

FOGO: Fear of Going Outside
Season 2, Episode 5: "Pork!"
Transcription

{{Sound Cues}}

—

Ivy Le, addressing the listener:

Hey, indoor besties! Here's the content warning. If you are a vegetarian or an animal lover or just squeamish, you should know, there's gonna be meat and bone and butchering noises like a Foley session for *The Walking Dead*, except all the dismembering on FOGO is real. But there are no images, so I would argue it's not that bad! It's not that bad. Listen, when you're ready. We're really getting into the meat of things today.

{{Bass-y rhythmic electronic music plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

To me, animals belong outside. I do not have pets. I did not grow up with pets. Bobcats and dogs and cows are just one bucket, and that bucket is Not in MY house! That changed when I moved to Austin, Texas, and I'm gonna tell you what happened here. It challenged me as a meat eater more than anything I've encountered so far on this hunting quest.

I rented a room in a house with six adults and a dog. This dog stayed home with me while everyone else left to go to work. Back when we did that. I was a freelance reporter, and this dog, her name was Tonka, like Tonka trucks. She would sit at my feet under my desk whenever I was writing on my computer. I called her my writing dog.

She died this past year, uh, and I cried for two days. She, she was so attuned to the humans around her. She was chill with me, but playful when the more active roommates came home, and one time her mom's ex showed up at the house. I had never met him, so I didn't know that that's who it was specifically, but I knew it was some asshole who didn't belong there because Tonka, the sweet dog, was mad about it.

After a month or two of living together, I realized I could tell when this dog was smiling. Did you know dogs smile? Animals have meaningful facial expressions? That was news to me. My dog niece, Tonka, was observably experiencing an emotional life, not entirely unlike mine. I watched her express joy, love, excitement, anxiety, disappointment, you know?

And it made me realize that animals like cows and pigs and sheep must be experiencing these things too. I just didn't know what it looks like because I don't live with those animals. I'm not a farmer. I bet farmers do know they're animals like that, but it's different cause when Bessie dies, it's bonus day.

I didn't give up meat after living with Tonka, but I probably eat less meat. My whole life, everyone's been telling me animals aren't as conscious as us or whatever, but I don't eat meat because I think animals are lesser than me. I eat them because they're tasty. Could—could you imagine your love life if you only ate things you didn't respect? Be fucking for real.

{{Bass guitar note; drum beat stops}}

{{FOGO Theme Music: fun bouncy music with electronics fades in}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

I'm Ivy Le with one E, and you're listening to FOGO: Fear of Going Outside. A Nature show by the most reluctant host ever. I'm trying to figure out how to go hunting and then I'm actually going to do it. So far, I've tried and failed to get a gun, so I got a bow and arrow instead. I've tried and failed to get land to hunt on, but I'm still looking and I've tried and failed to find a mentor to guide me on my first hunt.

Wow. When you say it out loud like that it's not going very well, is it? On today's episode, I'm butchering a whole hog with a guy who wrote the book on hog hunting because I have an unreasonable amount of faith that I'm gonna get out there and successfully hunt down a boar, and I will need to know what to do next.

{{FOGO theme music stops}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

I've met a lot of people along the way who are trying to help me on my quest. Don Nguyen, the hunting and mountaineering guy from last episode, has been sending me links to fashionable gear, even though he can't come down to help me hunt. Nicole Qualtieri, that hunting and fishing editor from Montana, uh, she is reaching out to all of our contacts in Texas.

And Allie Morris, that reporter from Dallas in episode one. She is trying to connect us to a rancher she knows through another reporter. A rancher is someone with a ranch, which is land. And Texas ranchers famously hate wild pigs.

{{A boar grunts}}

{{Upbeat Adventure music plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

So I'm trying to be optimistic, but I'm also getting tired. I've been running into cost barriers and cultural barriers and historical barriers even. But you know, for a while I couldn't even name those. So now that I understand a bit more why I've been running into obstacles, I'm changing my approach.

{{Upbeat Adventure music swells and stops}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

When I started trying to get into hunting, I didn't even know that there was a difference between hunters and gun people. Once I figured that out, I still had no idea that there were different cultures of hunters. Let's call them "old school hunters" and "new school hunters." Old school hunters here in the states are mostly white men who learned how to hunt from their fathers or grandfathers and uncles.

I think they see hunting as a heritage sport that needs protecting from newcomers. But I can't ask them 'cause they're not returning my messages. Then there's new school hunters. Many of them learn to hunt as adults. They're motivated by food or love of nature, and they're eager to bring new hunters to the door.

They're even happy to welcome temporary hunters like me, motivated solely by an obsession with nature shows in the pursuit of fame. One of these new school hunters is a well-known chef right here in my backyard in Austin.

Jesse Griffiths at Dai Due:

I'm Jesse Griffiths. I'm the, uh, chef and owner of Dai Due and also the New School of Traditional Cookery and, uh, author of The Hog Book.

Ivy Le, narrating:

The name of his restaurant Dai Due is from an Italian proverb that means "From the two kingdoms of nature, that's land and sea, choose food with care." And the new school of traditional cookery is more than cookery.

Jesse at Dai Due:

So that's our educational branch of the business. It's where we take people hunting and fishing and then teach them how to also cook and process and preserve, uh, wild game and fish.

Ivy, responding:

Oh, okay. So, um, it's like a cooking school, but like you shoot stuff.

Jesse:

Precisely. And I couldn't have put it better myself.

Ivy Le, narrating:

Jesse has a big old red beard. It's very Austin.

{{Hip-hop drum beat starts playing}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

He could be a chef or a barista, or a brewer or a lumberjack. In Austin, all these professions dress the same. He theoretically has red hair on his head too, but I can't tell from my height. I've seen him on Meat Eater with Steven Rinella, Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern, and a bunch of videos on Bon Appetit and more, and in every video I've seen him in, he towers above everyone else in the frame. I'm meeting him at his restaurant, Dai Due. When he gets going about feral hogs. I feel like I might have found a new white friend.

Jesse at Dai Due:

I regard the feral hog as kind of a kind of a miracle, you know, in that if you have an invasive and destructive species out there that's highly invasive and highly destructive and very, Very prolific. How bad would it be if these things tasted terrible? Right? What a blessing it is that they're good to eat and to think that people just leave them out in the field 'cause you quote-unquote can't eat those things.

Ivy, responding:

So there's hunting just for the sport of killing not to eat?

Jesse:

Yes ma'am. Pig hunting. Um, pig hunting's an interesting thing in that. When you tell humans that they can kill with impunity, then sometimes they go—they take that pretty far. Like for instance, a helicopter hog hunt. Like I would say that none, none of those hogs are utilized. And I'm not judging that, the eradication part. I think my whole stance is to try to get people to feel comfortable about utilizing 'em. If they so choose, I personally utilize every single one of them. And, you know, if anybody's hunting with us or at a class or anything like that, then we're, we're definitely using a hundred percent of that animal.

With hog hunting, there's, there's hunting for food, hunting for fun, excitement, however you want to quantify that emotional response to it, and hunting for eradication.

{{Motivational Orchestral Strings start playing}}

Jesse, at Dai Due:

So, I've always compared hogs to—they're like Nazis and zombies. They're totally fine to kill. You can kill all of 'em if you want. You know, like in a movie, you can kill all the Nazis and kill all the zombies, you know?

And, and hogs are like that too, where we've been told "These are hyper destructive. Go out there, there's no limit. You can hunt 'em 24/7, 365. Go out there and kill all you want.

{{Motivational Orchestral Strings stop}}

Jesse, at Dai Due:

I, I mean, I enjoy the hunting of them very much, but you know, other people might be like, “Oh cool, I can just go out and lay waste to a bunch of pigs and, and not have to—not have to do any work afterwards either.” You know? That’s kind of a bonus in a lot of people’s minds ‘cause there’s so much work.

Ivy Le, narrating:

Jesse agreed to teach me how to break down a real wild hog today. But before we go to see her, I have questions about these almost mythically reviled animals.

Ivy, addressing Jesse:

One of the seminal movies of my life was Babe. Hmm. So I know pigs, you know, talk.

Jesse, responding:

Mm-hmm.

Ivy:

And that they’re very intelligent animals and that even the ones that we farm are very intelligent animals.

Jesse:

True.

Ivy:

So what’s the difference between, you know, an animal that you would keep as a pet or on your farm versus one that’s in the wild .

Jesse:

I mean, technically, and, uh, I guess biologically not much.

Ivy:

Then why—why are—why are one—why is one of ‘em Nazis?

Jesse:

Because they’ve escaped. They’ve gone, they’ve gone wild. They’ve gone feral. They’re destructive. So there’s technically not a difference between a farm raised hog. And a wild pig. You know, it’s—it depends on what side of the fence they’re on. They just, they don’t have an address, you know, and once they get wild, then they are considered a feral hog. But the same species, *Sus scrofa*, you know, the Latin name, it’s the same for all of them.

Ivy:

So they’re literally the same species?

Jesse:

Yes.

Ivy:
Oh!

{{Bouncy electronic music starts playing}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Wilbur from Charlotte's Web is the same species as the feral hog I'm gonna hunt? Except the feral hogs more flavorful? Am I disgusted or salivating? Both. Both. I think I'm both. When we come back, Jesse and I get in the kitchen, where the knives are.

Jesse, in the kitchen:
It's a shitty job.

Ivy, chuckles and responds:
Literally.

{{Bouncy electronic music stops}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

I am meeting Jesse at his restaurant on a day that they're closed. A couple other chefs are preparing things for the week. This is not fast food. There are shelves of giant mason jars, pickling and fermenting and infusing things for future brunch patrons. We go back to the cold room where my hog is hanging. Jesse actually hasn't seen the pig yet either, so when he does, he slaps it.

{{Sound of meat getting slapped}}

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):

In a gesture that I interpret to mean "Good pig. This ass is satisfactory."

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Jesse, in the kitchen:
Oh, well that happened.

Ivy Le, narrating:

He's talking about some blood that's splattered on the ground when he took the plastic body bag off, no biggie. The hog is hanging on a hook by the space between its hind leg bones.

Jesse, in the kitchen:
Oh, it looks great. That's a...

{{Jesse's voice trails off}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

It's probably four feet and change long from snout to toe. The hooks are on rails up in the ceiling, so we push her through the whole restaurant to get to the giant butcher block in the middle of their open kitchen. And finally Jesse lifts her up off the hook and this pig flops to the butcher block counter.

{{Sound of meat flopping onto a counter}}

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):

When all her organs were still on her, I estimate she was between 200- 250 pounds. I'm eyeballing it based on how she looks compared to me: shorter, but wider and denser than I am.

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Jesse, in the kitchen:

I mean, I think one of the things that hunters—first time hunters have to get over in the field is when they go and they touch it and everything. It's warm.

Ivy, responding:

Mm-hmm.

Jesse:

You've never touched meat that was like raw meat that was warm. You know, it's body temperature. It's got a really bristly tough hide on it, and it's full of, um, all kinds of guts. Uh, and you gotta get all that out. And when you kill the animal, you're about halfway done, you know?

Ivy:

Mm-hmm.

Jesse:

A lot of people look at it as like, "I'm done!" No, you're not. You're not. You're, this could go on for another couple of weeks of packaging and making sausage and getting everything cleaned and put away and—and stacked in the freezer and things like that. So back to, uh, the gutting? I think. So we're, we've after we've skinned the animal, we've got, it looks like this, except this whole cavity is gonna be full of, uh, you know—you've got your intestines, your stomach, all your other viscera in there, and then your heart and lungs and your trachea, things like that. And everything has to come out. And so I start at the back, um, the very farthest point. Without being—

Ivy:

The butt hole.

Jesse:
To the butt hole.

Ivy:
The butt hole. Okay.

Jesse:
You have to core the butt hole.

Ivy:
Like an apple?

Jesse:
Exactly. That's—that is the exact metaphor—

Ivy:
So I need to get a butt hole core. Is that at—where do I get one of those? William Sonoma?.

Jesse:
You think you invented that, but it's called a butt out.

Ivy:
Butt out.

Jesse:
Yeah. Right.

Ivy:
Okay.

Jesse:
Yeah. And it is—

Ivy:
Butt out.

Jesse:
It is the most medieval, awful looking things. I don't use 'em personally, I just do it old fashioned with a knife. I mean, in my opinion, a knife is the best way to go for coring the anus, and you can quote me on that.

{{Ivy laughs}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

This pig has already been skinned and gutted due to laws about what you're allowed to bring into restaurants. You can't shoot a hog outside and just bring all that outside stink inside and serve it to customers because regulators agree that the outdoors is nasty. There's parasites and shit out there, like literal parasites and literal shit.

Since some of the field work has already been done on this hog, no matter how long it ends up taking me to butcher it. In real life, when I really go on my real hunt, it will take even longer. After the hours and hours of hunting, once you kill an animal, there's still hours left of field work to do.

{{Fun chill electronic music plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):
For foodies this is when the fun really starts.

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Jesse, in the kitchen:
Today we've got a cold feral hog carcass on the table, and we're gonna cut that up into pieces.

Ivy, responding:
Okay.

Jesse:
To edible pieces. We're also gonna have to look at that hog and determine, because it's a wild animal and there's so many variations in the quality of each individual pig, what we're gonna be able to do with it.

In the field after you killed that first pig, one of the most important roles is that you're really gonna need to take care to get it cold, keep it dry, you know, keep any kind of, uh, bacterial contamination from happening to the carcass, things like that.

Ivy:
How do I get all the ticks and the allergens off? Like—

Jesse:
You don't—

Ivy:
Just like dishwash soap or what do I do?

Jesse:
Some people do something like that. Some people will power wash it. We glove up, absolutely. While we are skinning and gutting—while we're in—in contact with any kind of reproductive or digestive organ on a feral hog, you must wear gloves.

Ivy:
Bring gloves noted.

Jesse:
Bring gloves for sure. Um, you—these animals, unfortunately, can be vectors for some diseases: Trichinosis, Brucellosis, uh, Pseudo Rabies, Tularemia.

Ivy:
Oh shit. I only know what two of those diseases were.

Jesse:
I made the other two up.

(Ivy laughs.)

Jesse:
Um, and you do have to be concerned about things like that. You know, you can freeze it for a couple weeks at negative five in any standard freezer and then braze it, slow, cook it, whatever. Don't eat it rare. You'll be fine. You'll be fine. But during that process, like if you have a cut on your hand or anything like that, there is a potential, uh, for you to get sick. It's very rare.

Ivy:
What if like a droplet of, of sweat, of like, pig sweat gets into my eye and I like catch like Andromeda or something.

Jesse:
Well, they don't sweat first off, but you could get a droplet of blood.

Ivy:
God, what if I become the vector? We already have so much Asian American hate.

Jesse:
You're not gonna spread it, you know

Ivy:
I mean, I might, why wouldn't I? Why wouldn't I spread it? If I get it, why wouldn't I spread it?

Jesse:
You're like Patient Zero of some new hog disease?

Ivy:
Yeah.

Jesse:

No, I don't, I don't think it's, it's not gonna happen. It's not gonna happen. You're gonna be fine.

Ivy:

Right, but if it did happen to you, like you are not representing your entire race.

Jesse:

It is true. You have an excellent point.

Ivy Le, narrating:

Jesse and I wash our hands and grab a couple knives. If you're squeamish, this is where the butchery starts, but don't worry, it's not for long.

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Jesse, in the kitchen:

So you want to take this leg off?

Ivy:

Okay.

Jesse:

Okay. What I'm gonna do is, I'm gonna reset this pig.

Ivy:

Yeah. Maybe—right.

Jesse:

Assistance here and so make, yeah. Cut...Exactly, exactly.

Ivy:

Where's that bone?

Jesse:

You're, you're right on it.

{{A hip hop drum beat starts}}

Jesse:

So you wanna kind of cut in a little harder towards the, there you go.

Ivy Le, narrating:

Jesse demonstrates what to do on the right side. The pig's right, and then hands me a knife to do the other side. He's easily a foot taller than me, maybe two. I don't know. I can't see that high. He has a great cutting angle with his knife and it works fine for me, but I make a mental

note to get myself a longer flexible boning knife to get around the pelvic bones and joints in the field, and one with a more severe angle for the rest. I'm out here trying to make a nature show, but let's be real. Everyone wishes they had a cooking show and I am living the dream right now.

{{The hip hop drum beat stops}}

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Jesse, in the kitchen:

You want to do is then identify where your ball and socket joint is, and what I'll do is use that as a reference and then you can just go to the other side. So much of butchery is just carving a knife along a bone.

Ivy, responding:

Yeah.

{{The hip hop drum beat comes back in}}

Jesse:

And the worst mistake you can make here is gonna be sausage, so it's not a big deal.

Ivy:

Okay.

Ivy Le, narrating:

Jesse is trying to be encouraging and he is, but sausage is no consolation prize for me.

Sausage is just fat dry hotdogs. I'm from Texas. There are about five cuts of barbecue I'd rather have before ordering sausage, like ribs!

{{The hip hop drum beat stops}}

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Ivy, in the kitchen:

All right, so you're using the arm roast to stabilize the ribs?

Jesse, responding:

Yeah, yeah.

Ivy:

Okay.

Jesse:

And then I'm gonna take my cleaver and I'm gonna work backwards and I'm gonna remove the ribs from the spine. This is the most fun part of the whole thing. So I'm just using the tip of this cleaver and I'm gonna tap it along.

{{Tapping Sounds}}

Ivy:

Tap it all the way down the spine.

Jesse:

Yeah.

Ivy:

But you're just– you're not going all the way through it.

Jesse:

Correct. I–I don't want to go through, I just want to just like–get right through those bones, right along the spine. And this does, admittedly, take some practice to do. I wanna make sure I got all the way through, yeah.

{{A hip hop drum beat starts}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

This butchering lesson is basically a very, very hands-on and up close anatomy lesson, which I needed. I think I'm learning more about my body butchering this hog than I did in 13 years of public school in Texas. But I need to learn how to hunt. So I take this opportunity before we've cut up the pig beyond recognition to ask Jesse about where to aim when hunting.

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Ivy, in the kitchen:

So where am I trying to hit? From like a cooking perspective.

Jesse, responding:

Oh, well, um, your–your–your new hunter target, like your best shot placement for somebody that doesn't have a lot of experience is going to kind of go counter to your best–your best place to hit it for, um, more food. You're gonna want to get in the middle of the shoulder here.

Ivy:

Like the middle from the side or the middle from the top?

Jesse:

Well, let's look at it. Let's do this. Um, okay, so on a pig, and I'm gonna open up the sternum real quick, just a little bit.

Ivy:

All right.

Jesse:

Let's see if I can get in there.

{{Cutting Sounds}}

Ivy:

I mean, I already feel better 'cause I'm like, that does sound like it hurts.

Jesse:

Oh yeah.

Ivy:

You know, but like I, I eat a lot of meat and, and I have no, um, delusions about what that means. You know, but like, you know, everybody kind of talks about how to make it as painless as possible, but I'm looking at like, where, you know, I'm tapping here at the top of this arm, right? Like trying to be like, okay, the bullet goes through here, it'll go through the heart. But I'm like, that still looks pretty painful. So as a new hunter, I'm looking to kind of punch it— right there, like above the elbow, right? But, but then an experienced hunter is going for what? The head?

Jesse:

Uh, a neck or a headshot typically.

Ivy:

Okay.

Jesse:

But that can be, that's harder. A much smaller target. And that can go wrong too. You know, you can get a bad shot on the head. I mean, you can hit snout, you can hit jaw, things like that. And it's, it's kind of a horrific injury for a pig. And it'll run away and you won't find it. And, but it'll die. But you're not gonna find it if you hit it too far forward on the head. Um, so I really think that the best thing to do is going to be: to try to hit it here.

Ivy:

Okay. I'm gonna shoot, I'm gonna aim for here. Like the top of the arm.

Jesse:

Yeah.

Ivy:

Okay, I already feel bad.

Jesse:
About shooting a pig?

Ivy:
I mean, I already feel bad 'cause I'm like, that does sound like it hurts.

Jesse:
Oh yeah.

Ivy:
You know.

Jesse:
I mean you can also, I mean this is what I'm going for here is like—is probabilities.
If you are able to get double lung and spine, The animal's gonna be dead in five seconds.

Ivy:
Okay.

Jesse:
Um, if you get a heart— uh, double lung or a heart and a lung, then animal would be dead 10 or 15 seconds of just like...running... Dead. You know, you know, a spine, uh, just a spine shot can often just incapacitate them and they'll, they'll drop. And you almost always know a spine shot in the pig. This is gonna be graphic, but you'll, you'll know a spine shot on a pig is 'cause they'll usually squeal. A lot.

{{A heartbeat hiphop beat plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating:
We are touching this animal where I'm supposed to take the shot. Jesse's showing me why it's the best shot to take. This is like a med school demonstration, except I'm not learning how to save people, I'm learning how to kill pigs. Jesse's a big guy, right? So he looks like a God looking down on this pig, but this pig is my size. I'm nearly eye level with this pig. I'm confronting the enormity of this physical life in the same way that seeing Tonka smile made me confront the enormity of her internal life.

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):
Seeing this Ivy-sized pig on the table in front of me, it made my heart ache for it. I'm not even questioning if I have the balls to hunt, but I feel bad about the reality of hurting something that feels pain. People at the archery range, and Don and Jesse have all talked about taking an ethical shot, but now I'm standing next to this pig and the ethical shot still looks extremely painful.

I don't think Jesse's lying to me or to himself. This isn't my bullshit radar going off. I think it's just empathy I'm feeling. In fact, Jesse literally wrote the book on hog hunting. If he says this, this right here where we're both tapping on the hog, like above the shoulder, you know, below the neck, this is the most ethical shot.

I believe that he has thought a lot more about this with more information than I will ever have, but I do think pigs are smart and live rich emotional lives, and I don't think it's silly to have empathy for this pig's suffering. I guess I do what I usually do with empathy, pain, you know, when I see war on the news or homeless people in the street. When the news is over, I go get ready for work.

When the light turns green, I have to keep driving. Right now, I don't want the meat to go bad, so I keep butchering. I just shove the empathy pain down where I keep all my other feelings instead of processing them and just carry it until I die, I guess? I dunno. I just suck it up and I keep going because there's food at the end of this.

{{Kitchen Background Noise}}

Jesse, in the kitchen:
And I want to cut as hard—

{{Meat Cutting Sounds}}

Jesse, in the kitchen (cont.):
Against that shoulder blade as I possibly can. So you can start to see the shoulder blade down there. You see how I'm running right against it? There's a, there's a very strong...that's the shoulder blade. You see it?

Ivy, responding:
Uh-huh.

Jesse:
And with this—oh, that's really beautiful meat.

Ivy:
Oh, that does look good.

Jesse:
Mm-hmm. . It's my favorite cut right here.

Ivy Le, narrating:
Seeing a pig's whole body this close, I did feel bad at the damage I would do to its body. Then me and Jesse split the meat between the two of us.

{{Jazz-y cymbals and drumming start}}

Ivy, narrating:

And I was all smiles. It turns out my conscious does have a price and it is protein. I could not wait to get home and cook it. I had to spend the next four or five days cooking all that meat I took home before it could go bad.

I almost couldn't do anything else. It was so much meat. I couldn't wait to tell Jesse about how all the food turned out, but I wanted to ask him to mentor my hunt. And get his advice on finding land to hunt on. Jesse and I reunited to talk more.

{{Drumming intensifies and stops}}

Ivy at Dai Due:

I did everything I told her I was gonna do with that food.

Jesse, responding:

What was it?

Ivy:

Look at this Bún Thit Nuống

Jesse:

Oh.

{{A hip-hop beat starts playing}}

Ivy:

I took all those long chops.

Jesse:

Yeah.

Ivy:

Is that what they're called?

Jesse:

Yeah, I love long chops.

Ivy:

And I made Bún Thit Nuống. That's like when you marinate the pork and like, like, um, fish sauce and sugar and garlic and, you know, all that stuff. And you grill 'em up. And that's on a salad of watercress and mint.

Jesse:
Oh.

Ivy:
Uh, and, uh, some quail eggs and, uh, obviously nước mắm and tomatoes and stuff. Yeah, that's what we did over there.

Jesse:
That's beautiful.

Ivy:
With that.

Jesse:
Oh yeah, I want that.

Ivy:
Um, I made sisig.

Jesse:
Oh, cool.

Ivy:
I made sisig with the—the belly.

Jesse:
Oh, okay.

Ivy:
Yeah, the belly. And it was like super chewy.

Jesse:
Yeah. It's gonna require—I mean, maybe twice as long to cook.

Ivy:
It would. Maybe that was it. And of course, I made Carnitas.

Jesse:
Mm-hmm.

Ivy:
I'm sure you have Carnitas out the wazoo at your restaurant.

Jesse:
Yeah, we—we used to do that at the Taqueria too. It's a very carnitas friendly meat.

Ivy:

Uh, and then, oh, I think this is more sisig. This is sisig, but with passion fruit.

Jesse:

Hmm.

Ivy:

Oh, here's what I did. I put the, um, I put the copa that you made.

Jesse:

Mm-hmm.

Ivy:

Uh, over grits. I cooked them like steaks and serving 'em with garlic confit on some, um, creamy grits.

Jesse:

That's beautiful. How was that? The copa is my favorite cut.

Ivy:

It was one of the best pieces of meat I ever had.

Jesse:

Yeah, yeah.

Ivy:

It was awesome.

Jesse:

And to think that people just leave them out in the field 'cause you quote unquote can't eat those things. It's just this gold mine of this beautiful meat.

{{The beat stops}}

Ivy:

I think I'm—I, I think the shopping, the clothes shopping will be fine.

{{Jesse laughs}}

Ivy:

I think the cooking part will be fine.

Jesse:
Yeah.

Ivy:
It's the, the snakes and chiggers and you know—

Jesse:
It's part of it—

Ivy:
It's the sticks part that I don't like.

Jesse:
Think about it. It's like you just gotta— you gotta pay the tax to—to be in the, in that world, you know, that's where they're at. You gotta go out there and be in that world with them. And there's this, there's this kind of give and take, you know, and also like a domestic animal, a pig, or let's say a cow, is born to die. You know, it's whole life is just on a trajectory to slaughter house.

Whereas a wild animal has all this freedom out there.

And let's not fool ourselves and think that death in the wild is pretty. You know, like a deer doesn't go and lay down in a field of daisies at the end of its life and just like kind of walk into the light. Um, it's brutal out there.

There's snakes and chiggers and coyotes, and there's other things that are gonna happen to that deer in its final stages. Um, and you're, you're choosing to enter into those final stages and at the same time, you have to go to the place that they live to do that.

{{Tranquil music plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating:
I've been outside, as season one fans know, and nature is brutal. It's good to be reminded of that before I go hunting, whenever that's gonna be. But I need more concrete hunting advice too.

{{Tranquil music stops}}

Ivy at Dai Due:
What else? What else should I know about them?

Jesse, responding:
Um, primarily nocturnal. I think one thing to always remember when you're hunting pigs, and this might—might sound weird, is to remember that they're always somewhere.

{{Intense orchestral adventure music plays}}

Jesse, at Dai Due:

Like we tend to think that they just disappear and then, you know, towards evening–

Ivy, responding:

They appear.

Jesse:

They appear. I guarantee you they were somewhere all day.

Ivy:

Right.

Jesse:

You know, they were somewhere. And once you start to realize where those places are. And how they're gonna traverse those routes to get from one place to the other and what their needs are. And you know how they're gonna respond to pressure and things like that.

You can start to formulate a plan to get in front of 'em. So, during the day, they're gonna be in, especially this time of year–it's warm right now. They're gonna be in the shadiest, lowest, coolest spot that you can possibly find. Probably near water or mud–like so–Cause they can't sweat. They need to wallow.

So if you have a property and you know that for sure, there's pigs on it, look at a map and find those low areas: creek bottoms, near ponds, you know, but just like very dense brush.

Ivy:

Ok

Jesse:

That's where they're gonna be during the day.

Ivy:

I wallow at like Sephora.

(Jesse laughs.)

Ivy:

And I can sweat, but I do need to wallow .

Jesse:

Well, predictable. I mean it's–

Ivy:
Or like TJ Maxx.

Jesse:
If somebody's patterning you, they're gonna know. And then after that, you find the route that they're gonna need to take to get to their food source, 'cause they need to eat. So at some point, wherever they're eating, wherever they're feeding, it could be an open field grazing on grass.

They could be rooting an open area or they could be coming to a food source like a feeder. Their main sense is a sense of smell. I mean, it's—it's incredible.

{{Brave adventure music starts}}

Jesse, at Dai Due:
So you must a hundred percent have to be downwind of them. If you are upwind where they can smell you? Game over, you're done. I mean, 300 yards out, they're gonna get the slightest scent of human and they're gonna bolt and and you won't see 'em.

Ivy, responding:
So what I do, I just carry like a little streamer with me to like keep track of the wind at all times or how do I—

Jesse:
Um, yeah, there's, there's a lot of ways to tell. I mean, you can look at foliage. Um, you can check a weather app, you know, usually I'll check the weather. Um, and see, "Oh, we're gonna have a southeast all day long."

And then you know that you want to approach from the northwest. If you enter from the southeast, there's gonna be problems.

Ivy:
So do I—Okay—So, but I have to go out and find them first to figure out if I'm southeast of them?

Jesse:
Well, you—you, there's different ways of scouting. You know, you'll look for sign. You know, you'll look for feces, tracks, uh, wallowing, uh, you know, areas that are muddy, that'll have hog tracks around it.

And then also rooting, rooting being a real indicator of where they're feeding.

Ivy:
What's rooting?

Jesse:

So they'll use their snouts to dig under the ground, and that's one of the most impactful things they do, um, as far as destruction. And, and kind of, uh, makes them so hard on agricultural areas— is the rooting.

'cause one hog can root a lot of land overnight. Um, so like a freshly plowed and tilled or planted field, they can go in and root that and destroy it. A golf course, a lawn, you know, they'll get under. They're looking for roots and grubs and things like that. They'll eat anything and they can dig three feet down with that—with that snout of theirs, it's—

Ivy:

Three feet?

Jesse:

Sure. It'll look like bombs went off in some areas. Like after a rain, if you get some soft soil, which is when they really love to root, and that'll be a good indicator if we— if we get rain. And the next day you go out, you'll see fresh rooting and that'll tell you where they were the night before and help you pattern them like they— they're predictably unpredictable.

{{Dramatic Adventure Music Plays}}

Jesse, at Dai Due:

They're always doing what you don't think they're gonna do, and you must always be ready. Like when you're hunting pigs, things change very quickly. You have—you can never let your guard down because they could come out at any point. They could just run out in the, in the pathway in front of you.

The closest I've ever shot a pig was at six feet. It's the distance that we're sitting right now. I mean, he was just standing there. And I had a—I had a good wind. The wind was blowing towards me. He never—he never knew I was there.

Ivy, responding:

Not by sight or sound, just—if basically, if you were down wind, we were basically invisible to it?

Jesse:

In my opinion, they have very poor eyesight. Or maybe it would be better to say that their eyesight is poor, but really they don't... They don't believe what they see until they confirm it by smell, if that makes sense.

Ivy:

Mm-hmm.

Jesse:

So if they see and smell you: done.

If they see you, there's so many times, well, they'll just look at you if you're downwind and they just don't know. If you're not moving around a lot, you're just like a strange shape or something.

{{Pounding of a drum}}

Jesse, at Dai Due:

They'll oftentimes just look, and it's fairly easy to get close to them if you are downwind of them. Getting that close to a deer is impossible 'cause they will see you or they'll hear you.

{{Music cuts out}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

This is great. This is the most intimate intel about pigs I've gotten from anyone so far. Jesse really thinks I'm gonna need it all too. He thinks I'm gonna become a hunter.

Jesse, at Dai Due:

I wish you the best of luck out there. I really want you to get a pig and come full circle on this and, uh, come into the—well, become a hunter.

Ivy, responding:

You want me to like become a hunter?

Jesse:

Yeah.

Ivy:

Like—

Jesse:

Oh, you will.

Ivy:

Do you really think that, like everybody who does it is like, oh yeah, this is my thing now.

Jesse:

Yeah.

Ivy:

Really?

Jesse:

Not everybody, but you're gonna. You're gonna—

Ivy:

Why? How do you know I'm not gonna be one of those people that's like, "Eh, it's not my thing."

Jesse:

I think the connectivity that you're gonna get out of this is gonna be enthralling.

{{Dreamy, introspective piano music starts}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

After he gives me all this really sage hunting advice, I asked Jesse to mentor my first hunt, but his cooking school is full for the year and he is personally booked out for another year and a half.

He gives me a personal copy of his book, though: The Hog Book.

It has droplets of blood on the cover from use, and I am touched. When I was growing up, my dad said that anything you want to do, it's in a book somewhere. Even though I grew up poor, my parents never said no when I wanted to buy a book. So I was definitely, "No, we got food at home" poor. But I was book fair bougie.

{{Dreamy, introspective music stops}}

I think he was like that because the last of what he cared with him fleeing Vietnam was taken by pirates on the South China Sea. The takeaway was: In a doomsday scenario, the only thing you'll know you have is whatever knowledge you managed to cram into your head before it happened.

So now I've got a library in my living room because of my parents' drama. I think about how my kids are gonna always be inviting their friends over, and in our dystopian future, you know, I'm definitely gonna get arrested by the thought police because everyone will know that I still have a library with facts in it.

I pore over this book. The Hog Book is independently published because the pictures are really graphic. Not to be extra, just so that you actually understand how to do the things he's describing. It's a detailed textbook for practitioners of hog hunting basically.

It's like my desktop mentor now. It talks about wind direction, how to pick which pig to shoot out of a group. It's got step-by-step instructions on skinning and gutting and recipes too. A textbook does not replace a real live mentor next to you in the woods, but it just might have to be enough.

{{Energetic guitar music plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

I don't have any ideas on who else to ask to mentor my hunt. If I'm gonna go hunting by myself, which it's looking likely at this point, I need to learn how to track pigs down. Like Jesse said, they're always somewhere, but where? Where? The book does not go deeply into tracking. So next time on FOGO: I ask a Girl Scout to take me outside and teach me how to track animals.

Isabelle, in the field:

Don't inhale the scat. That will be—

Ivy, responding:

Don't inhale scat.

Isabelle:

Do not inhale scat. Don't eat it. Don't consume it. It will probably give you an infection.

Ivy Le, narrating:

FOGO: Fear of Going Outside is a Spotify Sound Up series and was workshopped as part of the Spotify Sound Up Podcast Accelerator Program. FOGO is written, produced, and hosted by me, Ivy Le with one E. We are produced and edited by Myrriah Gossett. Engineering, mixing, and additional sound design by Robyn Edgar. Our theme song and Original Music are composed by Michelangelo Rodriguez. Story Editor is Minda Wei. Production support by Benjamin Grosse-Siestrup. FOGO's board of advisors is Jeff Zhao and Martin Thomas.

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Listen to "FOGO: Fear of Going Outside", for free on Spotify! You can follow me on just about every social media platform @IvyLeWithOneE, the phrase all spelled out, and see pictures from Jesse's restaurant on Instagram @fogopodcast. Go to fogopodcast.com for the newsletter, and transcripts, because accessibility slaps, like a hog's hindquarters!

{{Music swells and stops}}

Ivy, at Dai Due:

Guys are trash .

Jesse, responding:

I mean, I guess it could be said men are pigs.

(Ivy laughs.)