

FOGO: Fear of Going Outside
Season 2, Episode 4: "Naked and Unafraid"
Transcription

{{Sound Cues}}

—

Ivy Le, addressing the listener:

Today's content warning. Honestly, if you made it through the last episode, which was hard, and I'm so sorry. I didn't see it coming either. But we're gonna take care of you today and get some lol's. We do talk to a real hunter, who describes some graphic hunts, and I think I say the S word two times.

{{Bar ambient noise, glasses clinking and chattering}}
{{Snare drum beat quietly underscores}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

The first time I went to a tiki bar, no one had explained to me what tiki meant. I walk in to meet my friends. It's a restaurant called Trader Vic's, and the decor was a hodgepodge of cultures Europeans had colonized. There's beautiful East Asian screens dividing the dining room. The chairs are rattan wicker chairs you've seen in old photos from plantations in India and the Caribbean. There are wooden masks on the wall from Africa, but there's a Polynesian boat hanging from the ceiling!

The menu is out of pocket! There is a dish called Chef Chin Chin Fried Rice. I'm an Asian American comedian, and I would be canceled if I named a character Chef Chin Chin. Then our drinks come – in novelty cups, which look holy to somebody. They were like Easter Island-ish figures, if you know what they look like? I don't know where they're supposed to be from exactly, I've just been to enough museums full of looted holy art to clock it when I see it. Finally, I asked my friends, uh, guys, is the theme here, colonialism? (Ivy laughs) Joking, not joking.

{{Electronic piano music over drum track starts}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Then the servers bring our food, and these servers were literally all immigrants from formerly colonized countries. We looked like the cast of a UN humanitarian aid commercial. And then I tasted the food. Yo, that racist food? Was awesome! The tropical drinks were on point. The staff was lit, and I thought, oh shit, I get now why colonizers plunder. Because when you throw us all together– our people, our spices, our tropical fruits– admittedly, it is a damn good time!

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):

It was such a good time, I asked to let the manager know. And I swear to you, on my momma, the general manager was a Frenchman, like “ooh la la, madame, merci beaucoup for le compliment!” For those of you just tuning in, the French were *my* colonizers. My family is from Vietnam. We kicked out the French at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, and we were like, “GTFO. Leave your baguettes.”

This tiki bar kept the theme of colonialism down to their org chart! That is how committed they were to this bit, and as a standup comedian, I admire it so much. It inspires me to this day.

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

Ivy Le, narrating:

I'm Ivy Le, with one E, and you are listening to FOGO: Fear of Going Outside, where I am committed to doing everything it takes to figure out how to go hunting— or die trying. So far, I was unsuccessful at getting a gun, but some hunters put me on the bow and arrow, which I didn't even realize was still a hunting implement.

I own one now and started practicing. I have attempted to pass several online Hunter's Ed courses, but I keep failing the musket chapter. Don't worry, you don't actually have to pass Hunter's Ed to get a hunting license. (Whispering:) It's just recommended. They need the license fees to support conservation efforts, so they'll take that shmoney regardless. And it does take a lot of effort to conserve nature because— an indigenous hunter explained to me— we did a genocide on the indigenous people who have been managing this land for 20,000 years. And we invented hunting licenses largely to limit black freedman hunters after the Civil War. Anyway, I'm hunting hogs, which don't require a license when hunting on private land, but I haven't been able to get any private landowners to let us come hunt. And the state of Texas in particular has hardly any public lands to hunt on. I've been keeping a good attitude about the obstacles until last episode, when I found out immigrants who look a lot like my dad get shot at up north nearly every hunting season.

People have suggested I find a mentor to take me hunting, so on today's episode, I talk to a very special guest who makes his *living* as a hunting guide. I hope he can give me my optimism back, and maybe I can convince him to mentor my hunt!

{{FOGO Theme Music: synthy electronic sci-fi music plays and fades out}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

We've been getting ghosted by, I think upwards of a dozen different landowners and hunting outfits by now. It's what I like to call the South Texas No. No one is rude about it, they just stop answering your messages. We'll probably never know why, but FOGO's producer Myrriah Gossett stopped putting pronouns in her email signature to see if it would help.

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):

I have heard from nearly everyone that they had a mentor who taught them how to hunt, or if they didn't, then they really, really, really wish they had. And it does seem like I need someone on the inside of this world to get me access. I decide to take my own advice from Season One's finale. I joined the Facebook group for my local chapter of Outdoor Asians. No one responds to my post looking for hunters, so I go to a pho meetup that they're having to network with these outdoorspeople. I didn't bring any recording equipment 'cause I wanted to gain their trust, but it went something like this.

{{Sci-fi electronic time-travel music}}

Outdoor Asian 1, in a flashback:

Yeah, I thought I could carry 40 pounds, but on day three, it was so done.

Ivy, responding:

Yeah, totally. Like, I used to be able to help my friends move, but I'm getting way too old to carry that kind of weight up and down condo stairs.

Outdoor Asian 2:

So, as the group is growing, I will take on all the planning help I can get for the fall trip.

Ivy:

Well, I have planned more than 36 bachelorette parties, so I can for sure help get party bus and limo quotes.

Outdoor Asian 3: Big Men National Park is so underrated. Why didn't anybody tell me this before I moved to Texas?

Ivy: Oh my gosh! I know of a real person... who went there... Uh, they couldn't stop talking about how bendy it was!

{{Electronic sci-fi music plays}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Let's just say, I didn't get any new followers for @fogopodcast after that, but the guy who started the chapter, Troy Wong, says he'll introduce me to a Vietnamese American hunting guide who has been on Naked and Afraid.

{{Trumpet solo of FOGO's Theme Song}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Naked and Afraid! Where they drop a random outdoorswoman and random outdoorsman somewhere to try to survive for 21 whole days without clothes or water?!

Ivy Le, narrating (cont.):

I watch this show like sports-people watch their ball shows! I daydream about competing. I yell at the TV, as if I could do better. Sometimes, I cry. When my boy Troy from Outdoor Asian says he's going to introduce me to Don Nguyen from season six, episode 14, title "23 Days", set in the unforgiving savannah of Namibia, I ran to watch it! And you better believe I ask him about his experience being on the show.

Don Nguyen, being interviewed:

Like during the- during the middle of our shoot, at one point a farm truck, a beat up old Toyota rolled by, and the guy hit the brakes 'cause he saw like a white naked lady and then me, like standing there in the middle of a field, chopping at things, and like all the crew are trying to cover Amber, and I'm standing here, naked, like, "No one's covering me! No one! (Ivy laughs.) I'm there like, you know, nuts hanging out, naked, in front of this guy, driving by.

{{Action music, metallic clanking percussion, starts}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Naked and Afraid introduces its contestants with a PSR score for "primitive survival rating". It's a number 1 to 10 that represents how expert of a survivalist someone is. On Don's episode, he was rated lower than his partner, who ended up going home so early, the producers let him restart the challenge with a new partner, who was also rated higher than him. She went home early too, so Don, a skinny son of Vietnamese refugees, a nerd from Oklahoma City, who the show says, "lacks field experience"– because who has relevant Namibian field experience?– he completes a challenge all alone with what he studied from books about Namibia and a positive attitude.

{{Music stops}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Dear reader, I know you all believe in me, but if you can imagine, I get underestimated in life a lot, especially outdoors! I think it's because I'm short, I'm Southern, and I ask a lot of questions. I relate to Don, like a brother from another mother. I mean, I ended up a cosmopolitan writer, actress, and comedian, performing nearly exclusively indoors, while he ended up founding Climbers of Color and working as a professional hunting and mountaineering guide. But besides that, we're basically twins. I would die if I could talk him into coming down to Texas to mentor my first hunt.

Ivy, interviewing Don:

Tell me about how you learned to hunt?

Don, responding:

So I didn't really have a mentor to start hunting. So I like, you know, in middle school and high school, I see all the kids go out and like, oh yeah, it's hunting season.

Don, responding (cont.):

You know, we're gonna go out this, uh, Saturday, this weekend and go hunting on our, on our lease. And I kept bugging people, and it was really hard to get invited. So the first hunting trip I went on, it was my brother-in-law. My- he convinced an acquaintance to let us go hunt on his son's land. And so we go out there, and I got dropped off in a, in a box blind, which is just a box with like three windows on it.

And I was like, okay, well, I'll just sit here. And he's, oh yeah, just like (mimicing the son's voice:) "If you see something just, um, you know, just shoot it. And if you see a turkey, you know, here's a- here's a turkey gun. Just shoot. You know, just point it and squeeze." I'm like, "What? I've never touched these guns before. These are not my guns. I have no idea what they're about."

As the morning progresses, I'm super bored, so I have my microbiology homework in the box blind with me. I'm a, you know, I'm, I'm a, I'm an Asian student, I'm like studying, always gettin' ready for the next test. And I'm studying, you know, my college assignments. And while I'm flipping through the pages and going through the- going through the flashcards, I hear a bunch of like, rustling outside.

I look up and peek out the window and, "Oh, that's a, that's a deer." And it comes out there and stands and starts eating at the feeder, so I slowly open the window, and I like get this, like, four foot long gun- It's a musket, actually. It's a black powder gun- I'm like banging the musk barrel into, like, the box blind, and the wall, and, like windowsill. And then, like, it just stood there and watched me. I'm like, that's- I mean, I kind of feel bad. Like this thing is just looking at me, like, it isn't even afraid. It's like, okay, let's just, I'm here to do it. I go, Bam!

{{Quiet gunshot}}

Don, being interviewed:

And I shoot the deer. Pretty loud, because it was a musket, but it, like, wasn't that loud, like, "Whoa, man, my ears are ringing. Cool. The deer's dead." And so I went, went over there, and the deer was like, not dead. It was like I winged it, and it was getting back up. I'm like, "Oh my god. The deer's right next to me."

So the deer's on the ground. The, the musket they gave me, with no reloads, is empty. But I have this hand- a handgun. I brought a handgun- my own handgun- with me because, you know, like, man, I'm in the woods in Oklahoma. I'm- I don't trust these white people, I just met these guys. And so, I've got this handgun, and I'm like, well, I got- I- I think I'm gonna have put this thing down. So I put the gun next to the deer's head and pull the trigger. And it is not like the movies. That was, like, one of the most gruesome things I'll never forget, ever.

Don, being interviewed (cont.):

It was super- the, the gun went off- it shot the deer in the head. It was super gory, and, like, that was my first deer I ever killed. I was like, dang it, this did not go well at all. It was, like, super traumatizing, super violent. And you know, hunting is inherently, it is, I mean, it's a violent sport. I mean, I'm a hunting guide, I know that. Like, we're out there to kill things. That wasn't exactly how I was hoping my first hunt would ever go down.

Ivy, interviewing Don:

How did you, um, react? Like that first time?

Don:

So I shot the deer with the handgun, and then all the blood and gore and, you know, twitching—and immediately, I started bawling. I was like, “Oh my god, this is the worst thing. What have I done?” I was like, tears are runnin’ down my cheeks. And I was just sittin’ there, like, crying, and this deer is twitching and bleeding all over the place. And like it was, it was a smoking handgun in my hand, at my side. I’m like, “Oh god, why did I come out here? What happened?” The fact is, these guys, you know, they had no responsibility to train me, you know? It was supposed to be a mentor kind of thing. And so our friend kind of brought us out there, and, like, forced his son to, you know, let us hunt in his land and let us borrow his guns. But like, I didn't have a mentor, a mentor to be like, “Hey, look, remember like right here at the elbow, right there in the center of their bottom, center of their chest? You gotta keep- keep the sights focused there. Don't try to wander it around.” And that's why, like, now as a hunting guide, I like really try to drill that lesson home. Like, hey, like, if you want to kill this animal quickly and cleanly and not get so, you know, go full action movie on this thing, you know, you're gonna have to shoot it correctly. And I give coaching advice on that.

{{Western whistling music quietly underscores}}

Ivy, interviewing Don:

So then what kept you like, I mean, you're still hunting. (Ivy laughs.)

Don, responding:

I just wanted to go back and get it done right, you know? To do, to past- past me right. And to help people that were in that situation I was, whether it's climbing or hunting, get into these sports the right way and feel good about it.

{{Western coronet solo over the whistling; music stops}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

I'm hearing that Don had a horrific first hunt, which, you know, not what I'm trying to hear right now. But he learned from it, and it makes him a better guide. It makes him the guide he wished he had, but couldn't find. Kind of like how I'm having a hard time finding a mentor.

Don, being interviewed:

I didn't know what to call it, back when I started my- my journey of hunting, but I knew that my journey of hunting needed to look at other perspectives, because, like, it was hard enough to find, like, some good ol' boy Oklahoman to take me to his hunting camp, right?

So I'm like, well, if it's, if it's this difficult to get someone here to hunt with me, like, I'm gonna go to the hardest to reach places in the world and find hunters there to learn from. Because it can't be any harder than getting a good ol' boy in Oklahoma to show you his favorite deer spots, right? That there's- I mean, in- in Oklahoma there's, I mean, in, in the local places we live at, that the- that are the white dominated hunting spaces is, is kind of, like, an unsaid ownership of these public lands that people like to use. There's, like, not a lot of sharing, a lot of gatekeeping. No hunter worth any of their salt in- in the States is gonna geotag exactly where they went hunting, because that's compromising, possibly generations of secret knowledge of that family and that hunting group to the public. You'll never do that. So that's why you talk to hunters in the states, even public land hunters, you're not gonna gain the information that you're looking for. What you're looking for- what all hunters are looking for- is where are the game animals and when do they come out? Everything else that's said is really just social noise.

Ivy:

Mm-hmm.

Don:

That's the information. Like, say "How you doing out there?" Like, you know, some guy in a truck pulls up, he like, he's trying to start a conversation. Oh, we're getting into him. And like, "Oh yeah, where?" You know, "In the timber." And they're like, "Okay, we, we see 'em in the timber too!" And so basically, like, I'm, I'm being, I'm being a polite of being like, hey, I'm not gonna give you what you're looking for. Like, why would I? You, you've never have given it to me.

Ivy:

And why not?

Don:

I mean, like, you have to know that like trophy animals only come around every like, half a generation, like the really big trophies. The ones that you see, like, hung, hung up in hunting lodges. The ones you see pictures of in the magazines.

Ivy:

Are trophy animals different from, like, other animals that you hunt? Like I thought a trophy- I thought when you said trophy, I thought you meant like, just like literally any animal that you killed.

Don:

So a trophy animal I'm referring to is, like, what the old hunting establishment- like the Boone and Crockett Club, the Pope and Young Club- these are like big old hunting clubs that came

around after, like, the Theodore Roosevelt era conservation started. They used trophy hunting in reference to, like, the large old experienced bucks and bulls with the huge horns that exist out there. The reason that they, their rack- their horns and racks got so big is that they're very wily and smart and know how to evade humans.

Ivy:
Mm.

Don:
And to take a trophy, a larger animal that matches this, the criteria of a- of a trophy, shows that you're a better hunter or tracker or shooter than everybody else. Or at least you have access to good land and you know the location. You've scouted better locations than other folks.

{{Tense violin music transition into soft flutes}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

Man. I feel like I finally know why I've been getting nowhere with leads on places to hunt. I have been running into an invisible wall of culture. I felt it, but Don's had enough experience to be able to identify it. I am so relieved to hear someone say it out loud.

Sure, it- it sucks a little to know that all those people I reached out to didn't forget about me. They, or maybe their neighbors, actually rejected me. But at least now I know why. Don found it easier to travel the world and be welcomed by hunters abroad who don't even share his language than to find a mentor here in the States. How could I- someone who hates the outdoors- hope to do better?

{{Hopeful piano music starts}}

Ivy Le, narrating:

But he did it. Don is a hunter. Not in the sense that he's part of the hunter culture here, obviously, but in the deeply human sense that he is a hunter, in the tradition of humans throughout time and every place on earth.

Don, being interviewed:

You know, traveling across the world and talking to different hunters, like, there's definitely some hunting cultures have that trophy mindset. You know, like talking to the, uh, Hauorani Indians in the Ecuadorian Amazon, some of their really good hunters, they have that same kind of macho braggart culture, and they're talking like, "Oh yeah, like these three pigs. I just got these three peccaries here. You know, like I got 'em all with a spear, you know?"

Don, being interviewed (cont.):

And like, "I didn't use a shotgun." You know, he like, he implies he did hand-to-hand combat to kill these giant, you know, jungle pigs. (Ivy laughs.) And, like, all his friends are like, "No, no, he's full of it. He's lying. He used a shotgun!" And like, and it's, like, this, it has a similar feel to

North America. Even, like, being that far away in an indigenous culture. Sometimes some cultures have that kind of bravado, that comes with hunting.

Ivy:

So that's only some cultures?

Don:

Yeah, some, some of 'em definitely not big on trophies. Some are very focused on practicality and survival, but some of them are more like North America and, like, love to talk big and, you know, B.S.

Ivy, narrating:

When everyone told me to get close toed shoes in season one, I knew it was white people trying to justify the ugly ass things they paid too much for. I knew it because I have global perspective. Where I'm from in Texas, a chancla is a tactical weapon. And where my parents are from in Vietnam, we famously expelled multiple armies, in tire sandals from the jungle. Where there are jungle ants, okay?

{{Rhythmic tribal shakers and drums start playing}}

Ivy, narrating:

And when I went camping last season, I knew what food to bring because I had studied the food ways and histories of many cultures searching for clues and ideas, frankly, on how people endured their real life zombie apocalypses and how they rebuilt, as I knew I would have to do as my family's first American.

Don shares that same drive, and it sent him searching for hunting teachers, the world over. In fact, part of why he wasn't rated as strong a survivalist as he proves himself to be in the show was because he mostly pursues training with indigenous hunters. He feels their fieldcraft is superior in many ways to what's taught at more prestigious outdoor schools here in the states.

{{Rhythmic drumming stops}}

Ivy, narrating:

After his time on Naked and Afraid, he didn't go home. He took advantage of the free flight, like a good child of immigrants, and he arranged to stay another three weeks to learn from the Ju/Wasi hunters who are indigenous to the Kalahari Desert, which if you don't Google the contestants after watching the show like I do, I'll tell you... that's odd. Usually they go straight home to recover and tend their injuries, but I think being outside, hunting and eating with people all over the world, is Don's idea of rest?

Ivy, interviewing Don:

What are some cultures that aren't like this, that I probably wouldn't have access to?

Don, responding:

It would be the, uh, Kalahari bushmen in Southern Africa. It's hard to say whether this culture, their culture is different because it arises from the political circumstances or the environmental circumstances they're in, you know, going from a- a jungle to a- to a desert. But, um, they view hunting in a very practical way. They don't like to brag. You know, I ha- I had to pry, after, like, spending weeks with these hunters. I had to- I had to drag it and, like, pry it out of them.

Like, how many of these kudu bulls have you gotten? And they, oh, they kind of dodged the question, and it took ages. And finally, like, oh yeah, "I killed about like 35 of those, I think." And whereas, in other cultures, might be like, "Oh yeah, I killed hundreds, maybe thousands of these animals, you know!" But they're- they definitely really didn't want to give the information. They refused to brag about it. It was just ingrained into their society. Like if you start doing really good, you need to take a step back and let- let the next generation come up and get a little bit of glory too, before you resume your hunting.

Ivy, narrating:

It sounds to me that he admires this culture of stepping back for the next generation, more than the trophy culture. It's the opposite of gatekeeping. It's more like pushing people through the gate. I want him to push me! Push me through that gate, please!

{{Cool sci-fi hip-hop beat starts}}

Ivy, narrating:

I don't even know where the gate is right now. I try to convince him to come down to Texas. I can't afford his normal guide fee, which is expensive. I'm sure people who can pay it say it's worth every penny. You know, maybe for my future FOGO TV show, but I'm on a podcast budget for now. Instead, I entice Don with the promise of a food tour fit for a king. He knows I'm good for it 'cause I'm Asian. Plus, I tell him we have a hot air balloonist willing to take us if I can find land. Just as I suspected, he has never hunted from a hot air balloon. And he says, yes!

{{Trumpet flare solo; music stops}}

Don, being interviewed:

Yeah, I really want to get down there. I wanna be, I wanna be next to you when you drop your first hog, and you, like, get all in the guts and bloody with you. but I've, the rest of my spring and summer is just so booked up. It's just completely booked up.

{{Downbeat electronic riff}}

Ivy, narrating:

"Yes, but..." is a no! God damn it! He would've come if one of our land leads came through for a date this month or next. But of course, none did. And Don's busy season started up.

{{A quick metal reload chop-n-screw sound effect}}

{{Hip-hop drum beat starts playing}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

Agh!! I was so close. I couldn't stand it!

Ivy, interviewing Don:

Is this just like, is this like, I don't know, mountain season? I mean, mountains are gonna be there all year, Don!

Don, responding regretfully:

I know. (Don laughs) Yeah. People- people- the mountains are here all year, but people only pay money to climb 'em in the summer is the problem.

Ivy:

Oh. Alright well-

Don:

Yeah. Bit of a bummer. (Ivy laughs.) But hey, you know, for season three, if you wanna go on a big game hunt, you should come out to Wyoming sometime in, uh, in the camp I work at.

Ivy, narrating:

He can't be my hunting mentor, so my search continues, but... I have a standing invite to Wyoming! And he says I can message him anytime with questions. He'll answer them whenever he has connectivity between guiding trips.

{{Funky electronic synth music starts}}

Ivy, narrating:

I am really bummed, so he tries to leave me with some encouragement for my hunting quest, and how it will all be worth it in the end.

{{Hip-hop bass drops with a whisper vocal; music stops}}

{{Bird chirping quietly underscores}}

Don, being interviewed:

When I'm on horseback or I'm, like, walk- quietly walking in the pre-dawn light in a hunting field. You know, I'm out there in, in the- in the Absaroka or the Wind River Range, and there's a few inches of fresh snow on the ground-

Ivy, responding, disgusted at "cold":

Eugh.

Don, unfazed:

And out in the valley below, I hear an elk bugle.

{{Elk call}}

{{Adventurous whistling music starts}}

Don (cont.):

I hear a- the grunting of a- a deer nearby. You know, like, I don't see a single human in sight. It's just me and my hunter, and- this whole- whole valley, this whole range out before us- it's like- it's almost like we're the only people on Earth. Everything's right in the world. I have good boots on my feet. I have a good rifle in my hand. My backpack has lunch in it. I have a thermos of coffee, and this is the last great adventure in the world before me.

{{A scout's bugle plays a melancholic tune; music stops}}

Ivy, responding to Don:

Bruh. You lost me at pre-dawn and inch of snow.

(Don cracks up.)

Don, responding, lost... alone... can't relate...:

Ohhhh-

Ivy:

Try again. Try again.

Don:

Okay. I didn't sell you on that. I didn't sell you on that. You're a hard sell. You're a really hard sell.

Ivy, narrating:

Don tries a different angle...

Don, being interviewed:

You know, I look good when I go hunting. I- I get to dress up. I get to dress like a cowboy, you know. I got a good Mackinaw coat, you know, cool vintage looking gun. I feel really good about myself. So maybe that's a good sell for ya?

Ivy, responding:

Yeah, I can- okay. I think I- I think I can do- I think I can pull together some really great fits. Some looks. Because, um, I'm glad that you said that because everybody who's trying to tell me about the clothes that they wear hunting, I'm like, "No, no, no, no, no, no. Like, those are not clothes that I am going to spend my hard-earned money on, and like, let them live in my closet."

Don:

Yeah. Look at my pictures. I got some pictures where I, like, I was really bored at camp. You know, I'm sitting there. I gotta- I gotta watch horses for a few days between the hunts. You know, someone has to take care of the horses. And I have like little fashion shoots of the horses and stuff. I look really hot.

{{A slow bass-and-snare hip-hop track starts}}

Don, being interviewed (cont.):

Like hunting clothes. They- they fit really good on me, you know, you know.

Ivy, responding:

Okay, I'm looking it up right now.

Don:

Go to my- go to my Instagram. Scroll down. I- I got this mohawk goin' on. I got this Mackinaw coat. And I got my horse, Taco. I look so good.

Ivy:

Okay. Real Don Nguyen. Go for it. Oh yeah, I see the knapsack. You really do just have like an old school knapsack.

Don:

(Joking:) It's not a purse, it's a knapsack, okay?

(Ivy laughs.)

Don (cont.):

It holds bullets and stuff and bandages.

Ivy, narrating:

Don's Instagram @realdonnguyen does not offend my eyes. Most hunters do. I do appreciate, say, digital camo in a good streetwear outfit, but hunter's camo is *not* it. And it turns out most people hunt from inside boxes they call blinds, so the animals can't see them anyway! Who is this performance of wooded camouflage for?! The other hunter in the blind with you is human! It's common decency, then, to wear something pleasing to the human eye.

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

Don doesn't dress like that. His hunting style is inspired by adventure, and he is legitimately a brand ambassador for the wool coat company, WeatherWool. But I need a clearer concept to get a mood board going. Adventure is a cool idea, but my adventures and his adventures are not the same. Suddenly, I remembered that Tiki bar, and I know exactly what I need to do.

Ivy, interviewing Don:

(Cracking up) I'm just gonna have like a total colonizer themed- themed outfit.

Don, responding:

But combine it, from like European, American, just like combined-

Ivy:

All of them!

Don:

Everything.

Ivy:

Just like... and just see- just see if anybody notices.

Don:

Like show up to camp- like show up to camp with, like, knee-high heeled leather boots. Like riding boots. And like cow-

Ivy, laughing:

In like a tartan.

Don:

Mix the cowboy hat and the English riding boots.

Ivy:

And like American flags. (Don and Ivy laugh)

Don:

Yeah. Then throw a plaid shirt in there. Just, just like, why not? It's- it's a lumberjack shirt.

Ivy:

Do we know what hat Christopher Columbus wore? Like, what was it? (beat) Oh my God. I'm gonna look so awesome. But yeah, I mean it's gonna be so hot.

Don:

Yeah, so hot.

Ivy:

I mean the- like, sweaty hot. (Ivy snickers.)

Don:

I got- too- sweaty, hot, covered in ticks, but also, like, actually hot. Yeah. We gotta bring the hot girl vibe back into hunting. I'm not sure when it lost it, or even had it to begin with, but the hot girl vibe means you brought back into hunting, you know?

Ivy:
Yeah. Like-

Don:
Hunting fashion. It's a fine art. We gotta bring this back. Hunting fashion. It's the art of standing out, but also blending in.

Ivy, narrating:
Dear reader, I'm taking you into the heart of darkness that is *my closet*. I am going to pull from classic colonial looks: Danish aristocrats on safari, British hunting tweed and riding boots, French fur traders from the hunting movie *Prey*, and of course, American military surplus, which has long been my go-to for affordable tech wear. I can't reuse the fishing shirts I altered in season one, because I had specifically picked bright colors in case I needed to be rescued from camping.

My first-draft outfits feature khaki and olive safari clothes, and green army camo. But the problem is that I look like a Viet Cong soldier because of my face... and I probably will be sharing shooting lanes with veterans who don't believe in PTSD or therapy. But, I remember something I learned in an episode of David Attenborough's docu-series *Life in Color*.

{{FOGO Science Music: Bouncy sci-fi synths play}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):
Bengal Tigers evolved to be orange and black to blend in with the grasslands where they live in Indian Sri Lanka. To us, orange is not so grassy because we have three color cones in our eyes, but the axis deer that these tigers hunt only have two types of color cones, which means orange just looks like muted green to them. That's why people wear orange in deer seasons: so humans don't shoot them, but deer don't avoid them!

So I'm like, hold up just a goddamn minute. How many color cones do pigs have? Two, like deer? Three, like us? Sixteen, like the manta shrimp? Pigs have TWOOOOOOOOO! That means I can wear anything between red and green on the color spectrum! Anything with blue value, like cool gray or purple is off limits, but that's like not even half our color spectrum, honey. I can Make That Work.

{{FOGO Science Music: Bouncy sci-fi synths stop}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):
One of the ways my flaming bisexuality manifests is in my deliberate— some would say visionary— sartorial choices. I almost hate to admit it, but Don's fashion angle works on me. For

the first time this whole quest, I'm visualizing myself outside, and not in a worst case scenario planning kind of way. I am *not* excited to kill, but now I'm excited to *slay*.

If Don could survive 23 days outdoors naked, I think I can do one hunt, styled. And just as importantly, I now know there's a cultural difference between old-school sport and trophy hunters and new-school hunters like Don. They weren't taught to hunt as a matter of legacy, and they're eager for more new hunters to join them. I get it. I've been the first or second minority at every place I've ever worked, and it's lonely out there.

{{Upright bass playing FOGO theme music starts}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

Don is so invested in getting me outside, he would send me links to elegant hats he came across out guiding his monied clients for the rest of his busy season. I'm super disappointed Don can't be my mentor in-person, but ultimately I feel empowered to be me again. I'm not just a sad sack of trauma, y'all. I'm a fun person! I have an indoor person's nature show on Spotify. Every other hunter I talked to gave me talking points; Don gave me an invitation. Like, a really insistent invitation from a relative who has no problem making me feel obligated to come to something I really don't want to.

I know more new-school hunters like him exist, and I just have to find them somehow. I mean, I don't think they literally call themselves new-school hunters, that's just what I'm calling them. Hold on- I'm just gonna, I'm just gonna Google "new school hunting"...

{{Ivy types on a keyboard}}

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

Holy shit. The first result is a hunting school called New School of Traditional Cookery. (Reading to herself:) Each course is led by Chef Jesse Griffith, who acts as a hunting guide as well as a hunting instructor in the butchering and cooking components... About, about, about... where are you about? The New School of Traditional Cookery was founded in 2000 in AUSTIN, TEXAS?!?!

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

Ivy, narrating (cont.):

Hallelujah! I tell you what, I'll be goddamned if I'm not butchering a hog with this guy. Next time on FOGO.

Jesse Griffiths, butchering a hog:

And so, I start at the back, um, the very farthest point without being-

Ivy, responding:

Butthole.

Jesse:
To the butt hole.

Ivy:
The butt hole? Okay.

Jesse:
Yeah. You have to core the butt hole.

Ivy:
Like an apple?

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 Editing by Minda Wei. Production support by Benjamin Grosse-Siestrup. FOGO's board of advisors is Jeff Zhao and Martin Thomas.

Our outdoor Asians voice actors were Dana Wing Lau, Ewu, and Minda Wei, doing double duty today. From Spotify, our executive producers are Miguel Contreras, Grace Delia, Jane Zumwalt, and Natalie Tulloch. Spotify production support provided by Shirley Ramos. And special thanks to the rest of the Spotify team.

Listen to FOGO: Fear of Going Outside for free on Spotify! You can follow me on just about every social media platform @IvyLeWithOneE, that phrase all spelled out. And follow our guest, Don Nguyen @realdonnguyen. Don is spelled D-O-N. Nguyen is N-G-U-Y-E-N. Go to fogopodcast.com for the newsletter, transcripts, and merch!

{{Funky electronic FOGO outro music plays; it gets real nasty with it, thanks Michaelangelo!}}

Don, being interviewed:
I was like dripping blood as a 10 year old, and I was like crying and sobbing the whole way down as he lowered me down. And then he repelled down and he goes, (sotto:) "I'm so sorry. I'll never take you climbing again!" And then, now I'm a mountaineering guide!

(Ivy laughs in the face of those who doubt us.)