

Full transcript of the *Growing up with gal-dem* episode Cat Burns

The hosts of this episode are Niellah Arboine and Natty Kasambala. The guest on the show is Cat Burns. This transcript is a verbatim transcript, and we are using verbatim transcription to capture the conversation:

- Non-verbal communication will be indicated within square brackets, e.g. **[laughter]**
- Overlapping conversation will be indicated with a forward-slash, e.g. **/me too!**
- Pauses will be indicated with ellipses, e.g. **It took me (...) a while**
- Interruptions will be indicated with a hyphen, e.g. **I was reliev-**
- Titles of books, publications, films, or brands will be indicated in *italics*, e.g. ***gal-dem***

Voices will be named with their full name for the first sentences, and then by their initials going forwards.

Natty Kasambala to NK

Niellah Arboine to NA

Cat Burns to CB

Transcription:

Intro music:

gal-dem clapping with intro chant: *g - a - l - d - e - m!*

[laughter]

Natty Kasambala Welcome back to a brand new season of *Growing up with gal-dem*. A *gal-dem* original podcast inspired by our book *I Will Not Be Erased: Our Stories About Growing Up As People Of Colour*.

Niella Arboine My name is Niellah Arboine, and I'm the life editor at *gal-dem*.

NK And my name is Natty Kasambala, I'm a former editor, and long time contributor at *gal-dem*.

NA *gal-dem* is an award winning media company committed to sharing the perspectives of people of colour from marginalised genders. Each week, we invite a guest to respond to old diary entries, letters or text messages from their younger selves. The point is to nurture important discussions about growing up.

NK You can find *Growing up with gal-dem* on *Apple podcasts*, *Spotify*, the *Acast* app, or wherever you get your podcasts.

NK Cat Burns is a vibrant new pop proposition, both conversational and universal, personal and generational. In 2020, Cat mastered the art of *TikTok* and was propelled to fame. Soon after she was handpicked by the platform as one of the most exciting emerging new talents. Kicking off 2021 with a wave of industry tips, this year, Cat Burns will release her much awaited debut EP *Emotionally Unavailable*, And a new single *Into You*, this July. She's definitely one to watch.

NA So it's great to have you on the show with us today.

Cat Burns I'm excited to be here.

NK How's everything going with you? What are you up to at the moment?

CB Not much at this current moment, I've taken a bit of a... just a music break, like sessions break this past month, because it was kind of every day. And I was just getting stressed out. A person needs like frequent breaks, and lots of maps, and lots of time to recharge. And when you have sessions every single day, it just takes a lot out of you especially if at the end of it, you then are like I don't have that much to write about. So I just kind of took this- the month of June off to kind of like, just to chill out... live... so I can actually have more stuff to write about and like going back into sessions now, it's gonna be a lot more like two to three sessions a week, chill out, but not be so bang, bang, bang.

NK Yeah, so I was gonna say, I know we've all had like, the world has had like a mad few years but obviously for you there's been like, the pandemic, but also this like insane, like career, like, burst for you. Which is obviously happening at a time when the world is quite weird anyway. Yeah. So I've always wondered like, for someone who now has like almost a million people following her on *TikTok* and all of these amazing things and signed with a major label, like, does it feel weird to have to do that- Does it feel real to you yet? Like, is it weird having to come to grips with like, the industry side of things when things aren't fully back to normal?

CB It's weird, because it's all happened, like, obviously it happened very quickly, like me growing my following throughout lockdown. But I think the process of like getting to know the industry and signing my deal and all of that, once I signed the deal, it was very much, I felt like I've been eased in, just because live isn't back yet and touring you can't do yet. So all kinds of things that would, especially for new artists, they always make sure that they put them on live shows and festivals and all that stuff. And because we haven't had that yet, it's very much a slower process and a lot- so I can kind of figure out, Okay, this is how like, the major label industry works. And this is how I can like navigate my way around it. So I'm kind of, obviously lock down was awful. And it was so awful for so many people and loads of people lost so many people, but in terms of kind of creatively, it helped me write a lot more, especially just being in the comfort of my own home and not leaving it because I'm a massive introvert anyway. So the idea of not leaving my house was actually very fun for me. So it was quite fun to be able to do it kind of slowly and ease myself into it and not have it be so rushed.

NK Yeah, I can imagine. Because even the fact that you're talking about, you know, the sessions being back to back to back, like imagine if it was that plus, then you're having to tour, then you've got like a million different shoots. So that's quite a nice, like, positive way to look at it.

CB Exactly.

NA Yeah, I felt like it must be really quite comforting to have a slower approach to getting into the music industry, rather than, as you said, straight on stage... Doing loads of festivals, which I'm sure will come and we will be very excited for it. But yeah, a slower way in?

CB Fingers crossed. Yeah, exactly. Exactly. I like to be eased into things anyway. I don't want to be just thrown in and like not getting my bearings and like know the people that are around me and like kind of build my team slowly and not rush it and I'm very glad that it's happened at a pace that it has.

NK Okay, cool. I think we'll get into your extract, if you're happy to read that out for us. And I wanted to ask just before you do how long ago- Does it have like the little time stamp on it that says when you wrote it on your notes app?

CB It's actually from about last year, kind of in the midst of lockdown, I guess. But it's all just about my journey of self love, and sort of understanding what that means to me. And like how it's kind of ever changing and always growing and like, so many things you don't even realise are to do with self love, until you kind of someone either checks you or you check yourself about it. Yeah, so it was from about last year.

NK Amazing. Yeah, I like the idea of checking yourself, which is a question I have for afterwards. But yeah, if you can read it out for us, that'd be amazing.

CB Okay, okay. [reading] It's disrespectful to me, how dare I go around saying I love myself and value myself and care about myself, when I don't say something that bothers me and end up even more uncomfortable? That's rude. I'm offended. I don't value myself or respect myself to say, when I dislike something. My feelings matter. Loving myself isn't just looking in the mirror and saying, Oh, I look nice. Yes, I love myself. It's deeper than that. It's truly valuing and respecting myself in every aspect, even aspects that feel uncomfortable and foreign. So I'm really hurt personally by my actions, because it's dawned on me that I've never respected or truly cared about my comfort and well being. That's really sad to think about, but really good also, because it means I've identified that and I know how I can rectify it. Before I can respect, value, check in, reassure, show care and communicate with anyone else, I have to start with myself.

NK Amazing. Thank you so much for reading that.

NA Yeah. Thank you. Thank you for sharing that. Yeah, I think I really enjoyed how introspective it was, and how you kind of held yourself, account for your own feelings and loving yourself. So I wanted to know, what does that feel like now reading that extract out loud?

CB Quite weird. I think this past year or so really, I started to look at what it means to truly love myself and building my self esteem, and valuing myself at a higher level, because I noticed I didn't allow myself to feel joy, or any sort of positive emotion to its fullest extent. Because I was always prepared for the sadness to come straight after. So anytime I get too excited about something, something bad happens, and then it's not fun anymore. And now I'm sad, instead of allowing myself to feel the joy and the sadness, and not be so afraid of it. And I think I was afraid of joy and afraid of kind of the positive things in life because I was so used to the sad, lower points of life. And I don't want to say comfortable in it... But that was kind of what I knew. And I always knew the sort of self sabotage and ways that I can like, not really grow. So kind of, I didn't realise that even by not saying if I'm uncomfortable by something, even if it's something really, really small, like I remember I was in a cab, and the cab driver was driving an unusually fast speed. And he could see that I was very uncomfortable. And he was like, oh, like, are you? Do you feel uncomfortable by my speed? You want me to slow down? And in my head? I was like, Yes, please slow down. What came out of my mouth was no, no, it's fine, just just fine. So it was kind of like, okay, so I am allowing myself to feel uncomfortable, just so somebody else doesn't feel uncomfortable, instead of always prioritising my comfort and speaking up when things bother me. So it was an interesting kind of thing to read and look at, because I definitely think my mindset is changing, especially as I've gotten older, I kind of want to make sure that I'm always prioritising myself, and communicate my needs effectively.

NK I think that's such an important point. I mean, the levels to which women are told to do that, and young women and black women and people who are British, to a certain extent [laughter] as well, like, it's so ingrained in us. And I think something that I read once that really reminded me of kind of the realisation you have in your extract was that whole thing of like, if you had a friend who treated you the way that you treat yourself, like, would you stay friends with that person? And like, if you were in a cab with someone else, and you're like, I'm really uncomfortable with the speed that this guy is going out and your friend was like, She's fine. Like, would that be okay? And I think that's the way you put it in such a powerful way of kind of saying, like, we have to take care of ourselves as well as we take care of the people around us because otherwise like you- at a certain point, you won't have that much to give.

CB Yeah, 100% I think it's like, I think society thrives off of us not being very confident in ourselves, and all of our insecurities and capitalism as well. If you feel sad, just go and buy some clothes or go get some food, go out with your friends and do this, don't go to therapy, don't do that, that means you'll actually get better. And we don't want you to do that, because then you'll realise there's not actually that much value in just buying a new pair of clothes to help you for two seconds. So I think as well, it's not really promoted for us to actually look after ourselves and respect ourselves and know when we're not being valued enough or respected enough, or things like that. So I think it is definitely natural and common for us all to kind of not treat ourselves with the same respect we treat all of our friends and family and people close to us.

And it's like, but we live in our body, and we'll have to live in our body for the rest of our life. So at least make life as fun for you as physically possible. But I think society doesn't want us to be that way.

NK That capitalism point. I mean, I didn't know someone could be more communist than me. I was like Oh, my God, you're so right [laughter]. I wanted to know, like, when you wrote this extract, and you kind of had that like moment, did it feel like a turning point in terms of how you navigated certain situations? And were there any moments of discomfort in that?

CB Definitely. Because I think before I wrote that, I viewed not speaking up for myself and kind of prioritising my comfortability as just a fear of conflict. So I was like oh I don't like confrontation, because it just makes me uncomfortable. And then it wasn't till I had therapy. And we kind of dissected what that really meant, because it was all good and well saying, Oh, yeah, I have a fear of confrontation, and I don't like conflict and stuff like that. And then when we kind of went into it, and was like, okay, but why is that? I realised that it was because deep down, I viewed myself as lesser than whoever it was I was arguing with. So I thought, Okay, this person in situations of conflict can articulate themselves so beautifully. And when I get nervous, I cannot say the words that I want to say, my words don't come out the right way, it gets misinterpreted and all just kind of goes up in flames. So because of that, I then avoided it at all costs, but then by avoiding it, it then made me inexperienced in it. So then every time it happens, I'm the same way, I'm still nervous, and I can't get my words out, and I get all frustrated. So then it promotes the idea. Again, See, I told you, you're lesser than that. You can't argue with people because you can't say anything when somebody says something to you. So once we kind of came to the root of what the fear of conflict was, for me personally, I know other people, it might just be generally they just don't like it and it makes them uncomfortable. But for me, it was realising that I thought that I was lesser than the person, whoever it was I was arguing with and that my points didn't hold as much weight or didn't matter. And that my comfort didn't matter. And me getting my point across didn't matter as much as the other person. So that's when I would kind of always recoil and just either backtrack, or just not say what it is I wanted to say and actually back myself because I didn't hold myself to a high enough sort of standard. And then once I realised that, that then kind of... I cried for a long time and was like, okay, that really means that I don't actually respect myself, and don't value myself. And as emotional as it was, it was good because I felt this now and I don't want to feel like this anymore. And my points do matter, my feelings do matter. And I can articulate myself and I have good points to make. And as soon as I kind of started realising that I was like, okay, it's not as scary as we think. And the more situations we get into where we have to speak up for ourselves, the less uncomfortable it was going to be. So it definitely was a turning point, writing that.

NA I feel like that must have been a really cathartic release. Because I'm sure, as we said before, society makes you feel this way and to be small and dim yourself as much as possible. After years, having someone- in your case of a therapist, tell you that what you're doing is really just harmful to yourself if you're putting everyone else in front of you, having someone tell you that you are important must have been a really powerful feeling.

CB Yeah, I think everybody should go to therapy just because I think- especially when you kind of, say your life story to them. And like Usually, the first thing I'll say is just like, Oh, wow. So no wonder why you do X, Y and Z. And they don't diminish it to be like a sort of a tiny little thing that you do. But they put everything into perspective for you. So you might think I'm not trusting I'm not this, not that. And I do this all the time. And I do that and they're like, Yeah, because this happened to you, this also happened to you, this happened to you, and this happened to you, so I think you should be patient with yourself and understand that this is your learned response to x, y and Z happening to you. And I think even if it's like you only go for a little bit, when somebody kind of rationalises your feelings and just even just reminds you that you're not crazy and that everything that you're doing actually makes sense. And that you shouldn't be afraid of your brain and your sad emotions and your happy ones. That's when I noticed that kind of shift where I was like, oh, everything I'm doing makes sense. I saw a quote as well today, and it's just befriend your emotions, the good and bad ones, and not be kind of so scared by them. Yeah.

NK Yeah, we're always like a sponsored, like, advert for therapy. [laughter] I always talk about my therapy sessions like honestly, I think you're so right, even when you are able to just go for like six months, the way that you can just look at the world and look at- and understand your own emotions, but also, like, apply what you've learned to understanding other people's emotions and how they are. It's like, such a game changer. Yeah. And I also wanted to add, like, on that conflict avoidant note, I think, something that I've definitely learned as well, because I'm that person too is like, I think you can almost get into your head that, you know, like, even the word conflict is like, quite loaded in terms of like voicing your opinions. I think sometimes the more that you are able to advocate for yourself, you realise, like, you say, I actually don't really like it when you do that. And like the world continues to turn. That person is still your friend, like nothing changes, except like you feel a little bit better. Yeah, like you said, you do it a couple times, and you get that experience. But also you learn that it's not this like, insane, apocalyptic event that needs to happen every time. It's just like having a conversation with a person. Yeah. So another question I had was, I guess more on the Notes app side of things, because I think we've had a few extracts that come from the Notes app, and I feel like it's like this really sacred space [laughter], of like introspection and like, privacy. And I wondered if you have used Notes app for like songwriting, like, what's your relationship with the Notes app?

CB Oh, my Notes app does everything on there, I write songs on my notes. Whenever I get like, sent a new mix, I put it on my Notes app, everything kind of goes on there. Honestly, everything goes on there. It's like my safe space of music and life. And anytime I need to have a conversation with somebody, or something is going on in my life, and I'm feeling really stressed by it, I just write an essay down in my notes app, and it just helps me feel a little bit more at peace, especially if I'm like, really, in an emotional state. I write down everything I'm feeling in the notes. And then I can kind of look back at the next day and like, look at it with fresh eyes and be like, Okay, this was how I was feeling. So it's a very, like sacred space for me. That's why I put literally everything down.

NK That's awesome. I've never been like a journaller like either, but I'm like, a hardcore notes app person. Yeah. Niellah do you journal?

NA I journalled, but now I Notes app. But I don't title anything. So then when I go back through to like, try and understand what I'm talking about. It goes from like intense shopping lists, to all my like, wildest thoughts at 3am. So I'm not sure ever what bits I'm meant to be taking?
[laughter]

NK I'm like book ideas. I'm like, like, this is a genius idea for a book [laughter].

CB And then you go look, and you're like, Where is it?!

NK Literally [laughter]. Or I look back, and it's like a really terrible idea. I was just like, on the bus listening to like a good song. It just felt right. [laughter]

NA I also have a long list of names. I'm just like, in case I have children, here are 30 names I've picked up over the last five years.

NK Yes!

CB That's quite smart actually.

NKI did that too. In lockdown. I've never been like a baby name person, but until lock down. And then I got really bored one day and I was just like, 'Sage' [laughter].

CB Sage is nice!

NA So, I guess I know the music industry can be like quite a difficult place to navigate, especially as a black woman. And then listening to your music, a lot of the themes in it are about putting boundaries in place, protecting your heart, protecting your peace. Are those ideas and themes within your music, something you can kind of transfer to your position in the music industry?

CB 100%. I think everybody is slightly not confused by me, but intrigued maybe because I always play my guitar. And I sing like pop songs and like acoustic pop songs, a little bit of soul and stuff... They're like, oh, the last person we've kind of seen do that, that looks like you is like Tracy Chapman. And I'm like, if that's the only person you can think of and that was in the 80s it's been 40 years. Come on now. Like, please. It's just like, ugh. So I think the idea that there hasn't been that many black women sort of doing the type of music that I want to do, the way that I'm doing it, I think is already kind of different. And then with my music, I just kind of want to promote just relatability, but in a way that is always kind of promoting growth as well. Like, obviously, there's some older songs that may sound a bit bitter, but moving forward and kind of all my stuff moving forward is very much like, I want to promote self growth and acceptance and exactly what you were saying, just setting boundaries and loving yourself and respecting yourself. Told from a person of Gen Z, and through my experiences and me living my life and growing and changing and understanding myself, I can write that down in song. And hopefully,

people can relate to it and it not matter, kind of the way I look but also show other young black girls who may not instantly have a connection to r&b, hip hop, whatever, and may like rock may like pop may like whatever genre they like that it's like, we can actually like other things. And we can be successful in said genres, since we did create it. So we can actually become successful in the genre we created. And I think having different people kind of show that is very effective and shows labels and the music industry. Oh, okay, this narrative and idea that we had that black women don't sell and don't make any money is a lie. And they do. So we can now start giving opportunities to these young black girls, these young, dark skinned black girls who like to play the guitar or who like to play the drums or who like to play whatever instrument they want to play. Okay, we can give them some opportunities as well, because we haven't done that before.

NA Yeah, hearing you speak and hearing you speak through your music and then relating that to your extract. It's like you found that in confidence and self belief and worth in yourself. It's like, yeah, it's lovely to see that you've made that kind of full circle back. And now you can give that to a whole other generation of young black girls, alternative Black Girls, black girls that love pop. Yeah, I wish I was much younger, when you were around. That would have been helpful.

NK Yeah. Doesn't it make you feel old? [laughter] Yeah. Yeah, I mean, I know, it's like the most patronising thing like a person can say, and this is how I know I've actually entered elderhood. I don't know whether that's a word. But obviously, you're like, Yeah, I know, just a mirror what I'm saying like, it feels like you've come into your own and like, it's almost like harder to believe that there was a time in which you- and I know that sometimes it's the case that you know, people can say things through music that they might not be able to say, like in their day to day life. But it's almost like hard to, to believe that there was a time when you doubted your voice or that you might have doubted that you have like these important things to say, because I think, as is proven by your success, like you have a really invaluable voice in this industry.

CB Thank you.

NK And I think just on that, like theme of growth, I guess, like something that you talked about in the extract, that I thought was really great. It was how you said like, I felt hurt by my own actions. And I felt like that wasn't something I've heard, like, articulated in that way. And I wanted to ask or just like, make sure that- I wanted to ask actually, to just check in to see as you grow, and as you keep reflecting on like, your past selves and mistakes you might have made in your life, do you feel like you also have that room for I guess, like self forgiveness and like to feel like, okay, I was that person in the past. But that's okay. And I'm going to move on. Like, I can forgive myself as much as I would forgive a friend of mine, if that makes sense?

CB I definitely didn't for a long time. Like, I definitely found it really hard to forgive my actions that I made when I was younger. I just was so annoyed with myself on why I made the particular decisions that I did, or why I did certain things, and find it really hard to forgive myself, because the human brain just has its way of being like, well, if I had only just done this, then this wouldn't have happened. And then I wouldn't have been in this situation. So thanks a lot 17 year old me, you've made everything harder. So it's that kind where it's like, but if I just did this, and this and

this, and then I guess it's again, therapy just helped me sort of come to peace with my past and my past self and the decisions that I've made and really understand and accept that if I hadn't made the decisions, I wouldn't have learned what I did and wouldn't be where I am today. And my therapist always makes me do exercises where like I just close my eyes. And I imagine myself having this sort of moment with my younger selves. And whether it's just like holding each other, having a conversation. So I constantly talk to like my younger self. And whenever we're in situations of discomfort, I'm like, we're safe, I'm safe, I've got you don't worry, you don't need to go crazy. Because when you go crazy that's when everything goes a bit messy, and the same with like, my 17 year old self, and I kind of have a reference of it in my head, where it's kind of like, if we're like driving, and the car is life or whatever, or the road is life or whatever. For ages, my younger selves were always the drivers, and I was just in the passenger seat, just kind of watching them dictate my life and actions and get me into situations that I probably shouldn't be in. And then once I kind of realised that through therapy, I was like, Okay, I need to get into the driver's seat, and they can be the passengers. And they can say things to me. But ultimately, it's my decision because I am an adult. And I am the one to make the decisions. 12 year old me, seven year old me, are children, so they're not thinking rationally about things properly. 17 year old me is still a kid who doesn't really know things, the way that I know things now, just like, when I'm 25, me now is not going to have the same knowledge that 25 year old me has.

NK I literally had also written down like, do you ever almost like apologise to yourself for your mistakes, I think the way you've put it so beautifully, like, not allowing your past and your history to drive the car that's going towards your future, basically, like you can't let that stuff shape you and it can't hold you back either. Even if you've moved on as well, like you can't hold that resentment. So I think that's a perfect way of putting it.

CB Yeah, you have to forgive yourself. And that's what I've learned to do.

NA I don't know why it's cool. But I felt like I was listening to something that was talking about, like the different phases like if you end up acting more in your child phase, and how it affects you are acting in like a parenting way, when really we're adults and like having to lean into, you know, acting as an adult and doing what's right for you now, and it's so easy to live in the past and think about all those things. And it almost ties back in with what you were saying about not having that confidence to speak up for yourself. Because when you're beating yourself up for stuff you've done before, why would you now want to carry on advocating for yourself? But yeah, that forgiveness is really important to move forward. I had a question. I wondered if you could expand on about the part in your extract where you say, needing to value yourself in every aspect, and even aspects that feel uncomfortable and foreign. What were those kind of uncomfortable aspects that you were talking about at the time of writing this?

CB It was more that I didn't realise how wide loving yourself like branched off into. So I didn't realise that not speaking up for yourself and not saying things in uncomfortable situations or situations of conflict meant that you weren't respecting yourself and loving yourself the way you should. I thought it was just oh, I can look in the mirror. And I felt pretty today. So you know, I look nice. I'm not saying sort of mean things to yourself. But it was this kind of I got to a point

where I was like, I wasn't really saying anything to myself. It wasn't- I wasn't being mean, but I wasn't particularly being overly loving or really nice to myself. It was just like, Okay, look nice, like, Okay, cool. I wasn't like, but I wasn't really like digging into what true self love and self esteem was. until it was like, okay, and even in situations of discomfort. I still don't say anything, which means that I don't value myself. And I'd like especially in situations of discomfort and things that are like foreign to me, which at the time was conflict. I didn't realise that that meant that I didn't love myself as much as I thought I did. Because if I did, I would have said something, or advocated for myself and been like, no, this is what I mean, when I say this. I don't mean that, this is what I mean. I back myself a lot more, I realised that that meant that my self respect was actually quite low. Because I was just kind of going okay, yeah, yeah, okay. Yeah, yeah, that's fine. So I think once I kind of realised that, it pushed me to be like, okay, I don't want to be that way. I actually want to respect myself and back myself and let people hear my points because I have got things to say. And I do know I'm talking about so. Yeah, that's what I kind of meant by that particular sentence.

NK Awesome. And then I think what you were saying about, you know, thinking about your younger self, obviously makes you the perfect candidate for this podcast, which is all about growing up. And so I wanted to ask, what advice would you give to your younger self, if you could, this younger self who wrote this Notes app and maybe the self that she's kind of chastising for not speaking up?

CB I would say continue to be patient with yourself and continue to respect yourself. And know that your words, your feelings, your desires, your wants, your needs, your likes or dislikes, or matter. Even if you felt like they haven't ever or people have made you feel like they don't. They do. And life is much more fun when you speak up for yourself, because then you feel less uncomfortable. And it's not fun, feeling uncomfortable. I know from experience. But that's the advice I'd give myself.

NK Amazing. Thank you.

NA And what would your younger self think about where you are now?

CB I think she'd be quite proud. I think I've been doing these like things on my birthday, where I send myself an email to my future self, which has been really cool. And I did one where I read it for my 21st birthday. So it was actually I did one last year for it to receive on my 21st, which was in June. And it was really weird reading the email, because it was like, oh, have you signed a publishing deal? And though you wanted to do that, and I was like, yes I have. So did you sign a record deal? Yes, I have. Did you get out of this situation? Yes, I did. How are you feeling with your self confidence? A lot better. Oh, what's your relationship? Like? Are you dating boys or are you dating girls? Oh, like it was so like, weird to sort of read. I was like, Oh, my gosh, I've grown so much. I think that my younger self would be proud of where I am today. And hope that I'm always pushing for self growth. And it was really nice, because *India.Aire*, on my birthday sent me a lovely message. And she said, I hope that you never stop finding yourself and that you're always ever growing, which I thought was really nice. Because I was like, yeah, I always

want to push for self growth and always want to become the best version of myself, but also realising that that never ends. And that's just a lifetime sort of journey. And it was nice to kind of be reminded of that. So yeah, I think she'd be proud.

NK That's so beautiful. And I think you're so right, in terms of that thing of like, sometimes people feel like growth is like, towards some destination. And it's, I think true growth- I mean, I sound like I'm the Dalai Lama. [laughter] Personally, I find true growth. The first thing I learned when I felt like I had grown up a little bit was that I'm always gonna have like, flaws that I can absolutely do better on and like you do really never never stop growing. Can I ask one final question, which you might not want to answer? Because it might be like birthday wishes. But I'm just curious now, like, was there anything that you feel comfortable sharing that was on your email from this birthday, that you hope you can grow and achieve over the next year?

CB I cannot remember what I put in that email. And it- because once you've sent it, it's gone. You won't receive it until the next year. And I don't think I put it in my notes. I literally put it on the email. It's just called Dear future me.com. It's really, I think I had asked myself where I was with respecting myself again, like just where I was in my fear of conflict and like my relationship and how that was going and all just like, kind of stuff like that. And like music, all kind of similar stuff the last year, but just like, obviously, more ahead of where I was before.

NK Well, thank you so much for joining us on the show.

CB Thank you for having me.

NA Given me a lot to think about.

NK Yeah, I was really looking forward to speaking to Cat because I just think, I don't know, I just see so many of us in like, at least my echo chamber, really rooting for her. And yeah, she was such a great person to chat to a lot more... Like she had so much gravitas I felt in terms of like how she thought about life and like her mission.

NA And very just emotionally mature, like quite beyond her years, which is quite refreshing to hear her, you know, be so talkative about therapy about where she is with herself. Like, I was not expecting that at all.

NK I know. I think you mentioned it as well, just in terms of like, not to make it all about generations because I'm like one of those people stuck right between Gen Z and millennial. But you were saying how you feel like a lot of Gen Z's like they start therapy early. They've got like this other level of like self perspective.

NA Yeah, I feel like yeah, Millennials we're just getting on the therapy hype now. So like, not that it's too late, [laughter]

NK But it's too late.

[laughter]

NA Whereas Cat just seems so like confident in like, talking about their emotions, her emotions and her feelings, which I just thought was really wonderful to see and how that relates to her music as well.

NK Exactly. I think I'm really like jealous of it like it makes me wish I was able to kind of... I mean, I'm sure there are still things that everyone has regrets, and everyone kind of continues to grow. But I'm almost jealous of her. The amount that she thinks about like her wider context and like herself at such a young age and like how it's only going to continue to get better and better as she grows. So, yeah, that was a joy.

NA It was. Yeah, like especially relate to her. Was it her car analogy of like not being the driver, not being in the driver's seat of your own life. I was like, Oh my gosh, as a bar.

NK Honestly, I'm taking that one with me.

NK This has been an *Ai Ai Studios* production.

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NK We'll catch you on the next episode.

Exit music:

gal-dem clapping with intro chant: g - a - l - d - e - m!

[laughter]