

Sangeeta Pillai Episode

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How many fucking episodes of podcasts, how many awards, how many seasons, how many articles in The Guardian and Cosmopolitan and stylist does it take for you to even start to believe that you're good at what you do? Welcome to Women Are Mad, where we invite women to bring their anger into everyday conversation. I'm Selina Saxton, I'm an actress and writer. I'm Jennifer Cox and I'm a psychotherapist. We notice that anger is the one emotion that women aren't allowed to open express. Meanwhile, everything around us is making us absolutely furious. We're all feeling it. Let's get together to work out what to do with it. Selena, can I talk about what's making us mad this week? Please. You seem eager. I see Mega, I see Mega to get it all out. So lots of women have been writing in to us about the types of things that are making them mad. I think common thread here. Is institutional sexism. Somebody, for example, talking about how they were treated at airport security. Very much in line with their menopausal female symptoms and how their needs were used against them. Um, so I'm conjuring up loads of weird images now. I feel like I can't be more specific without giving her, um, dignity away. Okay. No worries. Yeah. Imagine what you're saying as well. Everyone else? Yeah. Just imagine. It was pretty humiliating. And it was in front of a lot of people, a woman, how she felt her treatment by admin staff or kind of reception staff at her local GP practice was a great example of internalised misogyny on the part of the female member of staff, but not taking something seriously because it was women's health. Yeah, basically and sort of really making her jump through hoops in a very, again, very humiliating way. It's this humiliation that feels so disgusting, people being very poorly treated. Um, again, dignity removed by by male senior colleagues at work, various different examples of that. Again, I think humiliation being shown up, being made to feel small is a is a common theme. And then personally, I was reading about I'm sure you saw this the mod, the news about the institutionalised sexism within the mod, and this one woman described how horrible it felt to walk across the pillared hall and how you'd feel these like awful stares. She wearing something specifically? No, it's it's, um, walking alone as a woman. Oh my God. Sorry. It's my imagination again. Took me to places of, like, her being wrapped in clingfilm. Right, exactly. Your imagination took you to somewhere where she was doing something kind of weird or crazy. Yeah, because this is what we're indoctrinated in. It's the woman's fault. She must be bringing it up on her. I'm doing it myself. And this is us. Yeah. I mean, I guess what that made me think about was the. Yeah, these sort of pillared institutions, these grand, patriarchal, forged in the fires of the patriarchy, these sorts of places and how they still. Can't seem to welcome women and can't seem to get it right as far as women are concerned. And then obviously that puts you in mind of the police, the fire service, even the Coast Guard. I was reading about this week in terms of how they treat their women employees. Um, and as we know, people who go to the police for help and there are still I'm sure there are still some gentlemen's clubs operating, aren't there? And come on, of course there are that famous one, the where even Joanna Lumley couldn't get a membership. I think it is pretty. What happened is we just came running in. Blundering in? Yeah. What would happen? No. Well, obviously women are allowed to work there. They're allowed to be the the serfs. Yeah, exactly. Let's do it. Yeah, let's let's barge our way in. Happy Christmas y'all. Yeah, exactly. Brace yourselves. Um, okay, I'm going to introduce our fabulous guest. Our guest this week is founder of the South Asian feminist network Seoul Sutras and the Spotify award winning masala podcast. Please welcome the excellent Sangita Pillai. Is Woo hoo! I feel like I'm going to, like, do a little dance to kind of arise, please. I'm sitting in my chair, but I've done the dance. I miss

my boy. Always up for a dance of any kind. Actually, I really are. Genuinely. Really. Especially with a headset. Yeah, exactly. I feel like. Yeah, I feel like the headset. Nails. What are those nails? Show me your nails. Thank you. Oh, they are excellent. I love a bit of nail action. Yeah. Me too. Always. Oh, I love it. I always like it's such a simple thing, isn't it? It's one of those things that just lifts you, right? Really lifts you. Like you don't even need to do. These are just like normal then not anything fancy. But yeah, same on a cheap. Cheap. Yeah, but it makes such a difference. Yeah. Agreed. Yeah. Um, we're going to launch straight in and I'm going to ask you the question we always ask our dear guests. What has made you angry this week? Gosh, so many things. Brilliant. That's music to my ears for a very long time today. But wonderful. Yeah. I mean, let's begin with, um, my current career, which is the ageism, like, oh, women and ageism like it feels like. ^{2s} As soon as you hit. I don't even know what the magic figure is. Not 30, 40, whatever. 50, I would say 30. I think it's 30. Yeah, yeah. We're supposed to suddenly drop off the face of the Earth. Yeah. Not have opinions, not wear anything that could be vaguely considered youngish. Yeah. We're on trend. Um, not feel beautiful, not act sexy. And all of these things, like, supposedly, you know, the minute you turn, let's say 30, all of these things are supposed to disappear and we're supposed to disappear, and our voices are supposed to disappear. And it really pisses me off. I think we also were meant to become good women, to become good women at that point as well. Exactly. Become good elders. I think that's combined with the community pillars of the community, which we're happy to be. But we have opinions and we have sex appeal, and we have all sorts of other things going on. We're not just tell us the community. Yeah. And it really makes me mad that we've brainwashed our young women also to buy into this crap. So we've obviously, you know, we live in the society. So excuse me, we've to a degree been conditioned by it. And I hear so many young women that I meet 20s or somebody who's approaching 30. I had a conversation with someone and she's about to turn 30 and she said to me, oh my God, I am absolutely horrified at the prospect of turning 30. And here this I will do anything if I could change not being 30. ^{1s} And I said to her, hang on a minute, like, why do you? And she's just like, oh no, because it's over there. Like everything's finished. And I'm like, actually that's bullshit. That's patriarchal bullshit. Mhm. Because you've been told that the second you turn 30 life is over actually. And in fact it's the opposite. Sorry. Let me just. No, no. Finish. Go. Please go home. And I said actually the reverse is true. We come into our own when we hit 4050. I'm 51. Yeah. I am the kind of fiercest, the loudest, the most, the most confident, confident, the sexiest that everything else that I have ever been. Yeah. Do you think this is inextricably linked to the expectations of motherhood and and traditional motherhood? And when I say motherhood, I mean the patriarchal expectation of motherhood, whether one chooses one to be one biologically or not, because I feel it's very linked to that. And that's why we're much softer on men who age and men men who behave as Peter Pans well into their 40s. In 50s, and we have a very amused kind of version of aging with them. So you mean like the kind of eternal we're meant to go all maternal, even if we don't actually have children? Yes, or have no desire to have children like me? It was a choice I made. You know, I never wanted kids. Um. Did you always know that? Yeah, I always knew that. I think I had, like, maybe six months at the age of 28 when I just got married thinking, oh, you know, maybe I should have children. And then I did that thing, which I'm so grateful I did. I'm like, I'm just going to sit with this and see how it feels. Mhm. And in six months I was like, okay, my body is telling me to have a child but my brain doesn't want a child. ^{1s} My life doesn't want a child. And then it just faded. The minute I had that thought, it just faded as, like a biological. So do you think a lot of women just feel the body feeling? Don't sit with it as a psychological matter and follow and go with it. Yeah, I think so. So I think one is the body thing. Yeah. And you're not allowing yourself the space to say, is this what I really want? And the whole other matter is society telling us that our whole purpose of existence is reproduction as women. Yeah. If we're not reproducing, why are you even here? Yes, yes. Isn't it success? The idea of that is inextricably linked. Yes, to the idea

of a certain kind of family unit. Whereas I would say now I'm well into my 40s, that whatever kind of unit you end up in, be it solo, be it with many other women, be it with many, whatever, if that works for you and your life is fulfilled and big and eventful and wonderful, then yeah, yeah, you've succeeded as a woman. I mean, absolutely, absolutely. And I'm I'm not even saying that like, oh my God, my life's amazing. There are things that are not good about it and things that I would like to change. But I think what bothers me is that success, as you say, is only this one metric of women being mothers. Like somehow the only measure of success is have you got a partner? Have you got children? Like that's it. And then like you're saying, if you hit your kind of 50s, whether or not you've had kids, your reproductive years are over. And if society has only wanted you for that, what does it need you for? Now shuffle off, lady, shuffle off your redundant. Yeah, but oh, so you know what I'm when we're talking about this, I'm regretful in how I used to speak to other women myself in my 30s. And so I happened to I've got kids and I was married, um, and I used to push that idea onto other women who weren't necessarily in that space, you know, and I'm quite regretful of that now because I, I thought I was being, um, compassionate or like, encouraging, but actually, no, I was just following status quo. That's what worked for me. Yeah. Imposing it on others. Yeah. And that's, you know, incredible that you're able to say that. Yeah. Because I think that takes a lot of self-awareness in a work to say. Actually I did that and maybe. That wasn't cool. But a lot of women will never say that because that conditioning is so deep. Well, how did you handle it, Sangita? In terms of, like, what other women men were expecting of you? You had to stay very strong in those years then. And culturally. Obviously, culturally is a whole other. Yeah, you know. Yeah. Thing. Um, yeah, I had to kind of, over the years, really defend my point of view quite a lot. Um, first of all, they would assume there was something wrong with me that I couldn't have children ^{is} because they were like, oh, if you're married. And I was married at that point, I'm not anymore. Oh, if you're married, why aren't you having children? Like, there must be something wrong with you, like your body or whatever. They couldn't get their head around the fact that I might not actually want to, even though my body at that point was capable of it. So there was a lot of explaining. There was also a lot of judgment, primarily from other women, which really surprised me. The men were like, yeah, whatever, you know, and let's get on with whatever we were talking about. But the women who had chosen to have children were very threatened by the fact that I wasn't having a child, I'm sure. Like somehow it was like an indictment about their choice. Yes, but but also this comes back to say, meet me in the language I was maybe using ten years ago. You know, was I probably using that language because I was exhausted, worried about my own decisions? Yeah. And going, oh my God, look at you. You're prospering. Like, I didn't think I was using that, but was I looking at you with longing, with yearning and a kind of sense of regret, of, oh my gosh, was there another way there? Yes. Yeah. Yes, yes. And the and there's not, you know, and as you say, look, a lot of people don't want to admit those darker, confused parts of themselves because they find it too exposing. But we're all very contradictory, aren't we? We all, we all wander about different paths taken. It doesn't mean we regret the paths, necessarily, but we all wander. Oh, you know, tell me, how was it for you then? You know, gosh, I wonder. Yeah. And I think the empathy and self-awareness comes from just saying, oh, you know. What you just said is that maybe I did that, or maybe what I thought wasn't 100% true. But I think when we admit that, then we've got to have the capacity to say, okay, maybe all my decisions weren't 100%. But yes, the people that get really defensive are the people that cannot do that, because by admitting to that, they're opening up this whole can of worms inside themselves, but they're not. Where does it end? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Particularly with women. We've been sold this idea of this one way to live our lives. Yeah. And God forbid there is another, you know? Oh my God. And, Sangeeta, the niceness, isn't it? I mean, I sorry, I always talk about this, but the niceness, the good girl, the being polite, the being kind, the, you know, tick tick tick. And oh, Selima, you're not being kind because you're questioning me on that. You know, maybe I'm not being kind. What

does that mean? Do I have to be compassionate all the time? Yes. 1s No. But like, you know, I don't, do I? In order to make some some brilliant decisions and to make strides. Yeah. I better not waste all time being compassionate or visiting. It takes up a lot of energy. I would say it does. And it's so deep. This kind of good girl conditioning. It's so deep. What what else would be making you angry? Overtly angry that you're aware of so, so much? 2s Um, I guess overall, I think, and this probably makes a lot of us angry is patriarchy and where we are in it. When I say patriarchy, I don't mean men. I mean just this whole system. Yeah, that we've been forced to buy into, um, that makes us feel less than that. Makes us feel like never good enough. That makes us feel there's only one way to be a woman. Mhm. Uh, that doesn't reward us for our work, you know, we're not paid equally. We're not treated equally like we treated really unfairly even now. Yeah. Oh gosh. Yeah. And it just makes me I guess it's a more rather than a raging anger. Like a simmering anger, like it's like this constant thing bubbling away. Um, and with my work as well. Like, this is why I do what I do, you know, because patriarchy is real in in my culture, it exists from the time you're born to the time you die as a woman, you know, like you cannot escape it. And how do you get on with your family right now? Um, I mean, I my. Initial years, I was like a huge rebel. Like in my 20s. I refused to get married. I refused to do. I come from like a very traditional Indian family in Mumbai. Mhm. Uh, I was the first woman in my family to have a job to go to university. So that traditional. And then, then I turned up and I'm saying all these things and they didn't know what to do with me. Even now, to a degree, the only way you can leave home is if you, uh, your education is another city or your job is in another city. And for about ten years, I kept trying to find a job in another city. And. 3s I'm like, I really need to work in Dubai. I really need to work in Bangalore. It just didn't happen, you know, for me, sadly. So I kind of stayed at home and kind of fought with them for ten years. It was exhausting then and for me. Oh my God. But that's not healthy carrying. That's that conflict. Yeah. Like and what were you fighting about mainly like what was your not having an arranged marriage. Yeah. Not um did you meet people even Sangeeta or not used to. So you didn't even meet them. I didn't even, they kept trying all these CV's. Yeah. Some reason would appear on the kitchen table every morning. I'm like, why are you. Is this a job thing or what? You know, you must have been so strong to resist this. I was again and again, presumably all your day. Your friends were like, come on, come on, just meet them. Everybody was like, what is wrong with you? Yeah, because there was literally at that point in India in 1980s, 90s India, no one was saying the things I was saying. No, I lived in a very traditional system and societies. All these girls were like, had a nice job. Then they quit the job, then they got married and they had good girls. They were good girls, you know, doing what they were told. And there was me every single day having the same conversation with my parents, saying, no, I'm not doing it, but I want to get a bit more into this. Then where did this come from? Your gut. Just your absolute gut. Did you look around and I you know, I've, I get asked this a lot and I think it is just me. I was born like this because there was no feminism, I didn't. I never heard the word. You invented feminism. You know, for myself, I'm like, this is what I'm doing. I had no idea that word existed because presumably you weren't being exposed to even kind of like 78. No, no, no, nothing. So 80s, um, 80s when I was in school and 90s when I was at university and started my first couple of jobs, like there was no media, there was like a couple of magazines, there was no satellite TV was I guess if you were staying in your in your town in that little, you know, bubble of suburban Mumbai and what what was your Hindi was your the language that you grew up Malayalam. So my family come from Kerala. Okay. Spoke Malayalam at home, Hindi with my friends because Mumbai is Hindi. Yeah. Fine. Marathi. So that was your English? Yeah. So like that was kind of, you know, uh, mixed. So it was very, very hard. It was really difficult. I had to be very, very singular. But what did you hook onto? Because the thing is, if you think about now how how like a teen, if you have a certain idea, you can use social media, you can use, you know, networks to kind of get yourself find your people. Yeah. Or you or you leave your town and meet them that way. Well, how did you do it?

It was just. This voice inside me. 2s And Sangeeta were. You always knew. But were you considered odd or very odd? Very odd. In fact, my first email address, Yahoo, came along and I call myself Killmonger. Killmonger is like the black, um, sheep of the family in in Bollywood films like the woman that goes when gets pregnant and is like abandoned. And that's incredible that you did that. You owned it, I owned it, I was like, I'm that woman. So, you know, I always thought of myself as that. And, you know, family didn't understand. They were like very, very. Yeah. So I'd love to know about the state of your mental health at that point. What did you feel good about yourself? Were you stable? Were you low? I was very low a lot of the time. I was very depressed. I think back, I imagine. I mean, do you think now when you look back, I know we're obsessed, but 1s were you angry? 1s I don't think anger was allowed. Yeah. So depression was. Yes. So yes. Yes. We were the masks that my anger probably. Yeah I'm sure. Yeah. Sangeeta, I was anxious for all of my 30s. Yeah, I think that's, you know, Indian women aren't allowed to be angry like there is no space. Um, so I but I think I was, because I was quite strong in the way I would speak to my parents as well. I would be like, no, I'm not. I wouldn't shout at them, but I'd be like, no, I'm not doing this, you know? I had to be very, very firm. And I guess that was a sort of anger. This is incredible. So switching to now the present day with your parents, if they're if they're not around. I'm sorry. Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. But towards the end of their lives, where was your relationship with them, if you don't mind me asking? It's very complicated. Okay. Um, probably not a good idea to get into it. Yeah. No worries. Can we. Can we divert you? Can we divert you to now? Yes. And can you tell us when you last got angry with somebody and what did it look like? Right. So this is really simple because it was this morning, this late morning and it was at myself. And I'll tell you why. So I was recording this little, um, I was doing the social media post, have launched my podcasting masterclasses for women. I saw it's brilliant and much needed. Yeah. Thank you so much. I feel like there's a real need for us as women. And also Sangita. Sangita, just to add your your on your post, you said about women not liking their voices. And Jen, if you don't mind me adding this, this was something that we had ourselves with Jenny. Hate it. Hate my voice hater. We've had to really work on that hugely. I think it's quite a common thing. So I think it's a very common thing. The number of women that say to me, I hate the sound of my own voice, and then you could dig a little deeper, because we have these expectations of how sexy women are supposed to sound, you know, like it's bullshit. It's so interesting because I'm just thinking now about where my feeling comes from. Yeah, I it's again too complicated to get into, but it's a thing. Yeah. It's a, it's a thing and it's an expectation of what a woman's voice is supposed to sound like. Totally. Yeah. You know, it's. And I think so. Yeah. So thank you for saying that because I hear that a lot. So anyway, so I, I put it out into the world and I'm like sat back and I had this like intense, almost pain in my stomach. And I'm like, oh my God, I put it out there. And what if nobody, uh, signs up for these classes? Do I even know what I'm doing? 1s You know what? If this do I. Am I even qualified? And then I had this, like, surge of, like, annoyance at myself. Mhm. It's like, how many fucking. Sorry. Am I allowed to swear I swear. Yeah. How many fucking episodes of podcast. How many awards. Yeah. How many seasons, how many articles in The Guardian and Cosmopolitan and stylist does it take for you to even start to believe that you're good at what you do? So how many? How many? Come on. How many like this? I don't know, I don't even know. And it annoyed me. Yeah. Like I've won six British podcast awards. Six is incredible, but it's just. Yeah. Come on. You know, I'm not from the audio world. I've come here. I'm not from the BBC. I don't have the media. I don't have the connections. And I've made this happen. Yeah, which is extraordinary. Can we just take a moment? Actually still go. Come on. Yeah. It's extraordinary, but you can't believe it. But this is so much what we say is that. You know what? What makes us angry is this kind of self-doubt. The way that you end up kind of. You try pushing a little bit. You put yourself out there a little bit, you end up thinking, oh, I shouldn't have. No. Yeah, not good enough, whatever it is. Yeah. And then the anger is back at us, but I don't it

shouldn't be, it shouldn't be. We just shouldn't have to feel that. I know, and I think what annoyed me was like, I've done a lot of work on this. Right. Mhm. I've done a lot of internal work. I've done a lot of examination. I'm talking about it a lot and it's still comes up. Yeah. And it surprises me sometimes it takes me by surprise like where's this coming from. But I think it's so valuable for, for somebody like you who has obviously done so, has done so extraordinarily well in the podcast world. Yeah. Um, it's so great to hear this vocalized, because we hear this again and again on our episodes, that women who are excelling in whichever world they're working in, talking about this imposter syndrome, talking about this. And I think the more we talk about it, the more we dilute it, hopefully the more we can hear it. And I mean, isn't it interesting how how women can't stand hearing their own introduction a lot of the time, yes. Don't you think? And you've probably noticed this, Sangeeta. It's like. No. Oh, sure. Oh no. It's nothing. It's nothing, it's nothing. Yeah. Minimize. Yeah. Like really it didn't happen. You know, you killed ourselves to make this happen. Yeah. It hasn't. And also sort of happened. But. So we are so alien to that aren't we as women even kind of tribally. And I overuse that word a lot actually. Sorry. In this podcast, um, you know too, we have this, you know, there is this language that we all big other women up, but actually, we still haven't all learned that to sit in a space where Sangeeta talks about all her achievements and we all go, wow, and that's it. And we just you hold the space and you say it. Yeah, yeah. Without there being an internal judgment when suddenly. Oh, right. Going on a bit. All right. You know, like there's all of this. Yeah. I can't imagine a man would struggle in the same way with that. Absolutely. And I thought that I'm like, I've sat in I used to work in the corporate world, you know, like advertising agencies. I sat in so many meetings where mediocre men have turned up and talked about something absolutely shit, you know, and they hold the space because they expect to be heard. Yeah. And I was there thinking, oh, I've got this really good idea, but can I even say it? And I wouldn't say it a lot of the time. So I've come a long way from there, thank God. But I've seen so many mediocre people just owning that space and also seeing it. I think it's further complicated by being a woman of color. No. Like I think that's that adds an extra layer onto it as well. Even expectations. Exoticism. Uh, I, I think it further complicates culturally, of course, it's, you know, within South Asian culture as well. We are taught to be quiet. We are taught not to sort of voice anything contradictory. Stay in the background, be quiet. That's this whole kind of internal messaging that we're taught from a very, very young age. Don't be the troublemaker. Don't be the stirrer. Don't be the one. This is why it's so amazing that you you did sort of hold a very different space growing up and weren't squashed internally anyway. Yeah. So you've never had a fear of being disliked? Presumably. 1s I. 2s Probably did. I'm sure. I don't think it would be completely honest if I said, oh, I don't want I don't care for people like me. I want people to like me. I think I'm a bit of a people pleaser. No. Really? No. 2s Because you clear. You're clear. You're crystal clear and who you are. So. Yeah. And you've done all of that. Yeah. You've got through all those years I did. But I think this internal voice which has always existed. Right. We'll always pipe up. Oh, it's so embarrassing. Hang on a minute. Like are you. Yeah. This is what you want, you know? And that's a good voice. My little voice is definitely, like, a little kind of gremlin that lives in my head. That goes really, like, if I'm saying something. But for me, it's echoes of some of my childhood, some of the language that I heard when I was growing up by certain members of my family. Yeah, but isn't it obscene that even after all these years of therapy and like you're saying, Sangeeta, like, you know, we've clearly we've all invested a lot in ourselves and in trying to, you know, combat this. Yeah. And yet it's still and maybe this is the systemic stuff then that we, that we still find ourselves up against. That doesn't matter how much of that work we do. I absolutely agree. And I think, Salima, something you said earlier, which is like there's that internal judgment that we all carry. Mhm. Towards ourselves and towards each other. Where does that come from? Oh, I know that's really clever, that that is the patriarchy sneaking in however it can and saying, come on, judge your sisters. Come on. Yes. Yeah. And like

be together if you're using certain language, the hashtag be kind, the hashtag whatever. But let's not let's not get too carried away here. And you need to silence her. If she's if she's not playing the game properly, if she's not, if she's not doing it in an appropriate manner in the in the way that we expect her to. Yeah, I think you do. Behind that back is the is the most stealth fashion. Yeah. No. And also look again this is something that I've had to learn lean into in my 40s. Is that rather than gossip or rather than speak poorly about somebody, I've had to learn not to do that because I was I was somebody who would do that. But we were taught to do that. Yeah. If I felt intimidated or she somebody said something made me uncomfortable and I didn't, whereas I've had to really work out now in my 40s. No, you're not comfortable with that. It's probably your stuff. And we just we just don't gel and that's fine. So rather than then dissect dissect with other people. And you're right though, because then because the, the sort of emphasis there is, we don't have a choice. We can't walk away. We have to stay and kind of slag this person off however we can to manage them. Yeah, but we don't. We might not gel with you either. I mean, like your ideas, their ideas. That's fine. Off you go. Yeah, go and go and invest yourself in a big, great big book. Now, you know, read something, do something. I definitely years ago I was much more like, well, you know, and I would kind of be like a clucky kind of. Yeah. Group. Yeah. It's it's what we're taught. Yeah. We're taught, you know, and it's so like it starts so young. You can hear young girl. Yes. What is she wearing? What does she think. Blah blah blah. You know, it starts there and but also suddenly. Don't you think it really, um, anesthetize women from ambition? It prevents them from doing things because when, when we're in that kind of, like, really like bubble. Where's your energy going? Totally. It's so draining. That was if you got like a focus then you're like, okay, we didn't get on whatever. Nice. Bye. Back to my work. Yeah. That's it. Um, talking of which. Sangeeta. Yeah? When has anger driven you to do something incredible professionally or personally or however? I mean, your whole life, basically, I would say, how would you be? Okay, now we're asking you about your achievements specifically. You have to own up to them. What's your best in your view? I think, um, 2s Problem, and this happened very subconsciously. I don't think it's a conscious thing. I think I started my podcast from a place of this thinking, this can't be the only way. Like the only people I'd see in British media were people who went to like, if you turn on your TV, most people I have a specific accent have been to a particular kind of university. Um, and I remember seeing that and thinking, well, I don't sound like that. I don't, you know, I've got this, like Indian whatever British Mumbai meets, Kerala meets London kind of accent. And I remember thinking, but surely that can be the only way. And that sort of started me on this whole podcasting journey. 2s Um, and I remember entering this competition Spotify thing that I won, like, at midnight or something. It was like it was closing at 1 a.m. or something like that, and someone had sent it to me. And I was like, I don't know anything about this thing. And I'm like, but fuck it, you know, like how if other people can do this, like, let me just at least try. And I sent off, uh, what what was the kind of blurb for masala podcast without expecting to hear back from them? Um, but I did. I got kind of shortlisted. Uh, they phoned me the next week to say we had 700. Sorry, I was mad. Like, I didn't even know, like what a podcast was. I'm like, how is it different from radio like. And I didn't really know. And I had to look it up and I'm like, I think I better look it up. Um, and they called me back and then they said, oh, you've been shortlisted are one of ten that got shortlisted out of 750. Wow. And you'll be put into this like boot camp for podcasting and we're going to teach you about this. So I did the whole thing. And at the end of it, uh, you got five I got five minutes to pitch to the head of BBC, uh, Google and Apple Podcasts. I got terrified. Oh, and they got five minutes to ask me questions. And this is where the angry bit comes in, right? So. 1s The head of BBC audio, who I will not mention the names. My pitch was about masala podcast. It is always a masala podcast, you know, and I'm like, okay, this is what I'm going to do. It's going to be like these taboos and each episode is going to be an interview. Um, because South Asian women, we don't really have the voice and we need to

address these things. So this man, white middle class man, turns around and in his five minutes that he has to ask me questions, it's like, don't you think this is too much for Indian women? Because I've worked in India. Oh. 1s And I just remember, like this rage coming up into my body and I, my voice got very clipped and I said, I think I know Indian women because I'm from India like I. And you're a woman. I'm a woman 1s and you're not, you're not, you're nothing. You spend what, two months or something producing some show that doesn't give you any. But I didn't shout at him. But I think it was very obvious that I was really pissed off. Yeah. Good. Um, and then what was really funny is I keep meeting him at podcast awards. He's come up and congratulated me. Yeah. Oh, I love you. You think he remembered that encounter? He does. He definitely. Sure he does. I'm sure he does. Because it was very clear what I thought about it. Sure. Oh, that is the sweetest way to end that. That's what you dream of. Hey. Hi. Here's me with two more awards. Yeah, exactly. You didn't think was very good. 1s Oh, well done that. Do you know. Do you know what that's such a good lesson in head down? You know the best way to get one's own back, head down, do the work and work on, and then you show. Yeah. You show that show. Yeah. That's so true. Yeah. You don't worry about kind of chat channel right now. Just get on, get on. Hold your ground. Which I did because it was like a competitive space. So I couldn't have really, you know, taken off, which I did. But I made my point clear. And then I'm like, well, we will see. And we did see 1s at the end, we always ask people to come into our virtual rage room. Okay, cool it. Um, and we ask what you'd like to swing your virtual baseball bat at. So the first is the current news item that is making you seethe. It's probably not very current, but all the Andrew Tate stuff, it really makes me angry. Really, really, really, really, really makes me angry. Because on so many levels, because they're damaging our young men. I think that makes me really angry. 1s I don't know where he's at now, but he just really makes me. Yeah, no, no, I get that 1s aspect of modern life that's making you fume. 2s How? 2s Imprisoned. We are by technology. Nice how we need it for our work. I use it for my work, but how addicted I and every single one of us is. Yeah, by the way it's been created. And I feel like it's gone. Almost like helpless rage that I can't do anything about it. All I can do is like, oh, I'm not going to use my device for two hours today. Like, really? That's the best I can do. So I feel really angry that I'm kind of in it, but I can't do anything about it. But I'm stuck in it. Yeah. Mhm. 1s Uh, behavior of others which gets on your wick. Mhm. 1s Um, when? 1s Women put other women down. It really makes me angry. But in a sad kind of way, I feel really sad. More than angry, I guess. It's like, come on, you know, we we've only got each other like, why are we doing that to each other? Yeah, yeah. And it's sad for them. Yeah, it's hard for them. I don't realize what you're doing. Missing out. Yeah. You're missing out. And you know, you're you're basically hating on yourself. Totally. That's what it comes down to. Yeah. You're doing. So it makes me kind of sad. Angry. Yeah. That makes sense. Um, no one I can ever answer this. So let's try the pop song which incurs your wrath. Oh. 1s It can be a Hindi one. Oh, God. Yeah, there's a there's a lot of them. Actually. I will answer this, actually. So there's a lot of Bollywood songs even now. Definitely. When I was growing up, uh, which translates as your beautiful white wrists and your beautiful white skin and your, you know, the kind of sex appeal is on kind of white skin. Um, and makes me really angry that we, as a race of brown skinned people, um, um, make it 1s hate ourselves so much that all our music about sexy women is about being white. Do you think that's shifting? Because I don't notice it so much with my cousins carefully shifting? Yeah. Do you think, um, it's still there? I think, but it's changing. I think we see a lot more darker skinned women in Bollywood. But you don't see anybody that's big or different. No, no, they're very slim. They're very, very. In fact, they become really thin. You didn't used to be anywhere Bollywood with like, really buxom women. You know, they're real women. And now they become really, really skinny. So that's the influence of the West, I think. Yeah, I definitely is. So it's changing. So yeah, all the. Goody goody, which is like literally your. Your white, white wrists, you know, like. Makes me very angry. 1s Um. And finally, you're angriest

moment ever on public transport. Hahaha. 1s Wow. Uh, that's probably. Oh, I've done, like, the shuffle. Yeah. When, you know, like a man sits next to you and sort of does that. The space. Yeah. The space. And then it's like you've, you've got no choice kind of man spread. Yeah. That's the bread I remember. And you've got no choice if you don't want to touch his thigh. Yeah. Kind of make yourself smaller. Oh hey this is me off. It's like. It. Why now? In 2023, I know not still. Do we have to act like this? And the assumption is that you, as a woman will become will shrink yourself. Yeah, because a man's not going to, you know. So I did a really weird thing quite recently when a man was doing that. And I was it was like the combination of like Britishness up tightness and me over apologising. So I didn't want him to take up that space out of principle. So I said, I'm so sorry. I can't move my leg in my arm because I, um, they're hurt. So 1s I'm so like, so then I kind of for the tube journey, I kind of like this side, but kind of like out of principle. So I took my space. I like the I'm sorry, but that's such a British thing. So British I don't see. I'm so sorry. I've gone. I've gone far further than that these days. I aggressively push them back and keep myself there, but it's really uncomfortable and it doesn't come locally. And then you're like, yeah, that thing now I have to stay. Like my arms are hurting. I don't want this space. No, no, take it, take it. Yeah, take it all. But no you can't with your sweaty thighs. Yeah, exactly. Out principle. I'm gonna hold my arm like this where it kills me. Yeah, the thing is, they don't care. They don't feel encroached on because it doesn't come laced with the years of oppression and, like, threat that we correct? Yes. Because that tube journey was exhausting for me because of all my thoughts around it. Yeah, yeah yeah. Yeah. Vile. Oh, Sangeeta, thank you so much, my Abby, it's been such a pleasure having you so really has. And we're in awe of what you've achieved in your podcast world in particular. Please start finding yourself impressive. Yeah. Next time you come on, can you have all your podcast awards lined up behind you? Yeah, really shining, I glinting away. I was the spotlight. Yeah, yeah yeah, please. We'll be blinded. Yeah, that's exactly what I'm gonna see. 2s So once this conversation brought up for us, she's absolutely right about the way that if you slag off another woman, you are slagging off you. This is not helpful. It is all about keeping us crushed down. If we're busy doing that, we can't rise up. And so often it's about fear, isn't it? You know, or it's about some another woman bringing up something quite uncomfortable in you about your own ambition or your own ideas or choices. And then we're kind of indoctrinated into that, that gossipy kind of behaviour. Yeah. And even like you were saying, that way of society ensuring that women stay on track by other women, judging her choices, making her know. Yeah. Making it very clear you're using up the energy. Well, like we've said as well, haven't we. Like, come on, you know, let's talk about this now. Get on, get on, go on. Because all of that chat, all of that kind of is circling around sucking up energy, isn't it? That's so true. Yeah I know, and we think it's so fun, but it's a bit like eating too much chocolate. Yeah, exactly. It's like you're better to luxuriate in an angry bar. Oh my gosh. Yes. 2s Thank you for listening and sharing in our anger. 3s And remember, you're not mad to feel mad. 3s Please like and subscribe. It helps other people find the podcast.