

The West Wing Weekly
0.05: Big Block of Cheese Live
Guests: Dulé Hill, The Memory Palace, The Allusionist, and more

[Intro Music]

[applause]

HRISHI: Live from San Francisco Sketch Fest, this is *The West Wing Weekly*. My name is Hrishikesh Hirway.

[cheers, applause]

JOSH: And I'm Joshua Malina. [cheers, applause] And THIS is a big block of cheese!

[cheers, applause]

HRISHI: Josh, tell us about our first guest.

JOSH: Our first guest weighs in at a svelte 50 pounds. [laughter] This is usually the part that Hrishi hates about Big Block of Cheese Days, when I tell him, "We're going to be pairing your questions today [Hrishi laughs] with a delightful Pecorino Romano." Pecorino Romano, of course, is the hard, salty, Italian cheese made from sheep's milk. It was a staple in the diets of legionnaires, of Ancient Rome, the infantry. It's basically Parmesan's saltier, tangier, cooler cousin. It's worth noting that my saltier, tangier, cooler cousin is here tonight, Rachel. [cheers] Yeah. Hrishi, do you know what part of Italy this particular block is from?

HRISHI: [laugh] It's from, I think, a region called "Cost-a-co."

JOSH: That's right! [audience laughs] Cost-a-co, Italy! [audience laughs] A city that specializes in great bargains on oversized comestibles. [audience laughs] Listen, I've done the math. As I mentioned, it's a 50 pound block of cheese. Marine's Memorial seats 564. Everyone gets 1.4184 ounces. [audience cheers, Hrishi laughs] We're going to try to feed as many of you as possible.

HRISHI: This is our Big Block of Cheese special, of course, it's in honor of the Big Block of Cheese episodes from *The West Wing*. Does everybody know the Big Block [cross talk] of Cheese episodes?

JOSH: [cross talk] There are two of them.

[audience cheers, applauds]

HRISHI: Do you know the titles of those, of those...the Season 1 episode?

[audience members call out]

JOSH: "Crackpots and These Women," very good.

HRISHI: And Season 2?

[audience member call out]

HRISHI: You guys know it.

JOSH: Well, this is going to go great.

[audience laughter]

HRISHI: A few of you... [laughs] Anyway, this is Leo's idea, so let's hear from Leo, really, about the Big Block of Cheese.

[*The West Wing* Episode 2.16 excerpt]

LEO: Andrew Jackson, in the main foyer of his White House, had a big block of cheese. The block of cheese was huge, over two tons. And it was there for any and all who might be hungry. Jackson wanted the White House to belong to the people, so from time to time he opened his doors to those who wished an audience.

[end excerpt]

HRISHI: So that's what Leo tells us, but of course we think there's more to the story than that, so to find out more, we turned to one of our favorite podcasters, Nate DiMeo, who makes the history podcast, *The Memory Palace*. And we're going to bring out Nate now to tell us some more about Andrew Jackson and the big block of cheese. Nate...

[audience applauds]

NATE: This is *The West Wing Weekly*. I'm Nate DiMeo. [Josh laughs]

[slow piano music begins playing, and continues throughout the following section]

[audience laughs]

Colonel Thomas Meacham wasn't actually a colonel. There are no records he ever served in the military. He was born in 1790's, so we're talking after the Revolutionary War, and then he was too young for the War of 1812. But it seems he was a big fish in the small pond of Sandy Creek, New York. Respected businessman, a dairy farmer, aww [expletive deleted] I'll just say it, a big cheese.

[audience, Josh, and Hrishini laugh]

And now and then, the local militia there would march about the town green and they would have Meacham shout out orders to the younger men. And at some point, he just started insisting that people call him "Colonel" and folks just went along with it, and so it became "Colonel Thomas S. Meacham." And why not? It was 1835; the American Experiment was a tremendous success. This was a brand new nation, a place where a white, middle-aged dude of property could be anything he wanted to be.

[audience, Josh, and Hrishi laugh]

And this new nation needed new heroes, men of intellect and ingenuity, men who could bring prestige to these newly united states and help it seize its place in the world stage. Colonel Thomas S. Meacham wanted to be one of those men, so he made a big block of cheese.

[piano music becomes more serious, plucking string instrument joins]

1,400 pounds of good New York cheddar. It was a cheese for the ages, made by a man of the age, and it was feted at a festival in Oswego, and that was cool, sure, but a cheese like that, and a man like Meacham, were destined for bigger things. The world needed to know what he had achieved. So he had resolved to bring the cheese to Washington, as a gift for the president.

[horns join music, becoming more ominous]

Andrew Jackson was a man of the people, after all: self-made, rose up from nothing. He was also a genocidal racist monster [audience, Josh, and Hrishi laugh, applaud], but let's skip that part and get back to the cheese [more laughter]. Andrew Jackson was a man of the people who could appreciate a big block of cheese, and so in November of 1835, Colonel Thomas Meacham hired men to load a 1,400 pound wheel of cheddar onto a purpose-built wagon. The wheel was four feet across and two feet tall, it was wrapped in a leather belt festooned with patriotic slogans befitting this all-American achievement. Forty-six horses pulled that wagon, and that wonderful cheese, and that phony military man, to the docks on the banks of Lake Erie, where the wheel was loaded onto the back of a sailing ship. A band played, cannon fire echoed, and Colonel Meacham beamed from the deck, waving to an adoring crowd as the wind bore him southward toward Washington.

He was not the first man to send an enormous block of cheese to the President of the United States. [audience laughs] Thirty years earlier, the town of Cheshire, Massachusetts, made a 1200 pound wheel, using milk from various cows owned by each of her citizens. It was an act of stirring civic collectivism. They emblazoned it with a Jeffersonian motto: "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." And then sent it to Jefferson himself.

[audience applause]

Wow! Who knew that was an applause line?

[audience, Josh, and Hrishi laugh]

But Thomas Jefferson was no tyrant. He held himself to a strict policy of turning down every gift so that he would be immune to charges of undue influence from moneyed interests, or from dairy products of unusual size. [audience, Josh, and Hrishi laugh] But Andrew Jackson was all, "Cool! Free cheese." [audience, Josh, and Hrishi laugh] And having accepted this gift from the people of the great state of New York, Old Hickory invited a few friends over. They had some cheese, they hung out a bit, and they went on for the night, leaving the president alone with a giant-ass block of cheese [audience laughs] and he had no idea what to do with it. So, the thing sat around for two years, and as his second term was ending, and he and his wife were starting

to plan for the move out, there was no way the cheese was going home with them to Tennessee, so he decided to share with the American people. Andrew Jackson was nothing if not good at managing his personal brand. And so what would be more “Andrew Jackson: Man of the People” than opening up the White House to all comers, with food for any and all who were hungry?

[music lightens, chimes added]

Ten thousand people came to say goodbye to the Jackson presidency, and to marvel at the mammoth cheddar. It is said of that day that the two-and-a-half-year-old cheese could be smelled on the breeze several blocks away. [audience laughs] One Washingtonian dubbed the 1400 pound, 4-foot tall wheel, “An evil-smelling horror.” [audience, Josh laugh] It was eaten in less than two hours. [audience, Josh, and Hrishika laugh] It is also said that the scent lingered, that it permeated the floorboards, the curtains, the carpets, and that on a summer day in the White House it would appear suddenly, like Lincoln’s ghost [audience, Josh laugh] for years to come.

[melancholy piano music returns]

Now, the memory of Colonel Thomas S. Meacham, it seems, is less enduring. History loses track of Colonel Meacham, merely noting that he returned to his dairy farm and died several years later. We know nothing of how the president may or may not – what he may or may not have said of Meacham and his efforts, or whether they even met. We know that he spent \$1,200 all told, to get the cheese down to Washington, which was a fortune back then. We don’t know whether he felt like it was worth it. [audience laughs] But let’s picture him on that boat, back on Lake Erie, and hear the fife and the drum, and hear the cannons boom, and see the crowd wave, proud of their local hero, heading off on an adventure, sure that his future is bright and that his name would endure. And know for a moment that it does, at least in this room, and that it may linger in the memories of the people gathered here tonight, people who like a TV show and a podcast about a TV show [audience, Josh, and Hrishika laugh and applaud] nearly 200 years later, lingering like the smell of the big block of cheddar. [audience laughs] Thanks. [applause]

HRISHIKA: Nate DiMeo, *The Memory Palace*. It is truly one of the best podcasts around, if you don’t already subscribe to it, please subscribe to that show. It’s actually one of the reasons why we’re all here, because listening to *The Memory Palace* is what made me decide I wanted to start a podcast, and then eventually start a podcast with Josh [audience member whoops], so, give it up for him.

JOSH: How about that? [audience applause] What a remarkable homage to fromage. [audience laughs] It’s a \$35 ticket. That’s about [audience laughs] that’s about what you’re going to get tonight.

HRISHIKA: I don’t know if I’m embarrassed or jealous. [audience laughs] So tonight, [Hrishika laughs] that was the highly-produced part of tonight, and, from here on out it’s going to be kind of a free-for-all.

[audience member whoops]

JOSH: Yeah.

[more audience whoops]

HRISHI: To begin with though, we are going to bring out a very special guest.

[audience members whoop]

JOSH: Also 50 pounds. [audience and Hrishu laugh] Strange coincidence.

HRISHI: The very svelte, Dulé Hill.

[audience cheering and applause]

JOSH: There we go! Wine and cheese, [cross talk] wine and cheese!

HRISHI: [cross talk] Dulé, before you sit down, before you sit down, we're going to ask you to have a ceremonial honor here, so, so one second.

JOSH: It's like at a wedding, or [cross talk] a bar mitzvah.

DULÉ: [cross talk] I'm a bit concerned.

JOSH: And say it with me folks, "HE GAVE HIM THE KNIIIIIIIIIIIFE!"

DULÉ: Awwwwwwww.

JOSH: Ohhhhhhhhh.

[audience cheers and applauds]

DULÉ: Hello, hello. See, I was wondering whether this was going to be Paul Revere's knife, you know what I'm sayin'?

[audience laughs]

JOSH: [cross talk] Well actually, that is –

DULÉ: [cross talk] But it doesn't look like it, you know

JOSH: That is the original Paul Revere knife, though I had to have the blade replaced, and then I had to have the handle replaced.

DULÉ: Oh, got it, got it, got it!

JOSH: But it is the original knife.

DULÉ: Got it!

JOSH: And don't worry about actually, practically, you can just stab it because I've already cut the cheese.

DULÉ: Alright, right here.

[audience and Josh laugh]

DULÉ: Look at that! You see, that's skills.

HRISHI: Amazing. Dulé...

DULÉ: As you see, I brought out the wine, you see. Because how you gonna have cheese without having wine? [audience members whoop] You know what I'm sayin'?

HRISHI: That's true, but if it were Big Bottle of Wine Day, it would have been a totally different episode.

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: Yeah, it gets, yes, it gets weird at that point.

HRISHI: Dulé, you were our very first guest way back in March when we first started. Since then, things seem to be going pretty well for you, so, you're welcome.

[audience laughter]

DULÉ: Thank you.

HRISHI: But, let's catch up on where we are in the *The West Wing* since Season 1. Now we're in the middle of Season 4, and at the time-

DULÉ: How many episodes are there?

JOSH: Good question. 157? You don't know. [audience and Dulé laugh] I'm a little disappointed in you guys. I think it's, I think it might be?

[unintelligible audience member speaks]

JOSH: 155, [cross talk] oh, you don't know about the lost episodes.

HRISHI: [cross talk] It depends on, it depends on whether you include the very special documentary episode, and things like that, so...

JOSH: You're not counting "Manchester Part 3."

[audience, Hrishi, and Dulé laugh]

DULÉ: What about the one with all the presidents? Remember that, that [cross talk] documentary one?

HRISHI: [cross talk] Yeah, the documentary special. Yeah.

DULÉ: Is that included in the [cross talk] in the counts?

JOSH: [cross talk] That counts. That's in the 155

HRISHI: [cross talk] It's flexible.

HRISHI: *West Wing Weekly* fans, *West Wing* fans have a pliable sense of the number of episodes. But, so, when we first spoke to you, it was when Charlie first appeared on the show. Now we're in the era of when Will Bailey has first appeared on the show.

JOSH: No, please.

[audience laughter]

JOSH: Not one of you?

[audience laughter, applause]

JOSH: My God! I'm getting cheese.

[audience laughter]

DULÉ: I was getting ready to say I, I don't really recall those years. I don't remember those episodes at all, but... [audience laughs] Will Bailey, you say?

HRISHI: Well, I was hoping you'd share your impressions of, Josh when you first met him. And when this character and this person first came onto the show, 'cause you didn't, you hadn't worked with Josh before that, had you?

DULÉ: No, I actually had no idea who Josh was.

[audience laughs]

HRISHI: And you still don't.

DULÉ: Yeah. No, I mean, I had no idea who he was. I mean, I just knew there's a new guy coming on the show named Josh Malina and I knew that he wasn't Rob Lowe.

[audience, Hrish, and Dulé laugh]

JOSH: And so did the rest of America!

[audience, Hrish, and Dulé laugh]

HRISHI: You know, when we talked about you joining the show, you know there'd only been a few episodes that had been filmed at that point, but you talked a little bit about the sense of intimidation that you felt coming into that cast and coming into that show. Was it important to you to sort of make sure that Josh also felt intimidated when he joined?

[audience, Dulé laugh]

DULÉ: Well, I mean if I'm being real then I knew there was no way that I, that Josh would feel intimidated 'cause I did know that he came from, you know, working with Aaron for many years. He was on *Sports Night* and I believe [audience whoops, applauds] ...yes, you see what I'm saying.

JOSH: Too late!

DULÉ: [laughs] And, it was like one of the movies, didn't you do one of the movies?

HRISHI: All of them!

DULÉ: All? Oh, so sorry.

JOSH: Until a certain point.

DULÉ: Yeah, yeah, so I knew that he was like a Sorkin player, so that, you know, you couldn't really intimidate him like that...

HRISHI: Mmm hmmm

DULÉ: You see what I'm sayin'? So for me, it was just a matter of just, like, getting a chance to know him and having a good time.

JOSH: I remember getting along very well very quickly with you. I remember that you were a kindred spirit in terms of joking people. I remember, and it now seems unprofessional looking back, but I remember pushing Steve the prop guy into a closet and locking him in it.

DULÉ: I do remember that! [audience laughs] I do remember that! [laughs]

JOSH: And we did that, and we conspired to lock a man, who's trying to do his job, into a closet.

[audience, Hrishu laugh]

DULÉ: I said, you know what? I think I'm gonna get along with [cross talk] this guy!

JOSH: [cross talk] I actually did that, yeah.

JOSH: One of my early memories, though, somebody else wanted to know, can anybody really play basketball?

DULÉ: Yes.

JOSH: Just you, though.

DULÉ: Well, no, I cannot play basketball.

JOSH: Oh, so who on the...

DULÉ: Martin Sheen can actually [cross talk] really play basketball.

JOSH: [Cross talk] Oh, yeah, actually that's right! Martin was decent.

DULÉ: Well, at least he's better than me. One of my most embarrassing moments on the show was when Martin Sheen beat me in a one-on-one basketball game. [audience laughs] I still have not gotten over that. [Josh laughs] You know what I mean?

JOSH: And the follow-up, the second question, was can any of these guys play poker? And I would say, "Dulé's the only other decent poker player on the show..."

DULÉ: Except, Josh Malina has systematically taken my money every time since he taught me how to play.

[audience, Josh laugh]

JOSH: Nah, I remember teaching you to play, it's a mild spoiler, but there are scenes that take place in and around Camp David [cross talk] in Season 6 or something like that...

DULÉ: [cross talk] Exactly.

DULÉ: I remember there were the cicadas, they were flying around [cross talk] while we were filming

JOSH: [cross talk] Yes. 'Cause I also remember a pregnant Mary McCormack being very sensitive about the cicadas and I went up behind her at one point with a little twig [audience, Dulé laugh] and I just barely touched her ear. And, again, this also seems unprofessional [audience, Dulé, and Josh laugh] and she burst into tears! [audience reacts with 'awwwwwww'] I was like, "It's not a cicada, it's a twig, ha ha ha ha..."

DULÉ: Welcome to being on set with Joshua Malina, ladies and gentlemen.

[audience laughs]

JOSH: But I remember playing head-to-head poker with you, kind of teaching you, I think at the time you weren't really much of a poker player. I said, "We'll play head-to-head, you'll learn, you have to play for real money because you don't make the same decisions if you're just playing for fun." I won a fair amount of money. [audience, Josh, and Hrishu laugh] I think it was 350 bucks, something like that. And then that night, I woke up in my hotel room, two in the morning, a phone call, and it's Dulé going, "Don't make me pay. Don't make me pay."

DULÉ: "Don't make me pay, Josh."

JOSH: "Don't make me pay." Just saying it over and over, and I was like [audience, Dulé laugh] I don't know this guy that well. Maybe he's [expletive deleted] crazy. [audience and Dulé laugh] [cross talk] But anyway...

DULÉ: [cross talk] I was like, "Josh, my family's from Jersey and Jamaica. Don't make me pay."

[audience, Hrishu laugh]

JOSH: We had a very good time.

DULÉ: I enjoyed it, I really enjoyed working with Josh. And one thing, and maybe I talked about it at the time that I was there, the first time I came on the show, but when you put the damn garbage can on top of my car.

JOSH: I did do that.

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: Yes.

JOSH: On a brand new car.

DULÉ: I mean, I kind of enjoyed it, and I also kind of hated it, you know what I mean? I respected it, you know, and [cross talk] despised it at the same time.

JOSH: [cross talk] I feel like it might have been traffic cones...

DULÉ: You see what I'm sayin'?

JOSH: And then I think I just wrote "Dumb" in shaving cream [cross talk] on your car.

DULÉ: [cross talk] Yes, you did, yes you did write "Dumb", yes you did, yes you did.

[audience laughs]

JOSH: I've learned, I've grown up. We've all grown up. You've watched me grow up on TV.
[audience laughs] From 35 to 52.

[audience, Dulé, and Hrishi laugh].

HRISHI: Well, in the spirit of Big Block of Cheese Day, we're not just going to be the only one asking questions. We're inviting members of the audience to come and ask questions as well. We've got a bunch of questions emailed in to us, so we're gonna jump right in.

JOSH: Yeah. Ok. So I guess there are stairs...

DULÉ: [says something unintelligible with food in his mouth]

JOSH: ...leading up to the –It's good, right? It's not bad.

DULÉ: I mean, yeah, my mouth is kinda stuffed right now, but...

JOSH: [cross talk] I may have cut –

DULÉ: [cross talk] It's kinda messed up asking me a question while you see I have cheese in my mouth, Josh.

[audience, Hrishi laughs]

JOSH: I may have cut unfeasibly large chunks. So, we're gonna ask first, Judy, and Michael and Courtney to come up. If you can make your way to the stage, there are stairs over here [audience applauds] Yay! Let's hear it for Judy and Michael and Courtney. [audience applauds] We got a lot of great questions. Everyone whose email we had, I sent queries out saying, "Tell us what you want to talk about, if you have any questions, if you have any wacky things a la Big Block of Cheese Day, we'll discuss it." And then...

DULÉ: I'm sorry, I just gotta say I'm still chewing this cheese. [audience, Hrishika laugh] Continue.

JOSH: It's Costco cheese, dude.

HRISHIKA: You were quite disappointed that we didn't get anyone writing in with alien conspiracy theories.

JOSH: Right. I wanted some, yeah, I wanted some wacky theories. We didn't get too many, but also a lot of people sent us questions in the last half-a-day. [audience laughs] People! [audience laughs] People! OK, who's coming up? Who's our first guest? Is that Michael and Courtney? Yaaaay!

[audience applauds]

HRISHIKA: Come on up.

JOSH: [cross talk] Please, grab a little cheese!

DULÉ: [cross talk] What's happenin', Michael and Courtney? How you doin'?

JOSH: Please, help yourself to a little cheese!

[audience laughs]

HRISHIKA: Courtney and Michael, will you tell us about yourselves? Tell us, really, we just want what you told us in the email that you sent.

MICHAEL: I guess I'll start by saying, you know, kinda how *The West Wing* has impacted me, that's really what a lot of the email was about. So, over six years ago, we were both going through a lot of stuff – back surgeries, wasn't able to walk, we had a six month old, lots of just craziness happening on top of... I was deep in my alcoholism. Deep. So, after the surgery, things just got real bad. I was stuck in a walker, wasn't able to walk, she had to help dress me, it was crazy! You know, shortly after that, the doctors had said if I didn't change my lifestyle, that, that I was gonna die. I literally had less than a year to live. So, at that point, I admitted myself to a rehabilitation center, and since then everything's been going great, much due to *The West Wing*. You know, once I first got sober, I didn't really know who I was. It was hard for me to figure out what my identity was going to be, 'cause alcohol was my life. So, I found *The West Wing* on Netflix, and started watching it, and was immediately drawn in. And, as you all know, sobriety is kind of a thing on the show, with Leo and the Vice President, as well as Aaron and his writing. You know, the show wouldn't be here without Aaron and he's from that territory, so the more I watched the show, it helped me to find out who I was because these were

characters, or the way these actors were portraying these characters, I wanted to be like them. They were funny, they were smart, industrious, and sober, some of them. [audience laughs] So I identified with that, and ever since then I've strived to be like that. It's even affected the way I talk. You know, [audience laughs] I say a lot of stuff nobody understands.

JOSH: Do you talk on the move? Mainly?

MICHAEL: Actually, lots of walk and talk.

DULÉ: She's like, "Stand still! Just stand still! Please!"

[audience laughs]

JOSH: That's actually an amazing story, and huge credit to Aaron [audience applauds] for – to you, and for Aaron to have created something and also, the fact is he dealt with similar issues in his life...

DULÉ: Right.

JOSH: ...and he takes his life, his writing is so invested with what he has lived and what he has experienced, and to even be a small part as an actor in something that inspires somebody or has an effect on someone's life to that extent is...

DULÉ: Humbling.

JOSH: Incredible.

MICHAEL: Absolutely.

DULÉ: And even I will say that, for example, you didn't mention it, but Martin Sheen is big into...

JOSH: That's true, too.

DULÉ: You know, AA and sobriety. The idea that it translates to you who watched the show, and, of course, our leader on the screen is Martin Sheen, who is a big advocate of it. He himself has battled that and overcame it. And so, I mean, telling the story, all I could help was think about was Martin.

MICHAEL: Wow, that's fantastic.

DULÉ: It's powerful how things will translate.

JOSH: And John Spencer, may he rest in peace, also lived it and you could see that that was a performance that came from deep within him, and really...

DULÉ: There was a lot of conversations on the set, I remember. I was a younger actor, but I remember a lot of conversations on the set about sobriety and AA, and... Is it the coins you get after a certain number of years?

JOSH: Chips?

DULÉ: Chips, yes. I mean, they would talk about it all the time.

MICHAEL: Yeah, yeah.

DULÉ: So, I'm glad we were able to be a part of something that, that helped [cross talk] in your journey but I'm also very proud of YOU for what you're doing.

JOSH: [cross talk] Speaking of which... it's not the same...

MICHAEL: Thank you. Say what? Six years sober, yeah.

DULÉ: Oh, look at that!

JOSH: There's your six year chip.

[audience applauds]

MICHAEL: Thank you very much.

HRISHI: Thank you both so much.

MICHAEL: Thank you so much.

JOSH: [cross talk] That was awesome.

DULÉ: [cross talk] And just so you know, I don't have one of those. I'm a little offended right now.

JOSH: Huh?

DULÉ: He gave it to me to give to somebody else. I don't have one of these things.

JOSH: You can get it for \$18 [audience laughs and applauds] at thewestwingweekly.com/merch.

HRISHI: I think Martin Sheen, in fact, we've had Melissa Fitzgerald on the show and she's doing amazing work with Justice For Vets...

DULÉ: Yes, she is.

HRISHI: I believe that it was Martin Sheen who got her involved in that. He's the one who told her about the drug treatment courts.

DULÉ: Right. He sure enough did. Martin is... Every time I talk about Martin I can never find the right words to say how much I admire him because he puts his whole being where his mouth is. What his beliefs are, he really follows it up with action. He doesn't just inspire in terms of what he does, he inspires others to get involved also. And seeing what Melissa has done with Justice for Vets is unbelievably impressive. I was just out in Philadelphia with her in the fall and I actually went to a graduation in Judge Dugan's court, and it was just overwhelming the good work that these veteran treatment courts are doing. I'm really in awe of what we can do as

citizens, in the criminal justice system what they can do when we just lead with our heart instead of just getting into this rigid thing of prosecution, prosecution, prosecution! I'm in awe of Melissa Fitzgerald, I'm in awe of Justice for Vets, and I'm in awe of all the veterans who take the steps over. And I'm definitely not in awe of Josh Malina!

[audience, Josh, Dulé, Hrishi laugh]

JOSH: He's got good peripheral vision. He saw me going...

HRISHI: Well, let's bring up our next special guest. Another one of our favorite podcasters, and another member of Radiotopia, much like *The Memory Palace* and *The West Wing Weekly*, please welcome our favorite etymologist, Helen Zaltzman from *The Allusionist*.

[audience applause, cheers]

JOSH: Heeyyyyy!

HRISHI: You may have heard Helen on our show before, we were promoting *The Allusionist*, and she did, not really for any reason, she did the etymology of the word "Impeach."

[audience, Josh laugh]

JOSH: Just a random, we just opened the book, and...

[audience laughs]

HRISHI: Yeah. And so today we thought we would ask Helen for some background on some other words that have been in our mind recently. [audience laughs] One that I've been thinking about...

JOSH: Can we guess? [laughs]

HRISHI: Do you just need to like, talk about some stuff that's going on with you? We can just turn this into counseling if that's what it...

[audience, Josh laugh]

HRISHI: Well, here's a word that's relative to *The West Wing*. If you remember when the president reveals the truth about his MS, he gets censured by Congress. [audience member whoops] And, again, just for some reason I've been thinking about censure.

DULÉ: Is that a good thing? I don't know...

[audience, Josh laugh]

HRISHI: [laughing] Someone was cheering for Bartlet's censure!

[audience, Hrishi, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: No, I think that was, but, that was a transitive law thing.

HRISHI: Yeah.

[audience member whoops]

JOSH: I think someone was connecting some dots.

HRISHI: Anyway, I've been thinking about censure a lot, so...[audience, Hrish, Dulé laugh]
Helen, can you tell us about the word censure and where it comes from?

HELEN: Yeah, well, it's basically the same word as censor, as in it's not the same kind of censor that puts black marks through words that you're not allowed to use in all the documents, not like a 1984 type of thing. It was originally a Roman magistrate who oversaw various things, including public morals. I thought, "That would be so useful now." [audience, Josh, Hrish laugh]
Where do we get one? Last seen in 5 B.C.

[audience, Hrish laugh]

HRISHI: Who would you elect for the Magistrate of Morals? [laughs]

HELEN: Well...

DULÉ : [whispers] Not Josh Malina.

[audience, Hrish laugh]

HELEN: I think...

JOSH: Whaaat?!

HELEN: I think Allison Janney would do a great job.

[audience applauds, Dulé cheers, laughs]

HRISHI: That's a good idea!

JOSH: I hope this is only if you have to choose from *The West Wing* cast.

HELEN: No.

JOSH: Oh, just the entire world?

HELEN: Yeah, sorry.

[Josh, Dulé laugh]

HRISHI: And, Josh, you had a choice word you were thinking about.

JOSH: Oh, I wanted to [laughs], I was curious about the origin of the word [expletive deleted]hole.

[audience laughs, applauds, whistles]

HELEN: Well, the etymology of [expletive deleted]hole is very interesting. It derives from the word [expletive deleted], which means [expletive deleted], [Josh laughs] and hole [Josh laughs], which means hole.

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: Deep. That's deep.

HELEN: Yeah, it's a really deep hole. [audience, Dulé laugh] But, I'm ashamed to say I learned something in researching this, because I'd always thought, "Oh, [expletive deleted]hole, that's just like a horrible open latrine type of place to reference."

JOSH: Actually, what I really want to know is where did you research this? [Josh, audience laugh] I just know where I would have looked. [Dulé laughs]

HELEN: But, it has had that meaning since World War I, a place that is a [expletive deleted]hole. But, I'm so innocent, to everybody else, for the last 400 years it has meant the whole whence [expletive deleted] comes. [audience laughs] So, your [expletive deleted]pipes.

HRISHI: Ahhhhhhhh...

HELEN: Did everyone know this except for me?

[audience responds]

HRISHI: I didn't know.

HELEN: What a mug. I'm ashamed of myself. [audience laughs] But, the first written citation of [expletive deleted]hole is from a saucy poem in the year 1629. [audience reacts in surprise] And, it's basically a writer, a cathedral musician, so you would think not somebody who would write an alliterative poem which is just different phrases about [expletive deleted]-ing into someone's mouth.

[audience, Hrish, Josh, Dulé react and laugh].

HRISHI: Jeeez...

HELEN: But he did!

JOSH: Sorry, kids. [audience laughs] They say it on CNN, it's all fair game now.

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: This has really taken a turn...

JOSH: Yeah.

[audience, Dulé laugh]

HELEN: It's educational. I went to Oxford. [audience, Josh, Dulé, Hrishi laugh]
Five flushing farts did I flap in thy face,
That I flung from my fist hole.
Six [expletive deleted]ing [expletive deleted]s did I shoot in thy mouth,
That I shot from my [expletive deleted]hole. [audience laughs]

HRISHI: [laughing] What year is that from?

HELEN: That's from 1629.

JOSH: Christmastime?

HELEN: Well, it'd be a wonderful greetings card, wouldn't it?

[audience, Hrishi laugh]

HRISHI: And of course, it made its first appearance in a Thanksgiving episode of *The West Wing*, famously titled, "Shitthoeth."

[audience, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: Awww, niiiiice!

DULÉ: Duh-dun-duhnt

HRISHI: He's giving me thumbs up, he was clapping! I do it for you, my friend.

JOSH: Row 2, Center, likes it!

DULÉ: See, here's what I want to see now, see? Back when I used to do *West Wing*, Allison used to teach me all these...

JOSH: Way to work in that you were on *The West Wing*.

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: Yes, I don't know if you all, I don't know if you all knew [audience still laughing] I did a show called *The West Wing*, was on for like seven seasons, not a big show at all, you know...but, no, no, Allison used to teach me, like, all these articulators to warm up my mouth before I would say all these, all the Sorkin words and things like that. And one of them was, "Are you copper-bottoming them my man? No, I'm aluminiuming them ma'am!" That was one of them, from Allison. She had a whole bunch of them, right? But what I want to see next time you have Allison on here is for Allison to repeat that same poem. [audience, Josh laugh] That's what I want to see!

JOSH: As a warm up exercise!

DULÉ: I want Allison Janney to say that poem as a warm-up exercise. [Hrishi laughs]

HELEN: Ten tough turds ... [Josh, Hrishi, Dulé laugh] that I toss in thy teeth [audience laughs]

DULÉ: [laughing] EXACTLY!

HELEN: You can have fun with this at home, just choose a consonant and make it work.
[audience, Dulé, Josh laugh] It just has to end in hole. That's the only constraint, and begin with a number.

HRISHI: Amazing!

JOSH: My son was just looking for a poem to bring into class, too. [audience, Dulé laugh] And he went with like a four line, Dr. Seuss thing. I was like, "Dude. This is tenth grade." He's like, "She said we could do it." [audience, Helen, Hrishu laugh] I wish I had had that at the ready.

DULÉ: Awwww, that's funny.

HELEN: Valentine's Day's coming up.

[audience, Josh, Hrishu, Dulé laugh]

HRISHI: Ladies and gentlemen, Helen Zaltzman of *The Allusionist*.

JOSH: Yay!

[audience applause]

JOSH: The cheese is just not moving. You know when it's like the waiter is really pushing the special? I would really like to recommend the Peccorino Romano tonight. [audience laughs]
Anybody comes up here, please give it a try.

HRISHI: We'd like to invite Neesha, Kyle, and Seth, if they are here.

JOSH: Kyle? I'm getting you cheese.

[audience laughs]

KYLE: Nice to meet you.

DULÉ: Wouldn't we all love to have just like Josh Malina at our house every day to get us cheese? That'd be nice, you know what I mean?

[Hrishu laughs]

HRISHI: Kyle, tell us about yourself. Where are you from?

KYLE: Well, I'm originally from Los Angeles, California. And now I live in Berkeley, California.
[members of audience cheer] A lot of people from the East Bay!

[more audience cheers, Kyle laughs].

HRISHI: Kyle, tell us what you told us in your email.

KYLE: Sure. So...

JOSH: [yells from the side] How are you with gluten?

[audience, Dulé, Hrishi laugh]

KYLE: I guess I'll start this is a bad time to admit though I am gluten tolerant, I am lactose intolerant. [audience laughs, applauds] Good call, good call.

JOSH: [laughing] Apropos of which, quick story. I'm also...Jewish fella? [audience laughs, applauds] I've never mentioned on the podcast, I, too, am Jewish. [audience laughter, whoops] And, I, fairly lactose intolerant myself, and there is a Baskin Robbins flavor that is available only seasonally, eggnog ice cream. Have you ever had it? Baskin Robbins eggnog? It's [sound of kissing fingers] mwah! It's exquisite. As a kid, my parents used to buy the container from which they sell it at the store, it's three gallons. We had a dedicated freezer just for that, 'cause you could only get it once a year. [Josh laughs] I can't believe I'm telling this story... lactose intolerance. Thanksgiving, my daughter's seven, so it's 13 years ago; I get a half-gallon of this ice cream for dessert, because I know my dad will like it. We're having [Josh laughs] dessert at my sister-in-law's house, my dad and I are eating it out of a half-gallon, [Josh laughs] a half-gallon container, my seven-year-old daughter walks down the stairs, sees us, and she says [Josh laughs] to everybody, "Oh, great, looks like it's gonna be another night of diarrhea and whining!" [audience applauds and laughs, Hrishi, Dulé laugh] Half the people at this party I had never met before, I think. I've never been more embarrassed. Take it away...

[audience laughs, applauds]

KYLE: That is quite a segue to talk about my childhood. [Hrishi, Dulé laugh] So, what I talked about in my email was that I was very interested in politics from a very young age. In fact, the first campaign I volunteered for was in the year 2000. I was 11. For those of you who are from Los Angeles, I was working for, or volunteering for the local Gore-Lieberman office and stood on Ventura Boulevard with a sign that said, "Honk if you're gonna vote for Al Gore." [Josh laughs] And for most people they would feel that...

JOSH: He won the popular honk.

[audience laughs]

KYLE: Yes! Really, of the 2000's. And most people would have thought that this was such a cop-out to give an 11-year-old and you'd get frustrated standing on a major thoroughfare in the Valley, in fall, but I'm a crazy person and that was the most amazing experience up until then...

JOSH: How, as an 11-year-old...? How did it even come into your head to...?

KYLE: I had a really amazing sixth grade social science teacher who wanted us to get involved in the upcoming election. She gave a very rudimentary background of the two major political parties in this country. For me, it was very clear that Al Gore was the right person to be president [audience member whoops] and anybody who didn't see that as well was a crazy person...

JOSH: Can we give your teacher a shout-out by name?

KYLE: Yes! Mrs. Barbara Braemer of Lindero Middle School in Agoura Hills, California.

[audience applauds]

JOSH: Yeah!

DULÉ: All right now!

JOSH: That is very *West Wing*.

KYLE: Yes. I will say I am nothing without the Las Virgenes Unified School District. If anyone...

[audience member whoops]

JOSH: Mmm-hmmm.

DULÉ: Look at that! You see what I'm saying? [cross talk] Las Virgenes in the house!

JOSH: [cross talk] LIAR!

KYLE: So from that moment, I knew I wanted to work in politics. At the same time, *The West Wing* had already been on for a season, and to see on TV a group of people who made their lives just focused on trying to make people's lives better was unbelievable to me, and to think that "Oh my god, I can have a career out of this." So I went and was very involved in politics. I worked for a local government in my hometown. I worked on more campaigns. I went to undergrad, studying Political Science at the University of California at Davis. Any other Aggies? [audience members cheer] I made the unfortunate choice to go to law school [Josh laughs], graduated. And during law school I actually became familiar with an organization called J Street.

JOSH: WOOOO! I like it.

KYLE: That's-

JOSH: Yeah. I'll wooo.

KYLE: I appreciate your wooo. And at a conference in Washington, D.C., Vice President Biden spoke at this gathering of this organization, and the more I read about this organization, the more I knew that I had to work for them. And so I've been working for J Street since April of 2015. And, class of April 2015?

[audience applauds]

JOSH: Wait on...in a second you'll find out what J Street is.

HRISHI: And then you can applaud.

KYLE: So, J Street is the, as we say, the political home for pro-Israel, pro-peace Americans, who believe in a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, via two states for two peoples.

[audience applauds]

JOSH: Yes.

KYLE: Thank you! It's very nice to have an auditorium clap for you. I really...

JOSH: Right?!

KYLE: I really recommend it.

JOSH: You should have gone into acting! [audience, Kyle laugh] We get it all the time.

KYLE: So, you know we're working really hard at the upcoming 2018 elections. We want to send to Congress, we want to create what we're calling a bulwark against the far-right foreign policy of the current administration and the people who are empowered by him. So, I would say one race that we're really looking at and very involved in is... Anybody familiar with Senator Ted Cruz? He's this guy, from Texas...

[audience boos, hisses]

JOSH: But UC Davis! WOOWOOO! [audience woos, Kyle laughs] I just wanted to get you back.

[audience laughs]

KYLE: So, everything that Ted Cruz is bad on domestic policy, he's even worse on foreign policy, especially for progressive values in foreign policy, like diplomacy first, a two-state solution. So, his opponent is a guy named Congressman Beto O'Rourke, who's from... [audience cheers]. I'm sure he's really happy that all these people are supporting him. We need more people to support him, and J Street as an organization has worked with him since his first campaign, I believe, in 2012. 2010 or 2012? And we are, we actually, take members of Congress to Israel and the Palestinian territories. And he went on one of these delegations and was so moved, and became very much a leader on Capitol Hill for this issue. I work with candidates like him, I work with current members of Congress, and work with leaders all across this country, many in the Bay Area. And advocate to the people that we send to Congress to say that there is a great constituency for peace out there, that we believe that we should put our progressive values not just on domestic issues but on foreign policy. We believe that the Middle East should be a safer place. And that the United States is very unique to have such an important role in foreign policy that we must use whatever might that we might have to influence the Israelis and Palestinians coming together and reaching a peaceful resolution so they can live side by side in peace and security.

JOSH: Awesome.

[audience applauds]

DULÉ: I love it.

JOSH: I love an organization like J Street that is dedicated to the proposition that being pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian are not mutually exclusive.

[audience applauds]

KYLE: It's very true.

JOSH: And that Jewish, American Jewish thought on Israel is not monolithic.

KYLE: No. In fact, our most recent polling show that still the overall majority of American Jews support two states for two peoples. The overwhelming majority of American Jews support the Iran nuclear deal, which is something we worked really hard to support. Which is another thing that Ted Cruz hates. So, if you like Iran not having a nuclear weapon, you should really support Beto O'Rourke.

[audience members cheer]

HRISHI: And how can people learn more about J Street?

KYLE: Go to www.jstreet.org and you can learn all about the ways to get involved, and you can connect with the local staff in the Bay Area. I'm one of them, so if you want to get involved you can just talk to me. But another thing I'll make a plug for, and I brought an invitation, that everyone can have is that we are having our 10th Anniversary Conference in Washington, D.C., where you can hear from people who work in Israel and the Palestinian territories, about the amazing work that they do building peace there. You can hear from elected officials who see J Street as a resource on this issue. And hear from people running for office. It's a really amazing event. I believe we're going to have over 4,000; it's going to be the largest conference ever for our 10th Anniversary.

JOSH: That's fantastic.

[audience applause]

HRISHI: And that's in April.

JOSH: I encourage you to take the cheese with you and offer it to a righteous gentile in your row.

[audience laughs]

KYLE: Will do. Thank you.

HRISHI: Thanks so much, Kyle.

JOSH: Thanks, Kyle, that was awesome.

[audience applauds]

JOSH: All right. You've waited really patiently, thank you. Come on up! How are you with lactose?

[audience laughs]

HRISHI: Tell us who you are.

NEESHA: [cross talk] My name is Neesha...

DULÉ: [cross talk] I like your purple boots.

NEESHA: It matches your shirt.

DULÉ: You see what I'm sayin'? That's how we doin'.

[audience, Neesha laugh]

NEESHA: All right. I grew up in New York by way of Boston. [audience members whoop] So, shout out to Boston! And I live in San Jose now.

HRISHI: And you have a question for Dulé, right?

NEESHA: I do. I wanted to know which cast member, maybe Josh, maybe not, caused you to kinda up your game or gave you the best advice.

DULÉ: Well, concerning Josh, I will say maybe not. [audience laughs] It's just too easy, you know what I'm sayin'? First of all, all of the cast, I was so blessed to work with every last one of the actors on this show. They're all phenomenal artists, and me being a young actor coming onto the show I really saw what it meant to really bring your A-Game every day. And even though you knock it out of the park on Monday, how to raise it up to go even further on Tuesday and Wednesday – and Thursday, and Friday. There was a scene between John Spencer and Martin Sheen, and I believe it was in "Bartlet for America" and it was like, "Let Bartlet Be Bartlet" was on the napkin? [female off mic says "yes"]. Laura Innes directed the episode. And I actually learned more in that moment from Laura being the director than anybody else. 'Cause Martin and John had, did this scene, and they were phenomenal when they first came and did it the first take. They were at each other's throats and going at it, and I was like, "Man! These cats are acting! They're doin' it!" And Laura just, continuously, each take, pulled away the layers, so it became very simple and very...it was like a rumbling underneath instead of it being all extra. And by the end it was such a phenomenal scene that I was really blown away.

NEESHA: Wow.

DULÉ: And, then, for example, Martin Sheen would always tell me, "Never let them see you cry." He said, in life, we never really, like most people don't try to just throw their emotions out, they're always fighting against. When something is affecting them, something is hurting them, we're always fighting against it. And that's what is interesting. So when you're doing a scene, hold that. Like, fight against it. And then Aaron Sorkin, when Miss Landingham had died...

[audience awwwws]

JOSH: SPOILER ALERRRRRRRRRT!

[audience, Dulé laugh]

DULÉ: Yes, for Kathryn Joosten, I, I do miss her. So, yes, for Kathryn Joosten. But, I'm like, you know, Mrs. Landingham in that moment didn't really die, you know what I'm sayin'? [audience laughs] But no, we were filming this scene, and first when I did the scene, I was like, [talks while pretending to cry] "You know, Mrs. Landingham died." I was trying to be all emotional about it, and Aaron came and said, "No. You've been through so much, your mother has died, you grew up in D.C., you've seen things, you seen death all the time, you're numb to this at this point, so just say it." And I took that note in. And then, lastly, I will say that just seeing Allison Janney work every day. I mean, [audience whoops, applauds] I learned so...

JOSH: You mean the American Secretary of Censorship?

[audience, Dulé laugh]

DULÉ: I learned so much just from seeing her do her work every day. She's so subtle with it, so grounded, so easy with it. And I would just take that in and try to pull what I can and try to apply it to myself. But it really was a group effort, but those are the specific things that I can really recall that affected my work that I do now.

JOSH: That is good advice. I feel like I've gotten similar advice about how it's more interesting to watch someone fight an emotion that's creeping up on them to overtake them, than to just give in to it. Although, occasionally, you work on some things that aren't as good as *The West Wing*, and it's like, "No, the stage direction says you're crying here." [some audience, Hrishi, Dulé, laugh] I'm like, "I don't really do that." [audience, Hrishi, Dulé laugh] And that's when you go to makeup and they have this thing, they have a little thing, and I always go, "Can you blow some talent into my eyes?" [audience, Dulé laugh] 'Cause there's some sort of like, it looks like a lipstick but it's an eye irritant, and they blow it in and then all of the sudden you start crying and like [unintelligible words while faking crying]. [audience, Dulé, Hrishi laugh] Look how good I am! But, yeah, I think better [Josh chuckles] better project its more about the wrestling with emotion.

DULÉ: And I was a very young actor when I was on. I came on the show, it was my first TV series, so I just, I was taking it all in, from every last one of the phenomenal artists who was on the show, and Josh Malina.

[audience laughs, Dulé REALLY laughs]

JOSH: Someone's gotta be the whipping boy. [Dulé laughs] So be it.

[Dulé, Hrishi laugh]

DULÉ: Yeah, I loved every last one of the actors on the show and I learned so much from each and every one of them.

JOSH: [to Neesha} Do you act? What do you do?

NEESHA: I don't. I'm so far from acting. I'm a financial...genius, I guess.

[Josh REALLY laughs, audience, Dulé and Hrishi laugh]

DULÉ: Now, look at that, look at that!

NEESHA: I'm a stable one!

JOSH: That was another word we considered having Helen take a go at.

[Dulé, audience still laughing]

HRISHI: You seem like a stable financial genius.

JOSH: Yes.

NEESHA: I'm pretty nerdy. I'm a financial analyst.

JOSH: Right-o.

DULÉ: All right.

JOSH: What do you, what do you think of bitcoin?

[audience laughs]

NEESHA: I literally know nothing about Bitcoin.

JOSH: Me neither, but I'm invested!

[audience, Hrishu laugh]

DULÉ: Hence, why you have a financial genius...and Josh Malina.

[audience, Josh, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: If I can't retire on my 1.65 Bitcoins, I'm in trouble.

[Hrishu, Dulé laugh]

HRISHI: Neesha, thank you so much!

DULÉ: Nice to meet you.

JOSH: Awesome, thank you!

[Audience applause]

HRISHI: And I like your t-shirt a lot.

JOSH: Who's next?

SETH: I thought it had been too long since a Jewish guy in glasses was in this chair [Josh REALLY laughs, audience laughs] so, another...it's consistency.

DULÉ: [cross talk] So, what do you take me for?

JOSH: [cross talk] I didn't know when I pick people to come up. I had no idea!

HRISHI: Please introduce yourself.

JOSH: Yeah...

SETH: My name is Seth. I'm originally from the Bay Area, shout out to Mountain View [audience whoohoos]. That's my sister, by the way; Hi Mel. [audience, Josh laugh] But I currently live in Portland, Oregon. In my email I had a story involving Josh, but I suppose I should start with my origin story [cross talk] as a *West Wing* fan.

JOSH: [cross talk] Please!

SETH: I had always known I wanted to be a writer, and when there was a show that came out that depicted the kind of writing that I loved, I knew I would watch it. And, in fact, I was attending Hebrew school...

JOSH: YEAAHH!

[audience laughs]

SETH: ...on Wednesday nights...

JOSH: YEEEEAAHHH!!

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: I've been there, I've been there.

[Josh laughs]

SETH: Yeah, you know what that is. Those are long nights. [Dulé laughs] This was the rare post-bar mitzvah Hebrew School. This was [cross talk] Hebrew high.

JOSH: [cross talk] Awwww, man...

SETH: Wednesday nights. It was a staple watching it with my family, and Hebrew High was...

JOSH: I love that movie.

SETH: ...two classes, two periods [audience laughs]. Yeah...

DULÉ: I was getting ready to say that's your next TV show, Josh. [Josh laughs] [cross talk] Josh Malina in "Hebrew High".

JOSH: [cross talk] Available mid-March, available mid-March.

[Dulé laughs]

SETH: There are only two classes in Hebrew High, but my buddy Josh, who's also in the audience, and I would cut second period, second class, to go home to watch *The West Wing*, to

my parents' house. They were aware we were cutting Hebrew High [Josh laughs], but it was to watch *The West Wing* with them anyway...

JOSH: What year would this be?

SETH: This was, '99, 2000?

JOSH: Oh. You were in utero?

SETH: Uh yes, but no, I-yes. I look younger than I am.

JOSH: You look young.

SETH: Actually, I'm not sure what year it was. But, the, in any case...No, I was younger than that. It reminded me of a movie I saw on a second date, when I was in 7th grade. The first date I went on was a movie called *Powder*, which I spent the whole time, I didn't quite connect to it. I was nervous about what to do with this girl next to me, do I hold her hand? Do I put my arm around her shoulder? The second movie we saw was *The American President*. [audience cheers] I spend the entire time focused on the movie. It did not make that date go very well, but I was in 7th grade, what chance did I have anyway? [Hrishi, Josh laugh] But I do remember Michael J. Fox's Lewis Rothschild putting in my brain the idea of a speechwriter. Speechwriter's a thing that existed. And then, of course, later in *The West Wing*, speech writing, yet again...obviously this turned out to not be a coincidence, and today I'm a speechwriter because of those things.

[audience applauds]

HRISHI: All Right!

JOSH: For whom?

SETH: For a time, in my first speechwriting job, was in the Obama administration. I was Secretary, or I was [Seth laughs] the speechwriter for the...thanks, Mel! [Josh laughs] His Secretaries of Commerce. See, I remember this because this is the famous third cabinet that Rick Perry forgot on stage.

JOSH: Right.

SETH: That was us, the Commerce Department. And now I've moved to the private sector, working for a sports company in Portland.

DULÉ: All right!

JOSH: A sports company, I bet it's a big one.

[audience, Dulé laugh]

SETH: There's only so many.

JOSH: Just do it. Am I right?

[audience laughs]

SETH: Got close. The audience can see what I'm wearing, if that helps.

JOSH: OK, yeah. I did that without looking.

SETH: Yeah, that's not bad. You're a pro.

JOSH: But we've met before.

SETH: We have met before, yes.

JOSH: Right.

SETH: Yes.

JOSH: As have ALL Jews!

SETH: Yes, exactly, yes. [audience, Dulé laugh] I actually attended a New Year's party, and the host of the party, who knew I was Jewish and not much else, we're friends, I guess, he said, "Oh, do you know my friend? He's also Jewish." And we grew up on the same street together! So, now, we're "All Jews know each other."

JOSH: Sure.

SETH: OK. So, in the early aughts, I was a member of something called the Aaron Sorkin Yahoo Listserv. [audience member woohoo] Really? All right. On it, people would email each other links to articles and interviews and their own stories, if they had met someone or had been on set for whatever reason. It's kind of, I've been thinking about it, since I sent the email mentioning it, it's kind of a relic of an Internet gone by. It's totally devoid of insult or irony, it's just these passionate fans who just wanted to hear what the next episode was going to be about, or maybe they were filming somewhere. So, one day, I'm at college, and the Northwestern Hillel, Hillel being a Jewish student organization, for those who may not know.

JOSH: YEAAAHHH!

[audience, Dulé laugh]

SETH: This is a truly Jewish podcast, as it turns out. I didn't really appreciate that...they announced that one Josh Malina was coming to campus. And in my...

JOSH: This is a sideline that I have that my dear friend Ajay Sehgal, calls, "Telling Jews they're right for money."

[audience laughs]

SETH: Yes. We love it, we love it. [audience, Dulé laugh] It beats the alternative. So, in my excitement of this news, I upon purchasing the ticket, which had, you know, "Behind the Scenes

Stories – Josh Malina,” I went to the Aaron Sorkin Yahoo Listserv and emailed the group to say this was happening and if he said anything of note I would share the story. So the day comes and Josh takes the stage, stands by the lectern and says he’s in a spot of trouble. You see, he had prepared a talk on the state of Israel and what it was like to be a practicing Jew in Hollywood, but it turns out that he had read somewhere that this was supposed to be “Behind the Scenes at *The West Wing*” and [audience laughs] he had not prepared for that. [Josh laughs] But, of course, it went over very well; he was very funny and thoughtful. And, afterwards, he was kind enough, you were kind enough to sign autographs for us in the lobby. I do remember that you were signing your headshot, your glossy, black and white, 8x10 [audience laughs] headshot, which was precious.

[audience, Josh and Dulé laugh]

JOSH: It’s bad enough from Dulé, but I’ve met this guy once!

DULÉ: I knew I liked him, I knew I liked him!

SETH: It’s infectious!

JOSH: The second time I met him, I’m [cross talk] getting shit from him.

SETH: [cross talk] I recommend it, if you can get this close to him, you can. So, I couldn’t help but ask how you knew that... What the title of what this talk was? And you confirmed my suspicion that it was the Aaron Sorkin Yahoo Listserv.

[audience, Josh laugh]

JOSH: I was a subscriber!

[audience laughs]

SETH: Sure, yeah!

[audience laughs]

JOSH: I wanted to see if they said anything about me.

SETH: So, I fessed up to having written that email and on your headshot you signed “To Seth, thanks for ruining my speech. Josh Malina”

[audience, Josh, and Dulé laugh] [audience applauds]

JOSH: That is a good story. I am going to send you another that says, “Thanks for insulting me at the live event.”

[audience, Dulé, and Seth laugh]

SETH: Consider it framed.

JOSH: That was awesome.

HRISHI: Now we're going to take a quick break.

[sponsor ads]

HRISHI: We have another question. We're going to invite James, is James here?

DULÉ: You tryin' to be slick, but here's the problem. Here's the problem... I saw the sheet in the wings.

[Hrishi laughs]

JOSH: OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

HRISHI: Ohhhhhh nooooooooooooo!

DULÉ: Come on, man, [cross talk] you can't try to get me like that, man!

JOSH: [cross talk] We blocked it out!

HRISHI: [cross talk] We blocked it out.

JOSH: That's you! [cross talk] That's on you!

DULÉ: [cross talk] You can't get me like that! Come on, son!

HRISH: OK, well, for everyone else...

DULÉ: Come on, son! You can't get me like that!

JOSH: All right, James Roday!

HRISHI: James Roday!

[audience applauds, everyone laughs, audience applauds more]

DULÉ: I saw the sheet right in the wing. I was like, "James Roday? There's only one James Roday."

HRISH: Here's what happened. We have this sheet of paper that's the rundown for the show. And we printed out a few copies, one for me, one for Josh, and one for the House. And in the one for the House, we blocked out, or I took a Sharpie and crossed out "James Roday" so Dulé wouldn't know, because it was supposed to be a surprise...

DULÉ: There's one right over there in the wings, right before I came out. I was like, "James Roday?"

HRISHI: And Josh left his paper somewhere.

[audience member yells, "NO!" and audience reacts, laughs]

HRISHI: James, do you have any questions for Dulé about *The West Wing*?

[audience, Dulé laugh]

JAMES: Sorry, Charlie. It's...I got...

[audience laughs]

JOSH: Ohhhh! Let's talk about *Psych*! [audience, Hrishi cheer, applaud] Let's talk about my episode. Nah, I'm just kidding.

JAMES: You wore a diaper.

JOSH: I...you made me...yeah, exactly. I'm like, "Great! I got a job through my friend, Dulé!" "Oh, you gotta wear a diaper, and we're going to stick you in a wheelbarrow, and [cross talk] we're going to put a wolf's pelt on you..."

DULÉ: [cross talk] I mean, you, you put trash on my car; I had to get you back in some way.

[audience, Hrishi laugh]

JOSH: You play a long game, long ball.

JAMES: You were the only grown man to wear a diaper on that show.

JOSH: That's true. [laughs] And I still do to this day.

DULÉ: So, here's another little *West Wing/Psych* trivia. There's an episode where, near the end of the series, Season 8, I think it was, where Gus was having some sleep nightmares. And I wake up in the middle of my nightmare, which I think it's now reality, and I walk into the kitchen, and my mom is Phylicia Rashad, and as I'm going to there, to the kitchen I see...

JOSH: [to the tune of "Feliz Navidad"] Phylicia Rashad, da da da da dum, Phylicia Rashad...

DULÉ: I'm telling a story, Josh.

[audience laughs]

JOSH: I just love that song.

DULÉ: I walk and I see a picture of my dad, and I turn to it and I go, "Papa?" And Papa is Martin Sheen.

[audience applauds, Hrishi laughs]

JAMES: Eight years we spent, trying to get him to come up and do the show.

DULÉ: Yes.

JAMES: And we got a framed 5x7 photograph.

[audience, Josh, Hrishi, Dulé laugh]

HRISHI: Dulé, for a little while you were doing double duty between *Psych* and *The West Wing*, is that right?

DULÉ: No. Not really, I mean it was the last season.

HRISHI: Right.

DULÉ: During the last season of the show...well, I guess that was double duty.

[audience laughs]

HRISH: I know what I'm talking about!

DULÉ: During the last season, while we were filming the last season of the show, I did the pilot of *Psych*. So in the fall, I think that there are a few episodes, and then I went to Vancouver and did the pilot of *Psych*, and then came back and finished *West Wing*. And then by the time I was coming back finishing *West Wing*, *Psych* was picked up. So, I finished *West Wing* in April of 2006, and I started... as soon as we finished I went up to Vancouver maybe like a week later, and started *Psych* in May of 2006. That's how it went.

HRISH: And did the two of you know each other before that pilot was shot?

JAMES: I thought I knew him because I thought he was Omar Epps. [audience, Josh, Dulé, and Hrish laugh] I didn't actually think that. I had never met him before.

JOSH: Did you audition for it?

DULÉ: I did.

JOSH: Right. And you were already on the...It was your show.

JAMES: Well, I had already been cast. I had already got... I had already been cast. [Josh, Hrish, audience laugh] No, Dulé came in to test, which is what they call it when they have their final few choices in, and it's very conducive to doing good work. They put them all in one room together.

[audience laughs]

JOSH: But the worst thing about it is when you test as an actor, for a series, you sign, generally, a six-and-a-half-year contract, binding contract, before you go to the final audition. So that you can't realize that they, you know, they can't say, "We want you," and then you start negotiating. You have to negotiate when you're one of, like, four people. It's not good, but that's how it works.

DULÉ: And a little six degrees of separation, one of the exec producers of *Psych*, Chris Henze, is Allison Janney's manager.

JOSH: Enough with Allison Janney!

[audience laughs]

DULÉ: Hey, I love Allison Janney!

JOSH: She's greeaaaaaaaaat.

DULÉ: I love Allison Janney! Am I the only one in here? [audience woohoos, applauds] Thank you! Thank you!

JAMES: He immediately gave us street cred when he came on board *Psych*. We were like this little show on a fledgling cable network that didn't really have an identity yet. And I was, nobody knew who I was, and Corbin Bernsen had, had some success in the mid-80s...

[audience laughs]

JOSH: Wow, the mid-80s is just a laugh line. That whole decade [Dulé laughs], that whole era.

JAMES: He was the Sexiest Man Alive, once upon a time.

JOSH: That's right.

JAMES: But Dulé came on board, and all of the sudden we had a... what do they call the...?

JOSH: Black guy?

[audience, Dulé laugh]

JAMES: Yeah. We had a black guy [cross talk] to put on the poster, and...

DULÉ: [cross talk] This is what it's like working with Josh Malina, everybody.

JOSH: We got street cred now.

[audience, Dulé, James laugh]

DULÉ: Josh Malina, everybody...

[audience, Dulé laugh]

JAMES: No, the things where they nominate people for television.

JOSH: Oh, Emmys, sure.

JAMES: The Emmys! Sure, yeah. [audience, Josh laugh] I wouldn't know anything about that...

JOSH: Nor, I.

[audience laughs]

JAMES: But, he had been there, he had been to the ceremony, and all of the sudden we felt like a semi-legitimate basic cable television show.

DULÉ: You know, we used to have a wonderful time; we were nominated all the time on *The West Wing*. The first four seasons, [cross talk] we really were nominated.

JOSH: [cross talk] Here we go...

[audience, Dulé, Hrishu laugh]

JOSH: Oh I know, I know where this is heading!

[Dulé laughing, audience applauding]

DULÉ : Naw, I mean, it was a crazy streak, four years in a row, then I don't know what happened Season 5, it just...

[audience, Josh laugh]

JOSH: Richard Schiff turned to me one day, apropos of nothing, and said, "We used to win awards." [Hrishu, Dulé, audience laugh] Thanks.

HRISHU: You did a chemistry test, was it the two of you together?

JAMES: We did.

DULÉ: Yes.

JAMES: We did.

JOSH: There's nothing worse than doing a chemistry test, often it's with a potential romantic partner on a show, and then... not getting the job. [Josh, audience laugh] It's like, "Oop, you didn't have any. We're keeping her."

DULÉ: I believe there were three other people who did that, and did not...

JOSH: Name them!

DULÉ: ...did not, did not get the job. What?

JOSH: Name them! [audience, Dulé laugh] Omar Epps, and two others.

[Hrishu, Dulé, audience laugh]

DULÉ: I'm not going to name them.

JOSH: Alright. [cross talk] Did you guys hit it off right away?

JAMES: [cross talk] Epps was in a private room.

DULÉ: We did. I had a lot of respect for his, for, you know... Here's the thing- going from *West Wing*, which Aaron Sorkin is very much about the words, and he's a phenomenal writer, so when you're doing the words of Aaron Sorkin it's very easy just to say the words. But when you get into the room with James Roday and you're doing a comedy by Steve Franks, Roday will

just take you any and everywhere, and I really just... I was just like, "What are you doing!?"
[audience, Hrishi laugh] "The words are right here, brother!"

[Josh, Hrishi, audience laugh]

JOSH: Ohhh, I never thought of... That's a huge left turn.

DULÉ: It really, like early on, it threw me. Even in the chemistry, I was like, "What is this cat doing? Doesn't he understand that when the writer writes something that's what you say?"
[audience, Josh, Hrishi laugh] "This three dots, three dots mean you take a pause, brother."

[Josh, audience laugh]

JAMES: I think I was absent for all of those lessons. [Dulé, Josh, audience laugh] Wouldn't it be fun if you could live a day of your life as if it was written by Sorkin?

JOSH: Hmmm...

JAMES: Think about how much you could get done.

[audience, Josh, Dulé, Hrishi laugh]

HRISHI: Did you ever go back and watch a *West Wing* episode to get some research on Dulé?

JAMES: I did. But first I watched *She's All That* again. [Josh, Dulé laugh, audience applauds]
No, I knew he was a fine black, dramatic actor.

[Josh, audience laugh]

DULÉ: You see, working with Josh Malina and James Roday, this is what it's like. You see what I'm sayin'?

HRISHI: We really called James [laughs] so Josh would have some backup.

[Hrishi, audience, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: By the way, my copy of the sheet is right down there. [Hrishi, audience laugh] I don't know who left theirs Stage Left, but not I.

DULÉ: You know what? I'm gonna show you this sheet, hold on one second...I'm going to go get the sheet

JOSH: Go ahead, bring it out.

HRISHI: I think it, [cross talk] it was mine, actually.

JOSH: [cross talk]Oh, we thought we were being so crafty. Very disappointing.

DULÉ: It was right here.

JOSH: That's not mine!

HRISHI: No, that's mine.

DULÉ: "Bring out James Roday."

JOSH: Oh, see! Thank you!

[audience laughs, claps]

DULÉ: "If we can confirm him." [Josh laughs] You see? Which I didn't know whether they can confirm him or not, but, now I do.

JOSH: I X'd mine out, and it's on stage!

HRISHI: Alright...

JOSH: *Psych* movie? Want to talk about that?

[audience woohoos, applauds]

JAMES: Got the band back together.

DULÉ: Yes, we did.

JOSH: Ahhhhhh.

JAMES: Had some fun, threw some Christmas trees in the background, called it a Christmas movie.

[Josh, audience laugh]

DULÉ: Brought back all of our wonderful guest stars over the years, you know what I'm saying? [Josh laughs] [cross talk] Everyone, everyone who really was liked.

JOSH: [cross talk] I wasn't in it.

[audience laughs]

JOSH: Yeah, I know, I know what you're saying

[Dulé laughs]

HRISHI: So now that you've done one reunion special movie, do you think you could make another one happen?

JAMES: You know, I say this without any irony whatsoever, I feel like we'll make *Psych* movies as long as *Psych* fans want *Psych* movies. [audience cheers, applauds] We'll never be the ones that say, "Naaaah, you know, I think we're done." Because it was too good of an experience, and it gave us too much, and as many times as we can say "Thank you," I think we're going to want to.

DULÉ: Most definitely.

JOSH: Can you help us get a *West Wing* movie off the ground?

[audience cheers, applauds]

DULÉ: Well, I know somebody who may be able to help. If we got Allison Janney to be...

[audience laughs, cheers, applauds]

JOSH: She's the best!

DULÉ: You see what I'm sayin'?

HRISHI: James, thank you so much for joining us.

[audience cheers, applauds]

JOSH: We're going to end with a little trivia, if you want to stay up here [cross talk] and help us.

JAMES: [cross talk] Oh sure, I'll chill out and trivia it up.

HRISH: We're gonna conclude tonight's show with something we're calling the "Du-lightning Round"

JOSH: By the way, I also...

DULÉ: Du-lightning?

JOSH: I failed to give all our other people who actually showed up... I've got challenge coins for you, too. So, downstairs with the cheese, I'll give you each one. Thank you guys.

HRISH: Yes. So now we're going to call up some other people who responded to our emails and they're going to go head-to-head against Dulé in a Charlie Trivia competition.

DULÉ: Oh my gosh...

JOSH: Here are the people who RSVP'd. Darren. Jen. Erin. [laughs] I feel like a school teacher. Tom. [audience, Hrish laugh] Alanna or Alaina? [audience member replies] OK. Alanna.

HRISHI: Come down, come down to the stage

JOSH: And Rob.

DULÉ: That's right, you tell him.

JOSH: Come on up for trivia.

HRISHI: Please, everyone, help yourself to some cheese.

JOSH: Please! Please eat some cheese! Please.

[unintelligible audience reply]

JOSH: It's pungent! Are you getting it in the early rows there? Do you guys smell it?

HRISHI: [off to the side] Come hang out, come hang out here.

JOSH: Yeah. Oh, yeah, here we go.

DULÉ: This is Charlie Trivia?

HRISHI: This is Charlie Trivia.

DULÉ: Ohhh, [cross talk] this is about to be embarrassing.

JOSH: [cross talk] What do you call it?

HRISHI: It's called the Du-lightning Round.

JOSH: The Du-lightning Round.

DULÉ: The Du-lightning Round.

JOSH: Right.

DULÉ: This is going...

JOSH: Or, Defeat Dulé.

HRISHI: These questions are not easy. But if you get it right...

JOSH: Oh yeah!

HRISHI: You get a Snuffy Walden *West Wing* CD...

DULÉ: Heeeyyyyyyyyyy!

HRISHI: ...as a prize.

[audience cheers, applauds]

JOSH: Right?

DULÉ: [to the tune of the opening score of *The West Wing*] Duhh duhhhhhhh, [cross talk] duhhhh naaahhhh naaaaahhhh

JOSH: [cross talk] So, each person

JOSH AND DULÉ: Daaaah daaah daaaaaah daaaah naaaahhhh

JOSH: We're gonna run long for this?

DULÉ: Duuuhhhh daaaahhhh

[audience, Hrish, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: [laughing] Let's make good choices.

[audience, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: OK.

HRISHI: OK. We've got three minutes. We've got three minutes to do this. Ready?

JOSH: Uh-huh.

HRISHI: This is going to be fast.

JOSH: It's going to be one-on-one, right?

HRISHI: Yes.

JOSH: You buzz in, I'll tell you who I think buzzed in first, and we'll see if you get the answer. If you get one right, you win.

HRISHI: And each of you will get one question. So, even though all of you have noisemakers, whoever is standing next to Dulé, it's your turn. You get a chance to answer the question.

JOSH: Isn't there a second follow-up? We rehearsed this. A lot.

[audience laughs]

HRISHI: Maybe. We'll see how this, how it goes.

JOSH: What's your name?

TOM: I'm Tom.

JOSH: He's Tom.

HRISHI: OK.

TOM: Nice to meet you, Josh.

JOSH: Yeah, nice to meet you, too. And thank you for buying the merch.

TOM: Of course, of course.

JOSH: ...westwingweekly.com/merch

[audience laughs]

JOSH: Yeah. OK.

DULÉ: I just want to say I was on the third episode of this podcast and ask me how many pieces of merch have I received?

JOSH: How many did you buy?

[audience, Dulé laugh]

JOSH: That's how "Merch"-andise works.

[audience, Dulé laugh]

DULÉ: Touché. Touché.

HRISHI: Alright, Tom. Tom, are you ready for your question?

TOM: I am.

HRISHI: Dulé, are you ready for your, for this question?

DULÉ: I'm ready.

HRISHI: Here we go. OK. What is Charlie's sister's name?

[noisemaker sounds]

JOSH AND HRISHI: Tom.

TOM: Deena.

HRISH: Very good.

JOSH: Winner!

[audience applauds]

HRISHI: Very good!

JOSH: Winner! I beg of you, take some cheese before you go back to your seat. Thank you. Well done!

DULÉ: That's impressive!

JOSH: All right!

[audience back-talk]

DULÉ: I was thinking...

JOSH: What's that?

DULÉ: I was going to say "Deanna."

JOSH: She knew that one!

HRISHI: Well...

JOSH: Wait. What?

HRISHI: Now...

JOSH: Ohhh, the next-here...

[audience back-talk]

HRISHI: [cross talk] There was a second question, Dulé has now-

JOSH: [cross talk] Either was acceptable. Now he just cocked-up the second question.

HRISHI: Dulé has just messed up the second question. The second question was...

JOSH: WAIT! OK...

HRISHI: In a bit of *West Wing* inconsistency, what other name was used for Charlie's sister?

DULÉ: Ohhhhhh, see?

[audience reacts, laughs]

JOSH: See, that one you would have gotten [cross talk] ...aww, too late.

HRISHI: [cross talk] And the answer...

JOSH: Nope!

JOSH: All right, what's your name?

ERIN: Erin.

JOSH: Erin.

HRISHI: Erin, ready?

JOSH: Go to the stupid questions.

HRISHI: This is, these are questions supplied from Josh

JOSH: These are the remedial *West Wing* questions. Here we go.

HRISHI: These are Josh's questions.

JOSH: This is my innovation.

HRISHI: What's the fourth letter of Charlie's name?

[audience laughs]

HRISHI: First one to buzz in...

DULÉ: Ahhh, I'm lost!

[noisemaker sound]

JOSH: Erin! No, Erin!

ERIN: R.

HRISHI: Correct!

DULÉ: Ahhhhhhhh!

[audience cheers, applauds]

JOSH: That is great. [Dulé laughs] That's how you give away CDs! Thank you. Could you please take some cheese, for the love of God! Dude, your name?

ROB: Rob.

HRISHI: James, will you ask this question?

JOSH: Guest Question!

JAMES: Here we go. In which episode did Charlie first appear?

[noisemaker sound]

JOSH: Oh, it's a dead tie! You call it.

HRISHI: Tie goes to the runner.

JAMES: Yeah.

JOSH: Yeah. Rob?

ROB: "A Proportional Response."

HRISHI: That's correct.

JAMES: Holy [expletive deleted], you know the name of the episode? [laughs]

[audience applauds]

JOSH: Nice!

HRISHI: Very good!

JOSH: Please take some cheese! No, take some cheese. [audience, Hrish, Dulé laugh and cheer] Thank you. Here you go dude... [more laughter from all]. Yeah! That's how you give away cheese!

SOMEONE OFF MIC: Do you have a Wheat Thin the size of Lake Tahoe?

JOSH: [laughs] It's a good line. We do not have a Wheat Thin the size of Lake Tahoe. OK.

HRISHI: OK.

JOSH: What's your name?

ALANNA: I'm Alanna.

JOSH: Alanna.

ALANNA: Yes.

JOSH: Jewish?

ALANNA: Quite. The obviously Jewish...

JOSH: Fully Jewish. All right.

ALANNA: Fully Jewish.

JOSH: Right on. Yeah, you look familiar. [audience laughs] OK...

ALANNA: Are we related?

JOSH: Prob...Way back when, sure.

ALANNA: Yeah.

JOSH: Alright, here we go. Uh, James?

HRISHI: James...

JAMES: All right, here we go. In Episode 3.17, Charlie wants to buy a DVD with his tax money. What's the movie?

[audience reacts]

DULÉ: Oh my gosh!

JOSH: Boooooooooooooo!

DULÉ: Like, really!?

JOSH: Boooooooooooooo!

DULÉ: A movie with his tax money?

HRISHI: Nobody?

JOSH: Anybody?

HRISHI: Nobody? OK.

[audience members shout answers]

JOSH: Right. You! [audience member says something] *To Sir With Love?*

[audience members shout again]

JAMES: That is...

DULÉ: You know what, you know what...

JAMES: Somebody said it, somebody said it.

JOSH: *Her Majesty's Secret Service*. All right, dude, this is, yeah...

JAMES: He has to get that.

[more audience talking with hosts]

HRISHI: Bonus question for the audience.

JOSH: Bonus question, but if you get it right, he's got your CD. [audience member says something] No, here we go. Bonus question...

HRISHI: Charlie gets the DVD from President Bartlet along with which other movie?

[audience members shout answers]

HRISHI: Yo, these are my people.

JOSH: Right. Are we on the stupid question page?

[audience members still shouting]

HRISHI: No, no.

JOSH: They're funny!

HRISHI: OK, fine. Here's another...

[more audience shouting, Josh laughs]

JOSH: I think so.

HRISHI: [laughing] Here's, here's another one from Josh.

JAMES: OK, here we go. A rooster named Charlie lays an egg on a barn roof while facing north. Which way does the egg roll?

[audience members shout answers]

[noisemaker sound]

ALANNA: South?

JOSH: Wrong!

DULÉ: North?

JOSH: Roosters... [audience members shout] Roosters don't lay eggs! [Hrishi, Dulé, audience laugh] That was a gimme! A gimme!

[more laughter]

DULÉ: It's pressure up here, everybody, it's pressure!

JOSH: I'm giving a CD to a random person. [Hrishi, Dulé, audience laugh] All right. Thank you for playing. Please take some cheese!

HRISHI: Before we wrap up, we do have one more question for the audience. It's a fill-in-the-phrase type question. It goes...Fill in the blank: OK.

JOSH: OK.

AUDIENCE: WHAT'S NEXT?

HRISHI: Thank you.

[audience cheering, applause]

[Outro Music]