

I Wish I Was An Only Child - Selasi Gbormittah & Edinam Gbormittah

Cast:

Cathy Mason

Rachel Mason

Selasi Gbormittah

Edinam Gbormittah

[I Wish I Was An Only Child Theme Song]

Rachel: Welcome to I Wish I An Only Child with me, Rachel.

Cathy: And me, Cathy.

Rachel: This week we're talking to Selasi Gbormittah, one of the most popular Great British Bakeoff contestants, and his younger sister Edinam.

Cathy: They were really interesting. She's incredibly open. He's much more the joker, much more closed. And I think she's frustrated that he isn't more open.

[I Wish I Was An Only Child- Interim Music]

Rachel: Can we just start really with you telling us a bit about your childhood, just to give us some context. So Edinam would you like to start?

Edinam: Oh gosh. Our childhood was fun sometimes, we fought a lot, Selasi and I actually fought a lot, we argued a lot. I think I was bit physically abusive towards him sometimes.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: Because I grew up with two boys and I had to, you know when you're the only girl sometimes, you just feel like you need to make your presence felt. I'm the only girl and I was the last child as well. So I got a lot more attention. I feel like my brothers were a little bit jealous sometimes. But I mean it's normal, it's just normal sibling rivalry, not being too dangerous. I mean, maybe once or twice in the eyes of my parents anyway. But to us it was just usual banter between siblings. But our childhood, we have such

good memories of it, of what we can remember. I mean we grew up together. We did a lot of things together, my mum and dad kind of ensured that we did a lot of things together. Like when you look at our family pictures, half the time the funny thing is Selasi is always been a happy child, whereas my older brother and myself, we've been a bit grumpy. We were notably quite grumpy and you can tell in our pictures because in all the family pictures he's literally the only one smiling [laughs] beside my parents.

Rachel: Really?

Edinam: Yes.

Cathy: Why is that? Why is that?

Edinam: I don't know.

Selasi: I ate all the food, that's why.

Edinam: I feel like we didn't like taking pictures.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Edinam: Possibly. I feel like he actually just enjoyed things like that and we just kind of saw it as a bother.

Rachel: Right.

Edinam: So we'd literally be either with a straight face or frowning like it's so funny, in the pictures. And it's a joke now but yeah.

Rachel: So does that mean you're closer in some ways? So there was the two boys together, you said they'd gang up on you a bit right to a degree.

Edinam: Mm-hmm.

Rachel: But if you and your other brother were quite serious together...

Edinam: Yeah.

- Rachel: Did that cause any division between the three of you? Were you close?
- Edinam: No I think what happened with us is it's more like a monthly or a quarterly preference for me. Because there's quarters in the year that Selasi and I are very close, I'm always at his house, well before Covid anyway.
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Edinam: Or whatever and then another quarter, he's literally the older brother, I'm at his house or we communicate a lot more. It depends on whatever is going on at the time.
- Rachel: That's really interesting.
- Edinam: But generally we have a group together, we send each other memes on Instagram or stuff like that. But I think with the closeness it's relative, it depends on the topic. If I wanted maybe I wanted to discuss something a little bit more personal and I needed a better understanding of it, in terms of maybe finance or something like that, I'd go to Selasi. If I wanted to make a drastic financial decision I'd go to Selasi. And if I wanted to make like a decision based on maybe say fashion or friendship or something like that, I'd go to my older one.
- Rachel: Oh OK.
- Edinam: But it's weird because they're both within the finance sectors at some point in their lives so they have a better understanding of that area, so I go to them for those things.
- Cathy: But if you had a problem...
- Edinam: If it's to do with those decisions I go to Selasi.
- Rachel: Right.

Cathy: But if you had a problem, if you were really upset about something, a relationship breakup or something, who would you go to?

Edinam: I'd go to Selasi.

Cathy: Oh OK.

Rachel: Selasi you're smiling.

Edinam: [Chuckles] Only because he makes light of the situation.

Cathy: Yeah.

Selasi: It's not because I give better advice [laughs].

Cathy: [Laughs]

Edinam: No it's not because you give better advice because sometimes his advice his advices are wild. But he makes light of the situation and makes you understand that you know listen, life is not that serious.

Cathy: Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: Things happen.

Rachel: Right.

Edinam: You know so just OK this is the error now let's move from it, what next?

Rachel: Right, laidback.

Edinam: As opposed to he doesn't, and in saying that I'm not saying my older brother is judgemental or anything because he's also relatively understanding and whatever but I think Selasi seems to have more time for me and my disturbances.

Rachel: Right.

Cathy: Disturbances is a great expression.

Edinam: Yeah.

Cathy: Do you ever wish you had a sister though? Because I've always wanted to have brothers so I'm insanely jealous of you but how did that feel just having men everywhere?

Edinam: Growing up I had I think a huge chunk of my family dynamic is men.

Cathy: Yeah.

Edinam: I have a lot of brothers, two brothers, I have uncles, I have cousins who are mainly guys. So between a certain time I don't feel that void. I didn't know what a sister was.

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: Yeah.

Edinam: So I never craved a sister until maybe about secondary school where I realised that oh, you should have a sister or you're missing out on a certain part of your growth not having a sister. But grateful to God because when I went to secondary school, I met a friend and we literally became sisters. So she's literally part of the family, she's like my mum's fourth daughter. And sometimes on Selasi's Instagram you'd see him post there and all that stuff so I don't feel like I'm missing that experience because I managed to get one.

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: By I mean from year seven, and we still live together [laughs].

Cathy: Aww.

Edinam: Yeah so we have that relationship so I don't feel that. And then I have female cousins who I'm also close to who are like big sisters. So if it's like man trouble or stuff. But even with man trouble I go to Selasi.

Cathy: Oh Selasi!

Rachel: Selasi you are...

Cathy: He's a little therapist.

Rachel: Selasi you are the font the all knowledge. So we need to hear from you now, yes.

Cathy: [Laughs] Well you were lucky, you had both sister and brother. Perfect.

Edinam: Yeah the sister came later but I got it in the end anyway so yeah.

Selasi: Um, I mean she's not really my sister, she's adopted but we'll come...

Edinam: He always says that, I'm not adopted.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs]

Cathy: I didn't quite know where to go with that.

Edinam: He also claims he's the favourite child.

Rachel: Oh.

Edinam: That's Selasi, Selasi's a troublemaker.

Cathy: He's going to ruin all our questions.

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: He's going to ruin all our questions and we're going to have to redo it.

Rachel: No he's going to be brilliant, he's going to be brilliant.

Cathy: OK.

- Rachel: So yeah, you are the favourite child Selasi, tell us more about that?
- Selasi: Yes.
- Edinam: Please. Please.
- Selasi: It's a proven fact and even scientifically proven by my parents and the love they show towards me. But I genuinely think I am, just for the obvious reasons but I mean I'll let Edinam explain that. Our childhood was I guess...
- Edinam: What are the obvious reasons? [laughs]
- Rachel: Yeah.
- Cathy: Yeah what are the obvious reasons?
- Edinam: What are the obvious reasons? I'd like to hear it.
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Selasi: Because mum speaks to me all the time and doesn't speak to you guys. It's simple.
- Edinam: Yeah because we don't pick up our phone calls sometimes that's.
- Selasi: [Laughs]
- Cathy: [Laughs]
- Edinam: [Laughs]
- Rachel: Does Selasi have a bit less of a life? So he's there to answer your mum's calls.
- Edinam: Yeah basically, he just sits down and waits for his phone to ring. Oh mum's calling 'Hi mum'.
- Selasi: [Laughs]
- Edinam: Whereas half the time Senanu and I are busy doing something .

Cathy: Exactly!

Edinam: So basically it just shows that mum doesn't rate you. She knows you're always available. You have to feel, you know you have to let people know that you're busy. Try it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: You've got play the game Selasi, act cool.

Rachel: Treat 'em mean keep 'em keen.

Cathy: Exactly.

Rachel: It's important.

Selasi: Yeah OK, OK I'm learning.

Rachel: So can we go back? So you said you did have some awful rows as children. Can you remember one of the worst? So Selasi if you could tell us one that you remember?

Selasi: Yeah. There's a mark here.

Edinam: [Laughs]

Cathy: Oh. And you're pointing to your head.

Selasi: I don't know if you can see it, there's a mark here.

Rachel: Yeah.

Selasi: I had to get stitches because this one here, I mean I was a very annoying child right.

Edinam: Thank you.

Selasi: Like I probably still am an annoying person.

Edinam: Very annoying.

Rachel: Why?

Cathy: Why?

- Selasi: I just knew how to push her buttons right so basically I think I pushed her to the limit once and she grabbed a massive plank of wood.
- Cathy: [Draws breath shocked]
- Selasi: I don't know how she managed to pick that up, because it was very heavy. And she swung it across my face and it hit me on the forehead.
- Cathy: Wow.
- Edinam: I think I was at my peak of anger at that point [laughs].
- Rachel: Yeah I think that sounds like a few years of...
- Edinam: Yes.
- Rachel: ...anger banger see.
- Selasi: So I ended up with a cut on my forehead and I needed stitches for it.
- Rachel: Oh my goodness.
- Selasi: [Laughs]
- Cathy: But what was it about? Why? Why what was the row?
- Selasi: I can't remember, I was just probably just being an annoying kid.
- Edinam: I can't remember.
- Rachel: Oh my God...
- Edinam: I think actually I think it was something to do with, because obviously I was the only girl, so I got a lot of attention from my dad which may be an issue for guys because they might want to bond with the father, that whole father/son dynamic thing going on. So I think on that day, they had to wake up early to do something and the both boys were really angry with me because I was still sleeping or something like that, if I can remember

clearly. And obviously I finally woke up and I was just prancing around the house like a princess doing all of that. And he started just jabbing, just jabbing. And I remember there was a time, so he started off jabbing and then I went off on him and I remember this comment so vividly because my dad used to comment, he used to look at our books, our schoolwork and stuff and that and he'd always make reference to how good my handwriting was.

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: So as Selasi was jabbing, I also made reference and then I was like 'Yeah no wonder dad says my writing is better than yours'. And it just escalated from there. And then he went off and just got angry. My dad wasn't at home at that time, so he came back and literally saw this guy, he came back just in time, thank God he did.

Cathy: Oh.

Edinam: Because he probably could have just bled to death and I'd probably have a criminal record but.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Cathy: [Laughs]

Rachel: Aww.

Edinam: [Laughs] Yeah so I literally, I think the last straw, he made the comment, I wish I could remember the comment but it just tipped me off the scales, I was just like no this guy has to get it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: And I just picked up whatever was within reach and just.

Rachel: Wow.

Edinam: I was like, oh gosh it makes me sound so violent right?

Selasi: You are [laughs].

Edinam: I'm not violent at all.

Cathy: But did it make things better?

Rachel: Did you get punished for hurting the favourite child?

Edinam: No I didn't.

Cathy: [Draws breath shocked]

Rachel: Really?

Cathy: That's outrageous.

Edinam: I didn't get punished.

Selasi: Thank you.

Edinam: I know because, that's why I feel like, that's why I was surprised that he thinks he's the favourite child.

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: Because I mean hello!

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: I almost killed 'one of the favourite children' and didn't get punished so.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Cathy: That is unbelievable!

Edinam: No I didn't get punished at all. I don't even, I think I was just, I wasn't even sent to my room or nothing. It was just like oh what happened, took him to the hospital, came back.

Cathy: You're kidding!

Edinam: Yeah I was like eight? Eight or nine? Yeah.

Cathy: [Laughs]

- Rachel: OK so was there much discipline in the household generally?
- Edinam: Yes.
- Rachel: OK can you?
- Selasi: We used to, in Ghana back in the day it was a thing to get caned right. They don't do it anymore so.
- Edinam: You seem like the tougher kid right?
- Selasi: Yeah so your parents will cane you, you go to school. I mean we went to boarding school. You go to school and you get caned, it was allowed, it was legal then. And so there's a running joke amongst Ghanaians in the Ghanaian community for example. You go to school, you get caned, if you were to come home and complain to your parents, you'd get an extra ass whooping.
- Edinam: You'd get more canes.
- Cathy: No!
- Edinam: Yeah.
- Selasi: Because your parents think you've done something bad to get caned at school so you definitely did deserve it, so they would punish you on top of it.
- Edinam: Yeah.
- Selasi: If your parents were not home, then you would have your neighbours who could cane you [laughs].
- Cathy: No!
- Selasi: [Laughs]
- Edinam: Your neighbours could discipline, yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Selasi: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Edinam: And I remember there's this thing about if you're outside, playing outside and you're caught doing something that's not approved of by any adult, as long as they knew your parent they were allowed to beat you and you can't now go home and tell your parent because that also results in more beats because your parent is thinking, why would you embarrass me outside?

Rachel: And you both had that happen to you? You both had?

Edinam: No. No.

Selasi: It was just me.

Edinam: I wasn't that child.

Cathy: Not the favourite

Rachel: No.

Edinam: That was Selasi.

Rachel: Yeah OK.

Edinam: So do you understand why Selasi could possibly be the favourite child?

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: Simply because he was quite stubborn so it was more or less my friends were thinking because he was seeking attention, so let's give him. Because he was just constantly getting in trouble, Selasi was always getting in trouble with somebody [chuckles].

[I Wish I Was An Only Child- Interim Music]

Cathy: What were you doing Selasi? What were you doing?

Rachel: Yeah what were you doing? We need examples.

Selasi: Um? I mean OK so there's this story right, myself, my brother and a cousin but he was almost part of the family because he lived with us, his parents were back in the UK

at the time living and working here. So he lived with us. Um? I think so what would normally happen is during Christmas you know we have big parties etcetera in the house. So my dad was shopping loads in preparation for the party. So he basically bought a big bag of soft cookies, like Viennese Whirls right.

Rachel: Yeah.

Selasi: And he kept them in the freezer waiting to serve us, you know on Christmas for the party. And what we were doing myself, my brother and my cousin, what we were doing was we were basically stealing these biscuits and eating them right. So come the day of the party...

Cathy: Oh no.

Selasi: ...or a few days before the party we were planning the food, the menu etcetera.

Edinam: [Laughs]

Selasi: Then my dad realised that there was literally only a handful left of the biscuits.

Cathy: That's awful.

Selasi: And he basically lost it. So I can't remember if he caned us for that but we basically got locked in our rooms for the duration of the party, we were not allowed out or to be at the party.

Rachel: Wow.

Selasi: Even if we needed, yeah so it was just stuff like that we used to.

Cathy: Even if you needed the toilet? Is that what you were going to say? Well I'm obviously going to ask how you dealt with that?

Selasi: [Laughs] We were basically imprisoned on that day. You're not allowed to see other family members that

were coming to the party were locked in the room and were let out I think in the evening after the party had finished or something like that.

Rachel: And Selasi, are all your bad things going to be linked to food? This is my concern. Are they all going to be sugar related?

Selasi: Surprisingly...

Edinam: Sugar or food related.

Selasi: ...the majority are linked to food because I'm a big fan of plantain, I don't know if you know what plantain is.

Rachel: Yes, yes.

Cathy: Yeah.

Selasi: Yes, I'm a big fan of plantain, I could eat plantain for the rest of my life and it's literally my death row meal, right. I don't know why I'd be on death row but that would be my death row meal.

Cathy: [Chuckles]

Selasi: Every African household has like plantain, rice, tomatoes and those are like staples, so you cannot run out of it but we ran out of it and we went to one of my uncle's house not far from us, maybe about 15 to 20 minutes from us. And after the party, I basically went into their kitchen and they had loads of plantain so I literally helped myself. Basically stole plantain because I didn't ask and I was a kid so I helped myself.

Cathy: He's a food thief.

Selasi: So I helped myself to loads of plantain and I thought it was OK right. So we got home, my dad did not know that because my mum was in the UK as well working as a nurse. My dad did not know that. So the next day they called my dad to say 'Oh your son has taken all our

plantain or most of our plantain' And I got in trouble for that.

Edinam: [Laughs]

Selasi: So to answer your question yes, a lot of them are food related.

Cathy: He's a nightmare!

Rachel: And did you get caned for that?

Selasi: I can't remember, I think I got a telling off.

Rachel: OK.

Selasi: But I can't remember if I got caned or not but I got a massive telling off.

Rachel: OK and did that fear of caning make you less likely to tell on each other?

Selasi: No I mean the caning was normal.

Rachel: Yeah.

Selasi: To be fair I wasn't against caning because I mean I believe in discipline, I wasn't against caning. I mean it was still painful but I kind of felt I had the mentality, I do deserve it or I did deserve to be caned because you know. So it didn't you know there were people that at the school I went to that really enjoyed and we used to get caned in front of the entire school and the assembly etcetera right. So people just used to just take it and just sit on their desk or whatever. You don't do your homework you get caned. And you talk back at the teacher, you get caned. It's like it was normal so there was no fear of it per se.

Rachel: Right.

Cathy: But did you say you went to boarding school?

Selasi: Yeah.

Cathy: Did you both go to the same school?

Selasi: Yeah.

Cathy: How was that?

Selasi: So myself, all three of us and a few of our cousins went to the same boarding school. And it was quite nice because...

Edinam: It was like a family school [laughs] because the majority of the cousins went there.

Selasi: So we all used to look out for each other.

Rachel: Oh that's nice, that's good. So could you tell us a bit more about your parents? So obviously you were in Ghana and your mum was in London?

Selasi: It was in boarding school, I think both my parents lived here, so we used to live with our grandma back in Ghana, she used to look out for us and uncles and relatives. Because our family is quite big, my mum I think has eight or nine siblings, my dad about the same. And so the network is quite huge and there's always been that closeness where you spend some time with your aunty here and there and they look after you etcetera.

So my parents were both here, and then my dad did decide to come back to Ghana and to basically look after us. So we lived with our dad for a while. And we went to boarding school. And then my mum used to visit over the summer holidays which was nice for us because we ended up having loads of nice stuff.

Cathy: Mm.

Selasi: You know the cool kit and the bicycles and the trainers and all that kind of stuff. So it was quite nice, so we didn't really miss, the dynamics of the family wasn't. We didn't miss, oh mum we miss you kind of thing because for us it's you know yeah.

- Rachel: And also you had a big, big family so you had all this love around you so.
- Edinam: Yeah, yeah.
- Rachel: That's lovely.
- Cathy: It is. But Edinam, I would have imagined that would have affected you more, missing having a mother around?
- Edinam: I think I didn't miss it as much as I should have, simply because my mum's sisters were also very involved in our upbringing.
- Cathy: Yeah, yeah.
- Edinam: So it wasn't a thing of. And my mum she called every day surprisingly, in those days we didn't have WhatsApp call and all those things but my mum was very present in our growing up. She was quite involved. Her mum brought us up. So a lot of our childhood experiences was with my grandma and my dad but in terms of physical it was with my grandma and my dad. But in terms of emotional and mental, my mum was there, she was present.
- Cathy: Right.
- Edinam: So I didn't really feel it as much as maybe anyone would think I should. I spent Christmas holidays with her sisters or my dad's siblings, or my cousins. Because my parents, although they were young, there was still their siblings were fairly older or had started having kids a little earlier than they did. So when we were about the age of nine/ten, the boys were nine/ten and I was like five or whatever, I already had all the cousins who had experiences in life. So they could guide us. So that was the bonus, that was what helped a lot more. So I didn't feel like I was missing out on much because my mum visited, she called us, she sent stuff. I was a slow developer as a female anyway so.
- Cathy: What do you mean?

- Edinam: In terms of growing breasts and time of the month and all those kind of things.
- Cathy: I'm with you on that. I'm with you on that, yeah. [laughs]
- Edinam: So it wasn't like I started at ten and I was lost.
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Edinam: I was a child until about my late teens, so it wasn't a big deal. So at that time I was already with my mum so I was able to experience that with her and get her to guide me in that area. But no, it wasn't a thing of I missed out because my mum was there most of the time so yeah.
- Cathy: Right, I'm going to jump in with some other questions, who's the funniest?
- Edinam: Selasi [laughs] Selasi is.
- Cathy: Yeah?
- Edinam: I mean within our family circuit yes. But obviously individual friends, my friends would say that I was funnier but I mean. Selasi is the funniest. He's funny because sometimes the things he does it's just like, how do you do that? [laughs] And he's funny because of that. So he won't give you a simple question, or he won't you a simple answer. You could call Selasi and say 'Oh where are you?' and he'll respond 'Where are you?'
- Rachel: Ah.
- Edinam: Like I'm not asking you.
- Cathy: [Laughs]
- Edinam: I'd like to know where you are for a reason. So do not throw the question back at me.
- Cathy: You sound like a nightmare Selasi [laughs].
- Edinam: He's a lot, Selasi's a handful.

Cathy: Yeah.

Edinam: Like sometimes you could literally just want a straight answer, 'Oh are these flowers nice?' 'No are you nice?' What? [laughs]

Cathy: [Laughs] Oh my god that would kill me.

Edinam: Yeah so Selasi is the funniest, definitely.

Rachel: Are you ever...

Cathy: Are you totally honest with each other?

Edinam: Yes.

Selasi: I don't think she is honest with me a lot of the time.

Edinam: What do you mean?! I'm always honest with you.

Selasi: I don't think so.

Edinam: I'm always honest with you. What do you think I haven't been honest about? Answer that question wisely [laughs].

Selasi: How much do you tell me about Alex. Sorry now it's like we're at a shrink meeting now, right? [laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs] Seriously...

Selasi: There you go.

Edinam: ...I tell you everything. I tell you everything you need to know.

Selasi: There we go.

Rachel: Who is Alex?

Edinam: My partner, my boyfriend partner.

Rachel: We can always, we remove and edit things by the way.

Selasi: [Laughs]

- Rachel: If there's anything.
- Edinam: Thank you. [Laughs] Thanks.
- Rachel: If it gets uncomfortable. But yeah you feel she's not entirely honest about him? Or?
- Selasi: I don't know because she just said 'I tell you what you need to know'. So she's selective.
- Edinam: Which is I'm being diplomatic in my answer.
- Selasi: She's selective.
- Edinam: It's diplomatic because you have to be smart because one thing I've always been taught as well is you protect relationships. I won't go out and discuss everything about Selasi with somebody else. So do you get what I mean?
- Rachel: Yeah.
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Edinam: It's just when I say 'I'll tell you what you need to know' it's once I can't handle something OK I need to go somewhere that I can't handle it. I need to speak to somebody. Unless you want me to come and say 'Oh Alex bought me a rose today!' Or I'm saying if you want 100% transparency I can give you that because he's extremely romantic and sweet and all of that. So I can tell you all of that. But the challenge of that is, should I tell you that? Would you feel intimidated about Alex?
- Selasi: Why would I?
- Cathy: Interesting.
- Edinam: Because, I don't know. Because obviously you may feel like you're losing your baby sister.
- Rachel: That's what I was thinking. I was thinking there's a real protective element there isn't there?
- Cathy: There is!

Edinam: Yeah.

Selasi: I mean you're adopted so I'm not really using you.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs]

Rachel: You were never really part of the family is what he's saying.

Selasi: Yeah.

Edinam: Yeah basically thanks.

Rachel: Oh Selasi.

Edinam: I remember when Selasi started with the Bake Off and he was just gaining a little bit of fame and whatever, he made that comment and literally in the papers 'Selasi's adopted sister' I was like why?

Cathy: Selasi you're going to have to get media savvy now.

Rachel: Yeah you're a troublemaker.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: And literally, I think it was in the Sun and Daily, what was it?

Selasi: Daily Mirror.

Edinam: Something like that, Daily Mill, and I was like you better pray mum doesn't see this because she's not going to find it funny. And the thing is Selasi is so funny but because of the generational gap, my mum doesn't always understand Selasi's humour.

Cathy: Yeah, yeah.

Edinam: So Selasi, I remember there was a time, I'll give you a perfect example of how unserious Selasi can be right. My parents were discussing getting this land back home

because let's do something for the kids. And my dad had called us, I think they'd discussed it and agreed to it but they said 'OK let's include the kids, let's ask them if they want it'. I was like yeah, I jumped up like that 'Yeah definitely let's go for it'. My older brother said the same thing. And then Selasi just said 'Well I mean it's great. It works perfectly because I could then have a second wife back home. So she could stay there'.

Cathy: Oh! [Laughs]

Edinam: And I'm just like, boy. My mum was livid. But obviously because we know Selasi so my dad just laughed at Selasi 'Selasi how can you say that?' And it became a running joke between my dad was telling his brothers and everything. My mum was just like 'You can't say things like that! That's wrong!' And I was just like ugh.

Cathy: So did your mum smash him across the head with a plank of wood? [laughs]

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs] She wasn't that livid, Lord. I don't even think my mum knows that happened.

Selasi: I don't think she does.

Edinam: Actually this might be the first time she hears about it. I don't think my mum knows I hit him. No I don't think so.

Rachel: She may if she listens to this. She may if she listens to this.

Edinam: Yeah oh Lord, so we'll push her away from this then.

Rachel: [Laughs]

Edinam: But yeah, no so that's just a common example of how. And I kind of appreciate that about him because he doesn't take life too seriously.

Cathy: Mm.

- Edinam: And especially with everything that's happening now, you can't take life too seriously. For your mental sanity and a lot of things, you just have to enjoy life and be positive about everything. So I mean, him making that comment is like, yeah that's funny, OK let's move on.
- Rachel: Typical Selasi.
- Edinam: Yeah.
- Rachel: Selasi where does that come from?
- Selasi: I think part of it is from my mum. Oh not my mum, no!
[Laughs]
- Cathy: [Laughs]
- Edinam: No mum, I think, I think.
- Cathy: That makes no sense.
- Selasi: Sorry it's from my dad.
- Edinam: I think mum.
- Selasi: I think it's...
- Edinam: No, no, no I think a bit of it is mum because mum can't be quite humorous sometimes. Certain things, maybe because you don't get to experience, I spend a lot of my time with my mum because we go to the same church.
- Selasi: Mum has zero humour!
- Edinam: So we always...
- Cathy: [Laughs]
- Edinam: No she has a good sense of humour!
- Selasi: She has zero humour!
- Cathy: She's only funny in church Selasi.

- Edinam: Because half the time, yeah exactly you don't go to church so you won't know, hello.
- Cathy: Exactly.
- Edinam: But I mean no she has. She has. Because sometimes my mum can be quite shady and quite humorous. And she has some serious cutback. So I think a part of it was from my mum. Selasi may not have experienced that because half the time they're at loggerheads with each other but. Yeah I think part of it is my mum. He doesn't get to experience it, yeah.
- Cathy: Why are you at loggerheads with her Selasi?
- Selasi: Um? Oh I don't know.
- Edinam: They have similar personalities.
- Cathy: Mm.
- Selasi: Like my mum is great, she's a very strong headed woman. Very independent, very proud. And I think I get that from her as well. So I think when you have two proud people, especially with my mum, because she's pretty much worked her butt off to the level that she's been, being very successful in everything that she's done. It's made her proud and also have that sort of independent mentality from where we don't...
- Edinam: Yeah you have similar work ethics.
- Selasi: Yeah we don't feel we need you know. It's probably the wrong word to us. We don't need validation from people, we just do what we need to do to make us happy and to make the people close to us happy.
- Cathy: Which is amazing yeah.
- Selasi: So it's kind of like there's that clash where it's like when my thinks something is right even if it's not right she will stick to that fact.

Edinam: But who does that remind you of?

Cathy: [Laughs]

Selasi: Me?

Edinam: Exactly so.

Selasi: Yeah but the difference is, if for example I know I'm wrong or something right, and you know I will actually say OK...

Edinam: Mm hmm.

Selasi: ...this is actually wrong or I misjudged this situation and I will apologise.

Cathy: Yeah.

Selasi: And you know just to pacify the situation and everything else. But my mum would never do that.

Edinam: That's only because of upbringing. That's because of the generation that she's grown up in. If you had grown up in her generation you may also not, you may be similar down to a T in that aspect. Your education is different, our eyes are open now much wider than theirs were. And we understand the whole psychology behind apologies. We understand the whole psychology of accountability. We understand the whole psychology of owning up to your mistakes. Whereas our parents, they don't. They literally, this is someone who you had to wake up and go sell bread before going to school.

Cathy: Yeah.

Edinam: Do you know what I'm saying? Now you don't have to wake up and go and sell bread. You can just wake up, brush your teeth, have your breakfast and go. So your life struggles aren't as serious. So it's different. I think sometimes as kids we don't give our parents that reverence in that aspect simply because we're thinking as

2021, or 2020 or 20th century kids, I'm my own independent person or I own my own confidence or all of that. They didn't have that.

[I Wish I Was An Only Child- Interim Music]

Rachel: Selasi are you religious? Because when you said about mum, is that an issue between you and your mum because your mum is religious.

Edinam: Definitely.

Rachel: I'm presuming you're not?

Cathy: Yes.

Selasi: Um? So I mean the thing back in Ghana is when you're a kid your parents drag you to church every Sunday right? If it's not holding your hands they'll drag you by the throat or something to take you to church. So I think when we moved to the UK, I think in 2000, we kept up that because I was still a teenager and we used to go the Catholic, so I'm Catholic, I believe in God. But I'm not as religious as my sister or my mum.

Rachel: Right.

Selasi: Because my mum you know there could be an earthquake and she'd be like 'God will save us'. You know, instead of running.

Cathy: Yeah.

Selasi: You know running to save herself, she's waiting for God. So that's the kind of...

Cathy: I'm with Selasi on this totally.

Rachel: Yeah different interpretations.

Cathy: My partner is Catholic, I'm with Selasi.

Selasi: Yeah so I used to go to church every Sunday but I think since I went to uni and everything, I don't think I've

stepped foot in a church for a while unless it's someone's wedding or whatever. So I haven't been to church. But these guys, they go literally every Sunday.

Cathy: Yeah my partner does.

Edinam: Definitely.

Selasi: And they spend hours! It's like how long do you need to talk to God for?

Edinam: No we don't. We don't. It's two and a half hours of service.

Selasi: That's too long. That's too long.

Cathy: That's a long service.

Selasi: Thank you [laughs].

Edinam: Selasi is the kind of person that when he puts on the family group that 'I went to church on Easter Sunday' we make sure we clap for him. My brother goes to church.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Edinam: He's the only one, he's the only one.

Rachel: Brilliant.

Selasi: Two hours is too long.

Edinam: My brother has a relationship with God. I have a relationship with God. My mum has a relationship with God.

Cathy: Yeah.

Edinam: Selasi is more or less a prayer point that we pray every morning. My mum prays for Selasi every morning

Cathy: Selasi we're going to hell. Selasi we're going to hell!

Selasi: [Laughs]

- Edinam: To have some kind of belief about, yeah, no with the whole church thing is one thing they also clash about so.
- Rachel: Right, thank you.
- Cathy: Yeah of course.
- Edinam: Because Selasi comes to church on my mum's birthday or something yeah.
- Rachel: Right.
- Edinam: But in terms of personality they're the same. They have the same work ethic. They think they're an island, they don't like receiving help from anybody.
- Cathy: Oh! Really?
- Edinam: My mum and Selasi, they will literally, yeah. They would visit all options before coming to any physical human being for help.
- Cathy: Wow that's amazing.
- Edinam: Yes.
- Cathy: Selasi?
- Edinam: I don't think it's amazing, I think it's weird really.
- Cathy: No it's weird. I mean amazing weird.
- Rachel: Yeah.
- Cathy: That's bizarre!
- Selasi: Um?
- Edinam: I'm the kind of person if I need help, I'm going to whoever I know can help me.
- Cathy: Totally agree.
- Edinam: Selasi will go to a cat first before coming to a human being.

Cathy: [Laughs] Selasi.

Edinam: Literally. And that's how my mum is, my mum is the same, they share the same work ethic. They share the same drive. They're both very frugal [laughs].

Cathy: Oh.

Edinam: Always looking for one discount from somewhere.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs] It's a joke that we make that Selasi is literally when it comes to spending and expenses and money management and stuff, Selasi is my mum. My older brother is my dad. And then I'm 50/50 depending on what it is. When it comes to spending on myself I'm not cutting corners. When it comes to spending on somebody else, I'm literally looking for the cheapest...

Cathy: Oh really?

Edinam: Yeah Selasi, if I want something expensive and I can afford it and I'm comfortable, sometimes I can't actually afford it, but I've calculated OK if I use six months maybe I could pay it off and I'll get it.

Rachel: Yeah.

Edinam: Selasi can afford it, but Selasi would still if something is £200 Selasi will message me 'Yo sis, do you have a code for Argos? I'm buying something'.

Cathy: [Laughs] Selasi, seriously.

Edinam: That's Selasi.

Rachel: On that note I've got to ask, what was the last present you bought each other?

Edinam: Oh? OK?

Selasi: You got me the trainers.

- Edinam: I got him trainers, and I've never even bought trainers that price for myself.
- Cathy: Oh that's kind.
- Edinam: So I just felt like with that I actually thought about it for a long time. Because I remember for my partner's birthday I bought him the trainers, the same brand and Selasi saw it, and he's like 'Oh I'm going to get these'. This is just a perfect example of how Selasi is. He said 'Oh these are sick, I'm going to get them. But I don't need them, they're too expensive'.
- Cathy: Which is a massive hint.
- Edinam: So I heard that and that literally stuck in my head. I was thinking, this guy can afford these trainers and they will not break the bank for him. So why would he make such a comment? But I came to understand that Selasi is always coming to my rescue financially so I had to think about it in a sense that, if he wasn't like that, I wouldn't have a financial somebody to fall back on. So I appreciate that. So his birthday I spoke to my partner about it and he said 'OK yeah let's get it for him. Get it'. So we did that. And he was like 'Yeah thanks, this is sick!' But when I was paying for it, obviously because sometimes I can be a cheapskate I was just like, oh do I need to buy this?
- Rachel: [Laughs]
- Cathy: [Laughs]
- Edinam: I mean I could just buy him a pair of £80 trainers and he'd be all right. I mean going...
- Cathy: How much were they?
- Rachel: No don't ask that.
- Cathy: OK I shouldn't ask should I?
- Rachel: No. Yeah. You went the extra mile that's the point.

Edinam: They were quite high [laughs] I went the extra mile yeah. So it was yeah. That's the last present I bought him I think. The last thing he bought me was a journal which was nice.

Cathy: Oh!

Edinam: It's downstairs, I should have brought it. Because I told him I wanted to start journaling and he goes 'Oh OK I have this journal, go look at it, if you want it let me know'. Yeah that one.

Cathy: Oh OK so that was what? £2.50?

Rachel: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs]

Selasi: They're really good these journals.

Edinam: They're really good. They're so good.

Cathy: Did have a discount code?

Selasi: No, no.

Rachel: [Laughs] On the £2.50.

Selasi: Amazon Prime, they're quite pricey actually for a journal but they're really good.

Edinam: They're quite pricey for a journal.

Rachel: Who would be most likely to regift a present?

Edinam: Me.

Selasi: No, me!

Rachel: Right.

Cathy: Oh.

Edinam: OK I guess both of us [laughs].

Rachel: And that's not, you don't see that as dodgy? Because yeah I regift quite regularly.

Cathy: I would never regift.

Rachel: You would never do that?

Cathy: Never. Never. Never.

Edinam: No I don't see that as dodgy, I will like when it comes to gifting people and this is, I usually battle my friends with these kind of things. If you're going to buy me a gift, I'd appreciate somebody coming and buying me say a bracelet, because I love bracelets. A bracelet that's £2, let's say a bracelet that's £2, as opposed to somebody coming and buying me maybe say a Gucci perfume because it's Gucci. I'd think you don't know me because I'm not that kind of a person. I'm quite funny with scents so if you buy me a floral Gucci perfume, you didn't think about me.

Rachel: Yes.

Edinam: You just thought oh everybody likes this and bought it, you didn't actually think about me. Gifts for me are extremely personal.

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: Selasi is writing down 'Get a bracelet' good man. Keep going.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs] I mean if you're writing it down, I mean a Cartier bracelet is fine.

Selasi: To be fair that's Alex's job that's not my job.

Edinam: [Laughs] Oh so now you want to shift responsibilities.

[Promo for Welcome to Spooktown- New Episodes every Monday- starting Monday 15th of March]

[I Wish I Was An Only Child- Interim Music]

Selasi: I rarely ever rely on people and also for gifts. So a lot of the things that I own I've actually paid for it. And my girlfriend hates it because you know my birthday and Christmas is the times that I actually spend a lot. And she's like 'Why do you keep doing this? It's your birthday, it's Christmas. People can buy you these things'. And a lot of the things I just buy, I just get them. So normally when people get me other things it's either things that I already have or I don't need. So then I'll pass it onto someone else that would actually make use of it rather than it's just sitting there idly without you know just gathering dust I guess, yeah.

Cathy: Which trait would you most want to have from the other?

Rachel: Selasi do you want to start?

Edinam: Yeah start, let me see what you say.

Selasi: More emotion I think. I barely ever show like emotion. I just don't play that card at all. I'm quite you know everything is happy whatever. If I have issues I deal with it myself my way and that's it. But I wouldn't necessarily express my emotions to anyone. Literally anyone.

Cathy: But you're feeling it. Are you feeling it?

Selasi: Yeah, yeah I feel it.

Cathy: You are feeling it? OK.

Selasi: I feel it um? But I would never show that to anyone because it's just not me and you know I just don't do. It sounds awful [chuckles] I just don't do emotions. If that makes sense.

Cathy: Do I get it yeah. Yeah totally.

- Selasi: If someone is crying for example I find that somehow an awkward situation for me personally.
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Selasi: So if someone is crying I just never know what to do. So I'll end up for example giving a very awkward hug and tap them on the back and be like. It won't be like 'Ah' yeah I just don't do that [laughs].
- Edinam: He gets that from my mum [laughs].
- Cathy: Really? Well yeah you're scared of being vulnerable presumably.
- Edinam: Yes.
- Cathy: You just don't want to be vulnerable.
- Selasi: Yeah I can't let that down.
- Cathy: OK but you wish you had? OK.
- Selasi: Yeah, yeah I wish I was more emotional but I'm not. I'm not an emotional person.
- Cathy: OK.
- Edinam: Whereas I'm very emotional. I'm extremely emotional.
- Cathy: Much healthier.
- Edinam: Yes it's much healthier. It's good.
- Selasi: Mm?
- Edinam: Mental health is important OK?
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Edinam: It's good for your sanity to express a certain kind of emotion. When I was younger I used to just ball things in a lot. So do you see why I had to be emotional? Because if I'm not, I'll keep, a lot more people will have as many scars as Selasi has on his forehead from holding things in.

Cathy: [Laughs] Exactly.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: You know so for someone like me, I can't afford to not be emotional. It wouldn't be good for my environment or my close circle. So yeah, I'm a little bit more emotional. Selasi's lack of emotions or lack of being vulnerable once again is something that my mum has as well. So yeah I understand that.

Cathy: But does it worry you that he doesn't express?

Edinam: For Selasi yes, sometimes it does because I'm thinking, you have to have somebody you can speak to. You have to. No matter who it is and it doesn't have to be a professional. Sometimes you just need a sound board.

Cathy: Totally.

Edinam: You know you need somebody who can help you reason. I mean if you're hurting, you have to be able to tell somebody. It's quite strange he's making that comment, because he's telling me. I've only just found out that he doesn't think I open up to him about everything. For someone who's not emotional, why do you expect me to open up to you? It's like you can't have your cake and eat it too kind of thing.

Selasi: Yeah you can.

Cathy: He can.

Edinam: I mean he can [laughs]

Cathy: Exactly.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: But it's interesting because my mum's the same and it's weird because my mum is in the field that requires you to be a little bit more emotional because she's in the medical field so you need to be, you're working with

patients and all those things so you need to be a little bit more 'Oh how are you doing Jan?' That kind of thing. Selasi is not like that. I could literally, I'll give you the perfect example. I had an accident a few weeks back and Selasi came to see me and literally he came, he walked in. He came in with his girlfriend, his girlfriend walked in and was like 'Oh my gosh Edi how are you?' Rubbing my hand and all that, holding my hand. Selasi walked in hands in pockets 'You all right?'

Cathy: [Laughs]

Edinam: I was just like [laughs] I was just like what is this? And my mum did exactly the same thing. 'Edinam what's the matter? What's wrong? What's wrong are you?' And I was like oh God.

Rachel: But you are really close aren't you?

Edinam: Yes we are.

Rachel: You are really close and you really care about each other.

Cathy: But hang on, Edinam you didn't say what trait you want from Selasi. What are you jealous of?

Edinam: What trait I want from?

Cathy: Yeah.

Edinam: I'm not jealous of it.

Cathy: OK.

Edinam: Um? It inspires me. His finance management.

Cathy: OK.

Edinam: His money management skills and his good heart. He has a good heart, he's always ready to help. No matter what it is, even if it's not comfortable for him. I think in that aspect we're kind of similar but his ready to help is more financial whereas my ready to help is, I can't give you the

money you want but if you need me to come and carry your books and take it to Timbuktu I'll do it for you kind of thing.

Selasi: You're not taking no books to Timbuktu [laughs].

Edinam: I mean not literally come on! See this is what I mean. So this is what Selasi does. And he's just annoying.

Cathy: She's going to smash him over the head with a piece of wood.

Edinam: Yeah exactly.

Cathy: Are you both in London? Are you both in the same area?

Edinam: Yes.

Selasi: Yeah about ten minutes.

Edinam: We're both in London, he lives...

Cathy: Ten minutes from each other.

Edinam: Ten minutes away from each other yeah.

Rachel: So we have to wrap up now. So last question, is there anything you want to say to each other than you've never said before?

Selasi: I love you.

Edinam: Oh shut up, you say I love you all the time.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Edinam: [Laughs]

Cathy: I was just going to say that, you so say that.

Edinam: Um? Anything? Um yeah. You need to be a little bit more open.

Selasi: Wait, wait. Is this meant to be a critical statement or is it more appreciating?

Cathy: Anything.

Rachel: You can take it anyway you want.

Cathy: Anything.

Edinam: Critical, anything whatever it is. You need to be a little bit more emotionally available. And as much as you want me to open up to you, which I believe I do, you need to give back the same energy because sometimes you don't find out what Selasi is going through until maybe something happens and you're having a family conversation and he just blurts it out and you're like wait, that was happening? [Chuckles] Why didn't you say? Whereas with me once it's happening you know 'I need to talk to you. This and this and that. Whatever'. So that you need to work on. Anything else is great. Anything else is great. Just be a little bit more emotionally available. Just give me 10%. Right now he's giving me negative 10.

Selasi: Wow!

Cathy: [Laughs]

Edinam: Give me 10% [laughs].

Cathy: So Selasi what would you like to say?

Rachel: He said 'I love you'.

Cathy: No he said that as a, he always says that.

Edinam: We're not taking 'I love you'.

Cathy: No we're not taking that. He always says that. Go!

Selasi: Why not? I never tell you I love you.

Cathy: Keep going. Keep going. Something else.

Selasi: I'd probably say you know just make more of an effort to reach out. You just to find out how, hey don't make faces, this is my statement OK?

Edinam: [Laughs]

Selasi: Just you know message people 'Hey how are you? How are you? OK bye'. You know just check in. Check in on your brother. Your favourite brother.

Cathy: The favourite brother.

Edinam: Do you know why I'm not even going to take that? I'm not even going to take that because Selasi and I communicate every single day so [laughs].

Rachel: Yeah what was he talking about?

Selasi: Yeah but it's not like 'Hey how are you doing?'

Edinam: This is an example of Selasi. What do you mean?!

Selasi: I don't know I'm just saying, that's how I feel. OK?

Edinam: OK I'll take your word.

Cathy: They're going to have a huge row.

Rachel: We've now started a row, yeah. OK.

Selasi: [Laughs]

Cathy: Oh no.

Edinam: Yeah definitely [laughs].

Rachel: We've left you with a lot to think about. Oh that was lovely.

Cathy: Oh that was brilliant.

Rachel: Thank you so much.

Cathy: Thank you. I mean so brilliant.

Edinam: Thank you very much.

Cathy: You two are lovely.

Selasi: Thank you [laughs].

Edinam: [Laughs]

[I Wish I Was An Only Child Theme Music]

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

Cathy: Am I allowed to say that?

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: Is that weird?

Rachel: No. What do you mean?

Cathy: OK.

[End of Podcast]