

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Cast:

Cathy Mason

Rachel Mason

Carys Eleri

Nia Medi

[I Wish I Was An Only Child Theme Song]

Cathy: She seems to have moved past her obsession with Richard Madeley, I don't know if I told you about that. So in the mornings we have to watch Richard Madeley because for some reason she gets very upset and agitated by him.

Rachel: So you make her watch it?

Cathy: Because it's funny, me and Buzz think it's really funny. So every time Richard Madeley comes on the television she starts really growling, I'll send you a video. And very low growl every time he comes on, anyway that's just suddenly stopped. I mean I have to watch recordings of Richard Madeley because it makes me laugh so much.

Rachel: Brilliant. That is brilliant.

Cathy: It's amazing.

Rachel: Who will be her next obsession?

Cathy: I know, I know. She's short sighted, I don't know if I've told you that? We think she might be partially sighted. So literally a pigeon has to sit on her face before she'll chase it. So all sorts of shit runs through the garden, foxes, horses and she just doesn't see them, it's really sad. So as a guard dog she's a disaster. If someone breaks in they have to go after.

Rachel: Even if she can't see it...

Cathy: Well I think she smells stuff but she just panics if anything, she can't see it's really sad.

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- Rachel: Oh and again a mentally ill dog, I wonder why that is?
- Cathy: [Laughs] Oh she's not mentally ill, she's partially sighted.
- Rachel: If she isn't now she fuck she will be.
- Cathy: So yeah the poor dog.
- Rachel: She'll be coming to me for some peace, definitely.
- Cathy: But Frank thinks we should get her some glasses and I don't think I've ever seen a dog with glasses on.
- Rachel: And do you really think he thinks that? No he prefers contact lenses for the dog.
- Cathy: But the dog can't see Rach.
- Rachel: I know. Well we'll see. Can't the vet? Why don't you get it checked?
- Cathy: No we'll talk to the vet, we will talk to the vet yeah.
- Rachel: But you're too cheap, you don't really like paying for the vet bills?
- Cathy: It's not that we don't like paying for the vet bills. What's somebody going to do about a short sighted dog?
- Rachel: At least let you know.
- Cathy: They don't do anything, they're not going to do her an eye transplant.
- Rachel: No but at least you would know.
- Cathy: Mm. Welcome to I Wish I Was An Only Child with me, Cathy Mason.
- Rachel: And me, Rachel Mason.
- Cathy: The podcast where we speak to other siblings about the dynamic of their relationship to see where we're going wrong.

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Rachel: Today our guests are actor and singer Carys Eleri and her sister Nia Medi, special assistant to the leader of Pride Cymru.

[I Wish I Was An Only Child Interim Music]

Cathy: Are you a classic introvert Nia and are you a classic extrovert?

Nia: No I think I'm an outgoing introvert I have actually figured out in lockdown.

Cathy: How does that work?

Rachel: [Laughs]

Nia: I like going out, I like being amongst people but I'm not fully fledged Carys with it.

Cathy: So you want to be in control of it?

Carys: [Laughs]

Nia: Who goes into a room and loves everyone. I need to kind of know people first.

Carys: I go straight in.

Nia: I can't just go into someone and think they're fabulous, I need to get relationships going first and understand what they're about etcetera. Sometimes I need to be alone as well for long periods of time.

Cathy: Right.

Nia: It's just the way that I am.

Cathy: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Nia: I can be really highly, highly sociable for a long time and then I just need to sort of cut myself off.

Rachel: Yeah.

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Nia: And also the type of work that I do is like so high pressured and 24/7 that having other people around is just too much sometimes.

Rachel: Yeah so you need to step away.

Nia: In my personal life that is.

Cathy: So Carys are you just throwing yourself at everything and everyone like I am?

Carys: Yeah, ah. Licking their faces. I mean I haven't been able to do that for a while.

Cathy: Do you think everyone's amazing?

Carys: Yeah.

Cathy: OK.

Carys: I mean I did a show, Lovecraft about the sex shop in Cardiff about the neuro signs of love and loneliness because I wanted to explore why I love people so much. And one of the first statements of the show I would say is my name is Carys Eleri and I love people, I love people, I just love people. I love you, I love you, you know I got ya.

Cathy: But do you go off them as rapidly? Do you go obsessively I think they're amazing and then lose interest?

Carys: Uh no. I mean what I found difficult in lockdown is just seeing all the rage happening online and like seeing the worst of people. I mean it's been an arrow in my heart to be honest.

Cathy: Yeah I agree, totally agree.

Carys: It's like not you, not you too, oh no! You're being an asshole. And I found that I'm excited that when we can find some kind of normal again so people can socialise because people get out of their heads and stop being such bastards and things so yeah.

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Cathy: And have you seen each other much in lockdown?

Carys: Not loads have we?

Nia: Well recently we have.

Carys: Well we have, we haven't [laughs].

Cathy: Are you sisters?

Carys: [Laughs]

Nia: I'm not sure anymore. It was really hard to go for a long period of time without seeing Carys. In the first lockdown and the one that happened over Christmas as well. Because especially we lost our father three years ago and I think we're even closer than ever because of that and our mum as well. So not having that connection was really tough and I think I coped pretty well until the beginning of this year, I actually thought I was going insane at one point. And so yeah we've kind of tried to make up for it haven't we? We've seen quite a lot of each other now.

Carys: Yeah and there was a point where Nia was like 'I can't f'ing take it anymore'. And the restrictions had lifted a bit so I just drove over with a sequin t-shirt saying 'The World Needs More Fun'.

Cathy: Aww.

Carys: And some glitter and we had a bit of a piss up [laughs].

Nia: I opened the door and it was like exactly what I needed at that very moment in my life was Carys turning up in glitter and I don't think I've ever hugged her so hard [laughs] And I think we had a little cry as well.

Carys: Yeah I mean it's such a lot.

Rachel: Carys you know how to cheer Nia up, yes?

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- Carys: Yeah, yeah. And it works both ways as well. I think Nia's got this amazing thing of just like being around the house, being seriously upbeat around the house. Always got tunes on where I can maybe sometimes just read and go quite quiet and read and stuff and just think a lot. Nia is like 'No we need to listen to Kylie fuck sake!'
- Nia: [Laughs]
- Rachel: Yin and yang. So can we rewind a bit just to get context for the listeners. So what's the age difference between you? Nia, you're the oldest sister, is that right?
- Nia: I am. So I think it's three years nine months to be exact.
- Cathy: Oh that's quite a lot.
- Nia: So it's almost four years.
- Rachel: Right.
- Nia: Yeah I was born in '78, you were '82.
- Carys: Mm-hmm.
- Nia: Yeah so the older sister yeah.
- Rachel: Right and you grew up in Tumble.
- Nia: Yeah.
- Rachel: We've done our research. The ex mining community in Carmarthenshire.
- Nia: Well we were born in a village called Porthyrhyd which isn't far from Tumble.
- Carys: Just by the national botanic gardens.
- Rachel: Lovely.
- Nia: And then we moved from there, Carys had been just born probably because I was about four so Carys won't have many memories of there. And then moved to a village

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called Llannon where my mum was a deputy head teacher for many years. While then building a family home in Tumble where Carys and mum still are.

Rachel: Oh!

Nia: So it's a really cool like kind of three storey house. I mean my mum and dad were really inspired by American architecture so balcony, basement, that kind of thing. And we were really creative kids as well. So the cellar which has now become...

Carys: My flat.

Nia: Carys' flat, been converted. Before the conversion started there was loads of graffiti in there from when we were kids because we used to have bands over rehearse. Other bands would come over and rehearse that my mum didn't even know.

Carys: There was just bodies everywhere all the time like it was quite a house.

Nia: It was like an open door kind of house and a real kind of sense of community to it as well. Not exactly a commune because I wouldn't be able to cope with that as we talked about earlier.

Carys: [Laughs]

Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: But it was very much an open house for our friends. I mean a lot of our friends used to spend a lot of time there growing up.

Cathy: So tell us about your parents, tell us about your parents. Because we've listened to your mum on I think it was Rhod Gilbert's podcast and she sounds funny.

Nia: The legendary (Meryl?)

Cathy: Funny.

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Carys: So funny. They were both teachers so mum was a deputy head in primary school and dad was a sports teachers in a school outside of Swansea, the secondary school. And he's quite an alternative sports teacher because everyone really liked him.

Cathy: Aww.

Carys: Yeah because he didn't put pressure on people. All of the gays I know he taught and were like 'Your dad was so lovely, I didn't have to do it if I didn't want to' [laughs] 'He didn't put pressure on me'.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: He was always like 'Take this time to just use this hour to do something that you really need to learn to do with your education, you know you don't have to'.

Cathy: Oh wow.

Carys: Yeah and that kindness stayed with people because he also knew like you know teenagers are going through such difficult times, especially in that area and it was quite a deprived area where he knew that they were vulnerable. And putting more pressure on them in the daytime what's the point?

Cathy: Exactly.

Carys: So he has quite a big affect on lots of people. And so they were both nurturers and they chose to be teachers, they chose to have children because they love nurturing children.

Cathy: Aww.

Carys: So that's why this house was constantly just buzzing full of people because all these kids just loved the energy, they knew they were welcome, they knew they could be creative, they could be silly, they could be fun and never be judged. So we were very, very lucky.

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Cathy: That's magical.

Rachel: That's amazing.

Cathy: That's magical. And did you two get on like a house on fire? What was your relationship like?

Carys: Yeah we were pretty good I think.

Nia: Not all the time.

Carys: Oh fuck you [laughs].

Nia: Oh we did, we really did. I mean there was a point where Carys was incredibly annoying like any other older sister will tell you.

Carys: [Laughs] How dare you?

Nia: When you're an older sister and you get to about 13 or 14 and you're really discovering yourself and individuality and you want to have your own thing and then your little sister is constantly copying you.

Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: And knocking on your door when she wants to hang out with you and your friends. Following you everywhere.

Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: It was just awful.

Carys: Just leave Carys [laughs].

Nia: And I wasn't very nice to her [laughs].

Cathy: So what did you do? Tell me all the bad stuff you did?

Nia: Well it wasn't bad it was just I hated it when she'd copy my clothes.

Cathy: Mm.

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Nia: Or I remember one day going into town, I can't even remember what the fashion was then, it was probably shell suits or something wasn't it?

Carys: Yeah, yeah we were shell suit heavy babes [laughs].

Nia: Yeah and I'd buy something and then I'd meet her and my mum and she'd be wearing the same thing. She'd bought the same thing.

Cathy: Oh no!

Nia: Yeah and it was just not on, it was against the sister's rules.

Rachel: But you were like that with me!

Cathy: Of course.

Rachel: Cath is the older sister, I wasn't allowed to read Just Seventeen, she wouldn't let me go near it.

Nia: Yeah too right, yeah that's true you were too young and it was her thing.

Cathy: Totally.

Carys: Yeah this is my thing. And the good thing was Nia was into those things so I was introduced to them in a safe space in a way, younger. And like Nia was allowed to watch Absolutely Fabulous. I wasn't because I was a bit young but I did anyway and Nia was like again furious that I was watching it with her.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Nia: I was furious.

Carys: What am I going to do you know? Just not watch it? I'm going to watch it with you, just deal with it [laughs].

Nia: I was obsessed, absolutely obsessed with music as well and that was kind of when we went into the Brit Pop era,

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so that definitely influenced Carys too. But you were a big Take That fan.

Carys: Yeah. I mean I was a geek with it.

Nia: Yeah you couldn't see any part of Carys' walls or bedroom for Take That images and posters.

Carys: Posters.

Cathy: But did that piss you off Nia because that's not Brit Pop, that's not cool is it?

Nia: No I secretly liked Take That.

Cathy: Oh.

Nia: It wasn't even a secret I did yeah.

Carys: Yeah.

Nia: Because in school you had this kind of like, I don't know if you remember, it was like there were rivalries weren't there? And there was certain type of people. So you had...

Carys: East 17 versus Take That.

Nia: East 17 versus Take That. And then Blur versus Oasis.

Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: And I was definitely a Blur fan and Take That. But I would still actually listen to East 17 a lot and Oasis. And now in my 40s I listen to Oasis far more than I do Blur.

Rachel: Really?

Cathy: That's weird.

Nia: I know, I know.

Rachel: That's weird. That's weird.

Nia: Is it weird?

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- Rachel: That is weird, I don't know why but that feels weird to go across...
- Nia: Yeah because I couldn't really take to the songs when I was younger but I hear them on the radio now like Wonderwall and those kind of songs and I love it. But I think it's massive nostalgia as well.
- Carys: Yeah.
- Nia: That's probably playing part of it.
- Rachel: Yeah.
- Nia: I've even watched the Oasis documentary.
- Carys: Wow I didn't know this.
- Nia: Yeah I follow Liam Gallagher.
- Carys: Aww he's great on Twitter though, he's great on Twitter.
- Cathy: He's funny! We live on Hampstead Heath and when we go on the Heath you occasionally see Liam Gallagher and he's dressed as Liam Gallagher you know what I mean? There's no disguise on.
- Carys: [Laughs]
- Cathy: You can tell him a mile off. But he walks like that you know? It's very funny.
- Carys: I love it, I love it. Does he still wear a parka in like 80 degree heat?
- Cathy: Yeah absolutely, 100%.
- Rachel: He's everything you would imagine he was.
- Cathy: He's everything.
- Nia: I love it, I absolutely love it. I love him.

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Rachel: Carys I'm going to ask you if you remember any really bad fashions that Nia was into? Because obviously you were young, you were looking up to her.

Carys: Oh gosh.

Rachel: Is there anything you've copied that you think back like oh no.

Carys: Nia because she's the eldest she was charting new territory all the time. I remember you having a really short haircut Nia, at the beginning I was like I don't know what the fuck she's doing there. But then everyone was like 'Oh my God look at Nia, she looks great'.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Carys: And then everyone got their haircut like Nia and I was like, aww for fuck sake she's good at this isn't she? [laughs]

Nia: I was the first person to wear DMs in school as well.

Cathy: Nice.

Nia: And I remember wearing DMs and going in and everybody was like 'What the hell are you wearing? They look ridiculous'. And then a week later everybody was wearing DMs. But honestly the influence in that was I was going to a lot of gigs and the Welsh language scene, the music scene was thriving at the time. I mean there were gigs all the time all over Wales. So you were constantly with other people your age or older as well. Watching new bands, watching new trends. I was listening to Catatonia, Super Furries, Manics all of them before any of their hits. And be playing them in the six form room and people would be just like 'What's that shit that you're listening to?' [Laughs].

Cathy: Wow.

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- Nia: And then everybody is buying the albums down the line. So I think yeah that influenced a lot and having those events to go to as well and meeting other people across Wales who were really into it, influenced a hell of a lot of that.
- Cathy: So did you have to travel out to go to the gigs because presumably they weren't in Tumble?
- Carys: Well they were just down the road from us.
- Nia: Yeah they were in Tumble.
- Cathy: They were?
- Nia: Yeah they were. Yeah it was unbelievable back then. It's like a whole different world.
- Cathy: Yeah.
- Carys: Yeah it was quite an amazing slice of time wasn't it?
- Nia: Yeah.
- Carys: I mean I was a big young for this era but Nia saw something amazing happen I think.
- Cathy: That's amazing.
- Nia: What would happen was you'd have like the Welsh Language Society who did organise a lot of these gigs, so you'd have a bus. Say there was a gig in Aberystwyth on a Saturday, you'd have a bus then organised, probably starting at say Swansea, pick in Tumble, pick in Carmarthen, loads of young people getting on the bus up to Aberystwyth to watch the gig and then back again in the same night and it was nothing and we loved it.
- Cathy: That's amazing.
- Rachel: That's amazing.

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Nia: And it would happen all the time. And these gigs would happen in villages, they would happen a lot in the Working Man's Club in Tumble.

Carys: And they'd connect the people from the countryside as well, they'd connect everybody and their social networks created from that era is unbelievable.

Cathy: That's amazing.

Carys: But yeah that was a special time.

Rachel: But that wasn't the time that you were Carys, you said you were a bit young for that, so how was it for you around the same time?

Nia: Sort of coming into it weren't you?

Carys: Yeah I would have been 15, not just quite old enough but I was very influenced by watching Nia doing all of these things. And then of course you had the National Eisteddfod which is an annual festival where people compete, poetry, dancing, singing, recitals blah-blah-blah. But then of course you have the festival side of it, as in the music side of it. So you have (mice bee? 18:05) which is just for young people so there's a venue with bands and then you camp there for a week.

Cathy: Wow.

Carys: So we've been doing rock festivals in the Welsh language since we were really young.

Nia: Like really young. And there is a conception as well, it's really funny for me when I speak to people who aren't familiar or don't do much for the Eisteddfod, the impression that they've always had of it is this really kind of...

Carys: Twee. Very twee.

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Nia: ...sort of singing, recital, very twee thing on television and I was like oh my God it was the most debauched time of my life [laughs].

Carys: [Laughs]

Cathy: Really?

Nia: It was like Maes B it was mad.

Carys: Yeah we had so much...

Nia: Before it was even Maes B gosh I remember watching Catatonia headline and Super Furrries headline just on the brink of when they were just about to make and break in the UK charts. So it was a big, big influence.

Cathy: Amazing.

Carys: But it was really safe as well wasn't it? It was a very safe space to be in.

Cathy: I was going to say, totally.

Carys: Do you know what I mean, like these are all I mean in many ways quite middle class families all Welsh speaking and everyone knows each other's family, their parents. So it was an unnaturally safe space but it shouldn't be unnatural at all. But essentially you had all these young people in a field and it was not threatening at all.

Cathy: So your parents were fine with it, totally fine with you going?

Carys: Yeah they might have been camping or in a caravan like ten fields away.

Nia: Our mother wouldn't have been camping Carys.

Carys: Oh no, good point well made.

Rachel: [Laughs]

Carys: They would have been in a nearby hotel.

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Nia: Yeah [laughs].

Carys: Although even not there for the whole week, they would drop you, you're camping there for a week now and all of your friends would be there.

Cathy: Oh that's amazing, wow.

Carys: It was super fun.

Rachel: So a very happy childhood then by the sounds of it?

Carys: Yeah we were very lucky, very privileged and we understand that and you know.

Nia: Yeah understand it was a very privileged childhood to which I am really respectful and grateful for.

Carys: Yeah and it's that thing that word privilege can become quite toxic but I really feel privileged to have had, I mean in very many ways it was humble, in many ways it was all these other things. We weren't exactly millionaires or anything.

Cathy: But you were given freedom to explore what you wanted?

Carys: And love.

Cathy: Yeah freedom and love which is amazing.

Carys: Yeah, yeah.

Rachel: And it was very creative, your parents. It feels like it was creative.

Cathy: Yeah it does.

Rachel: Like you said the basement, it was all happening in your basement, your house was the fun house that kids wanted to go to.

Carys: Yeah.

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Nia: I've just images of my mum. I was in a band but also other bands would rehearse there and they'd even allow that. And then she'd come downstairs, a band of boys, Texas Ranger band used to rehearse down there. I've just got images of her, she'd come down with her little tray of like Tupperware cups with tea for the band.

Cathy: Tea aww.

Nia: And like 'Boys tea?'

Carys: [Laughs]

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

[Promotion for Welcome to Spooktown]

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

Cathy: So neither of you rebelled because you didn't have anything to rebel against?

Nia: Oh God there was rebelling yes there was absolutely.

Carys: We just have that instinct anyway.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: And I think we both, you know mum and dad were teachers and they weren't super strict but if they would try to apply any pressure we would absolutely fight back. Because mum is really feisty as well.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: And we were like well you know [laughs] that's always going to happen.

Nia: Yeah we were well behaved I suppose but we weren't super quiet kids or anything.

Carys: No.

Nia: I mean we'd give as good as we got.

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Carys: Yeah.

Nia: And also we're from Tumble so we're really good at banter.

Cathy: Right.

Nia: You know [laughs] that's something that's always been around so.

Rachel: Would you two gang up on your parents a bit?

Carys: Um? I mean like if something was unfair and it was like yeah of course. But they were a perfect example of a united front.

Cathy: Right.

Carys: They were so flipping annoying with it.

Nia: Hated it.

Carys: Yeah and like dad would clearly get our side OR the other way around but they would never, ever drop that front.

Cathy: Oh really?

Carys: No.

Nia: They were a wall of unity at all times.

Cathy: Wow.

Nia: Which was some kind of policy they put together before we were born I think [laughs].

Carys: Yeah seriously annoying but it worked [laughs].

Nia: It worked. I mean you always knew where you stood and that was that. As much as it would drive you absolutely mad. But my mum would get annoyed and Carys and I could do the same, Carys and I would become a wall as well of unity and that would drive my mother mad [laughs].

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Cathy: Right.

Carys: You two, like you bitch about each other.

Nia: You bitch about it each other.

Carys: [Laughs] But then a word against either of you and you're like that.

Nia: Yeah.

Cathy: So you never hated each other?

Carys: No, no, no, no.

Cathy: Gosh

Nia: Oh God, I couldn't hate Carys no.

Carys: No.

Nia: But there have been times when probably in a moment of fury we've probably felt you know, oh my God I hate you.

Carys: Yeah.

Nia: But that disappears really quickly.

Carys: Mum and Dad were very good at making us talk through stuff straightaway and you face your stuff straightaway, you get it out straightaway, you heal straightaway. You don't let anything fester.

Cathy: That's amazing.

Nia: And I see that influence in my life now. I mean obviously I work in politics where I see a lot of people fester and I see a lot of things fester and politics is probably one of the most judgemental fields you can possibly work in.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: It's harsh [laughs].

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Nia: And you can see lots of people in groups form judgements without talking. And because I come from that background oh my God there's a problem let's talk, let's have a chat, let's go for a coffee, let's talk about this. It's helped me a lot and trying to sort of instil that in other people as well.

Rachel: Yeah.

Nia: Especially in the pandemic where everybody has just gone really insular and onto a laptop. I mean chatting is more important than ever.

Cathy: Yeah they're not listening, people aren't listening.

Carys: And with mum in the pandemic, I've been isolating with my mum the whole time, just me and mum.

Cathy: Wow, how's that?

Nia: Well done Carys. I wouldn't do that for love nor money [laughs].

Carys: Still waiting on my medal [laughs].

Cathy: Goodness.

Carys: And to begin with it was fine and then it was incredibly frustrating. Because you are on a completely different level to each other. She's 75, I'm not 75. And I don't want to be ageist or anything but.

Nia: She's 73 Carys, if she hears that she's going to kill you.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Carys: She's not even 70 yet. She watched The Chase every day.

Nia: Ugh.

Carys: Like it drives my brain nuts.

Nia: She has a massive crush on Bradley Walsh.

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Cathy: I know I heard that.

Rachel: Even we know about it.

Cathy: Even we know about it yeah [laughs].

Carys: Yeah she wants the hair the same colour as Chris Tarrant which is the colour of corn.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Carys: So you're literally like OK and then you hear this every day and it grates on your soul because you're not seeing anybody else.

Cathy: Yeah of course.

Carys: But bless her. So when restrictions could lift and we could just drive to the local beach we would go there together and look out to see and get all our stuff out, our annoyances with each other. And mum is really good at facing those things. And she'd debate herself and stick up for herself until the cows come home and so will I. But we want to get to a place of peace though you know?

Nia: And sometimes that place of peace then I have to step in [laughs].

Carys: Yeah.

Nia: Like some kind of mediator but it was funny. It's become easier out of lockdown because I can go down and we can spend time apart and together. But during lockdown it was quite funny because I had one of them on my personal phone and one of them on the work phone.

Carys: Yeah.

Cathy: Oh no.

Carys: Just like slagging each other off.

Cathy: Really?

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Nia: OK guys, OK.

Carys: [Laughs] Oh my gosh.

Rachel: So Carys you're more like your mum, you both sound very stubborn?

Carys: Well I don't know, I've got a lot of dad in me which is quite laidback and quite reasonable. It's been difficult, I think mum and Nia are very similar and they're quite fiery. And dad and I were always a bit more kind of relaxed about stuff. But now that energy is gone and when I'm just there and it's just me and my mum I think the isolation factor has changed so many behaviours.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: My patience was just thrown out of the house, do you know what I mean? You're just behaving like you've never behaved before and it's really hard. But once you identify it you can kind of work with it. And we would, we absolutely would but yeah.

Rachel: Which is brilliant to be able to recognise it and talk it out. Go down to the beach, talk it out, it's brilliant.

Cathy: Yeah I'm incapable of all of that.

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: I'll be honest.

Carys: [Laughs]

Rachel: If Cath's angry she just like shuts down for like two or three days.

Nia: But how are you going to manage in a commune?

Cathy: Oh I'm fine in a commune. Maybe it's just family?

Rachel: I know it is.

Carys: Yeah.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Rachel: We always say we get the worst of you.

Cathy: Of each other. Yeah my family get the worst of me.

Nia: Family communication is entirely different to normal communication I think.

Cathy: Isn't it? Totally, totally.

Rachel: Yeah.

Nia: It really is because you can pick up, because Carys and I have this sometimes where we're in conversation and it's a really nice conversation and then one of us will say something, they might trigger the other.

Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: But the person who's saying it doesn't realise they're doing it.

Cathy: Of course.

Nia: But the cue is taken a completely wrong way. But it's a sister or a sibling thing.

Cathy: Exactly. Totally.

Nia: That is completely different to...

Carys: And you could shake things off quicker.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: That's what I find with us, like we shake off pretty quick.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: But I think the thing with the commune thing as well is there's so many people, there's so many tasks to do if you're leaving in a commune it's a very different kind of thing all together as well. (Nia?) is having anxiety, don't take me away to a commune.

Nia: It's an anxiety inducing conversation.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Cathy: Sorry it's really stressing her out.

Carys: [Laughs]

Cathy: Are you ever embarrassed by each other.

Nia: No.

Carys: Um?

Cathy: Oh Carys has.

Carys: I don't think so. I don't think about situations no. There was one time when Nia heckled me when I was on stage and I was really fucked off with her because she was pissed [laughs].

Cathy: What was the heckle?

Nia: I can't remember, it wasn't bad.

Carys: No you just pre-empted a joke because she'd already seen the show and she was shit faced in the back.

Cathy: You can't do that!

Rachel: Ohhhh!

Cathy: That's terrible!

Nia: I did.

Carys: Everyone came down on her like a ton of bricks which is hilarious. So she's like 'Stop it! I don't want to know anymore'. Yeah. I think that was about the only thing.

Cathy: But Nia is really thinking hard. Nothing? Nothing embarrasses you about Carys?

Carys: [Laughs]

Nia: No I mean even if she did something awful, I mean she's my sister...

Carys: Yeah it's fine yeah.

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Nia: ...and I'm very protective of her and that's that really. I mean yeah she can annoy the hell out of me you know? But yeah she's my sister at the end of the day and that is that [laughs] you know.

Carys: [Laughs]

Nia: Yeah.

Rachel: So what about one of your worst rows? I know we keep going a bit dark, sorry.

Cathy: Love dark.

Rachel: There must have been a row as kids.

Nia: We'd be competitive in different ways and in healthy ways as well. I mean you know we used to play tennis.

Carys: We were funny playing tennis as well.

Nia: It's like street tennis.

Carys: Street tennis and we'd like go to local courts and there'd be girls next to us clearly who had had lessons so they look the part and they've got their little white skirts or their white tops. And she and I are just like in mismatched closed 'It was out!'

Cathy: [Laughs]

Carys: Fuck you! But we were both on the school tennis teams, we were good at it. But we talked to each other quite roughly [laughs].

Rachel: Brilliant.

Cathy: Is there anything you envy about each other? Nia what do you envy in Carys?

Nia: I don't know if envy is really the word but definitely really proud of her. I think I've actually thought about this during lockdown is that Carys has taken the creative side of her and actually done something incredible with it.

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Whereas I come from that background as well where I can sing, I can compose, I am musical, I do play, I do write, all of these things. But I took the factual route which I wanted to at the time. I went into, I was a BBC new producer and newsreader. I used to present factual TV programmes, a natural path into politics, which don't get me wrong I love, but I do think oh God maybe I should have done more. But it's time as well but obviously that's another excuse.

Cathy: But you were in a band together. Is that right?

Carys: We were both singers, it was like a band that was already setup and then we would kind of guest sing a lot with them and we did a lot of gigs as a part of their band but.

Cathy: Right.

Carys: So I suppose we were sort of in a band together but not officially.

Nia: I mean it was an electronic pop band so all of the sounds were made in the studio. And our rehearsals were basically a gossip session with loads of wine.

Carys: And a laptop.

Nia: And a laptop and maybe sort of figuring out a couple of melodies and then we'd go in the studio and record stuff. So there wasn't really that band vibe to it as we understand bands to be kind of thing. It was lending our vocals to tracks.

Cathy: But Carys did you think that Nia was going to go into music, because if she was sort of trailblazing and going to gigs and all the rest of it, did you think she would end up going into that?

Carys: Yeah and you know when you think your first job at the BBC was presenting a music show actually if you go back.

Nia: I forgot about that.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Carys: [Laughs] That was your first job.

Nia: I don't mean that in a bad way, I mean God. I did yeah.

Carys: Yeah because life has taken you to a new path. But initially you starting broadcasting through music.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: And I think that was because Nia was always attending gigs. Even after the whole Welsh Language Society stuff wasn't as popular, Nia was still going from gig to gig to gig and always writing about them, always posting stuff online about them. So Nia was known for being really passionate about that. And you had your show. And I think as life goes on as well and you mature and you see how the world works. And we were injected with a big dose of politics through our dad. Dad was super aware, dad would make us very aware. Dad was reading the Observer every Sunday and discussing stuff with us and you know. So as you get older you start to see how the world works.

Cathy: Of course.

Carys: And like oh actually that's interesting. And I think Nia being at the Beeb as well which is a hub of news and politics so dancing from both worlds I should imagine.

Cathy: Yeah totally.

Nia: Yeah music has been my career path, it's been my journey into everything really. All of it started with music, creativity. And that never leaves you.

Cathy: No.

Nia: I mean oh my gosh you know even working in the world of politics if it wasn't for the pandemic I'd try and see as much music and live theatre and creative stuff as I can because that's where you get your ideas from. That's where you understand society.

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Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: That's where your light bulb moments happen you know? And they're still really, really important.

Carys: And so much political music as well. You know they do bridge often.

Nia: Yeah so what do you envy about me then Carys?

Cathy: Yeah come on, come one.

Nia: [Laughs] Nothin'!

Carys: [Laughs] Yeah like I said envy is a weird, I find those words very weird between Nia and I.

Cathy: What do you wish you had? What do you wish you had that Nia has?

Carys: I think with Nia, I think she has such tougher skin that I have. Although I kind of like have become thicker skinned myself through work. What Nia has to do in terms of having a thick skin is on another level.

Cathy: Oh I know, whoa, it really is.

Carys: Oh my God!

Nia: Thanks guys [laughs].

Carys: And the aptitude to do what she does, I mean I wish I had the. I mean like when restrictions could lift, popped over when I had my sequins on and my glitter and then the next day she's there with two laptops on, one on a Zoom, one typing stuff up. And then the Senedd streaming live, so the Welsh Assembly streaming live on the telly, so she had to watch that. And I was just like. And back to back Zooms and it all being about Covid and it all being about politics and all on her own every day. And I was just like well the fuck done.

Nia: [Laughs]

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Carys: I could not do this. I'm literally in my basement writing comedy songs and doing these. I mean don't get me wrong, it takes a lot of work and energy and it's not something I take lightly either it's work. But my God, I can throw myself into a world of pure imagination.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: Which is really lovely. OK it's Covid based and the comedy songs are about the pandemic but it was all fun. When Nia is facing the darkest realities every day. And dealing with very difficult people sometimes and I'm just like oh my God, well done [claps].

Nia: Thanks guys. I don't know if that's something to envy [laughs].

Carys: No but it's your aptitude though. It's your capability.

Cathy: It is amazing.

Carys: Like oh my God I would have cracked like an egg, I would have cracked like an egg.

Cathy: Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

Nia: Yeah and sometimes you just need your glitter covered friend, sister to turn up on the doorstep to make sure that you don't crack like an egg.

Cathy: No totally.

Rachel: Could you ever work together do you think?

Nia: Oh?

Carys: [Laughs] Dad used to laugh a lot with our texts, when sometimes we'd slag each other off to dad and dad would be like 'You two are hilarious' Nia keeps telling him 'Carys is so bossy' and then I'm like 'Nia is so flippin' bossy'.

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Nia: And my mother still says that that still exists, that she still gets that as in Carys saying Nia is so bossy and like oh my God Carys is so controlling.

Carys: Yeah. So yeah I think it would definitely need other people and not just Nia and I working together solely.

Nia: I think when Carys and I work well together is not directly working with each other.

Rachel: Yeah.

Nia: So for example you know we turn to each other for advice, you know we are each other's...

Carys: Yeah we're a part of each other's work yeah.

Nia: And that's really precious and that's more effective I think than us ever working together on a project I think we're far better at it.

Cathy: Are you the first people each other would turn to if you had a problem?

Carys: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: I mean it depends on the problem as well. I think and you know if it's lovers or something it could be turning to Nia, it could be like Nia is the last person I would turn to. Not the last person but not the first person I would turn to. Because I don't know what her dynamic would be with that person either so you just want to have like. So it depends on the situation but by and large definitely. And having that soundboard because we're pretty similar, we're the upbringing with everything that we do and have done we get it.

Nia: But also we have very different expertise and experiences as well. And they play into each other. Sometimes I will need a specific kind of slant on something that Carys can

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give or vice versa. And I think what's kind of invaluable really and the most precious thing is that when things do go wrong in your life or when you are facing like the darkest of times or you're in a situation which happens and especially in Covid in the isolation where things do go wrong, there is a loyalty and there is a love and there is a safety net in each other and that's nonnegotiable that's there.

Carys: Yeah totally.

Nia: That's it and that's really precious.

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

[Promotion for Who Are You Wearing?]

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

Cathy: Is there anything that you would never talk to each other about? Is there an area where you just wouldn't go there with each other?

Carys: I mean I'm not sure but by nature of that question we could ever answer it [laughs].

Cathy: Well we know what we wouldn't.

Rachel: Really?

Cathy: We would never talk about sex.

Nia: What would you not talk about?

Rachel: Sex.

Cathy: Sex. Never.

Rachel: Oh yeah, that's true.

Nia: Yeah actually there have been times where Carys has started to divulge something about her sex life in the past...

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Cathy: And you panic.

Nia: And I've just gone 'Oh my God!' la, la, la, la.

Carys: La, la, la, la, la.

Nia: Stop it now, stop it now, I don't want to know.

Rachel: Yeah that's true.

Carys: But we have always been pretty open whenever anything has happened, I would phone Nia and go 'Oh my God you'd never fucking guess what I did last night, I met this guy and this happened'. And then she's like 'Come on, come over, let's have a Sunday lunch and tell me everything'.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: You know so we would always be quite open about everything.

Nia: But not everything.

Carys: No not too many details.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Nia: So when you get into the graphics, then you go to your friends I think yeah.

Rachel: Yeah.

Cathy: Are you very huggy with each other? Because we won't touch each other.

Carys: Wow! Don't you touch each other?!

Cathy: Never, we've never touched each other.

Carys: [Draws breath shocked] Oh my gosh, no we're very huggy.

Rachel: And we're so close. Yeah, no.

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Carys: Oh wow. I can't even. So back to my show, my name is Carys Eleri, Carys means love and Eleri means either river, valley or goddess.

Cathy: Aw.

Carys: So I'm either the river valley or goddess of love, I'm going for goddess obvs.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Carys: But I have to hug everybody and I think the pandemic has been really good for me in putting that. Because sometimes I hug people and I'm like I'm not sure if I should be hugging this person [laughs]. But I just feel like I have to have this closeness and I know what happens scientifically in that bond moment.

Cathy: Of course.

Carys: But yeah this has been quite a good exercise for me to not be too huggy with people.

Nia: [Laughs]

Carys: But whenever I see Nia we're always hugging.

Nia: Yeah.

Carys: Waking up in the morning, I crawl to bed to Nia and give her a squeeze.

Cathy: Oh my goodness that's lovely.

Rachel: Aww that is so lovely but...

Nia: She did that yesterday morning actually.

Carys: Yeah, yeah.

Cathy: Aww.

Nia: Morning, morning.

Carys: And I'll tickle her and like come on.

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Cathy: Really?! Oh.

Carys: I'm a awake now [laughs]

Nia: Get out! [laughs]

Cathy: If Rachel touched me I would fire her out the window.

Rachel: I know. But I think it's coming from you because I get that, I get that but you don't.

Cathy: Oh no. No.

Nia: Carys is definitely the primary hugger of the...

Carys: The clan.

Nia: Of the clan really, Carys really needs physical contact and hugging where I don't as much. I do sometimes but it's not my oxygen in a way.

Rachel: Yeah.

Nia: And I have to be in the mood for it [laughs].

Carys: Yeah because mum's not that huggy but daddy was very huggy.

Cathy: Right.

Carys: And if Dad was watching telly I would instantly just snuggle up and probably fall asleep on him. And mum said since losing him looking at all the pictures of us with dad or her with dad or all of us together, dad always had an arm around somebody. Like there's not a picture where he's not physically in contact with somebody. And I'm definitely that person yeah.

Cathy: Oh that's lovely.

Rachel: So what would your perfect weekend be? I'm going to start that again, what would your perfect weekend away together be?

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Cathy: The One Show.

Rachel: The One Show.

Carys: [Laughs] Do you know what the other day I was with my friend, she had job, I was to look after her little baby and I was in this Airbnb and I was like I need to bring Nia back here. Because basically we love cycling, playing tennis, swimming, drinking, chatting you know. And there was an Airbnb with access to a pool and tennis courts with bikes and I was just like we would be, like that's all we need, we'd have been very happy just being there I think. What do you think Nia? I mean we could do with a rollercoaster maybe, we do like rollercoasters.

Nia: Yeah we do, we love theme parks as well and rollercoasters we need to do that soon. It's a massive adrenalin rush we both chase.

Carys: We love it yeah.

Nia: Yeah I mean that sounds absolutely perfect. What I've wanted to do for a long time, but obviously that's not going to happen for a long time is take Carys to South East Asia, say Vietnam, Cambodia, that kind of route. Because I know Carys would love to see the culture there.

Carys: And the trees.

Nia: And it would blow her mind. And the trees. I mean the temple of trees I went to. Carys loves trees, it was an ancient, ancient temple of trees in Cambodia. I don't know if you've ever seen Tomb Raider the first film, the original one, probably the beginning of the naughties, a section of it was actually filmed in there. And it's like I have never seen anything like it in my life. This kingdom of ancient trees where a tree is the size of, you know people could live inside these trees.

Cathy: Oh wow.

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- Nia: And I would to take Carys on a journey there to see them. I know that's not a weekend, that's more of a long haul.
- Rachel: Yeah but that's fine, that would be the perfect trip.
- Carys: Carys cheeky weekend to Vietnam anyone?
- Rachel: Carys I love trees.
- Cathy: I love them.
- Rachel: I'm convinced that I can feel them when I lean against them and that I can feel some sort of electricity which everyone thinks is weird.
- Cathy: Do you? I never knew that.
- Rachel: Yeah definitely, definitely! I always like to hug a tree.
- Carys: Yeah of course.
- Rachel: I don't know where mines comes from, wheres does yours come from? Wheres does yours come from?
[laughs]
- Carys: Wheres does yours come from?
- Nia: Wheres you was?
- Carys: [Laughs] I've got so many books here as well, a friend gave me a tree book the other day. People just send me tree books now, it's really funny. I don't know but also growing up in the countryside it's just a part of your soul. It's just a part of who you are, your upbringing your makeup. And I remember being in Cardiff is great because it's a good mix of city and rural life, it's a really nice mix. I moved to London for one year, I was in there for BBC Radio 4 drama department and so I had to live there for a year. Oh my God, like I was chasing the sun, I felt really claustrophobic. Even though I'd visited London so many times, spent so much time there, living there is entirely different and being underground a lot, I was like right I'm doing any tubes anymore, I'm walking

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everywhere or taking buses. The walk to work was beautiful. And then I would come back to here and see the depth of vision and everything of horizons and the trees and I was just like [draws breath] and it was making more sense to me, you know this is really important, this stuff. So this years, before we were really talking about forest bathing and all that stuff it was just innate and just going this is what.

Nia: It matters yeah.

Carys: It matters and this is your connection.

Cathy: When we were kids we used to go to a place, I don't know if you've been there because it's the Forest of Dean which is quite close, certainly close to Cardiff, called Puzzlewood, it's really worth going it's beautiful.

Carys: Really?

Cathy: I think, I've probably got this wrong but I think you walk through the root systems of trees. I think they filmed Labyrinth there.

Carys: Oh my God!

Cathy: So the soil is copper coloured and it's really beautiful.

Rachel: You'd love it.

Cathy: So you go into sort of a clump of trees...

Carys: What's it called again?

Cathy: It's called Puzzlewood.

Rachel: Puzzlewood.

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

Rachel: I'm taking it, I'm taking it. You said I was One Show, I'm taking it, I don't know what this is now.

Cathy: You are going very One Show.

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Rachel: I'm going quick fire question.

Cathy: Fuck sake Rach, come on, cool it off.

Rachel: So um who had their first kiss? Who had the first?

Cathy: Earliest, you need to say who had the earliest kiss 'cause yeah.

Rachel: Yeah, yeah.

Carys: Ah OK, um?

Cathy: Rachel was about seven.

Rachel: Yeah.

Carys: Do you mean snog?

Rachel: Yes.

Carys: [Laughs]

Nia: Seven and a snog that's like well done.

Cathy: Yeah she was a wrong 'un.

Rachel: Exactly. I'm 18 months younger than Cath and I matured a little more quickly.

Cathy: I thought she was a complete slut.

Rachel: And it's not true I was just normal.

Cathy: Seven. Seven.

Rachel: It wasn't seven.

Carys: [Laughs]

Rachel: Anyway this isn't about us so.

Nia: Yeah don't sit on the fence there.

Rachel: Yeah exactly. Because that would have mattered to us. You know it mattered to you that I...

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Cathy: Yeah it mattered that she kept young.

Rachel: Had a snog first.

Cathy: No because I didn't like it. Because I wanted you to be young.

Rachel: I know yeah, you hated it.

Cathy: I wanted you to be youngest.

Rachel: I had armpit hair before Cath did and she was furious, she wouldn't talk, she was livid.

Carys: Oh wow!

Cathy: And started her period.

Nia: I was just going to say, did you start your periods before her?

Rachel: Yeah. And Nia, you said you were the trailblazer because you were the older sibling.

Nia: Yeah. I bet that really bothered you that she started her period before you.

Cathy: Oh massive. You had underarm hair and her period. So she was about 11 and I was 13...

Nia: Oh my God.

Cathy: ...and I still hadn't got either.

Carys: Oh wow.

Rachel: So yeah it caused problems. So we're not talking about that, we're talking about snog.

Carys: Oh yeah, I think mine was, I know it was when I was in Lanzarote, I think I was 11 or 12? I can't remember. 11 or 12.

Nia: Yeah you would have been 12, I mean I was 16, was I 16?

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Cathy: It's the same as us.

Nia: Yeah you would have been. Was it Lanzarote that was your? Yeah, yeah, yeah I remember.

Carys: Yeah. Under a palm tree, I mean like that's really sweet isn't it.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Rachel: It's very sweet. Is this a weird question though? I beginning to feel that this is a weird question and it doesn't really work.

Cathy: Maybe it's a weird question. Just say.

Carys: How about you Nia?

Nia: Well it's not a really weird question and also it's interesting because I don't think there was that rivalry with us. And also I was gay and I didn't really sort of admit that or get to that point until later on. For me it was more about who am I going to tell or which girl I've kissed you know? [laughs]

Cathy: Did you tell Carys? Was Carys the first person you told?

Nia: Yeah.

Cathy: Oh OK.

Nia: Changed her life forever.

Carys: Yeah it definitely.

Cathy: How did you feel?

Carys: It was amazing. It was amazing.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: How old were you?

Nia: I was 18, you were 14.

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Carys: Yeah so I was 14, she picked me up from my auntie's house and went 'I've got something to tell you'. And I was like oh gosh. And clearly she was worried about it. And I was like you know classic 'Are you pregnant? Are you a drug addict?' you know [laughs] the only two things that you could think of at that time.

Nia: None of the above.

Carys: [Laughs]

Nia: Definitely not pregnant [laughs].

Carys: And she was like 'I've just got something to say, I'm bisexual and I've felt it for a while'. And I was like oh wow and I remember crying but not out of disgust or fear or anything, it was out of a complete shock and the fact that she was able to tell me.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: So then we popped home, Nia was like 'Go get your stuff, I'm taking you to Swansea, I'll take you to meet my new friends in these gay bars in Swansea'. And I was like fucking great. I mean like we're from a rural area which is very focussed on rugby.

Cathy: Exactly.

Carys: They've never appreciated my jazz hands here.

Cathy: [Laughs]

Carys: So I was like, they do in the gay clubs.

Cathy: Yeah.

Carys: So then by the end of the night I was on top of the stage with the drag queens singing the Lulu bits of Relight My Fire at 14-years-old thinking I've arrived as well.

Cathy: Oh that's brilliant.

Rachel: Aww that's lovely.

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Carys: Yeah and we discovered so much like through Nia's journey with her sexuality like I've learned so much. I've got all sorts of different friends and the amount of adversity, especially during that time as well and being on a journey with people who have transitioned. And a close friend of ours. Like I have so much experience of all these kind of different life paths and it's amazing, it's been amazing.

Cathy: Of course, wow.

Rachel: Nia I felt like you were going to say something.

Carys: No I mean it's just been wonderful really to have Carys on that journey as well with me even though Carys isn't gay or is not on the LGBTQ+ spectrum. And having her support. But also how I've seen how open that's made Carys to the world. And how you opened yourself up to different communities and getting to know people and how they work. Because you know recently, I mean trans people have always existed, they've always been in my life and Carys life. And you've seen the trans community come under so much attack recently by people who have never met a trans person.

Cathy: Yeah.

Nia: Let alone have been part of their life or been there when they've woken up from top surgery we'd say or you know. Carys and I have always had this, they're our best friends. So we have that vision and strength as well and solidarity with the community and Carys has certainly grown up in it. I mean I was 18 but Carys was 14 when she first you know met my gay community and that is growing up in that community then.

Rachel: Yeah.

Carys: It was such a privilege because like I said it was a heteronormative background here.

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Cathy: Exactly.

Carys: And it was really fucking boring and also being a big personality and you know lots of the men had no idea how to speak to me you know. Because they weren't used to strong bubbly characters who could outsmart them, you know what I mean, it was really alien and not humiliating but threatening. And I think this community has come quite a full circle with all of that kind of stuff now but to then be introduced to a very different community with so much humour in the face of such adversity.

Nia: And glitter [laughs].

Carys: And glitter.

Cathy: But hang on, so Nia you basically found that community in Swansea, that's quite a long way from Tumble so how did that?

Nia: Well it feels like a long way, it's not really, it's 20 minutes, 25 minutes.

Cathy: Oh really? Oh fine yeah.

Carys: Tumble's is not far from anywhere.

Cathy: Yeah that's amazing.

Nia: It's really close to the M4. But actually when you're growing up you do feel that Swansea's miles away, especially back then you know pre Google maps, pre internet. I mean we'd go to Swansea twice a year probably.

Cathy: Right.

Nia: To shop for my grandmother's dress for Christmas and one other time, you know Swansea was the special visit. So yeah you know mentally it was far off.

Cathy: Yeah.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Nia: Yeah but that was the closest scene. And then obviously you would have Cardiff and then London which I eventually did go to and explore. But it was really important. And it's really sad to know that the oldest bar Champers in Swansea, the oldest gay bar is actually closed now and I mean that was the safe space for so many gay people in South Wales.

Carys: But also like the High Street of Swansea was just gay bar after gay bar, it was so much fun.

Nia: Oh my God it was buzzing at that time. You go to Champers, then there was a pre Champers called Chatham's.

Carys: Chatham's.

Nia: Chatham's yeah. Which you know you'd think the night would end there. And then you'd go up to there was the old Palace Theatre and back in its heyday the Palace Theatre was thriving with all of the arts in the city. But it was actually kind of quite a rundown venue and that's where the Palace Theatre then was the gay club. And it was huge. And you would walk in and I think back now [laughs] it was like a rundown version of the Moulin Rouge you know.

Cathy: Oh great.

Nia: There would be like this kind of little, because you're going back to like '96 and homophobia was rife, people were getting you know kicked in around that area. And you would have this little door and then you'd have to either go with somebody else who was a regular to be introduced there. Or they would ask you 'Are you gay?' to be able to go in. And then you'd step in to this world.

Cathy: Oh that's magic.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Nia: You know there'd be men on stage with their feather boas and their wigs and just it would be just packed full of people who could just be themselves.

Carys: Total joy, total joy.

Rachel: Wow.

Nia: And it was absolute joy, yeah. And that's a hell of a thing to kind of be part of.

Cathy: Of course.

Nia: And I really proud and really privileged to have been a part of it.

Cathy: Of course.

Rachel: It was lush.

Cathy: Our parents met in Swansea, I suspect we were conceived in Swansea.

Rachel: I know.

Carys: Ah!

Rachel: Who's most likely to cry?

Carys: Me.

Nia: Yeah.

Rachel: Carys?

Carys: I think so, yeah, yeah.

Rachel: Nia you agree with that?

Nia: Yeah. Yeah.

Rachel: Yeah OK.

Carys: I do cry. I do cry but it takes a bit more for me.

Cathy: Right.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

- Carys: I'm super emosh. I can't hold any of my emotions back.
- Nia: [Laughs]
- Carys: Like I don't have poker face, poker face does not exist with me.
- Cathy: Oh that's lovely though isn't it?
- Rachel: And you've both got good banter. Right so we're going to finish with this last question. And don't forget Puzzlewood that's really important.
- Cathy: Please go.
- Rachel: You've got to go to Puzzlewood.
- Cathy: Yeah you'll love it.
- Carys: OK thank you.
- Rachel: Is there anything you want to say to each other that you've never said before? So Nia, I'll put that to you first. I'll say is there anything that you want to say to each other that you've never said before? We've had so many different responses. Some people say really silly things. Some people say really serious things. Some people say nothing. This is the first example.
- Carys: [Laughs] I think it's because we're so open with each other.
- Cathy: That's what I mean yeah.
- Carys: And yeah we've been through so much.
- Nia: I always say I'm proud of you. I always say I love you.
- Carys: Yeah I think we're pretty open about all these things. Having been through so much pain together as well. We've had the deterioration of our father. We cycled from Paris to London after he died to raise money more motor neuron.

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

Cathy: Oh right.

Carys: There's like so many things we've done together through our pain, which you do reflect and we've processed a lot together. So yeah I don't know.

Nia: Don't cry now [laughs].

Cathy: [Laughs]

Rachel: So there's nothing that hasn't been said basically.

Cathy: Why do women do that?

Rachel: What?

Cathy: What is that about?

Carys: I don't know.

Cathy: I don't get what it does.

Carys: Dry my tears, that doesn't work [laughs].

Cathy: It doesn't work, it's so weird.

Carys: Fan my eyes [laughs]

Cathy: It's really weird.

Nia: I don't know why you do it, it's really strange. Yeah stop doing that! Stop fanning your tears.

Carys: What have I never told you? What have I never told you? Uh?

Nia: I don't know if I've ever said to you, or maybe I have, you know, I'd like you to see more of the world, further.

Carys: You have told me this, you've just said it like half an hour ago.

Nia: Oh yeah, yeah. All right.

Carys: [Laughs]

I Wish I Was An Only Child- Carys Eleri and Nia Medi

[I Wish I Was An Only Child Theme Song]

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.

Rachel: Right we've got five minutes to go.

Cathy: Oh come on Rach!

[Promotion for Here to Judge]

[End of Podcast]