



Our Hen House Podcast: Transcript for Episode 702, Interview with Myq Kaplan

Jasmin: Welcome back to Our Hen House.

Myq: Thank you so much. I'm always happy to talk to you.

Jasmin: So you've been on Our Hen House before, and you've also been part of our events, and you're a long-time vegan, and my friend, and my brother from another mother.

And now you have another album coming out. So tell me about it.

Myq: I'm happy to. Thank you. So the newest widely released album of mine is called *Live in Between Albums*, and it's called that in part because, or mainly because, I've made many albums. And in 2016, I had an album that I recorded called *No Kidding*.

And that was like the first themed album I had that was sort of built around the theme of wanting no kids. And then, in 2020, I released an album that I believe I came on the show. You were always very gracious to have me. That album was called *AKA*, which is short for "All killing aside," which has themes of...not murdering, mainly. Like, love, compassion, not murdering.

So, the 2016 album, I don't want to bring more people into the world. The 2020 album, I don't wanna remove any people from the world or any sentient beings. So let's just keep the levels steady.

And since I've been doing comedy for 20 years, my first albums were more just like, I hope anyone likes these jokes. Who knows what they're about? Some were about veganism, some were about movies, some were about my life.

Anyway, I now was like, "Oh, I want to talk about what's important to me. I want to talk about things that I care about."

And I feel like I can do these large pieces that have more connectivity, more thematic coherence. And also, I still wrote a lot of silly jokes that didn't go with either of those albums, with either of those themes in the meantime.

And I was like, "Well, I think people might enjoy hearing these also, even if it's not specifically about veganism or another issue that I care about." Like, maybe people out there working hard in the vegan activism mines wanna come home at night and just listen to some silly things.

And so this album, *Live in Between Albums*, I recorded in between those two albums, and it's full of jokes that don't really fit with either of the themes and don't necessarily go together with anything. And so that's why they all go together with each other in a way that...I sometimes like to think about when I was a kid, and I went to this summer camp that I wouldn't say saved my life, but really enhanced my life.

Really helped me blossom and learn that there were kids out there and other human beings who weren't my family, who...I was very grateful that my family loved me, but it felt like they had to. And I found these friends, my peers who were these kindhearted, other artsy weirdos at this summer camp. Like, the whole school year felt like kind of a black-and-white pre-Wizard of Oz, kind of like not yet over the rainbow, just like, "Ah, time to make the homework..." kind of idea.

But this summer camp. Full color. Beautiful. A social world opened up to me, and I came out of my shell because there were all these other kids who I feel like had that same school experience. The outcast, the misfit. And so, we all ultimately fit together because we all didn't necessarily fit anywhere on our own.

And that's what this album is. It's sort of the island of misfit jokes that all belong together. So thank you for asking.

Jasmin: How do you collect the content that you create? Because what I love about your work, Myq, and it's like not even really work, what I love about your mind is that you're constantly reflecting on life. Even in describing your albums in the last couple of minutes, you were offering me insights, even in just describing them. And I guess I don't fully understand how your mind works in terms of taking just what might be perceived as an ordinary thing and turning it into content. Can you tell me more about that process?

Myq: I'll take us back to when I started doing comedy, I knew that I could control the quantity more than I could control the quality. And so any idea that I had that I thought either was funny or could be funny...

At this point, now I think I don't always even start from what I think is necessarily funny. I might start with something that I think is important, funny, and accessible. So, sometimes I'll start with something important and then try to make it funny.

Sometimes I'll start with something that I think is funny and then see if I can make some meaning out of it. I mean, sometimes just being funny itself is all the meaning that it needs. Joy needs no reason, but in the beginning, I would fill notebooks and fill a digital recorder over and over with just all these ideas that might end up being song lyrics or jokes or journal entries or, you know, part of a new philosophical manifesto.

Like I didn't know. And I kind of, you know, in the best way, didn't care. I was just like, in a way, throwing a lot of spaghetti at the wall.

My girlfriend, Rini, who I've been with for almost just about seven years now, has described these two phases of my process of creation as- one, the blooming phase, and two, the pruning phase.

And so the blooming phase is just, like, I plant seeds, water them, grow them, and then just a massive forest manifests. Then the pruning phase is like, "What is the show going to be? Or what is the joke going to be?"

This is all to say, like the original spaghetti phase. I'm mixing a lot of metaphors here. It's a forest of spaghetti, of course. As we all know, the old expression "can't see the forest for the spaghetti-trees." *Jasmin laughs* And so I just sort of allow that to happen. One of my podcasts is called *The Faucet*, also inspired by and named by Rini, who, during the initial lockdown phases of the pandemic, noted that I was doing a lot of Zoom comedy shows, a lot of performances where I was just riffing and just coming up with things off the top of my head.

She's like, "You could just do that. Just turn on the faucet anytime, spout off, let the stream of consciousness out." And so I do that, and that is the blooming. And then at some point, when my recorder is full, when my notebook is full, I go back, and it becomes, in a way, more like homework, but a fun kind of homework because I'm the teacher and I don't have to do it. And there's no deadline for the assignment.

It's kind of a funny Buddhist-adjacent thing where, my understanding is that, like, take a mug that you drink tea out of. When a mug is empty, that is how it fills its function. It needs to be empty in order to be filled so that you can drink it, again empty it. And it's just a continual process. So I feel like my digital recorder kind of operates the same way.

If it's empty, I can fill it, and then I need to empty it so I can fill it. So I keep that process continually going. My first album, that I recorded in 2009, was called *Vegan Mind Meld*. And that album was basically just all of the jokes that sort of rose to the top of my consciousness to the front burner over the first seven, eight years that I was pursuing comedy.

I was just like, "Well, I say these things to the audience," and then later I look back and be like, "Well, how did they go, and what order could they go in?" And it was much more piecemeal and haphazard in the beginning. And now I'm very grateful that I have, in the past years, had the realization that I could have a central theme to work around.

I still love sometimes you see a comedian, and it's an hour of comedy. It's just joke after joke. Like, there's a comedian friend of mine named Brad Wenzel; he just put out a special call *joke. joke. joke.* and that is what it is. It's just joke after joke after joke. And some of the best comedians do that. And some of the other best comedians, like Maria Bamford, one of my favorites, she has themes of mental health and mental illness that run through a lot of her hours of comedy.

It's her, and it's her experience. And to answer your question, I guess the short answer is I don't know. But the long answer is everything that I've done, I have like processes and systems of curation in place that I want to be in place where...

Like, the hour that I'm bringing to the Edinburgh Fringe Fest is an hour that is about my relationship with Rini that we have co-created and co-curated over the last several years. And so that hour, everything that I write that sort of added up to that hour goes there. Other things that don't fit, maybe that will go in the next hour about toxic masculinity. Maybe this one will go in a future hour about my grandmother and my mother. And so, at the creation phase, I let everything come out, and I quote/unquote capture it with these devices that I have.

It's sort of like the way...I dunno if you've ever read the book *Thinking Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman. It's really great, and it's about the various systems we have in our brain. One thing it talks about is that there's the experiencing brain and then the remembering brain.

And they're slightly different. Like what you're experiencing isn't always exactly what you remember. And so I think that I'm doing the experiencing when I'm having an idea, I'm like, "Ah, spaghetti against the wall. That's the idea." And then later, I'll have help, by the aid of technology, to aid my remembering brain because my remembering brain might not remember without my little robot that I outsource a lot of my remembering to. So, I guess the answer is robots. That's how I do it.

Jasmin: That makes sense. So the AI world is definitely something you're probably down with since you're a robotic guy. *Myq laughs* Are you worried that an AI robot is going to take over your spot in the world?

Myq: I'm currently not worried for a couple of reasons. Number one, right now, all the times that I've seen someone ask an AI to give them a joke in the style of a certain comedian, they have not done that. Like, for example, a friend once asked, "Can you give me a joke in the style of Mitch Hedberg?"

And then the AI delivered literally a joke by comedian Dimitri Martin. And he said, "That's not in the style of Mitch Hedberg." And then the AI was like, "I'm so sorry, here, how about this one?" And then they gave him literally a Mitch Hedberg joke.

And perhaps it's going to improve. But a policy that I have that I like to enact as much as possible is- freak out later. You can always freak out later. Right now, here I am in the present moment, the only one that there is, with you, my friend that I love, and I'm very grateful for, and right now, the robots need us currently, like to turn them on and ask them questions and they're not even answering them the best.

And when they do, they're like, "Look at this painting that I made." I'm like, did you really? I mean, you, like a human did the heavy lifting of making that painting or whatever it is.

Freak out later is something that I got from one time when I was at my friend's wedding. It was, it was like a whole weekend, and there was an after party the night before the wedding ceremony, and none of that is maybe necessary detail...but there was weed vape. At the time, I'm not a big weed smoker. But I was like, "Vapor, that sounds better than putting smoke and fire in my lung." And so I took it into my head, and it didn't even really feel like anything, but then I felt it really strongly, and I was like, "Oh, this feels good."

But then I immediately worried. I'm like, "But what if I took in too much? And what if this amount of high keeps on increasing, and I can't handle it as well?" And, I was basically like, "What if I freak out?" And then I almost started freaking out, and I was like, "Wait, what if I don't freak out? It feels good now. So why don't I just try to enjoy that? And if I am going to freak out later, then I can always freak out later."

"If you can procrastinate freaking out, if you can put off freaking out"... That's what I was saying to myself, I was basically mathematically like, "If I freak out now, then that's definitely one freak out. And then if I freak out later also, then that's two. But if I don't freak out now and I do freak out later, that's only one. And if I don't freak out now, maybe I won't even freak out later. So maybe it'll be zero. But if I freak out now, it can't be zero. So the only way to have the lowest number of freakouts is to freak out later." And so...

Jasmin: This is freaking me out, honestly. *both laugh* It's hurting my head.

Myq: So I'm not worried about the robots now. That's all. Let's talk again in a year, and I'll see if I'm freaking out then.

Jasmin: All right, I'll book that episode of *Our Hen House* now, and the title of it "Is Myq Kaplan Freaking Out? When Will Myq Kaplan freak out?"

Later. The answer is later. So we just talked about AI, and I'm sure you have a much, much deeper understanding of this than I do, but I'm noticing that the landscape of comedy is changing. It does seem to be sometimes it parlays into a one-person show more so than like stand up.

There are some very popular comedy specials that have been on TV, and they have not been particularly funny, but they're super compelling, and they make you think, and I guess I just want your take on what the heck is happening. And, like, can we just please still laugh at comedy shows? Because we really need to, like, we're stressed out now, not later.

Myq: Well, number one, you can't see me because we're just talking audio-wise, but I'm taking my digital recorder, and I'm recording just for my journal, if not to tell people in some other form that, on this date that you and I, Jasmin, are talking. You just said, "Can we please all just laugh at comedy shows?" And I thought that that was funny. *Jasmin laughs*

And I think, in one way, the answer is yes. Maybe it hinges on the use of the word just, but I'm gonna answer the spirit of your question more than, perhaps, the letter of it. The short answer is yes, and the long answer is yeeeeeeesssss.

That is not a joke that I originated, but I love it. I don't remember where it first came from, perhaps *Family Guy* might be where I saw it first.

Jasmin: Yeah, that sounds right.

Myq: Here's the thing, as life progresses, I think it gets more complex in many ways. Like, you know, let's say evolutionarily, we evolved from ameba-type things, like one-celled organisms, and it gets more and more complex. Or like the big bang, you know, everything in one point, and then bang. And then life and things, as I understand it, get more and more complex. And maybe there's like a blooming and pruning analogy. Maybe, you know, it grows, and then... you know, it ebbs and flows, like it inhales and exhales. But, uh, this is all to say comedy, I think, also is getting more complex and art in general. Maybe it's not that it's getting more complex, but like our understanding of it is becoming more nuanced.

But it used to be, in comedy, in the eighties, there was the Johnny Carson Tonight Show. And tens of millions of people watched it. And there weren't podcasts, and there weren't web series, and there weren't many ways to go viral and forge your own path.

And shows would go off the air if they didn't have tens of millions of viewers in primetime, one of the three-channel slots. And now there's so many different platforms and so many different channels, and there can be all different kinds of weird shows that don't have to appeal to quote-unquote everyone the way that it used to, which is cool.

I think that's great that there are shows being made and voices being heard and amplified now that like never were and or never would have been, and certainly weren't, decades ago or even just a few years ago. And this is all to say that I think things are either getting weirder, or we're more aware of all these different, disparate things and pieces of art and creators.

I think there's now probably more comedians and more performance artists alive and working and out there and available than ever before. There's a friend of mine named Sean McCarthy who has a Substack called Piphany, where he reports on the state of comedy. And this year alone, I think they've already been like hundreds of comedy specials that have been put out.

It used to be you could probably go to the store and get every new comedy album as it came out. And now anyone can just put things on YouTube, and it's wonderful. And it's sort of a kind of democratization there aren't just gatekeepers that are keeping people out, and being like you have to be of a certain level or caliber.

And I guess the flip side of that speaks to part of your question, which is because there are no gatekeepers, it's like everything is out there. There's information, there's disinformation, there's misinformation, there's entertaining things, there's weird things. There's things that are comedic, or intended to be, there's things that aren't intended to be.

There's a new idea that I'm working on for a future comedy hour. And that idea is that in some ways, I'm going to liken everything to astrology, and as a very rudimentary description of what I mean by that is like, sometimes, if a person is into astrology, they'll meet someone, they'll ask, "When were you born?" And they're basically looking for a map. They're like, "Oh, so if you were born here, then that means this about you." When, in fact, maybe the map won't match the territory, right?

Because everybody is an individual, and I don't think that you can know everything about a person based on when, where, and the circumstances of their birth, per se. But we do that in so many ways. Like, here's another example.

I imagine you've had this experience, I've had this experience. People find out, we say, "I'm vegan," and people are like, "Oh, that's like an astrological map." If you say you're vegan, then I think that means these things about you, whether or not those things are true. Does that make sense?

Jasmin: Yeah, definitely.

Myq: And the same thing for, if somebody's like, "I'm an atheist," or, "I'm a Christian," or, "I do this or do that," or, "I'm a queer person," or, "I'm not," and we are, as humans, sort of like pattern recognizers and pattern seekers and categorizes. It's very helpful, evolutionarily, to be like that creature or that plant looks like a plant that poisoned my friend.

So I'm gonna stereotype that plant which I mean is kind of, in a way, what astrology is, as well as, like, making generalizations based on some smaller amount of information. And sometimes, these generalizations can be, in some ways, true and useful, and in other ways, I think you always get more information if you go direct to the source and be like, instead of, "What are

you,” be like, “Who are you?” Or “What are you doing?” And so I think that when saying that something is a comedy special or saying that something is comedy is kind of putting, like, an astrological type sign on a thing because sometimes people might be like, “Well, that's comedy? But I thought comedy was supposed to be like this. I thought comedy was supposed to be funny to me or everyone,”... and of course, nothing is funny to everyone. You have to speak the language to understand a comedy special, usually unless it's mime or super physical comedy.

I think to get more specific, Nanette is a great example of a comedy special that isn't only comedy. It's definitely comedy and more. I think there are lots of cool specials like that. And I was just telling my mom about this, and she likes learning things and getting a handle on categories of things.

I did a workshop, a standup workshop at a college a couple of weeks ago. And one of the other workshop facilitators is a storyteller. And I was telling my mom about storytelling, and she was like, “Oh, like, what? Can you describe what that is exactly?” And I'm like, “Oh, yeah. I mean, like, there are certain structures and certain formats.” Like The Moth is a famous storytelling show where people tell stories in a certain way.

And I would say that I'm not a storyteller in that way, but if somebody was like, “Would you say you're not a storyteller?” I'm like, “What does storyteller mean? Like, what are our definitions? What are we agreeing that things mean?” So there are some comedians who are storytellers.

Mike Burbiglia- a wonderful storyteller. Sam Morrison, his new show *Sugar Daddy* is an amazing, beautiful narrative about his partner dying of Covid a few years ago, and him getting diabetes as a reaction to his grief. It's beautiful and wonderful. Alex Edelman has a wonderful show that's going to Broadway now.

And so some standup comedians are storytellers. Many standup comedians are not storytellers in that way. Your joke, joke, joke, comedian. And then some storytellers are not comedians. There's a Venn diagram where I think that sometimes we choose to go to a movie or a piece of art, or a comedy show, or whatever, hopefully, based on the individual.

Like, I like this person, so I'm going to engage with their art. But sometimes people are just like, “Oh, what genre is this? I think I like this general genre or this general shape.” And comedy's weird because people don't even always know that there are genres of comedy. In a way that people might go to a comedy club on the weekend, like, “I'm just gonna go to the comedy club.

Doesn't matter what kind of comedy it is.” In a way that no one would ever go to a movie theater and be like, “Just gimme whatever movie’s starting now.” You'd at least wanna know, is it a horror movie? Is it a documentary, is it a comedy? Probably you'd want to, maybe you don't, that's fine.

Or music. You'd be like, I'm just gonna go down to the music club tonight and take in that. And so I think that to your question, yes. I think there are comedians who are just out there, uh, joke, joke, joking it up. There's a dichotomy that I'll draw that is not the only categorization necessary or possible, but that there are comedians out there who are actively, I think, just for the people who've worked hard all day and just wanna have a laugh. You've been engaging with the news, social media, your job at the hospital, whatever it might be, activism, and you're like, “I just want to sit down and like maybe turn my brain off and just like enjoy, like, Brian Regan perhaps,” who might not even be the best example because, in his most recent special, he engages with, the topic of his OCD in a way that he hadn't before, and I think is really meaningful in addition to being just sort of straight ahead, hilarious.

But then also, there's some people that don't wanna turn their brain off, that want their art and comedy to address the things in the world that they want changed. You know, your Maria Bamfords and Kamau Bells and Ties and Aparna Nancherlas and Hari Kondabolu, and... There are so many that are both addressing real-world challenges and making people laugh. So I guess when you ask, can we all just laugh at comedy? I'll have you fill out a questionnaire and be like, “What examples of just laughing at comedy have you experienced? And, let's see if we can create an algorithm for you to be like, if you like that, then maybe you'll like this.”

Jasmin: Yeah. There's your AI. I love that. Actually, if you could control all the AI, I'm sure there's one AI machine controlling all of it. If you could maybe have a stake in that, then I would probably be a little more comfortable with AI knowing that it would show me answers based on your perspective.

When you were talking, you mentioned something that was a dichotomy, and I was like, “Speaking of dichotomies, I feel very, very polarized on a lot of issues. Like, I feel really strongly that way and really strongly that way. And so if I have a comedy album, I'm gonna call it *Dyke-Otomy*.”

Myq: Yeah!!! I like that a lot.

Jasmin: I just came up with that. Thank you. Thank you. I'm not the one at Edinboro though, but go ahead, I'm interrupting you.

Myq: Oh, no, no. We're having a conversation. I appreciate it.

You just reminded me, my friend Gus, who I think I've mentioned to you...

Jasmin: One or 2 million times.

Myq: Yes. My friend Gus is, among other things, a therapist in the modality of DBT, which is dialectical behavioral therapy. And a dialectic is itself the kind of thing that you were just referring to in your wonderful joke and truth.

A dialectic is where there could be two things that are seemingly contradictory, but both true. A person might go to therapy for perhaps they feel that they have been hurt by someone else, but they can also understand why the other person did what they did or said what they said.

And so it's not that one is true and one is not true. Both are true. Shout out to another comedian friend of mine, Alex Dobrango, who has a Substack called *Both Are True*, which is funny and meaningful. Both are true.

But, the reason I was thinking of Gus moments ago is that he told me about an experience he had. He was sitting, I think, with other therapists, and one of them was describing a case, and they were describing all the symptoms that this patient was experiencing.

Gus noted that he was looking across the circle at another person listening. And that person was looking confused. And he was like, "Oh..." They were naming symptom after symptom. And this person's face was just like, "Oh, what could this be? What is it? It's that and this and that and this."

And then at the very end, the person, I guess, delivering the case study said, "And so the diagnosis is blank," or, you know, "is X, is such and such," and then the confused person's face like lit up and they're like, "Of course. All of those things mean that." And it's so interesting because the diagnosis is just a description of those things.

Here's an analogy, it's like looking up and like, look at that star and that star and that one and that one, and be like, "Oh, of course, the Big Dipper," like the Big Dipper doesn't exist outside of those stars. The Big Dipper is just the name that we give to that pattern.

The diagnosis is just a name that we give to a pattern of symptoms, a pattern of observations and experiences that a patient might be having. And similarly, if you went to a show that someone said, "This is a comedy show, and then it wasn't exactly the comedy show that you were expecting or that it was more of a one-person show, more of a story, like more of a drama at times, less of comedy."

And then if somebody said, "Oh no, yeah, yeah, that's not a standup comedy show. That's a specific..." and they gave it a different name. They're like, "Oh good."

There's a comedian friend of mine named John Fish. He's really funny. And here's a thing that he says sometimes, he says, "I've stopped telling people that I'm a comedian if I meet them at a party because," he's like, "I find that people will leave disappointed. They'd be like, 'That guy's a comedian? Not that funny.' So now I tell people that I'm an accountant, and I feel like people leave thinking that is the funniest accountant that I've ever met. He should do comedy." *Jasmin laughs throughout*

And there's something really profound in that. I listen to Alan Watts a lot, and Alan Watts once told a story of a Zen master, I think, or a Buddhist teacher who was asked, "Do you believe in God?"

And the answer that this teacher gave was, "If you don't, I do. And if you do, I don't." And. I think that there's something meaningful there about sort of the relationality of everything. Cuz I feel like that sometimes also, even among our beloved vegan community, or Jews. There's a classic thing about Jews, you know, that anyone who's more Jewish than you is a fanatic. Like more practicing like, "Whoa, a little too much." But anyone who is less Jewish than you is like, "Are they not even Jewish...? Like what?" So like, only whatever level that we're at, the Goldilocks level, is right.

And as a vegan, I would love for everyone to do it. And also, like, I'm not a raw vegan, so sometimes I'm like, like, "Raw vegans. What are you? I'm curious." And also, as a joke, when I'm performing for all vegan audiences, like an animal rights conference or a vegetarian food festival, I tell all vegan audiences that most of my audiences are not all vegan. And so that relationality impacts the way that I'm perceived and perhaps the things that I choose to say because it doesn't make as much sense if the context is different.

Like, for example, I don't have to go defensively to a group of vegans and be like, "Look, here's the reasons it's good." But for an audience full of non-vegan,

I might have to do that in a more meticulous or specific way. Um, what was the question? *Jasmin laughs*

Jasmin: I think that I have to listen to your friend's show, by the way, because I was thinking recently about how I don't wanna appropriate things because that would be in-appropriate. *Myq laughs* And I'm like, wait, appropriate and appropriate are exact opposites in what they mean and are spelled exactly the same way.

And I just think the English language is so unbelievably difficult. Like, I have so much respect for anyone who learned English as not their first language, because there are so many things like that I don't understand. Yeah.

Myq: Great point. That is, that's fantastic that it is inappropriate to appropriate.

I'm sure that if we delve not even that deeply, we'll find, you know, the etymological reason, like, the source that led to both of those things, being as it is. I think about sometimes, you know that they say the customer is always right. And I think that customer must come from the same place that customs does.

Like both customs at the airport and also, you know, the customs of a people. And I guess now I'm connecting this because if a certain group has certain customs, then they are right. The custom-er is always right. but what if your custom is to appropriate? Then, is it appropriate to appropriate the customs of a different...? okay, I'm sorry.

Jasmin: Did you know that customer...? I just Googled it. Customer also relates to costume, which I had no idea about that.

Myq: You know, I 100% didn't know that. And also, I have a joke that I tell sometimes about how Rini, my girlfriend, who helps me in so many ways, and one of those ways is she helps me curate my wardrobe. I trust her visual aesthetic, much more than my own, and so I essentially say that in this way, the costumer is always right. *Jasmin laughs*

Jasmin: That's awesome. By the way, when we were talking a little while ago, and then you brought up your friend Gus, and you're like, "Oh, and he's a therapist," and then you started talking about the type of therapy that he does. I feel like you were saying I should maybe get a therapist. *Myq laughs* I'm very pro-therapy. I am not in it currently, but I'm like, is this an intervention? *both laugh*

Myq: That's really funny for many reasons. I think the first reason is- that's not why I was bringing it up, but the fact that you think it is now, maybe it is why I'm bringing it up.

I also am currently not in therapy and (am) always a big fan of people being in therapy, in fact. You have been in therapy at times?

Jasmin: Oh, like, basically between the ages of 20 and 40, without ever going out into the world, I basically was in therapy most of the time. Yes.

Myq: Oh yeah.

I feel like therapy should be like, I don't know, the Israeli military for us. I think spend two years working on yourself and then perhaps we won't even have a need for the military, Israeli or otherwise.

Jasmin: Wait, Myq, when you said that about the Israeli military, all I thought about was when I was in Israel when I was 15 and the Israeli military, which is get on the bus like with their guns, and that was normal.

And I'm just imagining all these psychologists getting on the bus and sitting next to someone and therapizing them. That's where my brain went with it. Do you think...anyway... go ahead.

Myq: Yes, I think that would be a great plan. And if anyone out there is considering therapy, be they Jasmin or other listeners, give it a shot.

Especially if you're afraid of therapy, then definitely get into it. I've probably told this to you, I think, maybe in one of our earliest podcasts together. The thing about meditation that they say is, "If you have time to meditate, meditate 10 minutes a day and if you don't have time to meditate, meditate an hour a day."

I feel like if you think therapy could be valuable to you, definitely go to therapy. And if you do not think therapy could be valuable to you, go to more therapy.

Jasmin: Yeah, definitely a hundred percent. I wanna talk about Edinburgh, and I wanna tell you something about it really quickly, which is that when I was 16, my theater company that I was in at my high school in New Jersey, where you also grew up and at the same time as me...my theater company got a play accepted into the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and we had to raise money for it, and we raised something like \$15,000 of the \$50,000 that we needed to raise.

And so they were like, “You can't go, but we can take you instead to the National Thespian Festival, which is in Lincoln, Nebraska.”

And so, instead of going to Edinburg, I went to Lincoln, Nebraska, which has excellent thrift stores, I remember. And the cars go very fast. But Since then, I've always wanted to go to Edinburg. And then, when I was in Scotland a few years ago, which is probably my favorite country, to be more specific, Glasgow is my favorite city.

The train that we were on went through Edinburg, and I just looked out, I have never actually gotten out of the train in Edinburgh. So tell me what it will be like to get out of the train.

Myq: Sure. I've been there once for a month in August of 2018 when I brought my last show, the hour that would become the album *AKA*, that Rini and I spent and loved there and are so looking forward to returning.

You'll see a lot of castles I think you'll not be able to avoid. I mean, as long as you open your eyes, you'll see castles. It's like castles, castles everywhere, and not a drop to drink. And it's cute And yeah, don't drink the castles. I mean, look, I'm not gonna tell people how to live their lives, but I personally don't really drink a castle. *Jasmin laughs*

You do you. Yeah. It's just this...I mean, I've only been there during this festival, which I understand is, like, there's a massive surge of population that I was warned in advance would be overwhelming and, in a way, like I've been to Times Square on New Year's Eve.

And so I mean, if you've been to Times Square at any time, uh, square, then you will, I think, be fine in Edinburgh, even during the height of the festival. Definitely, there are times when there's a sea of people, and to get from one place to another, you wanna leave some time. But it's cute and quaint, and there's a lot of oat milk.

I feel like even more, you know, on the vegan tip, I feel like soy was like the first gateway non-dairy milk substitute that was everywhere at Starbucks here in America. But it really seems like OAT has, I don't know if it overtook it or it just was always the thing that arose first there.

Also, I don't know if this is my mother in me coming out. But there were so many places to eat. There was a nice soup place that always had all this vegan stuff. And also, I think maybe throughout all of Europe, they have this

standardized practice of listing allergens and even more allergens. On every menu, there would be...you know how in the US...I went to a restaurant with my dad and some family in Jersey City a couple of weeks ago. And they had on the menu buffalo cauliflower, and I was like, "Ooh, buffalo cauliflower, that's great. That's probably vegan," right?

And it came with ranch dressing. and it didn't mention vegan anywhere on the menu, and the waiter didn't really seem to know exactly what vegan meant. And I was able to figure it out and get something, but this would've never happened in Edinburgh. It would never happen, I think, perhaps in all of Europe, because, while here, you go to certain restaurants, and you're like, "Thank goodness it says V and VG or VEG." And even though there's no standardization among our people, and maybe this will be a joke at some point, cuz vegetarian and vegan both have a V and a G, some places are like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, V is vegan, and VG is vegetarian."

And some might do the opposite. So I'm really talking to the hard issues here. But anyway, over there, they have a very clear, like even more than just gluten-free, they're like, "This has mustard in it, or this has like celery th..." I forget what they are, but there are like 14 specific allergens that they mention specifically, like milk and meat and things. I dunno if they list meat as an allergen, but I do think that society should become more allergic to meat. Whatever that might mean.

Yeah, so it's just, people have cool accents over there, which is another thing, like, if you ask a Scottish person, do people here have accents? They would probably say no, but they would say it with an accent. So like, can you trust them?

During the festival, especially, which is when I was there, there are thousands of shows happening all day, every day from probably like 10:00 AM until, I don't know, four in the morning, and I went to see clowns and circuses, and storytellers and comedians and dance shows and magicians and there's like many busking on the street as well, just like walking.

There's a moment in a Bo Burnham special. I think it's in *What*, one of my faves, I think he's wonderful, where he's like coming out from behind the piano to walk. He just played a song, and I think he's coming to the front of the stage to talk into the microphone for part of the show. Tell jokes or read something. And as he is walking from the piano to the microphone, he is like moving in a weird way and saying something like, "Comedians, never miss an opportunity. Don't waste any time or space," making fun of the idea that he couldn't just

walk for a few seconds from one part of the stage to another without also creating content and art out of that moment.

And that's what I feel like Edinburgh is during the festival. It's like you could be walking from one theater to another or from one...I saw a show in the basement of a health food store...to another. And then, on your way, you're like, "Oh, also this is a show." The whole city is, and the whole world, and wherever you are right now, and your consciousness and your mind...I know my mind is a fun playground, but I think that yours can be too whether you're in Edinburgh or not, but it's fun. There are more castles.

Jasmin: That's fantastic. I definitely saw a lot of castles in Edinburg. So we don't have too much more time, though I want you to stay on for bonus content, if you wouldn't mind. But, tell me what's next for you and what we can do as your fans. We're all big fans of Myq Kaplan. What can we do to support you, and what are you excited about?

Myq: Thank you so much for asking. I will answer it in many ways. My name, Myq Kaplan, spelled the way that I do m-y-q k-a-p-l-a-n. If you search for that, you'll find my comedy albums. The two newest ones are *AKA* and *Live in Between Albums*. Those are on your various Spotifys, Apple musics, Amazons...whatever large faceless corporation you like to support.

You can get my stuff there or directly from Blonde Medicine, my record label. If you go to their website, you can find links to all the ways to get my albums. and I am a standup comedian. That is my main art engagement with the world. So please, if I'm where you are, if you're in Scotland, or gonna be at the Edinburgh Fringe, come to my show.

The show that I'm doing there this year's called *Imperfect*. And it is mainly about my relationship with Rini. It's a show that we've created together and are very proud of and happy with. If you wanna find out where else I will be, if I understand correctly, the very day this episode comes out, I will be in LA running that show at a place called Dynasty Typewriter that I love and many other places leading up to August 2023.

So check out my website, follow me on social media. If you'd like to subscribe to my Substack newsletter, I send out for free some jokes every week and some fun things, and you can subscribe for more. And there's the new notes, social media, Twitter-like vert aspect of that as well. I have podcasts. Jasmin, you have been on *Broccoli and Ice cream*, and I also mentioned *The Faucet*. So feel free to join my Patreon and, like, feel free to just, you know, Venmo me directly and

more specifically, here's some things that are coming up next. I don't know if I told you this, Jasmin, but Rini and I found out that our building that we live in right now will not be habitable for a year starting next month.

Jasmin: Oh, wow. I didn't know that.

Myq: We are moving all of our stuff into storage at the end of this month. And then for June, July, and August, we will be on the move. We will be, you know, staying with a few friends places, but I'm also just performing a lot of places. I'll be performing in California for a lot of June.

Uh, I'll be back in Arlington, Virginia, and Minneapolis in July before heading out to the UK. And so then we will return to the New York area after the Fringe ends. So, for September, we will be seeking a new home. And so if any of your listeners just have a free apartment in New York City, that's all that we're looking for. Feel free to support my Patreon or become a Substack subscriber or my new free landlord.

I don't have freelandlord.com yet, but if anyone wants to do that research...so this is all to say that the main next big thing that's coming up is the Edinburgh Fringe. And then, at some point thereafter, I will record that hour, optimally as a special and a new album, and then continue to keep emptying and filling the comedy bucket with future hours about my grandmother, mother, and more as I continue to amass these experiences.

But yeah, so from right now, I record this from Rini's mom's home in Kansas City, where we're spending the week and having a nice time with her family, her siblings, and then it'll just be on the road, and sort of in a liminal space between homes and yet in the home that is our hearts together...Which is also happy to be here in your heart home.

So thank you for having me and sharing all of this time.

Jasmin: I always appreciate your perspective. I always leave with things to think about, and I'm very excited about your album and about all of the work you're doing, and about asking you lots of personal questions on the flock bonus content.

Thanks for joining us today, Myq.

Myq: Thank you.