

Dish, Ep 3: 15 June 2022

Actor and Bridesmaids Director Paul Feig and beef tacos

Just so you know our podcast may contain the occasional mild swear word or adult theme.

Nick Grimshaw (NG): Got a very special guest in the kitchen today.

Angela Hartnett (AH): Oh!

NG: A very serious VIP guest.

AH: Very foodie, I'd say.

NG: Very foodie, very food motivated.

AH: Very- that's a very good way of putting it.

NG: But yeah, um, she's got one name, like Madonna. (laughter) That's how famous she is.

AH: She has been in a few papers recently.

NG: Has she?

AH: Observer Food Monthly.

NG: Oh, has she?

AH: May have a starring role in the Times soon.

NG: Ooh, wow.

AH: So there's a lot of press coming her way, I feel.

NG: Yeah. And I feel like the podcast, the press, you know..

AH: Building her up.

NG: We are building her up. Today on the podcast is Betty. Hi Betty!

AH: Hey Betty!

[Bark]

NG: Betty is Angela's dog.

Hello, I'm Nick Grimshaw

And I'm Angela Hartnett.

NG: Michelin star chef. She makes me say that every time she says her name.

AH: I really don't. But anyway, Nick and I have invited our dream guest round for a meal. I'm doing the cooking-

NG: And I'm going to be doing the eating, and the drinking, and the talking.

AH: And I may get a word in edgeways, we'll see.

NG: There's going to be incredible food, amazing drinks, and of course our scintillating company. This is Dish from Waitrose, and this week we are joined by their director of my favourite film, probably ever.

AH: We've invited Paul Feig round. He is the director of Bridesmaids, Ghostbusters, and the American Office. One of your faves I think, Nick.

NG: I'm ready.

AH: So on today's menu with Paul Feig, he's going to make some amazing martinis, I'm going to follow that with some Guinness braised beef tacos, we've got some pink pickled onions, paired with a lovely Château Maris. If you want to find any of the dishes from the show head to [waitrose.com/dishrecipes](https://www.waitrose.com/dishrecipes)

AH: Beef tacos, so I'm going to put my beef- I'm going to season that up with the lovely salt cornflour, stick that in the pan. Then I've got my Guinness, I'm going to pour my Guinness over that, and my little beef stock and some water. And that is going to braise for a good two to three hours. Doesn't look like it'll be working, but I think all those flavours are going to be

brilliant together. Then while that's working I'm going to add my garlic, ginger, cumin seeds, put them all together, and I'm going to add all those lovely spices to my beef as well, and then that's in the oven for a good couple of hours. Brilliant.

Okay, once that's working- then what I need for the rest of it, I've got my avocado, my pickled red onions. I'm going to add a little twist to this recipe and add some watercress, lovely bit of lamb's leaf there, and some parsley, and I've got my tacos. Okay, so I've got my pan ready and I will assemble it all together when Paul and Nick are ready to come.

https://www.waitrose.com/content/waitrose/en/home/recipes/recipe_directory/g/guinness-braisedbeefacoswithpinkpickledonions.html

NG: Hi, Paul.

Paul Feig (PF): Hey Nick!

NG: How are you?

PF: How are you? Good!

AH: Lovely to meet you.

PF: So nice to meet you, my goodness. My pleasure.

AH: Welcome, welcome.

PF: Oh my gosh.

NG: How are you? Nice to see you.

PF: Good to see you.

NG: Thanks for coming to see us, Paul.

PF: Thank you for having me.

NG: We're excited you're here.

AH: Yeah.

PF: Thank you, I brought you some gin.

NG: Never without his gin!

PF: Never without my gin, always selling.

AH: You look incredible!

PF: Thank you.

AH: I love the suit.

PF: Thank you so much, thank you. Well, you know, it's my uniform. I'm a suit guy, 'cause I don't look good in casual clothes. I can turn the nicest pair of jeans into the worst dad jeans.

NG: Whenever I see you on the telly, or when we did the telly together, it makes me reassess my life. It makes me think I should wear suits.

AH: I thought you were going to be a suit man?

NG: I was going to be a suit guy, but then I don't have that many suits, it turns out.

PF: You don't need that many though.

NG: I can be a suit guy, like Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.

PF: Right. But you get a dark suit and just get a lot of different ties and pocket squares, and then nobody knows.

NG: When, you know, when I see you making your martinis, I get- maybe I'm obsessed with Paul Feig? I want to dress like you, I want a drink like you.

PF: I love it. I'm thrilled.

AH: That way, Paul. I'm going to do your lemon.

NG: You're going to do the lemon. Paul, you should probably be in charge of this because this is your..

PF: Yes, allow me. I think there's a mixing glass in the fridge, there we go. But if I can have my team here, my support, I need the three-

AH: Do you need ice?

PF: Yeah, ice please and vermouth, if you've got a little bit of dry vermouth.

AH: Vermouth.

NG: Vermouth.

PF: And then what I need are three very large twists, so go pole to pole here. We don't like small twists. So you ever go to like, the bar and they give you the little curlicue pigtail?

NG: Uh huh.

PF: Worthless.

NG: Oh really?

PF: Yeah.

NG: You want like, a chunky?

PF: You want a chunky one, so then you can squeeze it over the top and release the oil.

AH: Ooh. Okay, I'm going to do one and you tell me if that's good enough, 'cause I feel the pressure. Oh no, already.

NG: That's rubbish!

PF: Well, I have to go now, I'm sorry.

NG: Bye Paul.

PF: See ya.

AH: It's sort of like that? Is that what you're thinking?

PF: There you go, yeah.

AH: Okay, alright then.

PF: The challenge is you don't want to go too thick because then when I press it, it will break.

AH: Is that?

PF: No, you want it- I'll show you how to do it. So give me two more of those.

AH: Alright, two more of those.

PF: 'Cause I'm making for the three of us.

AH: I might do three or four, cause I'm already scr- here, take that.

NG: There's the ice.

PF: There's my ice, here we go.

NG: I guess Michelin didn't see her shave a lemon.

PF: So now make it very, very dry. So all you want to do is, literally, uh, there's three of us so we'll just do three, the equivalent of three drops. Bam. There you go, that's all you want, but you have to have some.

NG: Yeah. So you have vermouth, which is what?

PF: Dry vermouth, which is, it's like a-

NG: It's its own being.

PF: It's like a wine, it's a more fortified kind of wine.

AH: Alright, let's lead the way.

NG: Let's take a seat at the table. Can we make some noise for Paul Feig, everybody. Yes. Paul.

PF: Bless you all.

NG: Cheers Paul.

PF: Cheers to you all, my goodness, thank you for having me.

NG: You spent the pandemic making cocktails, Paul, didn't you?

PF: Yeah, I did, I did. I started an Instagram show on the day that lockdown for me started, which was, you know, middle of March, just come off a production that we had to shut down and I thought, what can I do to help? Oh, I'll try to entertain people for a hundred days in a row without taking a break and we'll make cocktails and raise money for charity, and so we did.

NG: It's a great idea. It is a proper grown-up drink, but I read a thing about you saying that you were obsessed with being a grown-up as a kid?

PF: Yeah. I didn't want to be a kid when I was a kid, like, I didn't like watching shows about other kids. I just would watch things about adults, you know, and watch like Bewitched, and he would come home and make a martini at the end of the day. And I had this experience when I was a kid, my parents took me to Las Vegas because they were going to see a Muhammad Ali fight.

AH: Wow.

PF: Yeah, this is back in the sixties.

AH: That's amazing.

PF: It was wild. But you walk into the casino and you couldn't, as a kid you could only walk around the outside. And that was when people were dressed up, and my memory was they were in tuxedos and suits and gowns. And they put me into this nursery, there was a glass door that looked down at the casino, and so I'm in there with all these other dumb kids.

AH: You're like this at the window.

PF: Totally. I was just like, 'I want to be out there'!

AH: Get me out.

PF: So God as my witness, I said, as a kid, 'When I'm an adult, I'm going to do all this stuff that they're doing.'

NG: Wow. I love that. I love that idea of you being sort of obsessed with all these adults in furs and tuxedos having martinis.

PF: Yeah. Well, it's a weird thing, you know, guys of my generation also, they're, they're the ones that kind of rebelled against their fathers and the patriarchy and all that. So they're like, 'I'm going to be a kid forever.' And I was just like, forget that. All the guys I know are trying to dress like teenagers, it's like no, I'm a suit and tie guy. So yeah, let's be adults.

AH: Well you look very well in it.

NG: I love the dedication to it. Don't you have a cane?

PF: I usually have a walking stick, yes.

NG: I love a walking stick.

PF: I collect walking sticks.

NG: Do you remember the moment that you were like, I'm going to have a walking stick?

PF: I fell in love with them in the twenties, when I was in my twenties, I was actually-

NG: Not the Twenties.

PF: The Twenties, yeah. I'm very old Nick, I'm very, very old.

NG: He's a hundred.

PF: Or extremely young. No, I went to James Smith & Sons, which sells the great, you know, umbrellas. And they had all these old antique walking sticks and I was like, oh, I want to do that. So I started buying them, but I go like, what age can I start doing it? You know? So I kind of said when I turned fifty, I can like, without guilt, carry one around. But I also want to start early because when I eventually need a cane, people go, oh yeah, that's the guy with a walking stick. And they won't realise that I'm actually leaning on it.

AH: But I love that shop because they'll have a whole history about everything you like now, your height, how you hold your cane, that's fabulous.

PF: Yeah, old affectations I love. If I could wear a top hat every day I would.

NG: Do you own a top hat?

PF: I do own a top hat.

NG: When are you going to do top hat? Where could you do a top hat?

AH: Ascot.

PF: Ascot, which I'm going to this year, so yeah.

AH: You could have worn it here as well, we have no, you know-

NG: No dress code.

PF: I mean, I should have. If I was a rock guitarist I could do it, I'd be like Slash or something.

NG: Oh my god, Slash is here. That was quite a look, wasn't it?

PF: People always mistake me for Slash.

NG: No shirt, top hat. That was a sick look.

PF: That's my new look. Tank top.

AH: Do that at Ascot, see how that goes down.

PF: But I'm wearing a top hat, why are you throwing me out?

NG: Do you ever do like, trackies though? Do you do casual at home?

PF: I mean, kinda not. When I walk, you know, I do a four mile walk every morning, then I'll wear like, you know, workout clothes.

NG: Yeah.

PF: But around the house, if I'm writing and just relaxing around the house, sometimes I'll put on like, a flannel shirt and jeans, but I don't want anybody to see me that way.

NG: Yeah.

PF: So if any pictures exist, they must be destroyed.

NG: We'll burn them if they exist.

PF: Thank you, thank you so much.

NG: But yeah, I love it. I love the dedication. Like now I'm getting older, my dad always sort of wore the same thing every day and I used to think it was, like, so boring. I was like, 'why does he just look like dad every day?' And now I think it's really chic, like, I think it's a nice luxury to not waste your time being like, 'what's trendy?' or like, 'what should I wear?'

PF: Totally.

NG: I mean, I think it's really nice to wake up and think, 'that's what I'm wearing.' And also it's so confident.

PF: Yeah.

NG: Like, this is what I wear.

PF: I love it 'cause, I also do a lot of Saville Row suits, which are just- they're neither in style nor out of style, they're just a suit. But I love that because then I can take the ties and the pocket silks and make it into something fun.

AH: Yeah, you make it 'you', don't you. Exactly. Yeah, you look fabulous. We're loving the pink though.

PF: Thank you, I like to rock a nice colour.

NG: I feel like a tramp.

PF: No, you both look wonderful.

NG: I'm like a tramp here. Should we do some food?

AH: Excuse me, one moment, Paul, I've been told. I have to go in the kitchen.

PF: Can I help?

AH: No, no, you're our guest.

PF: I actually do know how to cook.

NG: Should I say 'should I help?' as well?

AH: Nick has never yet offered to help in the whole time he's here.

NG: Should I help as well?

PF: I'll sit here and drink.

NG: Yeah we'll just drink, we'll just drink. So you've been in London, what, three years now?

PF: Yeah, yeah, pretty much. I was back in LA for the lockdown but otherwise, my last movie I made was Last Christmas, a movie called Last Christmas, and then the new one I'm making we shot in Belfast, but we've been doing prep and post here and it comes out in September, called The School for Good and Evil on Netflix.

NG: Oh, amazing.

PF: Yeah.

NG: And you love it here, don't you? I mean, I always think that you properly indulge in the British things, like Angela and I were saying, like, you do like proper British stuff here, don't you.

PF: Yeah, well, my mom's side of the family is British, so it's in my genes, I'm from Bolton, and that's how my wife and I met thirty-plus years ago, is our mutual love of London and of Britain, and it's just never ended. And so, you know, we always wanted to be able to come here and live here, and so now we're actually doing it. So we're here, London, and you can't get rid of us.

NG: Right, should we try and eat this?

PF: Can I be the guy that picks it up with his hands?

NG: I'm going to pick it up as well.

PF: I have no problem with picking stuff up.

NG: But also apologies to everyone in the room because we're just not going to talk for the next two to three minutes.

PF: Oh my god, oh is that good. Holy smokes. Wow. What'd you do with that meat? Tell me all your secrets, tell me your secrets, Angela.

AH: Slow braised. It's all good, isn't it? I like a bit of the Guinness, actually.

PF: How long did you cook this?

AH: Oh, it's a good few hours, good three to four hours.

PF: I can tell.

AH: No, no, it's about three hours in total.

NG: Now, I know this is a taco, Angela, so please don't be flippant, but what are we eating?

AH: I mean, honestly? So we've got braised beef, so you've got like braising steak, really, you know, so the tougher part of the beef that needs longer cooking, but actually I think you'll both agree, it's got the more flavour. You know, much as we all love a steak, and they're brilliant, this one you slow, slow, slow cook. So slow cook with Guinness, lots of different spices, some herbs, for about a couple of hours.

NG: Just a can of Guinness poured in the pan?

AH: Yeah, Guinness, that acts as your stock, instead of using like, beef stock or water or something like that, you use Guinness. Then we've got chopped avocado, I've put some lovely little lettuces through there, some chilli and some pickled red onions, you see. And so you got that little- I haven't actually put any citrus, cause I think you got the pickling from the red onions.

PF: Yeah I don't think you need it.

AH: You don't need it.

PF: But there's a nice kick from those chillies. Really good.

NG: It's a really great mix of flavours and also textures, 'cause texture's so important.

AH: Texture is important, yeah, I'm with you Nick.

PF: Normally I'm all about putting hot sauce and everything on; I wouldn't put anything on this

NG: Yeah, I love everything hot.

AH: Yeah, we've discovered that. Well, the first thing I cooked for Nick a few weeks ago, I made a pasta, he says, 'I like a bit of chilli' and I put a bit of chilli then and put a bit, and he was like, 'I can't eat this'.

PF: Are you not a spicy person?

NG: No, I love it.

PF: I can eat really, really hot. The only place I've ever met my match in the heat department is in Indian restaurants, because I go to so many restaurants and they go, 'Oh, careful, it's really spicy'. And you have this, like, this is nothing. So you go there and it's like, 'Do you want it spicy, sir?' 'Yes, very spicy.' They get that look of like, really? And then you're just like, oh, my God, like you're in misery.

AH: And then you're literally like, dripping, yeah.

PF: I don't know what they use, 'cause it's a whole other level.

NG: Do you think your body likes that or doesn't like that? 'Cause I always think it's like, healthy, but then I'm like, I don't know, if it's such a physical reaction, if my body does like this.

PF: Well it's supposed to be good 'cause it makes everything, you know, it sweats everything out or whatever, but then there's what we call "fire in the hole".

NG: Yeah, oh boy. Oh boy.

AH: I don't know whether it's a good thing or a bad thing, but I suddenly, you know, 'cause I did rewatch Bridesmaids last night, and I now I've got the image of that final scene with the big sandwich.

NG: That was actually a documentary.

AH: That was, that was just brilliant.

NG: Did you watch on purpose last night or was it just accidentally on?

AH: No, I watched it on purpose last night 'cause I thought I'll have a little reminder and stuff, but it just- I was just literally, I can't say the word that made me laugh out loud, the loudest, but it was, you know, it's genius. It was just genius.

NG: It is so genius, and it is one of those films that if it's on- I've talked about how much I love it so much on the radio that people tweet me when it's on. So I will get loads of tweets, and people will be like, 'ITV2, 10 o'clock' and I'll look at my phone and I'll be like, I bet it's bloody Bridesmaids. Because it's one of those films, like it's on the telly I'm like, 'I'll watch it one more time', for like the 800th time.

PF: Aw, that's really nice.

NG: But did you know when you made it, it was gonna be such a loved film, like, do you have an idea when you're making a film, if it's going to end up good or not?

PF: Well, I always say nobody ever sets out to make a bad movie.

NG: Well...

PF: Even the worst movie ever made. Well, unless you're John Waters or someone.

NG: Yeah, shout out to The Rock.

PF: But you know, every movie you're on people are like, oh, this is going to be great, and they're talking about like, oh, we're going to go win awards, and then- you know, even if it's horrendous, you know. But I knew we were getting really good stuff when we were doing it, and we were just laughing every day and having so much fun.

AH: Great cast, I mean.

PF: Yeah, they're amazing. But obviously, my mantra on a set is always like, okay, let's see if it adds up. Cause I've had so many shoots where you're like, every day is great. And then you put the first cut together and you're like, oh, there's a problem here. So you just never know. But you know, we did a million test screenings, you know, where you, you know, you show it to an audience, where you record their laughs, you go like, that joke didn't work, trade that out, and we did that like nine or ten times over the course of months, and then you kinda know it's going to work with most audiences.

AH: Yeah.

NG: It felt really real as well. Like I hate in a film when I can sense the acting.

PF: I'm with you.

NG: Do you know what I mean? When it's like, oh God, you're so acting.

PF: Yeah.

NG: And I have to turn it off. And I felt like that, so much of it just felt conversational and believable and even like the ludicrous things that happen, like even the plane scene or like everyone getting crazy diarrhoea, like, crazy things, but I still thought it felt really believable.

PF: Yeah, well, that's why we do a lot of, I don't say improv, like a lot of my detractors going, 'They just make stuff up.' We don't make stuff up you know, we clearly have a great script and everything, but it's just sort of each take, like, we'll throw a surprise at each other, to just kind of make sure that we're not just so rehearsed. I don't rehearse also, I don't do rehearsals. I literally go like, okay, the camera's gonna be here, let's just go, and so you'll get amazing stuff. And also I shoot, you know, what they call cross-shooting, so I shoot both people at the same time who are in a scene, so then they can surprise each other and it's happening in real time. So that's why it doesn't feel rehearsed.

AH: Yeah.

NG: I love that. I really love it. I actually got a Bridesmaids tattoo.

PF: What?

NG: And I only remembered that now.

AH: Do you have it?

NG: Yeah! Do I have it? It's a tattoo.

PF: Is it a place where we can see it?

NG: Yeah, I'll show you. But all yesterday, when I was reading about Paul, we've been chatting about Paul, we've been chatting about Bridesmaids, I just remembered it now. Where is it!?

PF: You're about to blow my mind, I gotta say.

NG: Because it was me and my friend, Amy, we were obsessed with a line, which is not even that funny and you might not even remember it because I met Kristen Wiig and told her, and she was like, 'I don't know that scene.' And I was like, 'Well, you're in it,' and she's like, yeah, but I don't like, sit and watch Bridesmaids.

PF: Rewatching Father of the Bride, maybe?

NG: And it was a really simple scene and it killed us, and me and Amy still to this day praise this line, and so I had to get it tattooed on my body. Which was at the engagement party when Kristen Wiig goes, and everyone's sort of got a partner and a man, quite an ugly man, goes up to Kristen Wiig and says, "Do you want to go for a walk later?"

PF: That's my friend Steve Bannos.

NG: Oh, sorry Steve. In Hollywood, I mean.

PF: That's his bread and butter, that's his bread and butter.

NG: That's his thing.

AH: He's a good extra, he's a good extra, we like him, we like him.

PF: That's my father, Nick.

NG: Steve's outside. And she says, 'I can't,' and there's no reason and it just killed me cause she just says, 'I can't.'

PF: 'I can't, but thank you.'

NG: So I got 'I can't' tattooed on my arm.

PF: Oh my god, look, there it is.

NG: 'I can't'.

PF: I like it with, without an apostrophe, too.

NG: Yeah, without the apostrophe, I thought, yeah 'I cant'.

PF: Wow. I'm floored.

NG: Yeah, I forgot about that. 'Cause it's behind me I forget I have it, yeah.

AH: And I'm glad to know you don't have mirrors in your shower.

NG: Yeah, I forgot. I always forget about it, but it's one of the things, you know you get asked to do things like, 'do you want to go see my boyfriend's new band?' 'I can't'. Like, 'I can't.'

PF: Thank god they got the 'a' right.

AH: Yeah, true.

NG: But do you know what I mean, certain things you're like, like that walk didn't warrant a response, certain things like, 'do you wanna come and see my friend's play?' 'Oh, I can't.' But do you know what, when I go spin class, once a woman behind me was like, 'that's very de-motivating to see, to see 'I can't' for 45 minutes.'

AH: I hope you pushed her off her bike then.

PF: You're trying to motivate her.

NG: Yeah, she's like, 'yeah, I can.'

PF: I'll show him.

NG: That movie was such a success and so loved, do you always get people being like, 'you going to do a sequel?'

PF: Oh, yeah, they always ask.

NG: Are you going to do a sequel?

PF: No, no.

AH: Good.

PF: I mean, I don't know, honestly, that, that, that would be up to Kristen, really, you know, cause she's the one that wrote the original one. But I also don't think the world needs another Bridesmaids, if I may be so honest, because the reason that movie works, all the funny stuff is in it, but it's because this woman goes through this major crisis and ends up good on the other side. So if you do a sequel, she's not going to go through another crisis. So then, if you just have like, a crazy wedding, it could be funny but I just don't think it's going to have that weight that makes it, you know, makes it something you love.

NG: Also I love sometimes, if it's something good it's just left.

PF: Yeah. How many times has a movie gotten ruined by like, a crappy sequel?

NG: So many times, so many times. When you've done a comedy like that, do you as a director be like, right, done a good comedy, done that, does it make you want to go and do something like, really different?

PF: Well, I like to do different genres. I always wanted to do comedy or have comedic elements to what I'm doing, but I never want to repeat myself. So yeah, the idea of doing a sequel.. You know, there's, there's a couple of movies that I've made that I wouldn't mind doing a sequel to, but in general you want to keep moving forward.

AH: Paul, I see you've demolished it.

PF: Yes, I demolish that, that was the greatest thing I've ever had.

AH: That's very kind of you.

PF: I've eaten all over the world my friend, and this is one of my favourites.

AH: Another one?

PF: And yes, another one, please. I will say, this is the best taco I've had on this side of the pond.

AH: Wow, thank you.

PF: Hands down, hands down.

AH: Oh my god.

NG: And is it actually quite easy to make, this recipe?

AH: It is quite easy to make, actually it is. I'm upping your chilli content, you two.

NG: Yes.

PF: I've got to get the recipe because I actually do know how to cook, I'm not a bad cook.

NG: Yeah.

PF: I'm not a bad cook, yeah.

NG: Do you cook a lot?

PF: Yeah.

NG: I do love Mexican, because you're having that, all those different flavours together. And I feel like once you've had a lot of Mexican, like, I don't really like any other food after.

PF: Yeah.

NG: 'Cause you're getting like spicy, sweet, the meat.

PF: Yeah, no, totally. The only thing that can kind of compete with that as Indian food.

NG: Mmm, yeah.

PF: Because I just like anything that's just alive with flavour.

NG: Yeah, agree.

PF: Like, life's too short for bland food.

AH: So out of all your cocktails, mezcal?

PF: I like mezcal, yeah.

AH: Have you got a good cocktail for that?

PF: Yeah, I do actually. Cause I like really smokey gin- gin? Really smoky, you know, whiskey, peaty whiskey, like Laphroaig is my favourite.

AH: Really?

PF: Yeah, yeah.

AH: It's too medicinal for me. I'm going to give you that plate.

PF: Cheers, thank you.

AH: Excuse my fingers.

NG: Oh yeah, stick that in there, thank you Angela.

AH: There you go.

PF: But no mezcal, it can be really good, it's good for almost like, a Mexican, you know, Negroni or you know, Manhattan, you can do kind of, that kind of thing.

AH: What are you, so, Thanksgiving, do you deep fry a turkey or did you roast a Turkey?

PF: No.

NG: Deep fry? A turkey?

PF: No, I've seen too many, I've seen too many videos of houses getting burned down by people.

NG: Wait, what are you putting the turkey in, that's big enough?

PF: A big vat of like - go on the internet, go on YouTube and put in you know, like, I don't know, boiling- frying turkey mishaps, and you'll see people literally burn their house down.

Yeah.

NG: Stop. Deep fried turkey?

AH: You see that like cabinet there, that would be full of fried oil, but it's basically like a deep fried, Kentucky fried chicken turkey. It's delicious-

PF: It sounds terrible, but it's great, it cooks it in its own juices.

AH: But you could die and all your family and burn the house down. And there's more people in hospital on Thanksgiving than there are in any other, because, you know, obviously burns.

PF: The ones who aren't have the most delicious meal ever.

NG: Which is one in a thousand.

AH: You don't want to do it, yeah.

NG: So you, as well as having 'Kick Me', your book, also have a cocktail book.

PF: Yes.

NG: But 'Kick Me' was sort of, like, a coming of age story, like stories from your adolescence. How was it sitting and writing that and looking back on your life, 'cause I've just had to do that.

PF: Well, it was fun. The genesis of that was basically, I saved up my money to buy a typewriter because I used to love these, you know, the Selectric typewriters, the IBM ones, and so got this typewriter and was like, I gotta write something. So I was just like, I'll just write funny stories from my school years, 'cause that's what I would tell those stories to people who you know, would laugh at them. So I wrote a bunch of them up and I remember saying to my dad, like, he goes, 'oh, what are you doing?' I said, 'I'm writing this- I'm going to write a book about when I was in school.' And he goes like, 'who cares about you when you were in school?' And I was like, yeah, you're right. So I just put those, those, you know, chapters away. And then a few years later, when I created Freaks and Geeks, this show called Freaks and Geeks, I was like, oh, let me pull those out, and I used a lot of those stories in that show. And so then when that show went away I was like, maybe I'll just, now that people know me from that show, I'll write all these stories from my childhood. And so that's what I did, and that's how I wrote the book.

NG: And I love your dad's saying, like, 'who cares about that?'

PF: Oh, no, totally.

NG: Were your mum and dad always like that?

PF: My mum was a total stage mum. She was- like, 'I want to dance,' okay, I'm in suddenly in a million dance class, 'I want to play guitar,' and we got him a guitar. My father was always like, 'Oh, for God's sakes.' If my dad had one catchphrase, it was 'Oh, for God's sakes, because my mom would take me, like, she took me to buy my first three piece suit when I was nine years old.

AH: Love your mum, I love that.

NG: Love that so much.

PF: And then I came home and I was like, 'Look, dad!' And he's like, 'oh, for God's sakes, he's going to grow out of it in three months'. And I did, but oh, what a three months it was.

NG: That's a great mix, isn't it?

PF: I looked like a ventriloquist dummy, basically, back then.

NG: I don't know, I think people outside of telly and outside of film, are maybe like, 'What's the director do?'

PF: Oh no, nobody knows what we do. I directed six seasons of the American Office, you know, not all of them, but, twenty episodes in total and people go like, 'oh, you direct The Office, have you ever met Steve Carell?' Yeah, I think I met him.

AH: They did not say that.

PF: Yeah, totally, because I think they think a director, I don't know what they think we do. We basically make every decision that you see.

AH: Yeah. I thought, well, The Office is great here, but I love the fact it went on. You know, I liked all the, I mean, I literally bawled my eyes out when they got together, and then Jim played that DVD or she played the DVD. I mean, that was, it was genius, it really was.

PF: Yeah. Well, it was a great show to work on, we had the most amazing writers and those actors were so great. No, it was really- but, you know, I love the British one too. So, you know, I'm involved- I produce a show called Welcome to Flatch, which is the American version of This Country, and that was really fun. It's really- but I've been involved in several British shows that they try to bring to the US, some very successfully and others, very unsuccessfully.

AH: We won't talk about them.

PF: Well, I know exactly who they are. But it's all about taking what's great about the British thing- the great thing about Brits is, you guys really like to take down pompous characters and Americans really want to root for those characters. So we had to like, the first six episodes they did before I got there, they were trying to play Steve Carell's character, much like Ricky's character, but he was playing it very mean and American audiences were like, we don't want it. So we, it was like, okay, let's make him well-intentioned, he can still be a bore, but he means well, and so then it kind of caught on.

AH: You're very forgiving as Americans. You're like, you know, it doesn't matter what you've done, come on.

PF: We're a teenage country, I mean, if you think about us compared to everybody else, everybody else has been through so much, we're kind of like, 'Yeah, we can still do it.' But I kind of like about America, that we got that.

AH: Yeah, I do too.

PF: But at the same time, sometimes I think we're too forgiving, it's like, okay, that person..

NG: Get them out.

PF: Get them out of there.

AH: And where's the comedy from? I mean, is that something always as a kid, you know, I mean, as a young adult, when you were wearing your suits at eight years old, were you doing skits, or what was going on?

PF: Yeah, I had two parents who loved comedy. My dad was a wordsmith, he could tell a joke like a raconteur, he could tell a long joke, you know when somebody tells a long joke, you're like, oh my God, please let this end? He was one of these guys, you're just sitting forward the whole time, he could string you along. And then my mum liked really goofy comedy, she liked funny sounds and funny dances and physical comedy. So I kind of got the best of both worlds from them. So I have a real appreciation of high and low, I like to say.

AH: Yeah.

NG: And did you know, like, when you were younger and around that comedy in the house, were you like, 'I could do this as a job'?

PF: Yeah. Well, I had this pivotal moment in my life when I was about five, where I had gotten made the lead elf in this production of this Christmas play we were doing in kindergarten. And what happened was they said everyone has to dress like an elf, so parents get an elf costume for your kids. So my father owned an army surplus store, so he's like, oh, you gotta get an elf costume, so he takes me in, he finds these like, army socks, these like, you know, olive, drab, green socks, and like these two big foam pieces, so he puts them in the front so that my feet are like two feet long and then curl over the end, and like army underwear and like, this hat and he put a cotton ball on top of it, you know? So I've

got this ridiculous outfit. So we show up, I show up to the play, everyone is dressed like they were dressed by like Edith Head from Hollywood, like the most professional elf costume. So I walk out in this costume and the audience goes crazy. They're not laughing with me, they're laughing at me, clearly. But all I hear is like, listen to that.

AH: They love me, they love me.

PF: And so it was like heroin, I was just like for the rest of my life, I just want to, you know, I want to get that. And so it never went away.

NG: That was it, that elf costume.

PF: Thanks to dad, and the shitty elf costume.

NG: Did you have to do school plays or anything, did you do anything?

AH: I was Mary in the old nativity, you know, at one stage, and I remember playing, hold on- West Side Story. 'Cause I went to a girls convent school, you had to play, I had a deeper voice.

PF: Who were you?

AH: I was um..

PF: Maria?

AH: No, what are you on about? The bloke, that she fell in love with. Tony, I was Tony.

NG: Oh you were Tony?

PF: Oh my god.

AH: It was a girls' school, of course.

PF: Please tell me there's tapes.

AH: Maria..

NG: Amazing. I never did one more. All we did was nativity.

AH: You never did a play? Don't be ridiculous.

NG: Never done a play, my life became a play. No, we only did a nativity and I was like, generic shepherd. Yeah. So I never had like, a line or anything.

PF: You were playing like, a sheep or something.

NG: Pretty rubbish. I just remember I had a tea towel on my head, and like, a rag.

AH: It was always a tea towel.

PF: You showed them.

NG: Yeah, it's not very good.

PF: Oh, talking about tea towels at one of my- I loved the sound of Ringo Star's drums on the Beatles albums. Did you watch the, the Peter Jackson documentary? I was like, how do his drum sounds so good? I watched that thing, he's got a tea towel on his snare drum.

AH: Of course.

PF: Like how, after all, years of trying to find equipment that make it sound like that it's a tea towel.

NG: Maybe I'll put a tea towel over my mouth and it will sound interesting. Do I sound better?

PF: Oh, you sound great now.

NG: It does sound a bit better. Paul Feig everybody! That was so fun.

AH: Such good fun.

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