

THE HAMILCAST

EPISODE 290 REBECCA COVINGTON WEBBER 1 TRANSCRIPT

00:00:00] Hi, I'm stage and stage's Lin-Manuel Miranda and you're listening to the Hamilcast.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:00:18] Hi, friends. Before we get to the episode, I wanted to jump on and apologize for some of the audio you're about to hear. Thanks to some technical difficulties, my audio wasn't recorded by my usual podcast microphone, the one I'm using now, but instead the mic on my MacBook. I was devastated when I listened back to it and beyond frustrated that there was nothing to be done. But even in my embarrassment, I'm still really, really excited for you to hear this conversation. So again, I'm sorry about this, and I hope you can enjoy these episodes with Rebecca. OK, here we go.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:00:51] Hello, everyone, welcome back to the Hamilcast, I am Gillian today I am here with the angel, the goddess, Rebecca Covington Webber. You know, people, PR people. That's right. You know, when we first logged on, Donald Weber was on my screen and I was like, what? That's not what I'm here for.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:01:11] He does all the technical aspects and because he cannot feed the baby in the manner in which I can. So we, you know, we trade off those half hour slots.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:01:20] I hear you. Well, first, before we do anything else, can you please tell me your pronouns?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:01:24] She her.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:01:26] Thank you. So yes, you are Rebecca Weber, which means you are weirdly married to Donald Glover

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:01:34] in a crazy turn of events yet.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:01:37] But you are on Hamilton's And Peggy tour. You're the stand by for all three Schuyler sisters. You know, I we met in Puerto Rico because your husband, Donald

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Webber plays Aaron Burr on that tour. I saw you in Puerto Rico. You were not on, but we hung out out there and you were so wonderful. And San Francisco yesterday, like not 24 hours ago, you finished that five week run in San Francisco.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:01:59] We did. It was so crazy because San Francisco. I mean, yes, we had Puerto Rico. But in terms of performances and geography, Puerto Rico was like an island for us because it was just it was its own like thing. It was like the special present that we were so blessed to have. And so San Francisco felt a little bit like home, you know, and so it was so nice to be able to after COVID come back to San Francisco, albeit a short run. But it was fantastic.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:02:33] Oh yeah, I have so much to talk to you about all of that, especially Puerto Rico experience. Yes. Before we do anything else, though, I'd also like you. Broadway Beautiful Motown, the musical international tours of Beautiful Mamma Mia ain't misbehavin, thoroughly modern Millie. I mean regional. I need a little shop of Horrors. I mean, you're I don't what you're doing with Donald Webber. I'll never know. I'm not playing the role of Nik Walker on this blog.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:02:57] You actually are. Yes. And you play it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:03:00] Well, thank you. Speaking of Nik Walker, he has named the cocktail. Well, we're just drinking some wine, right? What kind of wine do you have on your?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:03:09] Well I have a sensible bottle of red blend from the McBride sisters. It's the Black Girl Magic Red blend that I will be enjoying today. Ooh, yeah, it's it's it's going to be delicious.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:03:18] It's going to be delicious. So when your husband was on all those years ago, I served him sparkling

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:03:28] I remember because I was like, Where

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:03:29] are you? What have you been drinking?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:03:33] Oh, well, it was prosecco fruit punch and like just a lime garnish. It was very good. It's just like fruity, delicious. But so was something. I do this sometimes where I'll ask mostly Nik Walker if I know that there's friends or connection to help me name the drink and then tell me nothing about why it's named.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:03:50] Oh, no.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:03:52] OK, so which means you have to explain it to me?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:03:56] Oh my gosh. Everything got tight.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:04:00] I was sensible. Chilled Pinot Grigio. You have some black girl magic. According to Nik Walker, it's called the Mister Postman.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:04:08] Oh, OK.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:04:10] He was nice to me and just very sensible. It's because I saying Mr. Postman in Motown. That was, Oh my feet. I know it like there's it's very straightforward, very unlike Nik Walker. But thank you, Nik.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:04:24] I appreciate that. Well, you know what that means. It means that he really adores you because he, I mean, responded and I was like, I didn't even think that text messages could go through that quickly. And he responded, which means that he loved your performance of that. That's the only way

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:04:39] to Oh, Nicky Walks. This is so sweet. That is very sweet of him.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:04:43] Don't tell anybody. But Nick has like a really, really sweet side. But don't tell anyone.

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:04:48] I know. I know we won't. We won't talk about that here.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:04:50] Well, cheers raising a glass to you. Yes, I am very excited about this. You've said you're excited. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I'm like, thrilled.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:04:59] I can't wait. I'm ecstatic.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:01] How I have to ask, How's Ella Frizgreald? How's Ella French Gerald and of course, your son D3?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:05:08] She's good. He's good. Everybody's good. Great. But I'll tell you, mom sometimes does not handle stress well, and by sometimes I mean all the time.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:18] Sure.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:05:19] And there has been a lot of change. You know, I think it's it's the integration of the life I know, right? And I know how to do this. I know how to tour. I know how to do eight shows a week. I know how to go to work. But integrating something brand new in it and still trying to do what I know. Mm hmm. It's the remix, and she is tricky sometimes, but Ella is good. Ella had eye surgery over the pandemic. This is like her third eye surgery.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:05:44] Oh my

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:05:45] heavens. And three is good. He is now. He has. Two teeth, and we have him in like a bouncer, he's trying to stand up, he's sitting up on his own. He does not like solids. He is just, you know, he's living his best life. And now we're here in Sacramento and we're on our adventure.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:06:04] How so? And he's Donald Weber. The third, that's why he's D3.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:06:07] Donald Webber. The third, yes. How old is he? Just turned six months on August 15th. He's

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he's like growing like a weed. It's so it's like the wildest thing it's. It's the wildest thing to watch.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:06:19] I have no, I don't know anything about like babies and how how like what they should be doing at certain ages.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:06:28] Like kids, that's the wildest part. That's how I feel is I'm like, right?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:06:33] I'm like, Googling, what should I be doing with my baby at six months? Because I'm like, OK, we oh, we have to brush his tooth. I see we have to like, there are like things and I'm just like, I did not. My younger brother was three years younger than me, so I didn't grow up with like children, you know? And like, we first had him and Donald was like leaving to New York to go tape something for a couple of days. And I was like, I've not changed his diaper yet. And so, like all of its new, it's all new.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:07:01] Even as you're talking about it, you have this like beautiful combination of just excitement and love. And like your eye, it looks like you're also jumping off a cliff at the same time. Oh yeah, here we are. Yeah, it's like,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:07:13] OK, he'll teach me everything. I need to know that Google won't let me know. So yeah, it's it's it's really cool.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:07:19] That's amazing. I'm just I'm just honestly just thrilled to be here and close proximity to you here. Got us all the same. So you just wrapped up San Francisco like last night and you said that you got to Sacramento where you are this minute, last night at midnight. So like right after the show, you just bailed. Not bailed. I mean, because you were done, girl.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:07:39] OK. We were like, Oh, we're about to bust these travel days. We bought an SUV. We have the family van. What's not a van? The family car that's going to go across America. And we were like, This is simple. We're going to travel in one car while moving from L.A. to hear Donald's

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parents had to follow us in a minivan and said minivan was full, so we were like, It's OK, we're going to get rid of stuff in San Francisco. And we went to pack yesterday and we were like, Oh, we'll just pack up the car really quick. After the show it, it was not very quick. And we also I I drove a RAV4 behind our

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:08:13] Highlander because we still

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:08:15] have too much stuff, but thankfully it was a short move. So yeah, we the show came down at four and we left San Francisco, I think, around like 8:30 or nine o'clock. Yeah, it's just tough because, you know, Donald is on stage every day and D3 is up at six or seven a.m. every day. So, you know, it's just merging. It's merging the two worlds. It's really so it's like, I'm glad it was a shorter travel day, an hour and a half drive because we learned a lot.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:08:47] We learned a lot.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:08:48] Totally, absolutely. I mean, it's I always talk about things like, I don't know, like podcasting or editing by like learn by doing. But that's also real big, gigantic life. Things like, yeah, parenting. Yes.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:09:02] Yes, very much so.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:09:05] One clip is a little higher than the other.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:09:08] Still, life is life. You know what I mean? Life is life. Whatever the challenges are, there your specific challenges? So I say, Hey, that hurdle is high for you is just as high as my hurdle is for me. So we'll get there.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:09:19] Oh, I appreciate that. So tell me about your from Lexington, Kentucky. I am. Tell me your whole. I want to hear the whole Rebecca Covington Webber story I want to hear. Of course, like, we'll get to your Hamilton ness of it all. But I want to hear, like, how did you realize you wanted to be on stage? Like, how did you get to where you are today? From Lexington, Kentucky,

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:09:39] from Lexington, Kentucky? So I started out as a violin player. I started playing violin when I was two watts. Yeah, my uncle. So my uncle was a conductor, a cello player. And so he gifted my older brother Virgil with a violin at the age of three, and Virgil is three years older than me. So my parents, the tale tells that around too. I was like, Oh, I want to play violin, I want to play violin. Now having a six month old, I believe my parents have made that up

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:10:09] because I'm like, There's no

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:10:11] way, but hey, I love you, parents, you didn't make it up. Thank you for the violin. But I they say that I was asking for the violin, and so they started me on a cardboard violin. I am Suzuki trained on violin. I could actually read music before I could, like, read a book. And so I was playing the violin. And then I also grew up in the church, in a Baptist church in Kentucky. And so I was singing in choir. And then in fourth grade, I auditioned for the School of Creative and Performing Arts in Lexington, Kentucky, and I was a violin major. And you had to choose a minor and an elective. I was a vocal minor in a dance elective, I believe, but it was like literally an arts playground. We were able to participate in anything we wanted to participate in. Our major was obviously our infants emphasis and in fourth grade, it's like, you know, what's the emphasis? The emphasis is just they were fostering incredible creativity. And so you could audition for the shows. You could be in the orchestra, you could be in the band, you can blah blah blah blah blah. And so I auditioned for how to eat like a child in fourth grade, and I did not get it. And she was devastated. And so my first show was Peter Pan. In the fifth grade, I played a pirate and I had a fake nose, and I just was really thrilled about that. And my grandmother sent me flowers and it said to the pirate, who knows it all? And I was very excited about that.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:11:42] And that's a really great part. I have to say that

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:11:45] never forget it. I'll never forget it. And just being a part of those shows like I love

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playing the violin, but I lived for being in shows like In. So it wasn't like they were competing with each other, but it was like it was this beautiful complementary relationship. And I just realized that I loved being in shows I loved creating. I love being on stage. I loved how it made me feel, and I was also in Central Kentucky youth orchestras and we took a tour of Europe, my junior year in high school, and I saw Miss Saigon and West Side Story on the West End. And I was like, Oh yeah, OK, that's what I want to do. I want to do that. And so to my parents dismay, I was like, Well, yeah, so all those violin lessons from the age of two up and in through high school, I yeah, I'm not going to do that. That's not what I'm going to

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:12:43] go to college for.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:12:45] So I did Governor School for the Arts, which then led to a job fair like we were able to like, you know, meet people from colleges and what are you going to major in and blah blah blah? And I didn't realize music theater was like a situation until the job fair. And I had a colleague who had gone to my high school, Kristen, and she was at Belmont University as a music theater major, and I was like, Oh, this is a thing I can major music, theater and so on. I visited the campus. I did a couple campuses like in my head. I wanted to go to UCLA or NYU or like, we're coming from Kentucky. That was like wide a very that was too big of a jump, I think, for me. But touring the campus of Belmont in Nashville, it just felt felt like where I was supposed to be. And so I went to Belmont. I got my degree in music theater and every year we would do auditions. We did see the Southeastern Theater Conference where you have like a 90 second audition and you have to sing and you have to do a monologue and blah blah blah blah and all these things. And then you go into a hotel ballroom and you've gotten callbacks from all the different theaters. You have to like, look for your number and you go to their hotel rooms and you do your callbacks. And some callbacks are like midnight because you have to schedule them. And it sounds really crazy saying it out loud now.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:14:03] Yeah, like that audition I had was in a hotel room at midnight

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:07] and like, and it was one one mike guy. It's like, Well, you know what I mean with like the artistic director of the theater or like the director of the show.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:14:14] And you're like a young woman.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:15] Yeah, and it's like you're at a hotel room at 11 p.m. And that's like, like saying it out loud now. I'm like, I wonder, does this still happen? Is this still how they do it?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:22] I don't know.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:14:23] Auditions are wild to begin with, but you know, I mean, yeah, let's invite this young woman like this means everything to her up to that. Like what is going on?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:32] And you don't think anything of it other than they loved my 90 seconds.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:14:35] Yeah, you're just grateful for the opportunity. It's crazy. You know what I mean?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:38] And you're just they are trying to get a job at summer stock for like \$150 a week.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:42] Like what? I hope we have hope.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:14:46] I hope we have evolved out of that. But blah blah blah, I started doing summer stock and and then one of the callbacks where I was able to fly to New York, where the callbacks for the first nonwhite tour, a thoroughly modern Millie. And then so I booked that. And then we closed the show in Newark, New Jersey, at NJPAC. My mom flew up and it was like June of two thousand six and we literally took the train. I, I had like, figured out a room I could sublet with, and I was living like three people at the time, and we took the train cut off in Harlem and I moved to New York. And that was it.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:25] Oh my god.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:27] Do you still play the violin?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:15:29] I do. It's in storage right now because it's very hard to travel, but it is in a climate controlled storage. But when I'm in New York, I do pull it out every now and again. I feel like I'll pull it out way more often now with D3 and my older brother still plays the violin. And so. So yeah, it's definitely still a part of life.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:46] Oh my god, that's an amazing story. So you're there in Harlem? And one of those, you know,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:15:52] everybody was just, you know, yes,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:15:55] couple of people that you probably didn't know, maybe you did, then that means you're lucky if you knew them before and you have this room then and then you're pounding the pavement, right? Like, that's that whole life of getting out there you know

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:16:08] it was wild because I didn't really know what to expect. My my school at the time, they cater to a broad spectrum of like what to do outside of college. It was very much like, Oh, you can work on a cruise ship, you can move to Atlanta, you can live in Missouri, you know, and so like, they cater to a lot of things. It wasn't like New York focused. It definitely was like, Oh, and you can move to New York. But it wasn't a lot like, OK, this is what life will be like in New York. This is what you need to do. Like, you know, it was just like, Oh, you love performing, we're going to teach you how to perform. We're going to foster that passion and fly. And so there was no like

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:16:49] a

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:16:50] checklist or system or like, I didn't know what to expect, really. But I did get an agent pretty soon after I moved to New York, thankfully. And then a lot of my first auditions, they were like light agent, not

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light. They were agent appointments, but I wasn't in the union, so it wasn't like I wasn't like coming in like with heavy hitters off the bat. It was literally like it, a job. And so I got my equity card doing a misbehavin at the two river theater in New Jersey. I think it's, yeah, it's still there. And yeah, and then it was like kind of like we were off to see the wizard from there. And it was like such a cool time in my life. Like, I look back at her and I'm just like, Oh man, there are. I'm tired thinking about all the ways that I made things work. It was like I had a job, I had auditions, I had appointments and blah blah blah. And it was, you know, I'm really proud of her. I'm really proud of her.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:43] Yes, I sometimes say, you know, Hey, fill in the blank. Year me. Yeah. Do you see this? Are you seeing this right? Like, Hey, 2016 me? Do you see what's that like to

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:17:53] have those seeds, man? Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:17:55] You know, and so I love hearing you watching you and hearing you talk about this is really is very moving. So you should know that like that. All that comes through through time zones and miles and miles and tech issues and all that. How did you get your. Well, first of all, I love that they were just like New York is New York, but there are other places to do that are like, that's like a good reminder for everyone in the world.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:18:21] Yeah, right, right.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:18:23] But how did you get your agent? I know people are always very interested in these stories because there are a lot of aspiring or not even aspiring creative people who are out there who are curious about these things.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:18:34] Yeah. So I got my agent off of a recommendation, actually. Rachel Hoffman, who works at the Telsey office now, she was working at Yves Clemons office, who cast the non-equity to Emily that I was in. And I remember it closing night. We had conversations about my career and she was like, I think you should move to New York. I am moving jobs. I

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can't really tell you about it right now, but you know, I am here for you, and I think it's time for you to move to New York. And I was like, OK. And all of a sudden I got a call from an agent and they were like, Oh, we got your info from Rachel. And I was like, Oh, OK. And you know, once again in school, it wasn't something that I knew about. You know, you hear about how hard New York is going to be and it is hard. But you know, so then I'm like, Am I getting scammed? I don't know what an agent is. I don't know what this means. I'm supposed to be lining up at three a.m. and I was and I was willing to do so. And so like, you know, I love that there is a cross-section of experiences and that everybody experiences. Everyone experience something, experiences something completely different. And so I was connected to this agency. I had to go audition for this agency and then we were trying each other out. And thankfully, the relationship has flowered and it has bloomed so beautifully. I'm still with them, and so I've been with Stewart Talent since 2006. And so, yeah, it's been it's been a really, really great relationship and I'm so very thankful for all involved. Truly. Yeah, yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:20:16] And then from there, because now I feel like, are we get are we getting close to the the Donald Weber, the Nik Walkerness of it all? Or is that

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:20:24] Oh man, that is like, that is like, you know, she had to grow up a little bit, you know, she wasn't ready for a Donald Weber for Nicky Walks, you know what I mean? She had to, like, have some life experience before those two clowns.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:20:37] I got to tell you they're not ready for Rebecca Covington. I'm saying that right now on the record

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:20:44] before those two clowns walked into my life.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:20:46] Oh God, .

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:20:47] No. So I was back. In New York, I moved to New York after Millie, I was pounding the

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pavement and I remember I auditioned for Mamma Mia! And I remember doing a dance call. We were at the equity building. I had some callbacks, but it definitely was like seeing 16 bars. It wasn't like, Oh, you have an appointment for Mamma Mia, blah blah blah. Like, it was definitely like a vague like, Oh, there's a call for Mamma Mia! And it was. It was through my agent, so it was an invited call, but it was sing 16 bars of this. We're going to do a dance call a situation. And I re- I don't remember where I was going, but I was in front of the funeral home on 137th and Saint Nick and my agent called. I remember I was literally stopped at the funeral home and set on the funeral home steps, and he was like, That's when he told me I had booked Mamma Mia! And I was like, I'm rich. I was not rich. And so I went on the road with Mamma Mia! For like a year and a half, and that was really my it was one of the most life-changing experiences and most educational experiences for me and for, in fact, my stage manager from Mamma Mia! In 2007, ISH is my production stage manager here on AM Packing. No way. Same stage manager. Same team. It's really. Oh, I love that. It's relationships in this business. I mean, obviously I didn't book it because of that stage manager, but all of a sudden my stage manager is like calling me and it still said Kim Fiske mom and me, and she was like, Hey, I'm calling to welcome you to Hamilton, and I was like, You're the stage manager.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:22:22] I was like, That is so light.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:22:23] And so this business is just my small.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:26] Yeah, it's crazy to see. I can imagine you see that not we were like not expecting to see that now, but like in that context.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:22:32] Right, exactly.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:33] It's just totally

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:22:35] out of kind of a lot. And so that was I didn't meet Donald and I met Donald in 2011 and I met Nick. I guess we met he, wasn't it? So we must have met when he

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came into the Broadway company. So probably like 2013 or 2014. So there's a lot of a lot of life before that. Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:22:56] So tell me about Motown.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:22:57] Yeah. So we met doing the readings of Motown, so we did the developmental readings of Motown. Donald had actually done one in L.A. I did the first one in New York. Life had happened. I had lost my younger brother in 2010, and I decided to take a break from the business. And then my agents, you know, they were kind of like tiptoeing on how to like, what to send me, how to like, how we weren't going to move forward. And and they were like, Oh, I think you want to. You may want to do this Motown thing and and a guy at the time, he knew the director and I couldn't get an appointment and I was like, Yeah, I am interested in this. And so he sent my headshot and resume to the director, Charles Randolph, right, and I was able to get an appointment and I booked the developmental reading and that was in February of 2011, and that's where I met Mr. Weber. And we did like a two week reading like it was nothing. And then we just stayed in touch. It was. It was. He was just such a refreshing personality and his just his. I mean, anyone who knows him knows he's he's literally game for anything. He's like the most joyous person in the world. And he's like, Yeah, cool. We'll talk on the phone for an hour. Yeah, call me when you're driving blah blah blah. And then so we stayed in touch after that reading and then we didn't start dating until like two years later. But he was one. He became one of my best friends. We literally I remember when I was doing Ain't Misbehavin overseas, we were in Paris for one of my birthdays and. I remember he didn't call me like because we had Skyped, we had and I was like, That's so weird, Donaldson, call me and I called and I gave him a hard time. I was like, Do you know what day it is? And he was like, Yeah, October 24th. And I was like, Yeah, it's my birthday. And so he hasn't missed any like any important days because I was really upset. I was like, I don't understand. I don't understand how I didn't get a call on Paris time or on U.S. time like that doesn't make any sense to me. I need you to do better, be better. We're friends. But yeah, I mean, how many friends do you call in and cuss out over your birthday? So obviously, yeah, obviously I cared about him a

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lot, and I I guess, you know, you'll get two different stories out of us.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:09] But yeah, no, I understand. I mean, my husband, Mike and I were also friends.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:25:16] You know what I mean? Like, yeah, hindsight is 20 20.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:19] Yeah. If you didn't call me on my birthday as friends, I'd be like, What? What?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:25:22] Yeah. Like, how did you miss my birthday? Yeah, yeah. No, no, no.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:25:25] What what?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:28] I love that you were like, do better. And he's never missed a single one, so

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:25:31] never missed it. And we've talked like every day. So it spent. Maybe his plan was at that point just to talk to me every day just in case he forgot something. So maybe he was just smarter than I ever realized.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:43] No, I'm not. You, you're probably

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:25:45] like, It's a

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:46] good. I think he just wanted to talk to you all the time. I think that part's true.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:25:51] Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:25:55] Well, you said that I'd hear two stories. So what? What do you think his version would be now that he's not here? Now, it's just us?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:03] OK.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:03] So, but

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:04] so there was a whole situation. There's a there's like two. There's like a detour on our stories when it comes to like how we first hung out, how we first like became friends. So, you know, here's the thing this is my episode. I don't I don't have to honor how he experienced it because it's a lie. You know what I mean? How I experienced it is the full truth

Gillian Pensavalle [00:26:28] when I said, I want the Rebecca Covington Webber story, this is exactly what

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:31] I meant. Do you know what I'm saying? And so I guess if you guys want to talk to him about this, you're going to have to slide into his DMs. And I better not catch you.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:26:39] Yeah, no, I'm OK.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:40] I bet because I will respond, do you know what I mean? And so sure.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:43] Here's the thing.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:26:44] We were doing our readings of Motown, and this was like near the end of our two weeks together. I don't I didn't really talk much during the first part of the two weeks because we didn't really know each other, and it was a whole bunch of like New York friends that I had. So you know what, you came here, you did work and then you left. It wasn't a lot of like social time because we had like 75000 songs in the show at that point. We still had 75000 when the Broadway show opened. But you know, it is what it is. And so there was a cast member who had what I would like to call a mental episode. And, you know, it was like a bit stressful to experience like in the workplace because no one really knew what was going on. And like you have to understand in 2011, this is before social media. This is before, like mental episodes were understood and how you deal with them were understood and the. The complexity of it all. Do you know what I mean? And so at that point, everyone was like, Is he OK? Are we OK? Is everything OK? And so. It was a stressful day, and then I remember leaving the thing. But I want second, I want to make sure he's OK.

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:28:01] Are you OK?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:28:04] OK. OK. OK. Hey. My husband left his master mask and he's outside of inside of our hotel room. So I'm going to let him into our hotel room. He won't even let me get this story out. Do you see? Do you see the strategy here?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:28:17] I'm keeping this all in. All you see. Do you know what I mean? The world needs to know.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:28:21] See the strategy here. He's like, Oh, I left my mask and my keys

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:28:25] didn't leave your mask and your

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:28:26] keys. You heard me talking about the truth, and now I have to step away and let him into the room.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:28:30] I've got to make it about him or keeping it in .

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:28:48] Our interruption has subsided. He is in the room, he is getting his mask and his keys. So if everyone was concerned? OK, so it was a very stressful day at rehearsal and me being the empath that I am, I could feel everyone's stress and I was like, Does anyone want to go get a drink after rehearsal? And Donald was like, Oh, I'll go. And he was the only one that was like, Oh, I'll go. And I was like, Oh, I don't. I don't know him and I like, I don't. That's not cool with me. So I asked our friend Eric Summers, God rest his soul. I was like, You know, I don't know this guy. And he's the only one who said yes to going out to get a drink. Do you mind coming with us? And he was like, Yeah, I'll go. And so we went to, Hey, what's the name of that sushi spot? I'm like, It's a cross from Harry Potter. Um, I don't remember the name of it. I'm going to remember it as soon as I stopped talking about it. We went there and for happy hour and we literally had sushi and we talked and we got to know each other. And I will say I

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found him to be one of the most lovely humans, obviously, that I have ever met in my life. And so we became very close friends. Eric, Donald and I used to call ourselves the three musketeers. And yeah, we hung out and I would say we talked every day since then. But he obviously missed my birthday in Paris, and so we did not talk every day since then. But now it worked out well.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:30:12] Yeah, I mean, unfortunately, it would be nice for you to be able to say every day since then. But unfortunately, thanks to Donald's negligence, you are unable to say that phrase.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:20] So now now what?

Gillian Pensavalle [00:30:22] Let the record show. I mean, he has the rest of his life to make up for it. Honestly, like,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:28] honestly, I'm so

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:29] interested to see how he does it, though, because

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:32] I'm I'm I'm the

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:34] date keeper, right? I am like the organizer. I'm the one that's like just a reminder. You have this. Just remind you have this. And here's the thing we're adding birthdays like we have a son, we're adding milestones. So like, I'm really interested to see

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:47] if

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:30:49] there is a dropped anything because he is really good at like, this is our engagement anniversary. This is our wedding anniversary. This is, you know, he's really good at that. But I do feel like the brain calendar is getting maxed out. And so now not I love you, but I'm really interested to see what the first like. I hope it's not one of ours, but what the first like most holiday is, you know, maybe it'll just be like Flag Day. Maybe that'll be the first one. But you know, I'm really hoping it's not an anniversary or birthday.

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:19] We'll see. Fingers crossed. It's Flag Day. That's really the best. You know what I mean?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:31:22] Because I mean, if you're going to drop a day, I need you to drop Flag Day. Don't drop my birthday.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:27] Not again.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:31:28] You just can't do it again.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:31] I mean, again, that that's what you know

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:31:33] what I mean. A two time offense.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:35] Oh, I guess. And there's no statute of limitations here. So it's not like that was back when you were. No, no, no, no,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:31:41] no, no, no, no, not at all.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:31:44] Like, you're already at one. Like, I don't know how high the score goes.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:31:49] Right, right, right. Yeah, this is not a basketball game. This is this is a golf situation you want to score possible. Yeah, I can't believe I just made a sports reference

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:31:59] that was, I'm really proud of you for that. Thank you.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:32:01] Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:32:03] Oh, so you're doing the thing. You're in New York. You're you're making moves. You're falling in love. Yes, you're doing it. That's the dream.

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:32:14] It is. It is. It is. You know, New York is very you can be in a long distance relationship by living in Brooklyn and Harlem.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:32:21] One hundred percent,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:32:23] do you know what I'm saying? And so I do like it did take a lot of effort and it was a lot of like, Oh, OK, let's meet in Union Square. Oh, let's ride you ride the train halfway, and then that's a clean transfer for you, and then you can ride. Then back home. The time, the time that I was pissed he was so far away was when I got home from tech one night and there was a mouse in my apartment. Oh, do you know what I'm saying? And it's like midnight because you're at 10, you're in 10 out of 12. You know, I call my friend in Harlem and he's in Harlem and I'm in Brooklyn. So I just had to put a mouse trap and like, it was a whole contract. It was a whole situation.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:01] It's horrifying, but I

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:33:02] dealt with it by myself, so I'm proud of that. But I was sad that my friend was so far away. Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:06] This is another instance where it's like friend to the little asterisk, right?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:33:10] Because you call all your friends for mice, you know what I mean? But it wasn't like we didn't. We didn't. There was no like in love nest at the time.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:18] You didn't know that, but it was, bro, it was. It was a low boil, right? You know? Right?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:33:23] Yeah, it was like, just like this. Yeah, we didn't know that. We didn't know that. And yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:28] Do you ever hear from other people who were on the outside looking in saying like, how obvious you are? Like an example I have is a friend of Mike's notice that we were all out. Everyone was just sort of out like single or

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whatever. And I left like a group conversation in a bar to run to the bathroom, and I told Mike I'll. Be right back, I'm just running to the bathroom.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:33:48] You didn't tell anybody else,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:33:51] I didn't tell anybody else. And his friend was like, What? What's going on with you guys? And he was like, nothing because nothing had. But she was right. She wasn't saying in a bad way, but she was just kind of like, I think that you might not know, but I think something's happening like, right?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:34:06] Yeah, people say that like way down the line because I'd be like, Well, why didn't you say? Because here's the thing, like I I'm never one. We were never one to cross like boundaries we didn't want to like. Yes, so we did not see anything. We did not. There was no like discussion. There was there was nothing. And so like, we just didn't, we didn't see it. But I just knew that, like, I really cared about my friend. Like, I, you know, I was he was just he was a great guy. You know, he is a great guy. And yeah, so there was like this turning point. And I can't even tell you like when it happened, I don't even know when it happened. It was just like,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:34:48] Oh, yeah, OK, I love you. Like, you know

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:34:51] what I mean? It was like, Yeah,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:34:52] yeah, that make that scans.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:34:54] You know what I mean? It was just like, Oh man, you're my best friend. I love you. Like it. Just it made it. It made perfect sense.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:35:02] Yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:02] Oh my god, I love this. So tell me

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Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:06] about. It's just so it's just so it's just pure. I love beautiful stories and I love. I just love this.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:14] So getting like emotional about it, and I'm mad

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:18] that I met him first. I wish I was friends with you longer, but we'll get there.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:35:22] We'll try to. We have time. We have time. We have time.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:27] Well its funny because he when we were backstage at Porto in Puerto Rico, which I definitely want to get to, I don't know if you remember this, but first of all, he took a picture of all of us that I've never seen because it was on his phone and I was like, I'm never going to see

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:35:41] Oh, that his phone long guy's phone is like the black abyss. Yeah, he was like,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:45] No, I'll take it.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:35:47] OK, let me tell you what, I'm going to find this photo within twenty four hours. You will have it.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:35:50] I'm sure you are, but it's probably bad. I wore a dress that I thought was great, and then I realized later a little too complicated. I just I'm sure it's not the greatest picture, but anyway, but so good, he said. He was like, Oh, where are you guys going for it? We were only there for like a couple of days, and there are a lot of the Patreon Peep who came, which was like, amazing. It wasn't planned. It was just Puerto Rico was such a limited run and it was like really exciting. And I remember the two of you said, you have to go to Oceana because it's this gorgeous restaurant on the beach. And it really was. And we we like made reservations the next night and went at. I remember texting him and being like, When you're right, you're right. But the two of you were like, You have to go and because of you, we made the

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reservations and you were you were so spot on and it breaks my heart to say that Oceana is not is doesn't exist.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:36:37] Oh, it doesn't.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:39] Yeah, it breaks my heart.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:36:40] Oh man.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:41] YEah, I know. I know. And this bar prime time that I loved that Mike and I talked about in our like Puerto Rico specific episodes is also not there. And I just hate it. I hate I hate it.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:36:51] Now, is this due to COVID or like due to weather like hurricanes or

Gillian Pensavalle [00:36:57] climate change induced bad weather that Puerto Rico, just like, couldn't get, can't withstand? They just couldn't catch a fucking break and then culvert between that and COVID, it's just like it's

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:37:07] just too much

Gillian Pensavalle [00:37:08] because Oceana was right on the beach. And then, yes. Rebecca, I'm talking. If it was a if it was a 90 second walk, it was long from this little bar, prime time to Oceana. It was like a perfect little

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:37:19] wonder if I went to prime time. You might. Yeah. Listen, I loved Puerto Rico. Yeah, I had never been. And it was like, That was it for me.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:37:27] It was. If you want to talk about it now, since we're here, why not see one another? Yeah, tell me about. Well, no way, because I want to know your Hamilton story. OK, Rebecca, what are we going to do? OK, well enough about Donald Webber. For now, I want to hear about you. Mean, really? I know he has his episodes. No, he really is. Just like the two of you together are so sweet and so lovely, and he he was always very kind to me. We met when the podcast was so early in the run, and he, he and Nik Walker too, like I was called Nik Walker

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my first friend, never enemy. Like a little reference. But he yes, Donald and Nik specifically very early on in the run of this podcast. It never made me feel like a dumb fangirl, like they never they were very kind and very warm and supportive. And so that that will always be like something that's very important to me.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:38:21] I know I talk about them a lot, but they are two literally two of the kindest men you will ever know and two of the best people to have on your side. So I can I can attest to that. Yeah, yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:38:32] One of them isn't great at dates, and that's fine.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:38:35] That's just the problem. He's trying Gillian. I said, he's kind of, well, yes, it's.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:38:47] Let's let's. Well, unfortunately, it's going to it's the donald's going to be involved because I want to know your Hamilton story and I'm sure you know his his overlaps with you or whatever. So let's let's get into did you know, like how did you hear about the thing? Were you in love with it? Were you one of those people who who were like, I can't listen to it because I want to be in it so bad? Or like, what was your role?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:39:11] Oh, that's so interesting. From like the first thing? Yeah, yeah. So we saw it the first time we saw together at the public. It was still when, like they had like staff seats and you could see it for \$20. And and, you know, it was like before, the thing was the thing. So we saw it at the pub.. Sasha Hutchings Yeah, she was able to get us some of the staff seats. And I'll tell you what, you know, we were late. And I think they did not see us until after my shot. And I was like, I don't understand the show. We were standing outside. You know, they held the seating. They held the seating because we got, if you weren't there at the downbeat, they held you until my shot. And so we were standing outside and I was like, This is the mega-deal most, you know, just mad. Just mad that I was late. How are you going to be mad at the show because you were late? You know what I mean? And so and I remember being

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like, I don't understand the show. I don't I literally don't understand. I don't understand what's going on in the show. I missed the entire introduction of the show.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:14] Yeah, the first

Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:16] song lays it out pretty well,.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:40:20] But I did not realize that right?

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:40:24] And you know, it was like,

Gillian Pensavalle [00:40:26] Yeah, literally everyone's introduced. Yeah, basically.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:40:29] Yeah. Uh-Huh.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:40:31] And so then you know it, I like was like, I don't I don't understand what's going on. I don't, I don't know what's going on.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:40:36] I don't write a hit. I don't know what's going on.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:40:39] And then we saw it really early in the Broadway run, and I remember talking to Chris Jackson and he was like, Chris Jackson was also in the ratings of Motown with us. So, you know, it was like we saw the show and like, we are so proud of our friends, you know? And I remember talking to him and he said something like the public was like seeing it at like our old church on a back road and seeing it on Broadway was like seeing it in the cathedral, in the beautiful like cathedral. And there was something about it, like it was like you could. I felt the show. I could feel I could feel the heartbeat of the show. I could feel the nucleus of the show. I was on time for stage show, so I

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:41:16] definitely got the

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:41:16] opening numbers of the show. But there was it was. I was moved and it was one of those

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experiences that I couldn't put my finger on and I didn't see it in terms of I want to be in it. I I literally was just moved by the piece and I was moved by how I experienced the piece and I was moved by how it felt like I was at a concert. But I was emotional. You don't cry when you go to see Destiny's Child in concert, you know, like it was like the whole experience of like, What is this? I can't put my finger on it, but it like makes me move and it makes me like, feel things. Do you know what I mean? And I I it takes nothing for me to cry these days, and I feel like I've always been a bit emotional. You know, you can ask Donald about it. I don't care.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:42:05] Look, Lin Lin has called me. There's a video of him. I think it was after FLS's closing night or something. Burr. The Patreon Peep were really amazing and they got this video. I couldn't make it and I was out of town or because they got extended and blah blah. But there was this really nice thing, and I think it was for my two hundred that there was some milestone. Oh my god, I'm nervous, so I can't think of it. But there's video of him. And they did something really, really nice for me, like they always do. And they showed it to Lin and he was like, Oh, did you cry? She's an easy cry. And I was like, clocked by Lin-Manuel Miranda. So Rebecca, I had like, when you feel things like there's there's one way for it to come out and sometimes it's through my eyes

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:42:45] says yes and right.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:42:48] And so but this was one that it was it wasn't like I was crying. It was like I was sobbing, like I could not get myself together in order to, like, move on. And so it was just the experience of it all. And it had it was there was nothing in me that was like, Oh, I can't wait to do that. It was literally like, I can't wait to experience that again. And it had nothing to do with, you know, it wasn't like I was going home looking for the vocal selections. It literally was just, I can't wait to experience that again. Yeah. So we saw it. I think a week before it opened, we saw it in previews on Broadway, and then I think we saw it once it opened at at this point. I was in rehearsals for the national tour. Beautiful. So I do remember it was August because we left and it was July because we left in August. So it was right before they opened on

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Broadway. They were in previews on Broadway. And so. It honestly wasn't something that I was like. I did not see myself in it, but it wasn't a piece that I was like, Oh, I, I want to do that. It was like, I just want to experience it. And then as I tapped experience that I was like, Oh

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:44:04] yeah, I want to do that. But also, you

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:44:07] know, being in the business with my black girl magic. You know, it wasn't that wasn't something you saw yourself. You didn't see yourself leading shows, you know, and then it was like, if you're not that type, you don't see it. So I didn't know that. I didn't know that. Honestly, it was a possibility. And so I'm I'm sure that added into how I wasn't able to see myself in it at first. You know, they started casting replacements and blah blah blah. And I got a I got a generic call to do like the woman ensemble. I can't dance this ensemble. So it was like I was like, you know, I can't do the woman's ensemble thing. And then I got an appointment. It was right as I was leaving beautiful. And this was, I think, December of 2016, January 2017. And it was for the Schuyler Sisters vacation cover, which is Jennie Harney Fleming.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:00] Another goddess among us.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:45:02] When I tell you goddess, I mean, for wings, for wings and halos and all the things in the world.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:08] When she left my apartment, I said to Mike, I was like, I want to do better.

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:45:14] Truly, truly.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:16] The energy I was like, I feel lighter. I feel determined. Hmm. I I was hanging on her every word. Yeah. And speaking of CJack, he's another one, by the way. But to that, that after midnight performance, did you see that after midnight? Yes, with us.

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Rebecca Covington Webber [00:45:37] Incredible. Everything he touches is gold, and he knows that like, he's he's just he's incredible.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:42] And Jenny's voice, it's just like, just like,

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:45:45] Oh my god, team, truly dream team.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:47] I'm really like, I'm I'm holding my heart. Like, I just the just the thought of Jenny Harney Fleming makes me feel like fluttery. So yeah

Rebecca Covington Webber [00:45:56] As it should, she she is the flutter. Yes.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:45:58] Yeah, yeah.

Gillian Pensavalle [00:46:06] If you happen to miss Jennie Harney Fleming on the podcast or you just want to listen again and be inspired. She's featured in episodes 203 and 204, but next week I'll be back with the incredible Rebecca Covington Webber for part two. We're talking about her audition process. Words of wisdom from Tommy Kail that work life balance, defeating imposter syndrome and what it was like to run nine shows a week in Puerto Rico. But for now, that's it for me. So until then, stay safe. Stay healthy. Thanks so much for listening. I love you. I'm G.Pen

[00:47:11] The Hamilcast is brought to you by my love of the thing TM and my complete lack of chill, please join me in raising all the glasses to Sir Alex Lacamoire for generously making my intro music and this custom Yorktown arrangement that I will never, ever get over. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. To become a patreon peep and join the best, kindest and most welcoming corner of the Internet, go to Patreon dot com, slash the Hamilcast. You can submit questions to guests, join Zoom Hangouts, get behind the scenes access and of course, my unending gratitude. I'm at the Hamilcast on all social media and you can listen wherever you get your podcasts. Visit the Hamilcast dot com for transcripts, episodes and more. You can

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