

Transcript
Dead Ladies Show Podcast Episode 28
Fanny Cradock

(Dead Ladies Show Music - 'Little Lily Swing' by Tri-Tachyon)

SUSAN STONE: Welcome to the Dead Ladies Show Podcast. I'm Susan Stone. The Dead Ladies Show celebrates women -- forgotten and famous -- who achieved amazing things against all odds while they were alive. The show was recorded in front of a delightful audience here in Berlin. And on the podcast we bring you a special selection of talks from these events. Dead Ladies Show co-founders Katy Derbyshire and Florian Duijsens are here with me too. Hey there!

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Hello!

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: Hi, Susan!

SUSAN STONE: It's our last show of the year, and we thought we should celebrate with some champagne -- air quotes around champagne. Other fizzy drinks are of course available. (SOUND OF CORK POPPING AND LAUGHING, EVERYONE SAYS CHEERS) Here's to Dead Ladies, there's more every day!

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Auf die toten Damen! Prost! So, since it's holiday time, we're bringing you something festive on the show today. And if you're one of our German listeners, hallo! (LAUGHS) Wir haben für euch eine deutsche Ausgabe als Weihnachtsgeschenk. Einfach diese Episode mal auf Deutsch. That is to say, as a gift to our German listeners, we've recorded a German version of this very same show, that's clearly labelled Deutsch Episode 28 — so have a look for that download, if you'd like hear us auf Deutsch instead of auf Englisch.

SUSAN STONE: Indeed, it's our first ever -- lots of fun, a little bit challenging for some of us. (ALL LAUGH) But let me tell you why we're able to offer this dual delight. So our presenter in this episode is Mary Scherpe. And she was talented and charming enough to do her talk twice for us, in two different languages. Florian, please do tell us a bit more about Mary.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: Well, Mary, my dear friend is a writer and activist and a creative director. Her website called Stil in Berlin is the online source for great advice about where to eat in Berlin and where to go. She just launched a brunch guide in fact, which is very helpful if you've ever had to suffer, like, sweaty cheese. You -- buffet breakfasts which are the worst.

SUSAN STONE: Bad pancakes; we can't have bad pancakes.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: We cannot have bad pancakes. She has all the best pancakes, all the best eggs any which way you'd like them. You can find it on her website, called stilinberlin.de. This weekend, the 15th of December, she's also throwing the sixth edition of her annual clothing drive called Warm Up, benefiting Moabit Hilft, which is a wonderful nonprofit assisting refugees here in Berlin. So check that out too.

SUSAN STONE: Yes, Mary has a lot going on, and it's all pretty fabulous. Now, Katy, I think that you might know the lady that Mary's presenting here better than Florian and I do, or at least you may have encountered her first. So tell us a little bit more.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: So Mary's gonna tell us all about Fanny Cradock, who's a TV chef, a holiday standby and a rather eccentric lady. Actually, although she is British, I only learned about her from Mary's talk, really. But of course, her heyday was a little bit before my heyday. What I grew up with though in the UK, was a whole generation of TV chefs who really reacted against what Fanny had done. And so they were -- they were trying to make sure they were as down to earth as possible. It was all kind of brown cord and lentils and nothing at all, like Fanny Cradock.

SUSAN STONE: Yeah, Fanny is the opposite of brown cord and lentils, that's for sure. She really had this remarkable sense of style, which you'll hear a bit about. But, while you're listening, I would recommend that you go take a look at the pictures that we have on our website or just give her a Google, I would say Fanny's entire way of being was extravagant. Here's Mary with the story.

MARY SCHERPE: So I'm not British. I'm actually very, very, very German. So it might be a little bit surprising that I introduced someone like Fanny Cradock. When you are from Britain and you grew up with a TV, it is very likely that you know who she is. And you also usually have an opinion about her. Outside of the UK, however, she remains mostly unknown. So, as I said, the question is, where did I get the idea to introduce her here?

Over two years ago, I co-founded the Feminist Food Club. It's a loose network of trans and cis women in working in gastronomy. And for one of our monthly meetings, I researched historical female chefs, because my knowledge was also limited in that field. And that's how I found Fanny.

She was a revelation to say the least. Usually female chefs, especially those on TV, present themselves as rather approachable: as the good housewife and/or the caring mother. Just look at someone like Delia Smith or Martha Stewart, or Fanny's contemporary Julia Child. Considering that sea of beige, it seems Paula Dean's hairstyles and Nigella Lawson's tight dresses are as

extravagant as it is allowed in this profession. I witness this type of holding back in the Feminist Food Club myself when women who run big catering businesses or restaurants introduce themselves to the circle saying things like, "I have this, like, small cafe and I do this, like, stuff."

Fanny is very much the opposite. Modesty is not her style. She opens her autobiography which is obviously named "Something's Burning," like this: "We have covered half a million miles by car, train and aircraft, and 14 countries have been our stomping grounds. We have eaten more meals in more hotels and restaurants than any other couple alive today. And we have long ago wiped the eye of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I in respect of beds. We have sold 3 million words and books and articles alone, made around 100 broadcasts and over 70 TV appearances and we have graduated from an ancient Vauxhall 10 to a very small Rolls. It seems we are the only cooks in the world who have performed for 6,500 people at the Royal Albert Hall in London."

Let's just stay with this for a moment: she performed at the Royal Albert Hall. In 1956, Fanny and her husband Johnnie Cradock prepared an entire multicourse Christmas menu in front of, as I said 6,500 guests in their very own Bon Viveur international Christmas cookery show. Mind you -- in front of, not for, 6,500 people. And it went like this: Fanny wearing a silk taffeta gown and a tiara, cooked in a show kitchen in the center of the hall. Celebrities were seated at tables around this kitchen, and were then called into the circle to give the creations a quick taste. Which also means that the main part of the audience -- just to repeat -- who bought tickets, came there just to witness this extravaganza. They never get any food.

The menu matches the setting. We see how Fanny shakes a bottle of bubbly, only to bury it underneath a pile of sauerkraut. On which Johnnie then arranges two halves of a piglet to be doused in gravy by Fanny. Next, the champagne is cracked open, and gushes over the crude composition. (AUDIENCE LAUGHS) After that, they garnish an oven-baked turkey with its original and raw tail feathers, wings, and yes, its head. For dessert, Fanny took inspiration from one of her biggest idols, Frenchman Georges Auguste Escoffier, and presented a Peche Melba on an ice sculpture in the shape of a swan that weighs 36 kilos. Here's a short video of that.

FANNY CRADOCK ON TAPE: And we come to what is probably the most misquoted, ill-represented distorted sauce the world has ever known. Sauce Melba! Which has nothing to do with port wine, red currants, stewed strawberries or strange thickening, but is just fresh raspberries, rubbed through a sieve.

JOHNNIE CRADOCK ON TAPE: And with a sharp raspberry sauce to balance the sweetness of the peaches and the creamy ice, here is the

master's classic dish, and last item on the first part of our program.
(APPLAUSE ON TAPE)

(AUDIENCE LAUGHS)

MARY SCHERPE: It's true, it's not made up! Up next is Fanny after a costume change into another shiny gown, explaining and showcasing the preparation of a souffle using her fake French accent. I think it's very exciting. Not only -- just to repeat that again -- because most of the paying guests never received anything to eat. But because of Fanny's stage persona, her impressive gowns, her strong voice and her commands. She basically does everything herself. Fanny is famous for her at-times forward and always quite dominant style, which until today is used to justify her ambiguous reputation. It's easy to find takedowns alleging her lack of talent and emphasizing her bullying.

In 2009, TV show host John Walsh used the occasion of the 15th anniversary of her death to describe her like this. "She had mad glittering eyes, the face of a supercilious horse, the maquillage of a French clown, and demeanor of a woman in constant search of an argument. She was rude to everyone: BBC colleagues, helpers, members of the public, fellow cooks and her long-suffering partner Johnnie. (AUDIENCE LAUGHS) Much of her life was a lie, a cover up, a delusion. From her date and place of birth to her marital status, it's not even clear that she knew much about cooking." Well, a man dissing a woman because of her loud and demanding ways isn't necessarily news. Yet Fanny was one of the UK's biggest celebrities after the war, helping the British rediscover their love for cooking and indulgence, all while wearing formal dresses and elaborate hairstyles.

Phyllis Nan Sortain Pechey was born on February 26, 1909, in Leytonstone, East London. Her mother, called Bijou, was an actress and only 18. Her father, a writer was already 33. Her father's biggest success was a theater piece called "Tons of Money," which gave the family exactly that, albeit for only a short time. In Fanny's memory, her father fell victim to the casinos, while her mother chose flamboyance. She preferred to start her day around 11am with a plate of oysters.

Until she was 10, little Fanny lived with her grandmother, being educated in literature and ballet, violin and piano, hosting and cooking. All her life she never failed to accentuate her sophisticated and allegedly French heritage, gifted to her by her maternal grandparents. In these early years she first learned to appreciate cigars and wine. Quote: "My wine was pale pink at five, deep pink by eight, and often straight from the bottle when I went to school." At 10, Fanny was shipped off to boarding school, a terrible time of which she remembered, "I learned nothing, forgot all I knew, and hourly hoped to die."

She was kicked out of school at 15, met her first husband, a pilot at the Royal Air Force, and eloped with him two years later. To which her mother reacted as follows: "No, you may not come home. I don't want any soiled doves in my house." Shortly after the wedding, the newlyweds found out that they were pregnant, but only two days later, the young husband died in a plane crash. Not in any type of heroic maneuver but during a routine flight and bad weather. Eight months later, Fanny's first son Peter was born.

The next years were tough. Fanny had to make ends meet without the support of her parents, who had gone bankrupt and gotten divorced. At 24, Fanny met her second husband, a construction technician, got pregnant, married him, and left him to move to London and work in restaurants shortly after giving birth to her second son Christopher, who stayed with his father and had to wait for 25 years before finding out who his mother was. At just eight years old, her first son Peter got adopted by his paternal grandparents, probably because Fanny had to lock him in at home while she went door to door selling vacuum cleaners or worked as a seamstress. Her relationship to both her sons remained, let's say, strained.

Fanny married a third time -- a fun-loving, handsome, and well-off race driver. This one. She later insisted she did it as a favor to him since he was actually gay, a statement his second wife strongly contested. (AUDIENCE LAUGHS) This third marriage was even shorter than her second, since just days after the wedding, she met Army Major John Cradock, the love of her life, her fourth and final partner, and eventually husband. She annulled marriage number three, with the race driver, who she actually wasn't legally married to anyway, because hubby number two, the construction technician, had converted to Catholicism in the meantime and did not agree to a divorce.

By the way, Johnnie was also already married, with four kids. His divorce was believed to have cost him around 75,000 pounds; today that would be over a million. It was worth it, though, as they stayed together till the end. She wrote, "We met, I taught him to drink champagne for breakfast at 2pm. I helped him to discover the pleasure of kitchen raids for Alfresco meals in the middle of the night, and that snails and frogs legs were delicious."

By 1942, Britain was at war, but the Army Major was released early due to an eye infection, and they moved to the countryside where Fanny changed her name to Cradock so they can at least appear to be married. They set up shop in Snitterfield, at 1200-soul community, not far from Birmingham, where they lay the groundwork for their future success by hosting extravagant dinner parties. Fanny had a talent for clever and thrifty solutions. She bred rabbits, served ferns instead of asparagus, and baked hedgehogs in clay, so they tasted like frog legs. Or so she says. She also writes her first novels under the

pen name Francis Dale, adopted from her grandmother's middle name; most of her writing is more or less derived from her own life story.

After the war, Fanny and Johnnie returned to London and renovate a South Kensington house ruined by air raids. She started penning a fashion column for The Telegraph under the name Elsa Frances, and a beauty column using the name Nan Sortain. When she turned 40, she turned to cooking, and published her first cookbook called "The Practical Cook." In the spirit of the still prevalent strict postwar rationing, the recipe for the baked hedgehog is paired with tips like "don't throw away stale sandwiches, dip them in batter and fry -- they're excellent." In 1950, Fanny and Johnnie started writing a travel column for The Daily Telegraph under the title Bon Viveur in which they test restaurants and hotels, and introduce the Brits to new and exotic dishes like the pizza.

(AUDIENCE LAUGHS)

A few years later, they start cooking for audiences. She showed up in a gown and a tiara of course, he spotted a top hat with tails, and they sold out venues easily. Just a year after they started, 20,000 people already enjoyed their presentations. But, before Fanny felt entirely ready for the big stage, she had to take care of one thing.

A producer once told her, "You look so awful in pictures." She didn't disagree, and consulted a plastic surgeon for a facelift. However, he insisted, "There's nothing to lift yet. What's more, it wouldn't make the slightest bit of difference if there was. It's your nose that's all wrong, my girl." By the way, at this point Fanny was 45-years-old. "It throws shadows all over your face, it brings your eyes too close together, and it makes your whole face look like a currant bun." So Fanny gets a nose job, but not only for aesthetic reasons, the doctor also promises more: "You will become an easier person to live with when you lose your inferiority complex that came through always being conscious of your nose." And she remembers, "How clearly he had seen through me. To keep people from noticing that nose of mine, I had become a woman who talked fast and loud. I had become an eccentric in dress, and in manner, defensively."

Afterwards the couple went through a self-imposed gruesome and not really recommendable diet of mostly lemon, orange and grapefruit juice, but then they're ready. against the fashion of TV cooking presentations of the time, Fanny wanted to add a little extra, she wanted to entertain. Thanks to her live shows she was well aware that in order to do so, she had to cook for the back row. And this intention translates into her TV appearances. Dressed in fine garments, never, ever in an apron, she insists, "Cooking is a cleanly art, not a grubby chore." She wanted to convince the most anxious housewife of the joy and fulfillment cooking can bring.

The following years were the most important in her career, bringing her success after success. Even before performing at the Royal Albert Hall, she participated in a public cooking competition against the French three Michelin-starred chef Raymond Oliver. The occasion was his announcement that, "Women do not know how to cook. They are incapable of inventing a dish." Fanny obviously showed up in front of the 40 press people and 300 guests wearing an embellished pink satin dress with a train. The jury agreed on a tie, even though Oliver later denied this and claimed he won, but Fanny had already won the hearts of the audience with her elegance.

Even the Royal Family now knew who she was. Here we see her with Prince Philip, I think, marveling at her skills at an exhibition. What followed were many ad campaigns for detergents, fridges, frozen vegetables, than a failed theater project, and a successful record-breaking bid for which Fanny, Johnnie, and their Rolls Royce raced from London to Monte Carlo in only 16 hours and 19 minutes. Her menu for car journey included bitter chocolates and sultanas in the boot for easy handling at speed, caviar brown bread sandwiches, as well as several thermoses of hot coffee laced with brandy. (AUDIENCE LAUGHS). Different times.

The Cradocks left their home in Kensington in 1958 for Blackheath in Southeast London. While the snobby Kensingtonians despised her as nouveau riche, here they were considered quasi-royalty. Thanks to a kitchen renovation worth around what would be 50,000 pounds today. Fanny could now cook on five stoves instead of just three. And she invested a lot of time into gardening as an early adopter of the farm-to-table trend, which she called "from garden to gourmet," and she used her Rolls Royce to fell some trees.

In 1960, her aforementioned autobiography was published, and Fanny celebrated with an elaborate Cockney-themed party at her house. She turns her kitchen into a fish and chips shop and herself into a Cockney flower girl. Yes, that is her. Fanny then had to undergo multiple surgeries for colon cancer. After recuperating in her favorite hotel in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco, the couple set out on the maiden voyage of the newly acquired 11.5 meter long yacht, which instantly exploded on ignition. Both were sent to the hospital with heavy burns for months, uncertain whether they would survive. Fanny's recipe against the scars? Nivea cream.

They turned their backs on London and moved to Watford, a small community one hour Northwest of the city into a place called Dower House. There, they enjoyed their own stream with trout and crayfish, a pool, a kitchen with nine stoves and a marble dining table. And another revelation: Fanny's new BBC show was now shot in color. Colorful Cookery was aimed towards both the quote "girl living in the bedsitter and the harassed housewife with little time to spare."

In 1975, Fanny was 66, her now infamous Christmas cooking series screened on the BBC. Already back then -- it's my favorite scene her decorating the Christmas pudding -- already back then her style was quite nostalgic. Delia Smith was ready to take over. Her frugal and demure style seemed to be what the Brits were craving in the turbulent 60s. But Christmas is a special time for Fanny. She was the person who would prepare the pudding a year in advance, buy all the presents during summer vacation, and send out over 500 holiday cards. A year later, Fanny committed what she called the biggest mistake of her life, which caused her to...(LAUGHS) I didn't even see it and have to laugh!

Which caused her to fall out of favor with her beloved audience. Invited as an expert on the reality show *The Big Time*, she was supposed to consult one of the amateur candidates in creating a menu for a banquet celebrating a former prime minister. When her assigned mentee, a woman named Gwen Troake from Devon, told her she wanted to serve a seafood cocktail, duck with brambles, and coffee pudding for dessert, Fanny could not hide her extreme disapproval.

FANNY CRADOCK ON TAPE: Now what else is there, in this meal, what do they start with?

GWEN TROAKE ON TAPE: Seafood cocktail.

FANNY CRADOCK ON TAPE: Yes, you see, it's frightfully rich. Seafood cocktail. And then straight into the duck?

GWEN TROAKE ON TAPE: It's a three course luncheon, isn't it?

FANNY CRADOCK ON TAPE: Yes. (ROLLS EYES IN VIDEO)

(AUDIENCE LAUGHS)

MARY SCHERPE: The audience did not appreciate her repeated eye rolls. Strange, considering today's TV shows are almost all based on the bashing of amateurs ambitions, and the celebration of memeable faces. Back then though, the BBC received over 600 letters complaining about her selfish, condescending and rude behavior. The candidate herself though, was fine. Gwen Troake's "*Country Cookbook*" was published the next year, pointedly including the coffee pudding recipe that had made Fanny hopping mad. Most of Fanny's BBC shows were canceled following this incident, but she continued publishing novels, kids' books, and of course cookbooks.

A year after the grand debacle, the Cradocks finally got married without further ado. Under the assumption that has been number two, you remember the

construction technician, was deceased. Which wasn't true, as the Daily Express discovered two years later, by which time the real number two had actually died. So the only one troubled by this was the reverend who had illegitimately married them. After a quick move to Ireland, and another one to the Channel Island of Guernsey, the Cradocks returned to Essex in the mid 1980s.

At the age of 82, Johnnie died of lung cancer at the end of January 1987. Fanny could not handle his illness, neither visiting him in the hospital nor showing up at his funeral. 1988 saw her last long interview, and she was confronted with the rumor that she caused so much suffering in Johnnie's life. To which she replied, "But it was all an act, darling. We used to practice beforehand. We were devoted to each other. And now that he's gone, I don't want to live. I walk with memories and they're so painful."

Aged 84, Fanny died on December 27, 1994 from a heart attack. Her ashes were spread next to Johnnie's. Research for a biopic discovered that Fanny had probably been taking pills, uppers and downers all her life, especially amphetamines, which used to suppress her appetite since she was well aware that her public role did not allow any weight considered over the norm. The resulting film is called "Fear of Fanny," in which Julia Davis plays her as emotionally fragile, antagonized, and constantly swearing. Fanny's second son Christopher had consulted with the production.

The two books consulting me were obviously, "Something's Burning," Fanny's autobiography from 1960, and Clive Ellis' biography "Fabulous Fanny" from 2007, as well as countless articles and her numerous cooking shows, many of which can be found on YouTube. For many years, Fanny and Johnnie were the faces of the British Gas council's ad campaigns, and in 1963, Fanny appeared in a 20 minute post-modern Cinderella story in which she teaches an ingenue how to cook. The ad is highly absurd. However, it's also 20 minutes long, so I'm just going to show a short clip. We're entering when the couple which is this is about argues about the burnt dinner. But don't you worry, Fanny's on her way to rescue them!

ADVERTISEMENT ON TAPE:

Husband: I just thought you'd like to see how to cook something properly.

Wife: Properly!

Husband: Darling it's three months since we moved in here. We must ask mum to dinner. I just thought...

Wife: I don't care what you think, I'm not having your mother here criticizing the way I cook.

Husband: That's not fair. My mother doesn't criticize.

Wife: Oh doesn't she? She's just always telling me what a good cook that creature you used to run around with was.

Husband: That is not criticism. Hilda is a very good cook.

Wife: All right then. Go and get her to cook you your fish fingers!

Husband: Hilda wouldn't have fiddled with fish fingers. And Hilda wouldn't have griped about having my mother to dinner either. (DOOR SLAMS)

Echoing Voices: Mother to dinner, mother to dinner. Mother to dinner! Janet!

Wife: Oh, it's you again. Alright then, go on, show me how to make a good dinner every night.

Fanny: My dear Janet, nothing could be simpler. All you need is a little knowledge and the right equipment. Come on, I'll show you now.

(AUDIENCE LAUGHS)

MARY SCHERPE: Thank you.

SUSAN STONE: Mary Scherpe on Fanny Cradock, recorded in warmer days in the Hof at Berlin's ACUD. You can see more of that absolutely bizarre advertisement, and some marvelous images of Fanny in action at deadladiesshow.com/podcast.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: So since we're on the topic of holiday eating, we thought we tell you about some of our favorite foods and rituals of this season.

SUSAN STONE: Yes, and we're even in the kitchen recording today, which does make sense, it's perfect for Fanny. So everybody grab your glass.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Oh, I already did. Yeah.

SUSAN STONE:
Okay. Florian, let's start with you.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: Right in my hand. I grew up in Holland. So that's where I'm going for the holidays. And we'll do three Christmas dinners, 24th, 25th, and 26th. And on one of those days, we actually have a hunter who's attending, so we'll eat something he shot and killed. Not on the day, I think it's coming, you know, it's coming from the freezer, so that'll be safe. Since he's been coming for quite a while, we've been experimenting with different things

to do with these poor dead creatures. In recent years, we've made wontons. We've done, like, sausages. This year, we might go crazy and just roast it with some rosemary, who knows?

SUSAN STONE: But in Holland and in Germany as well and some other countries, Christmas Day or Christmas Eve isn't necessarily the peak of the action, as far as kids go anyway.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: Well, in Holland, our gifts happened way earlier, right. They happen for St. Nicholas on the fifth or sixth of December, depending on which part of the country you grew up in. So generally, we don't have any gifts over Christmas. We just have lots of family movies on TV, and food, just eating.

SUSAN STONE: Okay, Katy?

KATY DERBYSHIRE:

So I have a family Christmas in London every year with my sister and her now two kids and my kid. And I luckily enjoy cooking, because I'm the one who does it. (LAUGHS) So it's fun. Except that you have to like, try and remember, okay, who's allergic to this? Who doesn't eat that? Who won't eat bananas in their pancakes for some reason? And if you actually revealed accidentally that there were bananas in the pancakes, they suddenly don't like them anymore. Anyway. Yeah, so my sister and I will chop and cook and spend all day eating, and then I will stop doing any more work after lunch and everybody else has to tidy up, which is the good part.

SUSAN STONE: Okay, traditional dishes other than chocolate orange?

KATY DERBYSHIRE: (LAUGHS) British holiday food is a little bit special. People don't like it in other countries for some reason. So we do have mince pies that have no minced meat in. Although there is some beef fat involved, which I really like. Then there's a Christmas pudding, which you make in November and then boil it for four hours on Christmas Day. And it's a big round ball of brownness. Another one I'm not actually super fond of.

SUSAN STONE: There's so many raisins.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Yeah. I mean, how many raisins do you need? You know? Yeah, there's a lot of raisins over Christmas, I suppose, because there wasn't any fruit on the trees. You know?(LAUGHS) It's just winter food. I think my favorite thing is actually, because there's always some kids around is the present giving, and the kids running around allocating presents to other people, "Oh this is for you, and this is for you Mom, this is from us." That's my probably my favorite thing. And luckily as the children get older, it gets later in

the day. So it's no longer at 5am, but now it's I think we're going on about seven, it's quite good.

SUSAN STONE: That is better, that is the advantage of getting older I guess. Yeah, we haven't been having so many early Christmases lately but the one thing that I definitely miss in Germany that we don't get -- and I'm from the States and I grew up in Florida, so it's green Christmas all the way around. But what you don't see here is egg nog. You're making a face but it's delicious! And it's not the same as Eierpunch-- like that something else, I was -- last night I was at the Weihnachtsmarkt, and I saw they were selling like a warm Eierpunch, which sounds like scrambled eggs to me. That sounds horrible. No -- eggnog should be cold. It should have rum in it. And it should have a heck of a lot of nutmeg on the top. Yeah.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: I did have some at a Christmas party on Sunday. Right here.

SUSAN STONE: Was it good?

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: It was not my thing.

SUSAN STONE:
Okay, well maybe it wasn't made right. At least there are no raisins in it.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Yeah, that's good. No raisiny drinks.

SUSAN STONE: Eggnog I miss, candy canes you don't see too often here. What else? Well, we always had shortbread. My grandmother came from Scotland, and so we always had shortbread from her and fruitcake as well, sort of very traditional things. And this year, we're all going to Scotland together.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: More shortbread.

SUSAN STONE: More shortbread, and possibly also a Cloutie Dumpling. If you know what that is.

KATY DERBYSHIRE:
Does it have raisins in it?

SUSAN STONE:
A hell of a lot of raisins. (ALL LAUGH) Yeah, so that's also kind of like a steamed or boiled pudding thing. This -- I guess these British sorts of puddings are, they're kind of like a fruit cake that's then been boiled and possibly set on fire. With alcohol.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Just to make sure it's really dead. Yeah.

SUSAN STONE: So there are some similarities, for people who've never encountered these things, but the raisins are really hard to get past.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: Yeah, I mean there's raisins.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: I like a raisin. But that's just me.

KATY DERBYSHIRE: But do you like 1500 raisins in one day?

SUSAN STONE: If you do then come to the UK! We've got a dumpling with your name on it! So thank you for that. That was fun. And everybody -- enjoy your own cooking expeditions this season.

FLORIAN DUIJSENS: And we'd like to thank our friends who are supporting us via Patreon, and everybody else listening in wherever you are. I hope you enjoy yourself around the table this winter. And don't be a tyrant in the kitchen, and make sure everyone has a full glass at all times. Our theme song, by the way, is little Lily swing by Tri-Tachyon, and we'll be back with another episode in January. Until then you can find us on Twitter and Instagram at @deadladiesshow. Drop us a line and tell us who your favorite dead lady is, and what you think of the show

SUSAN STONE: And what you ate for Christmas. Why not? The Dead Ladies Show was founded by Florian Duijsens and Katy Derbyshire. The podcast is created, produced and edited by me. Thank you, Katy. Thank you, Florian. And thanks to all of you! I'm Susan Stone. (ALL CLINK GLASSES AND TOAST WITH CHEERS)

(Dead Ladies Show Music - 'Little Lily Swing' by Tri-Tachyon)

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