

(Theme music)

INTRODUCTION

Peter Corbasson III: Hello, and welcome to the Humber Comedy Podcast, where we talk all things comedy. I'm your host, Peter Corbasson III. We have our first guest, Robin Duke, whose credits include the Second City mainstage and sketch comedy shows *SCTV* and *Saturday Night Live*. She currently has a recurring role on the show *Man Seeking Woman*.

All right, welcome to the Humber Comedy Podcast. This is our first episode, and on the show today, we have Robin Duke, and we have a small studio audience today of Humber Comedy students.

Robin Duke: It's a *huge* audience! I've never *seen* so many people in an audience!

PC: It's fantastic. So Robin, you teach second-year improv and sketch at Humber.

RD: Yes.

PC: I guess my first question is, who were your comedy idols growing up? Who did you look up to when you were first toying with the idea of going into comedy?

RD: Well, I started laughing at Jack Benny when I was a kid. I would just stand in front of the TV and laugh, apparently. That's what my parents told me. I didn't know what he was saying, or didn't get the jokes, but his attitude and how he moved made laugh. As I got older, I would watch Richard Pryor and laugh at Richard Pryor—his characters, his little-kid character that he did. Then there was Carol Burnett. So I guess I was attracted to characters.

PC: And I think that would make sense, because I think a lot of what you're known for is your character work. If you have a comedy legacy, if you will, that's what you're gonna be known for.

RD: Thank you!

PC: Now the first big thing that happened to you in the world of comedy was Second City.

RD: Mmm-hm.

PC: And you have an interesting story of how you got into Second City. Do you want to talk about how that happened?

RD: Well, it all started way back in high school. My best friend in high school, Catherine O'Hara, we became fast friends in high school, because we shared a similar sense of humor, and we loved to do characters. We would go over to each other's houses and dress up as characters, wear funny hats and put on funny voices. Catherine would do impersonations, she would do... Paul Lynde was one of hers, and Edward G. Robinson. So really, we just laughed all the time at each other. So Catherine was always saying, "I'm gonna be an actress." She was gonna be an actress, and I'd say, "Yeah, I'm gonna be an actress too." And Catherine actually went out, and she went to Second City, because her brother Marcus was going out with Gilda Radner at the time, and Gilda was in Second City.

PC: The Toronto one.

RD: The Toronto Second City. So I would go down with Catherine, and we would watch the show, the Second City show, and also those people became my idols, watching John Candy, Eugene Levy, Gilda Radner, Dan Aykroyd, Valerie Bromfield, all those people up onstage doing Second City improv and sketches. And they just blew me away. I was like, "Oh my God, this is

what I want to do.” Because they were smart, and they were funny, and they were satirical, and there was acting involved, and there was emotion, there was everything. But most of all, it was all funny, it all built up towards getting a laugh. I just loved it. That’s what I wanted to do. And at the time, I was going to university. Catherine, as I said, went off and she went that path of Second City. And I went to university because I wanted to be a teacher. Then that’s when I started going down to Second City, during university, and I started to take workshops at Second City. They offered workshops, and Del Close was teaching a workshop, and they had asked Del Close to put together a touring company, and he asked the first seven people through the door of the workshop to be in the touring company, and I was one of the seven people. So that’s how I got my first professional job. *(laughs)* Being one of the first of seven people. So I guess it was about timing, being on time.

PC: Now, you mentioned the touring company. What were the conditions like? Obviously, it wasn’t glamorous. It wasn’t a glamorous job to do.

RD: Well, we loved it. Oh, we were travelling, we were going to London, Ontario. *(laughs)* We were getting out of Toronto. Oh, we loved it. In those days, I have to say, when I started, there weren’t a lot of women, there weren’t a lot of people in comedy. There was just this land, this open field of going anywhere. It was all new. Comedy was all new at that point. Comedy as we know it today, during those early years of Second City, it was this new form, this new kind of theater that was happening. So it was all very exciting, and you did feel like you were a part of something that was greater (than you). So it was exciting being in the touring company. And then, in the touring company, what we did was, we learned old Second City material.

PC: Kind of like a greatest-hits thing?

RD: A greatest-hits thing. It was great training, because you got a great sense of where a laugh lies, how soon you have to get a laugh, how often the laughs must come in a beat. So that becomes just second nature to you after you've done the same material over and over again. So when you're up, and you're improvising, you know you have to get a laugh at a certain point. You can't go any longer. You need to do something at this point in time during that five minutes onstage in improv. So it was very valuable information, to do that, to interpret text, and also to develop characters. So any character I was doing was pretty derivative of Andrea Martin or Catherine O'Hara or Gilda Radner, but you make it your own.

PC: How important is it to you that you kind of start out imitating the people you enjoy? I find that's how I approach comedy as a beginner.

RD: Absolutely. I think it's so important to do that, because it works, you see it works. Catherine I think on some level was doing Gilda, but making that her own.

PC: Making her own little tweak to it.

RD: Exactly. And then I was doing Catherine and Gilda and a bit of Andrea, so all these things that you know work help you. It gets you to a point where you start to get your own laughs. You're getting somebody else's laughs in characters for a while, but then you just naturally become your own original person, with a combination of all those things. It's so important to be able to interpret that text and make it your own. That's where I came up with a lot of my characters. Because I don't want to be onstage doing Catherine, I didn't want to be onstage doing Andrea. So it was that need to make it my own, but saying the lines that they had created. So that was very important.

PC: So after the touring company, you went on to the mainstage. And then I guess after that was *SCTV*. Now *SCTV* had already been on the air for a few years at the point you joined. How did it come about that you ended up on the show?

RD: Well, once again, there weren't a lot of women available. I had been at the theater for a while. They knew my work. So Catherine left *SCTV*, and I stepped in to replace her on *SCTV*, basically. She wanted to do more film, she wanted to do more acting, so she decided to leave, and so that's how I got the gig. I sort of stepped in. Catherine sort of paved the way.

PC: In fact, I think that's kind of how you ended up on *SNL* originally, right? The story I heard was, Catherine was hired to do the show, and then she found out that things weren't really a positive environment, so she...

RD: She just didn't feel comfortable there. For whatever reason, she called me and said, "Come on down. I'm gonna leave and they're gonna look for a woman. I've told them about you, so come on down." I got on a plane the next day, and I went in and met with Dick Ebersol, who was the producer at the time. It wasn't Lorne Michaels. Dick took over, and I interviewed with him. I met some of the writers, and then I was waiting around, I guess on the seventeenth floor, and Catherine said, "Come on, we gotta go, we gotta go. Just tell them that you have to go and that you need an answer." That was Catherine. She had a lot of nerve, and rightly so, because she's incredibly talented. So I said, "OK," and I nervously went in to Dick and said, "Listen, I'd really like to have an answer, because I've gotta go." And I guess he was put on the spot, and he said, "Yeah, OK, you've got it." And that's what happened. I was being pushed by Catherine. She was instrumental, certainly.

PC: Now that season of *SNL* was a pretty tumultuous one, because I guess you ended up joining in the middle of what would've been the season, because they had let go of a whole bunch of people, and I guess only Eddie Murphy and Joe Piscopo were the only ones who were held over from the (previous) cast.

RD: Yeah. It was just Tony Rosato and I, I think. Was Tim Kazurinsky there? I'm not sure if Tim was there.

PC: I think that was the first time he did the stuff with the chimpanzees.

RD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I don't know if Mary (Gross) came then, or if she came in the fall. But there was a writer's strike, I think is what happened.

PC: Yeah. I think there was one episode, and I think it was the Chevy Chase episode (before the strike). Was there a lot of pressure after the first cast had left, that you guys were a "replacement" cast? What was that feeling like?

RD: Well, we certainly felt like that. We were following in the footsteps of all these people I'd watched at Second City. John Belushi had come from Chicago, Gilda and Danny from Toronto, Bill Murray from Chicago. So we were stepping into these huge shoes. So yes, we were very conscious of that. But I think there was also a confidence that, yeah, I guess we can do this, we've done Second City stage, we had that experience of being in front of an audience and performing. But they had created that show, those people. They had really set the bar high. That's what was hard.

PC: Well, I think your cast did a good job of living up to those expectations, because you had people like you and Eddie Murphy and Joe Piscopo doing lots of memorable characters. I think the Whiners are characters that you're the most well-known for, certainly on *SNL*.

RD: Yeah.

PC: How did that character come about? Is that something you created with Joe?

RD: Well, Joe and I were walking around the seventeenth floor, kidding around, doing these two characters, making each other laugh (over the fact that) nobody was writing for us. “Nobody’s *writing* for us, we don’t have anything on the *show!*” So we kept doing this, and finally I went home one night and wrote up a sketch around these two characters. I handed it in on Wednesday morning for the read-through, and when I came back in the afternoon for the read-through, it wasn’t in the read-through. The producers had read it, and I guess they had decided that it wasn’t funny enough. So I went to them and I said, “Could you just let us read this sketch?” And they said, “There are no jokes on the page.” I explained that it’s all in the attitude.

PC: Yeah, for sure.

RD: So we read it at read-through, and it went really well, and it got laughs, and so it got into the show. But when we were blocking it, the same thing happened. The director was blocking it without people leaving the restaurant, so I had to ask the director, “Could you try to cover people leaving the restaurant? Because that’s part of the joke.”

PC: Right.

RD: And there was some difficulty there in having him do that, because it required him changing all the cameras. That was a huge thing for him to do, because he had blocked it one way, and I was telling him to block it an entirely different way. But that’s how the sketch worked. It was not so much their whining, but the reaction to their whining, people getting up...

PC: They’re very obnoxious people.

RD: Yeah. So I had to kind of fight for that one.

PC: Did you find it was hard getting time on the show, that you really had to make your own time on the show?

RD: Well, I had to write, and I had always written for myself at Second City. That's what you do on the stage, you write scenes. You write scenes with other people through improv. I knew how to write a sketch at that point because I'd already written on *SCTV*.

PC: Right.

RD: So in order to get on the show, what I had to do was write. I had to write characters for myself. So Mary Gross and I, we often wrote together, or I wrote a lot with Eddie (Murphy), not so much with Eddie, but went to the other writers, like David Sheffield, with sketches that would be with Eddie, because everybody wanted to write for Eddie. So if you could associate yourself with Eddie in some way...

PC: Because if you wrote for Eddie, you knew it would make it to air, right?

RD: Exactly. I mean, if it was something good, it would certainly make it to air. But that was certainly one way to get on the air. Because the other writers weren't necessarily writing for women. I'm sure the women here recognize that it's very difficult, you don't get a lot of sketches handed to you with meaty female roles in them in sketches. So you need to have that female point of view come in and fully develop the characters, and the guys just weren't doing that. We were prostitutes (*laughs*). We were always prostitutes, showgirls. So I think we've gotta try to be a little more than that. So that's how I started writing on *Saturday Night Live*, and then the second year, I had written so much in the first year, and got so much onto the air, that the second

year... I had applied for the job of writer by submitting all the sketches I had had on air the first year. So I got hired as a writer in the second and third year.

PC: There must be a lot of differences between doing *SNL*, which is a live show, and doing *SCTV*, which was a taped show. Were there any similarities, or were they completely different animals?

RD: Yeah. There's nothing like *Saturday Night Live*. You never do anything in your entire career that comes close to *Saturday Night Live*. You get shows up in a week...well, maybe something like Rick Mercer, his show's pretty regular. He does live to tape, I guess, but you can always redo it. But this was live...

PC: Anything goes.

RD: On *SCTV*, everything was written way ahead of time, and then I shot in Edmonton, and you would come to the set and you would have your lines learned, and then they would do different takes of the sketch, and that was very straightforward, whereas on *Saturday Night Live* you're playing to an audience and you're playing to a camera. You've just been handed material on Wednesday night, and you have two days to block it and learn it and get it on its feet. So you're always under a lot of pressure to perform, and I never got used to the camera. I always felt like the cameras were in the way. I wanted to get to the audience, I wanted to perform for the audience.

PC: Yeah, because you enjoyed stage more?

RD: Right, I loved the stage, so (the cameras) were always in my way. Whereas Eddie, the camera loved him, and he loved the camera. There was just this magical thing that happened with Eddie and the camera. So it was really interesting. But anyway, that was the main difference.

Also, at *SCTV* the inmates ran the asylum, whereas at *SNL*, it was very network and producer-driven, making sure the host was covered, making sure Eddie was covered, all these things. So there were far more restrictions on *SNL* than there were on *SCTV*. So *SCTV* felt more creative to me than *SNL*.

PC: Who was your favorite guest host on *SNL*?

RD: I loved the Bridges, Jeff and Beau Bridges, so I wrote a scene for them, and that was great. I couldn't believe it, I was pinching myself. They were in my office, and I was writing for them. *(laughs)* It was great, and they were really lovely people, and I loved them. Who else was great? We had some characters, boy oh boy. We had Robert Blake. Isn't he the guy who was convicted of killing his wife?

PC: I think so.

RD: *(laughs)* So he was there. We had a lot of Roberts. We had Robert Culp, Robert Blake, Robert Urich. So there were a lot of Bobs on our show. *(laughter)* Don Rickles, we had Don Rickles, we had Jerry Lewis. Don Rickles was interesting, because it was a real lesson in rhythm and patter in comedy. At the producer's meeting, when Don Rickles came in, I noticed that he wasn't necessarily saying anything that was all that funny, but it was the way that he was saying it that would make people laugh. So he had that rhythm down. So he would say to somebody, "You with the sweater and the shoes and the bottle of water," and everybody would laugh.

PC: It was just in the way he said it...

RD: Just in the way he said it, it made people laugh. He had it down so well. So there was Don Rickles, there was George McGovern. We had Ed Koch, who was mayor (of New York). We had such an interesting assortment of guests. But I think the Bridges brothers were my favorite.

PC: Do you still watch *SNL* now?

RD: Yep, I do. And I look at it and go, “Wait, did I...? Nah, I wasn’t on that show.” (*laughs*) It just seems so far away. “No, I wasn’t on that show. Was I on that show? Did I do that?”

PC: Does it seem much different from when you were on it?

RD: No, not really. It’s the same. It’s very structured, how that show gets to air. It’s got to be. There’s characters, and I guess styles change over the years, but the actual structure of it and the idea of putting the strong sketches at the beginning and the weaker ones toward the end, but the weaker ones to me were the funniest.

PC: The weird ones.

RD: Yeah, those were the ones that would make me laugh. But I can’t stay up that late anymore (*laughs*), and I don’t tape. “Tape.” Is that what you do these days, tape? Anyway, yeah, there are some great people on that show, really good people.

PC: Yeah, for sure. So right now, you have a recurring character on *Man Seeking Woman*...

RD: Yes!

PC: I can tell you really enjoy that, because I’ve been to a few table reads, and it’s quite a lively table read.

RD: It is such a gift to do that show. I don’t know how that happened. I just feel like I was just touched by something greater than me, that I get to do that show. The writing is brilliant, the character is fun, they’re so supportive and enthusiastic, and everything about it, I’m just pinching myself. I can’t believe this is happening.

PC: Do you find it's different now, the way that things are done in TV comedy, from when you started out?

RD: I guess the style. I guess the content is more open. You don't have as many standards and practices, whatever it's called...

PC: Restrictions, or things like that.

RD: Restrictions. So you can go anywhere now, and *Man Seeking Woman* does that, but it doesn't just do that, it goes all over the place. So I think you can get away with a lot more nowadays, but once again, how it's all put together, and the writing has to be there, everything's gotta be there in the production. That all remains the same. So there's no real big difference, except maybe in the money. It's not what it used to be.

PC: My next question is about Second City. We've kind of been talking about this in our improv class, how Second City has turned into something much different than it was when it started out. It's kind of gotten away from the basics of how you become a Second City performer. What's your opinion on them doing that?

RD: They have this training center education, and there are all these levels, and all these people who take these classes, and I'm sure a lot of them hope to be on the mainstage someday. So there's this big carrot of being on mainstage. That has always existed, I think, but when I was going there, of course I wanted to be on mainstage, but there was also more emphasis on the process, on the art of it, so that the success was secondary. Mainstage now means that you go on to *Saturday Night Live* and you go on to doing films, whereas that didn't exist when I started out.

PC: Right, so it wasn't a prerequisite for anything. It was like a dream in itself.

RD: Yes, that's what it was. I saw these people onstage and they were being satirical, they were being funny, they were being smart, they had a message. They were acting. That's what I wanted to do. That's why I wanted to be on mainstage. That's why I wanted learn this form, because it covered all of those areas, not simply because I wanted to be on mainstage, or I wanted to be on *Saturday Night Live*. I notice that when guests come in to speak, the questions are more like, "How do I become famous," rather than questions about the actual process.

PC: Right, (as opposed to) "How do I do this in a successful way that can benefit my art?"

RD: Yes. Getting specific about, when you improvise, where is your starting point? It's more about, "How do I get my foot in the door?" Which are all valid questions, but I would be backstage at Second City just listening to people kibitz and jam, talking, laughing, and that's why I was there. I wanted to laugh. I wanted to be around that smart, irreverent way of thinking. I don't know, I guess people who do get successful, I think that's their desire as well.

PC: So my last question is pretty simple. Who's the funniest person you've worked with over the years? Or maybe, someone you'd love to work with again that you haven't worked with in a long time?

RD: I've just drawn a blank. I've been so fortunate to work with so many funny people. Where do you begin? John Candy, Marty Short, Catherine of course. Catherine makes me laugh so hard. Eugene Levy. Jay Baruchel, Eric Andre now. All those people are making me laugh. Eddie Murphy. I just love to laugh. I think I'm just a good laugh. (*laughs*) I love to laugh. There've been a lot. I'm drawing a blank, and I'm sure I'm missing somebody. But you know, the thing is, teaching here, I go down to the Comedy Bar, and the other night, or even in class, where I'm really laughing hard. It's nobody famous or anything like that, it's just laughing at the concepts,

laughing at the originality, being surprised by something, seeing somebody create a moment by being honest. I'm still being surprised, still laughing. And it's all in that honesty and in that moment of seeing somebody really committed. Will Ferrell makes me laugh. Oh my God, I haven't worked with him, but I'd love to work with Will Ferrell. That would be great, because I really love *Anchorman*, it's one of my favorite movies.

PC: Maybe we'll get him as our next guest on the show.

RD: Oh my God, and all my Women Fully Clothed people! We haven't talked about Women Fully Clothed! Come on! That's Katherine Greenwood, Theresa Pavlinek, and Jayne Eastwood. They're the three funniest women. We sit around, we laugh, we make each other laugh. That's just been a joy in my life, to have those women to work with and write with, and that all started late in life, and it's just been great. Whoda thunk? I feel more creative with Women Fully Clothed or at *Man Seeking Woman* than I ever felt back at *Saturday Night Live* or *SCTV*. And you know, I'm sixty-two, come on! No, I'm sixty-one, I'll be sixty-two. I shouldn't be pushing my age at this point. So I've been very fortunate.

PC: Do you have any upcoming plans to do more stuff with Women Fully Clothed?

RD: Yeah, we're in the process of writing a television show, which is making us laugh, which is good. Over the years, people have said, "Why don't you do a TV show," and we've said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." We tried to pitch one to CBC, which was disastrous. We tried to pitch a sketch show, and frankly, I think our hearts just weren't in it. I think our form of sketch is much better onstage. What we're able to do is engage the audience's imagination more onstage. So what we're doing is more of a narrative, and with more of an arc, and it's challenging us, it's a different form. It's so hard for us to get together, that's the thing too. Theresa has a new baby,

and we're all busy, and so it's hard to get a time. I just got an e-mail this morning (that read) "Why don't we put a day aside where we can all meet and spend the day?" Because we've been trying to meet for a couple of hours a week, and that's not working out, so we're thinking a day. So we're trying to find a day now to get together and just get this thing done, because we've talked about it a long time, and now it's just time to get it down on the page.

PC: Well, I hope you guys end up doing that, because I think, certainly me and the rest of us here, look forward to seeing more stuff from you. Thank you, Robin, for being on our first episode.

RD: Oh, that's it? OK, sure!

PC: We have some more questions from our audience members, so they'll take turns coming up here and asking you...

RD: I love it!

Audience member: Hi. My question is a two-parter. I was wondering what has been your greatest achievement in your entire comedy career, and do you regret anything at all?

RD: OK, well, let's start with the greatest achievement. I would say Women Fully Clothed, because that was doing everything, and that came at a point in my life where it was just difficult. It was difficult to get roles for women. It's very competitive out there, but I knew I could get a laugh in front of an audience. I knew I could do that. I've never been good at auditions, so for me I just had to get out onstage in order to do what I do, and I gathered these women together, and this became something really successful. We were able to tour, we had a blast touring. We were creative and inventive and funny, and we played to audiences of a thousand, two thousand people sometimes. Putting that together and having a vision that could happen, I think was one of

my greatest achievements. And also doing, at the beginning, doing a lot of the business of it, understanding the marketing and the promotion, and about renting a theater, getting people to come out to see us. All that became a part of it. And I was no longer the actor at home waiting for the phone call. I had an active part in my career. And that was a great achievement. But the other one, I don't know if I have any regrets. I'm sure there's something. I can't think of anything offhand, but I always think it would've led to something else. Whatever has happened has happened for a reason. I'm one of those people that believes that. Things happen for a reason. I couldn't be happier. I couldn't be more happy in my life, and things are good. No regrets.

Next audience member: So you've had the opportunity to work with a lot of people who've gone on to be very, very successful. I was wondering if you found that there was some kind of quality those people shared, or something that you could almost recognize in them beforehand, or was it more that people who became very famous were surprising to you?

RD: Well, it's always a surprise, but it's people who worked hard, just constantly working. Constantly working. I don't think I'm that hard a worker. I don't know if I have that focus. Dick Ebersol, who was the producer of *Saturday Night Live*, came to me one day in my office and told me that I lacked the "guerilla instinct" of a Gilda Radner. And I thought, "What the heck does that mean?" But it is the guerilla instinct of drive, of being driven, and I don't know if I've ever been that driven, and had that (feeling) of, "I've gotta do this, and this is how I do it." But I do see that in successful people. It's the hard work and the focus on not giving up. I was doing *Schitt's Creek*, and I was really struggling with the lines, just having memory issues over these lines. I thought I had learned them, and they were falling out of my head. I was talking to Marty Short about it, and he said, "Robin, you've got to be doing it constantly. You've got to be saying those lines over and over and over again. I start the minute I get the script, and I say them out

loud all day in my living room.” And I’m like, “Oh my God, really?” But that’s why Marty is as successful as he is, because he works at it. He works hard at it. I was just amazed. And then he says to me that Steve Martin called him one day and tried out some jokes on him. And Marty said, “OK, those jokes are good.” Steve Martin was gonna do a David Letterman, so Marty was giving him notes on these jokes, and then Marty asked Steve Martin, “When are you doing this Letterman?” And I think it was three months away. So Steve Martin was working on his Letterman gig three months away. That’s what it is. It’s just hard, solid, focused work.

Next audience member: Sort of (building on) that question: Is that the best piece of advice you’ve gotten, or do you have another piece of advice that sticks out in your head that is very important to you?

RD: Oh no, Catherine said to me once, and this is good, this is more about when you are around famous people, and it is intimidating, because you’ve seen these people, you’ve admired their work, and you’ve loved them, and you’re like, “Oh my God, there’s so and so!” Marty Short used to have these parties at Christmas time where a lot of celebrities would be there, and it was really intimidating. And I remember Catherine saying to me once, “You know how you like it when people come up to you and compliment you? It makes you feel good, doesn’t it? It opens you up. Just go up to people and compliment them on their work. Just genuinely compliment them on their work.” I mean, what a simple thing, but I didn’t learn that until I was fifty-five. But it has served me well in those situations. So when I was at the *Saturday Night Live* (40th) anniversary, I was having a ball doing that. I was having the best time going up to people I liked, and I wasn’t doing it in such a way where I was running through the crowd and grabbing them and getting their attention. If somebody was walking by, (I’d say), “Louis CK, I really like your show. I saw the one-hour episode with the boy who was doing drugs, and that was the most

brilliant piece of television I've ever seen. You should be very proud." And he looked at me and he said, "Yeah, I am really proud! Thank you!" So I had this moment with him, which was great. I was able to say something to him and feel like a colleague. That was a big piece of advice. That, and really learning your lines the minute you get them.

Next audience member: Hi, Robin Duke. Big fan. You should be really proud of your work. I think you're really great.

RD: Oh, thank you, Cindy!

Audience member: I do have a question. So you were saying that you wished you had asked people who came to speak about their process, and I was just wondering, when you were getting ready to perform, or even teach an improv class, is there something you do? Do you flip your hair on a Wednesday afternoon, you know?

RD: I'm not telling.

Audience member: Oh!

RD: There is, but I'm not saying! *(laughs)* I'm not gonna give it away.

Audience member: Do you have a hint? Does it involve an object?

RD: No. Well, maybe, but I just can't do it. I can't say it. *(laughs)*

Audience member: Thank you!

RD: Yeah, I can't do that. I can't tell. It's my secret.

Next audience member: I wanted to ask you something about the Whiners sketch. You said it was rejected by the producers, and then you had to continue campaigning for it. Now, I can't

help but feel that if I were in that situation, I would just get so rattled that I would give up on it. So aside from the fact that it was making you laugh, what got you to continue fighting for this? What drove you to say, “No, this is a good sketch, we are gonna do this?”

RD: I guess just a belief that it was a good sketch. You just know, right, when you write something and it’s good? It made Joe and I laugh, he liked it. It was a good structure, it had a good beginning, middle and end. It just didn’t have the laughs on the page, but I knew that it was a performance piece. You choose your battles, right? You have to choose your battles, and that was one I chose, so I’m glad I did. I’m really glad I did. You can’t be fighting all the time. That’s a drag. It wasn’t like it was a fight, it was just trying to convince them that this was a good piece, and they should just let us read it. It’s not a big deal just to put it into read-through and let us read it.

PC: All right, I think that’s all the questions we have, so thank you, Robin Duke, for coming on our first episode.

RD: Oh, it’s such an honor, and I wish you all the best with it. I admire your work ethic, and I think you’ll be very successful with this. (*applause*)

OUTRO

(theme music)

PC: Thanks for listening. If you’d like to know more about the Humber School of Comedy, you can find the program at humber.ca. I’ve been Peter Corbasson the III, and we are comedy.

END