

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

I already had a cold listen my hands are freezing I'm I'm I'm freezing and I'm wearing two shirts and and I put slacks on today so I don't know what's going on I just I feel like I'm out of sorts but I am never never too out of sorts to bring you guys an all-new smart list. Let's go.

Smart.

Last.

Smart.

Last.

Smart.

Last.

Well, hang on. Hang on. Hang on. Hang on. Hang on. Hang on.

Take one second.

Oh, what's he doing?

God.

He's going potty, potty, he's going potty, potty.

He's taking a potty and he's taking a potty.

Listener, we could have started on time,
but Will has got a child's bladder.

And what, no, he actually just came back in
with two bottles of water.

I guess he's a little dehydrated.

No, I took it.

I grabbed one too.

So Will, you know, I got a little bit of grief,
listener for showing up 60 seconds late on our last session.
You were three minutes late.

Oh, sorry.

Check that.

What's, what's, what's the, what's the math on that?

That's three minutes.

That's a hundred and, so it's three, 60, 60, so 180 seconds.
180 seconds late.

So I showed up early today and I said,
I said, you know what, the problem
about showing up early is that you,
you risk seeing who the mystery guest is.

That's right.

And then what happened?

You saw the guest.

And our mystery guest, this guest,
accidentally bumped their camera cover.

And revealed himself.

And then I saw the guest was, and I'm thrilled.

I don't know.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

But no, I know, cause you were late.
You see, that's the advantage of being late.
I think, I think I was right on time.
Right on time.
Will, are you with us?
Yeah, I'm with you.
I'm just bummed that you saw who it is.
And because, the whole surprise thing,
it was just to cut down on our homework.
It's not a real big part of the show.
I think, I love it.
And people love it, I think.
But the audience is not, it's not a surprise to the audience.
The audience knows who the mystery guest is.
No, because they know what's coming.
But I don't know who it is.
No, I'm happy that we don't have to see your acting,
pretending that you don't know who it is.
Sean, cause you don't want to see Sean's acting.
No, no, no, no.
Nobody does.
You know what I mean?
I don't, I'm glad that we don't have to watch you
like go like, oh my God, who is it?
That's, and that's why I said, I know who the guest is.
So I don't have to be the guest. Okay, so while I'm excited,
so do we start or is there other topics to discuss?
No, let's hear some of your pre-show pattern.
Do you always think I have pre-show pattern?
Listen, Regis, you come with a couple of stories.
You got anything? I can.
I can come up with something.
What happened during our break?
We just recorded one listener and now I want to break.
Well, I can talk about this.
Oh, what happened to our break?
I booked a little thing.
A job?
Yeah, no, no, no.
Whatever, I booked a two little night stay in this place.
Oh, on Long Island.
For Valentine's Day?
No, much later than that.
Well, are we gonna do anything for Scotty

for Valentine's Day?
We give each other a high five.
I mean, nothing, we don't do anything.
Really?
We don't do anything on our anniversary either.
Do you guys do stuff on your anniversary?
When is your anniversary?
We talked about this.
Quick, when's your anniversary?
Mine?
Yeah.
11-11.
Is it really?
Yeah.
Oh my God, does Jenna and Amanda know that?
I know, it's interesting.
We're doing next to nothing for Valentine's Day.
Sometimes we do gifts for anniversary.
I just feel like the whole gift thing,
and it ends up becoming a bit of a burden, right?
Because you're with the person all year,
and well, but you get,
I get things that I want from her during the year,
and she gets things from me.
Exactly.
Like you don't need anything.
To like save up, no, you're not getting shit
until there's an occasion is, I think, weird.
Right, and also, you're not gonna let corporate America
dictate when you tell your wife and show her
that you love her with their fucking,
you know, you're not gonna let a gift card company.
If I thought like Will Ornette, that's what I would be.
I'd be, it'd all be about not letting the man win.
Yeah, you're gonna rise up and fight against him.
Screw the man.
Yeah, screw the man.
Good for you.
And it has nothing to do with the fact
that you're just too fucking lazy to do anything
or think about anybody else other than yourself.
Yeah, this is a splash of that.
I mean, if Valentine's Day was about golf,
you'd go out of your fucking ways.

God, celebrate.

Why would it have to be one day a year?

Yeah.

You would too.

Yeah.

I would love for you to just put on there now
just so Amanda sees it and you know,
planet that on February 14th,
just put golf all day that you're going on a golf trip
back to Pebble or something.

Overnight golf trip.

She'll murder you.

Just wait for her.

I actually do have a little bit of golf scheduled
for during the day.

When the girls are in school.

On Valentine, 1114.

And Amanda's busy doing something.

Yeah, Amanda, yeah, there is 93230.

Is that the thing that we're going to do?

No, I'm gonna invite you to this thing, 93230.

But Amanda's busy with her work she loves
and the girls are in school.

And then it's, listen,

it's gonna be in the morning and at night, huh?

How you doing?

Oh no, walk us through that.

That's when the love happens in this house.

And by the way, does it start with that use?

Does it start with how you doing?

It does.

Well done.

Morning and then how you doing?

Why do your eyes get so heavy?

Ah, you gotta keep it romantic.

Eyes wide is not,

there's nothing romantic about eyes wide.

Eyes open, you guys do what eyes open.

That's that shock.

That's what I used to do.

Do you guys still do what eyes open, Jason?

Yeah, lots of eye contact, yeah.

The face too.

Eyes staring at each other.

No blinking.

No blinking.

Wait, I used to go out to a bar with my eyes wide open with a drink in my hand.

Like just looking for anybody.

What was up the amphetamines?

That was mostly amphetamines, right?

That kept the eyes real bright.

Yeah, and then my how you doing would be much later.

After, you normally, it's okay to say how you doing after the deed, right?

Yeah, that's right.

I'm Sean, nice to meet you.

After you can, as you're zipping, you can say, hey, by the way, I'm Sean.

Do you mind small bills and how you doing, by the way?

Do you mind small bills?

Will, what would you do during the break, guy, for the last half hour?

I went upstairs, I was playing with the little kids.

We were just goofing around.

What does that entail?

What do you get down on the floor?

You make fun of faces.

Yeah, get down on the floor, do a little bit of-

And what do you do with the kids?

Legos.

I mean, we did do a little bit of Lego.

Really?

And then, yeah, we did a little bit of Lego and then just with, you know, Denny and-

What's his name?

Quick, the other one.

No, well, I was playing with Nash too.

Denny and Nash were both there, but I was with, I was kind of grabbing Archie or Abel.

I know, they're at school, man.

Yeah, those are the other two kids.

Yeah, I know all the kids.

I spend more time with my kids in the last week.

Real quick, Will, what's your brother's name?

Garrison.

Nope.

My brother, Chuck, my sweet brother, Chuck, whom I adore.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

Both sisters, quick.

Tannis and Shanley.

All right.

So my sisters and I grew up, and Chuck was much younger, or he is much younger, he's almost 10 years, my junior.

So my sisters and I grew up, we were closer in age.

My older sisters had two older sisters, Tannin and Shan.

What's up?

They're great with Eddie in Toronto, all of whom you guys know.

Sure, yeah.

And then Chuck came along, and he was a surprise, as my parents call him.

Uh-huh, oops, baby.

Yeah, he was a real pleasant surprise.

Sure.

And we weren't allowed to call him Chuck or Charlie, so we had to call him Charles.

Just oops.

True story.

Who said that, though?

My mom.

My mom.

And so then, and then it became Charles-y, which is even worse.

Like, oh, that is-

She still honored her decision about what the name was.

Well, yeah, we had to honor, oh, you have to,

you've met my mom, you've got to honor my mom,

because if you go against Alex-

Now, well, I didn't name him Chuck.

She will fucking take you down into the knees.

Still to this day?

So it's Charles.

She corrects, she'll correct your grammar, or your spell, whatever.

I love that you use strangers.

She'll wake you up in the middle of the night

to tell you, uh, you're sleeping wrong.

Are you sleeping wrong?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Well, actually, the doctors say that on your right side, because it's further away from your heart,

like, hey, man, I was asleep for fuck's sake.
Well, actually, technically, you weren't asleep.
Does Chuck prefer Chuck versus Charles?
I think that he doesn't really care, as it turns out.
And so we still call him Chuck,
and he has a lot of friends who call him Charles.
How about Chaz?
Ever Chaz?
Never any Chaz.
You know who really doesn't care?
You know who really doesn't care?
The guest.
You know what, Sean?
I'm sorry, dude, are you fucking late, dude?
First of all, it's my guest,
and I'll tell you if my guest cares.
And I know that she does care,
because she's interested in people.
Oh, it's a female book.
See how I'm starting to play like I don't know.
You know, I know, stop.
Eyebrows high, that you start with eyebrows high.
It's a female?
What?
But you know what, Jason likes,
Jason does have something come with this person,
in that they were both actors from a young age.
They've both been doing it for a long time.
Is this Drew Barrymore?
And then they know, well, and she has had,
Drew would be a great guest.
Fuck it, I didn't think about it.
I'm working on it.
I'm working on it.
I know, I wish that,
and I hope this guest doesn't,
I hope my guest doesn't hear that.
She'll love it.
She has been in so many things.
She's one, again, in one of those people,
if you start telling all the things she's in,
you're gonna know who she is.
To me, she is one of the funniest people I know.
Full stop.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

Full stop.

Every time I spend a moment with this person,
even a text from this person,
even if I get a switch of an text from this person,
I get a laugh.

Even if I think about this person and the abstract,
if I think about two, six people's removed from this person,
I'm laughing.

Okay?

I had the good fortune of making,
I guess what you'd call technically a film together
many years ago,
but we spent a lot of time overseas.
We were in Wales together and we had a lot of laughs.
And if it wasn't for each other,
we probably both would have gotten completely mad.
And she's done so many amazing things,
starting with acclaimed roles,
like Slums and Beverly Hills,
to Oranges the New Black,
to Russians all.

It is.

This is Natasha Cleo.

Hi, wow!

There you go.

Now you look at her.

Look at her.

Now you do it.

Look at her go.

There she is.

Oh, she's holding a microphone.

She's got a hand mic too.

She's got a microphone.

I asked him to put it somewhere,
but I said I'm not a professional on this.

No one's ever done the hand mic.

This is so interesting.

Yeah, this is awesome.

Now, hey, Will, did she spend any time in the room?

It's me, Drew Barrymore.

You're no Drew Barrymore,
you know what you'll do.

Well, I love Drew Barrymore.

Will, did she spend any time in the Rolls Royce in Wales?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

It was in Bentley.
No, she never got in the Bentley.
We did the Bentley in London.
In London, yeah.
That's right, she's got a good memory.
See?
Oh, we did do the Bentley in London.
Did you ride him back, Natasha?
Make him make your driver.
He was your driver?
Yeah, he was my chauffeur for the entire.
I was your chauffeur.
It's true, you can't quite call that a movie, can you?
No, it was tough.
What was it?
What was it called?
You guys haven't seen it.
It's called Show Dogs.
Oh, you guys haven't seen Show Dogs
and Natasha Leon, right?
No, this sounds hand-drawn.
You know what though?
Very nice people involved.
Very nice people.
Very nice people.
A lot of smelly dogs.
A lot of dogs.
It was live action.
Live action, oh yeah.
Okay.
Was it?
Thank you.
Do people call you Tasha, Tashi, Tushy?
Sure, sure.
Okay.
Tushy, Tushy.
Call me Tushy.
Tushy, Tushy.
Hey, Tush.
That makes sense.
Wait, Natasha Leon, honest to God,
one of the people who makes, I said it in the thing.
And I'll say it again.
God damn it, I've had some of my biggest

goddamn laughs have been in your presence
and the stuff that you says to me.
You say to me.
First of all, being with her over there,
being with and having this catering truck,
nice guys, super nice guys,
but they wouldn't make these sandwiches that were like.
Flat white.
We were hot for flat whites.
They were so hot.
Do you want a flat?
Would you like a flat white?
I'm like, I don't give a shit.
I just want a coffee.
What's a flat white?
It's a coffee, right?
And then, but what was the press sandwich they call it?
What would they call it?
Do you remember?
God, I was just trying to think of that.
Toasty, a toasty, a full way in the toasty.
Oh, a toasty for Tushy.
A toasty for Tushy.
Have you seen this movie?
A toasty is a place, a Neil Simon play.
Toasty for Tushy.
Were you looking to put on weight for the part, Will?
No, but I did, no, but I did.
Flat white sounds like full fat milk and lots of it.
No, it's a grilled cheese sandwich.
Well, that's the toasty part.
That's the toasty.
And we were like, at a certain point,
and Tush is like, stop making a big deal.
This is what you guys are offering to me.
Like, this is like some kind of found fucking delicacy.
Nice people.
It's a coffee with milk and a grilled cheese
that's been run over by a hot car.
You want to have like nine of them a day, though.
Yeah, you do want to have nine of them a day.
I would.
So anyway, so we were there, we had a lot of laughs.
God, we had a lot of laughs.

Yeah, but it was dark.
It was dark.
We had a lot of laughs.
Here we are in 2023.
It was dark.
Have you guys worked together or hung out since then?
No.
Why? Why are you guys fighting?
What happened?
We text.
We text.
We text every once in a while.
We text and...
Do you find Will a good texture, Natasha?
Great work.
I do, I think.
I think Will's a pretty solid citizen.
Thank you.
I'm gonna take a hand.
As far as guys go,
because guys aren't great textors, right?
I mean, like, do we get away with not being super responsive?
He is not bad, you know?
The funny person, but also a deep human being, it turns out.
Oh, so he'll send you a long one.
Is that what you're saying?
Text?
It's implied.
It's implied.
We have a language.
We have a language between us.
And you know what it is?
It's between the texts, you know?
It's the subtext.
It's the subtext.
Does he have good emoji work?
Because that's important.
Or good exclamation point work.
I honestly, I don't remember.
I think what's fun though,
I think you programmed yourself as little big willy
or something, let me look.
So I can never find you.
It occurs to me periodically to text you

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

and I look up your name and I can't find it.
So I give up.
You let him input his number into your phone?
Yeah.
Yeah, I love that move.
That's when you don't know the person's name.
Hey, put your phone in my,
put your number in my phone.
You hand me the phone.
I'll text you now so that it comes.
And then you know what?
We'd already been shooting for a month.
I was like, this guy's great.
He's so funny.
We both have flat whites and toasties.
Put your number in here, honey.
I said.
Wait, Natasha.
I'm texting you right now so that it comes up.
So Natasha, you have like one of the coolest voices
to ever walk the earth.
I'm assuming you're from New York or a part of New York.
Yeah, born here in the city.
And I'm worried about the voice.
So I'm concerned that it's a job topic.
Increasingly, I'm, I mean, that doesn't end well, right?
That is.
No, I think it's, it's, it's, it's identifiable.
It's like one of the greatest things in the world.
Do you do like voices for cartoons and animated films
and stuff like that?
You have done?
I do a measure, but Will's making much more.
Yeah, he's killing it.
Yeah, let's do it.
But we've got the new show now, Poker Face.
Yeah.
Yeah.
I'm excited for when we're all like 70.
And we're like, remember that.
I think we're there.
I think we're there.
We're vaguely trying to name projects from the past.
We've maybe or maybe not done.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

Yes, there's a new program, Poker Face, please.

You tell us.

A new program.

No, you tell us about the program
that the folks at home can be watching
on the television sets.

Natasha, go ahead.

You got it.

You got it tuned in.

If you're going to do it.

You got it tuned in.

It's called Poker Face.

It's streaming on the cock, right?

Cock stream.

That's what they call it.

The cock.

Is it on the cock?

We gave it the name that, no, who was it
of our guest gave it the name?

The cock.

But said, it's gotta be, you gotta call it the cock,
obviously.

They told me I'm in the flock now.

You're in the cock flock.

You're in the cock flock.

I'm in the cock flock.

You're in the cock flock.

You're streaming.

You're streaming.

You got to the cock flock.

I'm streaming.

You got to the cock flock.

If you want to stream in the cock flock,
you got to download the cock.

Get in the cock flock stream.

Laptop show.

And it's, uh, Ryan Johnson created it.

I love Ryan Johnson.

It passed a friend of the show.

Yes.

Very talented man.

Yeah.

What a nice person.

It's called poker face.

It just came out today.
Maybe in the middle of the night, I guess they drop shows.
And, uh...
It doesn't, to me, that seems weird.
Let's start dropping shows at midnight.
You know what I heard it is?
Yeah, go ahead.
Your name is Will.
Yes.
I'm saying you're right.
I'm currently going by Will, yeah.
So, Will, they, apparently they do it
because if there's a problem, a technical problem,
they can fix it in the middle of the night.
Isn't that something?
Doesn't that tell you so much about
your friends at Netflix and so on?
All right.
It seems a little unfinished.
Yeah, first of all, let me just say this.
Fucking...
Cross your T's and dot your fucking eyes
before you release a show, okay, streamers?
Right?
Okay, this is just word to the streamers.
But are you not at the age
where you suddenly have that revelation
that everybody is just another person
and they're just doing their best?
Like, I remember being a youth and I would think,
surely adults have got this handled.
And once you sort of turn something over or Jason,
you know this from Ozark or I know
from running Russian doll, you know,
it's like you hand it over from the edit
and you think, okay, that's it.
My part is over.
Here are the deliverables and Godspeed.
And then you find out about all these additional details
while you're in the edit and you're like, how the hell?
And that's when you realize that everybody
is a human being and another bozo on the bus.
Yeah, it's amazing that anything comes out semi-round.
Another bozo on the bus is the next one.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

My next show.

All right.

Just the planet is just a fucking huge bus full of bozos.

Yeah, it is.

And you're being self-effacing there too, I'm sure.

And none of us, everybody's an idiot, including us.

And it takes the best parts of all of us

and none of the bad parts to make something

kind of semi-round, right?

And with all the people it takes,

all the people that are involved in a film or a show

or anything like that, it's amazing

that not one of those people screws it up

beyond recognition.

It's like, it's a miracle when stuff comes out

that's halfway decent.

Whereas if you're a painter, it just takes one person,

one brush, boom, you get what you get.

But this stuff is really tons of people on the team, right?

So many people and there's so many aspects and layers

and it is crazy that like when you see old photos

of Thelma Shoemaker, yeah, the Scorsese editor.

And they're kind of sitting there

and the pictures are so iconic.

And she's over there and they're cutting the film

and it's like, we did it.

You know what I mean?

That's what the movie is now.

And making things in this era as a director or something

is bananas because even things like,

I remember screeners of Russian Novel this season

went out without subtitles.

And I was like, oh, these people must think I'm really

a maniac, like I'm just making a full European art film.

Just things like that will happen.

Yeah, things can go bad at a lot of different stages.

And even if things go great and they're well executed,

just the taste might be a little bit different

than everything you guys have been doing

in development and in production.

In other words, if the marketing dresses it up

in an outfit that is not reflective

of what you're gonna see when you actually watch the thing,

now you've told people basically to pardon the metaphor,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

you've gotten them all excited about a great Chinese food dinner, but you then end up serving them the greatest Italian food you've ever made, but they give it a false negative because it doesn't taste anything like Chinese food.

You know that fucking metaphor, or I forgot, you already asked for pardon for that.

Pardon, yeah.

Sorry, because I was gonna attack that metaphor, luckily.

It was a little clunky, but I think the message is sent.

And thus, and so by the cloak of darkness in the middle of the night, like little elves, and they put it, they drop these things on.

It's amazing that it all comes out decent, yeah.

We'll be right back.

SmartLess is brought to you in part by Viori Clothing, a new perspective on performance apparel.

This product, Viori, is just incredibly versatile.

It can be used for just about any activity that you can think of like,

I'm gonna go off the top of my head,

I'm gonna say running, or training, or swimming,

or yoga, or hiking, or also great for lounging, or weekend errands, okay?

Flossing, obviously brushing,

marching, stomping, drifting,

and just loitering, great for loitering.

Everything is designed to work out in,

but it doesn't look or feel like it,

so it's just so freaking comfortable

that you're gonna wanna wear it all the time.

It is, honestly, it's more comfortable

than whatever you're wearing right now, I can say that.

And I have come to love all my Viori stuff so much

that I started with the core short, sure,

because it's a classic, and then I started to branch out,

and I got into the jackets and the longer pants,

and they got stretch, and they're nice,

and they're just relaxed, and I could wear them,

I'd be working out, and then all of a sudden,

I jump in the car and I go take care of little biz, you know?

I'm taking care of biz all over Tizzy, that's town.

Anyway, the point is, I just love them,

and they're so unbelievably comfortable,

and they look really stylish,
and you don't look like you're going to attract me.
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Hey, smartlist listener, you like to listen to us
even though you understand that we are not smart,
it's in the name, talented, handsome, sure.
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side by side and make smart financial decisions.
Nerd Wallet has a whole team of nerds who make you,
well, they help you make smart decisions
on your next credit card, high yield savings account,
and more, and these aren't people who just say they're smart,
they're like actually smart, they've got CFPs, MBAs,
years of experience, and they're using their expertise
to offer side by side comparisons and objective ratings
on top financial products for you.
Are you spending more on gas or groceries lately?
Of course you are, the world is terrible.
Turn that negative into a positive
and find a cashback card that rewards you
for what you spend the most on.
Like for Sean, it's tuna, sprinkled with good and plenties.
Point is, they're gonna help him find that.
So listener, it's time to stop being smartlist
and time to get smart with the nerds at Nerd Wallet.
Compare and find top cashback credit cards,
savings accounts, and more at nerdwallet.com.
Nerd Wallet, the smartest decision
for all your financial decisions.
Smartlist has brought you in part by Zippa Kruder.
Award season is coming up and some of the best films
from the last year, they gotta put together a campaign

to try to win all these awards.
And it takes a big team of people to do that,
each with their own specific skill
to make these films really successful
and have a chance at grabbing those coveted awards.
And so you need to have the best people
for those roles on that team.
It's like if you're hiring for your business,
you want the most talented people on your team
to make your business successful,
which is why you should use Zippa Kruder to find them.
And right now, you can try it for free
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that speak to job flexibility,
like urgent or training provided or remote and more.
If there was an award for easiest hiring,
it would go to, do-do-do envelope, please, Zippa Kruder.
Four out of five employers who post on Zippa Kruder
get a quality candidate within the first day.
See for yourself.
Go to this exclusive web address
to try Zippa Kruder for free,
zipperkruder.com slash smartlist.
Again, that's Zippa Kruder.com slash S-M-A-R-T-L-E-S-S.
Zippa Kruder, the smartest way to hire.
And now, back to the show.
You've had, you've been in, listen, let's be honest,
you've been in show business since day one.
Out the womb.
Out the womb, you've been in show business,
you've been doing this thing.
You've been out there, you've been doing it,
and you've done it all.
You've been a star, you've been a thing,
and now you're out there, you've been doing it.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

You've been a star, you've been a thing,
and now you're a filmmaker, excuse me very much.
Storyteller will.

Storyteller.

Storyteller, I don't know if you know about
our version to the term storyteller,
because now everybody's a storyteller.

Everybody just wants to tell stories.

I'm featuring Gideon from all that jazz,
coming out the womb with jazz hands, you know?

It's a disgusting image.

Honestly.

Only Sean likes it.

Showtime.

You can go park and you can get a fabulous teamster
driving you over from parking to base camp,
and they're like, well, you know, as a storyteller,
I'm like, you're telling a story too?

Everybody's telling a story here today, huh?

Everybody's got a story.

Everybody's got a story.

But you started, you've done so many different things,
and so many different eras of your life.

Forget eras of the world, eras of your life.

You must look back and every,
is every part of your life, and Jason, you too,
is marked by what you were working on,
what you were doing professionally.

When it's so ever-present, you know,
guys like Sean and I grew up,
and we didn't grow up making movies,
and we didn't start doing acting and getting paid for it
until we were in our 20s and 30s.

You guys were doing, when you were kids,
it must be this thing that is constantly,
like it's been ever-present in your life.

What is that experience like, Natasha?

I know Jason's answer.

I mean, I will say that there was a time

I experienced it almost like,
are you familiar with this Fellini short film,
Spirits of the, Spirits,

so it's part of a trilogy called Spirits of the Dead.

They are not familiar.

Which is, but you are.
Which is, anyway, they're adaptations of Edgar Allen,
Poe short stories, and one is Roger Vadim,
and one is Louis Malin,
and then there's the Fellini one.
It's called Toby Dammit with a turnstamp,
and it's very, it's very dark.
It's almost like Satanic,
and it's like a warped circus,
and it's sort of that version of the showbiz experience
that's very, you know, wrapped in darkness,
and, you know, it's, and it's drunk,
and it's high, and it's kind of that.
And so I definitely would say that I'd had that window,
and then now all of a sudden, you know,
in my 40s, it somehow really flipped
over the past kind of decade,
where there's a sort of a beauty
to all of that memory and attachment,
because now all of a sudden, the players are becoming so recycled
of, you know, friends of like 25 years or something.
You know, whether that's Amaya,
or your Amy, and a rationale,
or like something that leads me to, with Ryan,
that was so much of why I was so game for this show,
is I could tell, sort of, spot him from a distance
of, oh, you're going to be one of these players.
Like, as soon as we worked together, well, I was like,
oh, of course we're going to end up working together again.
He's going to be so funny when he's old.
Like, I don't even really think of it as show dogs,
this movie we made that I guess involved talking dogs.
I think of it as you and I walking around Wales
being like, what's happening? What are we doing?
Ordering more flat whites, like,
doubled over, laughing hysterically,
and that whenever I see you, I think of us laughing.
I don't really think of us in a, essentially,
failed talking dog picture.
You know what I mean?
So, somewhere along the way,
it went from, like, a head trip about the thing
to the beauty of the thing of, like, a life in the arts.
Right. It all comes back around.

I think it's beautifully said.
Yeah, I love that.
Jay, what's your experience like in that?
I joked earlier on that I know your answer.
I don't know your answer.
I mean, similarly, you've,
it's been such an ever-present thing in your life.
Yeah, I mean, there's good and bad of that.
I'm sure Natasha, you'd agree.
It's like there's something great about having started so young,
but then there's also like, well,
maybe we should have tried to do something else too,
or, you know, being,
well, it's not my interview,
but I feel very, very lucky, as I'm sure you do,
Natasha, that we're both still working in this business.
Longevity is a real metal.
Or rather, I should say, I'm very,
I'm proud of that, that I'm still making a living at it.
Is that how you came to being like,
oh, shit, now I gotta start writing and directing.
For me, I look back and I realize that,
so I think at five years old,
I'm on Peewee's Playhouse or whatever,
and I know he's not very trendy right now,
but at the time, you know, when I was 15
and I was in this Woody Allen movie,
it was like such a big deal and it felt like, ah,
this is the cherry on top of a decade of acting,
something my parents put me into.
And then at 16, I was skipped by Tish
to be a film and philosophy double major.
I was like, oh, well, I'll read all these philosophy books
and then I'll write and direct these sort of Bergman,
but funny movies, because I'll be a filmmaker now.
And then it sort of, you know,
took 20 years to kind of get back there,
and it ended up being, I guess, all the things.
Was that similar to your version of how you got here?
Yeah, you sort of, you have career,
like I wanted to be the next Robert De Niro,
you know, when I was like 12.
And it was like, well, yeah,
but I'm getting kicked out of class

for being a class clown, so maybe go...
When you got kicked out of class,
did they just pull the bus over
and let you off at Wilshire and Santa Monica?
Because he was going to school
and a massage bus toward Los Angeles.
Kids massaging each other.
Not untrue.
But yeah, you know, you're like, well,
you know, maybe I'll go for the goal later.
Meanwhile, I need to kind of make a living.
And aren't we both so, so fortunate
that we've stayed afloat long enough
to circle back to our original sort of dreams
of doing things that are different
than what we've kind of become known for.
Right, but the thing is,
but so interesting about both of you guys is,
and I'm not even joking,
I'm learning stuff now
that you guys probably learned, you know,
20 years before me having started so young.
So you guys did have, what's that?
I don't believe that.
Sorry, I don't believe that you're learning stuff now.
I feel like I am.
No, just general, sorry.
Just general.
Single sentence.
Yeah, sorry, I just had to cut you off there.
I know you very well,
and it doesn't seem like you're learning anything.
Probably true.
But, but, but it would, it's not surprising.
Sean, and actually I think that you're, you're right.
I have the same thing.
I learned stuff way later,
the stuff that just that they know
and because they've grown up.
It's in your bodies already.
And worse, I'm still not, no joke.
I'm still like learning stuff.
That's in your bones.
Well, you're both, and they're both,

but they're both smart.

I'm not surprised.

You're both smart.

You're both super talented.

And so it's no wonder that you've kind of maintained that.

And I think people say, well, you know,

this guy had a bad, he had a, he was young

and he was a performer and then he didn't really work out.

And, you know, truth be told,

they might have not been that smarter of that talent.

And I mean, let's be honest, you know.

You can, you can get away with quite a bit of non-smarts

and non-talent when you're, you know,

eight, nine, 10, 12, 13 years old.

Most kids are dumb.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And most kids are really dumb.

And I want that.

I like that.

So now we've transitioned to attacking children.

The thing about kids is they're fucking stupid.

And then they come out here and they try to do grown-up stuff
with their kid shed and I'm all done with it.

They're crapping in their pants, you know.

I used to have this...

Get a license, you dumb fuck.

I used to have this acting teacher,

I used to have this acting teacher in New York.

This guy, George Aloros, he was a great guy.

And he'd go, when you're working with a kid,

what fucking experience is a kid going to draw on?

They don't fucking know anything.

But then, but I'm fascinated by this

because you'll see kids in movies and stuff

who have this unbelievable range of ability

to express emotion.

You're like, how do you know that?

Isn't that bizarre?

They're psychos.

Yeah.

Total psychos.

Psychos, exactly.

I remember when I auditioned for a little house in a prairie,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

I had to cry for Michael Landon.
And I remember just...
We all did.
You train your brain to think about the most horrific thing
in the world, to bring up the tears.
How old were you?
Then you were 11.
And it's just like, it's a muscle that is very unhealthy.
Still to this day, if I got a crying camera,
I will think of the most horrific thing I can,
which currently is something terrible happening
to my children, knock on wood.
So I look at pictures on my iPhone,
right before they start rolling of my sweet children,
and I imagine horrific things happening to them.
I start getting weepy and I say, okay, let's go.
It's like, what are we doing?
We need new jobs.
We need new jobs.
That's terrible.
This is a little fuck up.
Natasha, you don't do anything like that.
Do you?
I mean, you don't think about Jason's horrible things
having to do with the kids.
Weirdly, I do.
Which, if she needs to laugh.
That's great.
What a similar process.
Yeah, I'm like, oh my God, it would be so horrible
something to happen to these beautiful children.
I brought this up before.
I think, Jason, you used to, if people are breaking up on,
if people are, you know, corpseing,
like going up and laughing on set,
that you'll think about awful things happening to them.
Close.
I actually, this is a true story.
Will Speckle me that?
When you guys were doing an office Christmas party,
he said that, and everybody was cracking up
doing this one scene.
You go, how are you not cracking up?
You said, I just imagine all of them dying.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

Yeah.

It's not, it's actually worse than that.

If pinching my leg under camera, under frame doesn't work,

I will actually just think they,

these other actors that are being very, very funny,

are ruining the movie.

That they're being terrible actors

and they're destroying this project.

I love that that's worse than something that they're dying.

Exactly.

I get into this game.

Jason, nothing worse than ruining the project.

And killing comedy.

Disdain wipes the humor out of my world.

So Natasha, where was, all right.

So now you had all these great things.

You've done all these things.

As you mentioned, you did, you know,

which at a time again,

not very popular for a lot of reasons,

but the Woody Allen picture,

that was always like the,

the kind of the hallmark of somebody who has accomplished a lot when you get asked to be part of one of those ensembles.

You go, this is somebody who's important.

It was kind of like a stamp, right?

And then you get cast in those, at that moment,

you are an important.

So you, you had that,

you were doing a lot of very cool stuff.

And, and then you've gone on to do lots of,

you started working in television.

In fact, you were one of the first streaming shows around,

was Orange is the New Black.

And you became, you're a regular on that for seven years.

Yeah, it was a long time.

Yeah.

So great.

And as somebody who was such a stalwart in film,

what was that transition like for you going to doing a,

in effect, the TV series?

Was that something that you were interested in?

Or did you need the job at the time?

And you were like, fuck it, this is a great opportunity.

Or, I don't know, did you like that process?

It was super weird.

I mean, I definitely, I even hear the way Ryan and I will talk about this, you know, poker face mystery show.

We share a love of Philip Marlowe, you know, and Altman's *The Long Goodbye*.

You know, I love it so much that in co-creating *Russian All*, there's like a cat oatmeal and it's a direct rip from, from *The Long Goodbye*.

Like there's so much about that Philip Marlowe thing.

But, you know, when I think of Peter Falk and like the love of Peter Falk, it's not just Columbia.

I really think about all those Cassavetes films that, you know, as a teenager, I was like, this is who I am.

Right.

I'm like, I don't know him.

And then write him, direct him.

And you were, you were an indie film person.

Yeah.

And it was just, you know, and Philip Marlowe, whatever, Jack Nicholson, *Chinatown*.

And he also has references I don't have like the *Rockford Files* or *Magnum PI*.

Like I sort of, he seems to sort of know all of the lineage and I'm pretty strictly film or if anything, even, you know, John Fonte or Raymond Chandler books, which he knows all of that too, but I'm just saying that I don't have that same fluency with television.

So for sure, I always kind of raised myself on movies and thought that was the big goal.

And then, yeah, I mean, basically I was a, you know, pretty serious junkie for, I don't know, I guess I lost like a decade in there, which is always why, you know, I'm pickled.

So I look terrific, never looked better.

And yeah, also I have the use and the vibrancy of a 30-something, thanks to losing a decade of life.

You know what I mean?

So those are the upshots, Will.

You're kind of like a running back, like a football player who goes on the sidelines for 10 years and comes back and he hasn't been getting hurt for 10 years.

So he's still young, right?

So that's you.

There was 10 years of fun and frolicking
and no real career work because I had one of those decades.
You did.
I didn't really know that about you.
And I didn't about yours either.
Oh, really?
That's what I meant by the Fellini short film.
I guess it was too obscure.
I guess I was speaking in coded language only myself.
Well, I came out of it with, first of all,
an appreciation of employment and another at-bat,
another crack at relevancy.
And you were partying pretty hard.
Let's just say it that way, right?
You were, Jay?
Yeah, I mean, I don't, I mean, sure.
I mean, I was having fun every night.
It was more sort of hedonism and debauchery than, you know,
something I felt like I needed to check myself in for a war.
But either way, I came out of it with like that appreciation,
but also kind of seasoned and weathered
and a little bit broken.
And I felt that that really helped some of my acting stuff,
some of the directing stuff.
And my taste in things was, I think, more sophisticated,
having gone through something a little less privileged
and protected than, you know, being wrapped up in the business.
Oh, I would say for sure, because it's really all the things
you need to know about the human condition,
belly of the beast, heart of darkness.
It's kind of just seemingly like why Kerouac goes on the road.
You know, I think that anyway,
that the romanticism that surrounds it,
you do sort of, you know, return with, of course,
the only problem is if you make it out alive.
And then they sort of, the thing that's less spoken is,
you know, just how dark those dark nights of the soul are,
just how much that it ultimately, you know, doesn't work.
Like you can't sort of stop the negative self-talking,
self-criticizing mind, no matter what you do.
So you're sort of really doomed to then also
sort of take the years to correct it.
It's a long way of saying that's how I ended up on,
you know, what at the time was an internet show.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

Like as you guys know so much about Netflix
and kind of who knew, but certainly that was not the dream.
But who lose a different thing.
But so did you, but Natasha, thank you for laughing.
I really appreciate it.
Well, I was going to say, I just wanted to say, yeah, you know,
you can, you run the risk, of course,
in those of doing irreparable damage
and not just sort of physically like that.
You can't come back from, but almost,
almost spiritually and right.
You can, if that darkness gets too dark,
can you make that rebound and come back and live a life
where you're not too scarred by the self-inflicted wounds?
And are you able to let it go?
It's a razor's edge.
Are you able to let it go?
Are you able to move on?
Some of that is like, can you give yourself a break?
Can you forgive yourself?
Can you forgive all those things?
Can you, can you make that step?
And I look from what I know about you, you know,
I think that one of the great things is,
is you're a very open person.
And I know that you help a lot of people
and you're very generous.
You have, you're very generous of spirit and of heart.
And I bet you that's a big part of,
of how you've been able to come back.
I've, I've seen it firsthand.
And it's one of the things that I really admire about you.
I appreciate that.
But let's give Natasha some questions and some more.
Thank you, honey.
Wait, Sean, are you doing an Oscar Levan situation?
He sure is.
And what is the date in the theater, please, Sean?
Good night, Oscar.
It's April, it opens April 24th at the Belasco Theater
in New York.
I am, you know, I am obsessed with Oscar Levan.
He's made one of my favorite figures of all time.
And I feel like with that coincidence,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

we'd be remiss to not say, I mean,
that's a guy who knows about this whole game.
Oh God, all of it.
Yeah, yeah.
He was, one of my favorite one-liners was,
he said, I take prescription pills for the side effects.
Right, sure.
Well, Natasha, it sounds like you're coming to opening night
with us on the 24th.
Yeah, April 24th.
I don't want to know about that.
We're going to be in New York.
Come on, come with us.
It's going to be amazing.
Wait, Natasha, do you...
We've Sean knows.
Sean!
We're here.
He said, don't let him know if you're there.
I think he means before the curtain.
So once the curtain goes up...
Sean, that was so funny.
That last line was so funny.
God, that would be my worst nightmare.
I'm going to get Natasha to come with us.
So, but Natasha, do you...
By the way, we can cut this or whatever,
but I'm always fascinated by addiction.
It's been in my family.
It's been in my friends, whatever.
It's been all around me my whole life.
Do you ever feel a pull back there?
And what do you do to stop that desire if you do feel that?
Or are you so on the other side that you're like, not at all?
You know, it's helpful to get older because you're lazier.
You know what I mean? Like, I feel like it would take...
It takes so much energy to be, like, scoring...
And you've got to put the number in the beeper,
and then you've got to meet the guy on the side of the road.
It's cold down.
You're standing on the corner, and then I'm meeting you.
Now you're showing out.
Now it's in the morning.
You know what I mean?

You've got to get more cash from the ATM.

It's just a lot of ATM shenanigans.

A lot of energy, yeah.

And I just, I don't know if I've got it like that anymore, but I would say that, you know, for sure it is sort of like core to a DNA or whatever that I have on both sides of the coin.

You know, whether that's like the darkness of it or the lightness of sort of emerging from that and seeing life through a greater, you know, perspective or a prism of sort of gratitude or something.

But it's also like helpful in weird situations.

Like I don't know if you guys who have any experience with us find that, like I'm not much moved by something like night shoots or something.

You know, like I'll see a lot of people that are walking around me like, oh my God, it's so crazy.

It's like 3 a.m.

I'm like, who am I?

You know, and I'm like, who am I?

I've always been the caretaker.

You know what I mean?

3 a.m. is my home, baby.

I'm the opposite.

I'm like, if I'm driving home with the sun coming up, this is usually a bad sign.

Yeah.

And so I don't like night shoots.

It reminds me of the old days.

You don't like the old days.

Yeah.

But what about addiction?

Like I'll always be an addict.

I've just managed to channel that into something much less hurtful, much more productive, much more upstanding.

Do you mean just pure workaholism?

Yeah.

Because yeah, I'm like now, and when people are like, oh my God, how do you do it?

You're like a writer, a director, a showrunner, you're acting and you're like, well, it's all one job and I'm an obsessive.

I mean, it's another way of being like, and you got the company and you got like 19 shows and you want to direct three movies and how are you going to do all that?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

And it's like, well, you know, how did I, you know,
smoke all that dust?
That was not my problem.
PCP was not my problem.
Sure.
Sure.
But if it were, you would have won.
I'd love to be able to say smoke and dust.
How was your weekend?
It was mainly smoke and dust.
I was so fucking dusted this weekend.
I love.
I wish I had smoked dust.
And I read along.
They say smoke and dust is not a relapse.
Yeah.
Oscar Levan said that.
Yeah.
No.
Levan said eating and cheating.
That was Levan.
Eating and cheating.
Yeah.
But you know what?
I love Natasha is the ease.
I don't know.
There's something about the way that you deal with
and talk about that time in your life,
because I don't want to spend too much time on it,
but I know, look, I always think about it.
From my experiences, I needed contrast
and it's been a lifelong thing for me
of dealing with that contrast
and going through those times.
Again, I don't prescribe it for anybody,
but sort of coming out the other end of it,
it does give you, I don't know, perspective
and I've had so much perspective
and I've been the beneficiary of so many people's,
so much kindness and so many other people
who have been really helpful
and great people in my life.
And it's given me now as I'm 52
such a different appreciation for life

and appreciation for my kids
and appreciation for the people I love.
And it gives me such a great, better approach
to life day to day.
I don't sweat the small stuff
in ways that I used to.
I don't, all that kind of shit.
I'm just, I don't know.
I wake up every day.
I don't know about you.
I wake up every day and I'm like,
boy, I'm happy it's a nice day out today.
Boy, I'm lucky I'm having this cup of coffee.
Boy, I got to suck back six cigarettes
while I'm doing my little, you know what I mean?
The beautiful things.
Well, you can't, you definitely, I would say, you know,
first of all, I mean, I'm transparent about it.
Well, one aspect of it is I have no choice, right?
Like in other words, it's out there.
I guess I was lucky that it wasn't in a cell phone era.
So there's not too many crazy pictures,
but you know, it was definitely news.
And I didn't hear it.
It's news to me on this
and I gobble up a bunch of pop culture.
You don't fucking follow me.
You should read some of like the post from the 90s,
I feel like. Really?
Just go back log, microfiche, you'll find it.
Microfiche.
Amanda, his wife, who you might know,
complained to me the other day
at how little you pay attention to what's going on.
Well, no, but I was,
because I'm busy watching the news.
You're not watching the news.
But I think more than that,
there's an opportunity there, you know,
in the transparency, which makes you sort of,
like I always feel like I have this sort of duty
in a way to my inner child for lack of a better term,
which is really like she wants to,
she very badly wants to tell the truth.

Like she really is like hell bent on integrity
and good times and hanging out
and it is sort of like a misfit and lawless.

And I have to kind of like wrangle her
and make her do adult stuff.

Like, and, but mostly she just doesn't understand,
and I would say I have this very much in common
with Charlie, this character from poker face.
So like doesn't understand the point of lying
since we all die.

Like John Lennon says, just give me some truth, you know,
and really doesn't understand why the setup or the conceit
of life is about, you know, small talk and being fake
and lying about how well you're doing.

Like there's nothing inherently embarrassing
about life being a double-edged sword.

And, you know, the buy-in of the game is we all die in the end
and that's a super head trip.

And the whole time you're supposed to be sort of ambitious
and involved in this rat race and watching out for your health.

And, you know, you see bodies piling up of, you know,
people suicide rates or whatever.

It's just, it's hard to kind of make sense
of the riddle of the game.

And addiction certainly helps you to understand

that like every person, I mean,

it's one of the darkest parts of showbiz is, you know,
the solipsism that comes with people thinking
they're the center of the universe.

So like that revelation of getting clean
is that's the big one, right?

And you start to see that everybody is a real person
who's going through all their own little micro dramas
and darkness and all this stuff.

So I don't know, just globally, to me,
it feels like transparency is a sort of, you may as well,
because what's the difference?

Like there's such a better chance of helping.

Well, I think the only problem is you run the risk of,
because people sensationalism and click feed and bait
and all that kind of stuff that they want to take,
like boil what you say and your views on stuff
and boil it down to, I remember once when I was very honest
about the fact that I had relapsed, you know,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

I say relapsed, but whatever that means to people.
When I had gone out and I've been drinking
and there was like a, you know, all of a sudden
like the Daily Mail, like Will Arnett admits
that he hit the bottle.
Well, I didn't fucking hit the bottle.
You know, it's like, and then it was picked up
a bunch of different stuff.
And so then somebody else was like,
hey, you don't want to talk about it anymore.
I go, not really because every time I do,
it fucking smacks me in the face
because somebody writes some snarky fucking one line click thing.
So it's like, yeah, but that's the media's agenda, you know,
and that's their business is none of our business.
But what I sense from you, Will and from you, Natasha,
and I try to do is do exactly what you're talking about,
Natasha, which is be mindful of that little kid
that's still in all of us.
And if you are, if you're honest with that little kid
and you give that little kid the sort of the agency
that that kid deserves in your life,
you know, that presence in your life,
and you don't try to, you know, work on some veneer
or some artifice that keeps that little kid hidden
and instead let that kid be a part of your decisions
and your behavior every single day,
then you're not asking people to buy a bunch of shit
that you can't sell real good.
You know, you're just being honest and being you
and being the only you.
There's only one Natasha.
I think that's right.
Natasha, I was thinking about this last night.
Do you have, I think that there's great power
in being vulnerable or being open?
It's the only way we can be funny.
All four of us are funny.
Like that you can't, there's nothing funny
about somebody who's bulletproof.
Like it's all about, you know, warts and all.
Because, you know, what you touched on, Natasha,
about talking about we're all going to die,
I think about that all the time and not in a morbid way,

but it makes you become self-aware.
I bet you're first, Sean.
Just saying it now.
It makes you become self-aware enough
to do exactly what Will's about to say,
which was become vulnerable.
So if you're aware of your existence
and you're soon to be non-existence,
you know, it makes you go, like you said,
like who gives a shit about any of it?
Let it be open, be honest, be vulnerable.
Tell people how you feel in the moment
and if it scares you, it's a way to overcome
that fear of expressing your emotion, I think, you know.
And I do definitely feel like that softening happening
of like, I think it was so, I think I was, you know,
so into kind of like tough guys as a kid growing up.
That's probably why I have like this, you know,
action or whatever, I'd watch it on Scarface
or like Sylvester Stallone, Rocky,
that's what I want to be.
And like you were saying, De Niro.
And I loved, you know, Betty Davis and then Jessica Lange
and whatever, but really I was like those are my guys.
And I think also in many ways I was using that
as a way to sort of be safe in the world
and say, hey, I'm not like this other game.
And now over the years,
even in talking about things like addiction,
which is just something that never goes away.
I mean, those are just like facts.
There's nothing to really hide there.
It'd be a scam to say otherwise.
I do now feel this sort of softening happening
where yeah, it's just, you may as well tell the truth
because what else are you going to do?
And you may as well like, you know,
when you say I wake up and it's a beautiful day
and I'm grateful, it's like, you know,
for sure sometimes that takes me a second,
but it's like the gift in a way is the experience
or the familiarity with self to not take it too seriously
anymore kind of the whatever that sort of,
I guess more like a Buddhist idea of watching the thoughts

or something.

So I'm more like, all right,

I think it's a piece of shit day,

but we're going to get up and like have some coffee.

And I mean, it's really from me,

the joy of comedy or like, you know,

like spending this kind of life with Fred and Maya and Amy

is like just that sense of now we're laughing hysterically
about a third thing.

And in that space, it is an altered state.

And now I'm kind of, I've had a full mood shift

where suddenly I'm stoked and now I'm in the car driving

and the sun is sort of, you know, music's playing.

And I'm like, it's not that bad.

It's your new healthy drug.

Jason, can I ask you a question?

Do you find that you're sort of like,

before you start a season of Ozark,

like for me with Russian dollars a little bit,

like before I start to say I'm like,

and that's who I'm going to be.

And I'm going to wake up and I'm going to be excited

about this cup of coffee.

I'm so great.

I get to have this show and it's my baby.

And it's going to be great.

And then the rush of sort of like almost like the thinking

at that level and working yourself at that level

and the writer's room and the like the pre-production

and that you're really, you find yourself getting tight

and it's not quite, it's not as easy as it was.

Like you really have to set aside time to not buy into the fact

that this sort of alternate reality,

that sort of anxiety based, you know what I mean?

Of just logistics in a way is,

because sometimes I find that I have to really like,

that's when the rubber meets the road for me of, you know,

do you find that?

Yeah, there's a lot of logistics and nuts and bolts

and blocking and tackling that goes into what,

up until you start work is just this pure,

it just lives in your brain and it's going to be perfect.

And there's the, I think it was Ben Stiller

that made some analogy once,

like starting a movie as a director,
is that the painting is perfect.
And then all the way through the production
and development, principle photography
and then post, you're trying to, there's like this fungus
that starts to come in from the,
which we call it the frame of the picture.
Yeah, and it starts to take over the picture
and you got to just keep the fungus back from the,
and if you can get, maybe you're done with,
maybe there's 30% of the picture is infested with this fungus,
you've done pretty good.
And the fungus is probably a little bit more pejorative
than what he meant, but it's,
you bring in all these collaborative thoughts
and oftentimes are better thoughts,
but it changes your picture, it changes the painting
and that doesn't deserve a false negative.
It actually changing the picture is actually a good thing
because that is the result of, you know,
sort of this teamwork and this, you know,
it takes a village and let people contribute.
I find that that's when I really like, I really,
you know, when I'm sort of with my friends in Costa Rica
and we're surfing, I'm like, yeah, fuck a name, man.
This is good.
And I find that that's the most when I have to sort of reset
and not sort of buy the lie of the mind that like,
this is so real, the stakes are so high.
And that's when like things are really,
that's when I can almost, you know,
when it's sort of that time is that sort of significant
is when I really feel sort of all the kind of work on self
or revelations or whatever.
Like I remember walking on set on Russian doll and it's scary.
You know, season two COVID is so this like,
the COVID shit is very intense when you're the boss, right?
Like it's scary anyway, but now you're responsible
for so many people's health.
And I remember at one point like walking onto the stage
and they were like, hello, hello Natasha.
And I walked down and, you know,
okay, do all the jobs, right?
And I was like, holy shit.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

This is like exactly where I was supposed to be.
You know, meaning despite all of that,
all the other kind of like outside elements,
it was so sure kind of in my bones.
And like, that's what I mean by like me and the kid
were kind of happy.
And then we were sort of delighted by the kind of anxiety.
And I sort of like, I felt the road widen a little bit of,
oh, that's right.
This is like this fun, crazy thing that like we get to do.
It's not, you know, this is that thing that I really,
really love doing.
I mean, directing in general is a very joyous sport,
I would say of it just feels so awake and alive in a way
that sometimes I think when I'm only acting,
like it's different on something like this,
because, you know, Ryan and I have like a real partnership,
meaning in many ways I think,
or even I would say for us,
show dogs was like the two of us were in it together.
Meaning on some level,
it's like a body of work where it becomes the collaborator
is what matters because you feel like you're in something
together, you know?
But yeah, sometimes if you're just like, you know, acting
and you have no say,
you can almost feel very far from like the center of the action
and kind of, all right, so you're just going to tell me who's
like a middle-aged person who's been doing this for 35 years,
like, oh, should I come stand over there or something?
You're concerned I'm going to go pee
and maybe I'll never come back.
I'll forget that we're shooting, you know?
Like they're just so concerned all the time.
Are you directing any of these poker faces?
Oh, yeah, I did one.
I did one that that's not,
the last one we finished because of the schedule and everything,
but it said, Nick Nolte.
I got to direct Nick Nolte.
Oh, wow.
Oh, yes.
And now there's a real troublemaker.
She was great.

Was he responsive to your direction?

Oh, yes.

And like we had that thing that you were talking about,
that like vulnerability that comes on the other side of darkness
or whatever,

like we speak, like we speak the same Engie, you know?

That's great.

We had a lot of fun together.

That's cool.

And, oh my God, I love him.

Yeah, he's so interesting.

What a great actor.

I'm a huge fan of his.

Yeah, I haven't thought about him in a minute about,

I haven't seen him in a while.

He brings a lot.

He's so glad that you got him to do this.

That's going to be cool.

Oh my God, he's so like, that face is really addictive.

That's why I'm emailing like at the,

you're standing at the monitor and like,

you know, we use all these zoom guns on poker face,

like like Altman's slow, slow zooms or whatever.

Yeah.

And you're just like standing at the monitor riveted,

just pushing in on Nolte and all he's doing is thinking,

you're like, oh, that's a fucking actor.

Like, you know, that's just the smallest like flicker

and you're fascinated.

Like how do I get inside of your face?

I love you using the zoom too instead of the dolly push.

It's such a different feel.

It's a, I just, I dork out on that.

Yeah.

Like Ryan, I guess, I guess it's a Stevie Edlin shot,
the pilot who does all the brick and looper and Star Wars
and all the knives out glass onion with him.

And yeah, it's a lot of that's like baked into the DNA,

DNA of even a, you know, like the Colombo pilot

that Spielberg did with like,

that has got that long shot down to the road.

Wow.

Yeah.

I was just thinking about how do I,

how do I get inside your face?
And that's obviously what the sodium said to you, Jason,
last night.
Yeah.
But it did, it got there.
The resistance for me.
It got there.
It got there.
The door was wide open.
Natasha, would you, would you be happy if you did nothing
but direct the rest of your career as opposed to act
or you want to do a little of each?
I mean, I, I think so.
I'm definitely like wanting to be in my Cine Pollock era
where, you know, like Kubrick calls you up and says,
Hey, come be in, you know.
Eyes wide shut.
Yeah.
Come be an eyes wide shut.
But mostly you're kind of, also I like,
I feel like we don't talk about those guys enough.
Like the Cine Pollocks who are just kind of,
You can direct it like, you know, like Tootsie and just
give yourself a great role in it.
Exactly.
But that, that kind of, I would like to be that guy.
That's like my dream sweet spot.
Right.
It's so funny you say, I just watched for a different reason.
I watched the first half of Husbands and Wives
the other night in Pollock, Cine Pollocks in that.
Remember he, in the first scene he comes in,
he says they're getting divorced.
They're going to go for a thing.
He's so great.
There was something else.
And then I was thinking about him and Tootsie and stuff.
He's like, he's a fucking gem, wasn't he?
He did so many episodes of Will and Grace.
He played Will's dad.
Cine Pollock?
Yeah.
It was fantastic.
Wow.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

Amazing to be, and so are you Natasha.

You did an episode of Will and Grace.

I sure did.

Favreau puts himself in a lot of the movies he does too.

Yeah.

John likes a little acting.

Yeah.

I mean, I think that's sort of, that's, I guess, you know, Ron Howard's done very nicely for himself.

But I guess he doesn't, does he really act at all?

No, he puts Clinton in, puts Clinton instead.

He puts his brother in and he won't do it.

Danny DeVito, you know, really underrated.

I mean, he's made some major movies.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

I know.

Clooney directs himself, Affleck directs himself.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Jackie Bates.

Jason Bateman directs himself.

Yeah.

Lil' Jackie Bates.

Bradley.

Think about Bradley.

Yeah.

Bradley with Maestro.

You know, obviously, Star is born incredible.

And now his new film Maestro is off the chart.

Can't wait.

Have you seen it?

Yeah.

Yeah.

It's amazing.

It's amazing.

Well, and also he's done such a, you know, great job that it feels like a real event when he's directing something.

And also it gets to work with so many great people when he's just acting, you know, because I think, and I sort of have this theory that we're all going to look back as, you know, we're dying.

We're not going to really remember kind of like in this one, I was the director, but this one, I was an executive producer.

Like just all of that sort of sense of ego round, it'll fall away and it'll be more like sort of like flashes of the things we made with the people we were

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

hanging out with or something.

Getting back to what you were talking about before.

It's like, I'd be happy if I spent the rest of my life just working with the folks that I've really enjoyed working with and my friends.

And I mean, I think we've accrued a nice big troupe.

You should start just getting going on that.

Yeah.

But I do.

I love that directing.

It makes me so happy.

Yeah.

Oh, Natasha, we've taken 10 more minutes than an hour.

That's going to cost us.

We've done longer with you than we usually go with people.

Yeah.

And you said a hundred dollars per minute over the 60.

So that's a thousand bucks.

Split that up three ways.

No, it was a tough deal, but I'm glad you came.

I was so, I'm so glad that you said yes to coming and doing this show, Natasha.

I just honestly, I just love talking to you and you're such a great person.

Thank you, Natasha.

Thank you.

I'm so happy for all your success.

And I'm very happy about poker face.

Can't wait.

Wait, is it out or it's coming?

It's out.

It's out now.

It's on Peacock.

It's on Peacock.

It's really pretty great.

I mean, Ryan is great.

Yeah.

Ryan Johnson poker face on the streaming on the cock.

Yeah.

Wherever you can, wherever you get your cock, wherever you get your cock from, because I don't know if some people use Apple TV or they get another thing.

Whatever it is that you generally get your cock.

This is a great stream coming out.

Sean, I'm really coming to that Oscar Levant.

I'm telling you right now.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

I would love it.
Come see.
We'll carpool.
In the April, we're all going to the premiere.
It's going to be a big event.
It's going to be incredible.
So you're welcome to come.
Please do.
We'd love to have you.
Come anytime.
All right, guys.
Thank you.
Come anytime.
On the cock.
On the cock.
Okay.
Thank you, Natasha Leon.
We love you.
You're the greatest.
Thank you.
Thanks, guys.
Thanks so much.
Bye.
Bye.
I've never told a guest to slam it.
Have you told them?
Well, we did two of your guests today.
They both slammed.
I have never...
Well, explain what slam means.
Well, when you just shut the laptop and end the interview at the end, instead of doing the awkward sort of like, okay, so goodbye, guys.
That was fun.
Bye.
Right after saying goodbye to them, before they end, they just said, yeah.
Maybe Bennett and Rob are giving them the heads up to go ahead and do the slam thing.
We don't need follow-up at the end with them, you know.
Yeah, exactly.
We just had an hour.
Here's what I love about her, by the way.
I love that she's like completely open and apologetic.
Comfortable and talk about anything.
She's no nonsense, man.
I've never talked to her.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Natasha Lyonne"

I've never hung out with her.

Have you not?

No.

I mean, I think I've met her a couple of times.

I think I've met her once with Amy when she was doing a Russian doll singing a Netflix thing.

Yeah.

Yeah.

But that's...

Yeah, that's the most I've ever had.

Yeah, she and Amy.

Well, I produced that Russian doll with her, that Natasha was the show owner.

Yeah, huge success.

And Amy produced it.

Huge success.

They're very good friends.

But we didn't really...

I mean, I knew her a little bit just because she and Amy were friends, but she and I became friends going, doing this kids movie overseas.

And we had a lot of fun.

And she's one of those great people to be kind of out of the country with, because she's really funny.

Yeah, she's like...

She's a riot.

She just makes you laugh the best way.

She seems like the best person to hang out with.

If we ever take smart lists on the road to Europe, maybe we can make her a roadie.

She'd love to be a roadie, like the highest-paid roadie of all time.

Yeah.

What do you think of my hair today?

I think it's really great.

Yeah.

Yeah, it looks like you've been riding at high speed on a motor.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Well, you're the one that went up.

I'm not supposed to go up.

Well, I went down before and it felt like a fizzle.

Oh, okay.

I said,

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

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