

The West Wing Weekly  
4.04: "The Red Mass"

[Intro Music]

JOSH: You've done it again, you're listening to The West Wing Weekly. I'm Joshua Malina.

HRISHI: Sometimes I like to call you cupcake.

JOSH: Yeah you do, it's been a while.

[West Wing Episode 4.05 excerpt]

*JANET: Sometimes I like to call you cupcake, is that ok?*

*SAM: Totally!*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And my name is Hrishikesh Hirway and today we're talking about "The Red Mass" from season 4, it's episode 4.

JOSH: Mhm. It first aired on October 9th, 2002. The teleplay is by Aaron Sorkin. The story is by podcast favorite Eli Attie and the episode was directed by Vincent Misiano, the brother of Christopher to whom we recently spoke.

HRISHI: Here's a synopsis from TV-guide: Liberal third party candidate Howard Stackhouse is becoming a thorn in Bartlet's side and Amy Gardner is consulting for him. Elsewhere the Ritchie camp wants as few debates as possible. Leo meets with the Israeli foreign minister about the Shareef matter. A government siege of a house occupied by domestic terrorists is compromised by a sick child in the house and Josh makes Donna bone up on a self help guru who has advised governor Ritchie. No mention of Sam Seaborn's story in this. For me, knowing what's coming, I think this is an interesting episode for Sam. It's subtle-

JOSH: Mm, he's slowly working his way toward welcoming me to the cast.

HRISHI: Yes, I guess it isn't enough to merit a line in the synopsis, but it's really interesting, I think, building on what Sam said about...

[West Wing Episode 4.02 excerpt]

*SAM: I gotta get back in there. That's where it's happening.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: This is an interesting little landmark or signpost on the road of-

JOSH: That's right

HRISHI: In the road to what's to come? In the road...

JOSH: Close enough.

HRISHI: In the road leading to what's to come.

JOSH: While we're on the topic, how many hours did you sleep last night?

[HRISHI laughing]

HRISHI: On the topic of my lack of ability to articulate?

JOSH: Right

HRISHI: I slept for three and a half hours last night.

JOSH: You're seeing other people, you're doing other jobs.

HRISHI: I am.

JOSH: Tell our listeners about it, they'll be excited!

HRISHI: Well, I'm working on a TV show myself, for the first time, and it is a crazy schedule and as I was setting my alarm last night to get ready to come talk to you, I thought of-

[West Wing Episode 4.02 excerpt]

*C.J.: They've been given a four hour vacation*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: After Donna, Josh and Toby walk home from "20 Hours in America", they get a four hour vacation before they have to get back in there.

JOSH: Right, last night you had a three hour vacation.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: You spent the whole thing sleeping, you slept through it!

HRISHI: I in fact set my alarm for four hours, to give myself four hours of sleep.

JOSH: Do you have alarm anxiety?

HRISHI: I always wake up before my alarm.

JOSH: I generally do too, but I don't think that I would, had I not set the alarm.

HRISHI: Right, ah yeah, that's probably true. Yeah, I think you're right.

JOSH: By the way, actually, I've been hearing stories, we've been triggering our audience.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: Snowflakes that they are

[HRISHI laughing]

HRISHI: It's a trigger warning!

JOSH: Yeah. So I thought I would do one intentionally. Alexa, set a reminder for 12pm, donate to the Radiotopia campaign.

[HRISHI laughing]

ALEXA: Ok, I'll remind you at noon.

JOSH: Thanks Alexa. So it worked on mine, it should work on theirs.

HRISHI: Wow, that's devious.

JOSH: Yeah. Things are gonna get progressively creepier if this works on any level.

[HRISHI laughing]

HRISHI: So I started to realize, of course we've heard so many stories about the crazy schedule of working on *The West Wing*, how you guys had fraterday-

JOSH: Mhm.

HRISHI: And just the long hours and I don't think it had hit me quite so poignantly how much a lot of the parallels in what the characters are having to do, the lack of sleep, the extended hours, the crazy schedules in the Oval Office might also be a reflection of Aaron pulling from his own life as he's trying to get this show out and just people not sleeping, and everybody kind of being pushed to the edge. I guess it's hardly a... it's silly that I'm...It's hitting me with this poignancy now, but I think I've been sitting here dealing with a lack of sleep and all these things from *The West Wing* keep coming in my head. Monday I also pulled an all-nighter and I had to get up after going to bed at six in the morning and I sat at the obedge-sat at the edge of the bed-

JOSH: This is fantastic, I'm loving every minute of it.

HRISHI: Sorry!

JOSH: Keep going, you're on a roll.

HRISHI: I sat at the edge of the bed and I said:

[West Wing Episode 4.02 excerpt]

*SAM: Get dressed. Now.*

[end excerpt]'

HRISHI: And it was like the way Sam says it.

[JOSH laughing]

HRISHI: And he, you know, falls over trying to answer the answering machine. Anyway, so that's what's going on. That's why perhaps my voice sounds a little huskier than usual.

JOSH: It's working for me, Hrishu.

HRISHI: All right, thank you. In general this episode of *The West Wing* has a lot of these moments, as so many of them do, where I feel like they're talking about me. Or the characters are voicing my own thoughts about things in my own life. I'm thinking first of all specifically of the moment where Josh says to Donna:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

JOSH: *You know, there comes a day in every man's life, and it's a hard day, but there comes a day when he realizes he's never going to play professional baseball.*

DONNA: *And you're just having that day today?*

[end excerpt]

[JOSH laughing]

HRISHI: I think about that line all the time when I start to realize that I am now of an advanced age such that there are things that I thought that I might do or dabble in or get some experience doing and I'll never have those things and of course I'm not going to, but every now and then, as I make that realization, I hear Josh's thoughts in my head.

JOSH: Oh that's funny. "I will in the future". I never tied it to the Josh Lyman quote, but I have that moment all the time, because of course I live in a land of delusion and I dabble in it as a professional. So I'll, you know, I'll see a war movie, and think: "Oh, when am I going to play a soldier? Oh, that's right, I'm 51, I'm never going to play a soldier".

[HRISHI laughing]

JOSH: That has passed me.

HRISHI: Well, what about, I mean, something like *The Thin Red Line* could happen again, I mean that had 90,000 actors in it, and they were of all sorts of different ages.

JOSH: Ok, I guess I could play a soldier from afar, and it'll be the...

[HRISHI laughing]

HRISHI: Look, we all know you carry your own guns everywhere you go.

JOSH: There you go. You're very kind. Yeah, I recently wrote to Aaron vis-a-vis the live production of *A Few Good Men* that is going to be on NBC, I think in May. "How about playing Sam Wineberg?"

HRISHI: Kevin Pollak's character, from the movie.

JOSH: Correct. Mark Nelson in the original Broadway production. I understudied it. But of course this was all many, many years ago and Sam's not 51.

[HRISHI laughing]

HRISHI: Right. So did he write back?

JOSH: I think he didn't address the point directly.

[both laughing]

JOSH: Which is probably for the best. I like this episode and I think it's the mostly invisible hand of Eli Attie, because I like the strategizing. I like when we get into multiple moves ahead strategy and so the political strategy of trying to figure out Stackhouse's intent and

surmising that the Ritchie camp is bringing up needle exchange as a way to draw out Stackhouse, which will force Bartlet to address the issue to the advantage of the Ritchie camp. I love that kind of political strategizing. I like, on the other hand, the whole military chess game going on with Kumar bringing in Israel in order to pressure the United States. I just love that kind of thing. I like when the crack political staff is planning ahead. I think Eli having so much experience with the real deal, I think he brings that to the show often, and I like these, I enjoy these episodes. "Oh yeah, that's fiendishly clever."

HRISHI: I feel the same way about the debate part of it as well; figuring out what the decision is going to be from the debate committee, and then ultimately coming up with saying: "And we'll take yet another disadvantage in the number of debates, if we can shoot the moon with the format that we really want."

JOSH: Mhm, and it's interesting seeing the different characters respond differently. Toby's just got that anxiety about the pressure on a single debate.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*TOBY: What if he has a bad night? It's happened. What if he gets himself into trouble? What if Ritchie comes after Abbey or the kids and the president goes postal? It's what I'd try to do. Stress, hot lights. What if he has an episode?*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: It's interesting to see who's more risk averse, who's willing to kind of just go forward and see how it plays out.

HRISHI: Yeah, and this refrain is again for me a classic, his three lines of--

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*TOBY: It's a whole other debate. It's a second debate. It's a 100% more debates!*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: It's fantastic. There is a metaphor that doesn't work for me, though. At one point they're discussing the idea of kind of going for broke on this whole single debate idea.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*PRESIDENT BARTLET: Isn't this exactly why casinos don't play with a one deck shoe?*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: That doesn't really make sense.

HRISHI: Explain that to me, because I don't know what that means.

JOSH: Well, the reason that casinos don't play Blackjack with a single deck shoe, meaning dealing from just one deck, usually when you're playing Blackjack they take seven decks or something like that, shuffle them all, mix them all up together and then stick them in a shoe, which is the thing that holds all the decks, from which the dealer pulls the cards one at a

time. You don't play with one deck because it makes it a lot easier for the players to count cards.

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: So you have seven decks, much more difficult. In other words casinos make their money in Blackjack because they have a slight advantage over the player, and over time, millions of millions of hands, that advantage is always going to kick in.

HRISHI: What's the advantage they have over the player?

JOSH: The advantage is just that the odds... The player has to make decisions before they do. So players will bust before the dealer then reveals his hole card.

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: And it is slight. And when you have a slight advantage, you want as many hands as possible. You don't want to play a single hand, because in that one hand, you know, the player had only a 48% chance of winning, but they won, and they played for 8 million dollars, and now we don't have casino anymore.

HRISHI: Right. I know that the house always wins over the long game, I didn't know about the players have to act before the dealer, and therefore they are at a slight disadvantage. That's interesting. That's neat.

JOSH: Yeah, and so of course the smartest way to play Blackjack, although it doesn't make for a great weekend in Vegas, is to take whatever amount you've decided to risk over the weekend and play a single hand of Blackjack.

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: That's your best odds of walking-- I mean, maybe I'm talking out of my ass, I'm sure that people'll write in and explain why I'm wrong, but that's my understanding.

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: Better to play one hand and rather than play over time, in which of course the better odds of the casino are going to grind you down. So really what the president is saying is "This is why the casinos don't play a single hand of Blackjack." That's not why they play with a one deck shoe. They don't play with a one deck shoe because it makes it easier for the player to have an advantage, which is being able to count the cards more easily.

HRISHI: Right. The first thing that I thought about and was going to ask you, having no experience playing Blackjack of my own: it's called a shoe, the thingy that holds the cards--

JOSH: Right.

HRISHI: Is that why Dana Whitaker in *Sports Night* keeps saying "shoe money tonight".

JOSH: Ha, interesting theory. Never occurred to me before. I think that's pure... No, I think she wants to win money to buy new shoes.

HRISHI: Oh, "shoe money tonight"!

JOSH: I think it's her version of "Baby needs a new pair of shoes".

HRISHI: Got it. Speaking of gambling Josh, could you also comment on Leo's poker face?

JOSH: When do we see Leo's poker face?

HRISHI: Sam asks Leo about Shareef. Everything is clearly weighing on him, and he sort of lets something slip, you know, to Sam, in a sort of similar way. He's like:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*LEO: Then you've read that Qumar has reopened the investigation into Abdul Shareef's plane going down?*

*SAM: Yeah, why? They're going to say Israel had something to do with it.*

*LEO: You think they did?*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And at first Sam thinks they're just having a casual discussion about the news and geopolitical happenings, but then Sam starts to, you know, he says:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*SAM: Leo, we didn't have anything to do with Shareef's plane going down, did we?*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And Leo's response, having started the conversation, is to say nothing and not look up.

JOSH: Look, Leo's a pro, so I take that as his way, tacitly, to let Sam in on an enormous secret. Whether that's advisable or not, I don't know, but to me that was just Leo decided to tell him.

HRISHI: I like how diplomatically Sam then moves on, you know, sort of out of respect for the-- What he's maybe just been keyed in to, he says: "Sorry, two debates?".

JOSH: Yeah, I like it. I like it very much. To me it's a conversation happening within the silences of the conversation.

HRISHI: Mhm. Back to what you were saying about metaphors.

JOSH: Metaphor.

HRISHI: Metaphor. There was one moment that I liked, I'm probably reading too much into, but that's what I like to do. I really love this exchange, a throw away exchange, possibly, that I think is actually a lovely metaphor: Sam comes into Leo's office, and he comes from the Margaret side, and Sam says:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*SAM: What's wrong with the other door?*

*LEO: I don't know, you close it and it's locking by itself. What's up?*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And then he just moves on. But that idea: You close the door and it locks by itself. I thought, I don't know, my brain exploded with the possibilities of what that statement could mean. You know, the hidden meaning behind something like that. About burning bridges, basically. You close the door and you think: "Oh, well I can just go through that door again sometime in the future." But you close it and it's locking by itself.

JOSH: Nice!

HRISHI: I love that. And I thought that felt apt for things that are happening in this episode, as well.

JOSH: Either that or it's a setup for later when Toby finds the door locked and just steams in through the other door?

[both laugh]

JOSH: That's funny, I don't even remember the moment about the door? I like your interpretation.

HRISHI: Wait, did that happen? Toby tries the door and it's locked and he goes in through the other door?

JOSH: There is a scene where there is a little comic payoff, because he can't get in and then he just immediately storms in through the other.

HRISHI: [cross talk] That's right...

[both laugh]

HRISHI: You know, when I'd written this part down, I hadn't gotten to that part yet.

[both laugh]

JOSH: No, I like it though! It's just a beauty.

HRISHI: It was just a joke for Toby, putting something physical in Richard Schiff's way.

JOSH: [cross talk] You found something deeper and more beautiful.

HRISHI: I do love that scene too. That scene is so great. It's another fantastic Richard Schiff set of acting choices, when he runs in and he grabs the fax from Margaret, and the way that he says... There are two verbal moment that I wanted to point out from this episode, this is one of them. When he comes in and he says:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*TOBY: Given the inability of the two major... Do you mind that I'm reading this?*

[end excerpt]



JOSH: It's fantastic.

HRISHI: The way that he asks is not even a question. He's asking a question, but there's no intonation in his voice that is a question at all.

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: Yeah. Richard's line readings often are counter to what you'd expect.

HRISH: All human logic.

JOSH: Indeed, yes. And yet they work. It's Toby.

HRISHI: It's so good. That makes it so much better and funnier. I love it. But, right, I would never expect someone to see those words and then deliver them in that way. The other moment I love is when Clark Gregg in his role as Agent Casper describes a flashbang to the president.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*AGENT CASPER: Because they're gonna throw flashbangs. A flashbang's about the size of a grenade but instead of spreading shrapnel, it makes a deafening sound and releases a flash seven times brighter than the sun.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: It's so intense! I love the way he digs into that, and it also made me think that "God, I wish Clark Gregg had a podcast so that I could just listen to him talk."

JOSH: He's pretty fantastic, and Clark comes out of that NYU Mamet *Atlantic Theater Company* school of acting where, as we've discussed before, the character's the guy who says these things, and so his approach is kind of a stripped down approach to acting that, when used by really great actors, is intense, and draws you in. There's an intensity. He doesn't do a lot, but you want to listen to that guy and you're drawn to what he has to say and I can absolutely see the sprouts of Agent Coulson there, and why you'd want to stick this guy in every Marvel movie ever made.

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: Right, right. There's something again about the note that he lands on on "sun", you know, he doesn't end the sentence in a place where I would expect someone's voice to go, and it revs up the intensity by the choices made, the way that he delivered it.

JOSH: Yeah. I like the scene later in the Oval too, with Coulson, and Bar- Coulson...

[both laughing]

JOSH: Casper and Bartlet sort of reveling in their win.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*AGENT CASPER: Our guys-*

*PRESIDENT BARTLET: Our guys are fine.*

*AGENT CASPER: They are fine. We seized high explosive gunpowder, galvanized steel pipes, time fuses, blasting caps.*

*PRESIDENT BARTLET: And... Come on, and?*

*AGENT CASPER: Blueprint to the pool at KSU.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: I got a message on Facebook that I wanted to mention to you. I was contacted by a reporter from *Channel Two News* in Israel named Zion Nanoose. I'm not sure I'm saying that correctly.

JOSH: Doesn't sound Israeli.

[both laughing]

JOSH: Zion Western wall.

[both laughing]

HRISHI: I remember one of the very first times we ever hung out. I told you a story involving a friend of mine from school, who by the way now makes the Homecoming podcast for Gimlet, but at the time was working at McSweeney's and I mentioned him, you know, in the way of the story, and I said: "My friend Eli Horowitz" and you just said: "Jewish fella?"

[both laughing]

JOSH: I have a very keen Jewdar.

HRISHI: Anyway, this reporter Zion wrote to me and wanted to mention something in this episode that I wouldn't have caught myself. The character of the Israeli Foreign Minister is named Ben Yosef, as in first name Ben, last name Yosef.

JOSH: The son of Yosef.

HRISHI: And the comment was: "That's not really how names work. That should be his last name". Like David Ben Gurion, or something like that.

JOSH: I didn't think of that. That's correct of course.

HRISHI: I'll read from the email: "Ben started becoming a common first name for newborns in the nineties, but funny enough this is the second time that Sorkin has used it as an Israeli first name." I'm still quoting. "I think that in the first season, when the President scares Zoey about her protection he says that the Israeli Prime Minister is Ben Yavin". I can't remember, but in any case, Ben something is usually, at least at that time, a family name. I think now, nowadays there are children who are being born with the name Benjamin?

JOSH: In Israel.

HRISHI: Yeah, but that was really not a trend back then, or you know, that was a trend in the nineties and this character is too old to have been part of that trend.

JOSH: This is making me think of the sons of Joseph. In the Bible, Joseph has two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Every Shabbos, Jews that observe bless their children, wishing that their children would be like Ephraim and Manasseh and I've always been told the interpretation is that Ephraim and Manasseh got along very well with each other. And so now I'm trying to spin out that this is a... My interpretation is Israel and its neighbors should get along better, and the name Ben Yosef is a little shout out to that. I mean, it's clearly not, but this is my Tom [something] interpretation of why Ben Yosef is the name of the Israeli Foreign Minister.

HRISHI: I like that interpretation.

JOSH: I also like very much that he produces a crumpled yarmulke from his pocket. That's a very nice piece of verisimilitude as I'm constantly putting on clothes and finding crumpled yarmulkes from old events and things, and often a yarmulke will have information inside it suggesting what bar or bat mitzvah it was from, or what synagogue or what event and a lot of my clothes are like Jewish archeological digs.

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: So at events like those, where yarmulkes are provided, do you use those yarmulkes, or do you travel with your own?

JOSH: I usually will travel with my own.

HRISHI: [crosstalk] Is it B-Y-O-Y?

[both laughing]

JOSH: Yeah, BYOY! Um, it is BYOY, but I think it's then the nice thing to do is when you're at a simcha, a celebration, you then wear the one they've provided. My kippah to end all kippahs, though, is a yarmulke that my stand in on *Scandal*, Johnny Todd, had made for me. A beautiful white yarmulke with the seal of the office of the Attorney General of the United States.

JOSH: Wow!

[both laughing]

HRISHI: That's awesome. That's awesome. Did you say "your kippah"?

JOSH: Kippah. I guess it's the Hebrew word.

HRISHI: I thought you were talking about instead of the ad hoc ones you get at these events, the one's to, you know, "This one's a keeper".

JOSH: [cross talking] This one's a keeper. That's a good question. I don't know, they're just synonyms. Kippah and yarmulke.

HRISHI: All right. There's also beanie.

JOSH: Sure.

HRISHI: You got three words, really.

JOSH: A Jewish beanie. Yeah, I guess yarmulke is Yiddish and kippah is Hebrew.

HRISHI: I see.

JOSH: And beanie is hipster.

HRISHI: Right

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: I liked the interfaith nature of this episode. I really liked this moment at the Red Mass. They talk about religion and government and of course in Israel's government there's a much different relationship between religion and government, and Anthony has this question for Charlie about the separation of church and state, but then in the moment at the Red Mass I like that Leo, himself a Catholic, is holding the yarmulke and contemplating it. That was a nice moment.

JOSH: Yeah, I agree. There is a moment where Amy asks... Amy is planning to go to the Red Mass and she asks Josh, and he kind of dismisses it, like "no, I'm not going", I was wondering if that's a "I'm not comfortable at mass. Jew". Although you'd think that'd be more of Toby than Josh.

HRISHI: Huh, oh I took that as "I wasn't special enough to get invited."

JOSH: Ooh.

HRISHI: That sort of, you know, "the staff doesn't get to go to that, unless they're staffing the president, really, and I don't rank as a guest on my own".

JOSH: That's more plausible, I think.

HRISHI: Yeah. I really love the awkwardness between the two of them in that exchange. Their dynamic in this episode is so wonderful. Both in Stackhouse's office, and then in the White House itself. They're kind of at odds with each other, and sort of bristling when they're having that meeting in the break room at Stackhouse's office, but there's something more conciliatory and gentle between the two of them, but it's still so awkward.

JOSH: Yeah, their stuff is great, and the whole professional and personal dynamic between them is interesting and fascinating and makes you kind of root for them but also understand why maybe it's not going to work. It's very good stuff.

HRISHI: Yeah. And these two moments of trailing off really capture it for me:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*JOSH: Hey.*

*AMY: Oh, hey. I didn't- Hi.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: And then when she asks him about the mass, and he says:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

JOSH: Noo. No.

[end excerpt]

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: No.

HRISHI: I loved... I don't know if we talked about this already. I love the way that Mary-Louise Parker as Amy Gardner says "Hello". I don't know that she's done my very favorite way yet, I think it's coming up later in this season, but this is something I think about all the time.

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: That's lovely, that you learn this kind of stuff.

HRISHI: I think about it so often, because it's the way she says "Hello", and I end up saying hello all the time.

JOSH: And are you saying you consciously emulate it?

HRISHI: I don't think I can do it, so I don't emulate it, but sometimes, when Lindsey calls, this is one of those moments, like I said, where I'll be making a *West Wing* reference, and nobody knows, where I'll say "hello" and they'll say something, and I'll say "hello", and I'm actually quoting Amy Gardner there.

JOSH: That is the ultimate inside joke, when you're doing it for you own entertainment.

HRISHI: With the word hello!

JOSH: I respect that.

HRISHI: [cross talk] ...of all things.

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: The only time I consciously emulate someone else's manner of expression is I stole from Peter Krause, who played somebody on *Sports Night*.

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: Casey.

HRISHI: [cross talk] Casey McCall!

JOSH: Yes, who played Casey McCall on *Sports Night*. I used to note that he often said "Right on," and I admired it, cause he made it work, and I thought "Wow, that's really good, I'm gonna start saying right on."

HRISHI: And you do!

JOSH: That was 18 years ago and I do still say it, and I think I think of him every time I say it.

HRISHI: Wow, you've certainly said it to me. You text it, I find, more often than you say it, but you also say it.

JOSH: I'm sure I'm guilty of over using it, and I'm sure there are those who would contend that once is more than enough, but I really like it, and I absolutely just cribbed it from him.

HRISHI: I like it.

JOSH: So thanks, Peter.

HRISHI: You say it when you're excited about something. You don't tend to necessarily be very effusive in moments of great excitement, but I can tell you're excited, because you say: "RIGHT ON."

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: Yeah, I think you are right.

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: It might be like my "shalom." It means hello, it means goodbye, it means I'm agitated and it means I'm excited or I'm sleepy now and I'm ready for bed.

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: It can mean almost anything.

HRISHI: Speaking for a moment again about *Sports Night*.

JOSH: Sure

HRISHI: Robert Guillaume passed away. That was really sad news to see.

JOSH: Yeah, I was shocked and then of course I read that, I think, he was 89 and that's a good run, but I was surprised because I wasn't aware, to my chagrin, I guess didn't keep up with him enough to know that he was ill, or wasn't doing well. I'm happy that a few years ago... Josh Charles and I were texting about this, we got to see him a few years ago. We did a little *Entertainment Weekly* reunion photo shoot and he has meant a lot to me in my career, I'm glad that I was able to tell him this. I remember, it was probably the first day of *Sports Night*, but I had seen him as a 10-year old in 1976 in a production of *Guys and Dolls* on Broadway. I think I've talked about it before on this podcast.

HRISHI: Yeah, I love that story!

JOSH: And he played Nathan Detroit, which is a character for me that I knew as a 10-year old that "that's the part I would play," and I was just so blown away by him and I was a fan of his, I guess, already at the time. I don't know what the chronology is, but he played Benson. He was this super dry incredibly funny I guess butler, and then eventually in the spin off went into politics himself and I knew from the TV show too, like, that's the kind of acting...He just was a role model for me, he was incredibly funny, and then I got to know him and I got to work with him, you know, it was an acting class just being on the same sound stage with him and he also couldn't have been nicer and more encouraging to me and when I saw him at

the EW photoshoot, this is so sweet, he pulled me aside, and he kind of whispered: “Didn’t I tell you you’d do great things?”

HRISHI: Aww.

JOSH: Which I thought was just a stunning overstatement of what I have achieved in my career, but a rather lovely thing to say. It was just so, so sweet. He was all about everyone else. He was a very generous guy and nobody was funnier. And actually, and I’m glad people were lauding both Aaron and Robert for this, during production of *Sports Night*, Robert Guillaume suffered a stroke and came back...

HRISHI: And his character Isaac Jaffe also suffered a stroke.

JOSH: Right.

HRISHI: And was out of the show, and they just... That was the explanation for the character’s...

JOSH: [cross talk] Right, and he came back having had a stroke and the character having had a stroke and I just thought that was incredibly bold creatively, and incredibly bold of the writer and the actor to do it and to do it with such grace and style. And he came back and was as great as ever on the show.

HRISHI: Right, and it became such an interesting aspect of the character. You know, one more shade of such a wonderful three dimensional character. Sometimes there were little moments in the plot where he was tired and that was a result of, you know, there were physical things that he could no longer do because of the stroke. It was just woven into the story in this beautiful way. I really loved that online, after news of his passing came out, it felt like instead of a moment of silence, people had a collective moment of *Sports Night*, where everybody turned on *Sports Night* and watched their favorite scene, or linked to a clip from YouTube, and it was... I mean, I’m constantly going back to *Sports Night* anyway, but it was a beautiful thing to just feel like thousands of people were all watching at the same time and thinking of his great work.

JOSH: That delighted me as well. It was a real tribute to him and I don’t go back to the show, and I don’t watch it and I did click on a lot of these clips and did a little deep dive into YouTube that day, and my God he was great! I mean I remembered--

HRISHI: [cross talk] Really great.

JOSH: him being wonderful. He was another one of those actors in the John Spencer mode who has an ineffable quality to him that when he’s listening to another actor you still look at him and when he’s doing something as seemingly simple as reading a prepared statement that Isaac Jaffe gives this... is it “Six Southern Gentlemen of Tennessee”?

HRISHI: Right, oh God I love that.

JOSH: And you might think that’s easy. “Oh, he’s just reading a piece of great writing that Aaron wrote”, that’s literally up on the teleprompter because he’s on a news show, or sports show, but it’s so much more than that. There’s something again in the simplicity and organic nature of his performance that is riveting and very, very real and moving.

HRISHI: Mhm. There is a wonderful moment from Linda Holmes from NPR's Pop Culture Happy Hour where she discussed Isaac and she said "If you wanna watch *Sports Night*, it's the greatest, you should watch it, but seriously, Isaac is Jed Bartel, only earlier." She wrote like: "The Presidentness and the staffing of Bartlet is Michael Douglas from the *American President*, but the heart is Isaac." And I thought that was a...

JOSH: Very well put.

HRISHI: Yeah, wonderful way to put it. If there is anybody out there, listening to this podcast who has not watched *Sports Night* at this point, please fix that.

JOSH: And people often ask, and I think the answer is: It's available on Hulu.

HRISHI: It is.

JOSH: And if you need my sign in information, just shoot me an email. Just kidding. I also thought of Robert today and Isaac Jaffe as I read that the Houston Texans owner, Bob McNair, suggested that, I guess, letting football players do whatever they want during the National Anthem would be like letting the inmates run the prison--

HRISHI: Oh geez...

JOSH: And I thought: not the best boss.

HRISHI: Oh God...

JOSH: Not an Isaac Jaffe. My God...

HRISHI: That deleted the thought that I had loaded.

JOSH: Sorry.

[both laughing]

HRISHI: That's ok. What was I...

JOSH: That was a bad place to take it.

HRISHI: The other thing, and I'm sorry to all of our listener who are impatient for us to just keep talking about *The West Wing*.

JOSH: Logan.

HRISHI: This is what happens. This is *West Wing* adjacent so we're going to talk about it and this is my only time I get with you this week and I feel like I want all the Josh time I can get.

JOSH: And dammit, it's our podcast.

HRISHI: True enough. The same day that Robert Guillaume passed away, Fats Domino passed away.

JOSH: It's classic, it's the domino effect.



HRISHI: [Expletive deleted] Josh!

JOSH: I'm not better than that.

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: Damn you.

JOSH: What were you saying?

HRISHI: So, Fats Domino and Robert Guillaume both 89, they passed away on the same day, they were both 89, but I couldn't believe how differently I see them, consider them, in my mind, in terms of relative age, or--

JOSH: Vitality, or where on your mental timeline you would put them. I know what you're saying.

HRISHI: Exactly. Fats Domino exists as a person from the past.

JOSH: I thought you were going to say in black and white.

HRISHI: Sure!

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: That's how I literally see. I see Robert in color and Fats Domino in black and white footage.

HRISHI: [cross talk] Yes, exactly. All right, back to the show.

JOSH: There are a couple of rough moments in this episode of male condescension to women, bordering on sexual harassment, I think.

HRISHI: Yeah?

JOSH: Charlie and Emily--

HRISHI: Yep.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*CHARLIE: They're going to try to give you a whole stack and right there is where you become a man, Emily.*

*EMILY: Should I use sex as a tactic?*

*CHARLIE: If you need to. Hell, even if you just want to.*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: Ooh. It's like, wait a minute, wait what? Charlie! Why? Why this scene?

HRISHI: Is it on Charlie for that? Or is it just weird to have a young, female character saying that in a professional workspace?

JOSH: I think it's on both of them!

[Josh laughing]

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: I mean, though I guess it's inappropriate on multiple levels. And it's in front of his little brother, for whom you would hope he's modeling a better example of how to interact with people at work.

HRISHI: Mhm. I thought that you were going to say, as you started that sentence, that there were several moments, for me, of insane... I thought they could rename this episode "Swirling Mass", because for me it represented a swirling mass of terrible feeling about the 2016 election.

JOSH: Ah.

HRISHI: I mean, everything...

JOSH: Yes, C.J.'s concern that setting-

HRISHI: The lowering of expectations...

JOSH: The lowering of expectations, yeah. Allowing Ritchie to just quietly step over them during the debates, yes.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*TOBY: That's the ballgame.*

*C.J.: If the whole thing is he can't tie his shoelaces and it turns out he can, then that is the ballgame.*

*TOBY: And I believe he'll have to...*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: Yep, I mean that is just... I felt like I was watching the future being predicted by the past. You've got a third party candidate and someone from the establishment saying "No, those are his votes, he's stealing his votes!" and Amy saying "They're not his votes". That's what's crazy about it. It's not his votes. And while she's also right, you also know why Josh feels that way.

JOSH: Sure, yeah, that's a great little interchange, I like when Aaron writes for you. Your like: "Oh, right, but oh, also right, on the other hand."

HRISHI: Yes, and I understand you Josh and yet you're also wrong and yeah, there were so many moments that felt like it was hinting at, or just explicitly depicting things that would later happen between Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump. So, that's my, I nominate this episode to be renamed "The Swirling Mass of Terrible Feelings."

JOSH: Yes. My other example of "why, guys" was later in the Oval, based on the success of Casper and company, President Bartlet offers him his choice of daughters.

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*PRESIDENT BARTLET: Mike, pick yourself out a daughter. My oldest is married, but I can have it annulled. The Pope said he'd do it, I swear to God.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: Right, yes.

JOSH: Oh Bartlet. Oh President Bartlet.

HRISHI: Josh, can you do a--

JOSH: Nope

[Josh laughing]

HRISHI: 1920s kind of--

JOSH: No, but I'm hoping you can.

HRISHI: Old timey gangster voice?

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: Why, what's the line?

HRISHI: "Oh, oh, why guys, see?"

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: What, what?

HRISHI: Your said "why, guys" and I want you--

JOSH: Oh, did I?

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: [in 1920 gangster voice] Oh, why guys, see

[Both laughing]

HRISHI: [in 1920 gangster voice] Aw, why guys, see

JOSH: Aw, courageous cot minute man

HRISHI: Now, every time when these moments happen, instead of just feeling awful about the low level latent sexism in *The West Wing*, we can do a cute voice, "Aw, why guys".

JOSH: [cross talk]. Aw, why guys? I'm into it. I know we just came up with it, or you just came up with it, but can we sell the t-shirt?

[both laughing]

JOSH: That's really now, every episode my aim is to figure out a new piece of merch.

HRISHI: It'll be the name of Single Cell Paramecium's first album.

JOSH: Why did I write down "First Monday in October"? That's when the Supreme Court convenes for the first time, but what is--

HRISHI: And you were going to fact check that.

JOSH: No, I was going to mention the movie of the same name, but now I can't remember what the connection is to this episode.

HRISHI: This is why they're holding the Red Mass. The Red Mass happens before--

JOSH: [laughing] No. Oh, it's that small detail which has escaped me. Thank you. I remember seeing it when it first came out and it's about the first female on the Supreme Court, first female justice on the Supreme Court and I just thought it was interesting, it was scheduled for a February, guys, why guys [in 1920s gangster voice] aw, why guys, why that month? Why February?

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: I know you had that voice in there.

JOSH: Oh, you know what, it's easier to say the name, I'm going to start using that next year. [in 1920s gangster voice] February!

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: If you say it in that voice, for some reason it's much easier.

HRISHI: Excellent.

JOSH: Wait for the callback four months from now. So it was scheduled for a February 1982 release, but Reagan appointed Sandra Day O'Connor in July '81, so they actually pushed up the opening of the film to August 1981 so that, I guess, the premise of the movie would still land, there hadn't been a female justice on the Supreme Court yet. And I'm actually curious to re-watch this movie, because I remember it as being kind of funny and charming, but it seems not to have been highly rated by any of the...

HRISHI: Critics?

JOSH: Yeah, or Rotten Tomatoes. It's on Rotten Tomatoes even. Seems to not have been that well received. I remembered as a kid, I was 15, liking that movie, being charmed by it.

HRISHI: I'll check it out.

JOSH: No, you won't.

[Josh laughing]

HRISHI: I will!

JOSH: Ok

HRISHI: What do you mean? Of course I will!

JOSH: All right.

HRISHI: I love this genre of movie. I love courtroom dramas, I love political stories--

JOSH: [crosstalk] Courtroom drama

HRISHI: Mhm. *The Contender* I like, I love that movie. *The Verdict*, I love that movie.

JOSH: David Mamet, Paul Newman.

HRISHI: It seems like a movie that I would enjoy.

JOSH: Well, perhaps so. 15 year old Joshua recommends it to you. I don't know if 51 year old... Ah, 15, 51.

HRISHI: Ahh.

JOSH: Beautiful, let's end the show here.

[both laughing]

JOSH: I don't know whether I would recommend it now, but I'm curious to re-watch myself.

HRISHI: How old is Avi? How old is your son Avi?

JOSH: 15.

HRISHI: You guys should have a body switching movie. This is the only year in which it's going to make sense.

JOSH: That's right.

HRISHI: You have to make that happen.

JOSH: Are you saying when he's 16 I won't be 61?

HRISHI: It's true.

JOSH: I can't crunch the math off the top of my head.

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: It's true.

JOSH. Yeah.

HRISHI: I mean, according to the *18 Again!* 81 years old George Burns' rule.

JOSH: Oh, is that the exact premise?

HRISHI: In *18 Again!* George Burns' 81 and his grandson is 18 and they switch bodies, and George Burns is suddenly 18 again.

JOSH: There was a time when multiple body switching movies were made.

HRISHI: And it was an insane time.

JOSH: Yes!

HRISHI: I feel like this is going to be a time people tell their millennials about. They'll be like "back in 1988 there were two different body switching movies that came out at the same time".

JOSH: This was before body switching was a reality.

HRISHI: Right!

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: I should have tied this into our earlier conversation about stealing other people's verbal leitmotifs, but I found something in this episode that I want to start cycling into perhaps daily usage, which is:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*PRESIDENT BARTLET: Where's the table?*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: Right.

JOSH: I love that. "Where's the table?", in the sit room, where are we at, what's the thinking, what's the consensus?

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: What a great phrase.

HRISHI: And it works on multiple levels, because you could also use it if you couldn't find a table.

JOSH: Oh, it's perfect for that. Yeah.

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: I'll probably use it mainly for that situation.

HRISHI: Right, but you have the other one now, in your back pocket.

JOSH: Yeah, it's versatile, that phrase.

HRISHI: Mhm. The other moment that I think that you were winding up to before I diverted you was Josh doing heavy mansplaining to Donna on a history of western philosophy, and *The West Wing's* version of Tony Robbins.

JOSH: So condescending.

HRISHI: It's really almost as if someone needed a depiction of what mansplaining is. You know someone on Twitter: "I've heard of this phrase mansplaining, I don't know what does that mean", you know. Some potential men's rights activist.

[Josh laughing]

HRISHI: And then you could say: "Here, just watch this scene and you will see. Donna knows the answers, but Josh likes to explain them anyway, in a condescending way."

JOSH: Indeed he does. Yeah, lymanexplaining and lymanreading are real, as evidenced by the show.

HRISHI: [cross talk] They're real. By the way, I just quoted *The West Wing* and I don't know if you knew it, but I quoted--

JOSH: Damn it, what did you say?

HRISHI: You said lymanreading and lymanexplaining are real, and I said "They're real", and again, it's not even really the actual quote. The line is "it's real", but I'm quoting C.J. in a future episode, "Privateers."

JOSH: [crosstalk] Holy [expletive deleted]. Oh, that's a classic.

HRISHI: [unintelligible]

JOSH: No, but I do know "Privateers," though, to my delight, because there was a lot of fun shooting that episode, it has a crazy, great comic scene and performance my Mary-Louise and Allison and--

HRISHI: This is that scene!

JOSH: I'm looking forward to discussing it. I don't remember that phrase in that scene, but I sure remember that scene.

HRISHI: Is this a hazing or is this for real? Cause if it's a hazing.... It's real. It's real.

JOSH: Oh right, it's real.

[both laughing]

JOSH: That's funny. Well, we'll talk about it then. That reminds me very much of a moment in *Three Amigos!* when the three amigos of course think they've been hired to kind of play out this piece of public theatre and Steve Martin gets shot, he thinks accidentally, like "oh, well the other actor's using real bullets" and he touches his arm, "Oh, great, look at this", and he shows blood and it has a moment where he realizes, "Oh, it's real".

[*Three Amigos!* excerpt]

*LUCKY DAY: Oh, this is real.*

*NED NEDERLANDER: You mean...?*

*LUCKY DAY: Yes. They are going to kill us.*

[end excerpt]

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: Oh how I love that.

HRISHI: So now you've seen how unconsciously this stuff comes out, you've now witnessed it in real time.

JOSH: Indeed I have. It's real.

HRISHI: In a discussion about *The West Wing* I happen to... I can't even contain it.

JOSH: I don't like the whole pronunciation of Immanuel Kant. Kant, Kant, Kant. To me it's Immanuel Kant [pronounced like "can't"].

[Monty Python's The Philosopher's Song excerpt]

*MONTY PYTHON: Immanuel Kant was a real pissant who was very rarely stable.*

[end excerpt]

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: That whole scene threw me off. Anyway.

HRISHI: Yeah. Well, I do think of you as sometimes a bit of a pissant.

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: Sure.

HRISHI: This is just one example. I do like Donna's feint towards the conversion when Josh comes back. It's great. "I've located the light switch" is a great phrase.

JOSH: Yes.

HRISHI: She's really funny in that whole exchange. The whole scene is great. And Josh gives her no credit for the great joke when he says;

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*JOSH: This is an order form to buy Owing Yourself, follow up to the worldwide bestseller...*

*DONNA: Leasing Yourself.*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: Yeah, great line. He doesn't even pause to give her a hat tip.

HRISHI: Mhm. Also, as Halloween approaches, though it will have passed by the time this episode comes out, I appreciated this line from Donna where she says:

[West Wing Episode 4.04 excerpt]

*DONNA: Should I go in disguise?*

*JOSH: As what?*



*Donna: Somebody who would go to one of these things.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: She reminds me of course of all the terrible costumes of “What are you dressed as?” “I’m dressed as a guy who would come to this Halloween party”, without a costume, or whatever.

JOSH: I usually say: as an adult.

[Hrishi laughing]

HRISHI: Do you dress up for Halloween?

JOSH: I do not. I would, given the right circumstances, although I off the top of my head I can’t think of what those circumstances would be.

HRISHI: Being paid to be in costume?

JOSH: Oh, being paid is certainly--

HRISHI: That’s a good circumstance.

JOSH: Yes, that would certainly work. But no, my daughter’s in college, my son has no plans to do anything. I will with delight and eagerness hope for kids to come to my door, because I love kids, I love seeing their costumes, so I hope I’ll be giving out some candy this Halloween, but I have no plans to observe. How about you?

HRISHI: No, I was so excited to move to where I live now, because I live in a house, and I thought: “We’ll get trick-or-treaters,” I was also excited to see the costumes and stuff, but no trick-or-treaters come to where I live. There are a couple blocks further away from where I am, is a much fancier part of town, and the houses are much bigger and the streets are wider and that becomes sort of the destination for all the little children in the surrounding area to go up and down, so we don’t get any foot traffic.

JOSH: Aww. Well, I’m in a new house this Halloween so I’m hopeful. I don’t know whether it’s a happening hoppin Halloween neighborhood, but I’m hopeful.

HRISHI: I thought that, perhaps, actors, because all actors are the same, as we know...

JOSH: I will stipulate to that.

HRISHI: That actors would like Halloween more than most, because they love dressing up as other people, turning themselves into other characters. That’s what they do!

JOSH: Ah, yes.

HRISHI: And so here’s a chance to determine your own fate in that way, and really go wild.

JOSH: Yes, I think I set myself apart from the herd in many ways from actors. I don’t think I have a burning near compulsive desire to draw attention to myself that most do, and so yeah, sure, I think actors enjoy their Halloween.

HRISHI: I encourage everyone to dress up as Josh for Halloween, again this is going to be too late, so if you didn't do it, shame on you, and if you did...

JOSH: If you want to take a quick shot at it now, just in the privacy of your own home and shoot up a picture, please do.

HRISHI: You told me once, when I suggested doing some David Rosen cosplay, that all it took was a suit and some old person makeup.

[both laughing]

[West Wing Weekly Episode 1.07 excerpt]

*JOSH: And, by the way, if you want to know what the full David Rosen cosplay outfit is, it's a Hugo Boss suit and old age makeup.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: That was in episode 7, I believe, of this podcast, if you want to go back. Another thing that I like in this episode is that Ben Yosef doesn't know the difference between Idaho and Iowa.

JOSH: Sure.

HRISHI: And there was a moment from a past episode that I really liked. I like when people casually don't know things in *The West Wing*. For a show where everybody knows so much, where Josh Lyman can quote *Critique of Practical Reason* off the top of his head, I like these moments where people don't know. One of the other moments that I liked, we didn't talk about it in our last episode, but I love this bit where Leo asks Jordan about Shareef's plane going down.

[West Wing Episode 4.03 excerpt]

*LEO: Do you remember last May, that a private plane carrying Qumari defense minister, Abdul Shareef, went down near Bermuda, and that all of the passengers, including Shareef, were dead.*

*JORDAN: No.*

*LEO: No?*

*JORDAN: No.*

*LEO: Ok. Well, it happened.*

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: It felt so real, that a woman of her intellect and political savvy might miss a story about--

JOSH: Yeah, don't read the paper for a couple of days, I thought the same thing too. It was refreshing to just admit to your ignorance on a topic.

HRISHI: Especially that kind of story. It's a foreign government cabinet member, died in a plane crash.

JOSH: Yeah, I missed it.

HRISHI: Yeah. I liked that in that episode, I loved the last exchange between the president and Stackhouse, and the beautiful piece of storytelling and direction as the president watches him leave the Red Mass and you see the president's there, cameras are on him, he's got the motorcade waiting for him, Stackhouse gives him this very classy response and tells him that he's going to endorse him, and the president watches him as he moves through, down the stairs and into the street and then just disappears into the crowd. Just blends into the people walking on the street and I thought that was a beautiful little moment of Stackhouse disappearing.

JOSH: I agree. I was knocked out by that whole scene and want to give a nod to Vincent Misiano for the way he directed it. That really was the gold of this episode, because as he walks away, having conceded what he's conceded, and I like the reaction, just the conversation between the two of them. Then as he walks away the crowd starts yelling "Mr. President, Mr. President" and Stackhouse gives a little look to them. They're not calling for him.

HRISHI. They don't notice him.

JOSH: Senator Stackhouse. They don't notice him at all. He notices them, there's a quick little glance, and he's essentially an older man who's now given up his political relevance. It's just the moment really hit me as he walks away and then the president, on whom all eyes rest, decides he's going to take some questions about needle exchange. It's just kind of an incredibly great coda to this episode and brilliantly done.

HRISHI: Right, and Howard Stackhouse played beautifully by George Coda.

JOSH: I believe it's George Coe.

HRISHI: It's George Coe.

[Josh laughing]

JOSH: He's a terrific actor, it's an excellent performance.

HRISHI: It was kind of mind blowing to me the way in which all these things come together at the end, because the president decides to speak about needle exchange. That's one of the issues that Stackhouse wanted to bring up, that's one of the reasons why he thought about running. He was going to address the AMA about it. So he's not going to talk about it, he's not going to run. The president does that, I thought, in that moment, in the wake of the conversation about the thing that he spoke about, this 80-20 section. Who among the 80 will stand up for the 20. I thought in this moment it was also a representation of the imbalance in power, and here the president is the 80 and Stackhouse is the 20, and so the president takes heed of his own word and says "Yes, it is a political calculus by the Ritchie campaign to want to move someone to the left of the president here, and so they shouldn't talk about it, but this man, who represent this sort of smaller voice here, it's dear to him, and he's a real statesman. And so, he's going to stand up for him and take on the question anyway. And it

also felt like an assertion, you know, of the confidence that they have about, say they're only going to drop it down to just one debate, this idea that this is his moment and why shrink from the responsibility. The awesome responsibility and power of this job and he's going to actually go ahead and speak up for that voice.

JOSH: So that wraps up another, I'm going to say it, fascinating episode of The West Wing Weekly. Thanks for tuning in. You can go to our website [thewestwingweekly.com](http://thewestwingweekly.com) and donate there. We're looking for people to make a recurring donation if you can. Even if it's a buck, 5 bucks a day. Just kidding. Five bucks a month even, that would be meaningful to us, we're trying to get--

[both laughing]

JOSH: Even if it's just one dollar every 45 minutes.

HRISHI: You kind of went Huckleberry Hound there for a second.

JOSH: Vocally?

HRISHI: Yeah.

JOSH: What did I do?

HRISHI: And textually.

JOSH: What do you mean?

HRISHI: Five bucks a day, five bucks a month, Even.

JOSH: Stage right, Even.

[Hrishi laughing]

JOSH: That's Snagglepuss.

[West Wing Episode 4.03 excerpt]

*SNAGGLEPUSS: February 29th, Even.*

[end excerpt]

JOSH: Five dollars, Even.

HRISHI: *Funky Phantom* Spirit of '76 who has the same voice and mannerisms as another Hanna-Barbera character, Huckleberry Hound. The Spirit of '76, Even.

JOSH: [cross talk] Fantastic. Anyway, you can check out the other fantastic story driven podcasts of Radiopia, at [radiotopia.fm](http://radiotopia.fm).

HRISHI: Thanks so much to Zach McNees and Margaret Miller for their help, as always, in our post production process. You can find Josh, me, both of them, and the West Wing Weekly on Twitter. You can find the West Wing Weekly on Facebook, Instagram, and always on our website, [westwingweekly.com](http://westwingweekly.com).

JOSH: And I would like to entreat you to seek out my Facebook page. It's the Joshua Malina Facebook page, I guess it's @MRJoshuaMalina, because last night somebody at work told me that Facebook pages matter in terms of getting you next job, and I want to have a next job. So I would like you to help me artificially inflate the numbers on my Facebook page. Which reminds me, between this Wednesday and next, why don't you listen to a few episodes of Hrish's podcast Song Exploder and why don't you check me out Thursday night at 9/8 central on ABC's *Scandal*, final season.

HRISHI: I think people should checkout your Facebook page because I have a very special feeling for that Facebook page.

JOSH: Why is that?

HRISHI: It's where I first reconnected with you, eventually leading to this podcast in 2012. I saw a Tweet from you that someone had retweeted, and thought "Josh Malina!" and in your Twitter bio at that time you had a link to you Facebook page. I clicked on the link, saw you Facebook page. There was a button, Send Message. I sent a message and I said "Do you remember me? I wrote to you many years ago" and you wrote back, and the rest is history.

JOSH: The rest is history. The rest is West Wing Weekly. By the way, people have been asking me about transcripts of the show. That project is underway full steam, or has been for a long time, but the uploading of the transcripts themselves, and if you go back and look, I think much of the first season is already up.

HRISHI: The first season is complete.

JOSH: Oh, how about that, that's fantastic, huge thanks to Evie and Krista for doing an amazing job.

[Excerpt West Wing]

*C.J.:* Ok.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: Ok.

JOSH: What's next?

[Outro Music]