

Sara Cox, mackerel with a watermelon rojak and a Rosé

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hello and welcome to Dish from Waitrose. I'm Nick Grimshaw.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And I'm Angela Hartnett.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, hi Angela Hartnett.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Hello Nicholas Grimshaw.

NICK GRIMSHAW: You alright? You just read me then.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Read you, what do you mean?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, like looked me up and down, commented on the glasses, commented on my shirt.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Well one, this is the first time that you've actually worn glasses.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I've never worn my glasses?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Never. You've worn glasses, but I honestly thi- you want the truth?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Can you handle the truth?

NICK GRIMSHAW: I can handle the truth.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I thought they were always a vanity thing.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What, like fake glasses?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, I'm blind. Can't see owt.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, I didn't know you wore contact lenses.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I wear contacts every day, yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, right.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, so I've ran out of contact lenses, so I've had to wear my glasses.

ANGELA HARTNETT: They suit you.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And also I feel like they cover like crow's feet.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Do you know what I mean?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, yeah, yeah. A little bit, a little bit.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sort of take the edge off of reality.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Okay. Alright.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hey, dead excited today because our guest today is a friend of mine.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And also I feel like a friend of the nation's.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I feel like the country loves our guest today. Sara Cox, star of Radio 2, is gonna be joining us for a bit of food this morning. Have you met Sara Cox before?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Never met Sara Cox.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Have you never met Sara Cox?

ANGELA HARTNETT: No, no.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She's really fab. She was one of the reasons why I thought I could do radio.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Because Sara Cox was on The Breakfast Show on Radio 1 in like 2000, I think she started, or like 1999.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You talk about that in your book though.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I remember that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Because that was when I was like going to college, so it was like when I was out of school and you're like fifteen, sixteen and you're trying to figure out what you wanted to do.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then when I had someone like Sara who was like northern on Radio 1, I was like, oh, she sounds a bit like me. Do you know what I mean? So I really related to her. I've really loved her on the radio.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But also you think about it, what is she nearly over twenty-five years on radio? It's quite incredible.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh my God, yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Spanning her time.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. And she's brilliant.

ANGELA HARTNETT: She is.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She's so good on drive time and Radio 2.

ANGELA HARTNETT: She's like you. She just chats.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She just chats nonsensical. So she is here to talk about Radio 2 of course. But also she's got a telly show called Between the Covers.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yep.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Which is on BBC 2. And it's like a book show, it's sort of bring your own book, and you go on and everyone like brings a book, sort of, you know, so they, they pair it with a cocktail as well. So it's quite chic.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Very chic.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Very chic.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Much like Dish, the podcast, very chic.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Have they asked you to go on it? Because they've asked me to go on it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: No, no.

NICK GRIMSHAW: But I can't go on it because you've got to read four books.

ANGELA HARTNETT: But where- how much notice do they give you?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Well, about a month. I can't read-

ANGELA HARTNETT: Hold on, do they tell you what books to read?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, that's interesting.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So you've got to read the books, but I- well it's autumn now.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I've been reading a book since Christmas. Because I can't- I can't believe that people can just sit down and read a book. Without reading a book and being like, 'look at me I'm reading a book'. Like I can't believe it, I'm like when? Cause when I do it at night, fall asleep, cause.. tired, and then can't do it in the day 'cause I'm at work.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Do you not do it on holiday?

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's the only time I do it. So I've read it a bit at Christmas when I was off, a bit when I went on holiday for Remy's birthday in Rome, and then a bit when I went on holiday with my mum.

ANGELA HARTNETT: What about when you like, go on the tube or something? You're on your phone.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No I like- I like to listen to music when I'm on the tube.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Okay, right. But you can listen to music and read a book.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, I can't.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Can't you? Okay.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Noooo, I can't. No I can't, I can't.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I bet you sit on your phone doing nothing. I mean, you're not doing nothing, but you're on your phone, Instagraming, TikTok-ing now.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is true.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Now that is no different from reading a book.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is true.

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's the same amount of time. So don't tell me it's work.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No, I don't think it's work.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Cause you're on that phone the whole time.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I enjoy it. Well, I'm a TikToker now.

ANGELA HARTNETT: I heard. What possessed you to become a TikToker?

NICK GRIMSHAW: My book publisher.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, right.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Anyway, Sara Cox is going to be with us very soon. But before we get Sara in for a bit of a chat, we've had a message from Darren and Maggie. They say, 'Hi from Seattle-' I love that people listen-

ANGELA HARTNETT: All around the world.

NICK GRIMSHAW: All around the world. Love it. 'My wife Maggie and I love the podcast and we listen to it each week. We have a question for Angela.'

ANGELA HARTNETT: Mm-hm.

NICK GRIMSHAW: 'We're expecting our first child in November. We'd love to cook meals for us in advance and keep them in the freezer. We want them to be nutritious, no pork or beef, does Angela have any suggestions on meals we could prepare in advance?' So they could make a job lot of it, whack it in the freezer, then when they've gotta go to work and give the baby a bath and change its nappy and stop it crying, they can just get it out-

ANGELA HARTNETT: Defrost and do it. Curries are good.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes. Don't they get better as well?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, mature, the flavour and stuff. I think curry is good. Fish pies, stews, I think are great. Soups, pasta sauces, they could do some great tomato sauces, puttanesca, all that sort of stuff in the freezer.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And do you ever do that?

ANGELA HARTNETT: I always freeze leftovers, if I've made like a load of tomato sauce and we haven't used it, I'll freeze the tomato sauce. Make the fatal mistake of not actually labelling stuff.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, so it's like surprise pick.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So it's surprise. So when I finally defrost then I have what I call a freezer party.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, that's fun.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Where I say to neighbours or friends or relatives, I have emptied the freezer, it's, you know, like pick a mix.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh my god, let's see what's going on.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Let's see what's in the freezer, and then we cook whatever's there and we all have a little sort of buffet style.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's quite fun.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Next time I do one, I'll ask you.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I'll come round, yeah. You can come to mine, maybe I'll have one. So there you go, Darren and Maggie, you heard it. Pies, curries, broths, soups, pasta sauces.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Anything.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Should we get Sara in?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah..

[Dinner table sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Let's welcome our guest - and sometimes when we do Dish, we record in the mornings and today is one of those days. So it does feel a little bit special, I think, when we do a morning record. Almost like it's like a bit breaking the rules, do you know what I mean? Like a bottle of wine at 11am. Made even more

special by our guest, someone who I feel knows a lot about making the most of a morning, and also breaking the rules, or at least bending them a little bit. It is the brilliant Sara Cox, everybody!

SARA COX: Hello

[Applause]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hi Sara Cox!

SARA COX: I'm clapping at you two, not at myself.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Not yourself.

SARA COX: Go me!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Welcome.

SARA COX: Thanks, it's lovely to be here. I'm excited. It does feel like sort of straight through crew that we're, you know, there's some wine there and it's 11am.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It was quite threatening in the morning, the way that it is as well. It's like lining us up.

SARA COX: We need to pop a carnation in the top and let's pretend it's not got wine in it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, we can do that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Now we have to talk about food before we get into the life and times of Sara Cox, it is a food podcast. But there is some stuff that we found out about you, Sara, that we really want to talk about when it comes to food. You have described, previously, northern food as being not better, but sort of more substantial, sturdier.

SARA COX: Yes.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Hmm.

SARA COX: Do I stand by that statement?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Do you stand by that?

SARA COX: Possibly, I think so. Things often involve a crust, something mashed.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

SARA COX: All loosened up with gravy to help it slide down.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So are you chips and gravy?

SARA COX: Oh, I am chips and gravy all day long, and I know it's a cliché, but I just think it's delicious.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It is delicious.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

SARA COX: Proper chips and gravy from a proper chippy, loads of vinegar-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Loads.

SARA COX: -bit of salt.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, I like it so much that it makes you cough. Like when you open the lid.

SARA COX: As you inhale it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It like really makes you cough a little bit.

SARA COX: You know when you're little and you're trying to re-enact adverts, I really choked myself once because I took the gold foil off a jar of instant coffee and went [*sniffs*] and all the powder went up my nose.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh no!

SARA COX: I was like, ugh. What a way to go. Under a pile of Mellow Birds.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh my god.

SARA COX: I think they used to do it on an advert, didn't they, on that posh-for posh coffee.

ANGELA HARTNETT: They did.

SARA COX: But the vinegary cough, yeah, really nice. And if I'm up north, if I go up to Bolton, I have to have it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: You've got to have it. It's cultural. I remember someone at my school, Neil, had chips and curry sauce, and when I went home and, like, said I'd been to his house and he'd had curry sauce on his chips, my mum was like, 'I knew I didn't like that kid.' And it was, like, a shock, and I remember, like, my mum and dad being like, 'Curry sauce on chips?' And it was like a big-

SARA COX: You're not going around there again.

NICK GRIMSHAW: It was a big, it was a big divider.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Not playing with him. Dare I say mayonnaise, or is that going too southern?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, Angela, don't be stupid.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Is that a southern- what's wrong with chips and mayonnaise?

SARA COX: We're not in Belgium, Angela, we're in Bolton. Bolton, not Brussels.

[Drink pouring sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Was food important in your house when you were growing up?

SARA COX: Yeah, my mum's a really good cook, and she batch cooks quite a bit.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Were there are lots of you, did you have lots of brothers and sisters?

SARA COX: Yeah, I'm the youngest of five.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh, wow.

SARA COX: Up until I was sort of seven, we were on a farm, and that's where my dad still is now, on a beef farm. When we were at the farm, it was very much like a broth, my mum made a great broth-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Love a broth.

SARA COX: -with a whopping like ham shank in there, and lots of like the soup mix, you know, and the, the peas- would it be like marrow fat peas that are dried?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, exactly.

SARA COX: The dried peas and all that, and a mountain of veg, so sweet turnip, carrot, onion. And I still make that now, she gave me her broth pan, which you could bath an Alsatian in, it's mahooosive, and I make that now. Nobody really likes it but me.

ANGELA HARTNETT: No!

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh no!

SARA COX: I love that reaction.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Aw.

SARA COX: There's tears.

NICK GRIMSHAW: We'd like it.

SARA COX: The kids are getting a bit better actually with it now. But I think it's a bit of a sympathy munch.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

SARA COX: Do you know what I mean? They're like, 'Mm!' [*Spitting sound*] In a potted plant. But yeah, so there was broth and things like that. But at the farm, if it was like hay making, there'd be like piles of like ham butties-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Hay.

SARA COX: Piles of hay that we all had to eat. And my mum always does the joke like, 'What sandwich do you want?' And she'll go, 'I'll have an ham do do do do do. I'll have an ham do do do do do do.' [*To the tune of Mah Nà Mah Nà*] Like that's one of my mum's top jokes.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Bless her.

SARA COX: And then mum got quite busy with work, so there were some recipes that I thought had been handed down for generations, and when I asked her for the recipe she was like, 'Oh it's packet mix.'

NICK GRIMSHAW: You're like, what?

SARA COX: I'd be like, mother, I'm ready, pass down your knowledge, of your chilli con carne or whatever or beef in red wine sauce, I'm a woman now, tell me the secret, and she was like, yeah it's a Coleman's powder

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, okay...

[Dinner table sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sara, you love summat pickled, don't you?

SARA COX: I love, yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

SARA COX: Savoury, salty pickled things.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm. What do you like pickled best?

SARA COX: My favourite pickled thing's cockles.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, is it?

SARA COX: Oh, jar of cockles.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, I've never had a jar of cockles.

SARA COX: I try not to think- don't they, like, hang around sewage pipes and that? I try and block that out of my mind.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Block it out. Get rid of it. Well, we've put a little cornichon out for you, if you fancy a cornichon at 11:14am.

SARA COX: Why not?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Why not? I love a pickled shallot.

SARA COX: Yeah, very nice.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Love that, or a pickled onion.

SARA COX: Yeah, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: They remind me of my dad.

SARA COX: Ah, nice.

NICK GRIMSHAW: He always loved a pickled onion.

SARA COX: What would he have pickled onions on the side with?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Just on a plate.

SARA COX: Oh, just, that'd be the main.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, just a plate of pickled onions, like that.

SARA COX: Very nice. I like a bit of kimchi as well, 'cause I was-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm, love a bit of kimchi.

SARA COX: -modelled in the fashion capital of the world, Seoul.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm. Oh, yeah, you did.

SARA COX: Mm. Ate a bit of kimchi over there. Didn't appreciate it, of course, because I was nineteen and I just wanted a Big Mac. I was like, ugh, what's this? Beef bulgogi?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Don't like that. How long were you in Seoul?

SARA COX: Five months in total.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, wow.

SARA COX: But over two trips, so I think it was like three months and two months.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mad.

SARA COX: When I was nineteen.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And you were nineteen.

SARA COX: Yeah, my mum signed the forms.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She was like, get her out of here.

SARA COX: Get her out of here.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Get her out of here.

SARA COX: Get her off my sofa watching Neighbours, doing her nails 'cause she's a model and she can't wipe up and put the dishes away 'cause her nails are drying' cause she's a model.

NICK GRIMSHAW: She's a model, can't do that.

SARA COX: Lay above the pub where we lived at the time. Mum working her bits off, and me like, heh heh heh, painting my nails.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Did you want to model, like, did you when you were younger, or did it happen by accident?

SARA COX: It happened by accident. I wanted to not go to university.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right.

SARA COX: Because my sister was there, and she was like, 'We're so poor, eight of us are sharing a potato.' And I was like, oh, that sounds rubbish, so I just really wanted to avoid university as long as possible. And I got scouted in Paris to be a model, which sounds great, doesn't it, when I say that?

NICK GRIMSHAW: It does sound very glam, yeah.

SARA COX: Didn't feel it at the time.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And what, did someone come up and be like, 'Ever thought about modelling?'

SARA COX: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Ahh!

SARA COX: Yeah, exactly. I was like, yeah, in a shop, 'You've got a great look,' and all that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, yeah.

SARA COX: So, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then it all just went from there?

SARA COX: Yeah, and then I ended up at Manchester Model Agency, MMA, with Mavis. Don't know if she's still going. She was lovely, very blonde, very glamorous. And she used to tell us not to sleep with two pillows, or you'd get a wrinkly neck.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh.

SARA COX: She was right, I never listened.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What else did she teach you? I need the Mavis modelling tips.

SARA COX: I think that was-

NICK GRIMSHAW: One pillow.

SARA COX: Yeah, I think that was it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And then be born gorgeous.

SARA COX: Yeah, that was it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's the other option.

SARA COX: Then out you go, good luck.

[Dinner table sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow, Ange, this looks really good.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You like that?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Really nice. We've got like a watermelon salad here with a nice bit of- well, really nice bit of sort of chargrilled crispy skinned mackerel.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Crispy skin.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So what is this called Ange? What have we got?

SARA COX: Gorgeous.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So we've got mackerel watermelon rojak and it's by this fantastic chef in London Ravinder Bhogal, who's a great mate of mine, and it's basically an assembly of watermelon, green beans, cucumber, and you make this fabulous dressing and it's this lovely- a rojak is basically assembly of fruit and vegetables and it's from the Java region in India, and that's what it means. So there's spice there, there's chilli there and we make this fab dressing which is all those sort of flavours- you know you were talking about going out to Korea and places like that, it's that sweet and sourness you get with a lot of Asian food.

SARA COX: Yes, delicious.

ANGELA HARTNETT: So, that's the fish sauce, the tamarind, you've got a bit of sugar in there, loads of chilli, loads of garlic.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And then crispy onions and some cashews on top.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is seriously, seriously tasty that.

ANGELA HARTNETT: You're being very nice, lovely.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is banging.

SARA COX: I love a little crispy onion, is that a bit of mint in there as well?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Mint as well, coriander.

SARA COX: With the watermelon.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And there's a bit of extra dressing there if you want some.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, I love it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Bon appétit.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is delicious. That is like a proper explosion in your mouth that, that's like every flavours going on in it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And I know we're sort of end of sort of autumn and watermelon is not the season, but you can get it when it is as it is you can pickle it all, you know you were talking about vinegars earlier on and one thing they do out in Asia and friends of mine do it- well, our mate Lee from Black Axe Mangal, he'll pickle the skin, which you would never think to do, everyone always throws it away, but actually you can pickle it and it's lovely, crunchy sort of thing.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh wow.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And this, we've got it in mackerel, this would be delicious with pork.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh it really would.

ANGELA HARTNETT: It would absolutely, sort of a low, really slow roasted pork shoulder, with all that fat, with this spice, it'd be great.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Mm.

SARA COX: Wow, gorgeous. It feels kind of light as well, doesn't it?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, it does. If you want to try the mackerel with watermelon rojak, which you should because, it's a taste sensation. My mouth's watering now. If you want to try it, then all of the ingredients used in today's show are available from your local Waitrose and online if you, if you're like, I ain't going to the shop, you can order it online. And you can get the recipe at [waitrose.com/dishrecipes](https://www.waitrose.com/dishrecipes).

ANGELA HARTNETT: And what wine are we doing?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, and the wine. We're not actually going to have a wine today because it's 11 o'clock on a Tuesday, and we've got stuff to do. However, if you are listening to this and you're like, I'm going to have that for my tea tonight, then we suggest you pair it with a [Guigal Côtes du Rhône Rosé](#). Mm.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Love a rosé.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Bit of a mouthful, but perfect with this. Really round and rich with a bright, sort of fruity note of strawberry, cherry, white peach, followed by hints of melon and citrus as well. Really good with the grilled fish. Should I try it just for Waitrose?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Try it for the... Will it work with the mackerel?

NICK GRIMSHAW: It really does. Perfect, actually. There we go. Try it with the Guigal Côtes Rosé. You can get that at Waitrose too.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And online. Perfect.

[Salt grinder sounds]

ANGELA HARTNETT: So, do you cook a lot? Because you're living out in the countryside, you've got all the kids and everything, is that you doing all the cooking, or is it hubby, or what?

SARA COX: Well, I'm not out in the countryside actually, I'm in North London. I might have given the impression that I'm in the countryside because I've got a horse.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Ah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yes.

SARA COX: Yeah, so the horse is half an hour away.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Right, okay.

SARA COX: So we live North London. I don't cook in the evenings much because I'm on air four till seven.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Sure.

SARA COX: So the kids need to eat really before I get back, so husband cooks. Because I can't cook 'cause I'm on air at dinnertime, I will cook at weekends if I knock something up.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Nothing to do with food, I know it's a food podcast, who rides the horse every day? Do you do that in the morning?

SARA COX: Four days a week I ride.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Wow.

SARA COX: She's beautiful, she's called Nelly, she's an Irish sports horse and I'll have had her three years on October 31st, she arrived on Halloween.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Ooh.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Amazing.

SARA COX: She flew...bats..

ANGELA HARTNETT: And did you ride as a child then- sorry, did you ride as a child, is that where it's all come from?

SARA COX: Yeah, so I just had a little fat farm ponies when I was little, and then during COVID I lost a couple of people close to me and I thought, life is really short, you need to- like what am I waiting for, if not now, when am I gonna get a horse again and put in that missing piece of the jigsaw.

NICK GRIMSHAW: What do you do, like, just get up in the morning and head over there and just have a bit of like-

SARA COX: Load the dogs up, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh and you go with the dogs, just you and the dogs?

SARA COX: Gotta take three dogs with me, I'm not allowed to leave them at home. When I got the third dog, which was a little rescue called Pip, my husband went, you can't go riding, I'm working. What are you going to do with that puppy? And I went, I'm going to take the puppy with me, obviously, that was always the plan. So I take all three and the two little ones chill. The big one, the flat coat retriever, comes alongside as I ride out in the fields, and she'll wait and she'll stop and she'll take command while I'm in the saddle, it's amazing. And I pootle up the M1, a lot of audiobooks on the go with the book show.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Of course. There you go, you see that.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I see that, that's why she gets the big bucks. Leading us into the brand-new series of Between the Covers.

SARA COX: Of Between the Covers.

NICK GRIMSHAW: So back for its seventh series.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Incredible.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Wow! It's like Britain's Got Talent. Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. We were talking at the start, saying, I have been asked to be on it, and when I've been asked to come on they're like, yeah, can you read these four books by next month? I'm like, I can't read four, I can't read four books in a year. Like, my attention span is terrible-

SARA COX: It's two books, Nick.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, two?

SARA COX: Yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh, I could do two.

SARA COX: You could do two!

NICK GRIMSHAW: But in a year.

SARA COX: You might have like a month. Come on.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Don't know if I could.

SARA COX: What if one's an audio book?

ANGELA HARTNETT: He could. He could.

SARA COX: You could.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I was going to say, is that how you do it, audio?

SARA COX: Well, I listen to lots of audiobooks. We've got a booker backlist is six of our books and then six brand new ones.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

SARA COX: So the brand new ones aren't out on audiobook yet, obviously.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Who chooses them, or people publishers send them in?

SARA COX: It's done by witchcraft and magic, basically.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Right.

SARA COX: Cactus, Amanda Ross, and she really knows her books. She started off the Richard and Judy Book Club all those years ago. So her and her team read so many books.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Do you do cookbooks? All I remember is when I first did my first cookbook, everyone was saying to me, if Richard and Judy do that you've- that's it, you're number one in Amazon.

SARA COX: Yeah, to get one of those stickers.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Because that's what you say, Amanda and the influence. So it must really influence a new publisher.

SARA COX: You could have just transferred a few stickers when you were in the bookshop onto yours.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Richard and Judy love it.

SARA COX: There's you with a kettle, trying to steam off the stickers.

ANGELA HARTNETT: For my next book, yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Richard and Judy love it

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh my God.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And did you always read like when you were growing up? Because I loved reading when I was younger and I've sort of grown out of it, which

I'm not saying in a flippant way, it's one of the things I don't like about myself is how I can't sit and read. But were you always a-

SARA COX: Well, luckily that's a short list of things you don't like about yourself I hope-

NICK GRIMSHAW: It is.

SARA COX: -because you're a lovely man.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, but were you always a reader, Sara? Did you always love books?

SARA COX: Yeah, I always loved books. But like you, other things can distract you from reading like, you know, doing your Waitrose online shop.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's right.

SARA COX: So, you have to make time to read. But also- it shouldn't be a chore, but also it shouldn't be too much of an indulgence, like, it shouldn't be like, oh, I'm being lazy because I'm laying on the couch with a brew reading.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That's what I think.

SARA COX: Because I think it's a really good use of your time, because it's good for your mental health. It's good for you to just not be looking at a screen and to escape off into another world. And audiobooks are fantastic, and since doing *Between the Covers*, got into audiobooks and also get this, I'm like a three book gal now, I'm quite tarty with my reading. I've got three on the go.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And you flick between? Oh, okay.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

SARA COX: I have an audiobook, I'll have a little autobiography on the go, then a historical novel, and it's actually really nice because it depends on your mood. It's like food, bit of mackerel and watermelon or egg and chips. It depends on your mood.

NICK GRIMSHAW: You can have a mix. Are you a reader, Ange?

ANGELA HARTNETT: A bit like you, we all did it when I was younger and I've determined the last eighteen months to get back into it, and I've forced myself to do it because basically, I go to bed with headphones and a phone and I've banned that now and got back into it. And then on holiday this year, it was brilliant. I was just reading the whole time. I loved it.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I can't even do it- like when I went on holiday this year, if I hear like, even like a pigeon coo, I'm out of it. I need like, si-lence. So when I was on holiday with all my family, I was like, everyone needs to shut up.

SARA COX: You're like, 'Silence!'

NICK GRIMSHAW: 'Shut- don't splash!' Like I can't, I'm not like, but it's quite embarrassing.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Be concentrating.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I have to read with a pen and tick off the paragraph, because I find it so overwhelming being like, a big b***** book next to my bed, but if I look at it and I've ticked off all the chapters, I'm like, oh, I've read that much, I can carry on. I'm gonna-

ANGELA HARTNETT: You've got to.

NICK GRIMSHAW: -I've got to crack on, I've got to force myself through it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Agree to go on and then...

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, maybe I need to agree to go on.

SARA COX: Yeah, because Annie's coming on this series.

ANGELA HARTNETT: There you go.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, but she's a reader. And a writer.

SARA COX: I know, but you're a writer.

NICK GRIMSHAW: But not a reader. Make sure you watch it, BBC Two, 7pm from November the 6th.

[Drink pouring sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sara, as well as books, let's talk about the radio, please.

SARA COX: Yeah. Ah, radio.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Now, we talked briefly about you when you were younger doing your modellings. How did you make the transition to doing the radio?

SARA COX: Well, I stopped off en route to call people w***** on the telly.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah!

SARA COX: Woo! On The Girlie Show, so that was-

NICK GRIMSHAW: I loved The Girlie Show.

SARA COX: Oh, it was- I mean, I do sometimes joke that it's a late-night political discussion show and don't Google it-

NICK GRIMSHAW: It was, yeah.

SARA COX: -but it wasn't, it was post-pub silliness and raucous and quite wild and fun. I mean, it was great fun to do, and I wouldn't be sitting here now with you two legends eating mackerel if it wasn't for The Girlie Show, so I'm thoroughly grateful to it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah. And did they approach you and say, do you want to come on the telly?

SARA COX: Well, it was through a modelling- so they were obviously after experienced presenters, so they came to a model agency in Manchester. And I went last, everybody went pootling out, and you had to do a piece to this little camcorder, essentially, and I went out and I took a hairbrush out to use as a microphone.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Which she's using today.

SARA COX: Which- I know, yeah, always. So I rang up, it was Rapido, Rapido TV, remember that?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, yeah.

SARA COX: All those years ago. And, they were based in Notting Hill, and I rang the office like twice a day, going, 'Have I got this presenter job?' I was desperate for it. I'd ring them from the landline, which was also connected to the pub downstairs that I lived above, that my mum was landlady of, the Pineapple Inn in Bolton. So when I'd be on the phone to fancy London somebody'd pick up the payphone downstairs and it was the same phone line. 'I'm trying to order a taxi,' there'd be like someone on

there, and I'm like, 'Have I got the gig?' So yeah and then I got it and yeah, ended up, yeah, did telly for a few years, and then the Radio 1 years.

NICK GRIMSHAW: The radio days. And did you always like talking and telling stories and chatting?

SARA COX: I think so, yeah. My mum's pretty funny. You've met little Jackie-

NICK GRIMSHAW: I have yeah.

SARA COX: -but I was really shy at school, I was classic sort of bullied at school, show off in career kind of trajectory.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, it's worked for a lot of people, it's the route. And then Radio 1, how was your time at Radio 1? I remember asking you years ago, I think when I was starting Breakfast maybe, and you were like, 'Can't remember.'

SARA COX: 'Dunno.'

NICK GRIMSHAW: I dunno.

SARA COX: Let me check Heat magazine. Apparently I was there.

NICK GRIMSHAW: I was.

SARA COX: Who knew?

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, because I was saying to Angela at the start of this, that when you were doing Breakfast was when I was also trying to like, avoid university or avoid getting a job, and my dad really wanted me to be, you know, an accountant or be a lawyer or something and I was like, I can't. But do you remember how big that job was?

SARA COX: Yeah, well, yes and no-

NICK GRIMSHAW: Do you remember the pressure of it.

SARA COX: -because I was so young, I mean, I was like twenty-eight, but I mean, that feels so young now, it's twenty years ago. That's what's so sweet now about Radio 2 is that I've really worked for my teatime show and for my daily show on Radio 2 and I love every minute and I get it because in between the two jobs, you know, my career's undulated somewhat. It's lovely to have a gig that you really appreciate and you really wanted.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And how is life at Radio 2?

SARA COX: It's amazing.

NICK GRIMSHAW: You sound really, really at home and great there.

SARA COX: I really, really love it and I, I get into work every day and I'm already in a good mood because I love it so much, but when I leave I'm in a better mood because I've been interacting with the listeners.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah.

SARA COX: I just absolutely love it. It was the absolute dream to get a daily show on Radio 2, so I'm really, really happy.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sounds like you love it. Honestly, it really does. I was listening the other day, and it was on a Friday when you just do, like, requests.

SARA COX: Oh, we do all-request.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, and people just phone in. And like, on paper that could be kind of a boring show, like people just requesting songs, like, 'Hi, I'm John.' 'Oh, here's your song.' You make it so funny, and so entertaining, and so warm, and like, properly hilarious, like someone just calling in to pick a song- and I was really laughing at you speaking to- and it's rare that I laugh out loud to the radio on my own - and you spoke to a guy who called up and he said, 'I want to pick this song for my girlfriend and our two kids, and we're getting married next year or something.' And you were like, 'Two children out of wedlock? This is the BBC.' And just put the song on. And I was like, that is funny.

SARA COX: It's, I mean, I love all requests, but like, I wake up like a competition winner on a Friday like, I get to do it, I get to do it again.

NICK GRIMSHAW: And it just sounds like you love it, and it's really brilliant, it's really good.

SARA COX: Yeah, I do love it. I mean, I used to listen to Simon Mayo do it, and I used to be having a gin and tonic at home, and it was a real feeling of like, the weekend. I mean, I know every show on a Friday on all the radio- 'No, we're starting the weekend, we're starting the weekend' But it used to really feel like all requests starts the weekend, so yeah, it's amazing to be able to do it.

[Dinner table sounds]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Right, we have come to the end of the show question. Sara Cox, here is your question. You can win a Waitrose goodie bag from Waitrose, and it's really good.

SARA COX: Can I really?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, it's a good one.

ANGELA HARTNETT: It's there.

SARA COX: 'For the goodie bag, we'd love to hear about your most memorable moment as a broadcaster. But we also want to hear about a moment that you'd rather forget. It's a game of best and worst, so go!' Ooh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Do you want to do your best and worst radio story, or not really?

SARA COX: Most memorable moment.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah.

SARA COX: It's a bit of a name drop.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah, but come on.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Do it, do it.

SARA COX: But I mean, also, it's got me massive props with my nieces and with my kids, which is so rare because they're teenagers now, but I flew to New York and interviewed Eminem and hung out with him.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Wow.

SARA COX: And we went out for an Italian afterwards with all his friends, and he's a real gentleman.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Amazing.

SARA COX: It was very much of it's time, this wouldn't happen now, but like the record company paid for my best mate to come with me, so my best friend from Whitefield came and we went and hung out with Eminem.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Fantastic.

SARA COX: It was amazing.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh fab.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Wow.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That is amazing.

SARA COX: And the worst would have to be the classic, Sacha Baron Cohen in character as Ali G, stitching me up and doing an interview that was scripted because he was in character as Ali G. So I just read out my part of the script and he read out his, and it worked because he was promoting Ali G the movie. He got a lot of press, but it was all bad press for me because he spelt out the word mother, M O T H E R, and then said f*****.

NICK GRIMSHAW: On the radio?

SARA COX: Live on the Breakfast Show on Radio 1.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh my God.

SARA COX: The world stopped spinning for a second. And I looked at my team like, 'Nooo!'

ANGELA HARTNETT: 'Noo!'

SARA COX: And since then I think there's been like, training put in, you know, they probably call it the *Sara Cox Law* or something. And when somebody came up and said something about Matt Hancock on All Request Friday a few months ago.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh yeah, I was listening to that live.

SARA COX: Yes. The world stopped for a second, but I went, 'Okay,' and I actually, I said out loud what I was doing, 'Okay, well I'm now cutting you off now and I'm doing this now and we're not going to chat to you and I'd like to apologise to anybody if you've got children listening,' and this like training kicked in.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Kicked in.

SARA COX: But back in the day I just went, 'Aahhh!' and nobody knew, and my producer went, 'Aahh!' And it was awful. And then afterwards I went out and there was loads of paps waiting to take my picture, and I went out and I had on a t-shirt that said Dirty Dirty House Music. Cause I was cool. And they took these pictures and they cropped it so it just said Dirty Dirty.

NICK GRIMSHAW: No.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Horrors.

SARA COX: Naughty dirty girl. And so yeah, there was real like...

ANGELA HARTNETT: Oh God.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Oh my God.

SARA COX: And you know, it wasn't my fault. But he got so much publicity, it was all like, Ali G.

ANGELA HARTNETT: And he knew exactly what he was... yeah, 'course he wanted, yeah.

SARA COX: He knew of course he knew exactly what he was doing, especially 'cause he- it's kind of funny, you know, he spelt out, he didn't want to say m***** the radio so he spelt out mother and then said the bad word.

NICK GRIMSHAW: You gave us your best, you gave us your worst, Sara Cox you win the goodie bag!

[Applause]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Yeah! It's a load of Ali G merch! Yay! Ehh.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Ehh.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Sara, thank you so much for coming round to see us.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yeah, you've been brilliant.

SARA COX: It's been really brilliant.

NICK GRIMSHAW: That was wonderful.

SARA COX: Thank you so much. It was really delicious and really lovely, thanks, I loved it.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Aw, thank you.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Thank you Sara, Sara Cox everyone!

[Applause]

NICK GRIMSHAW: Thank you Sara!

SARA COX: Thank you.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Details of all the delicious meals I've cooked on Dish can be found at waitrose.com/dishrecipes. All the links are in our show notes.

NICK GRIMSHAW: We love reading your reviews, don't we Ange? Ange?

ANGELA HARTNETT: Yep.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Please keep them coming, and you know, the bigger the better.

ANGELA HARTNETT: Leave us a review on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or whatever you are listening today.

NICK GRIMSHAW: Don't be a stranger, you can email us now. Angela is on hand, as am I, if you want, to answer any questions, dish@waitrose.co.uk.

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