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“I wanted to write a book unlike any other, one that’s useful.” said Jack Monroe, speaking today at the Edinburgh International Book Festival with writer Heather Parry. “I wanted to write a book that would restore dignity to what is a terrible and undignified situation,” the food writer, activist and journalist added, talking about her fourth cookbook *Tin Can Cook*.

Tin Can Cook is designed for people living off foodbank parcels, a situation Monroe experienced for six months; “I just want to make good food accessible to everyone,” she said. As part of that accessibility, Monroe set up a crowdfunder to send copies of the book to every Trussell Trust foodbank in the UK. That crowdfunder raised £70,000.

She spoke of her own background in food writing and her time living in poverty after becoming unemployed. By the time she had her first book deal she says she had been rejected from 315 minimum wage jobs. She relied on foodbanks in that time and only sees the situation worsening; “The [foodbank] situation is growing in this country, week by week, month by month, year by year.”

Monroe’s latest book, *Vegan-ish*, was released yesterday, and she says she’s received some criticism on the title. “People say you can’t be vegan-ish. You can. I’m nice-ish,” she joked. All the recipes in the newest release are entirely vegan.

“It’s easier to catch flies with honey,” she explained. “Although catching flies isn’t vegan and neither is honey but the analogy still works.”

When asked about how to get people cooking, she argued that she could teach anyone who was willing to learn.

“I think there’s not anybody out there that can’t learn to cook,” she said. “But it’s a confidence thing. It’s about tapping into confidence and showing people it’s not as complicated as they think it is.”