

[Here to Judge ]

Cast:

Priya Hall

Leila Navabi

Robin Morgan

[Here to Judge Theme Song]

Priya: Welcome to Here to Judge where we scour the internet to dissect dilemmas and decide who's to blame. Here to Judge today is me, Priya Hall.

Leila: Me, Leila Navabi.

Robin: And me, Robin Morgan.

'Am I the asshole for hiding my girlfriend's sentimental forks? My girlfriend, who I moved in with last year, received some cutlery when her auntie passed away the other year. It isn't particularly nice or valuable but she likes it for sentimental reasons.

I hate eating with these forks as the tangs are too close together and it really minimises the amount of food I can eat in one forkful. I began hiding the forks in my work van, one every three or four weeks until they were all hidden. I claimed ignorance and that seemed to be going pretty well.

Anyway a couple of months passed by with me enjoying having properly sized eating implements. When I gave her a lift in my van to work the on Monday, she opened the glove box and found all the forks. She was quite upset due to the emotional nature of the forks and also that I would be dishonest about something so small.

The forks are back in the regular rotation now and I can feel the resentment growing and growing whenever I fetch a properly sized fork to eat my dinner with, and she has knowingly set out a tiny fork to eat my dinner with. So Reddit, am I the asshole?' [Laughs] This is possibly my

favourite sentence in all the history of the podcast, 'Am I the asshole for hiding my girlfriend's tiny forks?' [Laughs]

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: [Laughs] Oh God.

Priya: I feel like they've definitely used the word 'tangs' incorrectly there.

Robin: Yeah.

Priya: That's surely not it.

Leila: Yeah what the fuck is a tang?

Robin: Yeah it's not that, right?

Priya: It's a prong, right?

Leila: Prong absolutely.

Robin: [Laughs]

Priya: [Laughs] So bizarre.

Leila: Uh? I'm going to look up what tang means because I don't believe it means that.

Robin: No.

Priya: It's like tangy right? It's got a tang.

Robin: Tangs.

Leila: Define tang. A strong taste, flavour or smell [draws breath shocked] to the projection on a blade of a tool such as a knife by which the blade is held firmly in the handle. So that's not what it is, he's got confused.

Priya: No, no. He's close but no cigar.

Robin: But he has gone into the world of cutlery.

Leila: He's closer than we thought he was, but he's not there.

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: So does it matter?

Robin: Let's retract our judgement [laughs].

Priya: I will not [laughs] I stand by it.

Robin: Let's give him that, let's give him tangs.

Priya: Um I kind of relate with this because I have this exact thing where we've got cutlery that was given to us by relatives that is teeny, teeny, tiny. So small with like three prongs.

Robin: Were people just smaller in the past? Is that what it is?

Priya: I don't know. Maybe they had tiny hands and less food maybe.

Robin: Sure, yeah these are rationing forks [laughs].

Leila: Uh never have I ever thought that the space between the tangs was indicative of how much food it could fit.

Priya: Yeah.

Leila: That's what sounds nuts to me.

Robin: I thought we were playing Never Have I Ever, then [laughs].

Priya: [Laughs] This is a different podcast.

Leila: [Laughs]

Priya: That's strange.

Leila: No but have you? Like do you know what I mean? What's the space on that? Surely if they're closer together you could fit more on it?

Priya: Yeah.

Robin: They have more purchase I guess.

Leila: Yeah or maybe they were just so close together that it becomes a spoon. At what point does a fork become a spoon?

Robin: Oh we're getting so existential so early on [laughs]. When I was uh I'd say seven or eight years old, for some reason it was just me and my mum in the house, my mum was cooking me dinner one Sunday evening, and for some reason, no my brother was in the house as well. I went down for dinner and my brother had a normal plate and normal cutlery and my mum thought it would be really funny to give me a tiny, like a little saucer, and the tiniest cutlery.

Priya: [Laughs]

Robin: And it's legit funny, but I cried [laughs].

Leila: Aww that's why you're a comedian now.

Robin: Exactly, I think that's it, that's the moment.

Priya: That's the most adorable emotional abuse I've ever heard.

Robin: [Laughs]

Leila: Yeah that is so cute.

Priya: A little Borrower.

Robin: We were probably reading Gulliver's Travels and she was like, oh it's so immersive.

Priya: [Laughs]

Robin: This is a communication issue, isn't it? Between the girlfriend and boyfriend?

Priya: I don't know, I think it's the hiding of the forks isn't it?

Robin: Sure. But I think if he'd have gone 'Look these are quite small for me, I'm large. I'm a big man. And I just prefer using the other ones, is that OK? Like I know they're sentimental but maybe we could sort of put them in a

cupboard with plates like nans do. Maybe we could do that and sort of put them on show'.

Priya: Or he could just go and get his own forks.

Robin: No. No. That seems mad [laughs].

Leila: Do you have cutlery that you don't like in your house? Yeah?

Robin: Yes.

Priya: I mean I have tiny forks in rotation.

Leila: Like you just don't use it do you?

Priya: Yeah I just avoid them.

Leila: You just choose not to and then when you get to the last bit and you have to do the dishes, then it's like OK well that is my punishment for not doing the dishes, I have to use this tiny fork.

Robin: Yeah.

Leila: It does serve its purpose.

Robin: I have to use the bad plate.

Leila: Yeah. I'm going to tell you about a period in my life that I'm not proud of but I did go through that period in my life.

Priya: [Laughs] I love the start of this story.

Leila: [Laughs] I went through a phase just for fun of every time I [laughs] I'm embarrassed! Every time I'd go to a chain restaurant, like for example Ask Italian or Pizza Express, somewhere that you know, I didn't care about.

Robin: Somewhere on VoucherCloud.

Leila: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I would steal the cutlery after I'd used it, I would just take it. For fun.

- Robin: Would you go for all bits? Or would you choose one item?
- Leila: It depends what mood I'm in. I liked taking teaspoons, that was good.
- Robin: They're quite easy to as well, aren't they?
- Leila: Yeah easy, slip it in, yeah fine.
- Robin: Ladle [laughs].
- Leila: Yeah exactly, I already had cutlery it was just for fun. Because I'm too much of a pussy to every steal anything that's like actually worth stealing. Or to steal anything from a shop. But it felt like I don't know.
- Robin: Yeah you wouldn't steal cutlery from John Lewis but you'd do it from like a restaurant once they've given it to you.
- Leila: Yeah they gave it to me.
- Priya: It's very different to steal like a cutlery set. Like a whole thing of silverware as opposed to one fork every now and then.
- Robin: Yeah they've lent it to you.
- Leila: Yeah I'd never do that. I wouldn't even steal one cutlery from a place that isn't a restaurant. I've used it, it's been in my mouth so it's mine now.
- Robin: Especially in this day and age.
- Priya: My mum's always had the approach that they build the cost of stealing into the food. So she steals from restaurants all of the time. Like through my whole life, she's never stopped, she's never going to stop.
- Leila: What is she stealing like cutlery or plates?
- Priya: Any fucking thing.

Robin: Waiters.

Priya: Anything she can get her hands on [laughs]. And she once went through phase where she would steal steak knives.

Leila: Oh great.

Priya: And her husband at the time got really annoyed at her so she started like not telling him that she was doing it. And then he opened the glove drawer after they went out to dinner once, and just found a bunch of steak knives in there. And he was like 'You understand how not telling me that I've got a glove drawer full of steak knives is not ideal right?'

Leila: You said, husband at the time.

Priya: Yeah, yeah, yeah [laughs].

Leila: So I'm just like assuming that that was the reason for that uh.

Priya: Yeah that was the straw that broke the camel's back [laughs].

Leila: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Robin: I think that, I don't know the hiding, it seems really petty. I think he has got a bit of fragile masculinity that he can't eat with these tiny forks. I'd find it quite entertaining and just pretend a bigger giant. You know like there's something quite fun about that.

Leila: Yeah.

Robin: As we all said, the cutlery that we have that we don't want to use, I have tons of like kids plastic cutlery, there's nothing...

Leila: It would be really weird if you didn't have kids.

Priya: [Laughs] Oh yeah.

- Robin: Oh yeah. Oh no I've had it for years. It was handed down to me [laughs].
- Leila: [Laughs]
- Priya: It's the cutlery your mum gave you in that dinner, you just kept it to remind you of where you come from.
- Robin: Yeah, yeah, exactly [laughs] Never forget I'm a bad bitch!
- Leila: [Laughs]
- Robin: And I'll use that occasionally, you know when I sort of come in, sort of drunk, just sort of plastic spoon [laughs]. I think he just needs get over it, hiding stuff in your work van seems to be a bit much.
- Priya: I wish I was in that work van when the girlfriend found the like hoard of cutlery, I wish I'd been there.
- Robin: I wish his workmates had found it instead of her. So like old Johno would open the glove compartment and just find loads of tiny forks [laughs].
- Priya: [Laughs] So small.
- Robin: Producer Jo asks, 'Do you think they should get divorced?'
- Priya: [Laughs] I think she should swap out all of their cutlery for tiny cutlery.
- Robin: Smaller and smaller every day [laughs].
- Priya: Yeah. But no need for a divorce, just emotional torture.
- Leila: They're married are they? That's interesting. I was going to say if they're not married then what he could do is be like 'I feel such an attachment to these forks that I would like them melted down and turned into a wedding ring'.
- Robin: Oh yeah it's a girlfriend, so...

Leila: There you go then. That's one way to get rid of the fork. Just to make them into something new.

Robin: That's so sweet and manipulative.

Leila: Yeah welcome to my...hell [laughs].

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: Welcome to my twisted nightmare yeah.

Robin: [Laughs] Yeah that's a really nice idea, they should do that. I think she should just give him regular forks but make the portions bigger and plates bigger and bigger so he thinks that he's using tiny forks and drive him mad.

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: Just small steps.

Robin: Yeah exactly.

Leila: Just replacing everything he owns with smaller versions of it.

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: Or maybe he's just huge and he doesn't realise and he's like 'She's giving me these tiny forks' and she's like 'Babe they're the forks we've always had'. And he's like 'They're tiny'.

Priya: They're absolutely normal sized forks.

Leila: Yeah.

Priya: But he's like 'the tangs!'.

Robin: Do you think he's the BFG?

Priya: [Laughs] Yeah.

Robin: Tangs is a word that the BFG would use.

Leila: Yeah [laughs].

Priya: Absolutely.

Robin: I don't think he's an asshole, I think he's petty and I don't think she's an asshole, she just needs to marry him and divorce him immediately on the same day.

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: As someone who steals cutlery from Ask Italian, I haven't got a leg or tang to stand on.

Robin: [Laughs]

Priya: [Laughs]

[Here to Judge- Interim Music]

Leila: 'Am I the asshole for forgetting my partner's birthday? Two years ago I was in a really intense teacher preparation programme and was overwhelmed with lesson planning, student teaching, course work, and state exams all the while parenting my then two-year-old.

I was super stressed out and the day of my husband's birthday we had gotten home late and were having dinner. I was just venting about how stressed I was, and just feeling crummy. And I told him, 'Sorry, I'm just not going to be all there these next few days, I really need to focus on my stuff.' He proceeded to tell me about his day and he casually threw in how his co-workers wished him a happy birthday. And then I was like, oh shit, I felt so bad. I tried hugging him and telling him happy birthday but he was angry.' [Laughs] Angry birthday, never mind, that would...

Robin: [Laughs] [Sings to the tune of Happy Birthday] Angry Birthday to...

Leila: [Laughs]

Priya: Cha cha cha!

Robin: [Laughs hysterically]

Leila: 'So as an effort to make up for forgetting, I went out and got him a cake from the bakery. I sang Happy Birthday as I gave it to him' [laughs] Just this idea of her like singing it and singing it.

Robin: [Laughs]

Leila: 'But he was still mad. He didn't take a bite at all and said that getting a cake made no difference. I apologized but was super defensive and felt like me forgetting was justified because of all the stress I was under. He forgave me eventually and we're good now. I still feel awful. But was I justified? I don't know. I love him to death and I'm literally never going to forget his birthday ever again. Am I the asshole for forgetting and for saying those things about only focusing on the things I had to do at the time, and for trying to celebrate anyway by going to get the cake after the fact?'

Priya: Here's the thing. They say they're good now and he's forgiven her but she is still on Reddit. So...

Leila: Yeah, I don't uh...

Robin: Has she forgiven him?

Priya: Yeah [laughs].

Robin: For having the audacity to have a birthday.

Priya: [Laughs] I do love the idea of someone bringing in like a lit birthday cake and singing Happy Birthday to someone who's just not playing ball whatsoever.

Robin: He's furious.

Priya: I love that.

Robin: And the fact that like he didn't even have a bite [laughs]. He didn't even bite the apology cake.

Leila: There's nothing worse than not biting an apology cake.

Robin: Correct, absolutely, famously said.

Leila: I think I'd be really angry.

Robin: If your partner forgot your birthday?

Leila: Yeah, I would be fucking livid.

Priya: Yeah.

Leila: It's six days before Christmas, there's nothing else to do.

Robin: [Laughs]

Priya: OK let's assume this person doesn't have the same birthday as you Leila.

Robin: [Laughs]

Leila: Yeah OK sure, yeah, yeah, yeah. I can't see behind my own [laughs] I'm literally such a narcissist that I was like, well how could she forget? It's birthday season.

Robin: It's not like you were really annoyed at your girlfriend or anything, like I can't believe she did that!

Priya: [Laughs]

Leila: No I wouldn't forget it. But also I am bad at remembering birthdays.

Priya: Yeah, I don't think OP is the asshole for forgetting, I do think she's the asshole for then getting upset that he's annoyed about it because I mean you would be wouldn't you?

Robin: It's legit like.

Priya: Of course you would, yeah.

Robin: Like I know a lot of people who have done those like intense teacher training things, and they are incredibly intense and it sort of encompasses your life but...

Leila: Hang on.

Robin: Yes.

Leila: What's that for? What is this course? Is it like a become a teacher in three days vibe? Is it like the?

Robin: Yeah I think it's like a PGCE type thing, I imagine. It sounds like it's US version of it but I think basically it's a three year uni course condensed into one year.

Leila: Oh my God.

Robin: Whilst also doing teacher training, like teaching in schools as well.

Priya: My partner did it and he didn't forget my birthday so.

Robin: When's your birthday though?

Priya: September.

Robin: Easy.

Priya: That's the spiciest of times for a teacher training course, no?[laughs]

Robin: Start of the year.

Priya: Sure. Sure, sure, sure, sure, sure.

Robin: And everyone has got birthdays, like every kid has got a birthday in September so birthdays must have been on the mind.

Priya: OK that's fair.

Robin: [Sings] Angry Birthday to...

Priya: [Laughs]

Robin: I think the guy probably reacted, it seemed like he reacted in quite a decent way to sort of like...

Priya: Yeah.

Robin: 'Oh my day was this. And then the guys sang Happy Birthday because it's my birthday.' And then we all went home and now we're having dinner. Like I think he's not the asshole here.

Priya: No.

Leila: No.

Robin: But then his partner did go out to get an apology cake, which is quite nice.

Priya: I think that's quite manipulative.

Leila: Yeah.

Robin: Do you think so?

Leila: What getting an apology cake?

Priya: Yeah I think so. Straight away, give time to someone to be angry and then do an apology cake.

Robin: [Laughs] Sure.

Leila: This again might show me to be a horrible manipulative horrible person but what I would have done is been like, yeah and then I'd have to like, I'd very quickly organise a surprise party and be like 'Surprise!' I didn't forget your birthday really. You come back and you pretend.

Robin: Oh that's clever.

Priya: You've got so much confidence in your surprise party throwing together skills [laughs].

Leila: Oh I do. [Laughs] Again trying to throw anything together is just like impossible normally because no one wants to come to a surprise party. I had a surprise party for my 21st birthday, it was very lovely.

Priya: Did you? Aww.

- Leila: And that was the last birthday I enjoyed. It's all downhill from there really isn't it? 21, once you've done that it's like well.
- Priya: Aren't you 22?
- Leila: Yeah.
- Priya: [Laughs] There's not been that many.
- Leila: I know but you've got to remember the experience I've had of 22 so far has been this January.
- Priya: That's fair.
- Leila: Which has not been joyful.
- Robin: That's true. But you can't say 'I've hated all birthdays since' because and you'll never out of this, every single one of them has taken place during a global pandemic.
- Priya: [Laughs]
- Leila: God. I don't know how I feel about this to be totally honest with you. I don't know.
- Robin: I think she is the asshole for forgetting but I don't think, I think Priya's right, as with many of these things, going on Reddit is the issue here.
- Priya: Yeah.
- Leila: Yeah that's the problem.
- Priya: That's the thing that clearly shows they're not really sorry for forgetting.
- Robin: Yeah.
- Priya: They're not doing themselves any favours when they go on this do they?
- Robin: And she can't be that busy.
- Priya: [Laughs] Exactly, it's quite a long post as well.

Robin: Asshole, she's the asshole.

Priya: Yeah.

Leila: I agree. J'agree as they'd say in France.

Robin: Are you fluent?

Leila: Yeah. Can you tell?

[Here to Judge- Interim Music]

Priya: 'Am I the asshole for telling my brother-in-law to stop shitting in the bathroom with the door open while eating food?' Sure [laughs]. Buckle up. 'This is so absurd. I can't believe I'm typing this out so that I can be judged by internet strangers.

I'm pretty sure it's right up there with that guy who shits in the shower.

Recently, my brother-in-law (Dave) lost his job, couldn't pay rent, and moved in with my partner and I. We have the space, so it was no big deal. It didn't take long before I figured out that Dave is... sort of a neckbeard. He never cleans anything up, doesn't really contribute to the house in any way, leaves dishes and food all over the place, and let's not even talk about can mountain.' [Laughs] Which I assume is a mountain of cans.

'He rarely cooks, and when he does, I'd rather he not. He has this awful habit of hacking up a raw chicken with a cleaver and little bits of flesh and liquid go everywhere. It's a salmonella nightmare.'

Robin: [Laughs]

Priya: 'I've stopped using my kitchen'.

Leila: Oh my God! Salmonella Nightmare is an amazing name for a band.

Priya: Oh yeah like a punk band, definitely.

- Robin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Can Mountain would support them on tour [laughs].
- Priya: [Laughs] Can Mountain is the name of their van.
- Robin: Yeah [laughs]. Van Mountain.
- Priya: 'I've stopped using my kitchen (not really but I wish I could). Recently I've started driving home for my lunch break, right around noon, so that I can get a few extra things done around the house. It's because of this that I have found out that Dave's favourite show is on at noon. And apparently Dave likes to eat lunch while watching the show FROM THE FUCKING TOILET.' [Laughs]
- Leila: Oh no.
- Priya: 'The man crawls out of his room around 11:45, dumps a bag of chips on a plate, puts a block of cheese on top, burns it up in the microwave, and strolls into the living room bathroom (which faces the television)'. Living room bathroom is insane, just OK.
- Robin: That's mad.
- Priya: 'And plops down on the toilet, leaving the door open so he can watch his damn show.'
- Robin: [Laughs]
- Leila: What's his damn show?
- Priya: I have no idea [laughs]
- Robin: Jane Austen's Emma [laughs]
- Leila: Yeah [laughs].
- Priya: 'The man shits with the door open while eating food. It's not even the open door shitting that drives me insane (I mean that's gross too). It's food in the bathroom. I've worked in a hotel for many years. I've seen a lot of shit (often times literally), and if there is one thing that

always baffled and disgusted me, it was cleaning a room that had plates next to the toilet.

I wonder what kind of monster eats in the bathroom? Well, it looks like one of those monsters is now living in my house. Long story short, I let it slide the first few days, as I was elsewhere in the house so it's not like I had to look at him. But once I saw that it was a thing, I told Dave to stop taking food into the bathroom and close the damn door.

He threw a fit, saying that he lives here too and I'm 'shaming him for a normal activity' (none of this is normal, in my humble opinion) and how would I feel if he had a problem with something I did like showering every day?

Now my partner is in on this mess, and told me to just let it happen to keep the family peace, as it's not like it's hurting anything to let Dave keep eating and shitting with the door open. And that I should just stop coming home for lunch or ignore it all. Reading this after I typed it out, what the fuck even is this? So internet, am I the asshole? Should I really just let it slide to keep the peace until Dave moves out? Is eating in the bathroom a more commonplace/ acceptable thing than I think it is and I'm being unreasonable about it? Edit- I'm a guy, since I see a lot of posts assuming I'm a woman'. Should do a too long didn't listen on this?

Robin: Yeah.

Priya: OK.

Robin: Just to hear you sum it up [laughs].

Priya: The too long didn't listen is, someone has moved into OP's house during the pandemic because they needed somewhere to live and they've now found out...

Leila: Rent free.

Priya: Rent free. They're hacking up chickens in their kitchen and shitting while eating with the door open in the middle of the day.

Robin: I had a, not a friend but somebody I went to school with, once told me that on a Monday that he'd had his Sunday dinner whilst sat having a shit on the toilet.

Leila: No!

Priya: No.

Leila: No.

Priya: No.

Robin: And always just like that's, I mean that's not cheesy chips. That's a big meal. That's like a big plate. That's a hot plate.

Leila: [Laughs]

Priya: Anyone who takes any sort of food into the bathroom, even if they're not eating it in the bathroom. So say like, if you work in an office and you've got like a shared like toilet with cubicles, I see people take their lunch in there in a bag and just put it on the side and then they go into their cubical. That to me is the most disgusting...

Robin: Uh!

Leila: No!

Priya: ...thing a person can do.

Leila: Yeah.

Robin: I'm going to play devil's advocate with toilet man. I've said that sentence now...

Priya: Go on [laughs].

Robin: ...and I regret it, but I'm going to go on [laughs]

Leila: Yeah enjoy, I'm not participating.

Robin: I think that during these unprecedented times, we cannot judge people's behaviour. And if eating their chips, cheesy chips, nutritious, calcium, on the toilet while shitting, at the point where he doesn't think anybody else is in the house, he's not going to do this during the day, he's not an animal. He thinks that somebody is at work and this is a bit of 'me time'. He's living with his sibling and his partner, that's suffocating. He needs a bit of him time.

Leila: If the only way that someone could calcium is by sitting on the toilet and eating cheese on chips, then I'd rather their teeth all fall out.

Robin: Well someone hasn't been on the NHS website recently [laughs].

Leila: [Laughs]

Priya: To counter that Robin, he knows full well that his brother-in-law is coming home in the middle of the day and has chosen to carry on.

Robin: Well he has now, but this is a new thing right? Because the brother-in-law was like 'I've started coming home in the middle of the day to do some shit at the house'. Admittedly because this guy's a pig [laughs] and he needs a few extra hours in the day to sort of like fan the flames of what's going on in this house. I mean really what should happen is the sister, the OPs partner should be like 'Yeah I've asked him to leave'.

Priya: Yeah he's my responsibility.

Robin: He's a living room shitter.

Priya: [Laughs]

Robin: This is why I don't play devil's advocate because I get fucking ruined [laughs].

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Priya: [Laughs]

Robin: I'm going to stay with it. I'm going to stay with it. This guy is a prince and he needs [laughs] protecting at all costs.

Priya: [Laughs]

Robin: I really fancy a roast chicken now [laughs].

[Here to Judge Theme Song]

Melanie: This has been a Little Wander production. Music from Rhodri Viney. Local artwork from Sam Roberts. Voice from Melanie Walters. With special thanks to Beth Forrest, Steve Pickup, Sam Roberts, Henry Widdicombe, and Jo Williams. Other podcasts from Little Wander include: I Wish I Was An Only Child, and Welcome to Spooktown. Subscribe now on iTunes, Spotify or wherever you get your podcasts.

[End of Podcast]