

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

You know, Jason, have you ever had a mommy because I've had a daddy never even met your mommy.

Oh, see, you did the joke too.

I do like, you know what I really like doing with the edamame, especially if I'm sitting across the table from my, my daughters.

Is that like to take one of those edamame beans, like to fire, like squeeze it and fire one of those beans right at one of my daughters.

That's right.

Of course, you know, 16 year old gets pissed off at the 11 year old.

She opens up her mouth real wide and goes, yeah, try, try, try, I'll catch it.

And that's fun.

And then mom smacks me and, and then dinner falls apart.

Hey, remind me to skip sushi next time.

Yeah, you should or just wear a helmet.

Welcome to smart list.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

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Smart.

Smart.

What's the purple sex toy over your right shoulder there?

In the back.

Keep going.

The purple thing.

It's just one purple thing.

Right here.

Even further back.

Oh, this?

Yeah.

That, by the way, you know what that is.

Should it be inside later?

Roller, back roller...

That's the inside that's a, that's the inside of like a r- like it's a medal, but it's a record.

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It's like a sound thing.

Well, I don't know.

And you can also stick it up your ass.

That's what we're getting at.

Okay, but wait, I wanna say something about Jason's food because I FaceTimed with Jay last week and you do eat a lot of stuff.

It is kind of a joke, but it's not really because you do, for every cookie that goes in, it's like 20,000 pounds of nuts and bolts and twigs and sticks going.

That's right.

So, but I FaceTimed you and you answer it and you were on the treadmill.

That's the other thing.

You constantly are on the treadmill, constantly.

Again, I'm not, it's not constant, it's just discipline, it's one hour a day.

No, I know, but it's a routine.

But, and then we talk, and then I brought up the porn thing again because I can't believe you're the only male in the world that doesn't look at porn but we already talked about that.

And then, and then you had that.

Well, have either one of you looked at any porn today?

No. No.

Dude, I don't need the eyebrows, Will.

You don't need to like, be like, what a weird question.

You know, do you guys look at it daily or weekly or what's the frequency?

Again, more eyebrows.

This isn't a, what about, is it once a week?

More, I don't know like the frequency of it but I'm just saying like generally speaking.

Let's hear it, you say you don't know, let's hear it.

No, like male guys, every guy looks at porn.

Anyway, but the other thing was,

I want to talk about the headband that you were wearing while you were running on the thing.

Seems kind of horny.

It was, no, I've never seen you in that,

I've seen you in that like others like hats and stuff but I've never seen you wear the headband while you're on the treadmill.

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I still have that dumb long hair
and I don't want it sweating into my eyeballs.
That was astonishing.
It was like Loverboy, like the 80s band or something.
But it made you think of gay porn.
Porn, yeah, yeah.
No, I don't know.
I just thought I'd never seen you in that headband.
Well, what's your getup for your work?
Jason never would look at gay porn
because he'd be too worried.
Why are my pants crowding?
Yeah, why?
Oh no.
Wait, what were you saying?
What's my workout?
Yeah, what's your workout getup?
You know what, it's fine.
Well, my hair is quite short right now
but if it's even a little bit longer,
I have, it's the worst.
If I'm, so that I don't sweat
and I would never wear it outside because I'm embarrassed.
It's old school bandana rolled
and then kind of up here
and then my hair is kind of sticking behind.
That's exactly what Jason was wearing.
It's the worst, but I could never wear it.
Like everybody who lives, kids, Alessandra,
everybody looks at me like, dude, that is the worst.
I look like such a solid-
You don't want to get zits, is that what it is?
Well, you just don't want the hair dripping down his face.
You don't want the sweat in my face.
You don't want to sweat
because then you get zits if you sweat on your face.
Well, I'm 53, you know, I'm pretty good on that
but it's more, I just don't want to get the sweat in my face.
You know what I-
I don't sweat out of my face.
You don't sweat, period.
You what?
You don't sweat out of your face?
I never sweat from my face.

You know why?
Because it's hard to sweat or you're chilling.
Fuck, we're getting that on a t-shirt.
Boy, I'm getting on that t-shirt so quick.
I want to get to our guests
because I can hear him.
I can hear him from that.
He's had to listen to the porn
and he's had to listen to the sweat.
I don't sweat out of my face.
I don't.
I don't sweat out of my face.
And he doesn't deserve it.
You know why?
Because this is a guy, I use-
Do you like the term actor's actor?
I do like that.
Like he's the kind of actor,
the way I look at it is,
he's the kind of actor that all us actors look up to.
Yeah.
You're like, yeah, this is a guy
knows what he's doing.
I'm getting nervous.
Well, the second you say actor's actor,
you know they're friendly.
Yeah, and they're just like,
they've just done so much stuff
and they've done the dramatic stuff
and they've done the comedy
and they're good at all of it.
And you don't begrudge them
because you're like, they're so good at it.
That you're like, hey, hey, hey.
This is a guy who's got,
he's got an Academy Award nomination.
He's got, he's won two Golden Globes.
He's won a Primetime Emmy.
He's won four SAG Awards.
He's been in every imaginable.
We were talking about one of his movies
last night at dinner after you left, Jason.
Because one of his co-stars was there
from that film from years ago.

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He's been in, he's single-handedly responsible for the death of the Merlot business.

He's played John Adams.

He played Howard Stern's boss.

I love him.

Guys, it's Mr. Paul Giamatti.

I love Paul Giamatti.

Did I do this right?

Okay.

Yes.

Hello.

Lord.

Yes.

Well done, Will.

I love you.

Hello.

I love you guys.

I absolutely love you.

Look at you.

Wait a minute.

Talk about the background.

Can you hear me?

Can you see me?

Is this all like okay?

Jason, Paul, Jason's very confused right now because of all the books behind you.

Look at that wallpaper behind you.

It looks textured.

It's all, it's a green screen.

It's a green screen.

It's fantastic.

Wait a minute.

That's a moth trap.

I see that too.

That's actually a moth trap.

Very effective.

Works like a charm.

So listen, he's got at least 6,000 books behind him and you've read all of them all back.

No, no.

A lot of them.

Well, some of them.

I've read some of them.

Jason, name a book quick.

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Where the sidewalk ends.
So no pornography, no books.
It's pretty dry.
It's just sugar and salt for me.
Those are my vices.
I want to know about the books.
Why the books, Paul, behind you?
I have a kind of manic thing.
I honest to God, I have a kind of collecting mania
with books.
I put all my manic behavior into books.
I get that.
And you know what?
If you had asked me to describe, say,
what would Paul Gimani's background be?
I probably would have said a bookshelf, brimming with books.
I probably, given a few guesses.
Or a bunch of different glasses frames.
Why?
Or a selection of Warby Parker.
Just all back there.
Paul, do you have a favorite bookstore?
In New York, I like going to the-
Yeah, I'm assuming you're in New York.
Yes, I am.
I like going to the Strand bookstore.
That's a classic bookstore.
It holds up.
There's a good one out in LA called Iliad Books.
That's a great book.
I know that one.
But I was just at the Strand two weeks ago
and it's really holding up, isn't it?
It is.
They still got it.
Yeah, it's still there, which is nice.
Now, who was so,
so what was the film that you were referencing last night
that one of our dinner guests was in?
Private Parts with Mary McCormick.
Oh, yes.
Yeah.
Wow, that is a deep cut.
And we were talking about,

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God, I love that movie, Paul.
You're so great in that movie.
Thanks, I appreciate it.
It's a good movie.
It's a really good movie.
Betty Thomas directed that, right?
Yeah, have you worked with her?
I have not, but I would like to.
So let me ask you about Private Parts now that we're on it.
How did that movie come about?
Like, were you a fan or did you listen to Howard
leading up to that at all?
Like a little bit, you know, but not much.
I wasn't any kind of big,
because I didn't realize, for instance,
that that guy I was playing was a real guy
until about halfway into my little tenure
doing the movie, which was a couple of weeks.
And they said to me, how'd you nail this guy so well?
And I said, this is an actual guy?
And they were like, yeah.
I'm like, man, it's hysterical.
And I said, I feel terrible now,
because I've made this guy like the biggest asshole
on the planet, that this is a real person,
his children are gonna see this,
his wife is gonna see this, this is horrible.
And it got me a little nervous.
I thought, this is terrible, but so.
Did you meet him?
No, one time I had to do in promoting something
a few years later, you know,
but like, I was always the guy,
they'd make me do the drive time radio shit.
They'd be like, well, you do the promotion
on the drive time radio guys,
and I'd be talking to them.
When did you start saying no to that?
I, only a couple of years ago.
But it was always me, they may do that.
So because of private parts.
So I was always talking to some fucking guys
in Oakland or something like that.
And one day they patched him through,

they put him on with me.
And it was just incredibly uncomfortable.
But you strike me as a fella who's pretty diligent
about researching your parts and whatnot.
Are you not?
Erroneous mistake.
Oh please.
It depends, sometimes I am.
Sometimes it depends,
but sometimes I do a lot of research
and sometimes I just don't bother.
And what is, if you're playing a non-fiction character,
you'll do the research and maybe if it's aside for pens.
Like I did a boxing picture.
I did a boxing picture and I was interested.
Yeah, Cinderella Man.
Yeah, so good.
I love that movie.
And your nominated for an Academy Award,
which I mentioned.
I was, thank you.
Yes, thank you.
So good.
I wanted to learn about how to wrap guys' hands.
And I wanted to learn all that stuff.
And I learned all these old school tricks.
They would hold a big cold silver dollar
against the guy's bruise.
Well, it was fun.
I learned all that kind of stuff.
Because it was interesting.
Sean, you could have taught him,
because you're pretty good at wrapping guys' hands around.
While I round stuff, I guess.
Yes.
I'll show you, I'll show you later.
Wait, Paul, what do you mean, the silver dollar?
What are you talking about?
It's like an ensuel, right?
Guys would get an ensuel, meaning like a,
that's like the real thing that they use
to smear out a swollen eye or something.
It's like a metal square that's got like a little ring.
Yes, that's right.

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And in the old school,
because that movie I did set in the thirties,
they didn't have those things.
They would just have a freezing cold silver dollar.
And they put it,
they push it against the guy's face.
Oh, just to take the swelling down.
Yeah.
Will, you got anything for,
you got anything for ensuel?
What is ensuel?
Well, all's well.
I think that's what it's called.
All's well that adds well, no.
But Paul, but then what about my idea
that you might be very, very well trained?
I'm assuming you went to,
are you a Julliard guy, a Yale guy?
I went to Yale, I went to the Yale School of Drama.
That's amazing.
Now, wasn't our friend Laura Linney over there?
Was she?
She went to the Julliard, I believe.
Was she Yale as well, maybe?
God, I should know that.
No, she was in the Julliard.
No, she was in the Julliard.
Yeah, hey Jason, you remember you were in Ozark with her?
Yeah, that's right.
You were in the television's, I remember that.
I've never been to Ozark.
How was that?
Did you enjoy that with her?
What's that?
He's completely blanked it.
Yeah, I only can remember just an hour ago.
No, she's about the best ever.
So Paul, so you went to Yale, you're from New Haven.
You actually were born there, right?
No way.
Yes, I was.
And your dad was a professor there,
ended up being the president of Yale, and...
That's right.

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Wait, what?

Did your mom teach at Yale too?

No, she taught at a private school in New Haven.

Right, so your mom was a teacher.

So both of his parents were academics.

You have a Yale tattoos, you should have a Yale tattoo.

I should, I should have a big, I don't.

I should have a bulldog on my ass.

Or a big Y right on the small ear back.

I should always have a bulldog on my ass.

Same.

Yes, me too.

But wait a minute, what about,

go back though, before, in order to get into Yale,
you couldn't just, it wasn't like your mom and dad were like,
come on, I got you.

It's like you had a high school,
you probably excelled, right?

I did pretty good, yeah.

I was pretty good academically, yeah, yeah.

Did you go to high school in New Haven?

No, I went to a high school, I went to a prep school,
I didn't board, I went to a boarding school,
but I didn't board there.

So I went, you know.

Willie, you went to a boarding school, didn't you?

Yeah, yeah, I did, up in Canada,
and then the day students, we called them,
cause it was all boys, they were called day boys.

Yeah, day boys.

Sean, anything?

Careful, careful Sean.

I mean, this whole episode is,

I mean, it's really, he's gonna get a letter well.

I really gotta be surprised, it's prime month for Christ's sake.

Can you just ease off?

Is a Canadian boarding school,

is it just like horrendous,

is the boarding schools seem to be in England and stuff?

Well, no, but back then, back then.

Did they cane you there?

Did they like give you a good sound,
good sound, thrashing, if you, you know.

They didn't even bother grabbing the cane,

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they just went with the hand, I'm not kidding.
Easy show.
Did they?
Yeah, it's smacked in the back, oh yeah.
Are you serious, you used to get hit?
Really?
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
I got hit in the back of the head a bunch, and.
Was this like a Catholic school?
Was it like Jesuit?
It's an old school, it's a,
I went to this school that's like a very old school
sort of British style boarding school at the time.
It's now coedded and it's very different and it's all changed.
And so, but at the time,
it was very much a old English style,
all boys boarding school.
And our sort of brother's school was this school
in Scotland called Gordonston,
where a lot of the royal family went, et cetera, et cetera.
So we had some members of those types of people
came over to and went to my school as well.
So the then Prince of Spain, Filipe, the bourbon,
he's now the king of Spain, went to my school, yeah.
So you struggled a bunch growing up, did you Will?
Well, I didn't, I had nothing to do with that.
How did you eat?
I was starving all the time.
That's crazy.
Could you have a dad?
Low man on the totem pole, yeah.
Did people harass the Prince of Spain?
Did you know the Prince of Spain?
Yeah, I did.
Boy, this is a terrible sentence,
but he and I were on the same ski team.
That is crazy.
And I got bussed.
I got bussed to a school in downtown Los Angeles too.
Yeah, okay?
Yeah, and I had to walk to school with no food.
No food, no shoes, right, Sean?
Both ways, no shoes.
But anyway, we're back.

So would you-
Let's get back to Yale and-
And then the Prince of Spain.
But your dad was a professor
in the beginning, president of Yale.
So that, I think that does help,
because I know other people-
Probably.
Parents or professors at colleges.
So far, you must have done very well in high school.
You were a bright person.
I did pretty good in high school.
I was a bright kid.
SAT score, I'll bet, was pretty good.
And your essays and all that, what's not-
I think probably they must have been.
I don't remember what my essays entailed.
I don't remember what they were about,
but they must have been.
What were the extracurricular skills?
They must have been pleasing.
Am I extracurricular?
That's interesting.
I worked on the school newspaper.
I drew cartoons.
Really?
Wow.
I'm a school newspaper, yes.
And what else did I do?
I did some theater there.
And in the kind of the latter end of it,
I did some theater.
Were your parents more interested or excited
about you becoming an academic,
or were they okay with you becoming an actor?
I think they were okay with me becoming an actor.
I think the, I think the expert,
because everybody in my family going back was teachers.
Like, it was ridiculous.
Everybody's a fucking teacher.
So I think the idea, the assumption was,
one of their three children was gonna be a teacher.
And my brother and sister didn't do it,
so I think they thought this guy will do it,

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and then I just didn't do it.

I could see, can you see Paul in like an Alexander Payne film playing a New Yorker cartoonist?

Oh, yeah.

And I don't know what the story is yet, but I'm working on, I'm gonna call.

Now, wait, I might embarrass myself here, but did you not do Crumb, the Crumb movie?

Am I confusing?

I did a movie called American Splendor about a guy, this guy Harvey Picker and Crumb did the drawings for his, because he couldn't draw.

He couldn't, yes sir, yes sir, you're welcome.

So you're close, Will.

I'm very close.

Were you able to use some of your talents as a cartoonist whilst doing that film?

Nope, he couldn't draw, so I couldn't.

Oh, right, because the crumb drew for him's crumb.

No, I didn't get to do any of that.

I wish I had wanted to be a cartoonist, like an animator, was what I kind of wanted to do, but that didn't happen.

Did you know that guy was real when you were doing that movie?

I did, I did, yes, I did, yes, I was, yeah.

No, I was confronted with the actual man, so there was no question that he was real, and he was very real.

Do you doodle still to this day?

Yeah, not as much, I wish I did.

I don't draw as much as I used to.

I think when I decided to be an actor, I stopped drawing, and it was just a kind of different part of my life, and I stopped drawing.

I still do sometimes.

Yeah, what is your go-to doodle?

I think everybody's got one thing that they do know how to draw well.

Yeah, well, I do a lot of,

it's faces mostly, and it's kind of angry old men, mustachioed old men, bossy.

You have portraits of Jason in your house?

Yes, exactly.

My 11-year-old, a daughter, is very, very good at drawing,

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and I was looking at some of her work the other day,
and I said to her, I said, honey,
you know, I notice a lot of the faces that you draw.
There's a lot of tears coming out of the eyes.
Is everything okay?
She goes, yeah, dad.
And I go, no, no, I mean, I just, you know,
I'm trying to be a good dad here,
and I'm just saying that that's a flair for me,
and I just want to make, so I check in with you.
She's like, no, it's just really fun to draw.
Jason, do you think that she was so shocked
that you noticed anybody other than yourself?
That's kind of amazing.
That I knew my way to her.
Something out of your own
that didn't have to do with show business?
Something that wasn't stuck
to the front of the television that I noticed?
Yeah.
She wasn't the Dodgers,
that it wasn't Dodgers or golf related.
Do you still get a chance to do theater?
Do you like doing it?
Do you prefer, like now that you are on this trajectory
of 800 movies and TV shows, you're like.
I haven't done a play in a while.
I do, I do like it.
I do prefer it.
You're doing a play right now.
Yeah.
Sean would like for you to take over for him.
You should have a good fuck.
I really wanted to step in.
He's very tired.
You know, Paul actually was quite famously
in a play with a very good friend of ours,
and a friend of the podcast.
Billy crewed up in Arcadia years ago.
Oh, no way.
What was it?
I did a couple of plays with Billy.
I did three plays with Billy.
Oh, wow.

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Billy just took \$15 off me this weekend
because his Yankees took two out of three from my Dodgers.
Oh, you're gambling with Billy.
But I only sent him \$14.
I kept the dollar back for the damage
that Aaron Judge did to our bullpen fence.
Did you see any of that footage?
He ran right through the wall,
taking a scoring fly ball away from us.
Yeah, Aaron Judge had a very exciting weekend
here in Los Angeles.
Obviously, this podcast is airing later than that.
But Paul, I don't know if you're a big baseball fan.
I know that baseball runs in the family.
It does.
I'm not a huge baseball fan, but I occasionally follow it.
Things like this.
Tell Sean.
Well, tell Sean, because I don't know, Sean,
you know Paul's involvement with baseball,
which is quite, you know, goes without saying.
And we can cut it too if you don't want to talk about it.
No, no, no, no, no.
After being in academia,
my father ended up in professional baseball.
And he ran the national baseball league not for very long.
And then he was the commissioner of baseball
also not for very long.
He was the commissioner of baseball.
He was the commissioner of major league baseball
for like, basically.
Well, yeah, kind of.
That's crazy.
It is crazy.
And so he didn't, he didn't,
he did neither one of those things for very long.
Were you, did you go to a lot of games in that time?
Were you, was it,
because it was kind of the family business in a way?
Yeah, I mean, I did.
I went to some playoff games.
Now I'm taking a member of what ones I went to.
I wish I did.
I wish I was paying more attention.

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I wasn't paying that much attention,
but I did go to some, yeah.
And, but not enough.
I wish I'd done them.
That's why I asked you about extracurricular in high school.
Like, you know, like, like sports.
I was on the swimming team.
I was on the swimming team.
Swimming team, oh, okay.
Swimming team.
That's about as well.
Is it interesting?
It is interesting.
It's like to picture you swimming in high school
is kind of interesting.
It is interesting.
I had hair.
I had hair.
I wore like a little speedo.
So you did have hair.
I did have hair.
I actually had hair.
But for swimming, you know, you would shave,
you would actually shave your head and stuff like that.
Of course.
Yeah, they would do all that stuff.
You'd probably shave your whole body.
You shave your whole body.
Right?
You shave your whole body.
Yes, sir.
Did you, Paul, you just said, I wasn't paying attention.
And I was actually thinking about this concept recently
about this idea of as we get older,
and I've been doing a lot more reflecting lately
about this idea of like this stuff.
I just, I feel like now I'm much more aware or cognizant.
And I want to absorb everything much more now
than I did when I was a younger man.
All these things that we took for granted,
these experiences that we would have, right?
Have you guys had any of that recently?
Well, but even just saying what I was saying to you,
I regret that.

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I mean, I was in college and I was kind of checked out and I was sort of like, eh, not dealing with my dad and stuff like that.
And I very much regret it now, because he passed away very shortly after doing all of that. So I definitely regret that.
And very much so, but I very much feel the same way that I need to be taking everything in way more than I did.
And I wonder if my kid, my kid will remember shit or regret shit the same way I did, but hopefully not.
How old is your kid?
Yeah, how old is your kid?
He's 22.
He just graduated from college.
Oh, wow.
So he's the age I was when my father died. I want to bring the whole show down by talking about his death, but he's the age my father was.
He's the age of my father when my father died.
So it's interesting to me to think, yeah.
I remember, I worked with Marcus, with your brother on a very, very shitty football movie.
No, I remember that movie very well.
I was most enjoyable.
I remember just dorking out with him about your dad and just like picking his brain about it.
He's a huge baseball fan.
He's like a fanatic.
He's such a good dude.
I really like my time with him.
He is a good dude.
I loved that movie.
What was the movie?
It was called Necessary Roughness.
This football movie was back in the day with Scott Bacchula.
Scott Bacchula's Sinbad?
Wasn't Sinbad?
Yes, Sinbad, Kathy Ireland.
Kathy Ireland?
Who else was in that?
Yeah, there was a lot of people.
Hector Elizondo.

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Hector Elizondo, that's right.

Jay, did you take the moment during Necessary Roughness and really absorb it?

Oh, I sure did absorb it.

Wait, we're talking about two different things now.

What were you absorbing?

Well, we shot it in Dallas, Texas.

There was a lot of off time, you know?

They've got some nice ballet in Dallas.

Absolutely.

We'll be right back.

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Look, I don't know about you, but I like to ponder the bigger questions in life, like, I don't know, who made the pyramid?

Is there life on other planets?

And how much will CarMax pay me for my car?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

The last one is actually pretty easy.
If you're thinking about selling your car
and want to know what CarMax will pay for it,
just go to carmax.com.
You can get a real offer in two minutes or less.
And get this, CarMax gives you up to seven days
to accept the offer, seven whole days.
That's enough time to ponder another of life's big questions,
like, what should Sean have for lunch?
Tuna!
That's car selling reimagined, CarMax.
SmartList is brought to you in part by all birds.
Now, you'd think like the name all birds,
that there would be something else, but they're shoes.
And you know, the way shoes could be homemade
from things like, you know, found with like,
you could build shoes with like, you know,
a sticks and like the bottom of like bamboo
and you could wrap them and stuff like that.
But why would you make your own shoes
out of natural materials yourself
when all birds has already perfected the process
in the All Birds Innovation Lab?
Oh, you gotta zip up for that.
You gotta suit up, you gotta zip up.
They research how to make the most out of sustainable materials
like leather made from plants, sugarcane and tree fibers.
Materials so natural, one might even say they're super natural.
Try the plant pacer, tree dasher or super light
to see for yourself how super, super can really get.
I wear my All Birds every day.
I know that sounds like a made up thing,
like that's scripted, but it's not.
I wear them, I walk to the theater in them.
They're the most comfortable shoes I've ever had.
I swear I wear them every day.
I got a blue color one and then another color.
I don't know what it is because I'm color blind.
But they go with jeans, they go with everything.
And they kind of look better than just like,
you know, regular gym shoes,
because they kind of, you know,
you can go out to eat with them instead of like gym shoes.
You can kind of wear them and they look stylish.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

So their Innovation Lab is the home for science-y stuff like research and testing renewable materials.

That's where they figured out how to craft the plant pacers with leather made from plants, the tree dashes from wood and the super lights from sugarcane.

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All right, back to the show.

Paul, since we're kind of going through and I want to, there's so many movies we could, you know, because behind every movie, there's a story about making it and stuff like that.

I could talk to you for hours about so many things that I love you in.

But is there one,

because we're kind of like going through them now,

is there one that stands out

that's really, really, really meaningful to you that you will, speaking of,

is there one that stands out

that's really, really, really meaningful to you, that you will, speaking of,

holding on to things and remembering things that really, really sticks to your soul

and you have great memories of?

There's a lot of them I really remember nicely that way, you know, and it's not necessarily the movie, it's the experience too.

Right, right, right.

Is there one in particular?

There's a movie I did called The Illusionist, which is the sort of,

it's about a magician and stuff like that.

I really liked making that movie.

It was in Eastern Europe, it was in Prague, which was fun to be in.

And I enjoyed making that movie.

It was in Christopher Nolan, was it?

No, it's, that's the prestige.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

Yes, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
At the same time, two magician pictures came in.
Yeah, I remember that at the same time.
Simultaneous.
Yeah, so.
How'd you like working in Prague?
Man, that is a beautiful town.
Great, I loved it.
It was fantastic, yeah.
What film do you think,
and this would be a very hard thing for you to answer,
but which film do you think was the most helpful
to you in your career?
Because I feel like every single job you've done
has been extremely prestigious.
And really, really like,
did Will say you've been nominated only once for an Oscar?
For an Oscar.
Yes.
But I feel like every single part of the play.
But like 12 Years of Slave, Romeo and Juliet,
saving Mr. Banks down in Abby Lake.
Well, those are all,
and 12 Years of Slave was an amazing movie to make.
Yeah, one of those really incredible.
But any one of those jobs you would think an actor would go,
okay, now my career is made.
Right.
You know?
I guess so, but I mean, I think something like Private Parts
actually was the first time I ever did anything with real...
Just for my sister, Tracy,
Private Parts is the Howard Stern movie about his life,
just so...
And Howard, Howard, really convincingly
and to great claim plays himself, which is very unusual.
He was great.
He was so good.
He was so good.
He was really great at it.
He was terrific.
Paul, it does occur to me that Private Parts
actually was a kind of a kicking off point.
Of course you were a working actor,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

but that kind of opened you up to a halt
because it was such a big commercial success.
Yeah, I'd only really done theater stuff up until then.
I'd done a little bit parts and a lot of stuff
and a lot of TV shows and TV movies and stuff like that.
So that was the first time
I had anything substantial to do in a movie.
Did that lead to Saving Private Ryan?
I don't remember which one of those came first, maybe,
but Saving Private Ryan was just...
Was years after Private Parts.
I don't...
Was it?
I don't even...
This is what's weird.
And then this is where I feel like my mind, my brain is going.
You're also a guy I bet every single film
would love to have you be a part of that film
because of what...
They were a year apart, I just looked it up.
Really?
What it says to the community or the industry
about what our film is,
like we have Paul Giamatti in this film, okay?
So don't even submit this person or that person.
I appreciate that and I like it,
but I don't see it.
I mean, that's very nice of you to say.
I feel the same thing about you gentlemen.
I feel the same way about you.
No, don't even try it.
No, no, I'm not, I'm sincere and honest.
You're keeping a view of your Moth Protector back there.
That's right.
When they say I'm in a movie, they're like,
oh, great, it's going straight to video.
That's good.
Now we know.
It's going straight to video.
I've been in plenty of stuff like that, that's for sure.
But Paul, you know, what's funny is, and I love,
and I feel like there have been all these,
through the decades that you've been working in film,
there have been all these moments,

like saving private parts.
And then in the 2000s, it was Sideways,
which really was so,
and I joked that it killed the Merlot business
single-handedly.
It did actually.
But it kind of did, right?
It did, yeah.
It actually did, I think.
Yeah, it seems.
How so?
I've seen that movie 50 times.
Because of how disparagingly you guys talk about Merlot?
Yeah.
This is sort of like for the Philistines.
Yeah.
Oh, dude, dude, what?
Yeah, Paul, you're even at the mention of Merlot,
the look of disgust on your face.
The guy goes crazy, yeah.
Which, yeah, I have no idea, yeah, yeah.
And I knew nothing about wine.
I know nothing about wine.
I don't, you know.
You don't drink it?
It's really like, not particularly now,
kind of gives me a headache.
What's the drink that you like?
What do you like?
I like tequila, I like mezcal.
Those are the two things that I like a lot.
Is it a, Paul, is it a problem?
Go ahead, we can talk about it.
That's why it's not.
Do you really, do you love it?
This show, I do love it.
And this show sure is not a problem.
I still am in the loving, I'm still in the love phase.
I'm in the honeymoon phase still with tequila and mezcal.
So everything's, everything's fine.
I took a sniff out of somebody's,
somebody had a beautiful glass of tequila on the rocks
yesterday that I took a sniff of.
I swear to God, I went into a time machine.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

You know those, I mean.
By the way, I watched Jason put his nose in the glass.
I was knee deep into my 20s.
I was going pretty fast on a highway
and there was all kinds of things in my pockets.
You had a candle on the dashboard.
Candle off the dashboard.
Paul, Jason used to drive with a lit candle on his dashboard.
Cause he wanted the cops to stop him so bad.
I should have put a co-jack light on my, on my roof.
You should have had the little light to just pop up
on the roof.
Why aren't you driving a lit candle?
What was the idea?
Just for nighttime or was it lit all the time?
Paul, it was just a guess.
I just, I was blind to my douchiness
and I was looking for Atmo, you know?
Jason, when you smell that tequila thing
and it took like a time machine,
do you, is there like a desire to drink it?
Or are you just like, ah, it was nice to smell it,
but I don't have any desire.
Yeah, no, not anymore.
Cause I did it.
And that, and I was thinking about it at the time
I was thinking, let's do this until you're sick of it
because you don't want to be doing this
when you're in your 40s or 50s.
Oh, that's interesting.
At the level I was doing.
That's what you thought at the time.
At the time.
Really?
You had that foresight to say,
I get it out of the way now.
Yeah, I'm a little black or white.
Can I be honest with you?
That's how I feel about it.
I am too, a little bit too.
Whenever I make a cake, I eat so,
I'm not even kidding, I eat so much of it
so that I don't ever want it for a long, long time.
It also makes all the cake go away

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

so you can't have anymore.
No, do you gentlemen, do you drink at all?
I don't drink anymore.
We'll eat all three of us, don't we?
None of you drink anymore.
Sean doesn't know.
Wait a second, Sean, you don't drink?
How do I not know that?
Jay, because New Year's Eve, two years ago.
Oh, right, when you got when you were playing games.
Sean disappeared, Sean was doing bit.
Paul, this is true.
We were at our friend's house
and we kept pimping Sean out to do various bits.
So he's standing up, it's true.
And Sean's doing bits and he's dancing,
he's doing all these moves
and he's doing impressions of people.
He's like a monkey at the table, like a monkey.
But he was hilarious and we were dying.
And then all of a sudden he wasn't around
and someone goes, where's Sean?
And he went to the hospital.
Oh my God.
Yeah, you had Scotty driving to the hospital.
You had palpitations, what happened?
Did you have like a palpitations?
I get AFib, I get AFib, brought on by alcohol.
Oh my God.
And so I would just deal with it.
I didn't, I wouldn't know when it comes on.
Like it would come on once or twice a year.
Wait a second, so you would have it regularly?
Yeah, like once or twice a year
and I could be at the grocery store,
I could be at a party, I could be anywhere,
I could be at church.
He's got his own entrance at Cedars.
He's got a special back door.
So they would, it's in the dock.
And now Jimmy Kimmel calls me paddles
because I would go so many times to the ER
and they would, you know, clear and get my heart back to it.
Yeah, and then he FaceTime back to the party

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

says, guys, I'm okay, it's just on schedule here.

So you just, you quietly,

you just quietly took yourself off to the hospital?

Yeah, yeah.

That's beautiful.

His set was done.

That's very thoughtful of you.

He's been known to, Paul, he's been known to

in the middle of the night, go to the hospital

and not even wake his husband, Scotty up

and then come home and then he tells Scotty the next day

that he was at the hospital.

Because you've had these heart palpitations.

Well, amongst others.

Atrial fibrillation.

What amongst others?

He's a hypochondriac, he likes to be taken care of.

That doesn't sound like hypochondriac,

this sounds like a real thing.

No, no, no, Paul, he had his own podcast

called Hypochondriacra, okay?

He's a hypochondriac, you love it.

I understand, I think I used to be one,

I'm kind of a recovering one,

I'm not as bad as I used to be.

Really?

Yes, I used to be.

How'd you get over it?

I'm not exactly sure, I think I outgrew it.

Well, what is a hypochondriac, like officially,

it's somebody who's irrationally afraid of germs?

No, no, no, no.

Or worried about their health, concerned with their health.

Yeah, yeah.

And a kind of constant monitoring of your health.

And making sort of these leaps that they have as sort of,

I fight again, I think everybody has that

to a certain degree, and I've had it before too.

Yeah, the older you got too, right?

And I had this thing recently where I had,

Jay, I was telling you about, remember I didn't play golf

and I had this sort of pain, I was like,

and I'm like, you know what, motherfucker?

It's just gas and relax and give yourself a break.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

Oh yeah, what was it?
And it went away.
You're joking.
Oh really?
Like in that moment, it just vanished.
And it just took it easy for a couple of days
and I just like, you know what?
Just stop giving it so much fucking credence
and stop thinking about yourself and do something else.
But you also said you had a three minute fart
that on the backside of that, you felt great.
That is true.
So if I did hummus, that happens.
You have a terrible gas.
The valve just gets stuck open.
Just know for the longest one forever.
Yeah.
I would love to go with you to the Mediterranean somewhere
and just get you into a hummus diet
and watch it all fall apart.
I would be, please excuse my friend.
I'm so sorry.
That's amazing.
Paul, I was going to,
the other thing I wanted to bring up was.
Sure.
Yes, please.
And going through all,
and I don't want to go through all your credits,
but one of the things.
God, no.
And I've been such a fan of yours for a long time.
And I even, and I'm a fan of yours
despite the fact that you're friends with Thoreau.
And like, I've made a lot.
What's the deal with Thoreau?
Well, we don't know.
He's one of our best friends,
but we love to throw as much at him as we can.
So let's have your best material now.
No, that's interesting.
Throw it at us.
Beautiful shot.
No, no, no.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

I haven't seen him in ages.
I haven't seen him in a long time.
And he.
You're better off.
Yeah, probably.
I think I probably am too.
He adamantly will not return my calls.
My texts, nothing.
Does he do this to you guys?
No, you may have a wrong number for him.
He's pretty good.
He likes contacting connection.
He loves doing text bits.
Not with me.
Loves his bits on the text.
Not with me.
Not with me.
Jason gets really mad with text bits.
I've noticed.
Well, it's just, I don't want to participate.
I mean, I'm happy to observe,
but then I'm constantly feeling like, oh God,
everyone is contributing and emerging
and double-click thumbs up or ha-ha.
And if I don't, I'm a dick or I hope
that people just assume I put my phone down.
No, I know.
I feel the same way.
I put my phone down and so, right?
So that they just think I'm not steering, right?
I agree.
Yeah, I agree.
Paulie, any good,
Oh, is it Paulie now?
Yeah.
Paulie.
No, it's fantastic.
I want to be a Paulie with you.
No, no, I appreciate it.
Give me one good theater story.
Just something went horribly wrong.
Here he comes.
That's a tough thing.
Did you ever forget your lines?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

Paul, go ahead, Sean.

No, I've never, a guy, speaking of heart attacks, a guy had, I was doing a show once and a guy, I was in a little black box experimental theater in Seattle where I lived, where I moved out to Seattle and I started acting out there.

And a guy got up in the second row, I was watching him and I was on stage doing this long monologue, 40-minute monologue.

Oh my God.

And the guy...

Doing the monologue and watching the guy in the second row.

Yeah, that was, no, and I and the guy because he was getting really dopey looking.

And he was, and I thought something's wrong with this guy.

I mean, his close quarters, a little shitty little experimental theater.

And he got up and climbed over the guy in front of him, came up on stage, pissed and shat himself and dropped.

No way.

And he, and he, and he, he'd had a heart attack.

I didn't realize he'd had a heart attack until, and I was playing in the show.

You thought it was just your performance? I thought, well, people thought it was a set because in the performance I was playing a, what do you call it?

The guy who puts his hands, you know, a faith healer.

A healer.

A healer.

I was playing a healer.

And, you know, and I suck at improv-ing and things like that.

I could have, it could have been a gold moment for me, but I didn't, but I sort of knelt down and they came up and got the guy off.

I heard later, actually years later,

I didn't even know that he'd had a heart attack, a small heart attack.

So anyway, that's about it, Sean.

That's not a great story.

Wait, wait, wait.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

That's an amazing story.
That's an amazing, like one of the best ones
we've ever had.
And you're like, I don't know if I got anything.
Shooting and pissing himself was the relief, was it?
Now, is that common, by the way,
when you have a heart attack to empty?
I think he was also kind of having a,
yes, that's true, is it?
Do you evacuate fully or do you have a heart attack?
Or is it just frontal?
Do you have a cardiac event?
I've never heard about pooping when you have a heart attack.
Is that true?
I think maybe it can happen.
Well, yeah.
You might lose, like, your faculties or whatever.
That's a whole different thing, though.
I think he did, yes.
Well, he was on stage with you.
Did he die?
He was on stage with me for a while.
Yeah.
That's crazy.
I don't know if there's anybody who enjoys pooping
or talking about it more than Bateman says to me today.
He goes, he goes, hey, can you play golf on Thursday?
I said, no, I can't,
because I'm getting a colonoscopy on Friday.
So Thursday's my prep day.
And I said, let me know,
I'm gonna be at home in that prep phase.
And I go, let me know if you wanna come by and observe.
And he wrote, very kind.
What's the latest to let you know?
I just not sure if my Thursday's gonna fill up, you know?
I had you, you finally had one?
Did you have one?
I'm having it this week.
I'm on Friday.
Oh, you are?
It's actually fantastic.
Listen, I can tell you, I enjoy the hell out of it.
It's really, I enjoy it.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

That little twilight thing they send you off into,
and you wake up real chatty, too.
I have a bunch of jokes for the doctor.
And then the rest of the day,
are you exhausted the rest of the day?
You feel fresh.
I felt very fresh after.
Paul, I've said this on this podcast a couple of times.
You will need a shower, will.
But when I got my colonoscopy
and my bare ass is hanging out,
right when they put the anesthesia in my arm,
they said, count back to 10, I go, 10, nine.
Oh, I feel it.
And right when I passed out, I go,
whatever you do, don't touch my asshole.
And then I pass it out.
And you got that out, that all came out, you said.
And I heard laughing as I went out.
Beautiful.
Well, it reminds me of one of my favorite jokes, right?
Guy walks into a, to a, to a,
He's gonna ruin it.
He's gonna ruin it.
I know that, I think I know this joke.
No, please, please, please.
I like this joke, too.
I think I know what it is.
The guy leans over the table and he drops his pants,
and he's ready for his exam,
and the doctor comes in and the doctor says,
oh, kid, oh, Jerry, this time, no hard on.
And the patient turns around, he says,
my name's Andrew.
And the doctor says, I'm Jerry.
No, that's not even close, Jay-Z.
It's not?
Some fucking tables.
Can I just let you tell this?
That actually confused me.
I mean, it was confusing.
Paul, Paul, if you can tell me.
I'm confused now.
It wasn't the joke I thought it was gonna be,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

and I'm confused now.
Paul, no, you should know,
you should know we both got quiet
because we wanted to let him hang himself
because he has tried to tell this joke 30 times.
It was my favorite joke.
And it's so embarrassing.
On this show, or is this the first time?
Oh, on the show, on the golf course, at dinner,
and he does it all the time.
How do I mess that up?
One time he taught it, one time he said,
he goes, and the guy comes in and he says,
don't get a hard on Kevin,
and Kevin says, my name's not Kevin.
And I go, Kevin says my name's not Kevin.
Wait, but I think I was conscious of that this time,
and I think I said it right.
No, I don't think you did.
The guy's on the table, and he's dead.
He's puzzling about that.
The doctor walks in.
Doctor walks in, what happened?
The doctor walks in, and he says,
and the guy says, okay, Jerry,
don't get a hard on this time.
And the patient goes, my name's not Jerry.
And the doctor goes, no, my name is Jerry.
Very good.
I just punched it up, I said, I'm good.
When you throw an extra name in there,
it confuses it.
I have to say, I'm Jerry, he's good.
I like just I'm Jerry, that's funny.
By the way, leave it to baby,
I made it longer and more complicated.
And unfunny.
I'm Jerry's funny, that's a funny joke.
I have to say, it's a very funny joke.
If you give it time, don't get a hard on Jerry.
And Andrew, who's actually related,
who grew up with Jerry's cousin,
they went to this, they're from the same town, says,
this is why we need our writers.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

This is why we need our writers.
It's true, you really feel the lack of writing,
don't you?
We do need our writers, we do love our writers.
Who told you that joke?
You?
That's right.
Sean told you the joke.
So speaking of our writers,
one of the things I love,
so this is what I was getting at before,
and again, it goes without saying how much
I enjoy watching you perform.
I appreciate it.
I'm a legit fan.
But in the last couple of years,
the thing that I've really loved watching you in
is Billions.
And I think that that is a performance
that is so, just deserves so much more acclaim.
And there's a specific,
and for people who haven't watched it,
it's really great, and it's Paul,
and it's Damien Lewis, and amongst a million other
really great performers.
I need to, I want to.
I've heard nothing but great things about it.
I know.
And I love me some Damien Lewis, too.
I think he's just outstanding.
Yeah, he's great.
But you, Paul, have this moment in the end
of one of the seasons where you're left on the bed,
I don't wanna ruin it.
I mean, it's a few years old,
but you're left on the bed and you are crying
because it seems like your world has imploded.
And as the camera comes around,
it reveals that you're laughing.
And it was one of the great,
I thought it was such an incredible device.
It was a device, if you will.
Smart episode, yeah.
But it was a fucking brilliant episode.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

I didn't even see it in that film.
It was such a small target for you to hit.
Yeah, because an actor would read that in the script
and then you'd have to think,
okay, well, how could I laugh
that could believably sound like crying?
It was tricky.
It's a master class.
And unfortunately, some of it was on my back.
That's actually what made some of it easier,
was it was on my back.
So it was like, I could do sort of like making it look
like I was hunched over laughing or something.
But I think actually part of it is too,
when I start laughing, I start crying, actually.
So it actually, it wasn't the, you know,
because if I, and I can get, I'm able,
making yourself laugh is tricky, actually.
It can be, but I feel like it's like faking a sneeze
or something like that.
Like it's hard to make an authentic sounding sneeze.
Yeah, oh, it is hard to do it.
Are you a good crier?
Can you cry on cue?
Sometimes I'm not necessarily,
I'm not one of those people that can do it on cue.
And I'm not one of those people that's like,
which I do you want kind of thing.
Laura Linney knows how to do that.
Laura Linney can, oh my God.
My mom could nail that in a second.
Oh, hey, Paul.
But wait a minute.
Because she only had one eye, Paul.
Oh, wait a minute.
Did she have tears out of the fake eye?
No, fake eye.
She couldn't afford that one.
No, I'm serious, were the ducks, I'm serious.
That one came with a palm that she couldn't.
It was a hole in her head.
Yeah, it was a hole in her head.
Did she lose, I'm sorry, I'm sorry at it.
Did she lose the eye in somewhere?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

Yeah, she was two, when she was two years old, she had cancer.
Tracy found it and brought it to the show.
We actually had, we've both,
we've all three of us have held her eye.
We did it on stage in Wisconsin.
Actual eye and formaldehyde or galasai?
Galasai, yeah.
Wow, that's amazing.
Paul, is there like a,
are you somebody who seeks out,
like develop things for themselves?
Are you just an actor who's just like,
you know what, my agents just call me
when there's something that you feel is right.
Otherwise, I'm not gonna go find a writer,
put this thing together, right?
It was more that kind of thing for a long time.
I made some like, not unsuccessful attempts
to produce some stuff,
not even necessarily stuff for me to be in.
And I managed to make some movies.
And I did a television show that I then appeared in
called Lodge 49 that nobody watched.
And it's a, it's a nice show.
Oh yeah, tell me about that show.
It's a really good show.
It's a really good show.
And yeah, it was on for two seasons on AMC
and nobody watched it, but it was a good show.
And just because the writer, I met the guy
and I read the thing and thought,
wow, somebody should help this guy make this thing.
Cause it's really great.
But, but I haven't, only lately now,
and as I finished billions,
I've actually been doing a podcast
because for the past couple months,
and that was something that I did develop
with a guy that I know was a philosopher
and there's animation and stuff like that.
That's kind of the first thing
that I feel like I really did on my own.
Oh, that's cool.
The podcast is Chinwagging, is that right?

It's called Chinwag, yeah.

Chinwag, Chinwag.

What does that mean?

What is a Chinwag?

It's like a, I think it's a British term
for like just shooting the shit.

Oh, I never heard of that.

Yeah.

Chinwag, Chinwag.

But, and it's a comedy podcast,
but you get into all sorts of different areas.

You got, you talk about...

UFOs and ghosts and Bigfoot and stuff like that.

I'm in.

I'm in.

Cause I like stuff like that.

I do too.

And I was like, you know what, I'm tired of not,
I'm tired of not talking about Bigfoot
and doing shit about UFOs and ghosts and stuff.

I really was.

I really am.

Really?

Do you watch Ancient Aliens?

I do watch Ancient Aliens sometimes.

I love it.

I love that show.

I love it.

How the universe works.

I've known, I haven't seen that.

What's Ancient Aliens?

Yeah, what is Ancient Aliens?

On History Channel.

What's it on?

It's on the History Channel?

Yeah.

It's all about conspiracy theories
about like why civilizations just died out.

Like the Mayans is like, or the Egyptians.

It's like all this stuff happens and then it's just done.

It's like.

Chariots of the gods.

It's all about UFOs, visited earth back in the day
and they built the pyramids and all this kind of stuff.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

And we have legitimate people sort of espousing on these theories and yeah.

Fairly.

They're legitimate.

In their field.

They're legitimate.

In their field.

Is that a degree you can get fairly legitimate?

Yes.

Do you?

I guess probably so.

Shatner actually was on,

was Shatner on Ancient Aliens?

Okay, I'm in.

Yes, he was.

He was.

And we actually talked, I talked to Shatner.

He was the captain of a spaceship.

So yeah, he's quite legitimate.

Yeah, yeah.

Paul, do you, so what have you gleaned from these episodes about say, for instance UFOs?

Are they, what's your feeling about it?

Well, I'm a believer.

I've never seen anything like this, but I'm a believer.

And stuff is super weird now.

I mean, all the weirdness now of the government saying they existed.

They just opened up a new division.

They just did, yeah.

They did, but I'm confused.

It's like on the one hand,

it's a bunch of guys say they're real and then they walk that back very quickly and it's really confusing.

And NASA just, is it in NASA that they just opened up a new thing?

I don't know.

Jason's right.

I read that too.

That there's some part of the government that is opening a new.

They're doing, I know that NASA's been looking for.

And if it had any teeth to it,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

if they were really curious about it,
I would think they would not tell us.
They would let us know when they were done.
You would think.
Here's what's like the intelligence community.
It's out though.
We had Neil deGrasse Tyson on our show ages ago, right?
Well, one of the first episodes we did
and he made the point that if these things,
these supernatural or extraterrestrial visits
or all these things were actually occurring,
we live in a time where people take something
like a billion photographs a day in videos
pointed in every direction.
And yet there's no.
There's nothing.
Because they don't want to be.
There's lots of actual,
there's lots of videos that they can't.
And they are, maybe in the army.
The Navy videos are pretty.
But don't you think we live in a world now too
that if it was, if there was actual proof.
You could hide it.
That people, well, no,
I think we live in a culture now
where people would be like, yeah, that's kind of cool.
Anyway, what are you guys doing?
Don't give a shit.
Well, actually, it would just get buried
in the avalanche of shit that's out there all the time.
We just end up in just like a really
non-consequential like TikTok,
like, I went with my family this weekend
and we saw a UFO, you know, in that mechanical voice.
I love when I stumped that that smart scientist
to grass Tyson on my whole mirror.
How'd you do that?
Oh, you should go back to him and listen.
It's a real great listen.
Yeah.
Did you tell him the hard on joke
and see if he understood it or?
I had not yet heard that joke.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

Here you go, scientist.
He is out.
See if he can figure this one out.
Who's named Kevin and who's Andrew, smart man?
Jason was trying to figure out.
What did you stump him with?
He was trying to figure out about
figuring out if you could-
Time travel.
Time traveling, if you put a mirror far enough away,
could you see-
It was about the speed of light.
The speed of light, and would you be able to see it?
But the question was so long and involved,
you could see Neil deGrasse Tyson,
who really is a big brain guy,
who figures out a lot of stuff.
He's glazing.
Glazing and really becoming quite confounded.
And then he got, you can see him
because he's getting angry that he was having
a special time with a dumb dog.
And at which point I said,
Neil, do you think that they could build a telescope
big enough that you could go back in time
through mirrors to see the beginning of Jason's question?
Nice.
That he liked.
We earned him back on that.
We earned him back.
Very good.
I'm so into that, Paul.
So Billions is-
Yeah, take a listen to it.
Billions is over.
Yeah, yes it is.
Now it's ending.
Yeah, we just finished it.
Now it's ending, because you guys kind of,
you stuttered, stopped, you stopped,
and then you guys did another season.
Is that kind of how it went?
Well, the COVID thing, you know,
shuttering down, and so we had,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

in the middle of the fifth season,
then we finished that half in the sixth,
and then we just did the seventh,
and now it's-
Wow, good for you.
Seven years.
Was that a great, good positive experience
working into your-
Yeah.
Oh yeah, it was great.
I mean, I was 15 minutes from my house
here in Brecon, which was great.
And Mike, you know, it's nice I could be around my kid.
He was a teenager, and all of that was great.
Yeah, it was great.
And the people were great.
There was no assholes anywhere on it.
It was great.
Good for you.
That's great.
You know what I always say,
if you look around, you can't find the asshole on a set,
it's probably you.
Yeah.
You do say that.
You do say that a lot.
You do say that once a day.
I'm looking for, this reminded me of my colonoscopy,
which is all about my asshole, you know?
Great, way to bring it all back, guys.
We have a classic guest with us today.
Paul, what are you doing when you're not acting?
What are you doing like to fill the time?
Boy, you, God, it sounds like you're just reading that.
No, I'm just more robotic.
Paul, what are you doing when you're not acting?
Great question.
It's a little eerie.
No, because I want to know,
because I know you're doing the podcast,
but like, what else?
I do the podcast now, and I read a lot.
I don't know.
It's a little bit like I'm kind of,

I don't have a job now,
and I am a little anxious about it,
because I am a little bit, I think,
of a workaholic, actually.
Like, what will you do for the summer?
Okay, again, I have to do the podcast,
for one thing.
You're gonna do the podcast.
Yeah, and then I don't know.
This is just terrible.
I get all flummoxed.
You walk across the Brooklyn Bridge,
this is what I imagine your day is,
you walk across the Brooklyn Bridge,
you go get coffee, you go to the Strand,
she might meet somebody for lunch,
you walk back, you'll take a nap,
you'll go for dinner,
maybe you'll go to Williamsburg.
That's actually pretty accurate.
That's terrifyingly accurate.
That's actually pretty close.
The thing that is very nice of what you do
is that you work all the time,
so that we get to watch you.
I love that, I can count on you
being in something once a year, at least.
You know?
That's been the case.
I hate these great, high-quality actors
that are like, so goddamn,
like, I only wanna work once every five years.
But they're picky, that's not a bad thing.
You're very picky, though, too.
It's just, I feel like you...
I think there's been more things
that you haven't treated yourself
to watching that I've done,
not if I'm not of the highest quality.
There's plenty out there.
Paul, I know you're being very modest.
I appreciate that, but I'm not,
I should have been pickier and so on.
No, you're being very modest, and I will say,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

and I think what Jason is getting at is that you are,
if I look at a film or a show that's coming out of something
and I see Paul G, your name, I'm like,
all right, this thing has a certain...
They know it, oh, I mean, good thing.
Well, I appreciate that.
Yeah, it's true, it's a true...
Now, saying that, what...
Here are the list of things that you've done
that I have not liked.
Oh, right.
Yeah.
Because we like to end the show...
And I'm gonna have to go alphabetical.
Oh, I love that, great.
I'm gonna have to go alphabetical
because the list is one.
Excellent.
No, but Paul, but I was gonna say,
you've done so many things,
and we often ask people here, we're like,
oh, what have you done like,
you've done a lot of this, you've done a lot of that,
what would you like to do?
I mean, you've kind of done comedy,
you've done drama, you've done period.
You've explored a lot of areas as an actor.
Is there one zone that you like,
that you feel really comfortable in
that excites you still?
Well, I'd like to do more theater.
That would be nice.
I would like to do goofy or comedic stuff,
which I used to do a long time ago,
and I haven't really gotten to do something like that
in a long time.
I'm not comfortable necessarily doing that at all.
But goofy, I'll bet not winking though, right?
I'll bet like authentic sort of like
Coen Brothers type of eccentric characters
that are very funny, but they don't know they're funny.
Yes, that would be nice, something like that.
What if he wants to wink, man?
No. Why not winking with you and the non-winking?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

Just let him wink. Winking would be like,
what do you mean, like winking?
Like super, super broad and soft morrick,
and you're overqualified for that.
You think so? I don't know.
Super broad and soft morrick.
Do you guys still love to perform on film and TV?
Do you still love it?
Do you still feel like it gives you the thing
it always gave you?
Do you feel...
It's just a good question.
I was gonna ask you the same thing.
It is a good question.
I'm curious.
It's like...
I love a set.
I just think it's...
I'm so comfortable on a set.
I love how many people it takes
to make something. You grew up on a set.
I know, but I didn't know then
how complicated it is to make fake life
and how many people you need to actually get it done.
You know, that it's not just the...
Love it, love it, love it.
You love the process of it and all that.
More than the product.
Uh-huh. I get that.
You know, to answer your question for me,
I think at this age,
it really now finally for the first time in my life,
it really, really matters what it is.
Because if I'm gonna spend all that time,
energy, resources, all of it,
I'm gonna give 110%.
I agree.
And if it works, right?
If it doesn't work great,
that's fine, but as long as I believe in it,
I think that's my answer.
I feel the same way.
I feel like, yeah, and life and kids
and also just sort of feeling content

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

on a day-to-day basis is,
I put such a premium on that and being happy,
I put such a premium rather than on work.
And the last couple of years,
I have not really done anything.
I have not said yes to anything in a long time
until this year.
And that feels good.
That's felt good.
It feels really good.
And there were things that maybe you should have done,
but I was just like, I just didn't feel...
But you don't regret it.
No, and luckily I was doing other stuff
so I could continue to make a living
and could afford to say no,
but I just wasn't feeling it.
I mean, and Jay, I know that you feel,
because you're doing so much more directing
and you've had the opportunity, again,
I don't wanna speak for you,
but as an observer that you do a lot of like,
I don't wanna do, you just wanna do this stuff
that excites you.
Yeah, I wanna be, I really like being challenged
because I know there's gonna,
I've had enough periods in my life where I'm not confident
or I'm not feeling up to a challenge
and I know those times will occur again.
So while I'm feeling eager to take off
possibly more than I can handle,
I wanna take advantage of those moments.
Because I know I'm gonna be a coward later, again.
Carl, what about you, the same question to you?
Yeah, no, I think I feel a lot of the same things
that you guys were just saying,
but I feel like I'm a little bit in a place
that you are, Wilbur, it's like,
I think I just wanna, and all of you guys,
I just wanna do the thing that is really gonna matter
because it's otherwise, I don't have the energy,
I'm old, I'm getting old, man.
And it's like, I'm with you.
It's like, so I have to just,

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it's gotta be something I really, really wanna do.
But it's been interesting doing other things, too.
It's like, I'd like to, I would like to draw again.
I would like to try to write.
I don't know if I can fucking read,
I read all the fucking time,
but I don't know if I can write something, you know?
You should.
I would like to try, I'd like to try different things.
So I think I need to say no more,
and I think I need to just do the things I wanna do,
for sure.
Well, how about this, when you're done with your walk
across the bridge to get the coffee and your dinner,
like Will said, and you should write a couple pages.
I would try.
I think I'll try.
You know what you should do,
you should get over there to the Belasco Theater
and see Shawnee and Good Night Oscar.
I would like to see you.
I would very much like to see that.
We're gonna get you some house seats, Paul.
I would very much like to see that.
I would love to see that.
Here's what's gonna happen.
I'm headed east at the end of this week,
and I'm gonna come to the city,
we're gonna go and have dinner, or we're gonna have lunch.
I would love that.
Downtown, and then we're gonna talk
about what you're gonna write.
I would love it.
For 3%, Will, you're offering his agenting for 3%.
No, no, I'm just gonna help him.
It's gonna be his idea, and I want that to write.
That actually would be, I would welcome that.
That would help me.
It would help me.
I need help.
I just have a conversation to get ideas going for himself,
so he doesn't need my help, but just, yeah.
You're just offering your muse.
And a muse for hire.

Why don't you call it, Paul,
why don't you call it Moth Catcher?
I like it.
I like it too.
Moth Catcher, fantastic.
That's a start.
That's a great start.
Moth Protector.
Isn't that what I call it?
Moth Protector.
That's a Moth Protector.
That's a Moth Trap.
What's the Moth Trap?
Moth Trap.
Moth Trap, Moth Trap.
That's a good one.
That's a good title.
Is that a Moth Trap?
Thank you.
That's a Techno Thriller.
What was the last book that you read
that you were excited about that you really liked?
Do you remember?
I read a lot of crappy mysteries, is what I read.
I read a lot of crappy thrillers
and crappy mysteries and spy novels.
Oh, I read a lot of spy novels.
I do too.
I read a lot of stuff like that.
That's the funny thing.
I don't read much highbrow stuff, actually.
I read a lot of spy novels.
Yeah, I enjoy that stuff a lot.
I really like stuff like that.
Do you ever read any of those Lynn Dayton books?
Yeah, that's what I just read.
Actually, I was gonna say what I just read
was a fucking Lynn Dayton book.
I said, Canny.
It is on Canny.
So the Bernie Gunther series, right?
So I read all nine of those.
Yeah.
A couple of summers ago.

Those are fantastic.
Yeah, those are great.
I can see that.
Sean, right?
We are.
These guys can have a good lunch.
We are.
I just read a bit of Lynn Dayton.
You would be a great fucking Bernie Gunther.
I would.
That's amazing.
Clown sitting on the Brooklyn Bridge,
each with a book sitting on a bench.
We're not even talking to each other.
No, no, no.
Like some great old couple.
So if you love those Lynn Dayton,
I've got another series for you.
I'll bring him a book.
That would be fun.
Bring him a book.
That would be lovely.
That would be lovely.
Oh my God.
I'm going to.
Please.
By the way.
Paul, what, now what are we looking at
just before we let you go?
What are we looking at for the summer?
If everything is kind of shut down,
are you gonna hit the beach?
Are you gonna get in the water?
Are you gonna, what are you gonna do?
I know you're on the swim team.
Yeah, I was on the swim team.
I'd like to get back in the water.
Maybe I'll go up to Cape Cod or something like that.
I don't have a home up there,
but I would go up there, a main or something like that.
Maybe somewhere like that.
That would be nice.
Well, let me just say this.
There are a lot of people,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

a lot of really bougie people who listen to our show.
Give me your email address right there.
And if you've got a real nice play,
if you've got a nice spread up there in the Cape
or one of the islands in Vineyard or Nantucket,
and you'd like to have Paul Giamatti
as your house guest for a few days.
He's on our Instagram.
Terrific.
Somebody could host him.
Let us know, and he's gonna spend a lot of,
during the day, don't bother him.
He's reading Linda Dayton books
and he's gonna be at the pool.
What's that for dinner time?
Don't approach him if he's in the middle of the chapter.
Give him a nice glass of mescal.
He's not gonna drink your wine,
but give him a nice glass of mescal.
And then he'll discuss whatever you want.
Awesome.
Paul, you're welcome.
Is that good?
We've set up your summer pool.
That's fantastic.
Thank you, thank you.
By the way, all jokes,
you're gonna find yourself in a fucking yacht
in the Mediterranean
because this is gonna be incredible.
Oh, shit, that would be great.
That's the demographic?
That's the audience.
It's all yachting.
That's the best thing right now?
It's fantastic.
It's a real yachting crowd.
Fantastic.
Paul, it is so nice to see you again.
And to echo what Will said,
I'm here in the city for quite a while,
so maybe we could grab a bite or something.
Nothing would make me happier
than to have lunch with you guys.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

I'm gonna get your contact info from our guys,
if that's okay, Paul, I'm gonna reach out.
Absolutely, it'd be a pleasure.
Okay.
Paul, when I'm out there sometime,
you guys FaceTime me from your lunch.
Sure, sure.
Jason, we love you.
We love you, but Paul can't wait.
We love you, Jason.
But Paul can't wait.
It's gonna be amazing.
Likewise.
Likewise.
Thank you, Paul.
It's such a pleasure to meet you, my friend.
Yeah, real pleasure to meet you guys.
Thanks for doing this.
Thank you very much.
Yeah, all right, Paul.
My pleasure.
See you down the road. Bye, Paul.
Bye.
Well, Will, it was worth the wait.
Did you know him?
Will?
I feel like I met him briefly.
I knew that he was friends with Thoreau, their old friends.
And like I said,
I've always just been such an admirer of his.
Yeah, the credits are just endless.
And that's what I meant, right?
Amazing.
He's an actor's actor.
We all, as actors, we're like,
if you were doing something, they'd go,
oh yeah, by the way, Giamatti's gonna do it.
You'd be like, oh man, this thing is really,
this is really a blue ship event we got to play.
And I met him once at the Golden Globes
years and years and years ago,
but I didn't chat with him until right now.
And talking to him at length now,
you feel like he's one of those people like,

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

oh, I feel like I've known him forever.

Like, yeah.

And he's the guy you'd give any part to.

Yeah.

Yeah, he really does have that.

Just there's something about him,
when he inhabits a character, you're just with him.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And he brings so much sort of pathos to every character.

I even enjoy watching his Verizon commercials
when he's playing Einstein.

I mean, great.

I know.

I can't believe we didn't bring it out.

I was going to, I was going to,
but I was like, I totally forgot.

When he plays Santa Claus, right?

Yeah.

Because his service was complete.

No, he's playing Einstein, you stupid fuck.

Oh, Einstein.

I thought it was Santa Claus.

Yeah, Einstein.

His service was complete.

God, I wish we would have brought it up
and you would have said.

So when you play Santa and the Verizon commercials,
you stupid dick.

You stupid fuck.

Listen, you know what though?

I didn't know he was in Brooklyn.

He lives so close to the Belasco.

Bye.

Bye.

Bye.

Stik history to youtube. terriflores.com
smart.

Yes.

smart.

Was

smart else is 100% organic and artisan Boy handcrafted by
Bennett, Barbfort Co Michael Grant.

Terry and Robin.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Paul Giamatti"

I'm Jeff smart loss this episode was recorded on June 5th our next episode will be out in a week wherever you listen to podcasts or you can listen to it right now early on Amazon music or early and add free by subscribing to Wondry Plus in Apple podcasts or the Wondry app

Hey listeners you need to know that Wondry's shocking true crime podcast over My Dead Body is back for a fourth season Gone Hunting. This newest season covers the story of Mike Williams. It was Mike's sixth wedding anniversary when he set off on a hunting trip into the gator infested swamps of North Florida. He figured he'd be back in time to take his wife Denise out to celebrate but he never came back. Friends and loved ones feared he met his fate through bad luck and a group of hungry alligators leaving his young family behind except that's not what happened at all and after 17 years a kidnapping and the uncovering of a secret love triangle the truth would finally be revealed. Enjoy Over My Dead Body Gone Hunting on the Wondry app or wherever you get your podcasts. You can listen to Over My Dead Body early and add free on Wondry Plus. Get started with your free trial at [wondry.com slash plus](https://wondry.com/slash/plus).