

## [Transcript] Between Two Beers Podcast / Madeleine Sami: NZ Comedy Royalty, Partying with Taika Waititi, Working with Lucy Lawless, and more!

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If I can ask one favor of you, if you've ever enjoyed this podcast, please go and hit that follow button on your app.

It helps the show more than I could say, and the bigger the show gets, the bigger the guests get.

Okay, maybe two favors.

Also give us a follow on Insta and Facebook, we'll be cutting the best clips and video highlights from each episode and posting them.

On this episode of Between Two Beers, we talk to Madeline Sarmie.

Madeline is one of New Zealand's funniest and most prolific comedic talents.

She's an actor, musician, comedian, writer and director, who you might have seen as the star of box office success *The Break Her Upperers*, or her new show *Deadlock*, or as the host of *The Great Kiwi Bake Off*, or *Shortland Street*, or *Super City*, or Sione's wedding. She's done a lot.

Her IMDb page is ridiculous.

In this episode, we talk about her weirdest jobs, best accents, relationship with Lucy Lawless, Oni Hanger upbringing in the loss of her father, Taika Waititi in the highs and lows of fame, *Super City*, Tom Sainsbury and so much more.

Madeline is one of the most entertaining and coolest guests we've had.

Funny, thoughtful and a wicked storyteller, this was one of our faves and we can't wait for you to hear it.

Listen on my heart or wherever you get your podcasts from or watch the video on YouTube.

A huge thanks to those supporting the show on Patreon for the cost of a cup of coffee a month.

To get involved, head to [www.betweentwo beers.com](http://www.betweentwo beers.com).

This episode was brought to you from the Export Beer Garden Studio.

Enjoy!

Madeline Sami, welcome to Between Two Beers.

This is an ASMR podcast because that did something to me, a little kitch.

It's 10am, it's early, but we're going to crack one open and see how we go.

You would have found your way into a few exports at Oni Hanger High School.

Oh yeah, I tell you what, I mean I wasn't a big drinker at high school, I was a bit of a nerd in that way, but exports definitely the entry beer drink, isn't it?

I feel like it was the beer of Auckland for a while there, it was kind of like the one.

Yeah, I mean I think the first beer I ever had was a Lion Red and my brother gave it to me and I was like, I'm never ever drinking alcohol, it's disgusting.

Neck minute.

I think mine was a Reineck if I remember rightly, which was 2.5% blue can.

The place I had my 21st and Oni Hanger had Reineck on tap and I knew that was the venue for me.

Steve, do you remember your first beer?

Not first beer, I remember I was in America for four years and we drank a lot of Keystone

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Light, it was the beer of choice and you'd get a 30 pack for like 15 bucks and it was light beer and everyone would just drink themselves stupid.

Like a light beer isn't light on alcohol, on carbs, it's confusing over there.

It is.

I mean here now, Xport have got the Ultra which is the rig watcher for those that are looking to reduce their carb intake.

Nice.

Ah, okay, so that's a carb free.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Low carb, low carb.

I think by definition there has to be some carbs in there.

Yeah.

Otherwise you're just drinking air from the bottom.

Or water.

Haley Sproul, friend of the show, former guest, said that you are constantly working on five different projects at once, which is high praise from potentially the busiest guest.

She can talk.

Exactly.

When we had her on, she talked about how busy she is, but right now does it feel like you are that busy?

I've just had a really, really epically busy start to the year.

I did like back to back shows, I shot double part and acted and directed in that which is like really quite full on through the flooding and the cyclones and everything else.

Through the apocalypse.

Through the little taster, taste test of the apocalypse that we suffered, went through earlier this year and then went straight on to directing two episodes of an Australian comedy called Gold Diggers, came home and then had a bunch of promo for Deadlock, double parked.

So I feel like I've just been through like a little bit of a washing machine of work this first half of the year and currently I'm in a writing zone.

I've got a fetch film script due in a month.

So it's a bit more like chill, but I think, yeah, I mean, I think there's this like mentality that you get into when you start out in this industries and it's really hard to break out of it.

Like what am I in 20s is like, just take work, just take work, just keep it going because also the thing about this industry is like you never know what's going to kind of happen when things are going to line up.

So yeah, I mean, I do have a lot of projects.

I think it's probably why someone like Hayley does as well.

I think it's possibly also undiagnosed ADHD, but yeah, it's good to have a few things on the go, bro.

Yeah.

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When you're writing a script, is there a discipline to it?

Like do you write in the early morning or is it nighttime thing or is it just when it sort of hits you, you get into it?

Yeah.

I mean, I tend to, you know, like a lot of writers will talk about this.

There's a lot of procrastination and writing.

I mean, I'm here doing a podcast.

Thank you.

Opportunity to procrastinate.

Yeah, I think that sometimes it's when the inspiration hits you, sometimes you got to walk around your house and pull your hair up for a little bit.

Sometimes I like going for a walk and then, you know, you'll get a burst of inspiration.

You can sit there and sometimes I'll get the inspiration in the middle of the night and then I won't sleep for a couple of days or I'm just on the, you know, cans of boss coffee for a while.

Yeah.

There's no sort of real rhyme or reason and I think sometimes the pressure of a deadline is really good, but yeah, it's kind of depends on the project and how jazzed you are about it.

I'm pretty jazzed about the thing I have to write at the moment.

Nice.

So, yeah, it's a sports film.

I can't tell you much more than that, but it's exciting.

It's amazing what a bit of deadline pressure does.

We always do quite a lot of research and the lead up to these and I often get emails from Seamus at like 2.30am the morning that we're recording.

Very specific time.

You know?

Like very last minute, yeah, adds a little bit of urgency to the work.

Yeah, totally.

I'd love also the thought and you've given us a little glimpse already of getting two of New Zealand's best accent mimickers on a podcast.

So you are very, very good.

Yeah.

Stephen likes to think of himself as an accent master, but it's not very good.

I mean, they're not claimed to be an accent master.

You always like to try to get me to show accents.

Yeah, why don't you give it a go?

Come on, mate.

Just a couple.

What's your specialty?

I've got two.

I've got a South African.

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Do the South African accent.

And it always...

That's one of the hardest, I think.

I've only got one word and it gets me in there and it's absolutely.

Yeah.

It's absolutely.

I don't think the South African accent is that difficult to do.

You just have to really lean into the character.

I don't really find it that hard.

Yeah.

Yeah, you just get your viewers, it's like really hard.

We've all listened to a South African commentary on All Blacks Games since we were kids, right?

Yeah.

So I feel like it should be in there.

Yeah.

We should all have one.

I played a lot of Joan of Lommy rugby growing up.

So it's like Percy Montgomery down at the bottom.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I have to pause you there because Bill Beaumont is the commentator on that.

Who's Scottish.

I'm not sure.

My memories are funny.

Yeah, how you've gone crazy.

Steve, you told me you've recently introduced accents into your storybook reading for your kids.

Yes.

Yeah, I've got young kids and I read them books at night and I've recently asked me to do each page with a different accent, which is quite challenging.

That must be because you are accent master 10.

Totally.

To them I am.

But after about the third or fourth page, some of the accents get quite problematic and I'm thinking like my Chinese and my Indian.

Yeah.

And then they're going to school and being like, hey, my dad does your accent.

It goes a bit like this.

No.

Are they accent, is doing accents racist?

Because I was a cute, I did the South African once on a voice note to someone and they came, it was on a dating app and they came back and said you can't, you can't do that.

That date didn't go very far, by the way.

Yeah.

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You can't do that.

It's racist.

I was like, I don't think that is.

I mean, I think there are certain races that have had the piss taken out of them endlessly and have been punched down on a lot.

I would say like Asian voices.

You know, I think in, I think there's a problematic like history of, you know, white people playing Asian people or, you know, blackface.

There's all these kind of like, you know, there's certain, I think, I think we can all feel fine doing Aussie or doing, basically doing white people.

We can feel fine doing white people.

I think if you're brown and you're from that place, you can, you can, you know, do that accent.

You know, like I, I mean, I can do an Indian accent because I'm Indian.

So you get fucked.

Rossi Peters has made a whole career out of doing accents pretty much as a stand-up actor is accents and takes on culture.

Yeah.

But it's like a really interesting time in, in like comedy as well with all of that.

There's like so much dialogue around, you know, what's appropriate now and how to be, you know, I think for a long time comedy did, did punch down.

There was a lot of comedians that, that did that.

And then now there's a lot of like old school comedians being like, but we've always done that.

Why can't we keep doing it?

And then all the, the kind of new generation being like, you don't be smarter with your comedy.

You don't need to.

So, you know, and it's interesting where, you know, like with someone like, oh, what's his name?

You know.

Chris Lilly.

Eddie Murphy.

I want to pee on you.

What's his name?

You know, I want to pee on you.

That's an art galley impression for that.

That's the first thing that I can think of.

Him and his like, and then the, the story of Charlie Murphy playing basketball with Prince.

I think it was one of the best sketches of all time.

But anyway, you know, like someone like him who's like, you know, controversial dude now because he's kind of got all these like, it's, I know it's, it's a very interesting time in comedy, I think.

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I found myself in a Madeleine Sami rabbit hole on YouTube last night.  
And whenever I send a link to Shay, it's a sign that it's a goodie.  
And it was one, I think it was something to do with the vagina monologues.  
And it was like the accent challenge.  
And it was you doing a Jamaican.  
Like you come in and you've got to do a scene in a Jamaican accent.  
It made me laugh.  
Yeah.  
Like, I don't know if that's legit now.  
Like, I'm like, well, I really, I don't know.  
I've got a Jamaican in my locker that I pull out every now and again when I watched the West Indies play cricket.  
And I did, I worked at Northern Districts Cricket and I was commentating, commentating along.  
Yeah.  
People loved it.  
And then afterwards I was like, oh, yeah, maybe everything isn't irry.  
Yeah.  
Yeah.  
I don't know.  
I don't know.  
Like, you know, and obviously you have to kind of view things through a lens now and be like, well, we all were in that mindset then.  
Like, you know, I think about like some of the stuff from the early office show, you know, like the off the British version.  
And you're like, if you watch it again, it's like, there's some really problematic stuff now.  
But like at the time, it was kind of revolutionary.  
And, you know, I think, I think sometimes you have to view comedy like that as well and be like, well, that was all of its time.  
And, you know, some, some things date.  
I mean, you look at any comedy from the 80s with like, and they're all like coked up to the eyeballs and making fun of homosexuals and talking about taking a bunch of cocaine.  
And that's because they have taken a bunch of cocaine.  
And it's all about like the edu comedy was talking about gay people.  
And it's like, well, you know, you could cancel those people.  
You could just view that for the time that it was set in and like go, that was the set of circumstances at that time.  
And I don't know.  
I'm a gay.  
I still like Eddie Murphy and Robin Williams.  
It's a foundation.  
The foundation piece is Eddie Murphy, Raw and Delirious.

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All right.

Every video store just I was talking to someone about that the other day because those videos we used to get them out sneakily.

Like mum would go off to work or whatever.

And we would just like get out, we're on Delirious.

Those two specials are probably the reason I got into comedy acting was Eddie Murphy and those two stand-up specials.

Because that was the first time I'd ever seen someone be like, just stand there, be so charismatic, be so, you know, bawdy and like rude and swear, but also just transformative character without, without anything, without costume change, whatever.

And just so fully do the voices and be the people and tell the story.

And that was the first, that was, that was when I knew, like as a kid watching that, that I wanted to be an actor, I think, and swear.

Yeah, it's full of it.

It's absolutely full of it.

We'll be right back after this short break.

We recently had Tom Sainsbury on the pod and we had some success unearthing some of his early, unusual jobs.

And in our research, we've stumbled on a few that we'd like to talk about.

Oh my God.

I don't know anything about this.

I might go nowhere, but Xerox Warrior Princess at the Skytower.

Oh yes, yes.

Is that a real job?

That's not a real job.

I made my own costume out of like tin foil and like little pie, you know, like, flattened a bunch of like pie casings that were made of foil for my like breastplate.

And I was part of some like Auckland Theatre Sports thing.

We get these couple of teenagers and pay them like really anything to just take people up and down the Skytower when it opened.

So I was a teenager and we all like took the piss out of, you know, an icon and I decided to, yeah, I made my own costume and I was Xerox Warrior Princess and I just took people up and down in the lift at the opening of the Skytower for a little holiday job.

It was sick.

A play on the Hollywood Walk of Fame then, kind of parrying famous New Zealand people.

I don't know.

I think that's what I chose to be.

I can't remember what else anyone else chose to be, but I was definitely, I was Xerox Warrior Princess and it was a whole, I think it was like a full school holidays and I just was taking people up and down the Skytower.

It was sick.

When you, a few years later, when you met Lucy Lawless and you were on Xena, did you let that you'd been Xerox Warrior Princess?

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Yeah, I did.

I did.

I think she found it very funny.

I'm actually, I'm actually very good friends with Lucy now and, you know, the, um, the legacy of Xerox lives on.

It's a shame.

It probably predates kind of mobile phone quality camera day, so you maybe didn't have any photographic evidence.

I don't think I had any photographic evidence.

It's a shame.

There's probably something in the archives somewhere, but I don't know.

It's so funny how like, like I think when my kid is 21, my kid is going to have like a photo for every moment of their life.

You'd be able to put it together and just watch, literally have a picture collage of how, of watching them, like a video of watching them grow, you know, watch them age every day.

Whereas for me, I feel like there's like, there's one role of film for when I was like two and then there's a bunch of photos from when I'm like in my 20s.

And then there's all that stuff in between.

Like maybe some friends somewhere have got some like film of us on a holiday or whatever, but nah.

It's just looping back to Lucy.

I'm not sure I've got the timelines right, but was it when you were about 18 or 19 that you first worked with her and she ended up like coming back to your flat and like you had this worldwide superstar kind of like interacting with your teenage people?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Who are you?

Who are you guys spoken to?

God, you're getting the inside gas.

Yeah.

So Lucy and I did the Vagina Mont logs together for the Auckland Theatre Company with Daniel and I was like pretty young, living in a flat in Mount Eden.

No, I didn't drive.

And so, and Lucy was very pregnant and we're just like, we bond, like I was in one episode of Xena.

It was like the penultimate episode of the last series of Xena.

And we all, I was, it was quite a big episode.

They basically called it their saving private Ryan, but like for Xena.

Because a lot of action were like running along the beach and a bunch of Amazonians are getting blown to smithereens.

And I survived.

My character survived.



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Tyra was her name.

She survived.

But I got to know Lucy and she was in a particular zone at the end of that shoot, I think, because it was like, it was ending and it was like a big deal.

It was a massive show, that show.

And then we did the Vagina Mont logs together and yeah, I didn't drive.

And she kindly offered to take me home every night from rehearsals and from the show.

Every night.

Yeah.

And her fancy car.

Xena's driving me home.

So sick.

And then we just became friends.

We're just like bonded.

And she's just, she's a girl from Mount Albert.

That's what who Lucy is.

She's always and I, you know, I grew up in Onihunga.

So I felt very, even though we're like obviously different ages and very different experiences in life, essentially that's who she is.

And she's a very, one of the most like smart down to earth people you'll ever meet.

And we just became really close friends.

And yeah, she would sometimes come over to my flat.

Just like sit in my room and my cousins or like my friends would be like, hi Xena.

And we're like, hi, you know, and she, yeah, she's just so chill with everyone.

And that's, you know, we're still friends to this day.

And she's still one of those people that will just call me up and be like, like I was out to dinner with my daughter the other night.

And she was like, what are you doing?

And I was like, I'm just, I'm, I've taken my daughter to, to a flash dinner.

And she's like, I'm coming.

You know, she'll just turn up and it's like, you know, yeah, we sort of bond through that time, but she's one of the best people ever, you know?

Yeah, she's on a hit list.

Sounds like, yeah, she sounds like we've got it in fine.

She is genuinely one of the most down to earth and interesting people.

She's always doing something interesting.

Like she'll, I'll be like, what are you up and up to?

And she's like, I just made this documentary or, you know, like whatever.

She's just, well, I just built a house on a farm somewhere.

And I'm like, oh, you know, I've been doing some stuff for Greenpeace.

You know, you know, I've been, I've been protesting up a oil rig or whatever.

You know, like she's always got something that she's doing.

But she's, yeah, she's one of the most like curious people.

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And her curiosity takes her into these crazy places.  
And, you know, she's always got an interesting story.  
She's the best.  
Would Lucy Lawless's curiosity take, I can't speak this morning.  
Would Lucy Lawless's curiosity take her to play a kind of surprise  
ear, get Auckland Zoo?  
No, I feel like, you see, I feel like this is the same summer, maybe,  
that I played Xerox Warrior Princess.  
Look, when you start out in this job, guys, and listen, I've got a philosophy.  
I'm a hustler.  
I'll take whatever work I can get, you know, yes, I, for a time, for one,  
I think it was one time, I think I didn't want to do it after that.  
I had to get into that.  
It was the middle of summer, Auckland Zoo.  
I had to get into a foam kind of surprise egg.  
I wasn't sure how you played this.  
So you were inside.  
Oh, OK, OK, sorry.  
But in a white stocking, of course, and then the kind of surprise egg around you.  
And it's stunk like the man that wore it before.  
And I'm pretty sure there were pubes in the foam on the inside that I saw.  
You have to go and know those nude normally.  
Yeah, it was horrific because it was so hot.  
So it's just like sweating up a storm.  
And then the kids are assholes and they just kicking you the whole time.  
Because they're like, yeah, of course, I want to kick that egg.  
I mean, if I was a kid, I'd want to kick that egg too.  
So yeah, I did.  
I played a kind of surprise egg for a little bit.  
Was it a promo?  
No job beneath me.  
Was it a promo thing?  
Like were you handing kind of surprise eggs out?  
Or I just don't remember.  
I think it was like I.  
So I started out when I was younger, doing a lot of improv.  
And the Auckland Auckland Theatre Sports was a company  
that would kind of train us up and they'd get offers for work  
for promotional things that, you know, it's either it's an awards thing  
where you're walking around in characters or you're going to the  
zoom being kind of surprised or zero ex-warrior princess.  
Or sometimes we would do a which is really fun.  
There was at the Maidment Theatre, there was a Sunday night improv show

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and like 14 year old me would get paired up with like Kevin Smith.  
You guys remember Kevin Smith was an incredible improviser.  
God damn God of a man.  
So handsome.  
And you'd get paired up with these these older things  
just to kind of get experience doing improv with them.  
So that in a way, because I never did drama school or anything like that.  
But like those experiences were like kind of my training.  
And I did a lot of like youth theatre as well again,  
which was kind of like my training.  
So I'd do a show, I would rehearse up a show every like sometimes  
they were like in the winter school holidays or the summer school holiday.  
So I was just like a nerd for acting from a really young age.  
And, you know, we did we did stuff like Auckland Theatre Sports,  
which was kind of like a really weird job.  
But they were these like American kids that would tour  
and they'd come for a trip around New Zealand for like three weeks.  
And then at the end of their trip, they'd be staying at some like like hotel.  
Like, I don't want to say quality in, but do we even have a quality in?  
And then we would go and do improv for them as teenagers.  
So they're teenagers, we're teenagers doing improv for them about their trip.  
They just had around New Zealand and we get paid for it.  
So I was just kind of getting paid for improv and acting,  
which is awesome because I kind of meant that I've never really had like a normal job.  
So I was like, it was a sick way to kind of get experience,  
but also like kind of be doing the thing I want to do, you know?  
I mean, not that I really can't.  
I can't I can't think that I'd even want to be a kind of surprising.  
No, well, I've put I've put myself back in 14 year old me's mind.  
Dangerous place. That very dangerous place.  
Very self-conscious, very unsure about putting myself out into the world.  
The world of improv at 14 sounds like a scary, scary place to me.  
But did you were you fearless at that stage?  
I mean, I have I'm one of 23 cousins and we're all like,  
I say to people often like, I'm not even the most talented,  
funniest, best person at entertaining in my family.  
It's Priya. I just, yes, it's Priya.  
It's Priya. It's her.  
Yeah, her on the show.  
But like, I just, you know, for some reason, it just kind of clicked for me.  
But like, our family growing up was always like, we'd do shows,  
we'd do characters for each other.  
So that sort of set me up for doing that for other people out in the world,

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because it was like that was my normal at home or a family gathering.  
You know, there'd be a there'd be a telequest or like my my cousin  
and I, my my one of my funniest cousins, Anna, and I used to pretend to be  
when we were like 10 or 12, we used to pretend to be a European duo,  
a songwriting duo that's a very elaborate story.  
But we were called Glass and Anya and we would do silly accents  
and we'd pretend to be interviewed by our cousin, other cousin, Clare.  
And she and our other cousins would be sitting like like they were watching Oprah  
and she would interview us as Glass and Anya.  
And we'd talk about, you know, we'd split up for some reason  
and it was about us coming together for the reunion.  
And we just do hours of just shit talking as this European songwriting duo.  
And then we'd make up songs and like people,  
my cousins still quote back the songs that we sung to them.  
Wow. Yeah. Back in the day.  
Yeah. Yeah. So, you know, that's where that's where it started.  
And then so it was a natural progression to do that as a teenager.  
And I still think I had the awkwardness of being that.  
But I just also knew I loved it at the same time.  
You know. Yeah.  
We met. We mentioned Priya.  
We reached out to her just to help sort of paint a picture of Madeline.  
We reached out to her. Fuck, she's funny.  
Like, say, oh, can you give us some info on Madeline?  
She's like, fuck you guys.  
Do your own fucking research.  
Hand me a crate.  
Yeah. Yeah.  
What can I give?  
What can I give?  
But she did give us some stuff.  
So I want to she she actually led with what an incredible sports person you are.  
Or were rugby cricket, football,  
she'd pretty much anything you tried and with Dux Ludorum at high school.  
Dux Ludorum, which I had to look up.  
Yeah, I thought.  
Not many school.  
No, I thought every school had a Dux Ludorum.  
But no, I thought. Yeah.  
Yeah. Was it was it ever like a potential  
how good were you at sport?  
Was there a potential gateway to professional sport?  
It's so funny.

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So Dux Ludorum, I love to lead with it because I was like, I was a Dux.  
Little little.  
I was the Dux of sports.  
Yeah, I mean, I loved sports.  
You know, my my I worshiped my older brother, Dan.  
He and he was really sporty.  
He was a lead guy and a rugby guy.  
And as a kid, you know, just follow him around everywhere.  
And he'd be like, want to come up to the park?  
And we lived off the back of my high school.  
And so we'd go up and kick a ball around,  
which I now realize was essentially like him  
kicking a ball and then going chasing it for us.  
I was like a little doggy for him.  
But I got good at sport from that, basically.  
And again, you know, my family is really sporting as well.  
So we'd often like start a touch family touch game or a family touch team.  
And so I was always kind of playing sport.  
And yeah, I just loved rugby growing up.  
I was that kid that would stay up till like four a.m.  
To watch, you know, the the, you know,  
South African or Blacks test, you know,  
I was obsessed with rugby as most, you know, Kiwis were,  
probably not as much anymore.  
So yeah, it's kind of like another thing  
that I just loved doing at high school.  
And I just would play.  
I just get into everything, netball, not so much.  
I'm more into the queer sports, cricket, rugby.  
The first the first year I played rugby  
was the first year they bought only the first year  
they bought rugby for girls into schools.  
So it was I mean, I've often wanted to like write a film or something about it  
because it was a free for all.  
Like, you know, boys grow up playing rugby through through school  
and they get technique talk to them.  
They get so that by the time they get to 16, that's, you know, it's a safe.  
It's as safe as it can be.  
The girls game was like for righting.  
And, you know, like we'd but there was some, you know,  
like we're all sort of like learning basically how to play rugby.  
We've all watched it our whole lives, but none of us have the technique.  
So we're getting, you know, we're training.

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We're doing that.

And then like, but you get into a game.

Sometimes I remember being because I I I rather tackled  
tackled tactically decided I wanted to be a half back, mainly for my size.

Also also for the fact that I could get rid of the ball  
and not get tackled too much because I'm always passing it.

And I remember being like at a rock and like, you know, all the girls are piling in  
and someone was like, oh, someone's got someone's got a boot in my face.

And then all the other girls were like, someone's got their boot in her face.

Everyone, let's just stop.

Let's just stop trying to let's not hurt her, you know.

And I remember just being like, oh, but then, you know, and in the same breath,  
I remember like, and I still think I have an injury from this game.

I remember playing this like Saint James, Saint James, James Cook High,  
like the girls out there and them coming and they were just like double the size of us.

And I'm like, OK, well, this is going to be a chip and chip and chase kind of game  
for me because that was the only way I was going to get around not being tackled.

And I, you know, all the all the training my brother had put me through  
over the years, I was like, yeah, I'm a chip and chase gal.

I, you know, as a soccer player as well.

So I had the had the skills in that way.

That was my that was my signature move.

I get into the 22 and I'd be like, get the ball from the rock  
or the or the or the scrum and just kick over the top and catch it.

And then we're like, bam.

And I did I did one of these moves against James Cook High,  
because these good girls are giants.

I'm going to get murdered and chip and chase.

And I'm like, I've got the ball and I'm running.

I'm like, yeah, I'm heading towards the trial.

Like I have about halfway line.

I'm like, this is easy. This is so sweet.

And I just get dragged back by the neck, like planted onto the ground.

I still swear to this day that my shoulder is fucked from that one tackle.

But this girl was just like sort of standing on me like, yeah,  
you're going to get away with that motherfucker.

And I was just like, this is pretty brutal.

Like my mum couldn't come to the games.

She just was too scared.

I love the idea of this for a TV show or whatever,  
like with the way that the women's game is so professional  
and so highly managed now, just raw grassroots first year.

The first year of women's rugby.

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Yeah. And it was it was cool.  
I ended up playing for Auckland Secondary Schools that year.  
And it was, you know, but it was just I I when I finished high school,  
I played soccer.  
I just felt like it was like a safer thing to play while I was  
doing acting as well.  
And I played for Western Springs United up until I was like 26.  
And then I taught my ACL and that ruined the end of my career.  
Wow. Yeah.  
But we were playing.  
We worked our way up to Prem Division.  
We had a pretty motley crew of like people and a crazy coach.  
And most of the girls in my team were like alcoholic.  
They weren't minding me saying this.  
They're mostly like alcoholic ex-professional tennis players,  
but also very good at soccer.  
And we worked our way up to Prem Division.  
And then, yeah, that year we would like, yeah, we were training a lot.  
And I injured myself in a social game.  
And that that was it.  
I kind of stuffed up a few jobs after that.  
And I was like, I can't really afford to like do that now.  
Then it became a gym jock.  
Yeah. We've Haley Sproul again.  
Let the cat out of the bag that you are a gym junkie.  
Jacked, I think was the term that she used.  
Jacked.  
Are you jacked right now?  
It's hard to tell with the Boston College jumper on that.  
I sprained my ankle like a month ago.  
And so I've been like chilling out on the thing.  
But I just do because I at the beginning of the pandemic,  
I because I was a Liz Mills gal.  
And then I had a like me and my my partner had a baby and I was like,  
I can't I don't have the time to get to a gym anymore.  
So I was like, got into this like body weight training stuff,  
calisthenic stuff.  
Yeah. Just, you know, burpees at home.  
Boopies on the deck at home.  
Like pole. Yeah.  
And so I I got into that.  
And that's kind of like my vibe now, because I think in this job,  
like often I find myself in a small space or a hotel or like whatever.

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And I'm like, I love a routine, but I don't, you know, when I get to a place and try and find a gym and, you know, like I feel like it's time consuming.

Whereas if I can just like do half an hour in a room and feel sweaty and great, then that's me.

Then I find a mountain to walk up.

It's great. Nice.

Yeah. Like there's a there's a good, good little seagull in the sport.

So she continues and you can choose which part of this you want to attack.

She says she makes a mean steak and she takes really good care of her lawn.

And she is really good at lending her little sister her cross colors leather patch jacket.

And she really wants that jacket. She's not getting it.

She she actually texted me again about it this morning.

She's like, I've told these guys now.

They're going to read it out.

Pre-assiliery is like she's the, you know, she's I've learned over time never to lend her anything because it comes back ruined.

She's gotten better with with with age, but I still, you know, the the damage is done, the damage is done, you know.

But she often gets the hand me downs anyway.

She's often like, you know, she's the younger sister.

So it all filters down to her in the end anyway.

That's her role.

Any Sony sisters albums dropping again soon?

We just did a gig recently and it was awesome.

Yeah, we we made one record together.

We're like, we're joking.

Well, maybe we'll put one out every 10 years, but it's been beyond 10 years now.

We love to sing together for the three, three sisters.

Yeah, we'll try to get the brother in, but he's not.

He's an IT. He's he's a good singer, but he's like very shy.

And you'd have to change the name.

Yeah, we'd be like the cause.

I was going to be like the brown cause.

Yeah, no, no, we yes, we do have plans to record.

It's been, you know, obviously life and, you know, I get taken off into my job and Angie's got her job and prayers doing her sort of stuff as well.

But we are yeah, we did one gig recently.

We're all like really excited.

So I think we'll we'll we'll start recording some stuff soon, I reckon.

Yeah, I've heard on Good Authority that you're a pop music aficionado and Britney Spears in particular.

You've got like the Britney Mike thing, the Britney Mike thing.



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Yeah, mimic Britney's Mike.  
Oh, I can. Yeah, I I I am a big Brit.  
I've seen her twice.  
You're a little bit sad for her now.  
Like I just I think I hope she's getting the help she needs  
because whatever she's been through must have like like it would have  
fucked with anyone, don't you reckon?  
Yeah, Steven shared some of her latest social media  
stuff with me this morning.  
And I was like, oh, that doesn't look.  
Yeah, she's in a great space.  
Yeah, I mean, I don't know what they did to her for those 10 years,  
but I'm sure they like absolutely,  
you know, smashed her on the cocktail of various drugs to keep her like  
from, you know, keep her in their control.  
But like, yeah, I don't know.  
I I I stand Brit to the end.  
I'm like Brit for life to lay die.  
But yeah, I love pop music.  
I love I I obsess about music.  
One of her dancers popped up in my TikTok algorithm the other week.  
She was an amazing dancer or in a Britney Spears tangent,  
but like like the way she moved.  
I couldn't remember her being so good at dancing.  
Did you copy her moves?  
Were you not so much that?  
Yeah, I mean, I like to do voices.  
I like to mimic people.  
I do a good Britney on the at the karaoke, you know.  
Um, so but yeah, she was an incredible performer back in the day.  
I think I think she's still an incredible dancer,  
but I think the style of dancing that she did, people have moved on from.  
Like, you know, we're into the sort of Parascopal kind of kind of dancing.  
It's a little more it's a little less just a few spins here and there.  
And you know, which is what it was kind of early 90s when when Britney came out.  
And that was like great for the time.  
But I think dancing has evolved, especially like, you know, pop and pop.  
Just on karaoke, it's not exactly karaoke,  
but as the Julie Andrews M&M mashup still part of your preparation for.  
God, who do I tell that to from everyone?  
Yeah, I toured this solo show for many years.  
And often I'd, you know, it was called number two and I played like nine characters.  
So and like from an old lady to like a young seven year old.

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And so my voice had to get warm.  
And often often, like when I was at the Edinburgh Festival,  
like you get into your venue five minutes before you get to do the show.  
And so you have to kind of warm your voice up.  
But like over the years of touring that show, I was like,  
what's the fastest way to kind of get it get make sure my mouth is warm.  
And and I'm able to and yeah, I would often rap.  
M&M and the style of Julie Andrews.  
Hi, kids, do you like violence?  
Do you want to see mystic nine inch nails to each one of my eyelids?  
Do you want to copy me?  
Do exactly what I did?  
Try, Sid, get fucked up.  
Worse than my life is my brain's dead weight.  
I have to get my head straight.  
It was like that.  
And it was like a really good way of like because you can do it fast.  
And like it was just a really fast way of like getting my mouth open  
so that I could get into like playing these characters.  
But yeah, that's really good.  
That's yeah, I'm glad you brought that up.  
You're welcome.  
I've got those little nuggets every now and again.  
Yeah, yeah, yeah.  
We'll be right back after this short break.  
I want to start painting the picture of growing up in Aung Hanger.  
It seems like a huge foundation piece in your life.  
Raised by your mum.  
Yeah, all the time, predominantly pretty much.  
Yeah, my mum and my dad split when we were like 12.  
So it was really, really pretty much mum.  
Mum and us in a house, four kids running around.  
Yeah, because you're fiercely Aung Hanger proud, right?  
Yeah, I love Aung Hanger.  
It's such a good.  
I still live there now, managed to buy a house there somehow.  
And it's just it was a good melting pot growing up.  
You know, like there was a lot of  
kind of, you know, my high school is just like full of every race,  
every type of person from every walk of life.  
So it just felt like a really good place to.  
It felt like a really good place to grow up, really.  
I've got a real fondness for it.

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Aung Hanger, I'll always kind of feel like I belong here.  
Yeah, yeah, I'm interested because I'm a mixed race child as well of an English, an English father and a Solomon Island mother.  
Oh, cool. So I grew up in a household which had those kind of cultures blended.  
And then as you make sense of the world as a young person, you kind of go, shit, I don't I don't really fit in this box.  
But you're able to fit across a whole bunch of boxes.  
Did you find that as well growing up?  
Yeah, I think and that's why it was so cool to grow up in that area because there were a lot of kids like me.  
You know, there are a lot of kids that were like a mixture of like different lots of different races or so you felt at home amongst that group, you know, of kids at school, especially, you know, it was a very there were a lot of different races at my school.  
And yeah, I mean, my family, my mum on my mum's side is Irish Catholic and they there's seven siblings, six sisters, one brother, the one brother married another Irish lady.  
So that's the one white family in our family.  
And then the rest three of them married Maori men and three of them married Fijian Indian men. So all of my cousins and I are half something and either half Maori, half Irish, half Fijian Indian, half Irish.  
So, you know, just grew up in this mixed family.  
I grew up in the suburb that was like really mixed and it was it felt, you know, I feel lucky, you know, when you hear about other people growing up like small towns or whatever. And it's a bit harder for them.  
I feel like I was exposed to a lot of like different races and different people from walks of life.  
And I think to be honest, I think for someone like me who, you know, I don't know, I've always loved doing voices and characters and stuff.  
I was always around great characters, too, you know, like.  
So it was kind of in a way like a playing field for that early, you know, stuff for me, like being making making up characters and jokes and joking around high school.  
Yeah, I imagine you you're able to draw from high school and family with some of the stuff that you do now, right, to draw back on those experiences of I think you said one of twenty three cousins.  
I imagine family get together as a kind of eclectic, loud, amazing affairs.  
Oh, yeah, yeah. And often when I play a character, you know, my cousins will be like, oh, that's totally blah, blah, blah.  
Well, that's all you used to put it done enough for that.  
You know, it's usually drawn from my family and my friends for sure.  
No one's safe, neither of you to us.

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Yeah, we wonder whether Tom Sainsbury would come in and like just take because he's a master observer of of people and breaking down their characters. We're waiting for kind of a couple of podcast hosts to be on something that it'll be coming, you know, that guy's prolific.

He's like every day there's some. Yeah, he's so funny.

You've never wanted to dip a toe into kind of that social media space of putting filming and putting stuff out there.

I mean, sometimes I do.

I don't know, like some of this Tom and like Chris Parker is so good at it.

But I feel like it's like I feel like it's one of the things that actually takes a lot longer.

And I guess as busy, too, with projects on the go, I'm busy.

Yeah. And I think I think if I had an idea for something, I would.

But I mean, it's kind of like what I do in my job anyway.

Maybe in the future, I don't know.

I at the moment, yeah, I don't I would say I don't really have the time for it.

But, you know, there's people out there that are doing like Tom, you know, every day would have an Instagram system.

So good. Hilarious thing that he's doing.

So, yeah, maybe I'm just losing back to the family stuff.

And if you want to dodge this one, it's OK.

But I'm losing your father.

I think you were in your 20s when you lost him.

Did they have a big impact on your identity or what impacted that have on your life?

Yeah, I mean, that was pretty it was pretty epic.

You know, I was doing a play, actually, at the time when I found out down at the Silo Theatre, which is now the basement.

And yeah, I mean, it's it's it's one of those things where you don't expect to be that young when that happens.

And it sort of put me in like an existential kind of like crisis for a second where it's like, yeah, you start to you're like, oh,

I had all these questions.

I had all these things I wanted to know.

Now I can't know them anymore.

And yeah, I think that I often think about the lessons

I learned about myself through that time

and how they've filtered through and to the rest of my life,

like in terms of like grief and like dealing with grief at a young age

and, you know, dealing with grief through the rest of my life on other things.

And yeah, I think I learned some really big like life lessons

having to go through that at that age about, you know, holding on,

you know, like my dad and I weren't necessarily like super tight.

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And, you know, after he's gone, I was like, well, what was the point of that? Like, you know, and so I take that sort of lesson into the future for myself now where I'm like, there's no point like holding grudges or like because you never know what's going to happen in life.

And so yeah, I mean, I think that it sort of had a profound impact on the way I live my life now and still live my life. And I still think back, you know, I think, you know, life is like really precious. And, you know, you just you just ought to and there's no there's no point. Kind of unres like having unresolved stuff.

I think that was kind of my biggest lesson from that that time in my life. Do you resonate with that?

I was going to say that's amazing insight because I lost my dad. I think I was 28 at the time and 100 percent. We were my dad was interesting. He was very English upbringing. Yeah, brought up through the Second World War, where everything was rationed and he had a real interesting outlook on life. We were close, but I know exactly what you mean around all of a sudden. You don't have this person that you think, fuck, he's never going to see me grow up. He's never going to watch me go, you know, through manhood. He's not going to see me get married, maybe he's not going to see me have kids, maybe. You know, but it's it's an odd, odd thing.

And I think you're right. I think your perspective on life and what's important really does change when you when you go through that at a at a younger age. And like, I hadn't reflected on it until I'm sitting here listening to kind of the way that you put that together. And it definitely it definitely hits home.

And I think it's probably now why, like, I gravitate a lot to my friends. Dads and I always kind of look at family situations and go, man, like, you don't you don't know what's around the corner and what's going to happen. Like, fucking bury the hatchet or make an effort to do anything. That's yeah, I mean, I just find.

Yeah, I think I find holding on to resentment or anything like that with things. I just want to release that because you just never know what what's around the corner and you never know what people are going through as well. Like, I don't know, I think I think I learn a lot about forgiveness through that process and like, yeah, life's short.

You just got to like, you know, give put good energy out there and, you know, not, yeah, no, try not to let things make you better and also just, yeah, I don't know, I think resolving things is the way forward, you know, because, yeah, you never know.

And, you know, I think I'll.

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You know, I'll, you know, you just never know what's going to happen.  
You never know when you're not going to have that opportunity to have that conversation.  
So have have it, you know, resolve it, get through it.  
Don't hold on to hate and hold on to like resentment.  
I think that was, yeah, definitely my biggest lesson  
that I still try to hold on to today with things.  
I was like, what's the point of being pissed off of that person?  
Like, let's just have a chat about it and work through it.  
You know, amazing lessons.  
Thank you for sharing.  
Hey, yeah, anytime.  
Yeah, DTC, brother, dad's club with the DTC.  
Anyone, anyone of my friends that when their dad passes on like, all right,  
we're DTC, we there is a sort of special kind of bond that happens.  
I think when you lose a parent and, you know, like every time  
any one of my friends loses a parent, I'm like, I, you know,  
it instantly takes you back to that feeling.  
It's like it's a big deal, you know, it's a big deal.  
Shout out our amazing producer ads as well.  
He's a DTC.  
He's part of the DTC.  
DTC, DTC for life.  
Love it.  
I got you.  
I got you guys.  
Damn it, it's supposed to work the other way.  
We'll be right back after this short break.  
All right, so to move through the genie, so I'm not sure which order these came,  
but High School, Shortland Street and Beer.  
Yeah.  
A monologue show called Beer.  
Yeah.  
Was that around the same time?  
Yeah, basically, I finished.  
So the whole kind of time that I'm at High School, I'm doing shows,  
I'm doing plays and I basically got to the end of High School.  
I was like, I'm going to take a year off and try and do acting stuff  
and then I'll go to uni or whatever.  
And all my friends were going to uni and felt a little bit sad,  
like I sort of, you know, I was like, have I done the right thing?  
And then I did this monologue play called Beer, which was like a hit in New Zealand.  
Like I ended up touring it a lot and we went to Edinburgh.  
And then in the same year, that same year out of High School,

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I did Shortland Street.  
So I was playing like a trainee doctor.  
I think I was supposed to, I was like, leveled up.  
I was supposed to be playing like a 25, 26 year old, I was 18.  
But they like straightened my hair and put me in like a suit and stuff.  
And yeah, I just was like, from that point on, I just was working in the industry.  
And I got to tour beer for a long time.  
And I was on Shortland Street for about five months, I think.  
And I did, I did like two months and then I did a season of the play beer in Wellington.  
And then I came back and did another three or two months.  
And then, but people remembered me from that.  
It was, people have such a crazy memory for Shortland Street.  
Like I went to Fiji like 10 years later and the lady that did my, like made my rumour, gave me a bottle of champagne because she loved me as Barney in Shortland Street.  
And I was like, that was like, I was trying to remember the character's name.  
That was like 15 years ago, but thank you so much.  
I've done stuff in between.  
And then, yeah, from that point on, basically, I did number two, which was the solo show.  
And I just toured these plays for years and years and years.  
And yeah, and then, yeah, it was, it was a kind of crazy start.  
Are you an instant celeb amongst your peers when you're on Shortland Street at that age?  
Like such a widely watched show.  
I imagine the younger demo sort of watched it a lot.  
It was a pretty big deal.  
Yeah, it was a pretty big deal that I was on Shortland Street.  
And I remember like walking to my best friend's house from Wani Honga.  
He lived in Owens Land.  
I was like, had my headphones.  
I think I was listening to the new whole album, Celebrity Skin at the time.  
And, and that being like, this is it, Mads, you've made it.  
Like, it's all, it's all got to be, I'll probably be in Hollywood next year.  
I'll probably be doing action movies with Tom Cruise.  
That's what I really thought.  
That's where the trajectory was headed.  
How do you find out that your Shortland Street role is ending?  
Did they kill you off or did you just phase you out?  
My transfer to Central.  
I did.  
I literally got transferred to Central.  
That is what happened.  
So I can technically come back any time.  
Shortland Street, if you need me.  
I, yeah, no, I had a very, so I was, I think I was like one of the first Indian

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characters on the show and I had a love story with Rangī.

And we were in love.

But my parents, Leigh Strang, but my parents in the show wanted me,

I had a schizophrenic brother that I had to look after, it was really stressful.

And my parents wanted me to have an arranged marriage.

So I loved the Nangi, but I had to go off and marry the, my betrothed.

And then they transferred me to Central.

That's actually so good.

But I'm honestly constantly surprised.

There will still, there'll be at least one person a year

that will recognise me from Shortland Street.

And I'm like, man, that is going back some way now because I, I was 18.

And yeah, so that was like 90, 98.

I did that show.

That's funny.

The amount of stuff you've done since then in Shortland Street.

That's crazy.

Foundation.

Yeah.

On beer, I'd heard in an interview that there was like a sex scene in it.

And you'd never had sex before and you had to imagine what it was like.

Yeah. So there's a sex scene where basically we're standing on stage and it's like you're watching, it's hard to describe.

But it's like we're standing on either side of the stage because the whole show was like monologue.

So Ian Hughes who played the male characters in the show would stand up and he'd do a monologue, then I do a monologue.

And the play was really clever in that it as the monologues went along, you realise these characters are connected to each other.

And so you're introduced to his character who works in a cinema and then you're introduced to my character who's like a Jim Bunny.

And then they eventually meet at the movies.

And so you're sort of watching them like you can see your his point of view and your her point of view as an audience and then they have sex.

And yeah, I was a virgin and hadn't had sex before.

And it was a very hilarious rehearsal room with three awkward men trying to relate to me.

How the physicality of the scene might happen.

And I really enjoyed them all kind of squirming

and trying to find the appropriate language to describe how I was going to do this.

I mean, you know, I think I think I'd seen enough sex scenes in movies to kind of know.

But yeah, it was a pretty it was a pretty funny, funny show in that way.

I had to do that play in Wellington.



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We had a season in Wellington at Brava Brava Brava Brava Brava.

Oh, no, opposite.

Oh, God, I can't remember the name of the theater now.

Brava, I think was the cafe underneath.

And it was a closing night and I was doing that scene and I looked down and there was a table and it was like Ian McKellen, Elijah Wood, like the Liv Tyler, the Vigo Mortensen, the full cast of Lord of the Rings, because they were filming at that point.

And I'm like doing the sex scene in front of like Ian McKellen.

Oh, sir Ian.

He loved the show.

He bought me a Coca-Cola afterwards.

It was sick.

Is that where Elijah Wood became enamoured with you?

Yeah, of course.

Yeah, because that's again, deep, deep research.

Deep research, yeah.

But yeah, so was that your first kind of interaction with that?

Yeah, he came to see the show

and then he came and saw me do number two as well, the play.

And yeah, we became friends that end.

Yeah.

For reasons we've already covered,

Shea mentioned that number two was your favourite New Zealand film you've seen.

You didn't see the play, but you connected with the family aspect of it.

Totally.

Same thing.

It was like that, that I didn't know was a stage show beforehand.

So that's that's on that's on me.

So my first experience of it was watching it in the cinema,

which again, when I read the backstory,

it was like, how are we not cast in the movie?

But that's a whole side story as well.

But for the first time, it was like, fuck, that's my family on screen.

Like the matriarch and cousins and everyone coming together.

It was like a real watershed moment, I think,

for brown people in the country to kind of see their culture represented for the first time. Was it?

Did you feel that when you were when you were doing the stage show?

Because I understand I think you took it to Mexico or something.

And it was translated to Spanish to that show for years.

I did. Yeah, I did in Jamaica and Holland,

with that show.

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It was an amazing show and that it was like just a story about a family, you know, three generations of a family, but it was like everyone could relate to it. You know, the family, the family is like a very specific Fiji and family in Mount Roscoe, you know, in the late nineties.

And but it was like a translated because of incredible performance, but also just the.

You know, people related to this story of this kind of dysfunctional family and and, you know, I would always be amazed at the reaction to that play because I'd be like, really, are people in Mexico going to get this?

I did. That was probably one of the wildest shows that I did, because I did I did two shows in this festival called the Festival of Servantes, who's a Mexican poet and they had this festival, this amazing silver mining town called Guanajuato, which is about two hours north of of Mexico City. And they translate.

It was a Spanish speaking festival.

So they translated the entire play into Spanish and had it projected above me as I was doing.

And the play is just me.

It's raw and delirious style.

I don't change out of my costume.

I'm wearing jeans and a shirt that says Sonny Fiji.

And I just trans it's me and a chair and I just transform it to all the characters.

There's no like big glitzy like costume changes to help a foreign speaking audience even understand what's going on.

And, yeah, I did the show in this like converted church.

So it's this huge, beautiful old Mexican church with subtitles above me.

You know, it was crazy.

But people, you know, and I remember thinking like, oh, do the show, whether or not people connected or not.

And they're all laughing and they're getting the jokes.

And then afterwards, this woman comes up, this girl comes up to me.

She's crying and there's a woman translating for her who speaks a bit of English.

And she's like, she said that you were her grandmother.

She saw her grandmother on stage.

And I was like, OK, then, you know, the kind of power of that, you know, play and the writing and the way people connected to it was was awesome.

And like, yeah, to do that and to be in Holland and have someone come up and cry and be like, that was my grandmother.

You know, it's, you know, it's pretty, pretty amazing experience for me as like a 19 year old traveling the world and just getting to like do this show.

And, you know, I got to have an OE basically, but also I was working and, you know, getting paid for it was pretty sick.

But to speak to your performance, because it is just you,

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like it must have been an incredible performance.

It doesn't exist.

Any like I was incredible.

I'm a little bit of smoke up your ass, but does that exist anywhere?

Like a copy of I mean, there's probably really bad VHS of it somewhere.

Can we crowdsource that from our list?

No, genuinely, because I struggle to see like my frame of reference is the middle, of course.

So I don't know how the hell I performed it over like 280 times, I think, in the end.

Because then, and then like 10 years later, I did like a 10 year thing of it.

It's always in my, you know, it's like one of those things where it's like,

I remember like an hour and a half of dialogue.

Have you got time to do a private show for Shay, maybe?

Yeah, I do a private show.

I just still remember the opening of the monologue.

OK, we'll arrange that.

It doesn't have to be now, but we'll arrange that another time.

Yeah, I probably I probably can't get the rights to do it.

So I probably yeah, you probably get sued if I say it online now.

So I have to do a sneaky side show.

Yeah, we're doing a private residence and no one no one will find out.

I want to link us up to Super City, so 2011.

Yeah, whatever, 10 years ago, such a breakout show like such a I don't know.

I don't know what to say. I just loved it.

Like, it was so good. It was so new. It was so fresh.

But you and Tom, we spoke to Tom about his writing process,

but I'm keen to hear about how it all worked.

Like, Tyker's involved and you and Tom, like, whose idea was it

and how how did the foundations of Super City start?

Yeah, well, I had been approached by basically after doing like these plays

where I played a lot of characters and Katarina Denabe, who was there.

She was the programming person at TV Three was like,

Mads, you need to put this on stage, you know?

I mean, put this on film and I was like, oh, yeah, that'd be cool.

And then got a friend of mine who is a kind of documentary

producer at the time, Karthu Neal, who now, you know, is a hot shot producer.

And he was like, well, why don't we just do like a little teaser?

And this was before this is kind of like before or around

like what Chris Lilly was doing.

And then he came out with that and I was like, oh, shit, you know,

like, you know, talk about like a collective consciousness in the world.

And I had I had a few characters that I'd been playing.

Georgie, the rough sleeper, was a character that I came up with

in rehearsal for a play that I was doing.

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And I just came up with this character because we were rehearsing at Silo near Myers Park and I decided that I would play this quirky girl who lived at Myers Park.

It was curious about the rehearsal going on.

And I would just turn into this character to amuse my fellow actors like Kuda Forrester was in that play.

And then everyone slowly encouraged me to be Georgie all the time, so I would get up and do improv as this like basically it was like I just stumbled it from Myers Park and was like, what's happening in here?

You know, like it was just like so that character came from that rehearsal process.

And then I'd always kind of fucked around with like a Pasha style character who, you know, kind of taps into, you know,

if you're like a mixed race girl when you grow up in the nineties, there were so many girls like that who were just like trying to be white,

basically, because there was nothing reflective of us,

you know, so I had these like, I'm sorry, my watch is on.

I'm just going to mute that.

My daughter turned that off.

Yes, so I had a bunch of characters that I'd been

floating around in my head and we did this like teaser trailer.

And then I got Tom involved to kind of help me flesh out a story.

And neither of us had really written TV before.

So we sort of got into it.

We got funding to do to do the writing

and we just got into a room together.

And basically we were like Googling, like, how do you do three TV show?

Where do you put the ad breaks in?

You know, like we're sort of working out how to write a TV show at the same time.

And yeah, and Tyker has been a friend of mine for years.

Like he was doing when I was touring number two,

him and Jermaine were like touring Humor Beasts.

They're like sort of sketch shows.

So we'd often be at, you know, like arts festivals together

and we'd be like, oh, do you want to walk around Christchurch for a bit?

Do you want to go and get a pie?

You know, it'd be like that sort of vibe.

So we'd been friends for years and then we got funding to do the show.

I was like, would you come and direct it?

Because I love, you know, like I knew that our vibe would be good.

And yeah, we just got to make this really crazy show,

which I just feel like would not be made now.

Like it was so dark and edgy and heartbreaking and funny in parts,

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but also just like sad.

And yeah, I feel like I look back on that time like how do we, you know, I just feel like the landscape for TV changed a lot when reality television kind of came in and became a massive thing.

I think people didn't want to really invest in experimental, interesting stuff, especially in New Zealand, because it's so hard to like make money for the TV channels. It's so hard for them to make any money from making TV.

So, you know, everyone kind of went, well, let's just pivot to making reality TV because it's cheap and people tune in.

How much got left on the cutting room floor of that writer's room with you and Tom?

And I've got a follow up question is after that as well.

Tom and I are very naughty people and we spend a lot of time talking a lot of bullshit.

And some of our crazier ideas for sure would never have made network television.

I mean, some of them are in there and we could like when I look back at what we got away with, I can't believe we did.

This is my follow up question is who's gag was the anal eaters with the Tom Sainsbury?

That's got Tom Sainsbury written all over it, for sure.

With the arseless chaps that come into the workshop.

That's definitely a Tom Sainsbury, for sure.

I was rolling around again, watching that back on replay.

That's cracking up, that's good.

Yeah, Ray with the anal eaters.

Yeah, that was a Tom Sainsbury, filthy.

He's got a filthy brain, filthy man.

We spoke to Tom in the lead up to this and he talked about the credit to your crowd.

He said you spent hours with the homeless community, the cheerleaders, bodybuilders in order to, I guess, learn or mimic how they were doing.

Is that an exceptionally important part of that process?

Yeah, I mean, I think when we did Super City, like, you know, Ray in season two has a bodybuilding partner

and we actually got a woman who does bodybuilding and, you know, we wanted to be able to represent it respectfully.

And so, you know, we're like, we had a lot of like in season one and two, we had a lot of the real people be the real thing.

So my cheerleading team was a cheerleading team and I just had to kind of like muck in and try and like, you know,

so there was this element of like where we were kind of, I guess is that like kind of dogma kind of style of filmmaking

where you're like blending reality with what I was doing, just to give it that sort of real depth and, you know, kind of realism, which was kind of a strange, strange thing to do in hindsight.

But like that was kind of the vibe, you know, we wanted to kind of like embed me into these communities

and follow them around and try and tell a story about them and give a perspective about them and

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lend that authenticity to it.

So, yeah, I think it was important in terms of the vibe of the show to kind of feel like we were just watching me be these people, but like it was as real as possible, I guess, and not like a big heightened comedy kind of thing.

Like we wanted it to be a bit dramatic sometimes and we wanted it to be edgy and we wanted to kind of say,

point out yuck, yucky things and like we wanted to like, you know, with a character like Georgie, who's on paper quite sad because she's a rough sleeper, but she was a clown.

She was like one of the more optimistic, beautiful characters in that first season.

Because, you know, like we didn't want to feel sorry for her.

We wanted to just spend time with her and like we wanted to make sure that like people weren't like sad about her

because she's living her best life, even if she doesn't have anything, you know,

and that was kind of a message of that character is like, you know, she was trying to be the best she could with that baby she found,

you know, like, so we were trying to kind of, we're trying a bunch of things.

And yeah, I can, I can pick up on that.

Was the review, did it get was the reception?

Sorry, the same as that.

Did people pick up on those underlying themes that maybe weren't so explicit?

Yeah, I think so.

I mean, I can't go back a bit now.

But yeah, I think, yeah, the response to the show was, was, you know, really great in that way.

You know, like someone like Pasha, who's just like super deluded,

you know, at times you feel like annoyed by her, but also sometimes sorry for her because you're like,

understand why she's, you know, trying to be Paris Hilton, even though she's never going to be, or why she's like holding onto this dream of making it, but she's not talented enough,

you know, like there's the kind of juxtaposition of those things does bring out sort of comedy and the trauma.

Yeah, I think, you know, people still talk about super city and stuff, which is great.

And, you know, like we wanted to, like someone like Offer in season two,

who's like just a brutal person who works at like Warns, which is our vision of wins.

You know, it was that classic kind of thing of like, you know,

someone who has gotten to a position of power and then, you know, like, like many politicians,

like who I won't name, who, you know, get, you know, use the system to get into a position of power and then try to take the ladder away and like having fun with the darkness and the comedy of that,

where it offers just like on a complete power trip, but she probably grew up on the benefit,

you know what I mean? And she's like, no, no, I did, I did this myself,

you know, and like kind of trying to find comedy and, you know, social issues or political things.

I think that was kind of Tom and I's emo, like, how can we make this funny?

But how can we also like, you know, point out things that people might not like?

Tom gave us an example, which might fit this criteria. He said,

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she always wanted to push the envelope. We had one character that had an abortion. She was keen for them to hemorrhage on the dance floor and bleed through her white dress, but the network wasn't having it. Is that the edgier side of it?

Yeah, totally. I was like, how visually amazing would that be for, like, for passion to be in a tight white dress?

And then like, you know, yeah, I mean, we were trying to push things. And, you know, obviously, we weren't going to get away with that. I've seen that scene in something recently and I'm like, why don't you try and do that too? We were before our time, you know? The world wasn't ready. We spoke to Tom about Small Town Scandal and playing all the parts in a podcast kind of space. And the real estate that you needed in your head to do that, you took it one step further earlier by, I haven't analyzed it frame by frame, but are you in almost every shot of the two seasons of Super City?

Yeah, pretty much. It was something I didn't think about before we wrote it. And then I was like, oh, fuck. This is going to be so tiring. I remember there was one, one day we were shooting in season two and the network had decided they didn't like the storyline for one character and we were starting shooting it the next day and they were like, rewrite it. And so Tom and I and my producer, Cathy, were sat in a room after a day of shooting. And maybe we're like two weeks into shooting. And I was so tired because like also my makeup and my hair and stuff for Super City was like, a character like Ray is like a full, like, so I have to get my hair all bound. Then there's a skull cap that goes over the top. Then there's a wig that goes over the top of that. Then there's a beard, a moustache. Then there's all this like crazy makeup. Then there's like contact lenses for his eyes. You know, and I think we gave him a little like pot belly. Like I'm going to, I'm in a little bit of a suit. Like, and it's the middle of summer in Auckland and I'm shooting the show. But my makeup would be like maybe three or four hours sometimes. So I'm doing these massive long days and we got to the end of the day. We had to rewrite a whole storyline because we had to have something to shoot the next day. And we're in a meeting kind of trying to write together, Tom, Cathy and I, and I fell asleep. And they just let me, they just let me fall asleep. And I woke up 20 minutes later and I was like, sorry guys, what are we doing? And Tom was like, it's okay, let's get back, we've got it. So what do you think we should, what do you think about the dialogue for this? I think we should say, you know, so yeah, it was pretty much the most tiring thing I've done. I mean, recently the show that I acted and directed in was pretty tiring because those two things are quite require different things of your brain as well. And that was probably as close to being as tired as I was during Super City. I mean, there's a reason there's only two seasons. I don't think I could, I don't think I could go back to doing that again. It's yeah, yeah, I learned to power nap on that shoot, those shoots.

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Like I'll be like, how long you got lighting?

How long you guys got to see that?

Two minutes? I've got two minutes? Okay, cool.

And I like learned to like fall asleep for two minutes.

Did your profile explode after that?

You're already a big deal, but then you're in the biggest show and you're literally in every scene.

Like was the demand for you crazy after those seasons?

I would say like, I would say Sione's wedding was probably the biggest thing and still is up there as like one of the biggest things that I've been involved with, like in terms of exposure.

I think Super City was a bit more niche.

It was on like a Friday night at 9.30, you know, I think one of the episodes got bumped for the Japanese earthquake, you know, and like then another one got bumped for the Super Rugby final. Like it was just, it was a really kind of niche show on a Friday night.

That was like, you know, it was edgy, so they put it on late and we swore, you know, I mean, originally, originally we, the dog, George's dog in Super City was called Sad Guy, but for a long time George's dog was cunt because we just wanted to be able to walk on George to walk around Auckland being like, can't, can't, where are you, can't.

But Network again, wouldn't let us get away with that.

Are you kidding me? Amazon Prime don't have a problem with that.

Oh no, not at all. I mean, they had to run an essay, they had to run an essay to Amazon Prime, the deadlock people, to get them to give us cunt, but they back down. But yeah, I think, I don't know, I think, yeah, Sue and his wedding was probably the biggest thing that I got recognised for for a long time.

A bit bigger than the breaker uppers?

The breaker uppers was then like, and yeah, I mean, up until that point probably, and then, and then the breaker uppers and then, you know, various other things.

This might link us up to that. Can you talk to us about the genius of Taika?

You've worked with him on a number of projects, very close. Like we see him as this worldwide like star and director and he's like the hottest property, but what is it specifically about?

Is it his work ethic, his eye, his drive? Like what makes him stand out?

I think it's all those things. Like he just has, he has, like he just goes and goes, like that guy, you talk about like me having projects on the guy, that guy's like me on, you know, acid. He's, you know, he's always got, you know, he's never like satisfied Taika. He's just constantly looking for, he's constantly making, making work and he's just really good at knowing what is funny and he is very live all the time.

Like he's always like, you know, looking for ways to make things funnier or better.

And, you know, like I learned a lot as a director being directed by him.

You know, he grew up again, like in a kind of environment where there was a lot of improv and a lot of like, he would make work with his friends and like, you know, he's a very live performer. Like when he, when he directs, there's a lot of improv involved all the time and I don't know, I think like with Taika, it's like not being married to a script too much, you know, and being in the moment in the scene and like when we did break her up or as like Jackie and I, we, you know, and Jackie grew up around Taika as well. Like we all kind of grew up with the same



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sort of philosophy of like, we, you know, going on your gut and knowing when something feels good and feels funny and if it doesn't, try something else, you know, try a different option. You know, Taika, when he directs, he often just yells out options at you and he'll crack you up and you'll crack him up and, you know, I think the experience of doing Super City with him was like that was like just jamming with him on the dialogue sometimes and coming up with better options and I think that's what comedy is about is about like sort of giving yourself options because then when you get into an edit, you're like, well, I've got this gag that could be good or this gag's funny or whatever. Yeah, I mean, I think here's a genius in that way. He has a good time. He makes people feel good. He makes people feel like they're important and what they have to offer is important. I think he does that not only with just like actors, but like across the board with crew and stuff as well. And I think he just has a good time and he knows what good comedy is and so it's a joy to be around that energy and that's why I think he's become so successful. But he also does sit down and do the work. Like he'll be the guy where, you know, like he'll just, he's like, I'll stand up or not, write a script. You know, like he's that guy too, you know? And so, yeah, it's, it's, he's fun to be around, but he also works really hard and he, you know, he plays hard. He works hard. He's a good boy.

Corey Gonzalez, McEwan shared a little story and insight into the world of Tyker, which none of us were aware, which is around what we do in the shadows, the press tour. You've got invited to parties and bits and pieces. Did he invite you and Jackie to a party in LA shortly after you arrived? Yeah, we, we would do it. We were editing The Breaker Upperers and he was there doing promo for JoJo Rabbit, actually. JoJo Rabbit. And we like literally just got off the plane. We went, we went and met him for a beer. It was really funny because I think this was post-thore and I'd like spent a lot of time in LA with Tyker. No one knew who we were at all. And then all of a sudden, I was the first time I was in LA with Tyker and I was like, oh, he's really famous now. Everyone knows who Tyker is. It's so crazy. And so we're sitting at this bar that we used to go to all the time and everyone's like, Tyker, can we get you anything? And you're like, oh my god, dude, your life has changed. And he's like, yeah, do you want to come to a party? I was literally in the overalls that I probably stunk like plain. No makeup in the overalls that I wore on the plane. I was like, oh yeah, well, it'll be a house party or something. And we end up at like the Chateau Marmont or something. And it's Seth MacFarlane's 40th birthday. And I'm like, Tyker, come on, Jackie and I just like, this is hilarious. Paris Hilton's there. And she's like, hey, what are you guys doing? And I'm like, oh my god, this is crazy. He's like chatting to Leo DiCaprio. It's nuts. And it's just his life now. When you've got Leo DiCaprio at your party, you're doing right. That's Seth MacFarlane's party. Tyker's got the sway to bring plus two. That's cool. Yeah, I don't know how he winged that, but I genuinely thought we were just going to go to someone's house. And I was like, Tyker, come on, man, I want to put, oh, I had a shower, bro. Like honestly, Leo DiCaprio, I was like, hey, man, how's it going? I'm sorry, I stink like plain. That's a vibe. That's a that's a vibe to even kind of try. His vibe. I mean, it's hilarious. Because like when you're at a party like that, like no one gives a shit about the two Kiwis that no one knows that have no makeup on that smell like plain. Like, you know, except for Paris Hilton, actually, she was the one person that said, hi, was interested in us. And I will always be like, Paris Hilton is cool. And in some of those moments, do you ever like pull Tyker to the side and go,

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fuck, maybe we were just knocking about down in Wellington on the tour. Like, are they pinch yourself moments with him? Have you got the ability with him to hold him back down to earth? Not that I don't imagine he's out of?

No, I mean, I think he's, he's in another sphere for sure. Like, but he's still the dork that I knew walking around Christchurch, you know, talking about talking shit at some arts festival 1099 or something. It's a hell of a contact on your cell phone as well to be able to just every now and again, drop a message of, hey, bro, what are you up to? Or I'm thinking about doing this or please stop sending me those tic-tac tic-tac recommendations. Yeah, he's often sends a lot of tic-tacs, but they're good. He's funny. What's his algorithm saying?

What's the stuff are you getting? I don't know. I don't know. He sends funny stuff. But no, he's yeah, I've known that guy for a long time and he's, he's still that guy. He's just in the crazy world of making, making massive movies now, but he's still, yeah, he's still a dad and he's still like a dork. The Breaker Upperers was a massive movie as well, right? Is it still in the New Zealand top 10? I don't know. I don't even checked in on that. But it was, yeah, it was cool. It was like Jackie and I have been friends for years and we'd never, we'd been in plays and stuff together. We were like, she came up with this idea for this movie and I was like, fuck you, that'd be great. Let's, and she was like doing a writer with me. And I was like, of course. So we wrote it over a number of years, sort of on and off. And then we didn't want to direct it initially. We wanted to be in it and write it. And then we were sort of cutting together this trailer. Oh, no, I guess you can't remember what we were doing. But basically, we wanted to get like someone like Tycho or Jermaine to direct us in it, but they were both busy at the time. I think Tycho was doing like some movie Thor maybe. Some crazy, I don't know, some crazy indie art house film called Thor. And they were both like, why don't you just do it? And we'd both worked on what we do in the shadows and kind of seen how they operated. And we're like, oh yeah, okay. And then we did a trailer for the film commission because they kind of wanted to test us. And we're like, yeah, this could be good. So we directed ourselves in this crazy movie. It was a really short shoot because we didn't have that much money. Yeah, what blows my mind is like four years to write it and test it and get it to a place where you want to make it. And then four weeks to make it. Yeah. And it was hilarious because the original like drafts of The Break Rapperers were like crazy, like big set pieces with like boats and jumping off boats and then like escaping to an island. And then my producer was like, yeah, guys, this is going to have a New Zealand movie budget. You're going to have to find a more clever way to, you know, and so then we leaned into the kind of hoakiness of the concept as opposed to trying to be like, this is not a Melissa McCarthy film where you're going to have like millions of dollars. You're going to have like maybe two and it's going to be barely enough to do any of this shit. So we sort of had to be more lean into the comedy and the kind of hoakiness of this like, you know, the job that these ladies do. And yeah, we filmed it in, I think, 23 days or something like that. And we, we, we were just, you know, we were really happy with it. We had a really good time. We got all of our friends involved, you know, all of our most talented, like funny friends, try to give everyone in New Zealand a part in our film. That's what I was going to say. I watched it back the other night and the first like 10 or 15 minutes, there's just everyone in the New Zealand comedy scene. Yeah.

Yeah. Well, it's literally like that was like, Oscar, what are you doing tomorrow, bro? Can you

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just come in? Like, we just need 15 minutes, honestly, you know, and you just know, it'll be, it'll be gold. And, and everyone has done that for everyone over the years. So like, you call in all those favours. We're like, bro, I remember when I came in, I did that little part for you. And can you come in, please, just 15 minutes, bro, please, please. Oh, yeah, it'll be funny. It'll be fun. We'll have fun. You'll get, you might get a free lunch, you know. So we just called and Lucy came in and did a little fun. So funny.

Jermaine's doing the sex scene. Jermaine, yeah.

Root in a way. Yeah. Yeah. Jackie was like, I'm pretty sure I can get Jermaine to have sex with me on camera. And yeah, we just sort of put it out. And like, you know, we sort of the success of that film was really a surprise to us. Like we were just genuinely hoping that we'd get a New Zealand release and that New Zealanders would watch it. And then we got accepted into South by and then I think, you know, the fact that Tyker had really, I think with Thor, especially had put, I remember flying over to Austin on the plane and watching Thor because I had a young child at the time, so I didn't get to go out to the movies much and Thor was on the plane. I watched it. And I remember being like blown away by how much tykerness, how much Kiwi comedy was in that film.

And I was all, that's what people are responding to. And then to then do our film and be like, you know, sitting in the audience in Austin going, oh, weird that our film, which is a very Kiwi film, very Kiwi since the humor is going to be seen by Americans first. And I got kind of nervous for the first time because I was like, how are they going to respond to this? And then the laughter was insane. And the commentary afterwards, you know, we did Q&As and stuff was like, this is New Zealand comedy. You guys are doing New Zealand comedy. It was like, oh yeah, because that's what they saw in like Thor and that's what they love in Thor and that's what they reminds them of Flight of the Concorde and there's this brand now of like New Zealand comedy. And it's like dry. And I think one of the reviews was like, you know, awkward, dry comedy. That's like our style. And they were like loving it. And so then it kind of took off after that and we got to open the Sydney Film Festival and, you know, we got, you know, sold the film to Netflix. And it was just, yeah, it was very unexpected. We genuinely were just like, oh, this is cool. I don't know if you were going to like this that much. This is sick.

When you sell it to Netflix, from the outside, everyone thinks, oh, I've cracked it. They've sold it to Netflix of this movie. But there's, there's lots of ways that money is broken up, right? Like you've got to pay the investors first before. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you know, like you, you get the money to make your film and then you kind of make deals with distributors and there's all this, this kind of structure where basically you're kind of bottom of the food chain because, because, you know, which is fair because like all these other people are investing money in your thing and they spend the money to get it out there and so they have to get their money out first. And then yeah, it's not like, it's not like a huge, big fancy paycheck. It's not like, hey, we've won a lotto. But you know, it was still, you know, I think, I think our film broke even. I don't think we lost money, which is a win. But yeah, it's, it's, it's a, it's a funny little word. I mean, I don't, I don't, I don't really know much about the, the financial ins and outs. I'll leave that to my producer, Kathy. He loves the, he loves the numbers.

It's like Steven, Steven's a real numbers guy. Yeah, but it is interesting. It's one of those things where like, you know, I've learned a little bit about it, but yeah, people assume

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that hell, you've cracked it. You must be loaded down. It's like, no, I'm back to square one, but hey, we didn't lose any money and I'm not having to mortgage my house to pay for my movie or whatever. The overall experience was an enjoyable one. The whole four year kind of process of forming it and then doing it and then the best. It was the best. Like, I mean, Jackie's one of my best friends. We're born on the same day. And, you know, we love it. So to get to make a movie with one of your best friends and for then people to love it, like you can't get, it doesn't get much better than that. We're working on another one at the moment. We joked when we were in South

Bay because we just like talk shit and all of our interviews and we joked that we would like come up with a trilogy of buddy movies and then we haven't really backed it up. We've gone off and done other things. And there was, we got, so we got an agent, we got agents and like everyone's like blowing smoke up your ass after you have like a, you know, great review and vanity fair or whatever. And so we, we got these new agents and they were like, come to LA. You know, we had like 28 meetings in three days. We had this guy drive us around to all the studios and to meet all these people. And they're all pitching stuff like, well, what about the Pluto movie? They're all basically trying to pitch us to make a movie out of a board game. And they're all like, what's your next thing? And we literally just come out of editing our film.

We were like, we have no idea what our next thing is about Jackie and I in between meetings. We'll be like, should we just like start bullshitting some stuff to some people? Because like, they're all asking what our next movie could be. And so, and as, as a way of kind of abusing ourselves as well, because we're like, we're never going to make this film, whatever, we can just talk shit. And then there was one thing that I came up with. It was like two good ideas. The accidentally ended up being good ideas. And there was one that that I came up with that we sort of just, you know, kind of kept to ourselves really, we didn't share them in the meetings. And they were both over the years, we've both kind of gone, I think that's got legs. And then we wrote a treatment for it recently. And we were like, we just need to get started on that. That's a good, funny idea. And it's just kind of stuck around. So we just got early development for that from the film commission. So we're going to start writing that as well soon. So there'll be another, because we're like, it's time, bro, we need to do another little buddy comedy. And how it starts is literally just a funny idea. And it just builds out from there.

Yeah, there's all these like really hilarious, like classic, like writer, you can find them on the internet, you know, write advice from writers. Like, one of the things that like, you know, in the time like, say, when I was with Tom, and we're looking up how to write a TV show. And, you know, we did a fair amount of that one, Jackie and I were writing our film too, because neither of us had written, she'd done a lot of short films, but neither of us had written a feature film before. And it's quite a different process and different structure to writing a TV show. Because TV show, you have like an episode per episode, and then you kind of have an overall arc, if you want, or, you know, there's different ways of writing it. Whereas a movie is like one episode of TV stretched out with a lot more detail, then you have to have like kind of bigger high points and low points. And one of the really good, like, grains of advice that I saw in those, those times trying to learn how to write a film was like, when you when you put together a submission to get funding for a film, they make you write like a log line. So like a one sentence thing of what your film is about. And then they make you

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write a paragraph to describe the film. And then then you write a sometimes like a 10 to 15 page treatment, which is like a more detailed thing of the story. And then on that, based on that, then you get funding to write your film. And one of the best pieces of advice was like, with a log line, if you, you know, like, casually mention your log line to someone, say you're out with mates, and you're having a beer, and you can test, you know, test your log line with people. And if they are like, whoa, that's great, or you could do this, you could do that. It's often a good sign that you're on to like a good movie. Because if you can, and like when we were doing the break or uppers, it was definitely one of the things we were like, oh, it's about two women that break up couples for cash. And everyone just be like, you know, so Jackie would be like, it feels good. And they give you this kind of excitement every time. And you're testing your log line with us with the rugby thing. Because that's a good one. Yeah, well, it's, yeah, it's so and this, this one that this new one that Jackie and I are doing, I think it's one of those ones where the log line never went away. Like it kept us both excited about the comedy of it. And like, you know, you, every time I'd think back to that, or we'd sit in a room together and be like, what about that movie where the ideas would flow really easily? And it's always a good sign when the ideas

flow, that you should pursue that as a thing to write. Sometimes, you know, you come up with a log line, you're like, I don't know, I think it's dead in the water. I don't think there's anything, there's no, there's nothing more juicy coming from that. So yeah, that's a good little, little trick there. Nice. Good trick out there for the writers. I'm keen to link you up to sort of current day. Deadlock has just come out just on the media tour for it. And interesting story, because you wrote it and then auditioned for the role and kind of didn't really think you were going to get it and got it. Please don't spoil it because I'm up to episode four.

Partner's just been eaten by a crocodile. I feel like you've just spoiled that for anyone who's not up to episode four. Yeah, my croc. Yeah, so I started out as a writer on the show. I've known the Cates for years. They asked me actually many years ago to direct one of their, so they did web series for a while. And we had the Skype back when we used Skype just before, just before Breaker Opera is, and they asked for me to come and direct them in the show, Get Cracking, which is

like a piss take of morning, morning TV. And I instantly fell in love with them. I was like, oh, my God, these women are hilarious. And they're sets of humor and everything. But then we got funding for Breaker Opera. So the timing didn't work. And then through the years, I sort of became friends with them both online, like we're like, you know, pen pals, online pen pals.

And you're Bebo top five. Yeah, I'm a Bebo top five. I'm a MySpace top eight. And then, yeah, and then I think what happened, I would do little parts in their things. Rachel House and I played did a little part where we recorded some sort of live cross to them in Australia for their morning TV show. We played a couple of characters doing some weird story. And I never met them in

real life. And then the pandemic happened, they got the funding to do deadlock. And they were like, would you write an episode? And I think initially they asked if Jackie and I could do it together. But then Jackie had something else to do. And I was like, I have got to make this work. Like, it's been too long. I need to work with these women. What I just will follow them wherever they go. I think they're geniuses. And so I started writing on it. But it was like, during

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the pandemic, during COVID. So it was all virtual writers rooms. And it was just kind of online back and forth. And then, yeah, and then the opportunity to audition for it came up. And I thought it was a joke. I thought they were playing a prank on me. I was like, what the fuck, you guys? This is a joke. And they're like, no, mate, nah, we've been thinking about you. And it's funny too, because when you're writing, you sort of have an idea of the character in your head. And it definitely didn't look like me, Eddie, in my head. I thought it was like, sort of really, you know, aged, you know, I think in the scripts originally, she was described as like this kind of aged white woman with like, you know, rosacea. And like, you know, she definitely had too many beers the night before. I got that role. I just imagine this like, leathery kind of really ochre like woman, you know, like, like the kind who's just got like a parrot that she yells at. And she's always smoking cigarettes on a porch. And then, yeah, so I auditioned for both the leads. And I went in. And I really, I really focused on the other character, because I was like, oh, man, I think I might want to play the queer character, you know, who's a bit straight, I think that'd be kind of a cool challenge. So I didn't put any effort into the Eddie audition. I went in, I was literally, I had papers like that, and I was reading the script off the page and just kind of throwing it all away. And apparently that was perfect energy for the part. Genius. Yeah, because I got me the part. I was gonna give didn't give a shit. And that was that was the energy I needed. It's the lesson. Yeah, it's great energy. Like it's, it's not not again, I feel like I've blown smoke up your ass twice today. But I fucking love it. It's an amazing show. Great concept. It's kooky. It's, it's got kind of white lotus vibes to it as well. I really, really enjoy it. I'm trying to I'm trying not to binge it in like a day. But yeah, it's been an amazing response to I mean, I think what the, you know, as a writer when I was working on it, I was like, how are these two genres going to work? Because surely one will, you know, trump the other or like, how do you make it funny? But then also keep the suspense going. And I think what the Cates ended up doing, because in the end, I mean, with the writing of it, they, they ended up realizing, you know, because they bought a bunch of writers on then, you know, it was kind of a, the process was interesting in that, like I was writing episode five, and I'd write to, you know, like a treatment, write that out. And then by the time they got to give me notes, they'd been, they'd given notes on X one to four. And so many things, you know, so many things had to change because of the crime story. And you're, you know, you're having to kind of put the intricate pieces of this crime story into place. So I was having to write a completely different episode five. And so they have like, I did a couple of drafts, and then the Cates pretty much realized they're like, Oh, we have to write this whole thing, because we're the only ones that have it all in here. And we can't, you know, like each writer can't know what's changing in each episode. So, so they basically ended up kind of like writing the whole thing in the end. And that was good for me, because I ended up trying to, you know, focus on the acting side of things. But yeah, I think they did a really good job of making a really thrilling, suspenseful crime show that also has so much comedy in it. And then like, underneath that, all the layers of like political commentary as well. And it's kind of a kind of a new genre, I guess, or what they've done. It's quite, you know, and I think it was really funny, the response to the show. Initially, you know, a lot of people are like, it's quite hard for them to, because, you know, some people are watching it because they want, they've been told it's a crime show. And then they're my

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character

comes along and they're like, what the fuck's going on here? Like, what show are we in now?

You know, because Dulce is so serious and they might get such a

kook. And then some people are watching it for the comedy and are like,

the crime's jarring for them. So I'd say, and then as the sort of show gets on and you're like

about halfway through, yeah, it really, it just gets more sort of tense. Yeah. Yeah.

End of episode three last night was tense. It really was. The other thing as well,

similarities to, I hate drawing too many comparisons to the white lotus, but

any show where there's a cock and balls in like the first five minutes of episode one.

It hooks you in. It hooks you in. It really does. It really tells you what the show's going to be,

I think, in the first five minutes of Deadlock. It's like this. I was like, oh, okay. How graphic,

full. Yeah. Oh, you can make out everything. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It's, I mean, I think,

I think what's so clever about the show is that it takes this genre that we all know well,

and it upends so much of it, so many of the stereotypes.

As, so you're kind of in it and taking the piss out of it. And then you're also, but you're also somehow along for a really thrilling, like murder mystery as well. So you're like, yeah, it's kind

of very clever, the layering of what the Cates have done. And I just, I think they're geniuses

and everyone should give them all the money to make whatever the fuck they want. Yeah,

they're very good. I've spent the drive up from Hamilton this morning working through the suspect

list. I'll try and I'm trying to be very tiptoe around ruining it for anyone. But the suspect

list now going, hmm, I wonder if it was, well, maybe it could be. So yeah, I'm hooked. Yeah.

I'm all in. And the end of it three is so good for that. Cause you're just like, what? Yeah,

exactly. Oh, okay. That changes the dynamic. Is there a weird feedback loop? Cause you got

double parked out as well. And it takes people a while obviously to get through shows. Yeah. So

is it kind of just like trickle through to you every day? Someone else like, oh,

I just finished your show. Amazing. Yeah. There was like an explosion over the weekend,

I think of people finishing deadlock. And yeah, there's like an obsessive. There's a, there's a,

yeah, I think I, there's been a really excessive explosion of like love for

the show and those characters. And there's like fanfic and there's like artwork every day and

like, yeah. Really? That's cool. It's really cool. Yeah, it's really cool. And you hear, I mean,

people talk, we're talking about it. People say, oh, shit, that sounds good. And a lot of people,

I think, I think a lot of people are sort of waiting for all the episodes to drop as well.

And so there's new people watching it every day. So my mentions are like going nuts. But there's a

real like, yeah, there's so much love for the show. It's so cool. And yeah, double parked again is

like at a different sort of level. But yeah, I think it's also the two shows, I guess, I mean,

there's not a lot in common with, with other double parked is a very different show, just me

playing quite different characters. But I think that, you know, people, for there to be that

kind of representation, I think is really important for people. So there's, there's definitely like,

they're both refreshing in that way. And that we're seeing like a different perspective,

different perspective on something, you know, on the, on the deadlock side, it's like that

the people that are usually the victims are not in, in deadlock, you know, it's, it's, they're

usually the victims in their shows and they're not. And it's like telling the story from that

perspective. And then double parked is like, you usually see a show about a heterosexual couple

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having a baby instead of a lesbian couple having two at once. And, you know, so I think it's refreshing storytelling on both sides. And I think that's what people are responding to. Just you, you dropped your mentions in there. What sort of numbers do you get every day on a mention? Because they'll blow up. I mean, I'm not, I'm not a, I'm not a real like on Twitter type person, but I've been like tapping into the deadlock hashtag just to see what people are saying. And yeah, it's pretty funny. There's some pretty like, there's some pretty funny fans out there. But yeah, I don't know. I'm, I'm, I sort of have this love hate relationship with, with social media. And I've kind of for years wanted to be the person that just gets to not be on it. And then I think when break rappers came out, my producer was like, you have to have something, you have to promote the movie somehow. And I was like, okay, well fine. I'll, I got rid of Facebook a really long time ago. Like maybe I've been Facebook free for my name is Madeline. And I visited Facebook. No, I've been Facebook. I, yeah, that was my the most toxic for me. And I just was like, I hated it so much. So I got rid of that. And then I've got like Instagram and Twitter, but I'm barely on them really. A couple of our reach outs to you have fallen on deaf ears to get some intel on previous guests. So you're clearly not. Yeah, I don't expect you to be as grateful if we do get, I mean, I think it's like, I don't know, I just get overwhelmed. And, but it's, you know, it's nice with like, you know, I think I go through phases, like it's nice when the show's out and people are sending really lovely messages. And you know, like I'm getting messages about double part where they're like, it's so nice to have a story like this where it's not like there's no trauma. These are just two normal people, like a gay story, but it's not like, doesn't have to be like a coming out thing or like a traumatic kind of triggering story, you know, it's just like funny and relatable. And, you know, it's nice to kind of have that like interaction on that level, but I'll probably escape from the, I'll probably escape from the digital realm as soon as these shows are. And this podcast, the profile is big at the moment, you're everywhere, the good and the bad and feel free to swerve this one if you want, but you recently had a high profile break up and there was like an Instagram post and a public acknowledgement. Like, is it hard feeling like you have to do that and you have to let people into your personal situation? Yeah, I mean, I've never been someone that's wanted to talk about my personal life that much, because I just, you know, and I think, I think back in the day, it used to be way worse. I think with with and I think the one positive thing I'll say about like Instagram and Twitter and things like that is it's put the power back into the hands of the people who story it is because, you know, like, you know, before the, when it was all like paparazzi stuff, but now, now, now like celebrities willingly give their lives up and everyone does. It's not like it's an even playing field, like that every person has their own Instagram, everyone's their own star of their own lives, if they want to be, you know, if you want to get involved on Instagram in that way. But yeah, I mean, I think, you know, for Pip and I, we accepted that, you know, even when we got married, there was like people trying to do flyovers of our wedding and we're like, really, you know, people chasing around tight, chasing tight around the farmers in Masterton, trying to see what he was buying. Did you put your guest registry in farmers? Is it? No, I mean, we had a journalist, like, just walk into the venue and be like, what's going on? And there's, we didn't even think about like security or anything. Like, we didn't think people would be interested at all. Who cares? But slow, slow news day. So yeah, I think Pip and



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I, you know, sort of accepted that there'd be an element of interest there. And because I had all this stuff coming out as well, you know, you just, you know, but people have been really cool, you know, and I think the fact that we could do it in that way where it's like, you know, she could make a statement and she, you know, she called me and was like, is this cool? And I like sent her what I was going to write. And I was like, is this cool? And like, we just like, you know, make sure that we're both happy with the message that we're putting out. And yeah, I mean, I think it's just a part of life that you have to kind of accept when you have a sort of public profile. But yeah, you know, and it really, it does feel different in that I don't think it's like spawned a bunch of articles. It doesn't feel great to be exposed in that way. You know, it doesn't feel, you know, it's a vulnerable time for everyone. And then when, and then like, you know, when it's in stuff or whatever, and you're like, you know, really, do we care? I don't, I don't really, do we give a shit? Come on. Yeah. But, you know, I worried, I wondered about that, like the choreography of it, knowing that you kind of, you know, you got to make your statement or whatever, but it's going to be news within minutes. You got, it's going to be headlines on, like, yeah, I think the fact that it's not like the old days where someone's just found out and then does a big article about it and you didn't have any opportunity to, you know, say it in your way. I think the fact that we both got to say what we wanted to say in our own way, that we, that we both knew what was coming out, like, I think that is the difference now, because it's from us, you know, and even though it's kind of with reluctance, because you shouldn't have to, you should be able to do it privately and not have to feel like you need to do that. But at the same time, it's kind of part of the job. You know, you have to accept that you do have some sort of profile. People are going to talk about it. You might as well be the one saying it in your own words, as opposed to someone else just speculating or whatever, you know? So sort of, in that way, it does, you know, it's just, it's not fun. It's not fun to feel that exposed and vulnerable, but it's kind of part of the job, I guess, and there's a curiosity there. And, you know, the great thing about that whole scenario is that the response and the comments and stuff for both of us have just been really loving and supportive. And so in a way, it's been really nice as well, you know. It's an interesting time lag. And I'm curious not to kind of stick around in that area, but around your film or your producer body of work, and then it's released a way down the track. And then you're already working by the sounds of it on a number of other things as well. Is that kind of a curious thing to, to kind of park it, wrap it, do it? It's so weird. And then dip back into it and be like, yeah, and I, you know, I drew this inspiration from the character when you're already working on something else. It's so weird. Like coming back to Deadlock especially, because that was a really long post schedule. So like they, we finished shooting in June last year. Wow. And then it was released in June this year. So it was a year. And you just get amnesia. Like I was, I was so tired on that shoot. You know, the first week of, of, of Deadlock, I think I was running through the Australian bush in my, in my reef sandals. In one of them or two of them? One of them. One of them. You guys. Yeah, I think one of them or two of them. But like, I was just, you know, so, and it was like similar to, I mean, that's definitely, there's a longer shoot I've ever been on. It's the longest time I've ever played one character. It was similar. It was a similar kind of exhaustion to say doing something like Super City, which was a shorter shoot, but more intense. Whereas

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Deadlock was a longer shoot, but just about as intense. I mean, Kate Box, who plays Delcy in the shows, incredible. Like the two of us were barely even not on. So like all the other characters will be like, oh, we're going to go, we're driving to the beach for two days. We're going to go like to this amazing beach in Tasmania. Me and, me and Boxie would be like, fuck you guys, man. Like it was an intense shoot. But then you, but then yeah, you, you go off, you do other shows. And then you come back and then you have to start talking about it. You're like, what, what do we do? I can't even remember. Like, what's the show again? But they sent us like, they sent us a bunch of episodes to watch before we had to do publicity. So we could kind of get back into the mindset of like, oh, yeah, that's right. We did that on that day. Do you watch it in its entirety after you've filmed it or after you've lived it? Yeah. So I, they sent us seven episodes because we had to go and do some sort of extra filming for, for Amazon. Amazon I have this thing called xray. It's like extra content on their website. So they sent us seven episodes. They didn't want to send us the effect because they were, it wasn't really in their special effects and stuff. And they wanted to see you and we want you to see it in all its glory. So we, so we got to watch it earlier in the year, but there were these like links that would expire and like, you know, you must, if you watch them now that it works, you know, it's like Mission Impossible, they will explode. So I got to see the show earlier this year and I was like, oh, shit, this is really good. And then, but I hadn't seen it eight until the weekend. Oh, wow. Yeah. So I saved myself to watch that. That's pretty cool. Cool. I'm going to start wrapping us up. Thank you so much. This has been so cool.

I just, my last question is what a week, and I know you're writing a script at the moment and you've got that, but like, what is a, what is a day in the life of Madeline Sami look like at the moment? Like, are you early, early riser? Are you sleeping? I'm a terrible sleeper. But yeah, I'm, I'm generally an early riser. I mean, it's a bit, I'm like, have just done a raft of like jobs and publicity. So I'm in like this kind of like, trying to get into a writing zone at the moment, which is tricky. But yeah, I mean, generally I get up and try to pump it. Yeah. I'm trying to do my, do my Chris Hemsworth workout. Yeah. Hi. Hi, Chris. Trying to get ripped like Chris. I do like a little half hour workout. And then I usually go for a walk. Then I break my fast, have some eggs, try and do some writing. I mean, that's generally, when I'm in this sort of zone, what I would do, come into a podcast. Do a long four, do a five hour podcast and tell my whole life story. Yeah, I mean, it's, it's, you know, often in a day, I'll get like a voice job or do something like that. But like at the moment, I'm going to try and get into like a bit of a structure for, for doing some writing, which is often not structured at all. So we'll see how we go. And I end up writing the whole thing a week before, before it gets, needs to be handed in, working through the night, through the day, drink a lot of coffee. Yeah, deadline pressure is good. Yeah. Awesome. Any last bits before we wrap? Do you have a favorite, what do you call it, discipline out of everything that you do, writing, acting, singing, just being general business?

Um, I don't think, I think the variety is what I like. Um, you know, I was really into songwriting last year. Um, so I wrote a bunch of songs and got my sister's hype to do another Sami sisters record. But that's just where my brain was like, wanting to put my creative energy. And then I you know, Deadlock was the first time I'd done acting in a long time. And I hadn't sort of unofficially retired, but I'd done a lot of like writing and directing. And I've kind of felt

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like I like that a lot more. And then getting to play a character Eddie and Deadlock was such a joy and kind of brought me back to this old Mads who love doing that. And then last year, I was just doing acting to the point where my agents, my acting agents were literally like, Mads, what's with all this acting? Which is a hilarious question for your acting agents to be saying because they, they'd known that I kind of moved on to like directing and, but you know, like this year, I've been doing a lot more, I mean, I did acting and directing for double part, but like, then I went over to Australia and shot a couple of episodes of gold diggers. And then I've got a big job starting towards the end of the year, which is directing like four episodes of TV. So I think for me, it's the variety that I really like. And I think each of those things teaches me about the other thing. So like doing, even doing a voice job, you know, like I did, you know, when there's a period of my life where I wasn't getting a lot of acting work, but I was doing a lot of voice work. And I was like, you know, it wasn't necessarily like feeding my soul. But I learned a lot about like mic technique. And, you know, when I go and do ADR for a TV show, now I've got this like experience from doing all that voice work for more of those years. Or like even like singing with my sisters, like, you know, you learn like you take, I feel like I find like I take lessons from all of these jobs, even like the Kinder Surprise Egg, you know, I've probably taken some life lesson from that Kinder Surprise Egg that one time in Auckland too. But yeah, I think, I think variety is good. And I think in New Zealand, like, you know, it's a small place, we, you have to kind of vary up what you're doing. You guys will have experienced that in life as well. It's like, you've got to be able to be a jack of all trades here, because it's not always like there's one, there's a bunch of work in one way, you know, so yeah. My last, my last point is just a little tip of the cap to your love of in living colour. Friday nights was like appointment viewing for me growing up. Yes. A couple years younger than you, but I was like, have to stay up, have to watch the Jim Carrey impersonations. Yes. The guy that was in the background, it was such good TV. Yeah, it was a double, I'd gone to St. McCunn's house. There's a double, double feature. It was absolutely fabulous. And then I think a living colour was afterwards. And I was like, sometimes when people ask about like my sense of humour, where does it come from? I'm like, raw, delirious, abfab and, and living colour. Yeah. But yeah. Three out of four, I've got you there. But it's like, yeah, that was such a good, like, British, and, you know, I feel like if I looked at my taste and like, yeah, like British comedy and American comedy, it's like a mixture of those things. And now New Zealand, that's our classic New Zealand. But yeah, and living colour was great. I've got, I found it in living colour T-shirt on eBay, which is one of my prized positions. Nice. And whenever I wear it, people like, fans come out of the world. It was such a good sketch show. It was amazing. And it holds up. Well, I mean, there's probably some problematic shit in there, but there always will be. But like, it's still, there's still some such funny things. And Jim Carrey was just like incredible in that show as well. And J-Lo was a backup dancer. There's a fly girl, fly girl. J-Lo was a fly girl, just like dancing in the background. J-Lo was like the biggest star in the world now. So there's a lot of like amazing people that came out of that show. And also, you know, like Abfab for me was like, women behaving badly. It was one of the first shows where women just got to be a bit shit, you know? And like, it was revolutionary in that way to just watch, you know, even though I can't quite relate to these, I shouldn't be able to relate to these like, drunk rich women, like, but they were taking the piss out of that. And then they were also just kind of awful and funny

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at the same time. And I don't know, it was pretty cool. Nice. Hey, this has been such a cool let. Thank you so much for coming in and giving us your time. It's been so fun, entertaining and inspiring, but it's no surprise you are where you are after hearing your story. Like, thank you so much for all the detail you've given us. Listeners are going to love it, but I'll throw to the outro guy over here.

Yeah, like a really relatable for me personally. And I think, and I reflect now as I get older, like brown faces that you've seen growing up. It's really important. And you mentioned variety like the variety of work that you've done in terms of like the stage stuff, the TV stuff, the big screen, the directing, like it's incredible outputs. And it is like Steven said, it's really inspiring to spend time with someone and kind of hear the hustle and the grind behind the scenes. But also I just want to acknowledge like the intimate side of your story that you shared reflections on the loss of your father and the breakdown of your relationship and how you've managed and handled those. I think those are two really important lessons to come out of this episode

as well as an encouragement for people to just check out everything that you've done over the years and everything that you'll do in the future as well, because I'm sure it's going to be amazing. So thank you very much. Thanks for having me. Cheers, Madeleine.

If you've made it to the end of this episode, hopefully that means you've enjoyed it and maybe are a fan of the show and maybe are interested in buying some new between two beers merch. If you go to [theaccnz.com](http://theaccnz.com), you will see a between two beers hoodie and three different styles of caps which are available to purchase. Check them out. This episode was brought to you by export. The new

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