

Many months ago I interviewed Nate Ruess, who had a successful career with several bands, from 'The Format' to 'fun.' to his solo work. I grew up listening to his music. He is now my Twitter mutual, making us equals.

### On The Subject of Music College

SARAH: Okay. I did sound for a vocal jazz choir for two years.

NATE: Okay, so, you know what you're doing recording discord?

SARAH: Mhm? Yeah. Just letting you know.

NATE: Okay, thank you. Um. Uh, just vocal?

SARAH: I also did, like, the regular jazz, but, it was mostly vocal, that was the torturous part of it.

NATE: The torturous part was doing vocals?

SARAH: Well, no, I didn't do the vocals, I did sound *for* the jazz choir.

NATE: Yeah I know but did they, were they bad?

SARAH: Oh, yeah, yes. Yeah. Have you ever heard, like, vocal jazz, like a choir?

NATE: No, is it just like, is it just like: 'bee-bap babap bop'... is it like, kids who got really into Glee, and then, but then they were like too good and they became like hipster Glee?

SARAH: Yeah, basically.

NATE: Like, jazz. Yeah, like, jazz kids, but they came up on Glee?

SARAH: Yes. Well, I don't know if they really came up on Glee because I feel like none of them wanted to be there, that was sort of a part of it as well. So they all believed. Like, they all wanted to be choir teachers? And I guess in Washington the way that you do that is by being in a college vocal jazz choir.

NATE: Oh God.

SARAH: Yeah. You just have to like, run the gamut.

NATE: Could any of those people sing?

SARAH: Probably half of them. And a lot of them were, like, good at singing, but they weren't good at like jazz singing. You know what I mean?

NATE: Yeah, people, I think people who do music in college are probably just not cut out for it?

SARAH: Yeah, like me.

NATE: Did you do music in college?

SARAH: Yeah I did. What do you think.

NATE: Mixing, or?

SARAH: Well, I did uh. I did like music theory, I was taking music theory classes and like. Trying to get good at composition.

NATE: Oh.

SARAH: Yeah, it's not good.

NATE: No, it's not good. Well, I mean, one of my best friends did it, in college, and now he's like an award winning. Songwriter and producer and all that stuff, but like he's the only person I know who actually did it and made it. He, uh, has produced and cowritten like most of the music that I've done.

SARAH: Is that the Format? No? Okay, sorry.

NATE: No, no. He won like producer of the year. At the Grammy's four years ago or something like that.

SARAH: Oh, cool. That's awesome... Where did he go? Was it like Berkeley or some shit?

NATE: Yeah.

SARAH: Oh, really... Okay. Well John Mayer went to Berkeley.

NATE: That's right. He did.

### On the Subject of Resentment

SARAH: Are you. Well, I have a question here. Are you bitter? Are you... What the fuck? This is not the question I wrote... Okay, if you were, if you saw what I just saw, you would be mad I think. That's what I'm gonna tell you... I wrote an entirely different question and I open up my word doc and I guess I edited it in some kind of fugue state.

NATE: (Laughs reservedly kind of with a hard “o” sound somehow).

SARAH: OK, anyways. I remember seeing you perform in like a coffee shop on YouTube?

NATE: OK.

SARAH: It was like a, it was like a, it was like a small coffee shop and it looked like you just dropped in and started singing, it was great, beautiful vocal work, and a few years later I saw Hozier doing the same exact thing. And it had *millions* of views. And, and, I feel like... I feel like... Do you feel any deep-seated and like harmful urges towards other musicians, like?

NATE: No! No, I'm good, I mean like, I, I wrote uh like... I mean. God there was like a three year-span where I was the primary songwriter of like four of the ten or fifteen most popular songs that had come out. So, so, *most* importantly. I was rewarded *financially* for it. Um, but like, but also, that was, my my intention was never like, I mean I stopped doing, I stopped because I just didn't *enjoy*. The uh, people paying attention to me.

SARAH: Yeah, that's fair. I actually wanted to ask t' you about, like, how it is to, like, be on the receiving end of para-social relations. Ships. Relationships. Because uh, I've definitely been on the like the parasite end of it, especially as a kid. Um, so. I don't know. Just wanted to know.

NATE: Uh, no I mean I think it's fine, like so have I, I mean I grew up listening to music that's why I got into doing music, so, so... People stop becoming the fans of the music and start becoming fans of the personalities or stuff like that and that was never my thing, but I only got on social media like six months ago for the first time *ever* so. I feel like maybe for the last five years my goal was to make people feel like I. Had just dropped off the face of the Earth, cause I didn't care if anyone know who I was, like I was, still getting paid the same, and I enjoyed my life a lot better when no one knew who I was. So, um. So that was good but now that I've gotten back onto like. Now that I've gotten onto social media, I'm like, yeah I guess I crave attention more than I, more than I thought that I did.

SARAH: That makes sense. Is that. Hm. Hehe. De. Wha. What do you, what do you feel about the. Why are you, like on streams. I said that aggressively, but I'm. (Nervous laugh).

NATE: Well those are, those are my, those are the friends that I've made online, and I just appreciated, like. I guess what, what I liked about getting online for the first time was, I, I. Maybe in the last ten years or fifteen years I've just been kinda lost, uh, my. Not lost my sense of purpose, but just moved on from what I, I grew up in a lower middle-class family in like Iowa and Phoenix, and, um. And never really... You know, I

guess I'd been signed at like an early age I'd always had success and never had to do anything but be in a band, but, um. But I never saw myself as a popular person, or like, Hollywood, or anything like that so. So I appreciated being online cause it's just a bunch of fucking normal people that make a bunch of jokes and that's what I like the most about. About life or growing up so it was cool to just get back involved with having, you know like, banter and funny conversations and not talking about music, or like the industry, or, um. You know all this stuff I was never really like. Not that interested in to begin with.

### On the Subject of Heteronormativity

SARAH: Yeah... I have a question about a song.

NATE: You can ask whatever the fuck you want.

SARAH: Okay. Well I'm sorry, I don't mean to. Haha heh heh hn. Okay. Uh, the song "The Gambler" had a huge impact on me when I was like. 13, 14, because I thought it was like, I thought it was like, what my life was gonna be like. But, after growing out-up, and like coming out and taking a bunch of literature classes I've learned that it's actually very heteronormative; are you okay with that?

NATE: Hahahahaha, yeah totally! I'm totally cool with it.

SARAH: Okay.

NATE: I mean that's all I know, that's all I knew, that's all I know! Um, you know. So, like, I can't, yeah, like. It's funny though that you refer to it as heteronormative. Obviously I don't give a fuck. Like, I would love for things to be more progressive in that sense but at the time I didn't fucking, you know, uh, you know, I didn't ever make, you know, two thoughts about that.

### On the Subject of if Nate's Music is Good or Not

SARAH: Yeah. I definitely feel like your music is very sincere. I'm not trying to, like, kiss up to you. Um... I was gonna ask also, yeah, like you said on twitter you had one- one and a half good albums, what do you feel those are, like.

NATE: Uh, I mean I think I had two good albums- oh no, probably one and a half when you add it up. Uh, the second album of my band the Format, there was this album called Dog Problems, and that was when I first started really writing the songs, like, in my head, and I was going through a crazy breakup at the time and I was probably like twenty-two years old and, so like. It just was very honest, and oh, like, really trying very hard, musically? And I think it was like, one hundred percent original? And not like anything else? And then, um, and then my solo album, which was the last album I

recorded. And I think that's because it was just, you know, fifteen years of making music, that uh, that, um. Yeah, it was just a test... How good I had gotten writing songs, and not really feeling like I had anything to prove for the first time in my life.

SARAH (helpfully): Yeah. That's nice. I like that.

NATE: It's a great feeling. It's an unbelievable feeling, honestly. It's an unbelievable feeling. Unfortunately, I had just come off of making that fun. album that was, like, massive and it sold, however many million records, and so I think I felt a pressure to write a few more like, try and write hits or something like that? But what ha- I also had such a disdain for doing that at that point? That I think there were like four songs of me like, trying to do that but not caring enough to do it well that that mur, mur, murkied up the overall, what I think is a very special album... Yeah. If I could take it back, I probably, I probably would, but generally I try not to be focused on things that I regret? But that's definitely one of those ones where, shit if I could change that.

SARAH: Well you should do like a director's cut, you should do like a, like a...

NATE: Yes, yes, good call. Like a remaster down the road, and omit half the album.

### On the Subject of Hits

SARAH: So all four of your big ones, you hate them?

NATE: Uh. Yeah, yeah. I mean.

SARAH: I didn't like that P!nk one. To be honest.

NATE: I like the P!nk one. The P!nk one is probably one of my favorites.

SARAH: Oh wow.

NATE: Um. Cause that just felt a little more. I don't know. I don't know why.

SARAH: It was stripped down. It was, it was emotional.

NATE: Yeah. But then, the other three. I wasn't crazy about, I really wasn't crazy about the other three on that fun. album. I thought they were fine.

SARAH: I really was very deeply touched by those three, um, the, the last two-

NATE (cutting me off): I thought Carry On was good I thought Carry On was good.

SARAH: Carry On was really good. I think actually it still is really good. I don't mean to.

NATE: No, no, I think it's still probably really good. Some Nights, I remember at the time I was like this is really good, and then in retrospect I'm like, I don't think, I just hear it and I actually don't think it's that good? But I think it's just a production thing? I just think it sounds very pop? And then We Are Young I think is just kind of like fine, but kinda like. Yeah. I don't know. It was, it was. I wrote it. And I've never seen anything just go. Go so wild in my entire life, and it was cool because, that, I guess I never expected that to happen of, of anything I've ever done, so it was fascinating to watch, but at the time it was like yeah this song's kinda whatever.

SARAH: (nervous laughter) Hm.

NATE: Yeah.

### On the Subject of the Game Grumps Part One

SARAH: (nervous laughter) Can you, can you promise me... (laughing)... can you promise me you won't let the guy from Game Grumps cover, like, We Are Young? Like.

NATE: The guy from what?

SARAH: Game. Do you know what Game Grumps is?

NATE: No.

SARAH: Okay, Game Grumps is a YouTube series where these two guys in Glendale, play, um.

NATE: Glendale what?

SARAH: California.

NATE: Well there's, I grew up in Glendale, Arizona, so.

SARAH: Oh. Yeah, I can see the contusion.

NATE: But I've also been to Glendale, California many times.

SARAH: I've been once, it was a great experience, best place I've ever been.

NATE: Are you serious?

SARAH: No. No.

NATE: That would be amazing. But, uh, I digress.

## On the Subject of the Glendale Galleria

SARAH: I liked the Galleria, it was, it was kind of like uh. I'm actually kind of obsessed with the Glendale Galleria. Did you know it's like, um. It was modeled after a Ray Bradburry essay?

NATE: Is the Galleria, what is that, is that the outdoor mall?

SARAH: Well the outdoor mall is the one across the street that's called the Americana at Brand.

NATE: Yeah, the Americana, but I don't know what the Galleria is.

SARAH: The Galleria is the big, um. Brick mall that's like really close. To. The Gah, the Americana.

NATE: I don't think I've ever been to the Galleria.

SARAH: The Galleria is where the first Apple Store was, the first Panda Express, and the first... uh, three-story Target was in the Galleria.

NATE: That's amazing.

SARAH: Yeah. It's kinda historic in some ways.

NATE: I'm tryna remember if I've been to that Target, then. I mean I'm sure at some point in life I've been there. We would always, you know, when you're a band and you're kinda like, you're playing Los Angeles, but you're coming through on tour? You usually just stay like in Glendale or in the valley cause it's too expensive to stay in Hollywood? So I've probably been there on an off-day.

SARAH: Just seeing the Apple Store and not knowing it was the first, and walking past all this history.

NATE: Yeah, that'd be, I mean, that would be special to me. I'd really love to eat at the first Panda Express.

SARAH: I don't know if it's still open. I feel like a lot of the shit they have has closed because the Americana is better? I don't know. It's just mall history.

NATE: Yeah, I mean, I went to the Americana, God. I guess it was two years ago, now, you know the COVID stuff kinda. Yeah, last year my wife and I, maybe two years ago, to the Gal. Not the the Gal, sorry, the Americana to see a movie.

SARAH: What was the movie?

NATE: First Reformed?

SARAH: Oh I love that movie, that's a great movie.

NATE: Great movie, great movie. There wasn't a lot of people in the theater, but it was playing at the Americana, that was the only place we could find it.

SARAH: Wow! And it wasn't playing at the Galleria, AMC?

NATE: Is there an AMC over there?

SARAH: No, I don't know, just saying that.

NATE: Oh. God, it's been so long. Uh, yeah.

SARAH: I don't even... I've been to LA... once in my life. Uh... like... I feel like... maybe two or three years ago? And it was. I only remember going to the Glendale Galleria. I.

NATE: What did you go for?

SARAH: Like, I wanted to have In-N-Out Burger, and they have an In-N-Out, um. An.

NATE: No, what did you go to LA for?

SARAH: Oh, like I was just with my family. I. Le, Ugh. We did this whole tour. We did like a little road trip, down to New Mexico and then um. Just mostly New Mexico and then we drove back up through California.

NATE: Did you guys drive from the Seattle area down through all that?

SARAH: Oh, no, we took a plane out to New Mexico. And then, did a rental car.

NATE: That sounds insane.

SARAH: Uh, yeah, uh, it sucked. I don't understand what my family- they have these horrible ideas about what is fun.

NATE: How- How many siblings?

SARAH: I have just one sibling, and two parents.

NATE: And two parents...? I mean I've seen some, I've seen some, I've seen some shit. In New Mexico.

SARAH: Like what.

NATE: Like aliens.

### On the Subject of UFOs

SARAH: You have. Oh. Wow. I've seen, I've seen, I've seen UFOs as well. But not in New Mexico, in uh, in my hometown, Tri-Cities, Washington.

NATE: Where, is Tri-Cities close to Whidbey Island?

SARAH: No, not eve, not at all, no.

NATE: Oh.

SARAH: I'm close to Whidbey Island now, though. What's on Whidbey?

NATE: I have a good friend, who lives on Whidbey.

SARAH: Should I edit that, should I cut that out? That you have?

NATE: No, no.

SARAH: I don't want you to like dox your friends, you know? That'd be horrible.

NATE: No one's, no one's, no one's, no one's goin' for him. I mean, I guess the island's small but, no we, we, my, my friends and I went there for his wedding, it was a trip to even take, take the ferry and do all that.

SARAH: It's fun. I don't think I've ever been up to Whidbey I've only been on Vashon and Bainbridge which are like, closer to Seattle.

NATE: Oh really. It seems like a good area in general.

SARAH: I'm sorry we're talking about this instead of the UFOs that started the conversation.

NATE: Uh, the UFOs, I don't know one time we were on tour and we, like pulled off and it uh like, somehow we ended up, um... sitting on top of the van and looking out into the sky and just seeing like crazy, like... What looked like, like Star Wars you know all you could see was like a bunch of like lights moving in like in motion. But I think. It might have been dirt-bikes on a hill but that would have been like twenty dirt-bikes it would have been moving so strange, I don't know. It's very hard to like. My band the Format we were supposed to do some reunion shows but COVID happened, the week that, or I mean you know quarantine happened the week that, um, the week that we were supposed to do our shows but we had talked, I talked to Sam, the other member of the Format I was like like: "do you remember when that crazy shit happened in New

Mexico?” and he, he confirmed it but. I don't think we both, like. We don't have a good story about it other than just saying it.

SARAH: It just happened.

NATE: Yeah. It just happened. Um, well, but taking it even further back, what, who are these Game Grumps?

## On the Subject of the Game Grumps Part 2

SARAH: Oh well I was going to say, I was going to transition into that as well because I, while you were telling that story I remembered a story that Danny from Game Grumps told on Game Grumps when I watched it every single day all three episodes, um. He told this story about how he was driving, uh, in Nevada and it was night time and he turned the headlights off and he looked up into the cosmos and he realized 'how fuckin' small I am dude', that's how they talk on the show. Um. Anyways, Danny from Game Grumps has a, has a band, called Ninja Sex Party is the band. And lately they have had dizzyingly popular cover albums. Like, I'm talking like #1 on the Billboard charts for comedy music? I don't really know. Like really successful. I don't know. Anyways, I was asking you to protest this by not allowing them to cover your song because I'm sure that they.

NATE: Are they gonna do a 'Weird' Al style cover of it?

SARAH: It's a genuine cover, like. I don't know, maybe I should send you some? Their really popular is the REM Everybody Wants to Rule the World.

NATE: That's Tears for Fears.

SARAH: Tear. That's Tears for Fears? Shit.

NATE: No, it's okay. It's amazing what, uh. An age gap will do, I'm like: You idiot. Then I'm like wait a second...

SARAH: No, REM and Tears for Fears are always the same band to me even though I know Tears for Fears is better.

NATE: You're insane.

SARAH: You think REM's better?

NATE: REM is one of the best bands of like all time and like. Tears. That's not even saying anything bad about Tears for Fears. I love Tears for Fears.

SARAH: Well. That's fair. Hey I'm gonna send you this Ninja Sex Party video.

NATE: Alright. Oh, so cool, I've never.

SARAH: Oh God.

NATE: These are the guys?

SARAH: The guy on the right is in a different band called Tupperware Remix Party and they do like Daft Punk type stuff.

ADVERTISEMENT: There's no one American story.

NATE: How do you know about these people?

SARAH: So they started their channel in 2012 and I watched every single episode until 2015. So, and that's like thirty minutes of content every day and I was a young impressionable child.

DANNY SEXBANG: Take me on!

SARAH: (Laughing)

DANNY SEXBANG: Alright everybody, thank you so much!

NATE: And this is popular?

SARAH: This is really popular. Do you see how many views are on it?

NATE: Yes, wow. But I've never seen any of this stuff.

SARAH: Well it's, it's mostly popular with very insecure gay teenagers. It's not terrible covers if I'm gonna be honest it just sounds exactly like the original.

NATE: Yeah this sounds literally exactly like the original song.

SARAH: Yeah. Except it's gonna be the epic, uh, Danny Sexbang. That's his name, Danny Sexbang.

DANNY SEXBANG: Welcome to your life.

NATE: Are these guys, like. Okay that's enough. Are they nice?

SARAH: Uh, Danny seems like a great guy. From what I can tell.

NATE: Oh well then that's good. As long as they're good people I don't give a fuck.

SARAH: Oh so you will let them cover... Probably they'd cover Some Nights. I think that's the one they'd go with.

NATE: Okay, you know them better than me. I mean as long as they're nice I'm okay with it. As long as they get your approval then I'm fine with it.

SARAH: Well, I don't know. I watched them so much and it was uh. It's honestly shocking to me when I think back about how much time I spent uh, watching Game Grumps. And I'm not gonna send you a Game Grumps video you can look it up if you really. It's just like, do you know what a Let's Play is?

NATE: No!

SARAH: A Let's Play is when somebody records themselves playing a video game and Game Grumps pioneered this style, well I wouldn't say pioneered but they popularized this style where one guy's playing it and the other guy is just like commentating over it and they like talk to each other.

NATE: Well that sounds cool.

SARAH: I think it really fucks with how children develop conversational skills though. Because.

NATE: You think?

SARAH: Well. I'm, I, I've observed this I think a lot of the people I know who have watched Game Grumps have this issue of like not knowing when to speak cause they're used to two people talking in front of them and then they're just sitting there silent? It's like raised by the television except, you know.

NATE: Yeah, like, I totally get it. I, uh, I like. Now that I have kids I'm gonna have to get used to all of this stuff and it's. It's interesting, especially after being online? Um. Myself, I've started to realize I've really have to like let it go and realize things have changed? You, you know, cause you're telling me this and I'm like who the fuck wants to just watch someone playing video games? But then now I'm like. You know my friends have streams and I watch them play video games.

SARAH: Yeah. That's true. The Fall Guys.

NATE: What's that?

SARAH: The Fall Guys. Fall Guys? Is that something?

NATE: Yeah I think that's the game. I haven't played it. But uh, nonetheless, so I'm like okay cool, like, I wouldn't have been any different from you if I was your age it's just so totally different thing to do.

## On the Subject of Age

SARAH: Yeah. Well what did you grow up watching, like Arch, Arkie Buncher, Arkie Buncher, Archie Bunker?

NATE: Archie Bunker.

SARAH: Yeah.

NATE: Uh, no, that was past my time, uh. What the fuck did I grow up watching. I mean I guess by the time I was a teenager I was just listening to like punk bands and then just like wanting to be in a band and like listening to I guess stuff like Weezer and whatnot but, but as a kid for entertainment... I don't know I would just listen to the radio. I'm still a millennial, too, by the way, I mean it's not even like I'm a Gen Xer or something.

SARAH: Oh no I know, I think Gen Xers are like 50 years old. Isn't that where we're at with Gen Xers?

NATE: No, my wife is like 42 or something and she's a Gen Xer. I'm 38 I think 39 is Gen Xer.

SARAH: You're 38? Google is lying if you're 38.

NATE: What's Google say.

SARAH: Google says you're 36.

NATE: That' be great. Okay, fine, I'm 36. I might be 36, I don't know, I mean I don't even remember.

SARAH: Well were you born in 1984?

NATE: No.

SARAH: Oh, wow. You've gotta. Well, no you don't. But it's wrong. It says you're 36.

NATE: Don't, don't, don't fix that.

SARAH: I won't. I'm not gonna do. How... Do you think I know how to do that?

NATE: Yeah, I do, I do, I think you're capable of doing anything online that's what I think, that's what I think, uh, zoomers can do.

SARAH: Yeah I'm basically like Neuromancer I'm plugged in. I don't know.

NATE: Right. I don't even know what that reference is but I totally get it.

SARAH: You don't know Neuromancer?

NATE: No!

SARAH: That's, that's more of your! That actually, that came out in 1984, so you would have been 2 years old, I guess. So.

NATE: What's Neuromancer...

SARAH: Neuromancer is a sci-fi novel, uh, near futurism it's uh. Written by William Gibson it's about a, an AI that's. It's stupid, it's just some dumb shit.

NATE: Is it though?

SARAH: It's cool but it's also like, lame. Do you know what I mean?

NATE: Yeah, yeah no I totally know what you mean.

SARAH: Okay cool. I have more questions, I actually have like, several questions I didn't ask at all and it's been like thirty minutes.

NATE: Let's go! I've got like fifteen minutes before I've gotta put my kids to bed.

SARAH: Okay.

### On the Subject of Lin-Manuel Miranda's Hamilton

NATE: By the way, by the way, this is, this is, I'm enjoying this so don't think that.

SARAH: Awesome. I'm smiling, for the readers at home I'm smiling or something. Okay. You were on the Hamilton mixtape. I wanted to ask you about the Hamilton mixtape.

NATE: Please do.

SARAH: What happened?

NATE: Uh. I. Oh God.

SARAH: Are you all in on Hamilton?

NATE: No. No, um. That's. This can even be on the record, but, no. No I am not. But, um.

SARAH: This can be on the record? Or it can't.

NATE: It can. It can. But I can only say so much.

SARAH: I understand. There's a lot of label, Fueled by Ramen, etc. Okay.

NATE: Uh, label, um, uh. I'm. I'm writing a, uh. Well I guess I'm pretty much finished but I'm doing a Broadway musical.

SARAH: Oh wow!

### On the Subject of Promotion

NATE: And it was supposed to be in. What happens before it goes to Broadway is it goes to a regional theater. Uh. You know. And if it's really good it goes to San Diego. And I think we were planning on. It's, COVID has really pushed it back so it's probably gonna be another year before it goes into like its first stage of development, but uh. All the music is mainly written and all that other good stuff and it's supposed to go on Broadway in the next two years.

SARAH: That's amazing. That was gonna be my last question, was, do you have anything you have to tell me or you're gonna promote?

NATE: No, I don't promote anything, that's why I don't do interviews.

SARAH: Okay that's fair. But then I feel like I'm interviewing you for no reason and then I'm just like sapping all of this energy from you and then you don't get anything out of it.

NATE: No, I don't care, I don't do any interviews. I say yes to anybody that I follow online. I don't follow a lot of people.

SARAH: Well thanks for following me, I know you do have like two hundred followers or followings. So. It's. It's a tight circle.

NATE: Yeah, yeah. I, I still gotta curate it a little more. I like. Take a lot of pride in it. I gotta do a little more curating and cut. Do some cuts.

SARAH: So, josh letterman on the chopping block, or?

NATE: No! Of course not.

SARAH: I've talked to that guy, he's, he's cool! I think you'd get along.

NATE: I'm sure! I've, I'm, he's, he, I, I'm always shocked when he, when he likes, one of my tweets I think he, he like, one of the, like funny, for people, someone who does like funny stuff, it's always good.

### On the Subject of Sarah's Personal Interests

SARAH: Yeah. Have you read Thomas Pynchon?

NATE: No.

SARAH: Okay.

NATE: I don't know how to read.

SARAH: That's okay!

NATE: Thank you.

SARAH: Have you met Morrissey?

NATE: No, why would I meet Morrissey?

SARAH: I don't know, just asking based on my interests.

NATE: Hahaha! No, I've never met Morrissey.

SARAH: Okay. Well that's probably good.

NATE: Morrissey is cool.

SARAH: No, no, Morrissey is not cool.

NATE: I like Morrissey but I've never met him.

SARAH: No, no, no. You shouldn't say that.

NATE: What.

SARAH: He's said some horrible things.

NATE: Oh yeah, he has said some horrible things. But before he said some horrible things.

SARAH: Okay, I agree with you there.

NATE: He made some, he's written some great songs. But do I want to meet Morrissey? I probably don't want to meet most of the people that I've ever grew up idolizing, like, yeah.

SARAH: Yeah, I don't want to meet Danny from Game Grumps.

NATE: Okay. I don't want to meet him either.

SARAH: Has anybody asked you what you think of, like, well no! That's impossible. You haven't done an interview in five years?

NATE: Yeah.

SARAH: Okay, what do you think of Twin Peaks: The Return?

NATE: I didn't finish it.

SARAH: Really! Why not?

NATE: I just didn't have any interest in finishing it, I don't watch TV.

SARAH: Okay. That's fair.

NATE: Like, um. I just don't have the, patience? I don't know what, what it is. I just don't. My wife hates me for it. Um.

SARAH: Well you'll watch 90 Day Fiancé, but you won't watch David Lynch.

NATE: Well that's cause she's watching 90 Day Fiancé in bed but I'm like sitting there playing a sports game on my ipe, on, on my Switch.

SARAH: Oh you have a Switch?

NATE: I do. I got one right when the quarantine started.

SARAH: Can we be Switch friends? Do you want to be Switch friends?

NATE: Yeah, course. Why, but, but, but what do, what do you play?

SARAH: I play like, well I don't actually play that much, but I play Smash Bros sometimes?

NATE: See people talk about Smash Bros but I've never played it.

SARAH: It's kind of like. It's like fun for a while. If that sounds appealing.

NATE: Is it just like Street Fighter?

SARAH. No, it's not. There are Street Fighter characters in it and if you play them, then it's a bit more like Street Fighter. But it's sort of just like uh. It's dumb, it's just a video game.

### On the Subject of Television

NATE: Well I mean, that's, that's cool. But I just somehow I only play like sports games and um. But my wife watches 90 Day Fiancé and therefore I watch too and it's really good.

SARAH: I'm glad. Well I remember Big Ed. Was popular. Everybody was publicizing Big Ed. Do you know who I'm talking about?

NATE: No, because, I just started watching like last week and whatever season she was on is what I watch.

SARAH: I thought it was a show about mail order brides, is that not the case?

NATE: Kind of. Pretty much. Some of these people just fall, like, maybe meet, met some of these other people while they were abroad, and then they only get to see each other for so long and some of them fall madly in love and. I thought it would just be about mail order brides but it's a little more nuanced than that, half of the time.

SARAH: Okay.

NATE: Um. But, uh. Wait, what were we talking about though right before that.

SARAH: I don't remember. Oh, Twin Peaks.

NATE: Oh yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah. I loved, I, I, I was addicted to this, I loved the series, I think the first time I really watched it was probably about fifteen years ago. And then I loved it. Uh and my wife had never seen it so we watched it again maybe five or six years ago? Um. And then when The Return came on we were really jazzed and I did think it was really great but then I think life just got in the way and I have such a small window to watch anything, so one time off it is just, there's no turning back.

SARAH: That's fair. I think it's worth a—

NATE (cutting me off): And I have no regrets, I have no regrets about it either, and, and the thing is, is I really thought it was good when we were watching it.

SARAH: Well it's worth another shot if you thought it was good.

NATE: It's just, getting me to turn on the TV and watch something is impossible.

SARAH: Okay. Well I understand that because I feel the same way about anything that isn't Twin Peaks. I'm not a big TV guy except recently I watched– (self consciously) guy...– although recently I watched the third season of The Good Place and no other season.

NATE: Why?

SARAH: Uh. I just felt like that was. What I had to do. And it wasn't good. It wasn't, uh.

NATE: Doesn't seem very good.

SARAH: No, I don't know why I do the things I do sometimes.

NATE: I know. I feel you.

### On the Subject of Humor

SARAH: Some Nights. Etc. Um. Sorry. I've also been resisting the urge to make jokes like. Oh this is so much fun. You know. Just because that's annoying.

NATE: Yeah, it's so annoying. But also. So. I'm trying to pride myself on being the nicest person of all time after. What happened is. I've, I think I've always been a pretty nice person but maybe when things got a little out of control, um, as far as from a popularity standpoint it was hard to be nice? Especially when people would continuously make jokes like that all of the time it was like ugh it was a. Anyways. It was just hard to like. We were running around so much and it was so tiring, um. And it was like an interview every two minutes and then you'd have to play a concert and then wake up and do it again and. But also, travel across the country and this was like three straight years of that every single day. Um. Uh, so. I think I just like, talking to fans or anything like that, I don't know if. It's not like I was mean, I'm incapable of really being mean to anybody but I don't think I was nice. So now having gotten online for no real reason, like I said I'm not promoting or anything like that, I've just decided to be super super nice, so when I see people make that comment I really want to say shut the fuck up but I'm just like. Ha ha ha ha.

SARAH: Well that's really format of you.

NATE: Thank you.

### On the Subject of Time

SARAH: I don't know where we were at with the 15 minutes, are your children screaming at you?

NATE: No, we've got, we've got 5 minutes, 8:30 is when those little shits gotta go to bed.

SARAH: Okay, Jesus. Um. I have uh, just like two more questions.

NATE: Okay.

SARAH: Well actually three, I have three questions.

### On the Subject of Transcendental Meditation

SARAH: Do you believe, have you ever heard of the concept within Transcendental Meditation which is called uh, like the vast network or the web of interconnectivity? And, uh, was it fated that we met because of an enormous web of consciousness that we're all connected to.

NATE: Uh. Do you do Transcendental Meditation?

SARAH: No.

NATE: I do.

SARAH: You do?

NATE: I do.

SARAH: You really do!

NATE: Yeah, through the David Lynch Foundation.

SARAH: That's awesome.

NATE: It's. You know what? I still do it. It's been six years. Um. Uh. So that says something.

SARAH: I would love to do it but unfortunately I don't want to go to a place and pay the twenty dollars. Because I'm stubborn.

NATE: Um, I think that's fine. Like I said, I, I, I haven't, I, I have never. Wait, no I guess I did tell. For the first six months I told everybody and a brother to do it?

SARAH: Mhm.

NATE: But no one should do anything unless they want to? And, and, like I said. It's fine. I didn't take anything out of it other than the few classes that I had? And the things that I learned and I adapted it even to what I wanted to get out of it? So, um. I, I

usually used to just be like have no faith in anything or believed in any, I believed that everything is just random chance? I'm trying to open up my mind a little bit so yeah, yeah. It could be the intercontinental highway.

SARAH: Okay, cool!

NATE: Okay.

### On the Subject of Long-Held Fan Theories and Rumors Perpetuated by Hayley Williams of Paramore

SARAH: Oh shit, where is it. OK. Actually, you don't have to answer this one. I think that, okay, off the record, it would be funny to ask you if you wrote Stay the Night by Zedd because this is a fan theory that everyone has and I feel like you did it.

NATE: Why is it a fan theory? I didn't even know that.

SARAH: Did you not know this?

NATE: No.

SARAH: Oh, they believe that you used a, a pseudonym called Benjamin Eli Hannah, AKA Benihana.

NATE: Yeah.

SARAH: That's true?

NATE: Yeah that's true.

SARAH: Okay but no, but wait, the joke was I was gonna ask you it and then say like, don't answer it. I don't know why, that was just what I thought would be funny and then, I just asked it for real, so.

NATE: Oh sorry, I won't, I won't answer it.

SARAH: No I feel like it's all ruined now and I'll just publish that you really did write it and. Sigh.

NATE: That's the first time I've gone on the record as saying it.

SARAH: Well do you want to go on the record cause I said off the record before I said this.

NATE: Oh, no, you can put that on the record I don't give a fuck.

SARAH: Okay. And you also wrote Icona Pop's Hold On.

NATE: Yeah, I don't even remember that song to be honest.

SARAH: I don't either.

NATE: I don't like, literally think I ever heard that song, when I wrote it.

### On the Subject of Ruining Nate's Career Permanently

SARAH: Okay, uh, my third question is uh, uh. This is. Good for your PR or possibly disastrous. Um. I'd like to ask you: What do you think of transgender rights? Do we deserve medical care?

NATE: Yes of course. Hahahahaha. Yeah...What the fuck... What the fuck... Yes of course. What a *dumb* question.

SARAH: Okay, I have a friend who needs thirty thousand dollars. How do you want to go about it?

NATE: You have a friend who, what do you mean how am I gonna go about it?

SARAH: Well you're gonna, how do we give her the medical care? How are we gonna get it?

NATE: Ugh. How are we going to?

SARAH: It's a gotcha question. It's a gotcha question, Nate.

NATE: How is it a gotcha question?

SARAH: Cause you just said, some. Well whatever, who cares.

NATE: No, wait, no I want to know.

SARAH: The gotcha question is I said: do transgender people deserve medical care, and then I say oh I need a friend who needs thirty thousand dollars so how are you gonna supply the. That's a gotcha question. That's like saying like. Yeah.

NATE: Well what did. It's not like I can supply the thirty thousand dollars?

SARAH: Well I was figuring you probably couldn't but I thought it would be funny to, I thought it'd be funny. So.

NATE: Okay, fine. Fine. Um. Wait, so but if I do have to pay the thirty thousand dollars, then can I just say that I don't think that they deserve it?

SARAH: You wanna go on the record as saying...?

NATE: Yeah!

SARAH: Do you. Sure!

NATE: What if I actually did want to go, what if I did want to go on the record as saying that I don't think trans, transgender people deserve, people medical care?

SARAH: I don't know! I think that that would be, that would really blow my website up, if you said that on my website.

NATE: What, it's not enough that I said that I wrote Stay the Night?

SARAH: Who cares about that? Maybe a lot of people, I don't know.

NATE: I don't think so. You're the first person that's asked me.

SARAH: Well then probably nobody cares. No offense.

NATE: But, uh. Yeah. Of course.

SARAH: Okay. I'm glad you answered that question.

NATE: What if I... What if... I'm trying to think of these different... Like, who would say no?

SARAH: No, that was the sort of the joke of the, cause then you had to say yes.

NATE: Also, what if actually I don't believe it but I say that I do?

SARAH: Well how would I have any way of knowing? I just have to take you at your word. And when I type it out it's gonna be even more plain, there's not as much inflection, so like.

NATE: What can, what can seem like. How can you make it seem like I'm...

SARAH: I'll just like use like. When you say what the fuck I'll just use periods. Or like dot dot dot. What the fuck, dot dot dot.

NATE: How do you make it seem like I'm saying yes but I'm meaning no.

SARAH: There's a lot you can do with punctuation.

NATE: I believe it.

## On the Subject of Ending the Interview

SARAH: Okay, your children are in need of parenting.

NATE: That's right.

SARAH: I don't mean to keep you.

NATE: No, Sarah, this has been a wonderful conversation.

SARAH: Okay, I'm glad! I think I've had a fun time.

NATE: You did a great job I hope, I hope that you, I hope that it was worth anything.

SARAH: Well it didn't matter if it is or not, because... I'm not gonna say that. I was gonna say it was fun, it was fun.

NATE: Okay, well that's fine.

SARAH: But I didn't mean it in that way. But.

NATE: No, it's fine. When you bring attention to it that's when it gets bad. It's not like I'm patrolling for the word fun. Now, nowadays I have to fuckin', watch out if I say it, I'm just like what the fuck, I don't even care.

SARAH: Yeah. Well. I don't have a way to say. I don't know. It's the end of the interview.

NATE: Well, I guess that's. I guess I'll see you online.

SARAH: Okay. I'll like your tweets or reply maybe once in a while, so.

NATE: Please. Please do. I deserve it.

SARAH: Do you? No, let's not... Okay goodbye.

NATE: Alright. Thank you, bye.