

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Bonjour à tous nos amis, nous sommes ici aujourd'hui.
Listener before you change the channel.
Sorry, I was just trying to do, I thought that we had like an international market.
So I was like, you know, trying to say hi.
But now I can do it like this as well.
Welcome to Smarley's, maybe I'll come here and take one coffee, a cigarette,
or maybe I'll go see my mistress and then I'll hit every cliché in the book.
Welcome to, it's an all new Smarley's.
Will, you fired up about your guest?
I actually am.
Oh my God, wait, let me guess.
It's an ingenue, and that's why you're trying to be nice and cool.
A little gel in his hair.
Yeah, your hair looks amazing.
Yeah, it's banging.
Is your guest somebody that you have a crush on?
Do you have a crush on your guest?
I have a major talent crush on this person, yeah.
And don't laugh.
It's a man and he's got a smoky laugh.
Don't laugh, don't laugh.
If your laugh is too distinct, man, don't laugh.
Now he's farting.
Shit.
High class, high class.
No.
Now you guys, you'll definitely get it now, you guys.
Oh my God.
First of all, I can tell you a bong water, right?
I was going to tell you about my birthday dinner last night.
Yeah, hey, happy birthday, Sean.
Thank you, thank you.
Did you finish all the cupcakes, Will, and I sent you?
Yes, that was incredible.
I didn't finish them, but yeah.
Whatever sweet treat it was.
I got the second I opened it.
Thank you, by the way.
The second I opened it, I've poured a glass of giant milk,
and I went right into it.
Okay.
But the next night, so Scotty gets this,
so Scotty gets this reference to, I mean, I'm sorry,
referral to this restaurant that's on Billionaire's Row

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in New York City, right?
You know, on 57th Street.
Central Park South.
Yeah, whatever that is.
Was it Central Park South or on 57th Street?
You keep going to Billionaire's Row.
Is that what they call it now?
I never use that term.
I don't know.
That's what I heard.
I have no idea.
I'm not a billionaire.
So you have to get a reservation.
This conversation's over.
Yeah, you have to get a reservation, right?
So Scotty asked this person who asked this person.
Would you go to the Russian Tea Room?
That's right above it, actually.
Yeah.
So we go into this building.
It's crazy.
It's got all this security.
We're like, we're scared to walk in, and we walk in,
and we're like, hey, I have a reservation,
and it's on the 100th floor, the 100th floor.
Oh, Will, didn't I send you the video?
Yeah, you did.
That's why I keep going.
Yeah, I know.
Oh, gosh, hang on a second.
Let me check, see.
It must be in my trash or something.
It was really late.
Jay, it was really late.
I didn't want to disturb you.
Oh, wait, I'll show you.
You should have looked at them.
They looked like a couple of dudes
were in from Schenectady, you know what I mean?
They were so excited to be there.
Look at the heights of this.
Wait, does this restaurant rotate slowly?
No.
Look at this, Jay.

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Look at this.

Look at this.

That's Scotte, and that's you.

By the way, they just look like animated LinkedIn profiles.

Look at that.

Both of you guys.

So it is rotating.

No, my camera's rotating.

My camera's rotating.

Look at that.

Isn't that wild, that view?

Yeah.

I never want to do it again, though,
because it was heights.

I couldn't do it.

So guess what?

So I talked to Sean before he left,
and he goes, and he's telling me he was going,
are you scared?

He's like, yeah, I'm scared.

I mean, well, you were scared.

I was so scared.

I was really scared.

I don't need to do that.

Are you guys okay with that?

I'm not okay with that.

I don't like to be up that high.

I don't either, really.

I don't really either.

The food was good, though.

Yeah.

But it's kind of good for weight loss, right?

You go up there.

You lose your appetite.

You don't really want to eat a bunch.

Yeah, a little bit.

Is that why the restaurant's for skinny folk?

Yeah.

By the way, there's only five tables.

Not even kidding.

There we go.

Because it's a restaurant for the residences.

It's a nearly spit take on my microphone.

At the loop around to weight loss.

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Guys, this body's no fluke.

I've told you before.

It sure isn't.

That's what makes it worse, is that it's by design.

Hey, you know what's great by design?

Oh, here it comes.

A nice segue into it.

But it turns out that it's really organic, is a career that is just full of incredible performances of varying sizes and characters and degrees and things.

Somebody who started, Sean, you will enjoy, because we know you love the theater.

We know you're on Broadway still currently.

The Bolasco Theater.

The Tony Award winning.

Hold for applause.

Tony Award.

Oscar, I love you.

Is that what it's called?

For Good Night to BASCO, the story of hot sauce.

But good night, Oscar.

So this person, you're going to be able to get some great theater stories out of because he started in the theater.

Not only he just started in the theater, he also ended up starting a theater in which he went back to and performed for 40 years or more in this theater group, a very well known theater group.

He did a lot of incredible performances.

He's then gone on to do so many iconic roles over the years.

He's made 147 feature films.

No way.

He's been in some of my favorite feature films, some of my favorite performances of all time.

He's been nominated for four Academy Awards and Golden Globes and Sags and all the other stuff.

But for me, apart from his incredible performances in some of my favorite films, Like to Live in Diane L.A. or Platoon, he was also Bobby Peru, maybe my favorite character who I went as for Halloween once.

Guys, it's Willem Dafoe.

No way.

That's a bookie.

No way.

Good morning.

Oh, God.

Willem Dafoe.

Wow.

I almost pulled the thing off the little camera.

Every time you said, well, I reached for the thing.

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He knows how to respond to a cue?

Yeah, well.

Yeah.

What a pleasure to meet you.

Hi, everybody.

Hi.

It's so nice to meet you.

Talent crush thing, but thanks.

Well, it's such a thrill to meet you.

And I did say it, so I want to kind of get it out of the way.

I did in the year that Wild at Heart came out.

I went, like a month later, I went as Bobby Peru to a Halloween party.

And I bought some vampire teeth at a store down on 8th Street.

And I took a lighter or something.

I made him like flat and dark and I put him in.

And I wore a Bolo tie.

And I won't say what he kept saying.

What were you kept saying?

Like catchphrase?

Yeah.

His catchphrase.

He kept saying, he's like, what is it?

You can smell your pussy or something.

I don't know.

It's terrible.

It was something terrible.

So that's when you were just barking all night?

Yeah.

I met a lot of friends as you're going to imagine.

Sure.

Yeah.

Anyway, so I want to get that out of the way.

But Willem Dafoe, what a thrill to meet you, man.

Great.

Thanks.

It's so cool.

Yeah, it's nice to be here.

We have no questions.

We have no questions.

Okay, ciao.

We do.

So it's true, right?

I was writing in the intro, Willem, that you started, let's start at the beginning, you started in the theater.

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I know that you're from Wisconsin and you moved to New York and you got a meeting. Well, you're doing sort of theater in Wisconsin, Milwaukee in some avant-garde theater. And then you moved to New York and started doing that there.

Am I right in that?

That's right.

I still do theater, but less because for many years I had a company.

So every day I was going into work, you know, the way, you know, regular people do. Yeah.

You know, really, every day that I was not on a movie set, I was either at the theater working or we were on tour.

It was really a whole life.

One thing that's worth mentioning.

I did start doing theater in Milwaukee with a small group called Theater X, but then when I moved to New York, because I had ants in my pants and ambition and also it was a time where a lot of things were happening in New York and I felt like I wanted to be there, particularly the music scene.

Not that I'm a musician, but it felt like stuff was going on.

So I went there, but I think it's fun to tell you that I really intended to be, you know, a conventional theater actor, you know, audition and all that.

What year was this?

Well, initially I went in '75, but then this company in Milwaukee that had seen me in my brief period at school called me back to go on tour with them.

And I did.

I worked with them for a couple of years.

They were called Theater X.

They had a, it was a company run, small company.

We did original work, which was very cool.

We toured mostly internationally, not so much in the States.

Wow.

Yeah.

That's what they did for a couple of years.

Just doing a bunch of different plays?

We were making plays, you know, generally.

Right.

Originals.

They had a writer that worked with us.

And occasionally we'd do plays, but they were kind of unconventional.

Where were you going internationally?

You just, you take your merry band of actors?

Mostly Germany and Holland at the time.

There was a very good place called the McCree in Amsterdam.

And it was really where I got my education because they brought in theater.

They had lots of money and they brought theater from all over the world.

And when I was there, I'd see things, you know, from Japan.

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I'd see things from Africa.

I'd see a lot of the great, you know, Peter Brook.

I'd see lots of great theater companies from Europe.

Peter Brook, who's sort of with like one of the Godfrey,

if you guys don't know, one of the Godfathers of sort of avant-garde theater.

And you're just incredible.

And of course, Amsterdam would be a great place because everybody's all knocked out on grass, you know what I mean?

Yeah.

So you're doing all sorts of crazy theater.

Everyone's doing these plays in English, obviously, even though they're from Germany or Africa or...

No, not necessarily, not necessarily.

Because it's also the kind of...

They're the kind of performances and plays that don't necessarily lean too heavily on the playwright.

Not always, sometimes yes.

But it's more about the production, you know,

because it's a theater that is more based on, you know, other elements, not just on the playwright and one conventional elements.

But what I was going to say before, and you guys are so fast, I'm a little slow, when I moved to New York, I really intended to be like a guy auditioning and go to Broadway and that kind of thing.

Right.

But I just found myself going downtown, you know, and going to loft performances

and just getting really attracted to these people that are working down there.

And I felt like as a kid from Wisconsin, it really transformed me.

You know, it really made me see theater in a new way and made me see performing in a new way.

Yeah.

And that was really exciting.

Where in Wisconsin, my sister lives in Wisconsin?

Is she doing okay?

She's doing okay.

Thanks.

I just want to know if you grew up there anywhere close to her.

I grew up in Appleton, Wisconsin.

She lived for a long time in Whitewater, but she's not there anymore.

There's a university there.

Yeah.

That's where her husband worked.

Okay.

That's usually the reason someone's in Whitewater.

We have a big, this is not even a bit.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Well, we have a huge following in Wisconsin.

We're like the number one podcast in Wisconsin.

It's quite a trophy.

It's actually a true story.

It sounds like a weird thing to say, but it's kind of true.

So, Willem, your choices in style and talent and everything is so always fresh and surprising.

Surprising.

I could even say avant-garde.

Do you think it started there with what sounds like a very atypical theater scene that you've been able to carry on and kind of, you know, we're the beneficiaries of that.

You always seem to take a very fresh take on any of the characters that you play and you pull it off.

Thank you.

Did it start back from back then?

You must have.

I mean, because really performing in the theater really formed my taste, my nose, the things I was interested in.

So that definitely shaped who I am as a performer and what my appetites were.

But always when people, quite frankly, I feel flattered when people say, oh, you choose well or you choose interesting things.

That sounds good, but I always maintain that, you know, projects find you and you find projects.

It's not like it's not in my control.

True, but when you're given a script that has a Willem Dafoe character in it, which is to say something that's not simple.

These are not auditions at this point.

You're showing up on set with this incredibly gifted take on something.

What is that process like for you?

Is there an anxiety that you have still to this day about, oh my gosh, it's the first time they're going to see this big swing I'm taking.

Now, I'm going to pull it off, but they got to hang in there with me before they tell me not to do it and trust that I can get there and deliver it in full.

Do you think about that stuff?

I don't try to do that.

No, I try not to think about myself.

I hide behind other people.

Like directors are very important for me.

And I feel like at least whether it's true or not, I trick myself to saying, I'm just this guy that's going to go there and help this person realize what they're doing.

And I never have ideas.

I go to a place, you know, I prepare and I have something up my sleeve and I have certain kind of tendencies of taste and things I'm attracted to.

But really I go there and I see what's there and then I try to have an adventure.

And usually, as far as self-consciousness about how am I doing or my choices or this is a risk or this is not a risk or what are they going to think of this?

I really trick myself into not thinking about those things.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Well, I read this interview from you when you were younger talking about this very thing about your relationship to the audience or like going for something and like, you know, going for a result or like we're inhabiting a role, all these kinds of ideas that you're talking about.

And you talked about this idea that, well, first of all, one of my favorite quotes that I found when I was reading about you, which is whenever you talk to actors and they've done special preparation, whether it's putting on lots of weight or hanging out with junkies or being a junkie, they go on and on about it and it makes good copy for People Magazine and all that.

And people like to hear it, but inevitably it gets self-satisfying and precious.

I thought was, which made me laugh because I was kind of with you on that.

But what struck me was, and this kind of goes to Jason, I think what you were getting at, which is like, you said that you don't inhabit a role.

You are for moments while you're doing the role, taking the character through the sort of, within the context of what you've been giving the character is going to do in the scene, you do that.

But it's not you. Is that kind of right?

Well, it's all me because it's not anybody else.

But, you know, you kind of figure we're all people.

We have the capacity to be all people.

But I don't like this idea of choices or interpretation.

I like the idea of doing actions like an athlete.

And when you give yourself to those actions, it puts you in a place where there's a kind of logic.

And if the world is built correct and if you enter the world in the correct way and aren't too obsessed about saying something, but being there, then I think you learn stuff.

You have a special, you have a special concentration and a special relationship to what's going on in that room.

The trick I think always is, yes, you've got to prepare something.

But the people that really turn me on when I'm working with them is people that work with what's there.

They aren't pointing to stuff outside.

They aren't thinking about the audience outside.

They aren't sending messages.

They aren't, you know, nothing exists.

The world drops away.

And this is your life.

And if you can get behind that, then you're actually free.

I was going to say kind of actually again to what Jason was saying was about taking the big swing.

I guess you feel free if you're not worried about, because I agree.

If you're not worried, if you're not encumbered by that thought of taking a big swing because in your mind, there is no swing.

You're just being in the moment, right?

That's one way to think about it.

It's funny. Everybody's different.

You touch different buttons and you're interested in different things.

I like all kinds of performances.

So when I say this stuff, it's not a right way to be.

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I'm trying to figure out what makes me tick in this context.

So I'm just trying on some stuff for size, not to create a method,

but really to think about what the consistent things are when I enter a movie or I do a play or something,

or what performing is about for me.

Have you ever showed up on a set to all of this point?

Have you ever showed up with taking a swing?

Oh, you did all this prep and the first take happened and the director goes, can I talk to you for a minute?

More or less.

I was going to say, on that, do you, and I obviously meant no disrespect to saying big swings, but there are only a few actors, you are one of those few that can take a swing

that is something we've never seen before or imagined and completely executed flawlessly.

Do you have conversations with the director in rehearsals where at least they get some sort of a conversation

or maybe even a creative negotiation to make sure that that particular take on the character fits into the other many, many plans that a director has for that film as far as tone goes, what the other actors are going to be doing, what the shape of it creatively is going to be, and make sure you're in line with that before you get on the set.

You bring up something interesting to me and, you know, you don't have those conversations, you kind of intuit it, but I'm really struck by, you know, the beauty of making movies or doing places every time it's different.

So it's very important, part of your job is to look around, see who's there, see how they work, see what their tendencies are, see what the world is, and fold in.

Oh, that's wonderful, yeah, because so many people decide how they're going to do the part before they even see what everyone else is, and the fact that you're malleable is, that's amazing.

That's the theory anyway, maybe I'm not.

But, Willem, do you ever kind of, to that, do you ever come in and then go like,

okay, so, wait, so I had, like Jason was saying, like, I have this idea, I come in,

and then you go like, oh, everybody's kind of here, like, okay, well, maybe I'm going to kind of shed a little bit of that, now I'm going to kind of move it this way, like, in the moment.

Absolutely, absolutely.

But I don't come with too many ideas.

I don't believe that.

No, no, really, listen, sometimes you read a script, and sometimes you say, wow, I have special information on this, I want to be there for this.

Or, this is so far away for me, I got to do some research, I got to do something,

I got to go through something to, you know, be in this world, and both are good.

Yeah.

We'll be right back.

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and it's left us kind of wondering how we're going to get through it.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

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Because that stuff does come up.

I've had over the years a few moments where it just felt like there were too many moving pieces. There were too many things that felt overwhelming, and I wasn't sure how I was supposed to react to them.

And maybe because I was old enough, but, you know, I think even if I were younger, I would have had the same thought, which was like, what do I do about this because I don't feel comfortable?

And I can tell for me, if I don't feel comfortable, then I need to go and talk to somebody about it.

And I'm really grateful that I was able to have the opportunity or just the, I don't know, that I took the initiative to go and talk to a professional about it

because it completely changed the way that I looked at whatever was going on in my life.

And I could walk away thinking, you know what, I feel more clear and I don't feel as emotionally kind of spun out

as I did right before I started the session.

And, you know, for me, it works. Anytime I've gone in and talked to a professional, I've just felt so much better and all those things that felt so huge and insurmountable kind of got brought back into a right-sized place.

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You know, Sean, by the way, would have a lot of fun if he could bet on musicals, you know, odds against maybe costumes or set design.

So I don't know, I think that that would be something that Sean would enjoy.

I'd love to see him actually try to set up the odds and I'd love to see him bet on that.

So that's something that I am going to look into.

You know, for me, I'm a fan of duels and I'm also a fan of fans.

I love a fan. I love meeting a fan. I like getting a cool breeze from a fan.

So, you know, for me, this really adds up.

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And if I can have dual fans as in two fans, then even better.

And I've also been known to go to a duel that I was involved with and I fanned off both participants in the duel.

So really, it's just like multi-pronged for me.

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All right.

Back to the show.

I have a question for Jason.

Have you ever been in a situation as a director where we're talking about this?

Where you're the person?

You're the director?

Can I talk to you for a minute?

You're doing great.

Listen, we are thinking about maybe, have you ever had that experience?

And what do you do about that?

Yeah.

Well, I'm sure we've all been part of these conversations where there's sort of a delicate, tonal conversation because there is no bad.

But there are just different flavors.

You can have like a Mel Brooks type of comedy or you can have like a Woody Allen type of comedy.

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They're both tonally very, very different.

And some actors, maybe they're day players, somebody that hasn't been exposed to the personal process or maybe not even read a full script.

And they come in and they think they might be doing a Mel Brooks thing here, but actually the whole film has been going the Woody Allen direction.

And so we need you to kind of tone it down, basically.

All right.

And those are delicate conversations.

You don't want to insult an actor because then you get really bad stuff.

But I've done that before where I've come in and I've like had to talk to her and go like, I want to make sure I'm not coming in at a different volume from everybody else.

Yeah.

So I'm kind of doing this bit, but this bit, the grips aren't laughing at the bit I'm doing.

So, you know.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Only because like Jay from like, I asked that because from like a casting standpoint, like if you're a big, big, big, big star like A plus, you know, mega international superstar and they're not going to obviously audition or anything and you cast them.

Yeah.

Everyone's guess.

That's what you get.

Yeah.

And that was my question is, you know, you're, you're guessing now in, in, in Willems case, he's got the kind of talent where he can, he can be reactive to that.

What he was saying is that he can kind of sniff it out and make adjustments so that he is in the same movie and still doing a version of the character that's, that's satisfying for him.

You try.

Willem speaking of Last Temptation of Christ, which I loved.

You played Jesus.

You played Jesus Christ.

I was a research on that.

I played A Jesus Christ.

Not Vah Jesus Christ.

You played A Jesus.

And by the way, not your first time because right before that, a lot of people thought that, that your character.

Elias.

Sergeant Elias was, right?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Which, which was cool.

Both were great opportunities.

By the way, Sean, Sean, you should, you got to know that I read this or this interview, this other interview we were talking about Elias, Sergeant Elias.

And they asked you about the, the Jesus thing, the comparison or the platoon.

And you were like, well, I don't know if Jesus like went in the jungle and shot people up before.

So I don't know if that comparison is.

I think, I think that's a pretty good answer.

They both, they both seem like tough shoots.

Which, which, which set was more uncomfortable, the jungles or the, or the, the arid desert?

Listen, they were very different because of what my role was.

But they were both great because they were full on both the, both of them were extremely low budget movies.

People don't expect that of last temptation of Christ, but that was made for a nickel.

Yeah.

And both of them were about as far from Hollywood as you could get in terms of no trailers, no very little makeup, no, you know, you dressed yourself, you showed up and were in the jungle. Or you showed up, you were in the desert and they all had modest schedules and modest frills and you just shot away and both were full immersion.

So that always helps you because if you're in it, you can't be out of it.

Yeah, you find that more satisfying than when you go and then you go, because you have made independent films.

You've made these, these art house pictures with, with, you've worked with some of them. If I read you guys the list of the directors that will work with, it's incredible.

Yeah.

I mean, so that I'm so envious of all these people that you've worked with and that they've gotten to work with you.

But you, when you go and then you work on some huge, huge budget film where the money is spent that is just wasted.

Like you could, you could make a movie for their, their catering budget every day.

Right?

What do you mean?

Yeah, I see that and it bugs me, but I gotta let it go because I say, you know, it's not my money and this is how they make these films.

And, you know, I like being a part of that too.

And it does things that other movies don't do.

Yeah.

It gives you the opportunity to make less on a smaller film.

You know, I've always had, for the most part, I feel more comfortable when I've got more involvement and, and not more control, but you know, there's more collaboration.

We're in bigger films, not always, but in bigger films, there's a tendency to have lots of quirks and lots of concerns.

And you just accept that, see what it is and do the best you can and try to have fun.

Speaking of big films in that way that you were, and this is like one of the first, I

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

don't know if you guys knew this.

Well, you were in, I mean, you're barely in because they cut out your character, but you were in, and I didn't know this.

You were in Heaven's Gate, man.

Wow.

Oh, really?

And you shot for like three months.

Yeah.

And I was fired from it as well.

No.

No.

Oh, you were?

Yeah.

After three months?

After three months.

Oh, my God.

Because, you know, I was, I was a guy working in the theater and someone said, you should, you should audition for this movie because they're looking for ethnic faces.

Oh, boy.

And I remember the audition was, and I wasn't going up for stuff.

I was just, I identified totally as being a downtown theater actor.

You know, I had my ambitions.

I, you know, when I heard that, I thought, cool, I'm going to check this out.

So they asked for a monologue in English and a monologue in another language.

I didn't, at that point, I didn't know any other languages.

So I asked a friend who was in town, who was Flemish, to translate in Dutch.

Wow.

You know, I don't know why it was just because he was in town.

So I did it phonetically.

I got the role, but the role was like a nonscripted part.

There was a core of people that Chamino was going to fold in the movie because the idea was you'd see these people, you'd create a community.

So in the end, when they all die in this war, you know, you'd feel a connection to it.

Not a bad idea.

And it was interesting because, you know, the first day we like became a week behind because he kept on inventing things and it was fun.

I enjoyed it.

You know, it was really, you were working with great actors.

You were, he had just come off the Academy Award.

There was a lot of excitement about the movie.

The art direction was beautiful, all that, but it got really extreme as far as, you know, getting dressed and makeup and sitting in your trailer all day and not shooting for four days, this kind of thing.

And anyway, it became extreme.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

They saw a studio, saw it was a runway production and the pressure mounted.
And I think by three months, there was so much tension that Chamino was a little squirrely.
And we were in a lighting setup all day.
We weren't even going to shoot.
We were in full costume in the lighting setup.
And you had to raise your hand to go to the toilet like a little kid, you know,
but you were there all day on your feet.
And to kill time, you know, we talked to each other a little bit, not loud, but we talked to each other.
And a woman next to me told me a dirty joke and I laughed.
And Chamino heard my laugh and turned around and said,
Well, step out.
And that was it.
Oh, wow.
That's like, I always say, so you're basically doing stand-in,
where you're doing your own stand-in work.
Yeah.
Oh, yeah.
Because they were lighting the shot.
But I'm good with that.
You know what?
I always do.
But it's a very hard thing to do, to do well.
It's a very, it's a real talent to stand there, stare at another actor's face, not say a word,
don't play on your phone, stand still so that they can light the shot for a half an hour.
It's a lot of discipline.
I really admire that they're able to do that.
I always stand in for myself.
And I must also say, and I'm bragging here, I don't ever bring a phone to set.
Really?
Yeah.
Wow.
Not allowed.
Not allowed.
Takes you out for sure.
So, Willem, tell me, I have to, I always ask people who come on that have a theater background.
Do you have a theater nightmare story that we would love?
I have tons of them, something that went horribly wrong, something that you'll never forget.
Man, this is the story of the Worcester group.
I mean, it was exciting, but we always had lots of problems and with touring and I think,
I'm trying to think, there's so many, so many.
I think we did one burlesque.
My partner at the time was the director and she, her father died and we stopped work on a piece
and needed to do something light and easy.
So we decided to do a dance piece, which we called a record album interpretation.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

And we took an old Hawaiian record from the 50s, really corny Hawaiian music.
And we got some grass skirts and some lace and someone painted a backdrop and we invented these dances.
We just made them up and we do the dances to this music, you know?
And between a woman elegantly dressed would give a little instruction to give it a cultural context.
Well, anyway, the gag was to make it stick under our grass skirts, we weren't wearing anything.
And also, it was two men and a woman and she was also not wearing anything and bare breasted.
Well, we did this show, it was very popular.
It was a little chamber piece, but very popular.
And at the time someone said, would you come and do like one number at a party?
And they offered us like, I can't remember, like a thousand bucks a piece.
And at that time we're all really poor.
That was like, wow.
Yeah, we can do that.
So we went to this party, you know, they had dressed us, we got dressed in like the toilet.
And then we came out without the set, only with the music and with our non costumes.
And we did this dance, you know?
They started throwing singles at you.
At the end, yeah, people started coming up and saying, okay, let's go, come with me.
They thought we were like a stripper gram and then some, you know?
Wow.
That's hysterical.
Hey, but did you, Willem, did you, you've been living in Europe for a number of years now?
Yeah, I still keep a place in New York.
You do.
Yeah, it really depends on work.
Are you in Europe now?
Italy.
In Italy.
That's where you live?
Oh, wow.
What part?
North or south?
Rome.
Oh, wow.
So then you know Italian.
You speak Italian?
Yes, I do.
You better.
Yeah.
How long have you been living?
Not well enough.
Not well enough.
Everybody gets the six-year-old version of me when I speak Italian.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

How long have you been living in Rome?

Well, to be fair, I've had a place here for 20 years and I married an Italian and we've been going back and forth for 20 years.

Okay.

But just lately, I seem to spend more time in Italy because I've been working more abroad, even on American movies.

I mean, people shoot a lot outside of the country and those seem to be the movies I end up on. Yeah.

That makes sense to me, but I don't know why, but also, I guess my question is, and it also, if somebody says to me, Willem Dafoe lives in Rome, I go, right.

That makes sense to me.

Of course.

Of course.

And I think that you have this, I don't know, there's something very, you have a progressive sort of sensibility about you sort of artistically, and I wonder, how do you feel as an American living over there?

Do you notice a difference?

Do you feel a sense of more calm when you're in Europe versus here?

Or vice versa?

I don't know.

I mean, I'm forever a Wisconsin boy, you know, you can't lose that, you know, you can't, even if you want to.

Except they've got to have better cheese in Italy.

Yeah.

It's a tight fight.

Dude, are you starting, are you guys going to start a war with Wisconsin?

What are you doing?

No, no.

Let's stop it right there.

I don't like much cheese.

I'm one of those guys.

Where were we?

That blue line.

About living in Europe.

About living in Europe, though.

Listen, I've always spent a lot of time traveling because even with the Wooster Group, we spent a lot of time touring, mostly internationally.

So, I'm not even making a mistake for, you know, sensibility or I feel more comfortable.

It's just my life.

That's where my family is, you know.

I mean, my new family.

And I mean, I have a son who lives in the States, but, and I'm always happy to come back to New York.

I love New York.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

And I'm happy to work in the States.

I don't know.

I always feel a little bit like an immigrant here, partly because of the language.

And, but I like that because it's sort of humbling and, you know, it keeps you away from yourself.

It forces you to always be, you know, be in the place where you're not putting, you're not telling your story or you're not putting yourself forward.

You've got to hang back.

You've got to see how people do things and you've got to not be the best at stuff all the time.

There's a place to that and it opens up a different view for you.

So I think that helps.

So in some ways, I love it because once again, it's like a mask.

It's something to hide behind.

But also it takes a certain kind of ego pressure off and you learn how to be an idiot.

Like, like recently, I just, I just did something where, well, anytime I deal with like Italian workmen or something, you know, they defer to my wife because she speaks so much better than I do.

And I'm like the idiot.

And that, that gives you a different orientation and really helps you to renew, kind of cleanse yourself of getting burned down on, on what you're doing, what your history is, you know, being, you know, flattery, you know, you take the criticism as well as the flattery.

You know, it helps you.

It helps you because I don't think that's, that's naturally our nature.

Yeah.

Folks would fawn all over you in the States.

I'm sure you're very, very recognizable in the States.

Are you, are you stopped in Europe as much as you are in the States?

I'm better known internationally than I am in the States.

But you'd make something like Spider-Man movie.

And it's so widely seen.

That's for a lot of people.

That's your, that's what you get recognized for.

Willem, your, your, your, your first name is actually William and Willem was a nickname.

Yeah.

Oh, really?

And people are always curious about that because they think it reveals something, you know, and, and like there's a, there's a time I was interviewed on a TV show.

I can't remember.

I think it was Jimmy Fallon or something.

And this was brought up and it gets lots of clicks.

It gets lots of visits on that YouTube thing.

People really are fascinated by that.

They're like, oh, you're busted.

You've been telling us you got a fake name.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

You know, it's crazy.
It's like the irony is it was a nickname.
And by the time it was time to put my name on a program, I thought, well,
I don't feel like William.
That sounds a little formal.
It makes me sound, it sounds formal in English.
It's not who I am.
And Billy, I, or Bill, I haven't used in, in years.
And Willie forget that, particularly in England, although I do love that name.
So I say, okay, I'm Willem Defoe.
You know, so then to choose my birth name then almost feels like a stage name.
Yeah.
Right.
So Willem, let's just, sorry, go back to Bobby Peru for a second,
because I love Wild at Heart and I love that character.
Right, right.
And it has one of my favorite scenes in film history actually is when,
near the end when Nick Cage is surrounded by all those guys and he lights a cigarette
and he's like, what the fuck do you guys want?
And then they beat him up.
Right.
And it's such a hilarious moment.
But I love that.
Talk to us a little bit about you're getting involved with that and with David
and Bobby Peru.
And by the way, it kind of goes back to Jason's point.
How the fuck do you come up with that character Bobby Peru, man?
Like that's, I didn't, I didn't.
I mean, it was on the page, as you say.
And also I like that movie a lot and Bobby Peru is a magical character for me.
And there are some beautiful scenes in there.
The writing was great.
David was cool.
David Lynch.
David Lynch.
And the thing was, you know, I always say often that, you know, the best directors
really give you a world and then you enter that world and you know what you got to do.
Well, in the wild at heart, it's like, I came, it's like, not a big conversation about the costume.
It's like, here's your costume, Willem, and he gave it to me, you know, and I put it on
and it was absolutely right.
You know, the writings, language I related to its placement is perfect.
I did very little.
And then I talk about this a lot too, but those teeth.
Yeah.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

When I read it, I just assumed they'd put some funk on my teeth.
But when I saw David, he said, well, we got to send you to the dentist to make those teeth.
And they made these dentures that didn't allow me to close my mouth.
So, you know, you're always like this, you're a mouth breather.
And that makes you immediately like lascivious, like you're ready to suck on something, you know?
Yeah, yeah.
You don't have to do much more.
And that was the key.
You know, you're always looking for these triggers and these triggers either hit something in your imagination or they open you up to something that you didn't know before.
And then you go and you ride on that.
They grabbed you by the neck, you know?
That's not a decision.
That's something you invest because it falls into your lap.
So, there was something magical about Bobby Pru.
I mean, I don't want to get too crazy about it, but that was fun to do.
It wasn't a lot of work, not a lot of conversation.
Just hit the ground running and I liked it a lot.
Oh, that blows me away.
We'll be right back.
Put all these things under one roof.
You got yourself a good time.
So, consider this your formal invitation to grab the fam, few friends or some coworkers and come play around.
Don't golf the matter.
Yes, golf can be kind of hard, but no one is not good at top golf.
Everyone can play top golf even if you've never swung a club before and I keep telling this to Sean.
The food there alone should get you there because we'll go.
We'll hit some bombs, you know, maybe hit him.
I don't know.
I don't want to get into numbers because I don't want to start getting a lot of feedback from people like,
oh, you only hit it 310 or whatever it is, you know?
That's what my three would.
But the point is, Sean, while I'm doing that, Sean can be on that menu and just, and it'll be on me.
I'm happy to pay for his, which by the way is, you know, very generous if you knew how much he would eat at one of these places.
Because the food is delicious and also drink.
And he could also talk to other people if he wanted to, you know, strangers because Sean loves strangers.
By the way, it reminds me literally all you got to do is contact Sean for an autograph and he'll make you chicken fingers.
And by an autograph, I mean he wants your autograph.
Just approach him if you see him at an airport on the street, if you see him in his car.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Just be like, hey, Sean, I know that you're pretending you don't want to talk to me, but here I am. Anyway, Topgolf, it's a good time to go with your friends and hit some balls and have some laughs and have some great music and have some great food and just hang out.

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And now back to the show.

Are you the type of actor that when you're walking around just living your daily life, you're keeping both eyes wide open to absorb certain caricatures or traits of interesting people and kind of put it in your back pocket and just like,

I mean, I don't mean it as contrived as that, but more just,

No, no, listen, I probably was like that when I was younger, but now I'm just trying so hard to be a better person.

Sure.

And being a fuller person that that feeds into it.

Yes, and I don't think that those things are mutually exclusive in that it seems like you are, you love people, you love mankind, you think people are really interesting.

I love people and I'm social.

Right.

And you're trying to always keep yourself kind of growing and whatnot.

And as you said earlier, all these parts are always a part of you.

And so just by expanding you, you're widening your abilities and your spectrum of characters that you can play, the older you get.

Question?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Yeah, I think, you know, it's like I was doing a film in London just the other day.

And I went to the tape modern.

I had some time off.

I thought, what do I do, you know, today?

And I walked to the tape modern, you know, took me like an hour and a half where I was where I was staying.

Yeah.

And I went there and there was a exhibit up and there was a thing about what's her name?

Damn.

Alice Neal.

I paint my time using the people as evidence.

Wow.

Yeah.

And there was something good about that.

And I think, you know, we're here as witnesses.

We inhabit these things.

They aren't us, you know, film, television.

It's things where we come together to make these things.

They're so collaborative that, you know, you just put it out there and it's a reflection of your experience.

It's not even an explanation of your experience a lot of time.

That's why I get crazy about interpretation sometimes, you know, be there to have it happen.

It loved to happen, Marcus Aurelius, right?

So that's what I like.

And I do love people because, you know, they're all fighting this struggle that we all have in common.

I think, you know, when I feel sweet and really compassionate, I really do believe our job is to walk each other home.

You know, that's what the story is here.

Yeah.

So to be fair to you, Jason, your question about do I observe things?

I don't like, I'm sorry if I was snotty about that.

It was just like, I don't see like me, the guy and say, hey, he's got a cool accent.

I got a log van.

Right, right.

But I'm taking it on because I'm, as a person, I'm taking him on.

Yeah.

And I am, I am him, you know, I'm trying to imagine his life.

Seeing him, you're experiencing him.

And that, I think that's, that's the fountain.

That's the fountain.

Do you watch what you do with some actors, incredibly talented actors?

I can't.

Never do you watch their films or their dailies or what?

I do, but I don't go back.

You know, I mean, I've watched them when they come out, you know, like, you know, I, you know, when you have to do press for something.

And you're also curious how things turned out, you know, because a lot of times you're not, you're not involved in the post.

Yeah, exactly.

And that was going to be my follow up.

Sometimes you are.

You, you give such a beautiful contribution to every film that you do is there.

I won't ask you what your favorite film is or your favorite part is, but I will ask you which, which film that you've done.

Do you feel that your contribution happened to slot in once you saw the finished product?

A lot of the execution you weren't there for the director finishes things up later that you were most excited about.

Like, oh, that ended up fitting in a really satisfying way to me as an audience member.

That's hard because yeah, it's a good question, but that's hard only because when I see a movie that I'm in, I can't watch it.

I mean, I do watch it, but it's like watching a home movie.

It's an association of making the movie.

It always happens to me.

It's very rare.

I will say there are exceptions.

Like I recently saw Poor Things, this Yorgos Lanthimos movie that isn't out yet.

What a great filmmaker he is.

And that's one of the few times I saw the movie.

And maybe it's because I have prosthetics and all that where I didn't see myself and I didn't remember because there's a lot of fantastical stuff in post done.

And that was pretty interesting to watch this movie, which I love.

And to feel like I was watching someone else, that's quite rare.

Normally when I watch, I say, oh God, I remember that day so and so I had a fight or that lunch was terrible.

Or we ran really late that night or that day player came in and had a nervous breakdown.

These are the things you remember.

Yeah, of course.

I would imagine Spider-Man has the same type of thing where you can't really see what's going on around you because it comes in later.

Is there a satisfaction in seeing that?

Oh, that's cool.

I was pretending to see that and they made me not a liar by making that monster super big and matched my reaction.

It's true.

It's true.

That's a special case.

I'm glad that you say that because don't you guys do that too?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

When you watch something, you go like, oh, I remember I had a head cold that day and I could barely, I was blowing my nose between takes.
And I remember doing this thing where this is about 10 years ago.
I was doing one of those Ninja Turtle movies and we had, I had the runs.
I had like a stomach virus.
And the director says, yeah, great.
I've never told this story.
And the director says that we were doing reshoots and I had to run with Megan Fox.
We had to run across this parking lot and the guy's like, okay, you're going to jump out of the thing and you guys got to run across the parking lot.
And I said, and I go, man, I'm not running anywhere.
It's stuck in my pants.
I said, I can barely, and we both had it.
And I said, if I move from this thing, it's over.
We don't have doubles on these pants.
Do we need quadruples on the pants here, dude?
So I go, I can get out of the van and I can talk here and I can maybe slowly walk and you got to fucking cover me.
You can't even get a wide because you can't see how I'm walking.
Otherwise you're going to know that I'm, you know what I mean?
But those are the things I remember when I watch it.
I go, oh, that was when I had the runs.
My advice, always keep a bucket close by.
Nice.
I just wrote that down.
Just in general.
I'd like to stay on the set.
I'm going to leave.
Maybe you can cut that out.
Get loose.
Get loose.
Get loose.
By the way, I love it.
And you know, Willem, we have a mutual friend who's a big friend of the podcast who said, I said, you know, he's like, you got to get Willem as Bradley.
Bradley, sure.
We had a good time.
And I kept in touch with him and we've seen each other since.
And he's always had something interesting to say or interesting to show.
He loves you.
He loves you, man.
No, we had a good time.
And yeah, I enjoy seeing him.
What did you, what did you, you made this, you've made a few movies with Wes Anderson, right?

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

And now you're in this asteroid city.

But really a cameo.

I mean, that's not an apology.

It's just a fact.

An explanation, an explanation, if you will.

But what is that relationship with, with notwithstanding just being a cameo with Wes Anderson and his films and.

You know, I, it started my first film, I think I've made five with him.

And, you know, in varying degrees of, you know, some are bigger roles, some are cameos, but it started with life aquatic.

Yeah.

And that actually is what brought me to Rome because I met my wife on that shoot.

Oh, wow.

In Rome.

So that kind of changed my life.

But life aquatic was so much fun.

And it was basically kind of like Heaven's Gate in the fact that it was a role that was barely scripted.

Well, it was scripted, but he kept on sliding thing, me into things.

And then we kind of inventing stuff.

And that was really, really fun.

And I like life aquatic a lot.

Me too.

I like life aquatic a lot.

It's kind of slippery for a long, long, for a lot of the movie.

But at the end, surprisingly, it has an emotional effect, I think, that sneaks up on you.

And I love when you're able to do that in a movie, something where you think, ah, this is fun.

It's goofy.

You know, you're kind of following it.

And then it slaps you across the face or really, you know, lets you know what all that led up to.

That's very cool.

So I worked with him on life aquatic, you know, just adored him.

So when, you know, when you have a good thing, you know, whether it's Robert Eggers or Abel Ferrara or Paul Schrader, when you have a good thing, you know, at the end.

I just worked with Tim Burton, you know, and you say, hey, that was fun.

Let's do it again.

And they call you again.

Do you have, we sometimes, we talk about this all the time, the three of us do and on the show and stuff.

Do you, do you have like goals in mind?

When I mean goals, I mean, stuff that you go like, I want to go and do something like this.

I want to work on a project like this.

Not so much.

No, huh?

No, you know, and, and as I say, directors are very important because, because it's probably why I'm

not a director.

Okay.

And that is I, I like going towards something.

I don't like having an idea and now I want to accomplish it.

You know, I like being put in a situation and after flirt, punch, kick, slide my way out of it.

Because I think for me, that suits me.

I mean, I like doing that.

But if what if you say, oh, you know, I'd really like to play a union organizer or I'd really like to play Joe Stalin.

I'd really like to play, you know, Reverend Moon or something, you know, it kind of finished completes itself because you have this idea.

And it's like your idea, I suppose you could pursue it and it would change.

But I'd rather, I really like attaching myself to someone else's idea.

And then it's like somehow they take the responsibility and you can be irresponsible as an actor.

You're terrifically responsible to performing because you want to be there.

Anything else just doesn't work.

It's an opportunity.

It's a blessing to be able to be given this situation where you have this super, super charged consciousness, you know, because when you're performing in the best of situations, you're more alive than you are in life.

Sometimes it's sad, but you know what I'm talking about.

All of you know what I'm talking about.

No, of course.

So you look for those situations and to get those situations.

I don't think you can set yourself up.

You've got to be surprised and you've got to work from a place of not knowing initially.

And then you go towards something and then you learn something and that changes how you think and that that change of thinking opens your door to like be born as a new person.

And then you apply that energy, that kind of mind blowing newness to what you're doing.

And if all the stars align and if everything's correct and you don't get distracted or you don't shoot yourself in the foot or you don't get fully yourself and all these little temptations and things to fuck you up, then you got something, you know.

And is it something to sell?

Is it something that people love?

You don't know, but I always trust that I'm not a Martian.

So on somewhere, if I'm, something's happening to me and it's transparent enough that someone can identify with it or can go with me on that trip, you know, then it's worth doing.

It's worth doing.

Sean, you can't believe the disappointment on Sean's face when he found out you weren't a Martian. Because he just loves, he loves out of space.

Well, and when you're not, when you're, when you're not doing your, your, your work, your acting work, what is your next favorite thing to do?

Do you have a hobby that, that you're super passionate about?

I don't have hobbies.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

I'm, I feel like I'm always preparing for something I tried to be.

I have certain disciplines that I do daily, you know, and also I have a farm now.

So I, I never had animals or pets or anything like that, but now I have lots of animals and I grow my own food.

So.

Oh, that's so cool.

Wow.

So that's a big deal.

So it marries, it marries that kind of the simple tasks of, of doing like chores and, and cultivating things and eating out of your own place, you know.

Yeah.

Are you, is that in Italy that you're doing that?

Well, yeah, yeah.

But the animals are a big deal.

And we don't eat them because I'm basically a vegetarian and we keep them.

And sometimes I check myself on this is this really correct.

But, you know, we try to give them a good life and we try to enjoy them and they're a beautiful reminder.

You know, they connect you to nature and when you can be connected to nature, I think you can be connected to.

Things beyond this life.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Amen.

What's your favorite thing to do with the, with, with the animals?

Are you milking cows?

Are you, are you grabbing eggs from chickens?

I don't milk cows.

I do, I do take care of chickens.

I've, I've got alpacas.

Yeah.

And they're the sweetest animals in the world, but it's challenging because they're, they're a little delicate.

But today I was nursing one who was sick and I was very, you know, I worry more about these animals sounds messed up.

And this is why I never had animals before.

And they thought people that were so attached to their animals were sick.

But I worry so much about them.

You know, I probably worry about them more than I did about my children because they can't talk to you.

Right.

And, you know, when you see that animal suffering and you look in their eyes and you've got a relationship with them there, you know, you feed them, you put them in when they, the weather's lousy, you take them out, you know, in the morning, you've got a relationship, they're dependent on

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

you.

But it's not like, you know, a sloppy dog that just gives you love unconditionally.

These, like these alpacas are very regal and they're, they're very sensitive and they're gorgeous.

But sometimes I wonder, is this, you know, maybe they should just be in the wild.

But I try to give them a good life.

Could be hostile out there though.

That's true.

That's true.

And it can be hostile here.

We've got, we've got wolves.

We've got foxes.

We've got lots of boars.

You know, stuff happens the other day.

Fox took five of my chickens.

I got to work with these two boars every day.

Hey, listen, I'm spelt a little differently.

Willem, I know Willem.

You know, I've never told anybody about the farm.

I've really laid low on that.

I like the way you speak about it.

It sounds wonderful.

It doesn't sound braggy or anything.

Okay.

No, it's awesome.

Willem, what I was going to say was, and I was going to say this earlier, but it really came out in that thing is,

I like the way that you talk about, it's kind of like the way that you talk about working on something or a character

or the way you break it down or not break it down or just allow yourself to be,

it's kind of like that's your lesson that you bring to your life.

It seems like you're really honest with yourself about,

or you hold yourself accountable often the way that you talk about it.

And I like that.

I respond to that.

I like that idea of being honest.

Hang on.

I got to guess.

I know we're almost finished, but hang on.

I hope it's an alpaca.

Please be an alpaca.

Hey!

You want to see a beautiful dog?

Just real quick.

Yeah.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

I love this dog.
Yeah.
Can you see him?
Tails.
Yes.
Oh, wow.
He's a rescue greyhound.
Don't be eating that.
He's a rescue greyhound for the track.
He finished coming a baby.
He's a sweet dog.
You know how people look like their dogs?
Yeah.
No, he's so beautiful.
Tilt your camera down a little bit, Willem, so we can see the dog a little bit.
What's that dog's name?
Tails.
Tails.
Like, T-E-O.
Like, excuse me, God.
That dog seems very serene.
Yeah.
Ah, he's had a tough life when he arrived.
You know, obviously they don't treat them so well at the track because the bottom line is they've got to run, run, run, run, run.
And now he's, they're like cats, really.
They sleep a lot.
When they go, they go, but most of the time, and they're very, they're very loose.
They aren't sloppy, you know?
They're very regal.
Wow.
Anyway.
Man, I tell you, I tell you what, Willem, I could just talk to you.
The more I talk to you, the more I want to talk to you.
I've been such a fan of yours for so long.
Thank you.
I love everything you do.
Likewise.
And just keep doing it.
And you're so authentic.
And I have nothing to say other than just thank you for doing this and spending this time with us.
Yeah, sure.
Thank you, Willem.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Yeah, I hope it comes off kind of easy and warm.

It was a great conversation.

Like talking.

No, it was great.

When you come to the States again, we'll swap more theater stories.

All right.

I think I'm going to be there in September because we're going to do some promotion for this poor things that comes out, which is...

I can't wait to see that.

I can't wait to see that.

He's such a great director.

He's fantastic.

And I worked with him a second time since.

Oh, yeah?

On another film called And.

And that was funny because we were shooting in New Orleans and like the Spider-Man crowd would come up and say, hey, what are you doing here?

And I'd say, well, I'm making a film.

And they'd say, yeah, what's it called?

You know, assuming...

You know, they assume maybe I only make a film every five years and it's Spider-Man.

Right, right.

So they're like, what's it called?

And I say, And.

And they're like, yeah, yeah, but what's it called?

Exactly.

And.

And they're like, yeah.

No, no other questions, just that.

This goes on and on and on.

So finally I learned, you know, yeah, I'm shooting a film here.

What's it called?

Untitled.

Yeah, yeah.

That's smart.

Oh, man.

Well, again, thank you, Will.

I'm what an honor and what a treat to talk to you.

Good.

Nice, nice talking to you.

And I listened to a couple of your podcasts and I really enjoyed it.

Well, thanks.

We enjoyed you.

Keep up the good work and keep up your good work.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

Okay.

Thanks, Will.

Thank you, buddy.

Cool.

Yeah.

See you later.

Thanks.

Bye.

Wow.

Wow.

Yeah.

That's a, that's a nice, a nice.

Full person.

Guest there.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Nice full person, everything.

I was really, especially at the end there, I started to realize that like, and we, we interrupted by, by a tail, um, the track dog.

Um, but, but all jokes aside, Willem is just one of those guys who just seems so authentic and hearing him talk about his life.

And what I was going to say is like, he's authentic in talking about his thing, but he's also just feels like he's constantly searching for or being honest about who he is as a person and kind of holding himself accountable.

Did you guys get that sense at all?

Yeah, for sure.

Yeah.

And it seems like a lot about like our business, our city, our country even.

It's like a little bit at odds with, with the journey that he's on about authenticity and, and, and which is kind of runs also counter to what he does for a living, which is pretending to be someone else.

So I mean, if we're going to do it another hour on that, I would have asked him, you know, like, does he battle with that about trying to really be true to himself and really participate and be open and, and, and authentic.

And yet his profession is convincingly being somebody completely other than himself.

And also interesting, like, yeah, I live in Italy and New York and Los Angeles, wherever I couldn't do it.

What do you mean you couldn't do it?

You're doing it.

No, but I'm not.

I can't like just go live in another country and be okay with that.

And then come back here.

Upper East Side instead of.

Upper West Side.

[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

I'm not.

Upper West.

Upper West.

I haven't got to Delmonico's or what's the name of that market over there instead of Whole Foods.

That's tough.

Yeah.

Maybe guys, maybe when you come here, you can come to the city, we can stop.

Stop.

Bye.

Bye.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

Smart.

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[Transcript] SmartLess / "Willem Dafoe"

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