



## **Billy Porter, Greek chicken with orzo and a fiery lime margarita**

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** This podcast may contain some strong language and adult themes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh, hello. Look, it's us. Welcome to Dish from Waitrose. I'm Nick Grimshaw.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** And I'm Angela Hartnett.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And we are here for another episode of Dish [*bangs table*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** [*bangs table*] Stop tapping the table.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh, you're the table tapper. Do you know what your thing is, which I've noticed?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** What's my thing?

[*crew laugh*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You could have been a DJ in a former life because you like this.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I spin a bit.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** She thinks she's in De La Soul or summat.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Spinning back that vinyl.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I've, I've, I've been known, I've been known.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** [*laughs*] You have been known, yeah? Um, how are you?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'm very well, thanks. How are you?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, I'm good. I'm really good, yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Excited? How's your new job going?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh, it's going so well.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Good guests all the time.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What's been your favourite bit so far?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Ooh, the bit where I listen to Amol and, um, Emma, you know.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh, you...

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh, you lis- I bet you have got Radio 4 on, haven't you?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I told you my routine. I do Radio 4 when I wake up.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** 'Til about half past eight. So I miss your first hour.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Hour and a half.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** You're on at 7:30 you start?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I start at 7:00, thanks.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh, that's new then.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay, I didn't know that. Excuse me.

[*crew laugh*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's been on for weeks.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Well, hold on. When I texted you one time going, blah, blah, blah, where are you? You said, 'I don't start until 7:30.' I did not know the BBC 2 schedule- oh, sorry, BBC 6.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** 6!

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Also, I loved you were like, 'It's half eight, where are you?' 'I said, one, you're in France.

[*laughing*] Oh yes.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** And two, it doesn't start until half seven, that's why.

**ANGELA HARTNETT: GRIMSHAW:** Anyway, and then I come on to 6 at 8:30.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Good to-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Greenwich Mean Time.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** That is very good to know actually.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Um, all right. Well, we'll get you on, come on, could you come on?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'd love to come on.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** But I'm not, I'm lowly. You've got all these big, big stars on.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** No.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, Denzel Washington was on for god's sake.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah he was.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Anyway. Let's talk about today because today we have a true star on the show today.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Broadway royalty I feel.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And I just bumped into them and said hello outside and I've never met them before.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Get ready for the outfit. Get ready for the outfit. You know, like certain people are just like, of course.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You had to be famous.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Or something would have been terrible in the world.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Like, you couldn't have just worked in Wickes.

[*crew laugh*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** But an- let me, answer this question. Could Mesh carry off his outfit today?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Only Billy Porter can carry off this outfit.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh right, okay, all right.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Billy Porter is going to join us in a second. The look is fantastic, and they already are oozing that star thing.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Marvellous.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Not in a scary Madonna way [*laughs*]

[*laughs*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** In like a really generous way.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay, excellent.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Charm [*clicks fingers*] instant like that.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Always, I imagined him being charming, I imagined.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Very. So Billy Porter is going to join us in a second.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Excellent.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** They're wearing a top hat and a really long cape.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh, fabulous.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Or coat. There's frills.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I like a cape.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, you should get a cape.

[*laughter*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I, uh, my uncle wore a cape.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What? [*laughs*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** To my, um, nieces christening. He looked fabulous.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** He looked amazing.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Why don't you get one?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** This fabulous, stylish Italian cape, it was lovely.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Kitchen cape.

[*crew laugh*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'd love a cape.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Get a little kitchen cape.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, a cape.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You know David Sedaris, the writer?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I went to go see him, and when he came on stage, never been seen before, and um, he came on stage, and he was dressed as a priest.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Really?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** So I was like, oh?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Because?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Is he a priest or whatever? So he like started and he said hello to everyone and he started being like, 'I'm David Sedaris and I'm here to talk about my new book.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** No one seemed to react or anything. And then after about fifteen minutes, he was like, [*in David Sedaris voice*] 'Oh, I'm dressed as a priest. Um, yeah, I just went to Rome, and they were so beautifully made. I couldn't help myself.'

[*crew laugh*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** So he bought some.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** He just, he's dressed as a, he's like, [*in David Sedaris voice*] 'I, it's not culturally appropriate, I checked. It's beautiful fabric.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** [*in David Sedaris voice*] 'Anyway, back to my book.' And he was just had a priest's outfit on from Rome.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** That is nuts.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** That was well made.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** That is nuts. That's just like people going 'round dressed as cardinals.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It was, but it was like, it wasn't like a priest here.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It was like a priest in like the Vatican City.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** [*sings*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** That's nuts!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It was really fab. Really nuts. But beautifully made, apparently.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right, okay.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Anyway-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Back to Dish.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** -before we welcome Billy Porter in, let's hear from Erin. 'Hi Nick and Angela. First off, I want to say that your podcast is such a find. I have a couple of questions for you both. First of all, Angela, help. Whenever I try to make something like a pad Thai or noodle wok meal, I feel the recipes say, 'Toss noodles.' Mine either stay as one big glob, or they stick and burn to the pan. How do you toss things together so they seem like a cohesive dish?'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I think you've either haven't got enough liquid in your noodle dish.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** So that's why they'd stick to the pan and they're burning. And two, I don't know whether your ratio of sauce to noodles is correct. Cause if there's too many noodles, they're going to stick and congeal together, and there's not enough sauce to split them up. So-

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What do you call these things?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Tongs?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Tongs. May I suggest a tong?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** A tong?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** To sort of mix everything, because you want the noodles ingrained, like...

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** She should be- and are you doing it in a pan like a wok?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Right. One of them.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Because actually you want a round sided pan that you actually toss it. If you're doing it in a saucepan they're always gonna stick, you need the right pan in that instance.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And you, is it true, you don't clean a wok?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No, you just wipe it.



**NICK GRIMSHAW:** With what?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Just a cloth like a kitchen roll with a bit of oil.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** But does it not stank?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No, it's fine.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Okay. Oh, all right. Love that.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Love that.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** All right, tongs or a toss. Do it.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Tongs or a toss, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** ‘Second for Nick, when you are hosting, are you prone to silence [*laughs*] or a generic playlist or are you the master of dinner time selections?’ Yeah, I have loads of playlists and I just put one of them on.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** So yeah, I would do that.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Silence seems-

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Sometimes silence.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Really? When you're cooking maybe, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh... yeah? No, no, not when I'm cooking.

[*crew laugh*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** No, no.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Sometimes a silent dinner.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** What, just you?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** If you've had a blazing row. Pause. No, um, yeah, I think a playlist, yeah, for sure.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Nice.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** For sure. I share them on my Spotify, Erin, so you can just go and get one.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh I saw one of those the other day actually, pop up.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, they're all on there.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Don't know why it popped up.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** So have one of them, Erin. If you like that sort of thing.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** There you go, go for it Erin.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** 'Love you both, and thank you so much for the laughs.' Well, thank you, Erin. Email us any questions or thoughts, [dish@waitrose.co.uk](mailto:dish@waitrose.co.uk) is the way to do it. Shall we get our guest Billy Porter in?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yes, let's get him in.

[*theme music*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Okay, time to welcome our guest, to the show, for today, an award-winning star of stage and screen and we're talking big awards, not those rubbish ones.

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh, we're talking Emmys, we're talking Grammys, we're Talking Tonys. A round of applause, please, for the one and only Billy Porter!

[*applause*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Real awards!

**BILLY PORTER:** Thank you, thank you, thank you.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Billy Porter.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Amazing.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Welcome to Dish.

**BILLY PORTER:** Thank you.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yes, welcome.

**BILLY PORTER:** Thank you for having me.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** You look fabulous.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You look fab.

**BILLY PORTER:** Thank you!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Absolutely fabulous.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** I clean up okay, right?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, you look good.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** More than okay, I'd say.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, you look good.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** More than okay.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I got ready, I was like, maybe this is nice? And then Billy Porter arrived and I'm like, oh no!

[laughter]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** We're doing a cocktail. Cheers.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yes, please.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Welcome.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Welcome.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** We did you a margarita 'cause we heard that you love them.

**BILLY PORTER:** Cheers, yes. Cheers.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Welcome.

**BILLY PORTER:** Cheers, cheers.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cheers.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Cheers.

**BILLY PORTER:** I'm glad I said yes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Ooh, honey.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm. That's good.

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] Fiery lime margarita.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] My darlings.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** That's it.

**BILLY PORTER:** I'm in London, so if I slip into my high Brit.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, I always said I was a high, mighty white woman in a previous life.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** So I've been doing this my whole life, so if I slip, you know, now that I'm here for real.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, let it outgirl.

**BILLY PORTER:** Sometimes I slip into it, don't think I'm taking the piss.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** No.

[laughter]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's respectful.

**BILLY PORTER:** It's respectful and I love it.

[laughter]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** When have yo- how long have you been here now? Have you arrived?

**BILLY PORTER:** Um...

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And are you here now for the show? This is it?

**BILLY PORTER:** Yeah, I'm here for Cabaret, making my West End debut.

[applause]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Do do doo!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Woo! Woo woo woo!

**BILLY PORTER:** Um, I love it here. I've been spending a lot of time here over the last few years. Y'all sort of understand me and I like it. And I've always wanted to do the West End and I've just been waiting for the right time, and it's the right time now!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah!

**BILLY PORTER:** And it's exciting. We've been here since December 19th.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Y'all really believe in Christmas over here.

[laughter]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh yeah, we do.

**BILLY PORTER:** Don't try to get your internet fixed.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** From the 19th of December to the 6th of January.

[laughter]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh, you're a true Brit, you know exactly what's going on.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, we were like, you know, cause, I mean, Christmas is Christmas in America.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, Thanksgiving's your big thing.

**BILLY PORTER:** Thanksgiving is our- no, Christmas is a big thing too.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** However...

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Things work.

**BILLY PORTER:** Everything-

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Everything is still open.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Everything doesn't stop. Yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know what I mean? It's like what I realised over here talking to my, to my British theatre friends, you know, the tube shuts down.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** So they can't get there.

[*crew laugh*]

**BILLY PORTER:** So you're off, on Christmas.

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** And you're off on Boxing Day, whatever that means!

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** I mean, I went and did the research, so I know what it means, which is a really sweet- ish.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ish.

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's a bit. Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, the servants get a day off.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah [*laughing*]

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** Okay.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Was nice.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yeah, it's nice.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** I just love it, I love it, rehearsals are going so well.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh-huh.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And, you know, for me, you know, Toni Morrison says this is precisely the time when artists go to work.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, there's no room for fear, like, it's a beautiful quote that I have really built my intention on.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** In my career and to be doing Cabaret right now, you know, with its message of warning.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, it's really a warning. It's really a reminder and, and, and a warning about how we can descend into madness if we're not careful. It's really powerful for me to be here telling this story and reminding the world, we got to come together again.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah of course.

**BILLY PORTER:** And we have to remember love.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Well, I'm very excited. I didn't see Cabaret yet-



**BILLY PORTER:** You haven't seen it yet?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** -so I'm so excited. I'm coming for you.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** She's been waiting for Billy Porter.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'm waiting for the real McCoy.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** She said, 'I refuse to go.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** 'I'm not going until Billy is over here.' So now you're here.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** She was like, 'Sorry Eddie Redmayne, Reddie Shmedshmayne.'

[laughter]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Stick with the Jackal. Don't worry about that.

**BILLY PORTER:** Well, it's me and Marisha Wallace.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**BILLY PORTER:** Who's another African-American woman who now has transplanted here and...

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I like that, transplanted.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Transplanted I love.

**BILLY PORTER:** Well, transplanted, is that right?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, I like it.

**BILLY PORTER:** And she, um, you know, she came over about a decade ago, uh, to do Dreamgirls and she actually stayed and she's now twice Olivier nominated, once for Oklahoma and once for that most recent immersive Guys & Dolls, and she's the toast of the West End, and so it's two Black people in these roles in particular for the first time in the sixty plus year history of this musical.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** In a commercial production, and, um, it's very powerful.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, it's a really, really powerful place to be. Um, I remember the last revival with, uh, Sam Mendes as director and Alan Cumming as the Emcee, and it was the late nineties. Uh, probably around '98, '99, and every single one of my caucasian colleagues were cycled into this role.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I asked to audition, and it was a swift and unequivocal 'No.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Really?

**BILLY PORTER:** And the reason was, that they gave me was, 'That's not the story we're telling.'

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Hm?

**BILLY PORTER:** And I thought to myself, you're not telling a story of racism and oppression...

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** Okay. So, you know, and I've always been an activist and don't take no for an answer. And I did some research, and I found a book called Destined to Witness: Growing Up Black in Nazi Germany, and I sent it to the entire creative team signed, 'We were there. We are always there.'

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** I've been waiting to play this role since the nineties.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes. Well, congratulations.

**BILLY PORTER:** Thank you.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And, seriously-

**BILLY PORTER:** It could not be a better time than right now.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, mm-hm. And how do you feel ahead of, we know once you've achieved something like this and the role is yours and you're into rehearsals, how do you feel ahead of it happening? Do you get nervous? Do you get the stage fright?

**BILLY PORTER:** Baby!

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] Let me say first and foremost...

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh!

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] You know, I've moved into film and television recently.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** [*in posh voice*] You have, yes.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I haven't been on stage in like eight years.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** So you want to talk about the actor's nightmare dreams I'm having right now?

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** I mean, literally for the last week, I have been having, you know, those dreams where you're like, oh, you're thrown on stage and you don't know the role. Or, you know, you're late and you're like in a maze somewhere, you can't find your way out-

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** -and you're not going to make it to curtain on time. You know, I've been having those dreams.

[laughing] Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I'm like, oh my god!

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, but the process for me is my favourite part.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Right.

**BILLY PORTER:** I'm having the time of my life.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You can tell.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, totally.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You can tell, can't you, you love this. And it's such an interesting thing to do, to go into something like Cabaret and get the opportunity to redo it and to rework it and to reimagine it.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** When can we see it? When do you kick off, when's opening night?

**BILLY PORTER:** We start performances on January 27th.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**BILLY PORTER:** You all call it Gala Night... Or something?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh, Gala Night, yep.

**BILLY PORTER:** Gala Night, right?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay, the opening night, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Gala Night?

**BILLY PORTER:** Opening, Gala Night.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** For us is February 13th. We close on May 25th.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** So it's a long stint, it's a good, you know.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yeah, and then I'm staying for another month to direct a new play.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ooh, wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** That is making its world premiere at the Soho Theatre.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh fab.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** A new Harrison David Rivers play.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh, fantastic.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** Called This Bitter Earth. Listen, I'm trying to stay here.

[laughter]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** We sensed that.

**BILLY PORTER:** Cause I don't know what the hell is going on over there.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You're like, I'm...

**BILLY PORTER:** Don't get me wrong-

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** 'I'm staying here'

**BILLY PORTER:** I'm going to stay here for a minute.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, yeah. You're welcome.

**BILLY PORTER:** Until y'all catch a cold.

[*laughter*]

[*cork popping sounds*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ange is cracking that Champagne.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yes. Yes, you know. Ask and you shall receive, honey.

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** They asked me a month ago what I wanted to eat, I was like, y'all need to know that now?

[*crew laugh*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Was it a month?

**BILLY PORTER:** It was like- no, it was-

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I never knew when you got asked, was it like a month.

**BILLY PORTER:** No, it was like the day after Thanksgiving.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah [*laughs*]

[*crew laugh*]

**BILLY PORTER:** I was like, it is November 25th. You really need my menu right now?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wow. I never thought that.

**BILLY PORTER:** For January 9th?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I've never thought that.

**BILLY PORTER:** But now I understand.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Aw.

**BILLY PORTER:** I didn't realise it was gonna be all this.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh yeah. Wow, Ange, this looks good. Now, we went for Greek because we heard you enjoyed Greek food.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** I love a Greek moment.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You love a Greek moment. Tell us about your Greek moment. Did you go in the summer, or?

**BILLY PORTER:** Well, actually, this summer my sister and I went to Greece, to Mykonos, to film a show called My Happy Place.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh, wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** It's celebrities who, um, go to places that are their happy place.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh-huh.

**BILLY PORTER:** And for me I didn't travel much as a kid, we weren't wealthy, we were sort of poor. So one of the first places out of the country that I went was Mykonos.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh-huh.

**BILLY PORTER:** And it was just so magical and so fun. Also, what I love about Greek food is that it's clean.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** As a diabetic, you know, it's just very healthy.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Nice and light.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Olive oil, not heavy.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes. What have we got going on here, Ange?

**BILLY PORTER:** So what have we?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** So what we do have is a Greek chicken with orzo. A great friend of mine, Diana Henry, it's her recipe. So a whole chicken cooked down with orzo, finished with some parsley, some dried oregano. And then it has a soft-

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] Oregaaano.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oregano.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** [*in posh voice*] Ooh, we love oregano.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** What do you say? [*in American accent*] Oregano. Oregano, oregano.

**BILLY PORTER:** Oregano.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oregano?

**BILLY PORTER:** See, you did, you did the American! Oregano.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** [*in American accent*] Oregano.



**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] Oregano.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** And what's the other? [*in American accent*] Cilantro.

**BILLY PORTER:** Cilantro. Cilaaantro.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cilantro.

**BILLY PORTER:** But what do you say? [*in English accent*] Cila-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** We say coriander.

**BILLY PORTER:** Oh right. [*in English accent*] Coriander.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Coriander.

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in english accent*] Coriander.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Coriander.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cilantro. Sounds exotic to me.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Cilantro.

**BILLY PORTER:** You also say [*in english accent*] rocket.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, rocket's crazy.

**BILLY PORTER:** Rocket is what shoots to the moon, y'all.

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, like, rocket?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** And then we have a stuffing, so stuffed inside the chicken we have a stuffing with pieces of bread, tomato, garlic, olive oil, and a little bit of oregano in there as well.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wow.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oregano now.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oregano.

**BILLY PORTER:** No, I want you to say [*in posh voice*] oregano.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oregano.

**BILLY PORTER:** Oh my god.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Is it good?

**BILLY PORTER:** Seasoned food in England!

[*crew laugh*]

[*applause*]

**BILLY PORTER:** Hallelujah, hallelujah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Where have you been eating that nothing's seasoned?

**BILLY PORTER:** No, it's not nothing seasoned.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay, alright.

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** But you all have gotten better since twenty years ago.

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** It's gotten better. But I will say y'all don't mind putting some olive oil on something and roasting it with no salt and pepper.

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** This stuffing. Ooh!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Ah, yeah. Oh yeah, the stuffing in there.

**BILLY PORTER:** God, you- b\*\*\*\* you gotta give me this menu- recipe-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'll cook it for you again.

**BILLY PORTER:** No, I cook it myself!

*[crew laugh]*

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh, I love that.

**BILLY PORTER:** I cooked my first Sunday roast on a Tuesday.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Did you?

**BILLY PORTER:** New Year's Eve.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh my god. How was it?

**BILLY PORTER:** How was it Mary Martha?

**MARY MARTHA:** It was good!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah?

*[crew laugh]*

**MARY MARTHA:** We had Yorkshire puddings.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes, Yorkshire puddings. Wow.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yorkshire pudding from the freezer.

*[crew laugh]*

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, I do that. I do that.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** That's all right.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I do that.

**BILLY PORTER:** I didn't do Yorkshire pudding myself.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, I do that too. It's a faff, the hot fat, it's dangerous.

**BILLY PORTER:** And it's not pudding!

[*crew laugh*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, it's not.

**BILLY PORTER:** Americans.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's not.

**BILLY PORTER:** It's not pudding, it's a piece of bread.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, that's true.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:****ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** You can answer this question for me. This is amazing.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** This is delicious.

**BILLY PORTER:** I want to know what makes it a Greek chicken.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** And you know the other thing is the feta cheese that I forgot to mention, it's the feta in the stuffing, so that gives it that real saltiness.

**BILLY PORTER:** I like a feta cheese.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** There you go, you see. Ticking all the boxes here.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Now that is a nice moist chicken.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What was your key to smashing this Ange? Years of experience.

[crew laugh]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Being one of the world's top Michelin star chefs.

[laughter]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No, it's just a good chicken, you know, just don't overcomplicate it, keep it nice and simple. And it's all the right flavours. You've got oregano, you've got tomatoes, you've got feta. They all work together.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** The orzo as well is nice and soft.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, and the orzo.

**BILLY PORTER:** What do you do with the skin? Do you put anything under it?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No, no, just seasoned up the skin. Olive oil and salt. And then I put the stuffing in the bigger bit.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's bum.

**BILLY PORTER:** I haven't really thought about it like that!

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** I'm trying to continue to eat meat!

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** I don't want to know-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** All you need to know is feta was in the stuffing, that's all you need to know. You don't need to know where it went.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's good Ange.

**BILLY PORTER:** So it's only salt and pepper and oregano on the, on the chicken?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah. Only salt and pepper, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wow. That is good.

**BILLY PORTER:** And how do you keep the chicken moist-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Because when-

**BILLY PORTER:** -and then flavourful? Is it the stuffing in the neck that flavours it?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** We cooking the orzo with the chicken in the pot, so then you pour chicken stock on, so that gives it even more moisture. So all the fat from the skin goes in the orzo-

**BILLY PORTER:** And then it bubbles back up.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** -and the stock keeps it nice and moist, yeah, that's why.

**BILLY PORTER:** Work it out, honey.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

[*crew laugh*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Hey, I loved when we asked your food likes and dislikes last Easter.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Last Easter [*laughs*]

[*crew laugh*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** We found out that you like Greek food, we found out you like grilled chicken, we found out you like veggies, but my favourite thing was, we got to the drink section and the quote here is, 'Drinks Champagne like water.' Obsessed with that quote. So we're gonna have a Champagne with our meal. What is the Champagne pairing Ange?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** We've got this fabulous, uh, Le Mesnil Grand Cru Blanc de Blanc. Enjoy Billy, this is for you.

[*glasses clink*]

**BILLY PORTER:** Oop!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Cheers.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cheers!

**BILLY PORTER:** Cheers.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cheers Billy, welcome. Cheers Ange. Here we go. Mm. The wine pairing with this. It's Greek, I got my Greek friend Dino to tell me how to pronounce this, but obviously I forgot because I've been distracted by Billy Porter and Angela Hartnett. Um, so it's uh, Malagousia, is how he said to pronounce it. Magousia. Which you can find all the information on [waitrose.com](http://waitrose.com), rather than me butcher the Greek language, don't you think? If you want to try this recipe Or, get the wine, [waitrose.com/dishrecipes](http://waitrose.com/dishrecipes) is where you get all the information.

**BILLY PORTER:** Child, Imma watch this all the time. I didn't know nothing about it.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Are you?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's good. We love it.

**BILLY PORTER:** I love this thing.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You like it? Yeah!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Come back.

**BILLY PORTER:** I didn't know I was coming here to eat.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Did you not?

**BILLY PORTER:** No, child, Imma point and click.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** I don't ask no questions.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You just go.

**BILLY PORTER:** I look at my schedule, I'm like, I'm going to the Dish.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You're like, I'm there.

**BILLY PORTER:** Dishing the dirt is what we do in America.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh-huh.

**BILLY PORTER:** I was like, 'Oh, I guess I'm going to dish with somebody.'

[laughter]

[salt grinder sounds]

**BILLY PORTER:** So the question for me, for you.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** It's an artichoke question.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ooh.

**BILLY PORTER:** So I went to a very posh restaurant.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** In, what's the movie? Hill?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Notting Hill.



**BILLY PORTER:** [*in English accent*] Notting Hill.

[*crew laugh*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Notting Hill.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I ordered grilled artichoke. They come out. I look at the plate, like, ‘This looks like potatoes.’

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right.

**BILLY PORTER:** Put it in my mouth. ‘This is a potato.’

[*crew laugh*]

**BILLY PORTER:** Like, ‘No, these are the artichokes.’ I’m like, ‘This is a potato.’

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** I know the difference between a potato-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** A potato and an artichoke.

**BILLY PORTER:** -and an artichoke.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** [*with teeth together*] You gotta do this with an artichoke This is a potato. They’re like, [*in English accent*] ‘Oh, they’re Jerusalem artichokes.’

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Aaahh.

[*laughing*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah. Oh yeah. Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** So, like Yorkshire pudding.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** It's a bread.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

[*crew laugh*]

**BILLY PORTER:** A Jerusalem artichoke is a f\*\*\*\*\* potato!

[*laughter*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'm with you, Billy.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You're not wrong.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** You're not pulling, you're not pulling.

**BILLY PORTER:** And then somebody was like, 'Oh, well, yeah, Jerusalem artichokes are grown under the ground.' And you're talking about-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Like a potato.

**BILLY PORTER:** Like a potato.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Thank you.

**BILLY PORTER:** 'And you're thinking about the one that's grown above ground.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** I'm like, 'So why you looking at me like I'm Boo Boo the Clown?'

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** So it's a thing.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's a thing.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** It is, it is a thing. It's the season now for Jerusalem artichokes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I prefer Jerusalem artichoke taste.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh, do you?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, I do.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh.

**BILLY PORTER:** Not when it's grilled right.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I'm surprised how they grilled the Jerusalem artichokes. They're quite hard to grill, like to get them soft and tender.

**BILLY PORTER:** They were good.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** They were good, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I said, 'Well, I already ordered chips, so I need to send these back.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** [*laughs*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Cause I'm trying to keep my girlish figure.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

[*cutlery sounds*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** What's the thing that your grandmother and mother taught you that you'll always have create as their dish?

**BILLY PORTER:** My grandmother's devilled eggs.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mmm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Love devilled eggs.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Nice, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** She didn't use mayonnaise.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right, okay, so what did she do?

**BILLY PORTER:** I didn't know from mayonnaise devilled eggs until I started eating devilled eggs from white people.

*[laughter]*

**BILLY PORTER:** I just didn't know that they had mayonnaise in them.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I'm not a huge mayonnaise fan, so I'd look at it and I'm like, that's gooey.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** That's that creamy thing I don't like.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** But my grandma used Colman's dry mustard.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay, yeah, powdered mustard, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** The powdered mustard, and then butter, apple cider vinegar, salt and pepper, and that's it, right?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** And nobody really makes them like that.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** No.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, so it's-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Everyone is mayonnaise.

**BILLY PORTER:** -has a bite.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ooh, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** It has a little bite to it.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** You need that with the soft egg.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, exactly.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Like, rather than mayo and eggs to be like, ehh. Yeah, you need that.

**BILLY PORTER:** So there's that.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** And then there's the macaroni and cheese.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** Because I will eat my grandmother's, my mother's, my great aunt's, my sister's - and most anybody black - macaroni and cheese, because it's baked.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And it's like a piece of cake.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah. Thick, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** So it's coagulated and you cut it and it's like a piece of cake. So the so the cheese is not gooey.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mmm.

**BILLY PORTER:** It's, you can cut through it that I can handle. And it uses like three different kinds of cheeses. I like a sharp cheese.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** Hard on a cracker, I like that.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] I like an aged parmesan.

[*laughter*]

[*cutlery sounds*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Let's talk about the life and times of Billy Porter, please. I'm gonna go way back, I wanna go back to the career beginnings. I want you to tell us, Billy, um, I was saying before you came in, and I'd love to say it to your face right now, you are truly a star, and you have that, you know, instant charisma. And I was just saying before you joined us, like, Billy Porter is someone that I'm like, well, of course they have to be famous, like we all have to enjoy this.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Did you have a need in you when you were younger? Was there a feeling that you wanted to do something, to perform, to be on stage?

**BILLY PORTER:** Yeah, I started singing in church.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** When I was about five. You know, I was always a little sissy boy, I called myself a church sissy in my memoir.

[laughs]

**BILLY PORTER:** [*leans into the mic*] Unprotected.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** [*leans into the mic*] Anywhere you can find books.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** [*leans into the mic*] I actually do the audiobook myself.

[crew laugh]

**BILLY PORTER:** Um, but I talk about like, being bullied, and like, the relentless bullying. And I didn't know that I had anything 'cause I couldn't play sports and, you know, I talked like a white woman from England.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, I just didn't know! You know, and then in the fifth grade, there was a talent show and I signed up for the talent show, and I sang, and I won. And this is back when, like, the bullies cared if you had talent or something.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** If you had talent, they left you alone. They don't give a f\*\*\* now, but.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** And so the bullying stopped and I was like, oh wait? Then I went to sixth grade and there was an after school programme, it's called Rising Star Musical Theatre, I was like, oh, musical, I might be able to sing, and that was when I was introduced to the musical. They said, every role is going to be double cast, everything. And I didn't know what that meant. The list goes up, the cast list goes up and everybody is double cast. Except for me. And I'm like, am I good at this? You know, like, does this mean I'm good at something?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Right? And then that same year, and it was Babes in Arms, so it was Rogers and Hart. It wasn't like I sang in church, but it was fun. There was never a thought that you made a living doing anything like this. And then, in the same year, I was taken to see the national tour of The Wiz, and I was like, oh, I think this is that theatre thing. And there were a bunch of Black people on stage doing it. And then it was the year of Dreamgirls.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** And the Tony Awards was on, and I didn't know what Tony was. And I was washing my dishes, and I turn around, and there is Sheryl Lee Ralph, and Loretta Devine, and Jennifer Holliday, and she launches into And I Am Telling You, and- I'm Not Going, and I was like, like [*gasps*] I just, it was like the calling hit me.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** And at that point, you know, growing up in the church, it's like, when you have something special inside of that bubble, the only thing they understand is preacher man.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** So I was labelled Little Preacher Man, because they felt something special about me. And I preached my first and last sermon around ten or eleven years old. This was all the same time. I got up and I preached, and I was like, mmm...



[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** Not like that.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And mom was great, she was like, 'You don't have to do it.' And then this happened. And it was like, no, that is my calling. Theatre is the original love. Theatre is the original space that lifted me up and taught me how to dream beyond my circumstance.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** But that's quite, quite, really brave of your mother.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Given her circumstances, from what you're saying.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yeah. She was a church woman.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** To actually let you go off to just go and be you, as Nick said, you know.

**BILLY PORTER:** Well she, you know, my mother was the greatest woman who ever walked the face of this earth. She is the personification of what true Christianity means.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** She didn't understand me. She didn't understand my gayness. She didn't understand this theatre thing. She didn't understand any of it. And yet and still, she was my biggest supporter.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** She said, whatever God has called you to do, and I believe you when you say that to me, go do that. And I'm so grateful that she lived long enough to see the fruits of her labour. Cause it wasn't easy for her, you know, her community was not kind to her.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** You know, they would call her on her telephone and tell her that she was going to burn in the fiery pits of hell for loving her gay son and she did it anyway. She loved me and us and our community anyway. We were all her children. All of my friends were her children.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Incredible woman.

**BILLY PORTER:** I would not be the human being I am today, my sister and I, if it wasn't for my mother.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Well, she's in you.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** You can see, you can feel it. I think we need to salute your mum.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** We do. That's her legacy in you.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** I think that's, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cheers, Billy. Cheers.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** And your sister.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Cheers, to you.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Cheers, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And a round of applause for Billy and their mum.

[*applause*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Come on. But that legacy is, you know, she instilled that in you, and you're out here, you, you are living it, you're spreading the word. And that's-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Exactly.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** -that's amazing. Really is.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Incredibly proud, incredibly proud.

**BILLY PORTER:** And she really got to see it.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah. I love that she got to see it.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Exactly.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** She got to see the Tony, she got to see the Grammy, she got to see the Emmy.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** She got to see Pose. The last eight years of her life, she ended up at the Actors Fund nursing home in Englewood, New Jersey.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** Which was like twenty minutes, a half an hour from me and my sis. And because she wasn't in the business, she didn't really realise- and this is before like the television and the fashion and all of this, this was like Kinky Boots.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** But like I'd been in the theatre business and everybody knew me for like twenty-eight years at that point, right?

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, sure.

**BILLY PORTER:** So she's at the Actors Fund nursing home with all of these-

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** -old theatre people and blah, blah, blah, blah.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Ex-producers, actors, everyone.

**BILLY PORTER:** Like four or five months in, she calls me and she said, 'Son, these people have found out that I am your mother.'

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** 'And these white people are losing their minds!'

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** She's like, 'Who are you?'

[laughter]

[drink pouring sounds]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Billy Porter, I want to talk to you about Star Search.

**BILLY PORTER:** Mm-hm.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** So many people, loads of people like Usher and Rosie O'Donnell, Justin Timberlake, Britney Spears. Tell everyone who's-

**BILLY PORTER:** Beyoncé.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What?! Was it? Wow.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** She's good.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** She's done alright.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** She's alright. So tell everyone for those who don't know Star Search...

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** What it is, yeah.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** What it is.

**BILLY PORTER:** So Star Search, in the eighties.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**BILLY PORTER:** Was my generation's version of American Idol.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right, okay.

**BILLY PORTER:** Or The Voice, or it was a competition show, but it wasn't just singing. Uh, dancing, acting...

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** Supermodels.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Ooh.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Billy won all categories...

**BILLY PORTER:** Comedians-

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** Comedians, it had everything. And I was on in its tenth season. So, you know what American Idol was like in its tenth season.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Mm.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** The shine is off the bloom.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** Or wait, the bloom is off the rose. Or whatever, I don't know. But I won. And it was \$100,000.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** I was in Miss Saigon at the time.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right.

**BILLY PORTER:** The original cast. I took my vacation. And so I came back with \$100,000.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Come on.

[*crew laugh*]

**BILLY PORTER:** Which I went out there to get, b\*\*\*\*!

[*laughter*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Eyy!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ahh!

**BILLY PORTER:** I went out there to get it!

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** I also want to talk to you about your, your debut album, your first record that you released. It was called Untitled.

**BILLY PORTER:** Yes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** In 1997. But tell us what happened, 'cause I love this story. And the day it was released, there's something happened in your life, which was sort of terrible timing really.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah, yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** So I had put off jury duty for several times longer than you're allowed to.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Allowed to, yeah, yeah, sure.

**BILLY PORTER:** And they were like, you will come to jury duty or we will throw you in jail. So I went to jury duty on the day that my album was released.

[laughter]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** 'Yes, but my album's out?' 'Get to the jury duty.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** There's a murder trial coming ...

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** And it was a CD, still, at that time. So I brought a CD and a sharpie.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** And they said, 'Anybody who says they can't do this, raise your hand,' I was like...

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** So they bring us into the room with the judge. The judge is a black woman.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** Ding, ding, ding, ding!

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** So I meet the judge, I have a CD. And I said, 'Well, your honour, my album is released today. And, you know, I'm hoping to be able to go do a lot of press and stuff for it.' And she was like, 'Show me!'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh.

**BILLY PORTER:** All of a sudden, she was a black girl.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** She was a round the way black girl, she was like, 'I seen you on BET!' Just the robe and dundun... she was like, 'You can sing, son.'

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** I said, 'Well, I brought a CD for you,' she said, 'Sign that.'

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** And I handed it to her, and she's like, 'Go ahead. Go ahead.'

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** 'You're off. You're off.'

[laughter]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And you were just straight out of there.

**BILLY PORTER:** It was sweet. It was sweet. I wish I knew who she was. Maybe she'll listen and hear it.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh my god. Oh my god, love that story.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** That's brilliant.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And then also didn't Bette Midler hear it?

**BILLY PORTER:** Yes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And fall in love with it? Or she saw you perform and loved it?

**BILLY PORTER:** So Jenifer Lewis.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.



**BILLY PORTER:** The Black Mother of Hollywood.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** Was a Harlette for Bette Midler in her early career.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh-huh.

**BILLY PORTER:** She was turning, I think she was turning forty or something. And she had a big birthday party at Denise Richards' house. And she was funding the label that I was a part of.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Right.

**BILLY PORTER:** So she would always throw these parties, so she threw Jenifer Lewis a party. I sang Love Is on the Way.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Wow.

**BILLY PORTER:** At the party. Bette Midler was in the corner around and she heard it and she summoned me.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oof.

**BILLY PORTER:** And Jenifer was like, 'Bette wants to see you.'

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** And she takes me around the thing. And she was like, [*in Bette Midler voice*] 'I'll never forget it you know.'

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** No she didn't say that to me. But [*laughs*] I was like, Bette Midler, she's like, 'That song is amazing. I'm doing this movie'-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** [*laughs*]

**BILLY PORTER:** -'called...'

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** First Wives Club.

**BILLY PORTER:** ‘First Wives Club.’

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yes.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I think it would be perfect for the movie.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah. Right..

**BILLY PORTER:** And I was like, okay, and it was a song that I was fighting with the label about whether it was good for me or not.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh- huh.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Okay.

**BILLY PORTER:** Because I had sung a demo for it. They had originally written it for Celine Dion and they submitted it to Celine Dion, and Celine Dion passed on it. So then they brought it to me and asked me to sing it as a demo, the company, the production company, so that they could have a female voice on it, and a male voice on it, just in case, like, somebody like Michael Bolton wanted to sing it.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Right.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I heard it, and I was like, ‘No, this song is for me,’ and they were like, ‘Hmm...’ and I'm like, ‘No, it's for me.’ Hmmm, And then I just-

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** [*laughs*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's for me.

**BILLY PORTER:** And then I just started singing it.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Uh-huh.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yeah.

**BILLY PORTER:** And I just started singing it.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** You owned it, you owned it.

**BILLY PORTER:** I just started singing it everywhere.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** And so then this happened. This happened and I was like, 'See?'

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** 'See? Bette Midler says...'

**BILLY PORTER:** 'This is my song.'

[laughter]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** 'This is my song.'

**BILLY PORTER:** But get this, then- and this is [*leans into the mic*] also in the book, Unprotected.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** So get this, Celine Dion goes to see The First Wives Club and hears the song, and decides she wants to sing it!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Ooh!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Oh!

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** That Dion. Hmm...

**BILLY PORTER:** That's a whole 'nother story.

[laughter]

**BILLY PORTER:** You gotta get the finish to that in the book, [*leans into the mic*] Unprotected.

[laughter]

[*theme music*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** We come to the end of the show question, and for this momentous occasion, Billy Porter has donned a hat. Clap the hat everybody, clap the hat.

[*applause*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Woo!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** ‘Iya!!!’

**BILLY PORTER:** I am a black woman from the Pentecostal church, if you have never seen!

[*laughter*]

**BILLY PORTER:** We call them crowns, darling.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** It's a crown. Billy Porter, your end of show question, here we go, no expense spared.

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in posh voice*] She comes in an envelope.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** In an envelope, a gold one. For your chance to win-

**BILLY PORTER:** Y'all got a bottle of Champagne for me in here?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** And more, and more.

**BILLY PORTER:** Ooh, a Waitrose bag?

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Yeah! Okay, here we go.

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in English accent*] ‘Hi Billy, thank you for coming on Dish.’

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** [*laughs*]

**BILLY PORTER:** [*in English accent*] ‘We trust you had a fun time. For the Waitrose goodie bag, we come to you asking for advice. We've already broken all of our New Year's resolutions, and summer seems ages away. What advice can you give us to take into the rest of the day, month, and 2025? Thanks, Team Dish.’

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm.

**BILLY PORTER:** Okay, Imma get a little serious now.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Okay.

**BILLY PORTER:** Self-care. Take care of yourself. One of the things that I have come to, you know, I've been an activist my whole life. Born in 1969. Came out as gay in 1985 at sixteen years old, went straight to the front lines to fight for our lives. Marriage equality. Fighting, fighting, fighting, fighting. I'm fifty-five years old, and I have spent my entire life taking care of everybody else. And I need to spend some time taking care of me and my own.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Mm-hm.

**BILLY PORTER:** Take care of yourself. That doesn't mean that you don't engage. That doesn't mean that you don't give to others, but make sure that you put your oxygen mask on. You can't do anything for anybody else until you can breathe yourself.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Ugh.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Very true.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wise words. Billy Porter, everyone.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yes.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** The bag is yours. Wait, this morning I was obsessed with Billy Porter before I'd met you, and now I'm obsessed, obsessed.

[*laughter*]

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Like, obsessed. A round of applause. Billy Porter, everybody!

[*applause*]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Yay!

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Like, obsessed.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Next week on Dish we are going to be joined by Simone Ashley.

**SIMONE ASHLEY:** I guess I can say I was in the arctic. I was in Finland, in like the north of Finland and we were driving on a frozen lake in McLaren's.

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** Wow.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Oh my god.

**SIMONE ASHLEY:** That was pretty wild. And I didn't realise, they called it the 'Arctic Experience' and I was like 'Yeah, cool, yeah'. And then we were on the plane and I was like 'Are we going to the Arctic!? And my friend was like 'Ahh yeah!'

I thought we were in Lapland, god I'm so glad I packed like my thermals and stuff.

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** [Laughs]

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** If you would like to recreate any of the meals I make on Dish, you can find the ingredients and the method on [www.waitrose.com/dishrecipes](http://www.waitrose.com/dishrecipes)

**NICK GRIMSHAW:** We love hearing from you, so please come on, send us a question. I read them, Angela answers them. If you want to do it, [dish@waitrose.co.uk](mailto:dish@waitrose.co.uk).

**ANGELA HARTNETT:** Dish is an S:E Creative Studio Production

**VOICEOVER:** Waitrose, food to feel good about