

FINAL EP 12 Hannah Howard

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0:00:04.6 S1: Welcome to another episode of women in food. I'm your hostess, Missy singer Dumas. This podcast is all about the intersection of three things food, business, and the feminine. Each episode, I invite you to sit down with me and my interview guest as we dive into this intersection to spark your food curiosity, share a favorite recipe and give you some fun food explorations along the way. I am so inspired by these women, farmers, shaft bakers, cooks, writers, and food makers, who all bring their passion for beauty, for nourishment, community, pleasure connection and deep care to others through food. These are women who advocate and take action towards increased food awareness for themselves, their families and their neighborhoods. Before I introduce today's guest, I have one request, if you could go over to iTunes or whatever app you're using to listen and give us a rating and review. It's a simple act that helps us a ton. Thank you so much. So today, I am truly excited to introduce to you Hannah Howard. Hannah is a writer and food expert who spent her formative years in New York eating drinking, serving bartending, cooking on hotlines and flipping giant wheels of cheese and Manhattan institutions such as Pete line and Fairway Market, which I promise we are gonna tap right into her cheese expertise.

0:01:28.5 S1: After stepping away from the restaurant world to explore her own journey with food, she turned to her skills as a writer. Hannah is the author of two memoirs, feast true love in and out of the kitchen, and her recently released book, plenty. A Memoir of food and family, which we'll talk about further, and I will give you links in the show notes for both of these books. Hanna lives in New York City and Frenchtown, New Jersey with her husband, daughter, Simon, and their multiple Ace. Hannah, welcome to women in food. I am so honored and excited to have you join us.

0:02:01.1 S2: Thank you so much, Missy. And so excited and honored to be here.

0:02:05.5 S1: Yeah, so we're gonna get into your whole story and we will definitely... I promise everyone get into cheese and all things cheese, but I always love to start with what are some of your earliest memories and experiences with food, like Where did the spark and passion for food start?

0:02:24.1 S2: I was really lucky to grow up in a food-loving family, my mom was always cooking something delicious and always experimenting with new foods and new recipes, some of my best childhood memories are going on these grocery procuring adventures with her when I was a kid in Baltimore, and we would start at the farmer's market down our street. And I remember getting these incredible mushroom sandwiches from mushroom lady that you grow up, and then we'd go to motels, which is this great tiny family Italian store, and Miss Museo would be meeting her curds into fresh masseria. And if it was a lucky day, get this bite and it was just like the best... And then we'd go to the nearest bakery and get all his and halve and favor being PIE and those are... Yeah, I feel like I just grew up surrounded by some really wonderful food and definitely a love for food.

0:03:28.9 S1: Oh my God, I have to already. Paseo, to be like, What the heck is five of being... Pitti.

0:03:36.6 S2: Don't know that I've ever had it before or since, but it was the highlight of the store, and I remember bringing it from lunch for lunch to school a few times, and the other kids being like, What are you reading? But it's what it sounds like. It was this really flaky pastry full of

Balaban and spices and is just really satisfying and delicious...

0:03:58.7 S1: Oh my God, that inspires me to wanna try growing Pavan again, they've been so challenging to girl, but now I'm like, I wanna go Fabien, just I can figure out how to make a foaming PI that sounds... It's so interesting. Cool, so it sounds like from the beginning, not only did you grow up as a lot of food, but it sounds like a lot of your mother and the women at these shops, there were a lot of women influencing, mentoring, teaching you, sharing, sharing their food. Secrets with you.

0:04:31.4 S2: Absolutely, definitely my mom, who has a chapter in my book, plenty. Was the heart of my first food love initiation, and every evil this in the book too, but it's interesting that in my personal life, and I think this is true for many of us, women were so much the part of food life and cooking and feeding and making food for our families, but that in the kind of public sphere, so many of the big names and the fancy chefs and the people with lots of accolades and investments are men, so that was part of what I Martini...

0:05:16.0 S1: Don't know if you ever follow... Have you heard of pasta grantees? I... O

0:05:21.1 S2: My God, no ponton.

0:05:22.6 S1: The YouTube channel, but it's kind of a similar thing and out there traveling all over Italy, sharing all these grandmas, sharing their traditional ways of making pastas by hand and capturing that inter-generational knowledge to pass down because it's not passed down in that way anymore, but I agree with you. And one of the reasons I was so excited that you reach out to me and we're having this conversation is 'cause you and I and our similar mission of sorts of being aware of that and doing what we can with our various skills and privileges and access to an impact to elevate women's voices more and more, which you've done with your book, and here we are with this podcast, so having grown up, you went off into the world and you started working in restaurants... Right.

0:06:30.0 S2: Yeah, I loved... I had loved going to restaurants to... And food and cooking, and when I wanted to get a job to make some money, before and during college, restaurants just seemed to be the way to go, and my first restaurant job... I found it on Craigslist, it was... Let's see, 2005 or so, I had just turned 18, and I went to college in New York City, and I found a physician as a hostess at this call in this very old school Michelin star, French finding restaurant and kind of my brain kind of exploded. It was just a whole new way of obsession and appreciation for ingredients and food and dining that I had not experienced before. And a whole another universe. And I fell in love. I wanted more. And that's also how they also had this amazing cheese cart at the time, Max McLean, who was one of the old school cheese groups in this country, was the cheese guy there, and before service, he would set up his card and unpack each chose carefully. And I learned that was where you wanted to be at that time, 'cause you might get a few tastes and a few lessons and just...

0:08:05.8 S2: I always knew that I loved chest, that also just so expanded my whole understanding of what she was and what it could be.

0:08:15.7 S1: I love that description of sitting me or by... I can just picture it and hoping for a little scrap or as... I come from theater and construction industry, originally lighting and I worked on big mega resorts in Las Vegas when they were renovating or building and doing the lighting in the final weeks as the restaurants are revving up was the most fun, 'cause same thing the chefs and such the kitchens are revving up and practicing, and the wait staff is having lessons in all the lines and all the regions and what they carry and what they serve, and you kinda get all these snippets and I'll just never forget also in a French restaurant, so I love that you're sharing this story, working in the private dining spaces in the highest and French restaurant in a big resort, and the chef comes over to me and the crew and we're aiming all the lights on the tables and things like that, and they pretty much bring us one of every dish to try, we're talking about the 400 plate dishes, and it was run my God, and then he's like, What do you like? What dessert do you like and just bring us all this food, it was the costing...

0:09:27.1 S1: So those moments or you get these amazing snippets, definitely, things like that actually starts... My love of food. Yeah.

0:09:35.7 S2: And I was like, This eager, excited, 18-year-old and just... I remember the truffle, right, the triple lady coming in and smelling my first fresh trickles and just... Right, just being like, Well, this is the best. This is so cool.

0:09:52.9 S1: I have to say for our listeners who don't know, because it was a learning for me by truffles, you're talking about mushroom truffles as opposed to chocolate truffles, I assume... Yes, yeah.

0:10:03.7 S2: Choco troubles are pretty darn good too, but it was so good too, but these were the ones from Alba in Italy that had been hard to have their harvested by wild pigs, and the lady came through the back door and they went right into the safe 'cause they're so expensive, and it was just this whole mystique and excitement surrounding us fresh truffles... Right.

0:10:31.2 S1: Right, right, right. So how did you move from front a house into more in the kitchen?

0:10:40.4 S2: Let's see, so having fallen for this universe of restaurants and find Diane, I had this idea that I wanted to go to culinary school, and so I called the Culinary Institute of America admissions office to inquire, and I don't know if this is still true, but at the time, they had a requirement that you work for a certain amount of time in the back of the house, and I kind of said, Well, I work in a restaurant in the front of the house, and they said, No, you have to work in a kitchen. And I asked if they had any recommendations on places that I could go find an internship. And they did, and I went to work for chafing Wald mouth in his restaurant in Midtown. And they really like circa, I got to try out a lot of different positions on the line, and definitely as a... I wasn't doing things alone, I was watching and learning, and I worked there for a while, and during that time, I kind of realized that I asked every cook and chef about culinary school, and they all kind of said, I think I know people who have had incredible experiences at culinary school, so I'm certainly not against it, but they all said the best education you get is from working and doing and living it, and it's very expensive, so I decided against it, and that was kind of my introduction to the back of

the house, which was a briefer career for me, then after college, I ended up going to a restaurant management company for...

0:12:27.9 S2: A restaurant management program for a company, Hilton that owns Houston state houses around the country, and it was kind of great, it was like a restaurant boot camp, and they also had you work in every position in the restaurant, so everything from being a bartender to every station in the kitchen, prepping the butchering for the stakes, even doing the accounting in the office, adding up the numbers at the end of the month, and again, I learned so much, but it was such the wrong fit for me. So I hope it's okay that I'm giving my whole life story. Yeah.

0:13:14.3 S1: Yeah, no, I think it's great for... Our listeners are a mix of people, so some of our listeners are just foods and love food, and I love to hear the behind the scene stories of people's journeys in food, and then some values are people who are working on their own careers and food, and so to hear that, and I think this is what you're more recent book point also, is that there's so many diverse paths and ways to work in food, like being a chef or like I do, being a farmer, aren't the only options if you love food, to work with it and participate in the world of food.

0:13:56.0 S2: Yes, that's so true. And I think I've been really lucky on this journey to kind of slowly get closer and closer to what is the way that is right for me and my talents in where I find joy. But it's definitely been a journey, and I think the food has been the constant, and I've also gotten to work with some incredible people who really took me under their wing and share their passion.

0:14:28.1 S1: And so I'm curious, I... Where in you... Do you find the can use Lord gumption or the gal or the courage to reach out to a restaurant and be like, I wanna intern, but I know nothing, or you thought I like, you have a certain... Something about you, gumption is the word that's coming to mind. What would you say to other people that wanna start somewhere about how you find the place within yourself to just go ask and try new things that are probably... Were really scary at the time.

0:15:17.5 S2: Absolutely, I think... And it was helpful for me to remember that the worst thing that could happen... I guess the worst thing that could happen would be someone to laugh at you and say No way, and then the other thing that could happen is they could just not respond, and then maybe they could say yes, so it always seemed worth it to go for it, but that doesn't mean, like you said, it doesn't mean it wasn't full of lots of fear and to nerves, but I think these leaps have always been worthwhile even telling these personal stories in my books and putting them out into the world... That was so scary, but ultimately... Absolutely worth it.

0:16:05.0 S1: Yeah, so let's go enter or you're ready to get scary and get into your personal story to you... We did, you did. It's out there in the world, right here. And podcast land. So while all this is going on and you're finding your way to working with food and having a passion for food, I know there's another path that was happening in your world of struggling with your relationship with food... At the same time, right? Yeah.

0:16:36.1 S2: So at the same time that I did have this very genuine food love angle, I also had... I think from a really rocky relationship with food in terms of my own eating in my own body, I got

the message pretty early on, I think just from living in this world where we live in, living in this diet culture that we all existed that it was better to be thinner. It was better to be smaller, and I was always the tallest in the class and just kind of a first person to get boobs and just... And I always felt like my body wasn't quite right, and that I should be restricting my food and eating less, and I kind of messed with food in a way, so on the one hand, I did have this real food love, and then on the other hand, I had this food, fear and secession, and it was really something that plagued me, I would spend so long scheming trying different diet, thinking about how I could change my body, thinking about how I could burn a lot of calories, what all this disorder and stuff, and when I went to college in New York city, what had been kind of like a submarine on the surface erupted into a full-blown eating disorder, and for many years after that, I really just struggled, it was hard for me to feed myself with kindness...

0:18:21.6 S2: It was hard for me to accept myself and see, it's been almost 10 years now since I kind of officially officially for me, I just ask for help and started to recover, and that's also been a difficult and amazing journey that I really do feel like I'm always gonna be someone who has these, this stuff around food that I really do feel like for today, I am recovered and... And that first part of the relationship with that happy, joyful part is about a thousand times bigger than that messed up a noisy part of my brain, it still definitely exists, but has over these last years really, really shrunk in my life, and I'm really grateful for that.

0:19:15.7 S1: What would you say... What was the low point or the moment that was like... Was there a moment where you're just like, Alright, that's enough. I gotta... What was the moment that interview to ask for help?

0:19:29.8 S2: Yeah, actually, my first chapter of my first book feast is about this experience and... 'cause I did have this epic last... I was into the cycle of bingeing and then restricting, and I had this terrible binge, and I think What was... I had just moved, I had actually my last restaurant management job was in Philadelphia, and I had moved back to New York and I've always loved New York, so I was really happy to be back there, really happy to have found it. Beautiful apartment. I had just broken up with a boyfriend, which was totally the right decision, I had a new job, I was excited about, so all these things were awesome in my life, and it was a fresh start, and yet I couldn't stop really... This really vicious cycle, and I had this crazy binge where I went to... I just kind of ate everything I could get my hands on in this way that really was kind of using food as a weapon against myself, it started with this gigantic platter of cookies that I devoured and then it just continued, and I still remember so well, waking up in the morning and that feeling of regret and feeling physically physically disgusting and also just kind of emotionally drained and just be like, I don't wanna feel this way anymore.

0:20:52.8 S2: He sucks. This is really hard. And then the other thing that was really hard, and it was a low was that I still think it's so crazy that I'm just sharing this with you and anyone who wants to listen, because at the time this was my deepest, darkest secret, and I was so ashamed of having needing disorder and I didn't tell anyone, and that sort of pretending everything was okay, that was really lonely and a really, really hard experience that I wouldn't wish on anyone.

0:21:25.7 S1: I'm just taking it all in and sitting with it, 'cause it is a really big deal, and it's so interesting to me how you... Seems like found a balance now to have a passion and love for food

and work in food industry, and this other... Have worked through this other piece of simultaneously and that continue to walk, I should say, that line between the two, which seems unimaginable difficult to me, I can't imagine it, but it's on a... I appreciate you sharing.

0:22:06.7 S2: I met... 'cause I felt too so lonely around this stuff, and I met people in recovery who also worked with Food and in different facets of the food industry, and I really think that it's made me better at my work because I appreciate... A lot about how hard it can be and how wonderful it can be simultaneously, so I hope it gives me some more wisdom and perspective.

0:22:38.2 S1: Yeah, and it makes me wonder how prevalent various eating disorders are within food industry because they're such an intimate daily relationship with food, and I just think about whether you consider it all this temptation around you or tasting things all the time, or whatever it is, or the opposite, not wanting to ever touch food, 'cause you're working with it all the time, whatever the version is, I imagine it's probably more prevalent than most of us realize in the food industry, is that what you found?

0:23:18.5 S2: That's what I found for sure, and I've written a little bit about this, but it kinda makes sense too, that people are drawn to their demons in a way that you think that there might be quite a few bartenders who struggle with alcohol, a similar thing, there's something kind of it makes us want to conquer the thing that is hard for us, or... I think to be an amazing food person, you have to be a little obsessed, hopefully in a healthy way, 'cause I think there can be just like a nerdy passion, that's a really positive thing, but they can also have a more negative dark side too.

0:24:06.0 S1: Yeah, it's interesting, there's always this... How do I wanna say it? This piece about, like you said, working with your shadow, working in this industry, if that's a piece of your shadow or You're... As you said, you're demons, it's like confronting it, having to confront it and grapple with it head-on, diving all the way in to face it as opposed to hiding from it.

0:24:37.8 S2: Yeah, yeah, for sure. Which I just thought I tried to hide from it for a number of years and thought it would magically disappear, but it didn't work that way.

0:24:49.4 S1: That's the thing with our shadows and depending all that, it's like... I just think it can be the most transformative thing, like to push yourself to grapple with the thing that is the biggest shadow or challenge, can turn it into a gift, and in your case, it's turned into this gift where you're sharing other women's stories and your own story and helping other people, and expanding awareness as well as expanding love of food, you found a path to... It sounds like you found a path to churn, what was this secret demon into... An enlightened gift. I'll say thank you.

0:25:37.0 S2: Yeah, I think on a good day... Totally, yeah.

0:25:41.4 S1: And there's a bad day. So of course, when you have a bad day, what do you do, how do you

0:25:47.4 S2: Get... I think either the big difference from before is having people to talk to, and I have quite the support team, I have a very understanding, wonderful husband and family, and I have

a therapist, and I have people who are eating to sort of recovery with me, and so I know they get it, so I know if I have to, I'm just feeling it, I have someone to commiserate with, and I think something that I'm still working on is a challenge for me, but it's so helpful is just having a little self-compassion and kindness and gentleness with myself instead of beating myself up, which is my first go-to response, which doesn't help.

0:26:33.9 S1: No, I think that's a lot of our Marco to response, and honestly, I think as women more often, it's our go-to response to beat ourselves up. Would you say so?

0:26:44.2 S2: Oh, absolutely, I think we're conditioned to think that everything is our fault or... Fault. Exactly, exactly. Resort

0:26:52.9 S1: Were responsible for everything. It's a good reminder, the world does not actually revolve around us, there's a much bigger plan in place and just us. So at some point, you turn away from the direct food businesses and turn towards writing, were you always writing or did you always have a love of writing or did that come later?

0:27:22.3 S2: I've always loved to write and read... Let's see, yeah, so when I was in middle school, I published a zen about my friends that are adventures, so yeah, I always love to write, but I do just like you were talking before about the many, many ways career and food can look... I guess I knew that people were fed raters, but I kind of felt like budding sound practical, and it sounded like maybe to me too good to be true, if those were my two things that I love the most, food and writing, but I had been dabbling a little bit in food writing, I had an internship at Serious Eats when I was in college when the world of food blogs was very, very new, and that was really fun, I got to travel around the city searching for the best chalice or the best Castro, and so I knew that there was this Food world of writing, it was fun, and then... Let's see, So after my corporate state have dog, I got a job managing a restaurant in Philadelphia that was way more my speed and that it was kind of a funky family restaurant, also fine dining, but more...

0:28:39.0 S2: Less corporate and more personal and small in this beautiful place with beautiful garden, and I manage that restaurant for two years, and I just kind of every day, every day started to feel the same... I'm not very well cut out for restaurant hours because I'm kind of a morning person and I was always tired and I miss seeing people who were civilians and kind of like... But while I was doing this, and I still had love, that love for writing, and so I was doing a little bit of freelance writing, and I got this really cool gig, which was interviewing food entrepreneurs for Max's website, so I've got to interview these really cool food people, and one of them was Steven Jenkins, who was one of the partners at Fairway Market, which is a special traits kind of gone down hill, but it was this wonderful specialty food grocery store in New York City, and at the time they were growing and opening new locations and kind of a win, I asked... And he was hiring 'cause we really hit it off in this interview, and he's like, Yeah, we're growing, we need people. So I started behind the cheese act to cheese after the front asset, the powers that be kind of realized that I was also a writer and could write, and this skill came in handy, and this was my first job as a food copywriter, which is something that I've kind of paid the bills doing since then, I didn't really know that was a thing, but I started off writing the signs behind the chief case to describe each cheese, and then I branched into writing everything from the weekly newsletters to the signs in the store, to material on the website, and that was the first time I kind of branched in a way that paid my bill for hand writing.

0:30:55.1 S2: Right.

0:30:57.5 S1: Cool. So how did writing... Where did the idea to write an entire book come from...

0:31:07.0 S2: Well, yeah, I always, I've always wanted to 'cause I've only loved to read and write, and... So I hope to one day write a book. And I actually thinking more about it, and having this job at Fairway as a copywriter, and I thought, I really want to move writing from the periphery of my life more into the center of my life, and I... So applied to MFA programs, like graduate creative writing programs, and one of the programs I applied to as that I did not get into, asked me to write a... I think it was a two-page summary of the project that I wanted to work on during the program, and so I wrote... I pretty much wrote what would be in it, a very short summary of feast, my first book, and in writing those two pages, something really clicks for me that I really wanna write this book like, this is really a story I wanna tell. This is important to me. So that was kind of what crystallized it, and then I did it.

0:32:17.9 S1: Right, right, right. And so your two books, feast and plenty, are a little different because plenty is a little bit more about the diversity of women in food woven with your personal story. Right.

0:32:34.2 S2: Yeah, yeah, so pestis more of a straight... Or it's really... It is really my story. It's kind of a coming of age story of my adventures in... Of what we've touched on here, some of these adventures and if we working in the food industry, and it's also about this struggle with and then a recovery from the eating disorder, whereas plenty high, it does involve my story and it's the the next story after that kind of living in recovery, of meeting the guy who would become my husband and deciding to start a family, but it's also the story of these amazing women and a food industry to met along the way, so there's a lot of chapters that are just about these women and their lives and their challenges, and they're amazing. This...

0:33:27.7 S1: Yeah, so what led you to shift your writing in plenty to focus in on women and food and writing about a variety of them.

0:33:38.9 S2: Yeah, well, I think I just sort of have this realization. Like this cheese guy, Max, that I mentioned, and dove Jenkins a fair way, these guys had been really wonderful, generous mentors to me and taught me so much about food in the industry, and I think I was having just a conversation with someone and I was thinking, Well, where every women where are my winning mentors, and I realized I didn't really have them in the same way, and that sparked plenty in a way because at first I thought I was gonna be writing about... My first thought was to write about famous amazing women who had achieved enormous things, and I got way more interested as I started researching and talking in women who are more... Not just that they haven't achieved amazing, 'cause a lot of them are incredibly impressive, but more in the trenches working in this industry doing their thing, and people who I wished had been my mentors and friends or who were... And I got closer with, so it was kind of a selfish endeavor to find this community of food women...

0:35:02.9 S1: I like it, I like it. It's kind of how those things, these kinds of projects start with our

own desires and a couple of moments, I wanna ask you more about plenty and these women and cheese for sure. But before we do that, I wanna take a quick break and talk about the sponsorship of women in food, our locally Gulp Buffalo has been a wonderful supporter of women in food programming almost since the beginning video series in 2020. Did you know that you can search for women-owned businesses on Yelp, so support your local women on businesses by patronizing them and writing a review, download Yelp app now and you can use a filter for women-owned businesses to seek them out besides you. All our best sponsors are the ground community of people who are passionate about food and supporting the diversity of women's voices in our food culture, those sponsors are predominantly people like yourself, rather than companies that want to sell you things, so if you're not a sponsored women-in-food in by you to become one by joining the women in food Facebook community, access this community of food lovers like yourself to share an additional resources beyond this podcast to feed your curiosity and love of food, while also supporting the global community of women in food businesses.

0:36:22.4 S1: In this group, we share recipe swaps, we share the latest news and articles about food, We celibate one another, and our goals and our priorities, and what we're creating, and this is just a little taste of what the women in food community is about. So whether you're looking for a recipe or women made food product or a new restaurant, or help with your garden, this community is the place for that resource, and many of our past and future podcast guests are in the community and join in the conversation, so if you're interested in sponsoring this podcast and becoming a women in food community member, go check out women in food dot NET community. So he... What I wanna get into is this amazing array of women that you feature and plenty, and I'm kind of curious, 'cause what you were saying is that you kinda had this realization they had all these male mentors, and where are the women... And so what's your experience of the difference between feminine mentorship and teacher ship and what women bring to food compared to the men and not... You had access to some amazing men and learning as well, so it's not about belittling men, but we are women and food, so I'm curious what you see as the differences of the experience of working with women in food and learning from women in food versus the amazing.

0:37:49.7 S1: Experiences you had with some of the men and food... Absolutely.

0:37:54.1 S2: I think women have had to cross bigger, higher hurdles to achieve what they do in the food world, it is such a traditionally male-dominated industry in every sense of the word, from just the Boys Club, bro culture, to me being more able to get small business loans and for bigger amounts in this country to... They're not being any kind of good family leave for women who decide to start a family, so there's just so many ways that women have to figure... The barrier to entry is higher, there's more to figure out, there's more that's asked of them, and it's hard to talk universally, 'cause I feel like every woman has a different experience, but the women that I got to know were just all... They just also genuinely impressed me with their creativity, with their resilience, with their passion, they were just these really cool people.

0:39:14.7 S1: Do you wanna give us a little glimpse into some... Who some of these women are.

0:39:19.3 S2: Sure. So let's see, one of the first one that I met is Pala, who is in... Her background is as a chef, and she worked in some of these incredible Michelin star restaurants in Modena cooking, and found the environment to be pretty brutal and awful from getting verbally abused to getting

sexually harass, it was just like a really horrible place to be, and yet she also, she still wanted to be with the food, she still wanted to find this... A life for herself in this world, and she started to teach picking, and now she runs an online hoping to school what she's been doing since before the pandemic, which you can imagine has been doing really well during the pandemic, and she's just become a wonderful... Another person who I just got to catch up with, who I really admire is Timmy Roe, who owns some restaurants in Brooklyn, and she's opening a place in Manhattan now, she's a Sam Allie, my background. And she has, I'm always kind of like, I should do it 'cause she has two little kids and the restaurant hours as we know, are not super friendly to that, and yet she's just really created...

0:40:46.0 S2: She has this amazing people who worked for her, restaurants are beautiful, the food is lovely, she's really just created something really special and I really admire her.

0:41:01.8 S1: I know there's one particular woman in your book that's extra close and extra special, namely your mom too, including her in your book. Yeah.

0:41:16.8 S2: There's two people who aren't women in the book, there is also my husband and my dog.

0:41:22.7 S1: I like that your dog counts as a people back... Oh yeah, that was great. I really got

0:41:28.9 S2: People made it... We started talking and she just... She was the person who instills that this kind of really deep love for food and me, I feel like from my earliest in the Marian, she's always been a great cook, a great bringer together. I feel like she always hosts the family celebrations and holidays, and I feel like no one would ever see each other if it wasn't for her, and people always say they're coming from the food. I think food is just a part of it, but... Yeah, and she also was always sharing the stories of her... Our families for their back in time and her mom who never got to meet and for grandparents and all their fee traditions, and so I feel like for me, she's really kept the thread of food and family feeling meaningful for me.

0:42:22.7 S1: I love that. And one of the things, a word I use a lot, it sounds like what your mother embodies is harsher, which is not just cooking at the heart, but it's the gathering of people, it's a nourishing of community and nourishing family, the urging of relationships, attending, of all those things... That's much more than just the food. So what I hear your mom is the keeper of the hearth craft and your family. Absolutely, absolutely. Cool, so let's get into cheese 'cause now I'm craving Cheese since we've been touching on it here and there... What is it about cheese that you love so much?

0:43:08.1 S2: There's a few things I've come to learn, I love more as I learn more over the years, but I think there's something so cool that she's really just milk, there's a few other ingredients, there's like a little salt, little culture, a little red it, but it's mostly milk. And from that, you get everything from a creamy Brie to a shudder to paragon Virginia, it's just such a versatile food, and I also love the way that she has really been part of culture and humanity, since we had a culture, it's just been this. It's been a part of people's lives, and I also talk about Jesus, and I think it just has this unique ability to make people happy, whenever I talk about cheese, people get excited and whatever

I care, see, people really enjoy it. So it's like, I think it goes movie back to what you were saying about her craft, I think she has a certain power to re-pickle together.

0:44:13.3 S1: It is really fascinating that how simple it is, like milk salt culture, run it, and you get me any different flavors and textures and styles. What makes those differences? What's your experience of... What makes it come out different... What is the magic part? There is a

0:44:36.2 S2: Italians maker, but it just comes down to the recipe or the cure cooked before their errand, they pressed... What size MLP them in? Do you age them? Or they served fresh, just like these little decisions along the way that each one has this big impact on the final product, and so many of the cheeses that we love have been made for hundreds or even almost thousands of years, so it's like these recipe is passed down generation to generation, which is really cool. What

0:45:16.9 S1: Have you gotten to chore a lot to visit, a lot of creamery and see them making different kinds of chances.

0:45:22.7 S2: I have, I have been really lucky to visit some amazing places in the world, I got to go to the Jura mountains on the French side of the French Swiss border, where they make camp day and just visit a whole bunch of farms and visit these... This incredible Former World War One bunker where they know age thousands of... Sorry, thousands of meals and cheese, I've gotten to visit much more local cheese makers from consider Bardwell and Jesper Hill, and for one Kremer in Vermont to... Now, I think now I would consider him a friend. Brian, who is the chimaera at Mystic, she's a company, and he... I think he's expanded a little bit, but when we met, he was making... He's in one... What does it called? A storage container, shipping, indeterminate. He was making shoes in this single shipping container in Connecticut, and in fact, it was so small that my husband and I went up to go meet him and he had to take us in one at a time because there wasn't room for both of us in there. And there's so many more cheese makers I wanna meet in so many more choose destinations I wanna travel to, but I feel like I've had a really good start.

0:46:54.3 S1: What's your top one? I absolutely must go to places that you haven't been to yet.

0:47:00.5 S2: I have a few, but I think if I had to choose one, I would really like to go to Sardinia where they have more sheep than people and making credible Petrino and just see the sheep and see... So

0:47:13.2 S1: The main arena with a sheep cheese with a sheep milk are parents in sheep. I didn't realize that. Yeah, that's so cool. Now I'm like, maybe I can make cheese with my sheets a little bit

0:47:28.8 S2: Could... I think I've read a little bit about, it's hard to find sheep mules made in the US, because our sheep are not bred for milk production production, certain breeds, there's only certain breeds that are really more bread for milk production, which is mighty, a lot more cut milk in the United States.

0:47:51.9 S1: Go back to a state that it has a oeuvre a fan, go cheese as much as shops Jessi you could meet to...

0:48:02.3 S2: That would be incredibly cool to really aware... Definitely

0:48:06.2 S1: Come visit, I get a briefly milk one of my sheep 'cause her milk wasn't coming down and her newborn lamb was hungry, and so I had to milk her to get it to come down. It was my first milking experience on the fly, never milked anything, and I'm like sitting on the floor of the barn with this hungry baby lamb, and I'm like, What I do what I do, I just start trying to milk her and then milk start coming out, I'm like, Wow, I just miles and then I got the baby to suck and I was like, Alright, this is where the baby... Cool, yeah, and it seems to me like some of what makes the difference, and I've talked about this with other guests, the important of the impact or importance of This is the terraces that's aging in a shipping container in Mystic, Connecticut, your cars could be really different than she's aging in a World War 1 bunker and the mountains or something somewhere else, just because the air and the use and the soils, and then there's animals and what they're eating, the grass is different and what not. So I guess that's part of what makes all the different variety of cheeses.

0:49:21.1 S2: Right, so learning about these traditional cheeses, like you're saying, I guess the one in Mr. Connecticut is less traditional and new tradition, but it's really learning about... Learning about a sense of place. Exactly what you said. And I was just writing something about Michio from Amana and Spain, and it's been also made from sheep milk and just... Right, the sheep thrive there and they are to eat those grasses, and it's just an experience that only exists in that one particular places in the world, which is another really cool thing about, I guess, food in general, but

0:50:05.5 S1: I attesting with vegetables, it's like I certainly sourced from all over the world. And they're gonna taste different. One, I grow them in my soil with my climate, and with how I grow vegetables compared to where that seed might originally have been from, or however we... That created that seed before me, I was just having a conversation with the chef about peppers and all kinds of chili peppers from all parts of the world, and I had a shaft last year, I asked me to grow certain ones for him that I grew, but they don't have quite the same flavor as what he knows from where he's from or Jillian, it's like, Well, the soil is different and the climate is different, and all these things, so it's gonna be different no matter if you have the same seed, no matter how... Control of an environment, you create... It's still gonna be different. So yeah, so Terra, what's the strangest? Most bizarre those that you've tried or seen... I haven't

0:51:05.4 S2: Tried... There's a chess made with magnets were alive. I've never tried that before. I haven't tried, I don't know, I feel I've just gotten to try some really cool she's made with maybe mixed milks, I've gotten to try someone limited edition chess that only existed for a short period of time, but I don't know if I got to try anything ever so I don't know if it sounds so sexy and exciting, but I guess Jesus always sexy and exciting, so...

0:51:37.9 S1: Yeah, there you go. Is there a go-to choose for you and always favorite comfort cheese? It never goes wrong. Or category, maybe category of gesta, your goat's hard. It's

0:51:50.1 S2: Hard, might be definitely changes, and I have different seasons in my life where I'm more drawn to different things, but I do have a love for washed Ryan stinky cheeses, the... They're

called that wash rind 'cause they're made by washing the outside of that she is the Randall wine or a spirit or a Brian. And a special kind of mold grows on the outside and it leads to those theses that are just kind of by and by and often pretty pungent seafarer. Can you get Sison of the most famous ones? Or Colegio was less like gone, but it's me that way, I cover in that category... Right. Career is a little different. That's more of like an alpine style cheese, but I think you also... So I think I'm not really... I don't think I agree, as we know in... Although I can see it has a earthy funk. Yeah.

0:52:59.2 S1: It's on here. Not a bad way. Yeah.

0:53:03.2 S2: Cool. I'm talking like another level of... Fuck, like a slap. Actually, I wrote this for a story and the fact Tiger couldn't verify it, but I've always heard this and I'm pretty sure it's true, I've found so many references to it that across, it's a French cheese made in Burgundy, and then it's banned on French public transport, 'cause it's Stinson.

0:53:32.3 S1: What experience do you have with non-European and non-Northern American Jesus?

0:53:38.6 S2: Well, let's see, so he is tradition... Well, I guess a lot of things originally originally it's from in Mesopotamia for the Fertile Crescent, around grief in that sort of area, and then it's been a part of so many different European cultures, but it's... American cheese is a newer Tradition for sure, when we're thinking about American Cheonan arches not in the locator slices, but she isn't traditionally a part of Asian food cultures, but I just actually talked to an entrepreneur who's trying to open up a South Korean cheese and wine bar chain, because people like the world is international now and people are loving the Foods of the world and enjoying them everywhere, so I feel like... I'm not as familiar with chess being made outside of Europe and North America, but I'm sure they exist and I would love to learn more and try them.

0:54:50.9 S1: Yeah, I've fortunately... A front of mine here is an amazing chef of Indian food, traditional Indian food, and she does a lot of education on real traditional farm-to-table Indian food, and she grew up traveling all over India as a child, so she got to experience a lot of different regions, and there was a lot of... She has a lot of memories of cheeses and because I was also like, There's a lot of yogurt, so I choose not to step for much of a step further from a...

0:55:25.5 S2: I think of

0:55:26.6 S1: One... Yeah, site's a lot. There is a good bit of dairy used in various regions of Indian cuisine, so I would imagine there's a chest, for some reason, my brain wants to feel like there's Mongol and cheese to... But I don't specifically know. That sounds right. Why does that sound right? I don't know what... Right in my head too, but it sounds right by a... We're all... That'll be your next article on going and maybe. Cool, So I'd love to again to some cheese basics for our listeners, choosing cheeses for different uses, and then I know you're gonna share this like how to put together a really great cheese plate, whether it's for yourself or for a party or what not, but can you give us a little primer on categories of chooses best uses. For me, I've learned the hard way. If I've tried to make a MacInnes a short and cheeses that is just not the right cheese to... For that.

0:56:32.6 S2: Other things like that, but it's a huge question. I feel like we could talk to that about

hours, but I think there's a few ways to think about chooses if you think of them in terms of milk, cow usually go sheep, sometimes water buffalo. You can think of terms, cheese in terms of texture you have from soft to... You could have a CTA, which is so fresh that it's soft, soft, or you could go up to a super age Buda with those little crystals that come on age that's really kind of on those breaks off into shards when you try to cut it. It's so far, so you have a texture and then you have my, I think of mild to wild, so mile to think of a milky materia or the cheeses that they tend to be fresh Jesus where the milk really stands out and then have these big flavors like you said agree or like a blue cheese or something with just a lot of intensity of flavor going on, so that's some way to think about them, but I feel like now, when you're starting with what choose to use for recipe, I'm all for creativity and riffing and having fun, but maybe start with all the traditional ones, for example.

0:58:00.0 S2: I'm thinking rests famous for it multiplies. That's a great one to go for, or like Holly is great on the grill because it doesn't really know if it retains its form, texture.

0:58:14.4 S1: It seems like a first step in experimenting is choose and restraint from a recipe would be to stick with similar firmness texture and yet, when you ever play with flavor, but

0:58:30.0 S2: When you're in a... Yeah, when you're cooking with cheese, I think that texture is really important because different cheeses in melted in different ways based on their fat to protein to water ratio, so... Great famously is a beautiful melting cheese, but Pete doesn't really multistage soft, but it doesn't quite Melita same way.

0:58:55.5 S1: Which is why I love to scramble it into egg 'cause it holds its shape, but it gets so... Yeah.

0:59:02.0 S2: So it's definitely like a whole world, but I think at the end of the day, have fun, even if you do this, if you do choose the wrong sheet, it's probably still gonna be delicious.

0:59:12.5 S1: And so before we get into cheese play, I just have to ask what your take is on began Jesus or vanilla

0:59:22.2 S2: All for a big... Have a vegan friends and I'm all... I think if you don't eat dairy products, you should still be able to eat delicious food stuff, I don't know if I would really call it choose though, because I feel like she is from milk and my understanding that being said, I have read and all only only very much scratched the surface into chanting for myself, but that what we call Megan cheeses that are like me from nuts or plants are getting better and better and more people are trying their hand at them, so I feel like it's a really good time for Vegan Cheese, and

1:00:04.8 S1: Yeah, I've done a cache ricotta a couple of times for various parties where we had weaken folks and it came out quite good, but it is definitely, like you said, it's not a... It's not chest like vegan meat is not a meat or Vegas, not a milk, 'cause they're good replacements or substitutes, and they are getting... All these things are getting better and better. But yeah, I was just curious what your experience with those have been, so if someone wants to put together a decent cheese plate for gathering or a small group of people, or we're heading towards holiday season and maybe some Jesus before the big dinner. There so many... You go to the store these days, even a regular

standard grocery store, not even a store that has a specialty cheese section, and there's still so many choices, so like where do you begin? And how do you put it together?

1:01:07.6 S2: Well, if you're lucky enough to go to achieve shock where they have achieved longer or cheese Monger who know and care about what she is, I would always, don't be shy and ask because that's their job and they're really up close and personal, and they can direct you to something that you maybe otherwise would not have discovered on your own. So definitely don't be shy. I had the chose friend whose philosophy was one great cheese, so I kind of feel like less is more, you don't have to have a cheese plate with a million Jesus, he would do this one amazing cheese, but he also was achieved professional. So there's nothing wrong with doing three or four, but I usually cap it at that because I feel like After around four, it just becomes kind of dis... There's a few ways that you can go. You can't really go wrong. I think that's the first, I take the pressure off. If you have Jesus that you like, other people will like them to be able to be enjoyed, but there's different ways to organize a cheese plate, you could do a theme, there's... What grows together goes together, so you could do...

1:02:23.8 S2: She's from Vermont, I just went to visit a friend who's from Northern California, and she brought me some chess from where her family lives, senter in California. Cheeses are an area for a long time, I... Ayesha, one way you could do there, you could do like... It was constant. She is a Vermont, she's bored. Or the Talin cheese board. You could also... You could play with... I like to organize the mild to wild, so I get something for everyone in there, something a little bit more mellow for maybe a cheese movie and then work my way up in terms of intensity of flavor, but... Yeah, then the other tip I have is, Jesus taste their best at room temperature, it's really when the flavors shine, so I would take the chases out of the fridge, I got an hour before you plan to serve them...

1:03:25.1 S1: Yeah, in fact, I know restaurants I've been to where they have choose plants, you'll see the cheeses with a glass cover, like sitting out on the counter in the most part, not near anything met it, but just at room temperature and

1:03:41.9 S2: The contact... Yeah.

1:03:44.9 S1: Yeah, yeah. And I know I had a French friend who... Something about his mom always keeping the cheese and the butter out under a cover, but out on the counter or even out on the patio, depending on the reason to use at room temperature.

1:04:03.7 S2: Yeah, it's... Especially the harder cheeses are absolutely fun that way.

1:04:09.0 S1: And then what about the other stuff that you put on a cheese plate, like there's always fruit and nuts and crackers, like, Hey, how do you choose to use... Or what are some things relative for doing a pairing of something with Jeez.

1:04:21.0 S2: Those things are fun and you can't really go wrong, there's so many ways to parse, so many things are good with... She is like... I have a cheese friend who also works in the shoe industry, is kind of all about potato chips and session... My gosh.

1:04:39.3 S1: I've never heard that one before. We do hear about cheesy potato chips, but that's a different thing. Yeah.

1:04:46.2 S2: Yeah, I think thinking beyond the cracker, I feel like for me, my favorite is just a really good big get cut up into these slices, I love that with ches. And then in terms of fun, like fruits and dried fruits are generally a good pairing because the sweetness play as well against the rich savory result-ness of the cheese, but then you can also... So that's opposite to track, so you can think about in terms of Sweet flavors, chocolates also also won to use, especially if you're serving it after the meal like they do in Europe, honey is a beautiful pairing in the self-chases, but there's also more like similar, like goes with light kind of parents, you could do Cornish or more savory chutney and still have more non-none salty flavors with your cheese, I think it

1:05:44.7 S1: Was the one game with you, let's go back and forth and name some cheese and whatnot, parents being a Harland vegetable farmer, I go to a moral and a fresh air land tomato. Yes. What's parent? You would do your team. Totally.

1:06:08.2 S2: Well, so I hope it's not cheating 'cause I also, but tomato have been... It's so good to see. Satirist, amazing to me that was... And I just, I love having a cheese plate for lunch or just whatever God chooses I have, so I've just been kind of in chunking off into big pieces in air loomed with maybe a little Sisal and all oil, and then serving that with health signs and Jesus from a wash, try and cheese or a blue cheese or... It doesn't have to be master. I feel like that's a great combination for so many chooses because it has that BRAT acid pop act, that balance is like... She's a richness.

1:06:51.0 S1: I tend my own... She's eating... I used to have a love, I still have a love for very age sharp Jesus, but there's a lot of reasons I don't eat age chess anymore. So my 10, my parents these days tend to be young cheeses, whether it's a young UDA or Bree or got or broader more, so I tend towards the fresh fresh on age cheeses way more. So it's probably why it's on a

1:07:18.3 S2: I... That's a classic

1:07:19.4 S1: For such good reason it... Such a good combination is a favorite lately, this summer has been... And last summer has been fed at... With watermelon?

1:07:28.3 S2: Yes. Oh my gosh, I have met... I've said that watermelons so many times and it different gets old, it leaves.

1:07:34.8 S1: And I'll put some cherry tomatoes in that too in the sales to charities for a little more acid, the watermelon for the suite, the Fed for the tank one is so salty and there's something about more... More people are telling me that they love even just salt sprinkled on watermelon, so there's something about the old... With the watermelon. What would you hear with Concord grapes?

1:07:58.6 S2: Ooh, I feel like Conquer grapes, you get that. I think of Welsh, it's like a classic group flavor for me, things have been like a kid, so I feel like that would be so good, so refreshing

with just a really classic sharp cheddar

1:08:19.4 S1: Cheese, I'm thinking, what kind of cheeses are... Not a year, not erupt shutter with apples, but my Homs favorite meal all the time pretty much is like sharp center cheese, a slide stop Apple, Socrates and an ice tear, nice coffee Lake. And I've picked up that that's a favorite any time healed, then I found out living here in Western New York where we are in Apple region, like apple pie, shutter cheese on top, melted on top, which I'd never heard of before, but I was like, Yeah, that would probably be really good solutions. Right, right. What... What other cheese pairings? I like just going back and forth 'cause it would give our listeners some sparks...

1:09:17.7 S2: Let me pay. I really like, I feel like chocolate is a really good cheese parents, I feel like a kind of milk, a Nicolae with... I'm thinking like a blue cheese, one that comes to mind is just for help bellies in blue, which has this beautiful plunger and a kind of sweetness to it, and I think that sweetness and the richness of the chocolate, it would be really good together, although I think like a milk, chocolate and blue cheese is a great little bite after a meal...

1:09:47.7 S1: That's an interesting one. It's an interesting one. What... You said that and something came to mind and then I sold Riot again. What shoes would you put it with a cup of coffee.

1:10:05.5 S2: I'm of an age Duda because that really gets this kind of Wests when I do do my work at the cheese counter, there are these like Jesus that would just do in a wrong, and one of them would be like a super aged Buda because it's almost... It gets a kind of butter, scotch caramel sweetness where it's almost like... It's like candy for growing up, it's just... And that coffee, I think that works really beautifully also is like with the... Or bourbon.

1:10:35.7 S1: Yeah, have you ever been to Netherlands? And

1:10:39.2 S2: Yeah, actually, one of my clients that I do copywriting is meanders, they make a to feed of the ball who does, and I've gotten to go visit them, they're like an hour outside of Amsterdam and the thing travel to a...

1:10:55.0 S1: It was so much fun. I had no idea there was just how many different kinds of Goa and there's different names for how age they are and... All those kinds of things. I was like, Oh, cool. And now I know when I'm looking at different kudos in the US, what they are, what they are. Have you ever had a cheese where you're just like, No, don't ever wanna have it again...

1:11:19.0 S2: I don't know if I can say that they think that those cheeses that are like... You know, when you go to chooses like something like Bester, that's been made, it's made in this co-op, it's been made for hundreds of years, you know it's gonna be good, 'cause I just assume... But when you have a smaller cheese maker or trying something new, it might not be... So

1:11:44.8 S1: I'm just gonna admit I have a pet peeve about that cheese makers, newer cheese makers, and they say something is like a hard or Swiss and it doesn't quite... It's like a good cheese, but it's not what they say it is. I'm just like, I... Etawah traditional cheese that has a very China-specific flavor. Don't mess with it, right?

1:12:10.6 S2: That's true, it's a challenge for American cheese makers to... Because we don't have that tradition that they have in Europe, don't have... If we do have a shutter tradition, which is a great one, even though that's a British cheese or... Of course. But

1:12:28.1 S1: In Wisconsin, these before, I will tell you, when I worked for a big theatrical lighting company, all the manufacturers would send holiday gifts, whether it was a box of chocolate, but we had one of our main vendors was from Wisconsin, and so we get this huge box of Wisconsin cheese, and I was never into the cookies of the popcorn or the sausages or the chocolate boxes, but when that cheese back came in, I was like, Do not touch this, this is the one I want some from... I can have all the other gift boxes, leave the chose one to me, containment was fun, and there was always a chatter that was in the shape of Wisconsin at his cantos. I'm curious... Well, I'm curious a few things, but mostly, as I said earlier, what I love about talking with you is that you and I are in a similar mission, like bringing more women's voices in the food world out, into visibility, out into the public, sharing their stories. So I love that we got to have this fun conversation, and of course, love that we talked about cheese, and... What's fun about this conversation is how we've woven through the diversity of roles and jobs and ways people can engage, and women have brought their gift and expertise into the food world, same as you have finding your path through writing and the way that simple ingredients like milk salt, culture and rent, it can make such a variety and diversity of flavors, and it's just such a great map, recite this conversation and the reminder of uniqueness of every individual cheese in every individual woman, every individual person, and that we all can find our place just like each cheese can find its best pairing and its place on the way, and each of us can find just like you have found this path to writing and food and sharing women's stories...

1:14:39.1 S1: We all have that path, but I would love to ask if there's something that you would love our listeners to walk away from listening to this episode with... What would that be?

1:14:52.4 S2: I think you summed it up so well, that there's so many different paths and possibility is in the food world, I think my biggest piece of advice for people, if they're starting off in their food journey is to find people who inspire you, whether it's about what the... The amazing work they're doing, or just who they are, and stick close with them because I feel like it's really... For me, it's really been these people who have been incredible teachers and guides, and inspirations and community, and I think that's for me what food is really about, it's about this connection and coming together, like you said, with the hearth and sharing and enjoy that lean into that embrace that.

1:15:44.1 S1: Thank you so much and I hear a theme through your own personal story and everything you shared about support, and just find the people who are your supporters ask for support, whether you're going through a challenging thing or you wanna learn something new, or you wanna get into a different career, or just need friendship or have a question about cheese to define support and ask for help, ask for support from others and to know who your support people are, it seems like a theme that helps you through the hard times, and a theme that helps you grow in career and passion and what you wanna create both, and so... Absolutely, yeah. So, Anna, thank you so much for sharing your stories and cheese degree with us today. To all our listeners, I hope you enjoyed this episode of women in food and got a bit of inspiration for your next meal party or cheese play a last request, if you could go over to iTunes or whatever app you're using to listen and

give us a reading in review, it's a simple act that helps us a ton. Once again, thank you for a company mean this delicious adventure, join me around the table for our next episode and get ready to eat.

1:17:05.8 S1: I enantio.

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