

DISH – Candice Brathwaite, Spaghetti agli scampi and a Pinot Gris

NICK GRIMSHAW: Our podcast might contain the occasional mild swear word or adult theme.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, hello and welcome to Dish from Waitrose, and welcome to August. I'm Nick Grimshaw.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And I'm Angela Hartnett.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hi, Angela Hartnett.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Hello.

NICK GRIMSHAW: How's your August going so far?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Well, I've got a big party coming up, big festival.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, not another one.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Well, it's your birthday party.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes. Don't know what I'm gonna do yet.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Don't know what you're doing yet, but we'll see.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Well, I dunno, I kind of want it- my birthday's 14th, which is a Monday.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Mmm.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It's not a party day is it?

ANGELA HARTNETT: No.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I hate having a party on not my birthday. Cause I don't wanna pretend it's my birthday on the 12th.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It's my birthday on the 14th.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So we have to do something on the 14th.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So I wanna do a party on-

ANGELA HARTNETT: Well, can't you do two things, like do a pre-party?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Then another party.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then a thing, yeah. I was thinking of doing summat on the Sunday the 13th.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Right, okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Annie Mac's DJing in a park near my house.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Fab. Let's do that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So I thought I could just- we could go there.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, why not?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Don't you think?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, up for it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then- yeah, anyway, so, it's not what this podcast is about, but that's what I'm thinking. That's what I'm thinking. But it's also the last episode of series three.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I know, nuts.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Series three.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Can't believe it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: We've got an amazing guest today.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Who I just said hi to.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Mm.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And they are already brilliant. I can tell. I just like feel it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah. She looks gorgeous.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Looks gorgeous. I feel like a tramp. Anyway, before we welcome her in, Agata has been on. She says, 'Hi, Angela.' No Nick. 'Really like- really like yours and Nick's show. My question is about chicken soup.'

ANGELA HARTNETT: Mm-hmm.

NICK GRIMSHAW: 'Why is it that even after adding nice fatty meat, vegetables, the right seasoning and a bit of acid, it still ends up tasting of nothing? Is it the quality of the ingredients?'

ANGELA HARTNETT: I think it's your base, Agata, your base of stock that's probably tasting a bit insipid.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sorry.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She didn't say insipid.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sorry, is that a bit mean? No, she said it doesn't taste of anything, so... yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Doesn't taste of anything.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, that's fine.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So go on, how do you do the perfect stock? Cause every Sunday when I do a roast- to be fair, don't do it when it's the summer.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So don't worry, don't want roast in the summer, do you?

ANGELA HARTNETT: No.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I do make chicken stock.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Do you?

NICK GRIMSHAW: On a Sunday night.

ANGELA HARTNETT: What do you do with that?

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then the dogs go mad all Sunday night 'cause it's like the smell of chicken.

ANGELA HARTNETT: The smell, of course, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then I put it in the fridge on Monday and then...

ANGELA HARTNETT: Leave it there and throw it out Thursday.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Bin it on Wednesday.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, of course. Like everyone, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So I do that every week. But yeah, how do you make it yummy?

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's the quantity of chicken bones if you like, or carcasses-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Too much- to water?

ANGELA HARTNETT: To water.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So it's too much water.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But too much water you're basically diluting all the flavour.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Ah, yeah, 'cause I do that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And also, the best bits for stock, if you wanna make, it's the chicken wings, if you want to do it with whole pieces of chicken, chicken wings and the leg.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Don't use breast because there's, you know, there's not enough fat there, there's not enough flavour there, so that's it. Roast them off.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And there's hardly even any bone in that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Exactly. So that's what you want. So I think it's your stock, the base of your stock, you know, get your stock right, and also don't just add vegetables into it. Sauté them off separately so then they start to impound a bit of flavour and then add them into your stock.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You see, all happening.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, yeah. She knows. Agata says, 'Vegetables in the UK-'

ANGELA HARTNETT: She's got a lot of questions, Agata.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It's not a question. This is just a damning point.

ANGELA HARTNETT: A damning point.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She says, 'Vegetables in the UK really seem to be devoid of taste. Should I go organic or use imported stuff, say from Spain or Italy?' And go to Waitrose.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And buy what's in season.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What's in season now, peak August? Everything?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Every- loads of stuff.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Loads of stuff.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Well, it's all the summer fruits, isn't it?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's what you want. Peaches, melons.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm! Forget making chicken stock in the summer.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah make a tomato gazpacho.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I love gazpacho.

ANGELA HARTNETT: With crab salad, yeah. Love gazpacho.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Gazpacho is my favourite.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Is it?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Love it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah. I love it, actually. D'you make a good one?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Make it? No, you get it in a carton like milk. I just get it in the carton. I love it. Me and Mesh always have a little glass in it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Do you?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: With a little vodka in it? A little bit of celery salt?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sometimes. Yes...

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's called a Bloody Mary.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, well...

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's not gazpacho.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It is similar. Should we get our guest in?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yes, let's do it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Our guest today on Dish is someone that we think should sort of teach a degree in multi-tasking.

ANGELA HARTNETT: In life.

NICK GRIMSHAW: In life.

ANGELA HARTNETT: In life.

NICK GRIMSHAW: As well. She's an author, a journalist, a fashion expert, entrepreneur, podcaster, and TV presenter, so let's make her a professor too. Because we need to sign up to that course. Welcome to Dish, Candice Brathwaite, everybody!

[Applause]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hi Candice.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Hi.

NICK GRIMSHAW: How are you?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm good. I'm really good. Thank you for having me.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Welcome to Dish.

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's our pleasure.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Smell's so good in here.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And congratulations on your forty-seven accolades that I just listed. Now a professor.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And how are you? How is life?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Life is a a little bit stressful.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Writing books four and five.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I did this thing with my publishers where I was like, I'd really like a year off. They were like, yeah, sure, took some time off, and then they were like, oh, we need those two books next year. So now, like I'm working on four and five at the same time.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Uh-huh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm like, yeah, this is an interesting experience.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah! Cause like I really want to talk to you about the writing process, which I want to get onto in a little bit. But there's one thing that we just mentioned that I really want to talk to you and Angela about, and see if there's any similarities there. You're at the moment going through like, building stuff at your house. Angela, too has got the builders in. Angela's other half Neil, loves talking to the builders.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Hate.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Is yours the same?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Absolutely the same. I run away. I like, I don't even make eye contact. I hate that, that little small talk also, and I put up a post about this the other day. What are builders, landscaper, anyone, any trades person that works with their hands. Why are they so offended by milk alternatives?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Ooh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Why?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

ANGELA HARTNETT: We haven't had that problem.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No, really?

NICK GRIMSHAW: What do they have like oat milk? Your builders?

ANGELA HARTNETT: No, I'm saying we haven't- I don't offer them an alternative. I don't- I don't- that's not my problem. If you want coffee and tea in my house, you either have it black or you have the milk we have. That's it. What are we doing with the alternatives?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Do you like get them snacks and stuff?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I do.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, I do.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, you see my builders, we- because we do this takeaway food.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: We do it with this company and, and then when we change the menu once a month, we have a trial, and it happened that the builders were there that day, the day I was doing the photo shoot for it.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And normally I might give it to neighbours or keep it, but I said, do you want some- you know, at seven, or was it about eight o'clock in the morning, I said, oh, Chris, you know, there'll be food for lunch.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: He went up to them and he goes, 'We're having steak later.'

NICK GRIMSHAW: 'We're having steak later.'

ANGELA HARTNETT: Ange is doing a steak. So they had like a three-course meal.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow. Pretty good going.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Not at my house.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Pretty good going if you're a builder round Angela Hartnett's. 'You fancy a three-course meal?'

ANGELA HARTNETT: I know. Neil, my husband is annoying 'cause he's- he doesn't just talk nonsense, he just talks. So it's like, I'm literally going, forty-five minutes you've been yabbering away when he could be doing work. This is not, you know.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. Shut up.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I'm paying for those 45 minutes of you yabbering.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Exactly.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. Don't stop the m- my builder, Bob. Genuinely called Bob the Builder.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No! Sorry.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Genuinely called Bob the Builder.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Love Bob.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Love Bob. Have you met Bob?

ANGELA HARTNETT: I don't think I've met Bob.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Bob's great.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Bob was very anti milk alternatives.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And he was like, 'Have you not just got normal milk?' And I was like-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Bob would like my house.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then now he's converted.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So yeah, I'm making one person more annoying each day, builder by builder, yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: This is so strange. I'm like, they're so offended by it, I'm like, what is that?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, really offended.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What milk do you go for?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm a Oatly girl, so I drink that, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, love Oatly.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And I'm like a barista version for the coffee.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, for the coffee.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So they're getting the great coffee, they shouldn't complain.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I know.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Shut up and get on with it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Honestly.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

[Pepper grinder sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: What about food in the Brathwaite household? Who's doing the cooking day to day?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Husband's always doing the cooking day to day.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Uh-huh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Our relationship is very- whatever society defines as masculine and feminine, the roles are very reversed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So I'm like, hi ho, off to work I go. He's like in the kids' WhatsApp chat, he does drop off and pick up, he does the cooking, he knows how to work the washing machine. Like when he goes away with his boys, I'm left like four A4 page lists of what to do, when to do it, the timing for things, where security lights are. So he does all the cooking, he's Nigerian and as a Caribbean babe, I thought I was used to spice.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No. He's like three scotch bonnets in everything.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So like you can be on the top floor of the house and your eyes just start watering.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh my God.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's him cooking. So...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Like porridge. It's like, wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But my kids can eat food far spicier than I can manage 'cause they've just been attuned to that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: They're used to it.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Do you know what I mean?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, course.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But he does the cooking.

NICK GRIMSHAW: He does all the cooking.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Excuse me on that now.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Speaking of cooking, Angela, let's get it going. If you do cook Candice, what do you like to do? Is there anything that you particularly love?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh God, Jesus. My Rice Krispies? No, I'm joking. Kind of. A pasta thing.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So like...

NICK GRIMSHAW: I'm with you.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah, I found a recipe for like, white wine and king prawn pasta.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Easy, simple.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I prefer to bake.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I love to make like a good Vicky sponge.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like I'm more of a, a sweet tooth baking kind of gal. But cooking on the whole, I just find it- I don't understand when people are like, it's therapeutic, it's- I'm just stressed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Same.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm just stressed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I'm like, not relaxing.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: But you know what, working with Angela.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I thought Angela would be stressed. Like if I- if I'm stressed, like chefs must be like, psychotic. But actually, actually the opposite.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I'm not naming any names ...

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, but I thought chefs would be like extras, but Angela's really like, whatever. If something like dry she just like puts a bit of water in it, I'm like, oh yeah, not thought of that. D'you know what I mean, just very like...

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Not stressful.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I think- I'm not saying I don't think it's a skill that can be taught or learnt, I just think you've either got it or you don't.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And now, unfortunately, in the kind of world where we live in, and you can order what you want at whatever time, you're not even forced to get it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: To get it, yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Do you know what I mean? I'm just like, oh, I'll just order it and it's fine.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, just order in. So what do you love to order in? Don't, joking. Give us your top tips, yeah. Do you all eat as a family? I guess you've got like, you know-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: -so many things to do and-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah....

NICK GRIMSHAW: -you know, I wanna talk about your routine.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah. We really try to eat as a family, although the kids eat a lot earlier than us, so sometimes if we eat as a family, I find I'm then hungry at bloody eight o'clock. Cause we've had to have dinner at five.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But I'm from a very like all around the table type family. So like everyone had to come and eat dinner at the same time. And I think that's the best time to like just extract, maybe even like things that are troubling my kids, at the dinner table. You're not gonna get out them when they're heads in a tablet or they're in their separate rooms, but at the table, like my son will randomly go, oh, so and so pushed me today. And then you can go in like that and I find like the, the dinner table is where you can do that stuff.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's a really lovely thought actually, 'cause it is that point of conversing around a table.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Cause everyone always says to me, what's your favourite meal that you've ever had in the world? I said, it's not all-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's not about the food.

ANGELA HARTNETT: -it's not about the food, it's about the company and the people.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's generally family is my favourite ever meals.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Cause you've just had a great time.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But you are, 'cause you're relaxed, aren't you?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: This is it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah. It's very good like that.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah. Real- yeah. I just, I like that for them. And I had that very early on in my childhood, 'cause I was raised by my maternal grandparents, which was really odd in the eighties.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But my granddad was mugged and left blind in one eye so he was deemed as unfit for work, and so my nan went to work and I was raised by my grandfather up until I was ten, and that was a very all around the table household. And then childhood got a bit shaky, and so now for me having them around the table, it's like creating peace. I looked around my house the other day and I almost cried 'cause I was like, I can't believe I'm the landlady of a peaceful home. I hadn't had peace in my home for a really long time. And like my kids come in, drop their stuff and they're not worried about the electric meter, or what's not to eat.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: They're just like, oh, you know, we're home. I literally looked up and I was like, oh thank God. Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's a nice feeling.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's a nice feeling. So was granddad the like house... everything, he did, the cooking-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Everything.

NICK GRIMSHAW: -the cleaning, everything?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: He still is. At eighty-five, if he comes to my house, he's just like patrolling the front roads, I'm like, granddad what you doing? He's like, you know, neighbourhood watch. I'm like, you don't need to do that. But he- when he came to this country, so he came from Barbados in the Windrush period, he ended up being a kitchen porter at really fancy hotels, then elevated to being a chef, so he was bringing that energy home. My granddad's a tremendous cook.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, I bet.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: A tremendous cook. And so, what- and I think that has like seeped into my household and the way I live my life. I saw my nan, this woman, not do that, go to work, balance a chequebook every Friday, and I saw the man do the washing, the cooking.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And that for their generation taking those roles is quite extraordinary, actually.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Weird. I speak to my grandad now and I'm like, how did you feel about that? He was like, I'm not gonna lie, it was hard.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, of course.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Because he had a lot of judgement from his mates.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like what do you, what do you mean? Do you know? Like, what do you mean she's balancing the books, that was very odd at that period. And I feel like it just gave me the energy to live comfortably in that kind of household now, 'cause I think even people from my generation still find it a bit, there's a part of them that's like, ugh, but y- I'm like, no, it just works.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: You know?

NICK GRIMSHAW: It just works. And do you think you still feel that now, you guys?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And also like, what I'm learning- myself and my husband have been together eleven years this year, things aren't always the way they are. In another ten years, if we're still together, he could be out being the breadwinner and I- it just goes like that and I think the minute you put such firm boundaries on what each person is supposed to do, you've already failed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like you've got to be flexible. And right now my job makes the household the most money. Why would you not key into that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Do you know what I mean? But there are some relationships where masculine energy means that the guy's like, no, I've got to...

ANGELA HARTNETT: And it's about talking, isn't it, as you say, discussing it, you know, it's the smart move to do.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Exactly. And that's not to say it's been easy for my husband. He's Nigerian, born and raised. There are- there was a lot of energy he had to fight through, but I'm like, it has to be good for the household, man.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's good for the house.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. And do the kids love your husband's food?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Love his food. Like when I go to pick them up, they're all slightly upset, everyone's got a- everyone's got a long ways like, cause they're like, well, mum's gonna forget something and she's not in the WhatsApp chat, and I'm like, I am trying.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sorry, I've just come from, I dunno, Hay Festival.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Just sold a million books.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Because I did like- no offence to my dad, but when my dad picked me up, I'd be like, he is gonna be late, wrong place.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Not get it- like, just not, you know, it's- 'cause I think when you're a kid you quite like the, the flow, like, you know exactly.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You like routine, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: You like the routine, don't you?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So it'd be just like, oh no.

[Drink pouring sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: The other thing that we noticed from your Instagram was a big day, your first Filet-O-Fish.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Huge day. Back in May. Your first Filet-O-Fish, talk me through it.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I couldn't get my head around it. Especially in the black community, the chokehold Filet-O-Fish has, I'm like, girlies, what's going- I called all my black girlfriends like, what's going on? I'm so, I'm so sick of being out of the loop, they were like, we cannot explain it to you, you've got to try it. So it was 2 AM, I had some takeaway and I was like this- but I tried it with no sauce and no cheese.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And apparently that's criminal.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: They're like...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: The whole point of any burger is the sauce.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wait so just the-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Just the bun...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Just the dry?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, no. Oh, wow, no, you got to have the sauce.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But it was amazing.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And how was that- amazing?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It was so good.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Why no sauce? Why no cheese?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm very particular about sauces.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So maybe the cheese I could have done at a push.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But sauces to me, I was always that kid that was like, if the ketchup is touching the chips, now I don't want it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I'm quite like that.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like don't slather things on. Put it in a little pot on the side.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes. Yes!

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: If baked beans, touch anything, I'm now not eating the entire plate.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It has to be in a little...

NICK GRIMSHAW: You might be with me on my biggest ick ever, is if you are happily eat, you know, whatever.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then if I go and put the plate in the dishwasher, if the food touches my finger, I'm like, aaahhh!

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Eeeeeee! Oh my gosh [*laughing*]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Happily eat it, but not- aaahhh! Like, why? What is that about? Like if a bean touches my hand-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Literally

NICK GRIMSHAW: -I have to have a shower. What is that about?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And then if it's someone's plate, and the- oh God!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh! Gravy on a knuckle- aaahh! Hell! Hell! Like, get it off! What is that about?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm exactly- I don't get it. I'm exactly the same!

NICK GRIMSHAW: I don't know. But we'll happily eat it. But better not touch it.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah, but don't- ugh!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Touch it? Ew!

[*Cooking sounds*]

NICK GRIMSHAW: We wanna talk about shopping with you. Now regular listeners to this podcast will know that Angela and I hate shopping.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Why?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Haaate it.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Why? Okay, okay, hold on, alright, let's get, let's get, let's get down to the roots of this.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Help, break me down, Freud me out, come on.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So, I hate walking around the shopping centre.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I hate the physical aspect of going on the hunt, so much so I literally almost wore a tracksuit on my wedding day 'cause I refused to do this, oh, let's go to this shop- I, I hate that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Uh-huh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But I do like being inspired by people then trying to recreate that and being on a website till 2 AM.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Uh-huh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So what- do you hate both versions?

NICK GRIMSHAW: I hate both versions.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Aahhh!

NICK GRIMSHAW: I like the mooching.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh, oh you like-

NICK GRIMSHAW: I hate the trying on.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Hate the trying on.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Can't try on. Like, can't try on.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: My friend, right. She used to work at a fashion magazine.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And once she got employed by, I can't remember which Kardashian, but a Kardashian, she was coming to London and wanted some outfits. So my friend got in- the job of going to all the shops, buying the clothes, and then setting up like a shop in a hotel room.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So that whichever Kardashian could go in and go shopping and buy it, but from a hotel room.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I kind of want that. So like someone goes out to all the shops, thinks, oh my God, what would Angela Hartnett like.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Would love that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then puts it all in your hotel room and you're like, so much easier.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I get that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Although even though I hate the mooch, I'm really quick because now my personal style is so defined.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So, you know, I think in my early twenties, that took it out of me because I was literally trying to dress like, I don't know, bloody Britney Spears. Like I was just trying to replicate someone else's style.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Now I'm like mid-thirties, I can look at a rack and be like, no, no, no, no, no, yep.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No, no, no, like I'm really quick with it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, you've got the look.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hang on. So on your wedding day, you didn't wanna do all the wedding dress trying on?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So here's the story, right. You know that covid happened? We were like, ah, let's get married, b***** hell. It was actually our accountant that was like, you two are taking the p***, you need to get married, was like, all right, fine, whatever.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I love a romantic accountant. It's like a J-Lo movie.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: He's like, you're making my job so hard, get married, I'm like, oh, fine. So then we go to the registry and we know that weddings are backed up by eighteen months, two years, we're like, we're just here to register the thing so that you can say we're not married to people in, I don't know, Bermuda or whatever. We sit down and then she's like, oh, a date's become available in the next seven weeks. I was like, yeah, sure, whatever. Cool. We do the thing. Because I've never been that kind of person who was obsessed with getting married, I didn't understand that you can't just walk into a wedding shop. I didn't know that. Like, you can't just in seven weeks go to a wedding shop and go, I want that dress. Don't-

NICK GRIMSHAW: What happens?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: You, you need to be on the waiting list for two years, what do you mean you got seven weeks? We can't, we can't serve you. I was like, what?

NICK GRIMSHAW: What?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So I went to multiple wedding shops, all the designers in the land. Don't get me started on the fatphobia of being a slightly chubby bride, Jesus Christ, I was like, this is so painful, so I just got to a point where I was like, cute tracksuit, perhaps like?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So we ended up going to a place where we shop at quite often...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Uh-huh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I go towards the changing room to try on a completely different piece, there is a dress hanging up on the back of the stockroom door, speak to the lady, it's going to landfill.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Landfill?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's going to landfill because it's been in there for too many seasons and it can't be returned to the main store, and it's worth £16,000.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Stop.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And it's in my size.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Shut up.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: She sells it to me for eight hundred smackers.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Shut up! Oh my-

[Applause]

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is a round of applause.

[Dinner table sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Alright, food time, Angela. What have we got?

ANGELA HARTNETT: We have Spaghetti agli Scampi, so basically spaghetti with garlic and scampi.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow. Now this does not look like scampi what you'd have in Oldham.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Deep fried in a basket?

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, these just look like prawns.

ANGELA HARTNETT: They are prawns.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What does scampi mean, a fish?

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's basically prawn, isn't it? Scampi. Scampi is really, when you are, I suppose we use it as something that's deep fried, but in Italy we call it langoustines, prawns is essentially what they are.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: This is so good.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And lots of garlic and tomatoes. Bon appétit.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: My favourite.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow, this is really good.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Mmm.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm. So we're gonna have a little white wine with this.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Little vino.

NICK GRIMSHAW: We are going for a Pinot Gris, which is gonna be perfect with the prawns and the chilli. Perfect with shellfish, and also will hold up to the chilli as well. We've got an Ara Single Estate Pinot Gris. So do you cook these with the shells on?

ANGELA HARTNETT: The recipe that if you go online to Waitrose to look for... its shells on, but I've taken them off, 'cause I know you don't like the hard work.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, I don't.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But what I did do is put all the shells in the sauce.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh

ANGELA HARTNETT: So they're all in the sauce, all the heads.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So all the flavour comes out so you don't waste it, and- but then I haven't served it with the heads, I've just served it with a little bit of shell at the tail.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay, yum. So if you just go to the-

ANGELA HARTNETT: Go to the Waitrose fish counter and ask for large prawns with shell. Then you remove the outer bit of the shell, keep the heads and put that in the sauce.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay, yeah. Yum.

ANGELA HARTNETT: There you go.

NICK GRIMSHAW: This is really tasty. Cheers guys.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Cheers.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Welcome.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm, that white wine is nice with it. Mm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That's delicious.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Isn't it? Mm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Might have to take a picture of that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm- we can get you a bottle of that. We can get you a bottle of that. We can get you that home. If you wanna try this recipe, and do 'cause it's delicious, or find out more about the wine, [waitrose.com/dishrecipes](https://www.waitrose.com/dishrecipes).

[Cutlery sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Let's talk books, please.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh my gosh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Let's talk books. So you're currently working on four and five.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: But let's go way back to book one because you, you started at first writing blogs, right? And it came from there.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah. If we go all the way back, I used to be a student at a school called Brit School.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Which is for performing arts and jazz hands and all of that. And I majored, as the Americans would say, in the dance strand. Halfway through that year my English teacher was like, you're in the wrong job. She was like, if I didn't tell you how gifted I thought you were as a writer-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: -that would be bad. And I kind of knew that, but there was a part of me being working class, black girl from South London, that aside from someone that felt as far-fetched to say Malorie Blackman, I was like, right, that's not really real, is it Candice, you're not gonna actually get to be an author. So you kind of just park it. And when that teacher said that, again, it just got my mind ticking. I ended up winning a competition to work in a- one of the biggest publishing houses in the world, I would say. And that's when I was introduced to bloggers.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: This was 2013. I- there wasn't even the term influencer. I'm on the phone all day, 'How much do we have to pay you for you to promote this book?' The price they were telling me, I was like, I'm in the wrong f***** job. It's like, got it, got it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Whatever's on the other side of this phone call.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I was like- exactly, and in my brain I was like, how do I make the transition. Being the Pisces that I am, I didn't really think it through, I just quit two weeks later. I was like, I'm gonna quit my job.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Step one.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And found that- and this, I have to say this, publishers don't kill me, were unfortunately leaning towards people with large platforms and not necessarily a great writing gift.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Which is insane.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Insane.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And so wrong.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And it happens with songwriting as well, like with popstars.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like, d'you know what I mean? Everyone has to go viral on TikTok first before they can get a deal. And I was like trying to like get a manuscript around and the, the pushback was always the same: great writer, you need more social media followers.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I can't believe that is, I can't believe that is actually how they now decide.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I can't believe, that is insane. How depressing.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That is literally how it goes. So I was like, right, let me work on this following then, and I spent the next five years, like really trying to build an online audience. Long story short, we get to about 2018 and I finally get a deal for my first book.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But to say- to say that I came to writing at a time where so much was being changed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And spend is being pulled from bus stops and magazines and now being thrown on the internet, like I was really at that junction. But now, I feel like there's a blessing, now I can just like pick up a book deal like you'd pick up Tampax.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's rea-

ANGELA HARTNETT: As you do.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's really frustrating to be on that other side.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So my grandad was severely dyslexic, so dyslexic that until this day he sends me a photo of his letters and then I read them back to him down on the phone.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And his thing with me-

ANGELA HARTNETT: And wouldn't have been recognised or picked up by anyone, of course, yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Exactly. And his thing was like, being able to read and write is gonna be able to change your life.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So even though he, he actually didn't know what I was doing, he would stand over me with homework or like my handwriting, he was like, your handwriting needs to be clearer than that. Like he was really all in in making sure that I can read and write well. And every Friday he'd go to a bookshop, I think it's in Oval, they probably closed down now, Oval, south London. And he'd pick three books at random because he cannot read the titles and bring them home. So he's bringing a seven year old War and Peace.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right. Yeah. You were like, this is hilarious. Anything with any pictures, or...

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like, yeah, I remember once he bought me a book called Erotic Tales, I was like...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Thanks Grandad.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Broad education.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And like this semi-fake library at the back end of the dining room. He was just all in on me knowing stuff.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Even if he couldn't quite comprehend it. And so I think he helped plant that little seed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And now- it's like a legacy thing to come from a household where the person who raised me can't read and write. To have a dad who really wanted to be a sports writer, but then went into banking and then law because one of the places he went to get a job at were, were literally like, we don't employ black guys to write about sports.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So that's in what, the nineteen- late sixties, early seventies.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: To now be the girl that gets to be the Sunday Times best-selling- it's kind of like...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, wow. What a journey.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Well, it's bettering your children, isn't it?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You always want better for your children, you're always gonna invest in what you didn't have.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Exactly.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But to go onto such success must make them, I mean, just tears of joy.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh my Grandad constantly cries. Like I stopped inviting him, I don't have enough Kleenex, I'm like, oh, you're gonna cry, you're gonna cry, you're gonna cry.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And do your kids love reading.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Love. And now it's strange because my daughter went to World Book Day as a character from my book, which I just think-

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's fab. That is a serve. Your daughter being like, I dunno if you've read my mum's book. I think it's on the Sunday Times... yeah, there it is.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So, yeah...

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's amazing. That must have been very surreal.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So surreal, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Really surreal.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Aw. I- my attention span is so terrible.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I always loved, loved reading as a kid.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And my attention span is so bad. I, I find it harder to read now than I did as a child.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Do you think the inter- that's like the internet and how much we're given all the time.

NICK GRIMSHAW: A hundred percent.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, of course.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. Because I can't even watch like a film now.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I hear that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: The distraction of- like, I can't.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: The commitment.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm watching a TikTok and I wanna scrub forward.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Same.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And it's three minutes long.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. You know what I noticed my attention spans getting bad? Like, I used to love Grand Designs, right?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And now I'm like, an hour? I wanna see it before and I want to swipe and see at the end, like, sorry Kevin McCloud, I ain't got time. I want to see what it's like.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You're the kind that reads the last page of a book to know it's a happy ending.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. It's so bad. It's really, it's really, really bad. I'm not saying that I'm- it's a bad thing.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I'm not, you know- I really, I really- but at the beginning of the year, I had to train myself to read again. Like, 'cause I can read, but the attention span had to be focused.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And someone told me to tick off each page with a, with a pen.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Because you just feel like you are getting s- so when you look at it, you're like, oh, I did read.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But there's a time that- because you sit there and you go, actually it's Sunday, I'm just gonna read.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But then you think, oh, I've got so many other things to do, I can't waste forty minutes. Which is ludicrous.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Because actually, that's pleasure. What- you know you'd watch a film for that. Why not read?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It is.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah the only time I dedicate to reading is in bed and then I think that's the wrong time.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That's okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's like the end of the day, you're snoozy, I'm laid down, but I'm like [*snooring sound*] after a page. So it takes me like four years to read a book.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'd rather you read a book than be on your phone in bed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, true, true.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: For sure.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah. Much better.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. I've banned it in the morning as well.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Love that. Yes. I don't look at my phone until about 11 AM. I know my manager's sitting in the corner, but whatever.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's very healthy.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She's like, don't I just know it? You were meant to be on Lorraine Kelly two hours ago.

[*Drink pouring sounds*]

NICK GRIMSHAW: So when *I Am Not Your Baby Mother* came out, you had such an amazing reaction and it felt for me as, you know, not the person that wrote it, like an instant hit. Did it feel like that? I guess not when you've, you've lived with it and sat with it and, and wrote it and been on the journey.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It did feel like an instant hit. I'll be frank though. So let's say it came out Thursday.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: George Floyd gets murdered Monday. And so it gets sucked into this vortex where everyone's like, oh, this is one of the books you need to read to help you unlearn- And so, I love that book with all my heart, but there is a tinge of like, it's very bittersweet.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Because I do often say to my husband, if we all didn't watch a black guy get murdered on our mobile phones, would such books have grown in popularity?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I do question that all the time. And that's not to belittle the power of *I Am Not Your Baby Mother*, 'cause I didn't know this at the time, but when it came out, it was the only book you could get in the entirety of the British Library about black motherhood written by a black British woman.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's frightening.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: In 2020.

NICK GRIMSHAW: In 2020.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Crazy.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like I kind of knew it 'cause I had my daughter in 2013 and I had to get all my material flown in from the US. But to actually see that written down. I was like, damn. Damn. And it just felt really weighty.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: As much as people are like, oh yeah, pop champagne - writers work all their life to have a moment like that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sure.

NICK GRIMSHAW: How about like going on to do book two? Had you even thought about writing book two or did you?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So book two was originally, I- the idea of book one.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But, and again, it's such an interesting conversation, the pushback for book one was that there aren't enough black women who are gonna be interested in this material. Can you make it for a more diverse audience.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Who, who's pushing this? This is publishers saying-

NICK GRIMSHAW: I think publishers sound crazy.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That's literally what they said. And again, that was, that was in a time before George Floyd.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So all of a sudden...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So did you have both books written parallel? No. They just pushed back the idea.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No, they just, they pushed back the idea.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You stuck to your guns.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I stuck to my guns.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Brilliant. Well done.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And so, they were then like, oh, this is a great book, and I was just sitting there like, it's the idea we've been throwing around for three and a half years. But now all of a sudden you believe there's a market for it, you know?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So if I, if I could have had it my way, Sista Sister would've been first, but what happens, happens.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah,

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And then what made you sort of move from, I suppose not auto-biographical, but now into fiction, you know? Cause you've done that transition, haven't you?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: You know what?

ANGELA HARTNETT: You know, and you're a-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Which is a brilliant book, but-

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Thank you.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I just got tired of mining my own life.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I had a really hardcore upbringing. A lot of violence, a lot of trauma, a lot of pain. And I was like at what- when do I get some time off?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That's so funny because the YA book is just as traumatic, but in a very different way. But I was just like, I'm tired of going through my life in this way. I want a bit of a break.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sure.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And so that was the encouragement to go down fiction. Fiction is so freeing. Also, I know my- I think I've got one more adult book left in me, and then I'm leaving the adults for good, because there is such a joy to doing school visits and meeting twelve-year-olds and thirteen year olds, and seeing this light in their eyes.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm like, ah, this is where I wanna catch readers.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Because it's in the mindset.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And it's, it's so in your mind, those books, when you are teen- you are younger and a teenager, that's all you can think about.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm like, oh, I wanna be that writer.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I don't wanna be the writer that's defined by activism. Or changing a grown man's mind. That- there's no joy in that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I wanna hit you when you're ten, eleven, twelve.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. Wow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Because we've all got those books that we remember.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I know.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That are, you know, the five books you remember as a kid, whether they were part of a syllabus or just they were books that you think, they changed your life or you still will reread them, you know, it's amazing.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: This is it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So first fiction book Cuts Both Ways. How did it happen?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: How did it happen? Again, there's always like a backstory. We- so I was born and raised in South London, Brixton, and then I got pregnant with my son, and all that was flooding me was knife crime. I was like, I actually don't wanna raise a kid here. Not a boy anyway. So we totter off to Milton Keynes, bit of green space, a bit of fresh air. But in my periphery are my friends who are in a way stuck in a space that just makes them fear for their kids' lives, and now it's of any gender.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And I was like, how do I write a fiction book again that gives that come to the table type moment, you know, for the kid that is scared to tell their parents a gang is grooming me.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Or I'm feeling the pressure to have to carry a weapon. I was like, how can I become like this worm in fiction? And that's when the idea for Cuts Both Ways was born. And so Cynthia, our lead character, her brother Big Mike is a- unfortunately been stabbed to death, and so her family whip her out of the city and take her to like the countryside. She ends up at this really posh private school, the only black girl, catches the eye of the only black boy, and then a love story unfolds from there. But what I found in writing it is so much of Cynthia is actually my daughter's life.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Because it's just so far removed. Like my daughter goes to this really posh private school where I'm just like turning up blasting DMX and she's like, 'Mummy, please turn that music down.' And so our lives are just really different. So to get into Cynthia's head, I was having to pick my kids' brain.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like what sports do you do again? Like, what happens in your world. Because it, yes, I'm a black woman, so I'm often called to talk about race, but now I've transcended class.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sure.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Where I began isn't necessarily where I am, and also where I began my kids may potentially never be.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And so they're having a, my daughter would know more about this wine than me.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Mm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: You know, it's like, it's very strange. And I wanted to try and like, have a go at that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Does that make you feel slightly guilty or isn't it more that you are just following on with your grandfather and father, pushing the boundaries, but you wanna better your children?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm just excited.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, exactly.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah. I'm just exci- I'm really excited. It's really, yeah, wonderful to just be around kids who aren't in fear of anything.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Or aren't expecting anything.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And they shouldn't be.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Exactly.

ANGELA HARTNETT: A child should not have to live a life like that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Without worry.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Exactly.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's really- I do sometimes pat my shoulder, I'm like, God, if you, if you die tomorrow, you've done alright, girl.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Because in the earliest years of their life, they just think that they're entitled to these spaces and places, which is all you want, for your kid to not feel like, oh, I'm less than, or...

ANGELA HARTNETT: Course, yeah. Confidence to them.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And they should have that innocence.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Exactly.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And be free.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: In terms of the process of writing, is it different when you're doing fiction to non-fiction?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No, it's just as chaotic. It's like, I won't look at a manuscript for three weeks and then I'll write 10,000 words in a day.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm-hmm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm so impressed - borderline jealous - of the people that are up at 8AM, write for five hours, have a coffee break. I'm like, mm, just not feeling it today, sorry love.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I love that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That's probably the right thing to do if you're not.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah. You know, I'm just like, I'm not in, I'm not in the mood.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You're not gonna give your best are you.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And the thing is, I've never missed a deadline. And so in my mind I'm like, as long as you know what's due and when, and you stick to that, go for it. But I'm not a routine babe.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Do you, do you attempt it? Cause I wrote a book last year.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And I attempted the wake up at eight, sit down on a computer and it's like, days had passed and I've not wrote anything.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: This is it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then one night at nine, I was like, this book's pissing me off, and I sat and wrote how it's pissing me off, and then that was like my first chapter.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: See what I mean?

NICK GRIMSHAW: So it just was like, just went-

ANGELA HARTNETT: You needed something.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Needed something, yeah. So would you attempt to go and sit down and do like, it's nine, I'm at my desk.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah, in the early days I'd be like running to a caff, like, oh, look at me. And then I was just like, this ain't working. And I write best at like 2AM.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right. Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: When the house is dead silent.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sure.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like always music playing.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow. Really?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I struggle to write without music in the background.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, interesting.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah. And so like, Kano basically helped write the entirety of I Am Not Your Baby Mother. He owes me a lot.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So, yeah, lots of music and just understanding that as long as it gets done to the best of my ability.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And are you good on a deadline? Like when it gets near the deadline, do you find that quite inspiring?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Oh yeah, love a bit of pressure.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, me too.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Also because like very traumatic childhood, and I found peace in childhood, I find myself trying to buy back trauma in different ways.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: And like, oh, what can make my blood boil today. Might just be late with that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. An angry publisher deadline, ooh.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh God.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Gosh.

[Drink pouring sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: And okay, we wanna talk about Closet Confessions, your podcast. Now in its second season, available from all good podcast platforms. Now, now you, have brought some confessions along, I believe.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Got one, yeah, got a few, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Are these your own personal ones?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No, these are ones-

NICK GRIMSHAW: From listeners.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: From listeners.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay, good.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: One of my favourites, I know this one off by heart. So, a woman and a man recently get married. He is renovating the house he owned pre their marriage. She finds out he's cheating, she smashes up the house.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh jeepers.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: So she like licks out the kitchen counter and his cupboards and everything new, she, she- look at you two's faces.

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's a bit harsh, isn't it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, but I'm loving that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I love a drama.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Love drama.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Smashed up the house. Prints out all the nudes and all the text messages that she's found on like A4 sheets, sticks them all around the house, packs up her stuff. As she's leaving, his mom is pulling up into the drive.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Ah!

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh my gosh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yes. And then she blocks him on all platforms and then sends an email filing for divorce a week later, and she's like, I've never felt better.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh my God.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That is severe.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow. Not the mum pulling up. Could you imagine the mum?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Jeepers. That is harsh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That is harsh.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I was like that is still one of my favourites.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I mean, that is a, that's a confession.

ANGELA HARTNETT: That really is, yes. God.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is a movie.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: You two's faces.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That really is.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Okay, then there was, the girl- this was a bit silly. She cheated on her husband with a guy at work and then the s*x was really bad and then she like, she felt guilty and she was like, oh, what do I do? I was like, you've just- just don't eff about, like- and now it just don't even feel worth it 'cause the s*x was rubbish.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, that is...

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I'm like, that's...

ANGELA HARTNETT: Don't admit to rubbish s*x.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like, don't admit to rubbish.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: But the thing is, with Closet Confessions, we- I wouldn't even say confessions, we've had some stories so deep that we end recording and just have a good cry.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Right.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Or you have to give a trigger warning, or in the show notes, leave like links to therapy, like...

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sure.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I don't know what it is about maybe us not seeing the person, they're just...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, it's just a voice, yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Like, I have to say this stuff is happening in my life. And so we just set up that podcast for bants and now sometimes I'm like, oh my God, you know?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's really, yeah, it's a lot. It's good, but it's a lot.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Anything you'd like to share Ange, or... no?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, I don't know.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, you're not being anonymous on your own podcast.

ANGELA HARTNETT: No. It's hard, isn't it?

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, no.

ANGELA HARTNETT: No. I was thinking my- I did something cheeky last night.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Nick?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Have you ever been to a different supermarket?

[Laughter]

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I love that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Go on.

ANGELA HARTNETT: No, no. So we were talking about babies and stuff. My sister's just had a baby and she's living with us 'cause she's had a caesarean and

she's doing it on her own and stuff, and that's great. And she's amazing, and little Elsie's amazing, but I've made this rule in the house, because Anne's had to take loads of medication.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I said, we're not gonna drink. It's not fair on Anne if we all get, you know? Yeah. And so- and my husband loves to drink and so he came in a bit drunk last night. Well I thought he was in bed and then I heard him and I'm like- and I had rather cheekily gone, got in late last night and had a glass of wine, but I thought, no one's around, no one's gonna know. I'll break my own rule.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So you're just not drinking in front of her.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Exactly.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And then of course I hear Neil, and I thought, so I'm literally opened the cupboard, hide the wine and then sit there like this, real [*taps fingers*] 'I thought you weren't gonna drink.' I said, 'Weren't we supposed to be supporting Anne?' What a cow. What a cow.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh my God, Ange!

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sorry Neil, I really love you.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What a cow. With the wine hid in the cupboard.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: I love that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is amazing.

[*Dinner table sounds*]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Okay, so we're gonna do our end of show question.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: We have a question in here for you, Candice, and all you've gotta do is open it and read it out.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And if you wanna answer it, then you can get yourself a Waitrose goodie bag.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Woo!

ANGELA HARTNETT: Woo!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Woo!

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Win that wine! Yep.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Win that wine! Yay!

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: If you don't, you don't.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That was so flat.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's the jeopardy.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: 'Hi. We saw that you recently went to Beyoncé, as did most of the crew, and also recently went to see Coldplay, who you described as the best band in the world. We need you to choose please.'

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh God.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: 'Beyoncé or Coldplay?' Coldplay. That was-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, wow! Straight away!

ANGELA HARTNETT: Not even a choice!

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That wasn't even difficult!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Sorry.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wowowow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: She's like, give me two goodie bags.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Not anymore. If Beyonce's listening on that Renaissance tour bus to Dish.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Well, Beyoncé- I love Beyoncé, but you know what is with Coldplay, I say this all the time, they-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wristbands.

[Laughter]

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Do you know what, I'm gonna sound like complete idiot, but when I used to see clips of that on tour, not me thinking everyone had lighter up at the same time or something. I didn't know that they were wristbands.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I remember my mum seeing that once at a gig, and my mum going, 'Wow, is- so, is that a rave?' And I was like, no... That's what she thought a rave was, when people put their lighters up.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, bless her.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, that's a rave, yeah. Yeah. Sorry, go on.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: My thing is, Coldplay have a track for every point of your life.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Giving birth, a funeral, graduation, wedding, Bar Mitzvah - Coldplay have you covered. Whereas Beyoncé, it's just like cry about a guy or dance when you've left a guy, you know?

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's not giving you enough scope, is it?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: It's not very varied.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She's not filling in the blanks of our lives, is she?

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: You know. Sorry. Sorry Beyoncé. Sorry

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is so funny. That's amazing.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I think you've won that bag and some.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Yay!

[Applause]

NICK GRIMSHAW: You definitely won that. Round of applause for our guest, Candice Brathwaite, everybody!

[Applause]

ANGELA HARTNETT: Woo!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Thank you.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: No, thanks for having me.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That was so fun.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Such fun.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: That was great.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That was really fun. I didn't want it to end.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Thanks.

CANDICE BRATHWAITE: Thank you

NICK GRIMSHAW: If you would like to recreate today's dish for your friends or family, or maybe a stranger in the street, head to [waitrose.com/dishrecipes](https://www.waitrose.com/dishrecipes). That is where you'll find all the meals we've ever made on the podcast.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Follow Dish wherever you get your podcast, so you'll get it delivered to your device every week. And if you enjoy it, please leave us a great review.

NICK GRIMSHAW: If you don't, just listen to something else. We can't all have a Michelin-star chef in the kitchen, but you can get some Michelin-star advice. Email your questions for Angela, whatever they are, to dish@waitrose.co.uk

VOICEOVER: Waitrose - Food to feel good about