

## Petey, Baseball Cap

IAN CHILLAG:

Heads up. Somehow for the second episode in a row, we end up talking about bird reproduction on the show, just wanted to let you know. That said, here is the show.

PETEY:

It was a fun night, it was a late night, it's a six train. I don't know if you guys know about the six trains. It goes from Pelham Bay Park, all the way to the Brooklyn Bridge. So, around the city, having fun, chilling and dancing, so there's a lot of music going on. Get flipped to the back of your time throughout the night.

I've fallen on the floor, a couple of the times in the night. And then, we wobbled, it was a wobbly walk into the train.

And I was getting, I was getting a car sick, you know. So, we get on the six now and I just remember my owner's sleeping. Noodle is dosing off.

IAN CHILLAG:

Noodle is the owner?

PETEY:

Yeah. And I just keep seeing the other side of the train like tilt and tilt and tilt, you know. So, I'm just hoping that I don't fall. I'm on his head and I know inside that head, he's probably dreaming. And I'm just kind of hoping he's having a nightmare or a bad dream, where it will just snap him out of his sleep.

But no, I remember falling off, rolling onto the seat, being upside down. Do you know what it's like to be upside down on a train seat? No. I'm picturing like a turtle lying on its back and I was like in Melbourne, I can't do anything.

I was just praying that nobody sat on me. And then, and then all of a sudden, "Stop." Staying clear of the closing doors, he gets up and he's gone. Somebody gets on the train and they look at me and they put me on their head and that's how I lost Noodles and gained Derrick.

My name is Petey, Petey the hat of the Montreal Expo, baseball cap.

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IAN CHILLAG: And that's not...that's not a team that exists anymore.

PETEY:

No, not that I know of, no.

IAN CHILLAG:

Have you ever seen another Expos hat?

PETEY:

No, not since I got separated from my siblings, no...that and sad because I spent so much time with my siblings and, you know, I seen them go, you know, my size is actually a 75 eight, so you have like, you know, my little brothers are like seven and half, like our big brothers, I got a seven three quarters, I got a eight.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, have you ever...have you ever seen adjustable cap?

PETER:

Yeah, I have seen those in my neighbourhood a few times, I mean, in the Bronks. I like sometimes, sometimes to do is snap it. You know, all of that innovation, yeah.

IAN CHILLAG:

I've never seen that.

PETEY:

'Cause they're sold, they're sold about the actual cap. It doesn't matter how it fits. I've seen instances were guys who've had dreads and like they have them up like Marge Simpson and those just put the hat on top of the dreads, on like they're on top on the hill.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, good two fit above the head?

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PETEY:

Yep, yep, yep.

IAN CHILLAG:

It just, it looks weird man. What do you think it's like to be up there?

PETEY:

Oh man, that's like to penthouse, man. That's the penthouse suite of heads man.

PETEY:

You see everything. You see the pigeons, under the bodega awnings. Pricey inside of first-floor windows.

IAN CHILLAG:

You see like the cab from three blocks away, with the light on, you're like, "A cab is coming", you know. You can probably see my squatchee.

IAN CHILLAG:

Your what?

PETEY:

Squatchee. It's the button on the top of the hat, it's a squatchee.

IAN CHILLAG:

That's called a 'squatchee'?

PETEY:

Yeah.

PETEY:

So, I mean, the Bronx is like...that's New York Yankees' country, as I understand like...

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IAN CHILLAG:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, unfortunately, yeah. What's it like being an Expos hat? Like really being anything but a Yankees?

PETHEY: Lot of questions, I get a lot of questions.

IAN CHILLAG:

Are you from Montreal?

PETHEY:

They don't understand. Like yeah. But from what I understand, I just go well, with a lot of the sneakers and the clothing articles. That white and blue.

IAN CHILLAG:

Appear well?

PETHEY:

Yes, yes. Yeah.

IAN CHILLAG:

Do you ever...like do you ever wish you were a Yankees hat?

PETHEY:

Sometimes I do. You know, sometimes I do. Sometimes, I don't. Because I feel like if you're, you know, with all due respect to my cousin is Yankee hat.

"You get lost and the source" is what they say, sometimes. You know they're so many Yankee hats that turn around, Oh, there's a gazillion Yankee hats, there's only one of me, you know. Yeah, there's all kinds of people representing the Yankee hats and that's cool, you know, that's cool. So, whatever.

But me, I'm like, I think they say, "It's an anomaly", you know. You know, I remember the first time we went outside people were like "Hey, where did you get that?" You know, it made me feel really, really special. You know, no one has ever, I've never felt that before. You know, I've never felt that level of respect, you know.

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The thing that also made me feel special, he never wanted to tell anybody where he got me. "Y'all, I got this at the BSL store." That's what he used to say. And he made me feel proud that he didn't want anybody to even find out my origins or where...you know, it made me felt special.

IAN CHILLAG:

That was with your other original owner Noodles?

PETEY:

Yeah, I miss him, man. I really miss him, you know, Noodles, Noodles, he just had so much pride in me, you know, he always made sure I was nice, I was crispy, you know. You know, this new owner, I don't really know man, Derrick is just weird. You know, Derrick throws me. When we go home he just throws me in the corner, seats on me, you know, I'm all out of shape now, you know, I don't even have the original shape that I was born with.

You know, I look in the mirror sometimes before he goes out and I can only recognise myself to be honest with you.

But, you know, Noodles was just, he just...he was cool, he made me feel like I was a crown, you know, for the first time in my life.

Have you ever been treated like a crown?

IAN CHILLAG:

I can't say that I have? Yeah.

PETEY:

Special.

IAN CHILLAG:

It's interesting that you put it that way, I think about...I think about the people that love me.

PETEY: Mm-hm.

IAN CHILLAG:

Like, like my wife...I think about like, what if my wife to show me that I was important to her, made me sit on top of her head.

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PETEY:

Oh, that would be... You would love it. I'm telling you, you'd love it. Someone just sporting you around, you know, turning you around - turning you to the side, when they get serious, you know, he did amazing up there.

You'd be such a sense of pride, trust me.

You might just start a new trend, you might not even, they might not even do wedding rings anymore, you might just have to sit on your spouse's head, so people know you're together, forever.

IAN CHILLAG:

It's a beautiful image.

PETEY;

Mm-hm.

IAN CHILLAG:

Petey, I think about...you've got this thing on your, do I call it your front, your face?

PETEY:

No, that's like, yeah, that's my front. That's the front of my face.

IAN CHILLAG:

OK. And it has Expos on it.

PETEY:

Mm-hm.

IAN CHILLAG:

It seems like it'd be weird to have one thing that you're saying kind of representing to the world?

PETEY:

I feel like, you know, I'm bigger...I'm bigger than that, you know. I feel like I represent security...

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IAN CHILLAG:

Security?

PETEY:

...You know I represent head security. I represent staying on top.

IAN CHILLAG:

Literally on top.

PETEY:

Yeah, I'm like the ultimate head security guard, you know, I'm protecting you from the rain, the snow, the hail, that random, that air conditioner juice that might drop on your head.

IAN CHILLAG:

I do think about you, 'cause like a lot of people have a favourite cap. People have a favourite T-shirt, but like with your favourite T-shirt, if it's bad out you can put a jacket over it.

PETEY:

Mm-hm.

IAN CHILLAG:

You know, but like with a favourite hat, you are always...

They're sort of frontline of defence, like there aren't hat for hats.

PETEY:

Yeah, it's unfortunate. But, but you know, I was thinking about this the other day, 'cause like I said, I have a lot, my family is huge, you know. I got so many different relatives, you know, different hats, I got cowboy hats...

IAN CHILLAG:

OK.



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PETEY:

...You know, those are cousins from down south. Then, I was thinking about one of my favourite cousins, he's a shower cap, you know. So, I was thinking like man, if we could just collab one day, like we usually hang out but, like you're saying on a rainy day, it would be cool if we could just collaborate and just like kind of come together and then keep a lot out for me, I could look out for him or her, you know, we come together. I go on first and then my cousin covers me, it's like a cover.

IAN CHILLAG:

Yeah.

PETEY:

You know, someone the rain hits, it's like protection, 'boom'. And then, you sit through, so you can still see, that's him whoever you're representing.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, thinking about other different types of hats, your...your cousins, are you happy being the type of hat you are?

PETEY:

Oh, man, I love... I love being ey, yeah, even though, I don't play or I'm not involved in the sport of baseball. I love being a baseball hat, you know like it feels like a crown. It feels like I'm royalty, you know? And it's like a lot of other hats that I could have been, so I'm like fortunate to not be another hat like they have this falcon sex hats. Have you ever heard about these guys?

IAN CHILLAG:

Did you say Falcons sex hat?

PETEY:

Yeah, yeah. Like the falcon, like the (VOCALISES). Usually, it's a sex hat that humans wear, you know, like us being as humans. They kind hard species to figure out, you know, hats were simple - but like they have some sort of a hat that Falcons will land on and I guess, they'll have... they have intercourse with the hat and they artificially make more falcons.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, there's a hat that a falcon lands on and breeds with, you know, and they take what's in the hat to a laboratory and they make more baby falcons?

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PETEY:

I guess, I just...I just keep thinking about what it would like to be the person wearing that hat.

BRAD:

Hello.

IAN CHILLAG:

Hey bro, can you hear me? Are you OK?

BRAD:

Yeah, I can hear you. I'm moving to a different spot on my property. Does this sound a bit better?

IAN CHILLAG:

Yeah, it sounds a lot better.

BRAD:

OK. (INAUDIBLE) the satellite. OK.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, brad, I wanted to talk to you about the falcon sex hat. You've...you've used one of these hats?

BRAD:

Yeah, many times. Yes.

IAN CHILLAG:

Can you just tell me what it is like?

BRAD:

We work with these male falcons, often a peregrine falcon or a gyrfalcon and you have to be on his same level, you don't wanna tower him. Be on the same level or even beneath him, so we assume a very humble position often in a chair or kneeling and you almost have to go into a meditative mental

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thing, 'cause you can't do this when you are or drinking too much. You have to be very much in the moment.

IAN CHILLAG:

Sure.

BRAD:

When that falcon...then he'll give...he'll look at you kind of stares at you and he may then very quickly flatter over and land directly on the top of the hat and you have to remain very still or somehow you can talk to him while acting like a female, because they make quite a racket...

IAN CHILLAG:

Wait, so when they, when the falcon lands on your head you'd then chirping and make sounds?

BRAD:

Yes. Yes. Yep.

IAN CHILLAG:

Well, what is that? What is that sound like?

BRAD:

Oh, boy. Let me try it. You're ready? It would be like (MAKES SOUNDS LIKE A FALCON). There you go.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, you're doing this with falcons who for one reason or another have imprinted on humans?

BRAD:

Yes.

IAN CHILLAG:

Can I ask why the head? Why not the have the falcon land on your arm or anywhere?

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BRAD:

For some reason, the male falcon mounts a female falcon on her back, by placing your hat on your head and the falcon thinks that you're his mate. He goes to the highest point which would be kind of like a female falcon's back, which is the top of your head and he starts dancing around getting excited and you'll see in a couple of minutes he may mate with that hat but there are some males that actually they're quite moody, they're quite emotional, they don't all do it. And they don't all do it when you want it. So...

IAN CHILLAG:

That actually sounds very human.

BRAD:

It can be and yes and you...and working with falcons has made me a better person.

You cannot be getting...you can't get angry, you can't...you have to be very steady and very kind and very patient. I've been married, hey this is a good thing. I've been married for like 41 years which is an anomaly and maybe I'm gonna give some other credit to my working with falcons the past 50 years.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, they all stopped of being a team in 2004, it must be so weird... What's it like being a hat for a team that doesn't exist?

PETHEY:

It feels weird, you know, it almost feels like being 'endling', you know.

IAN CHILLAG:

Endling?

PETHEY:

Yeah, endling is basically the last of its breed, the last of it's kind, you know? You know, the last dinosaur or the last turtle, for the last seat on a bus, you know, it could anything, whatever is the last, it's the endling.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, the last of a species is an endling?

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PETEY:

Yeah. and that's basically how I feel. I'm like that. That's who I am, I'm the last of the team. The team is gone, there's no more Expos, you know, I'm... My team, my brothers, my siblings everybody is extinct, except for me.

Just think about that. And actually... There's no more history, you're the history now.

IAN CHILLAG:

There was a time in Montreal where there were Montreal hats everywhere. I can show you a game if you want. I can show you a Montreal Expos baseball game and I don't know, you just sort of tell me what it's like.

PETEY:

Sure. I mean, I might be paying for but, someone is like watching a movie about your ancestors that aren't here anymore.

IAN CHILLAG:

So, this is a 1981 game.

PETEY:

Oh, there we go. Oh man, look at their hair under that hat, I couldn't even imagine what that hat must be thinking about, keeping all that hair in place.

IAN CHILLAG:

Yeah, this was a kind of mullet era of baseball.

PETEY:

This is crazy, I'm not I've never seen this many hats of my kind before, you know like, I never even thought this was possible, you know like a whole stadium with just my siblings on.

IAN CHILLAG:

Yeah. So, do hats ever do anything like do they ever take their hats off and catch a ball with it or anything like that?

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PETEY:

No, you're actually not allowed to do that.

Yeah, I don't even think I'd really wanna be used to catch a ball because it'd probably hurt, you know, balls usually coming from high up, I'm guessing, you know, I think I'd rather... I'd like to catch is probably just Noodle's head. Oh man, I hat... I think I know that hat. That hat looks like one of my sisters. It looks like Tina.

Man, it's like, not much actually happens in baseball.

IAN CHILLAG:

Yet, for me, I feel like baseball is watching a game is like...it's indistinguishable from just sitting there. Yeah, but could we sit here for while?

IAN CHILLAG:

This is 'Everything is Alive'. The show was produced by Jennifer Mills with me, Ian Chillag with Eva (INAUDIBLE) Will Trevor and Izabel (INAUDIBLE).

Thanks also this week to Emily (INAUDIBLE) and (INAUDIBLE)

We're grateful to the reporting of Sarah Curtis from whom we first learned about the falcon sex hat. We'd also like to thank Brad Wood for talking to us about the part. Petey, the Baseball Cap, was played by Petey DeAbreu. Music in this episode was by Blue Dot Sessions. Everything is Alive is a proud member of Radiotopia from PRX, Julie Shapiro the executive producer is the Noodles to our Petey. You can get in touch with us in a number of way @everythingisalive.com. We'll see you soon.

IAN CHILLAG:

Hey, there's a new thing from Radiotopia you should check out, its called 'Space Bridge' and it's a four-part series on Radiotopia showcase about citizen diplomats, forging connections between the US and the USSR during the cold war. Also, it includes two things I really love, Astronauts in the 1980s. Here's a clip, This is Astronauts Resty Shoeka talking about what it's like seeing earth from space.

VOICEOVER:

Do you deserve this, this fantastic experience? Have you earned this in some way? Are you separated out, to be touched by God, to have some special experience here that other man cannot have? And you know the answer to that is no. You know very well at that moment and comes through to you so powerfully that you're the sensing element for man and that's a humbling feeling.

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IAN CHILLAG:

Space Bridge is out now on Radiotopia's showcase.

VOICEOVER:

Radiotopia from PRX.