smart less smart less
smart list is 100% organic and artisanly handcrafted by Michael Grant Terry
rub armcharf and Bennett barbecue smart loss our next episode will be out in a
week wherever you listen to podcasts or you can listen to it right now early on
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