

TDS S6 E6

[00:00:00] **INTRO:** AURRA

[00:00:06] **Samantha Baines:** I am joined by Rosie Wilby, author, comedian and podcaster, and host of the breakup monologues. Welcome to The Divorce Social.

[00:00:15] **Rosie Wilby:** Yay. Thank you.

[00:00:18] **Samantha Baines:** You seem very excited to be here.

[00:00:20] **Rosie Wilby:** Well, I know it is kind of exciting. I mean, cause I'll tell you why, because I guess I've had the inverse journey to many of your guests.

[00:00:29] **Rosie Wilby:** Cause I often listen to your show, but I sort of felt like. You know, everybody was talking about divorce and this was something because I haven't ever been able to get married until now I'm in a relationship where we're engaged and we're gonna get married next year. Um, I haven't been able to get divorced either, so it's almost like a weird kind of exclusive club that I could never join, even though, I mean, I don't want my marriage to end, I don't want to get divorced, you know, [00:01:00] but it could happen, but it's almost like

[00:01:03] **Rosie Wilby:** yeah. Now I can get married. I could get divorced as well. Whereas I felt like in the previous kind of dialogue and conversation that we used to have broadly about breakups and divorces as this sort of almost hierarchy of breakups and of heartache where people kind of think, oh, well, if you got divorced, that sort of carries more weight than, you know, if you just had a break up, whereas

[00:01:30] **Rosie Wilby:** of course I couldn't get married. My breakups were like divorces or certainly one of them that we're gonna talk about. Um, but several of the others too. I mean, I kind of think if I could have got married all along, I'd be like Jane Collins. You know, I would be on to my fifth wife. So. Yeah, it's, it's almost a strange thing where it is kind of exciting to have that possibility open up of the good side of being able to get married. But also

[00:01:56] **Rosie Wilby:** You know, the sad part of being able to get divorced too. [00:02:00] It just means, I suppose, if you can mark a relationship's ending, you kind of acknowledge that it exists as well.

[00:02:08] **Samantha Baines:** Yeah, that's really interesting. I was talking to a guy recently who's coming out of his first divorce because he was able to get married and his partner is a man.

[00:02:18] **Samantha Baines:** And he said that he, it felt lovely that he gets to get divorced now because he's allowed to be married, but he's also allowed to be divorced.

[00:02:28] **Rosie Wilby:** I mean, isn't it weird. Can you imagine when you started this podcast you know, I mean, I listened to your first ever episode with Sarah Millican and I guess your real sense, you know, in your early episodes was that divorce was just this awful thing that you'd gone through.

[00:02:43] **Rosie Wilby:** And now there are people you're talking to who are more celebratory about it. It must seem weird.

[00:02:49] **Samantha Baines:** But also I guess I've been through a bit of a process through each series of the podcast. So I guess I feel more celebratory now as well. And maybe, that's having an impact on, you know, my [00:03:00] guests.

[00:03:01] **Samantha Baines:** No, it's funny, I mean, yeah, looking back now. I'm glad I got divorced. So I guess for you, you, one day you may get to have this wonderful divorce feeling or you'll just be happily married. So-

[00:03:15] **Rosie Wilby:** stay married. Happily married. I mean it's just a win-win Sam, its great. Yeah. No, it is really interesting. And I certainly hope that we don't get divorced, but I kind of think.

[00:03:28] **Rosie Wilby:** I've come to think that breakups, whether, you know, whether we were married or not, or civil civilly partnered or living together or whatever our situation was, I think we can learn from them. And you can grow a lot after, after some kind of trauma and some kind of break up. So I do think that, you know, arguably it is, it is an experience to be celebrated because you'll probably get something from it in terms of your own growth and personal development or creativity, or starting a new career [00:04:00] or writing a book or all of these kinds of things.

[00:04:02] **Rosie Wilby:** So I think it can be a good thing, ultimately.

[00:04:05] **Samantha Baines:** Yeah definitely. And I think it's interesting that you mentioned about the hierarchy of divorce as well though, and break up because I remember when I was first kind of breaking it to people that I was getting a divorce, they'd always say, oh, do you have kids? And I'd say no.

[00:04:20] **Samantha Baines:** And they'd be like, oh, it's fine. Then like, oh, it's going to be really easy because you don't have kids. And I remember being really annoyed by that. And do you think in the past, when you've had breakups and you weren't able to call them divorces because at the time, you know, you couldn't legally marry your partner, do you think, did that

[00:04:39] **Samantha Baines:** annoy you?

[00:04:40] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah, I think so. Um, I think you had essentially kids cause you had cats right. And um, you know, I've got a dog and two cats in this relationship and I think that would be a huge thing. Pet custody. You know, it is and would be [00:05:00] a really, really huge issue because they are children. To many of us they're part of a part of the family cause they, they really get upset as well.

[00:05:09] **Rosie Wilby:** And I remember my cat, when my last relationship was breaking up, um, the cat just started sort of pooing and weeing on the sofa and she was really traumatized and she was protesting basically um bless her. But yeah, even when we have an argument, now the dog is like really not into it and it's running to each of us to kind of go, no, it's okay.

[00:05:34] **Rosie Wilby:** You know, wagging her tail. And with her little ears down when she's upset. So yeah. I think whatever type of relationship we're in, it's awful when you, when you have a breakup, it's a lot of change for everybody around that relationship to climatize to, whether thats your mutual friends or your families, extended families and people that you hang out with and people that are important to you.

[00:05:58] **Rosie Wilby:** So I think there's a lot [00:06:00] that we have to process and work with and deal with, you know, whatever our situation has been in, in the relationship. However formally It's being recognized legally. And so on.

[00:06:11] **Samantha Baines:** You're saying one of your pets used to wee and poo because they were stressed at the breakup. My, one of my cats called queen Victoria.

[00:06:19] **Samantha Baines:** She used to wee on my ex in bed when we were still together. So, I wonder if she's always been on my side like get rid

[00:06:31] **Rosie Wilby:** well, I tell you what, when I had cats with my first ever, ever girlfriend, she on meeting my ex's new partner, the first thing she did was look straight in the eyes and just do a wee on the carpet.

[00:06:46] **Samantha Baines:** Wow.

[00:06:47] **Rosie Wilby:** She was like you're not replacing my mum, no, no, no.

[00:06:51] **Samantha Baines:** That was like aggression peeing.

[00:06:54] **Rosie Wilby:** Absolutely- strong eye contact. And then when she did move in [00:07:00] with my ex and her new partner. And who I got on with really well, actually, they had this sort of fireplace with kind of little i dont know, sort of gravelly stuff in that just seemed to have like a litter tray.

[00:07:13] **Rosie Wilby:** So she was always wearing in the fireplace, but I, thought, I thought it was quite fun really.

[00:07:18] **Samantha Baines:** Yeah. I mean, that is like a cat litter tray set up. Like, why would you do that? If you have a cat in the house? It's so true though, because I remember- so one of my cats died. That I had with my ex, he got hit by a car and it is like

[00:07:35] **Samantha Baines:** you know, I had to break it to my ex, so we'd already broken up. He'd moved out. We were going through divorce proceedings and then I had to break to him that the cat had died and also sort of asked for money for the cremation, because it's really expensive to get a cat cremated. Um, like hundreds of pounds and it's like awful, he's like crying on the phone and like I got him at work.[00:08:00]

[00:08:00] **Samantha Baines:** And then I was like, also, can I have 150 pounds? Because that's half of the cat cremation price. It is, it is, you know, you don't take into consideration that like visitation rights of your favorite pets or like, you know, just the maintaining or if they're ill and they need medication. It's quite, you know, it can be a lot to take in.

[00:08:21] **Samantha Baines:** And also we have two cats and for me, I was like, I'm one woman now with two cats, like I would have just, if it was just me, I would have got one cat that now I have to take them both because they're brother and sister and we can't split them

[00:08:34] **Samantha Baines:** up.

[00:08:35] **Rosie Wilby:** Can't split them up no.

[00:08:37] **Samantha Baines:** So, yeah, it is, it is a point of contention about divorce, but let's, let's talk about your breakup story.

[00:08:45] **Samantha Baines:** And by the way, I want you to know that you're very welcome in the divorce social, even though you're not officially divorced yet. You're a very welcome

[00:08:52] **Samantha Baines:** member.

[00:08:53] **Rosie Wilby:** Thank you- Its like a, I dunno, some kind of special clause isn't it, yes.

[00:08:59] **Samantha Baines:** [00:09:00] Well, I'm trying to open up the groups, so it's not, you don't just have to have that paperwork.

[00:09:04] **Samantha Baines:** You just have to have had a difficult breakup. And I would have said before, all people have had that. I actually have contacted a lot of people to try and get guests for the podcast. And they've been actually, haven't had a difficult right. So there are some people in the world who haven't had it.

[00:09:22] **Rosie Wilby:** Well, I mean, that's interesting, cause I think that depends on your definition of breakup because I know people who have not had difficult romantic breakup, but then go on to talk about friendship breakups or, you know, breakups, professional breakups.

[00:09:39] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, and you know, that's why when I recently wrote my book, I included those other types of breakups because we sort of have less social scripts around for actually navigating mourning those. So it is quite interesting when you sort of think about what is a breakup. I mean, we tend to assume it is the ending of a [00:10:00] romantic relationship, but then there are some people in the world

[00:10:03] **Rosie Wilby:** who probably don't have romantic relationships in the way that we define them. Um, but, but would have been really hurt by maybe a friend disappearing from their lives. So, you know, maybe our definitions of relationships and therefore breakups need to kind of broaden as well. It's, it's complicated, isn't it Sam.

[00:10:24] **Samantha Baines:** But that's what I love about your podcast.

[00:10:26] **Samantha Baines:** And your book is that you explore both of those things and you kind of broaden it out a little bit. You know, I'm fully just about heart ache of romance. But I love that you're, you're kind of exploring the rest as well. Cause I've definitely had some difficult work breakups, but let's talk about your difficult breakup.

[00:10:45] **Samantha Baines:** So where were you? That was a bit sprightly of me to introduce it in that way. Wasn't it?

[00:10:51] **Samantha Baines:** Sorry-very energetically.

[00:10:53] **Rosie Wilby:** imagine if I was seeing a therapist like heyyy, tell me about the time that the person [00:11:00] died.

[00:11:01] **Samantha Baines:** Tell me about the awful thing that happened to you and the most upbeat voice ever. Where were you in the world and in your life? Um, at the beginning of this break-up.

[00:11:11] **Rosie Wilby:** Actually there are probably two really significant breakups, but I'll tackle the main one first that prompted me to investigate breakups over the past

[00:11:22] **Rosie Wilby:** however many years. The breakup that really triggered all of that was when I got dumped by email 10 years ago now. So it was back when being dumped by emails still might have seemed a bit abrupt. I mean, now we have ghosting and all of this, these other behaviors.

[00:11:39] **Samantha Baines:** I mean, I think it still is definitely abrupt.

[00:11:42] **Samantha Baines:** It's like, not even a text, like an email.

[00:11:46] **Rosie Wilby:** Well yeah, I mean,

[00:11:48] **Rosie Wilby:** we used to email each other. Um, and, and we would have more space to say stuff. And I think you can think about an email and craft it and construct it more than you can a text. So I don't necessarily [00:12:00] think an email is worse than a text, but it was just, for me, it was definitely worse than a face-to-face conversation.

[00:12:06] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, after we'd been together for five years. And of course at the time I joked that I felt much better after correcting her spelling and punctuation and changing the font. Um, but of course it's, it's real shock. Uh, after doing so much thinking about this breakup and this relationship, I think what I've realized is not that the breakup itself was the traumatic thing, even though it was very traumatic, but it was actually the relationship and how

[00:12:36] **Rosie Wilby:** difficult and challenging the relationship had been and how painful it had been because it was an invisible relationship. And I think this is why I've become obsessed with breakups, because I kind of think if you do mark the end of a relationship, you acknowledged that, that it did exist and this relationship could never really exist or never move forward because her parents didn't know she was gay [00:13:00] and didn't approve of the gay relationships.

[00:13:03] **Rosie Wilby:** Although she did once try to tell me that they had enjoyed the film Brokeback mountain, which I thought is not

[00:13:12] **Samantha Baines:** well, that would have been perfect timing to come out surely. Like what a lovely film.

[00:13:20] **Rosie Wilby:** Cheery sense of how gay relationships can turn out, yay. Um, so yeah, I think that relationship had been so challenging that it was more of a case of

[00:13:35] **Rosie Wilby:** how can you end it now when I suffered and been through so much pain to try and stay in it and to try and help you and support you to feel stronger and to move gradually and slowly towards this point of telling them of coming out. And I suppose I thought [00:14:00] I was going to be a part of her coming out journey and that I become very attached to that narrative and that ultimately we were going to get there when we were sort of fighting for this visibility of the relationship and that almost

[00:14:16] **Rosie Wilby:** became my purpose. Um, so I think to suddenly have that ripped away so completely. Erasing and disabling. Cause it was like, well, how can you just end it now? You know, when we're sort of trying to make this progress towards this moment of, of recognition and affirmation and it suddenly

did feel like, you know, that thing, that many people say at the end of the relationship, that, that you've wasted your time for however many years you've been in the relationship.

[00:14:48] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, I mean, I do know we, we did meet her mom once for a cup of tea, but I sort of had to pretend to be a friend, you know, and all of that. And it's, it's just so awkward, that kind of [00:15:00] thing. When, you know, it's all just a pretend and a lie and the sort of frustrating, but I suppose nice thing in the end is the, after we broke up, she did eventually come out when she was in her next relationship and it feels better sweet.

[00:15:15] **Rosie Wilby:** Cause you kind of think, oh, you know, you weren't able to do it when I was with you. And equally I've had, you know, ex partners who struggled with drinking or with acrophobia, all kinds of other things that they were struggling with. And then when they kind of sought out after, after their relationship with you is ended, you feel really annoyed for a moment.

[00:15:37] **Rosie Wilby:** And then you think, but maybe I did sort of help them to that point, um, in some ways. So, so maybe. Maybe it's nice, you know, in a way that they have to move forward, even if it's sad that they haven't done that when they were with you. I know, I remember chatting to my friend about it once and she says, oh, but you loosened the lid, Rosie.[00:16:00]

[00:16:00] **Samantha Baines:** Yeah,

[00:16:00] **Samantha Baines:** exactly. It's all those things that you know, you can encourage someone to do it as much as you, you can. And for hopefully for their own good, but it takes them to take that step and no one else can ever do it for them. They just have to have that moment don't they. I'm really interested in you describing the relationship as an invisible relation.

[00:16:22] **Samantha Baines:** Because she wasn't out. So what did that look like day to day? Did you like go out for dinner and were you not allowed to kind of hold hands in public or was it just pretending in front of her

[00:16:36] **Samantha Baines:** parents.

[00:16:37] **Rosie Wilby:** I mean, the parents was, was the main thing, but I think that is quite an important thing because she was very close to her parents.

[00:16:43] **Rosie Wilby:** She went back to Wales to see them a lot, and she was really connected to them. So. You know, if it's somebody's parents that they

don't really see. Yes. I can see how that wouldn't necessarily be a big, big, significant problem, but she did go see them a lot. She definitely, [00:17:00] always wanted to spend Christmas with them,

[00:17:02] **Rosie Wilby:** so it meant we couldn't really speak at Christmas or, you know, maybe she would sneak off to send a text on Christmas day or boxing day or whatever, but, you know, there was no way we were ever going to spend Christmas together or, you know, important times if you need a holiday.

[00:17:17] **Samantha Baines:** So she wouldn't even like call you at Christmas cause she'd be at her parents' house?

[00:17:21] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah. It was quite complicated. I had to arrange a special time when, you know, she knew she could answer the phone and no one else was going to answer the phone and it was going to be okay. And uh-

[00:17:32] **Samantha Baines:** oh, wow.

[00:17:33] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah. So it was, that was all quite tricky.

[00:17:35] **Samantha Baines:** And how did that make you feel

[00:17:38] **Samantha Baines:** like being someone's

[00:17:39] **Samantha Baines:** secret?

[00:17:41] **Rosie Wilby:** Absolutely hideous. Um, I'm mean like having an affair, but you're not seeing anyone else, but yeah, I mean, I thought all intents and purposes, we were really committed and we're effectively married. And I felt like I was, you know, when I met her mom for a cup of tea and she was just talking to me, like I was some [00:18:00] random friend, I thought she was my mother-in-law, you know, And she was just like, oh, hello, who are you?

[00:18:06] **Rosie Wilby:** Kind of thing, you know, but I'm Rosie, I'm important. And so it's, yeah, it's really difficult. And I think it really chipped away at my self-esteem and confidence. And I think that played out in my comedy career, which during the course of that relationship, it'd started to really go well. But I was so distracted by

[00:18:32] **Rosie Wilby:** you know, why hasn't she texted me today? What she's doing? You know, why, why isn't she going to come up and see me in

Edinburgh this year? Why, why is she not bothered about coming to see me? I think ultimately you do what you do and you have to take responsibility for it. But I think I allowed myself to become really distracted at a point where I could have really gone for it more in my career.

[00:18:54] **Rosie Wilby:** And obviously I've been able to sort of have a second wind and go for it more now with the podcast and the [00:19:00] book and all of this kind of thing. But I think I had some opportunities that I sort of didn't take advantage of and grasp because I was so, so driven by trying to make this relationship visible and sorta just wanted to be good enough to be her partner and be accepted by her family, that our focus was not on how

[00:19:27] **Rosie Wilby:** you know, I keep writing funny jokes and, and that kind of thing. So I, you know, it feels frustrating cause I kind of think, oh, you know, I really got swamped by that and got submerged under some kind of a morphous liquid. And I, I made myself less visible somehow I think. And I was less, you know, when I look at the little videos of me doing shows or gigs, so I'd gone from being

[00:19:54] **Rosie Wilby:** quite confident on stage to really, you know, not, not quite owning it. [00:20:00] So yeah, definitely chipped away at me. And it was, it was really, it was really tough. And I think now that's why I've sort of been motivated to look at breakouts through a very inclusive lens and sorts of make sure to include queer relationships and the way that those relationships can still be a different experience, even in our more accepting world.

[00:20:24] **Rosie Wilby:** You know, it's still not that long ago I was in this relationship. You know, that that could not, could not progress. We couldn't move in together because, you know, again, would it be the pretense of having a spare room that I slept in because we were just friends and flatmates. And that was just so, so much emotional baggage, I think to take on.

[00:20:47] **Samantha Baines:** You said that it affected your confidence and you could even see it on stage.

[00:20:51] **Samantha Baines:** How long do you think that feeling stayed with you after the breakup. And how did you get past

[00:20:58] **Samantha Baines:** that?

[00:20:58] **Rosie Wilby:** Well, I sort [00:21:00] of, did the classic scene of getting into a new relationship too quickly. Um, but I hesitate to call it a

rebound relationship because we stayed together in this next relationship for five years, which was about the same time duration as the previous relationship.

[00:21:21] **Rosie Wilby:** And we really built something, a friendship and a connection and companionship and partnership. And we you know, don't get me wrong, we had had some attraction and the kind of sexual side and, and passion and romance a bit, but I'd been very in and out with that because I was so sad and broken really? And I wasn't ready and I'd kind of said I wasn't ready, but sometimes you just end up falling into things anyway, because you liked somebody, you like their company and they like you, and they're sort of keen for it to be a relationship, even if you're saying, oh, no, I think I might just want to be friends.

[00:21:56] **Rosie Wilby:** And they're like, oh no, you don't really, you
[00:22:00] know, I think also with gay women, because you feel like there aren't that many options around because, you know, if you're a straight woman or a Bi woman, there's just so many men, you know, sometimes on Tinder, I used to just switch my feed to men, just to sort of marvel at how many options they'll be. There's just so many?!

[00:22:20] **Samantha Baines:** There aren't that many

[00:22:21] **Samantha Baines:** women on Tinder actually. I have to say cause I'm Bi, but I have folks that come up and there's like, no women. It's just

[00:22:30] **Samantha Baines:** men.

[00:22:31] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah. Whereas yeah, if it's, if you switched it to just women, this is like about five and then it's like this one around you.

[00:22:40] **Samantha Baines:** You completed tinder.

[00:22:41] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah, exactly. I know which I don't think straight people generally complete Tinder, so I think there's a bit of a feeling of pressure.

[00:22:50] **Rosie Wilby:** If you're two gay women and you're both nice and together and fine and kind, and you know, all right, you kind of think, well, we should [00:23:00] just have a relationship, you know, even if you're not quite in the right place in your life at that time to begin something, even if you're not like a hundred percent. What I was going to say a hundred percent compatible, but God, who is, I mean, me and my fiancée now, we're definitely not.

[00:23:14] **Rosie Wilby:** There are things we disagree on, but we work them out.

[00:23:16] **Samantha Baines:** Do you think if you, could you say you sort of fell into it and you weren't ready and you said you weren't ready. Do you think if you had your old confidence before that invisible relationship, you would have stopped that or do you think you still would have fallen into

[00:23:34] **Samantha Baines:** the

[00:23:34] **Samantha Baines:** second relationship?

[00:23:35] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah, like you say, my, my confidence had been eroded and I think I sort of felt that the only kind of currency I had at that time was sort of my sexuality. This woman fancied me. And that seemed to be the only value I could tangibly attach to myself. So I think there was a sense of, [00:24:00] you know, who, who, who am I, and what's my identity.

[00:24:04] **Rosie Wilby:** Now. You know, you almost feel like your identity has been stolen.

[00:24:07] **Rosie Wilby:** It's really weird by this sort of ambiguous break up that came out of the blue because somebody has pulled the rug from under your feet. I remember seeing a therapist, you said like, you're like a tree up uprooted and you are, you sort of had your roots ripped out, you know, everything. You're the foundations of who you are.

[00:24:30] **Rosie Wilby:** Who you've built your self around, because that was very much at that time, my identity was constructed very much around the relationships and around my career. And I wasn't sure where I was with with either of those at that time when I started the new relationship. But I mean, it was in that new relationship that I, uh, Started to very tentatively explore the idea of non-monogamy, which of course spurred me into this really creative [00:25:00] time of, of writing my first book and doing, and doing comedy at sex parties and sex positive events, and getting involved in this whole interesting scene where the whole dialogue about relationships was very different because if you're polyamorous and you're having more than one relationship, you've got a very different narrative around

[00:25:21] **Rosie Wilby:** breakups and whether it's a failure, you know, if, if a relationship ends, because I think if you have more than one relationship, you kind of can see relationships as precious and valuable, even if they only lasted a

short time, because you're not necessarily looking for this one person you're going to spend your sort of monogamous, married lifetime.

[00:25:45] **Samantha Baines:** It's the ad break. So it's a perfect time to remind you to hit subscribe, to be notified about more episodes. You can also leave us a lovely review because honestly it makes a difference to the chart positions. And [00:26:00] one time I was in the charts next to Michelle Obama. No, it was really thrilled about it.

[00:26:05] **Samantha Baines:** So it'd be nice to do that again. You could also join in the conversation on social media. We're on Twitter and Instagram at divorce pod. We have a website, the divorce, social.com, and you can also join us for our like 90 style divorced chat room experience over on Patreon. So just go to patreon.com/samantha Baines, B a I N E S.

[00:26:31] **Samantha Baines:** And it starts at two pounds. And we all have lovely and awful and amazing chats. See you there.

[00:26:38] **Samantha Baines:** So you started looking into non-monogamous relationships. Why was that number one? And does that mean you were exploring that

[00:26:49] **Samantha Baines:** personally as well?

[00:26:51] **Rosie Wilby:** Yes. Um, I think I started exploring it because I was in this relationship where [00:27:00]

[00:27:01] **Rosie Wilby:** I really had started to love my partner in a very broad sense, but something was not right for me or slightly off for me sexually. And this was really freaking me out because we live in such a sex obsessed society. And you know, there was this narrative, isn't there?! If the sex isn't right in your relationship, then the relationship, everything else in the relationship is just

[00:27:30] **Rosie Wilby:** jettisoned, discarded thrown away like a bag of crisps or whatever. It just felt like it seemed a waste to throw away all of this good stuff. Um, but you know, if you have a breakup, it's, it changes things. You don't just preserve the friendship, you know, where it's hard to in anything like the same kind of a way.

[00:27:50] **Rosie Wilby:** And so I, I wondered, you know, in thinking with a very pragmatic head on. You know, sex is the only bit that isn't [00:28:00] quite connecting anymore or whatever. Cause it certainly had at some points in the

beginning of the relationship, but it'd been a bit in and out for me because I was still messed up about intimacy because of, you know, my, my trust had been damaged by, by the previous

[00:28:19] **Rosie Wilby:** relationship because not only had she, we had this secret relationship, we hadn't come out to her family she's then being kind of secretive with me because she had started to have a connection with somebody else that slightly overlapped with the ending of our relationship and that had not come out for years and years after the breakout.

[00:28:40] **Rosie Wilby:** So I kind of knew there was something that I didn't completely know, and that that was impacting my kind of sense of being able to open up with somebody and be kind of completely safe and trusting with somebody, I think. But yeah, I was just thinking, could you not just sort of outsource the sex, you know, [00:29:00] have sex with other people and just have this lovely

[00:29:04] **Rosie Wilby:** partnership where you live together and you know, that you get on living together and you like watching the same stuff on telly and hanging out or listening to the same music or talking about politics or whatever, you know, and you just get on because sometimes the people that you like having sex with are not the people that you like, if you

[00:29:25] **Rosie Wilby:** don't want to

[00:29:26] **Rosie Wilby:** live with them.

[00:29:27] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah. I mean, sometimes that just doesn't marry up very well. So it kind of, it makes me wonder really why we put such a high priority on sex and sexual attraction, because sometimes it means that you end up in a relationship with a total loss that you just quite like shagging.

[00:29:47] **Rosie Wilby:** So what

[00:29:48] **Samantha Baines:** do you think you learn from your non-monogamous experience?

[00:29:52] **Samantha Baines:** Cause I'm sure lots of people in marriages are, you know, think about this. I remember I had a [00:30:00] discussion with my ex about maybe this is an answer to how we could live, but not many people actually go out and try it. So what did you learn? What's what's what are the key bits of information that we need, if we're considering doing

[00:30:14] **Samantha Baines:** this?

[00:30:17] **Rosie Wilby:** What was really interesting was when I did go and do comedy at a sex party. And so my exploration into non-monogamy was largely, it was quite hypothetical because it was sort of under the veil of research for my book and like comedy shows. Um, so I went and did comedy at a sex party. Um, partly is just a fun, interesting experience to perhaps write about, but also just to be in that environment where sex was.

[00:30:47] **Rosie Wilby:** Not something that people were hung up about, you know, and I thought that would be quite liberating and empowering for me because the place I got to where I felt, I suppose, they're shamed, um, because of [00:31:00] this toxic, you know, kind of secret relationship that I'd had. Um, and yeah, what struck me was when we entered the party, which was this lovely, friendly

[00:31:13] **Rosie Wilby:** respectful space. We had to sign up and agree to these rules, which were about respecting other people, respecting people's boundaries, you know, making sure you had consent for anything, um, practicing, safe sex, um, you know, and there was also a power system where you were accountable for enough personnel and nobody could enter without a pal who would vouch for them and who would take them home if they were being a bit drunk or being a Dick,

[00:31:40] **Rosie Wilby:** harassing anyone and so on. So that sense of neutral accountability really meant that the party was just this really safe and lovely space where people were not drinking very much. People were just flirty and connecting and, um, the main space where the cabaret was, was not [00:32:00] like this, the sex space, the sex room was sort of this cordoned other bit

[00:32:04] **Rosie Wilby:** that was going to be open later after the cabaret. So I was like the foreplay,

[00:32:10] **Samantha Baines:** which some people would say all comedy is foreplay.

[00:32:15] **Rosie Wilby:** Well, yes,

[00:32:16] **Rosie Wilby:** but quite literally in this case, and it was, it was a lovely experience, but I think it was just such an eye-opener to realize that what made that quality work and work so well for everyone to get out of it, what they needed.

[00:32:32] **Rosie Wilby:** And, you know, some people wanted to have a full on orgy and have sex with lots of people. Some people like me just wanted to go there and chat. You know, maybe have a hug or a cuddle, but something quite, you know, quite low on the sort of extreme kind of chill, you know, you and I did end up having a little snog with a man just for a bit of fun, bit of variety.[00:33:00]

[00:33:01] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, well, I kind of. Went home fairly soon after that, but I felt really alive and connected and just the flirtation and the energy of people connecting and just, just that sort of freedom was so lovely. And, and the fact that, you know, what made it work was these rules and having some kind of, you know, charter of accountability, charter of respectfulness, charter

[00:33:30] **Rosie Wilby:** ethical behavior, which we don't really have in our broader dating world. And we don't have in our monogamous. Traditional relationships. We don't even talk about what does monogamy mean? What does cheating mean? What does fidelity mean? There's no communication. And so that was really something that I looked at in my comedy show was, you know, how many people have actually talked about monogamy with their partner?

[00:33:52] **Rosie Wilby:** What does cheating even mean? And I did this whole survey online where, you know, they could take different options for [00:34:00] what counts as cheating. And I put different stuff in the notes. I'm one person had ticked having sex with someone else and then ridden in a car like that makes a difference. It's really.

[00:34:10] **Rosie Wilby:** Wow. Yeah, it was so interesting. And you know, one woman, when I just, you know, do you talk about this stuff with your partner, she'd written , oh, one thing to do the deed, quite another to talk about it, you know, so, you know, somebody, I mean, I don't know what her voice sounded like , thats just me imagining. But it's interesting.

[00:34:33] **Rosie Wilby:** Isn't it? How, I mean, perhaps particularly British people, we were so reluctant to talk about sex and sexual relationships and how they work or even don't work. So. I really wanted to go on this journey where I, you know, try to put myself out of my comfort zone of kind of, serial monogamy, and, you know, dating people and [00:35:00] not, you know, I'd had a bit of casual sex, but I hadn't kind of gone to a sex party or anything like that.

[00:35:06] **Rosie Wilby:** Or, you know, I also went to a lesbian sauna evening, which was held in this sauna where they normally have a , gay male sauna where I'd heard about gay men, just all having a big old gang bang, really? And

I thought, well, I wonder what happens when the lesbians go there, then of course, I wrote this very satirical chapter in my book where the lesbians all just end up having a cup of tea and folding towels and tidying.

[00:35:32] **Samantha Baines:** Lovely .

[00:35:33] **Rosie Wilby:** Had a lovely chat But I mean, I did have a little snog with a girl there. But, uh, we went to the showers and the showers were on a timer. And then the water kept stopping. So yes, it was, it was just, you know, and it was all a bit chilly and drafty and -

[00:35:49] **Samantha Baines:** And not the sexiest environment.

[00:35:52] **Rosie Wilby:** No, not at all. But do think

[00:35:56] **Rosie Wilby:** there's something interesting.

[00:35:58] **Rosie Wilby:** And this is why I've been interested to [00:36:00] study queer relationships. There's something interesting about male behavior and female behavior. And obviously there are different arguments as to whether it has anything to do with our actual hard wiring and our biology or our social conditioning, but women do behave very differently around

[00:36:16] **Rosie Wilby:** sex and love and commitment and relationships and, and also the monogamy and behavior patterns. And this is when I first noticed that lesbians are much more serially monogamous than anybody else, and we have more breakups and now we can get married, more divorces than anybody else. We are at the top of the divorce charts.

[00:36:37] **Samantha Baines:** Oh, wow. I didn't know that.

[00:36:39] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah, and it's really interesting. Um, and it sort of makes sense because if you look at heterosexual divorce figures, 75% of them in this country are initiated by the woman. So of course, if you've got two women in a relationship someone's getting away at some point,

[00:36:56] **Samantha Baines:** yh, statistics say

[00:36:58] **Rosie Wilby:**

[00:36:58] **Rosie Wilby:** Statistics say you know, [00:37:00] obviously there are exceptions, there are very, very long lasting lesbian relationships, but there are a lot that break-up. And I think it's something to do with this unacknowledged restlessness that women have. I mean, we have this social narrative don't we, that women are sort of, you know, the gatekeepers of the home and relationships and the family, and we're gonna hold things together.

[00:37:25] **Rosie Wilby:** But actually, you know, there's a lot of evidence now with kind of scientific studies that have been done that show that women are, women are more sexually restless and actually have more of a thirst for novelty even than men.

[00:37:42] **Samantha Baines:** Well I'm

[00:37:43] **Samantha Baines:** surprised that even statistics say that more women end marriages and I, but I wonder if that's related to something the other half has done also.

[00:37:55] **Samantha Baines:** Because obviously I speak to a lot of people who, you know, their breakup [00:38:00] has come as a surprise and they initiate the breakup because of maybe of infidelity that they don't want to put up with. So it would be very interesting to find out within

[00:38:12] **Samantha Baines:** that, what are the actual, causes.

[00:38:14] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah i agree

[00:38:15] **Samantha Baines:** you've done so much work on love and relationships, and now obviously, Engaged to be married, which is something you never thought you would do.

[00:38:26] **Samantha Baines:** How do you sit in a happy relationship knowing all this stuff that you know, from your books and everything, does it affect what

[00:38:35] **Samantha Baines:** you do?

[00:38:35] **Rosie Wilby:** I do it, do I know too much? I mean, can we demystify all too much? Um, and yeah, particularly being so obsessed with break-ups and particularly having talked too much about the good sides of breakups and how empowering

[00:38:49] **Rosie Wilby:** they could be and how it can be such an opportunity for growth and learning. And there's a part of me that's like, I quite like to break up. It sounds great. [00:39:00] I like to go on that journey of being single and reinventing myself and transforming myself. But I also think having a lack of fear about a breakup is a really good thing for us staying together as well.

[00:39:17] **Rosie Wilby:** And so in the breakup monologues book, most of the story is about staying together, having been known for my breakups and what information I've taken forward into this new relationship and how I've realized that I've reset my boundaries and wouldn't, you know, accept some of the things that I was just putting up with in a relationship before where I was very hurt by somebody.

[00:39:46] **Rosie Wilby:** Not being able to tell their family that I existed. So there's a chapter in this book where my girlfriend and my girlfriend, she's called in the book. We are at her brother's wedding and I feel completely welcomed into the family [00:40:00] by her wonderful family, her brothers and her nephews and nieces. And yeah.

[00:40:07] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah, it's just this very, very different experience talking about her mum. My girlfriend's mom, Glenda coming to stay in asking Siri questions about LGBT history and sipping tea out of a pride mug. Um, you know, so it's this incredibly different experience. And so I think you do. You do look for that. You do look for something that's going to be different.

[00:40:35] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, cause you've learned, you know, that having a secret relationship was not, for me, it was, that was too painful for me. That that felt very difficult. So yeah. Having somebody whose family, accept me is lovely. Um, especially as I don't have a big family. Yeah. Um, my mom's not around anymore. Um, so there's, there's my dad, who's lovely and amazing, but I don't have any siblings.

[00:40:59] **Rosie Wilby:** And [00:41:00] although I have lots of cousins, I don't, they're all scattered around the world. I don't sort of see anyone with any regularity. So to feel like I've got this other family's really, really nice.

[00:41:11] **Samantha Baines:** And that's how it should feel. We all hope. Um, there was something I wanted to ask you actually, as, um, podcast host to podcast hosts of podcasts that are about breaking up, I'm worried that if I ever fall in love again, will I still be able to do this podcast or will I feel like a fraud or, um, but you, you seem to be doing it very well.

[00:41:36] **Samantha Baines:** D was, was there a worry for you when you were in the throws of love initially.

[00:41:42] **Samantha Baines:** Um, is still doing the podcast.

[00:41:46] **Rosie Wilby:** I know. It's that question? Isn't it? Is it still on brand? If you're not personally getting over a breakup and there are occasional articles that I've been asked to do. And they asked me to do an article around the birds.[00:42:00]

[00:42:00] **Rosie Wilby:** When I said I was in a relationship. And it'd been a nice fee as well. I was a bit gutted, they were like, oh no, we don't want you to do an article any more, we want someone who's just had a breakup.

[00:42:11] **Samantha Baines:** Who wants someone who's crying as they type the words. You should have sent them to me.

[00:42:17] **Rosie Wilby:** Sorry, I should have done that.

[00:42:19] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, yeah, it was a bit kind of taken aback by that, but yeah, apart from that, I think I've managed to spin it in this way that I think when you've got enough time has passed and you're now able to make a relationship work and you're able to not fear a breakup because you know, you would survive it. Um, I think surely that makes you even more wise about breakups

[00:42:48] **Rosie Wilby:** than, than when you were in the immediate throws of it in the immediate aftermath of the chaos.

[00:42:56] **Samantha Baines:** Yeah, definitely. And I think obviously I'm not in a relationship [00:43:00] now. Well, not obviously I'm not in a relationship now, but, um, even just with time, since my breakup, I feel like already, I've learned so much more about the breakup.

[00:43:11] **Samantha Baines:** Now I can let look back and things are kind of changing in my life in different ways. So. Yeah, I think I know also it's just a bit of hope. I like, I like the fact that you've had terrible breakups and now you're in love again and about to get married. It's like, oh my God. I might get that, yay!.

[00:43:29] **Rosie Wilby:** Yeah. I mean, it's presenting a good story

[00:43:32] **Rosie Wilby:** isn't it? And saying, look, I had these terrible breakups, but now, you know, I am with somebody I'm more compatible with and you know, whose family totally love me and embrace me, which is this big thing that there wasn't there in past relationships.. And you know, I've managed to kind of put, put things together and, and come out the other side of it all.

[00:43:54] **Rosie Wilby:** So I think, yeah, I think it's a positive, a positive story. I hope so. But yeah, [00:44:00] I think I know what you mean. It's so weird. Isn't it? This kind of still being obsessed with breakups, even when I'm now five years into a relationship, but it's, yeah, I think, I think the breakups and staying together is so closely linked.

[00:44:17] **Rosie Wilby:** I say, you know, I say they're like a flick of a switch apart, you know, one moment of madness or clarity.

[00:44:25] **Samantha Baines:** Definitely. Well, I think that's the perfect place to finish. Thank you so much. Can you- its been a great chat. Can you remind us about all of your books, what they're called and where we can get them?

[00:44:38] **Rosie Wilby:** Yes.

[00:44:39] **Rosie Wilby:** So I've got two books, um, Is Monogamy Dead?, Was the first one. And The Breakup Monologues, is the second one. And they're available on all your usual places like Amazon and Waterstones and bookshop.org. If you want to support indie book shops, um, or you should be able to go into a local [00:45:00] bookshop and order it. Although Sam, I've noticed something recently where if you go into like Foyles or somewhere, its so hard to find my book because my surname begins with w so it will be - you'd be all right,

[00:45:12] **Rosie Wilby:** you're a, B. But if you go into the like self-help section or relationships section, which is where it usually is they're then alphabetical and mines right on the bottom. So the only people that would naturally happen upon it would be sort of lying down on the floor. You know like when we had the football recently, there was a man that was sort of lying down, you know, so he would protect it if everyone jumped up and then the ball kind of went under the wall when they all jump up, I, you know, it's like that you'd have to be somehow horizontal on the floor

[00:45:41] **Rosie Wilby:** to actually see any books by authors with the surname beginning with W. So do look down if you are in Foyles on the third floor in self-help self-help section looking for my book-

[00:45:53] **Samantha Baines:** Or just order online

[00:45:55] **Rosie Wilby:** Or just order online its so much easier.

[00:45:57] **Samantha Baines:** You have to be

[00:45:58] **Samantha Baines:** very tall to find my [00:46:00] books,

[00:46:00] **Samantha Baines:** because its B and its like right at the top.

[00:46:04] **Rosie Wilby:** But yes, its available in all the places and yes, the podcast is also called The Breakup Monologues. And interestingly, there's a lot of, kind of cross-pollination with, uh, guests that we've both had on and maybe had just slightly different conversations with so-

[00:46:21] **Samantha Baines:** We should start a spreadsheet between us , have you had this person.

[00:46:26] **Rosie Wilby:** or this person

[00:46:27] **Rosie Wilby:** is good. Yeah. Yeah. It's really interesting. Sort of when sometimes you've had people on after they've been on mine, I'm like, oh, I wonder what Sam has there. Or sometimes they've been on before. Yeah. Yeah. So it, yeah, I think interesting too,

[00:46:42] **Rosie Wilby:** the scenery.

[00:46:43] **Samantha Baines:** Well its been very nice to share a space with you, guests with you and have you on my podcast.

[00:46:51] **Rosie Wilby:** Oh, definitely. Well, I loved it. When, of course you were on The breakup Monologues, with Helen Lederer, a prima donna festival, so people can find that one. If they [00:47:00] want, it was a really fun one actually.

[00:47:01] **Samantha Baines:** It was crazy, I loved it!

[00:47:06] **Rosie Wilby:** I mean, we definitely kept things more on the fun, light side there, didnt we?!

[00:47:11] **Samantha Baines:** Which sometimes you need you know. Helens hilarious , she's great. That

[00:47:16] **Samantha Baines:** was-

[00:47:16] **Rosie Wilby:** I think sex in toilets was the main theme. Wasn't it?

[00:47:19] **Samantha Baines:** Yeah.

[00:47:20] **Samantha Baines:** It's quite often when I do podcasts, I seem to end up talking about sex in toilets, but you know, that's my thing.

[00:47:28] **Rosie Wilby:** Um, yeah so tune

[00:47:29] **Rosie Wilby:** into that one.

[00:47:31] **Samantha Baines:** Do have a listen. And where can people find you on social media

[00:47:35] **Rosie Wilby:** @Rosie Wilby on Twitter and @break up monologues on Instagram.

[00:47:39] **Samantha Baines:** Wonderful. Well, thank you so much

[00:47:41] **Rosie Wilby:** Thank

[00:47:42] **Rosie Wilby:** you.