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# THE ROYAL TELEVISION SOCIETY

## Interview with David Shore and Freddie Highmore

Transcribed  
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### **The Good Doctor**

RTS in Conversation with David Shore and Freddie Highmore

*Caroline Frost from the UK Royal Television Society speaks to The Good Doctor showrunner David Shore and executive producer and star Freddie Highmore via video conference. This 45-minute interview was published in video format on YouTube on Apr 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in anticipation of the second half of season 5 returning to TV screens in Great Britain in June 2022. It was transcribed from video to text by TeeJay from the [You Make Me More](#) blog on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.*

**Caroline:** My name is Caroline Frost, and on behalf of the Royal Television Society I'm delighted to welcome today the executive producer and showrunner of *The Good Doctor*, David Shore, alongside executive producer and star Freddie Highmore, welcome. Thank you both for coming today.

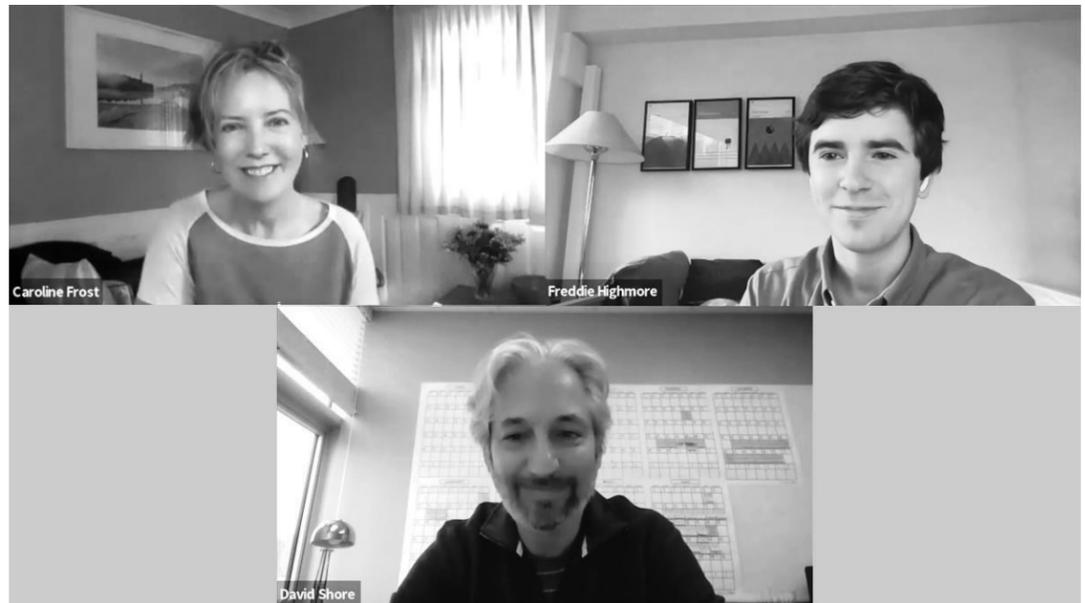
So we know that we've got season 5 forthcoming of *The Good Doctor*, so first of all, let's see a clip. [30 second promo of 5x01 *New Beginnings* is shown]

David, if I could start with you. I'm gonna take you right back to the beginning, if I may. *The Good Doctor* is based on a South Korean drama of the same name, could you just give us a quick, brief history of how it came to pass that it ended up in your safe hands and on our TV screens from America?

**David:** Well, American TV is very excited about stuff from other places or stuff based on books, it makes them feel more secure that somebody's kind of vetted it before them, in a way. They're not putting their own opinion on the line, God forbid.

I usually like doing original stuff, but... There's going to be a lot of butts in this. I heard about this Korean series from several people who told me I should watch it, including Erin Gunn who I work with, and other people, so finally I went, okay, guess I should watch this. And I watched the first episode and just really, really liked it, and wanted to do it, wanted to take that character and run with that character, and have fun with that character. I thought it was an entertaining character and an important character, and that's pretty cool.

And so I said I wanna do this. And Sony got excited and we found that



Daniel Dae Kim had the American rights to it, so I met with Daniel, and then I wrote a pilot, then we cast Freddie, and the rest is history.

**Freddie:** (laughs) I was wondering if you were gonna end with that phrase. I was waiting for that. At the end of all the butts. But the rest is history...

**Caroline:** As you, Freddie, intimated, the central character, Shaun Murphy, is crucial to the appeal of this show, and it was going to fall or fly on how much we responded and related to him as a character. So can you just tell me a little bit about your vision for that character and how you came to cast Freddie in that all too important role?

**David:** You're absolutely right, this show rises and falls based on that character, and how that character's delivered, and first and foremost we wanted to be honest, and we wanted to be responsible. This is not a character... this is a character that suffers from a condition that is never been— Suffers is maybe the wrong word, who has a condition that we've never seen as the lead on a TV show, I don't believe.

**Caroline:** Just for the sake of—

**David:** He has autism, the character has autism. If you haven't watched

the show, why are you watching this?

**Caroline:** Good point, good point. Yes, as you say, this is a central role with somebody who has a condition that is quite...

**David:** And so there is a huge amount of responsibility, I felt, to be fair and honest and responsible, but at the same time, this is an individual. Like all people with autism are—they're individuals. They have a condition, but they also have many, many, many other attributes. And they're individuals with the same loves and the same hopes and the same desires and they just manifest differently.

But a lot, a lot of thought went into that and how we were gonna show it. I mean, there are certain clichéd views of this very often, and sometimes the character is just a character with autism, we didn't want that. A lot of that thought went on. And then very early on, the network recommended Freddie Highmore, and I'm a fan of Freddie's work. I don't know if he's listening...

**Freddie:** (laughs)

**David:** But I happen to be a fan of his work, and we had breakfast. He had just finished, I mean, he will tell you, he just literally just finished

doing *Bates Motel*. I had breakfast with him, and I was just so struck with his intelligence and his thoughtfulness, but most importantly, he was asking the same questions in the same way that I was asking them, and it just seemed like a good fit. And one thing I've learned, you need a really good fit on a TV show between the star and the showrunner. You need to be pulling in the same direction, and it seemed quite clear that we were going to be, and it's been clear ever since.

And, you know, once we started doing the pilot, it just was so clear that we had made the right choice.

**Caroline:** Great, those are pretty endorsing words, Mr. Highmore, over to you. And I will come back to you on this one, David, because I'm curious about your predilection for spotting a talented Brit in the midst. Freddie, from your perspective, as David had said, straight off the back of *Bates*, and you were being presented something quite, quite different, what was your perspective on this decision, what drew you to it?

**Freddie:** I mean, I didn't, as David knows, I didn't have a— It wasn't like I was looking to do something else immediately after. And it was literally three days later after finishing *Bates Motel*. And I'd sort of come to LA and it was just really not, like, work meetings but just see a few friends and then go home to the UK. And I'd spent the five years on *Bates Motel* telling people, "It'll probably get cancelled next year, I'm gonna be back in the UK soon, don't worry," and then it was like, okay, the show's finally over, I'll come home, I'll be back in London.

And then, oh, actually I'm heading back to Vancouver to do a pilot with David Shore, and I've sort of been here ever since. But I think it was the opportunity to work with David, as he mentions, that breakfast was really... I kind of went into that breakfast, trying to keep an open mind and having really enjoyed the script but also thinking it would be somewhat crazy that an amazing opportunity would present itself three days after finishing something else, and left thinking, well, I guess this seems like it is actually as great as it seems.

And obviously the character of Shaun was so different from Norman, and so intriguing to me, and a huge amount of research had to go into it and we wanted to make, as David was saying before, you know, represent autism as authentically as possible. But if felt

like a really exciting challenge, and so we ended up... It almost sounds like I'm telling our love story or something, and it's like, "And then we ended up together, and then we did the pilot."

**Caroline:** How we met...

**Freddie:** Exactly.

**Caroline:** For sure, but as you say, very different character and specifically autistic. I'm sure you've been asked this question right from the beginning of the series, but what guidance did you take, what advice did you seek from that particular community so that you could be as accurate and authentic as possible?

**David:** Uhm...

**Freddie:** Go ahead, David. I mean, I'm sure we'll say the same things because they're true, but we have a consultant onboard the show who's been there since the pilot and maybe even before I was on board, correct me if I'm wrong, David, but Melissa... And she's absolutely wonderful.

And then, you know, David and I from the beginning shared pieces of literature that we found interesting, documentaries back and forth and discussed and looked at autism in general but also just being aware that we were telling this one individual's story and that Shaun can never represent everyone who is on the spectrum, in the same way that a neurotypical lead character of a show— in the same way Dr. House doesn't represent everyone who's neurotypical in the world. Shaun was never gonna do that for people who have autism.

And so of course it was being guided by truthfulness and at the same time feeling free to give Shaun his individualism and his own quirks and his own unique desires that don't necessarily have to do with the fact that he has autism.

**Caroline:** Yeah, for sure. Let me expand the landscape slightly beyond *The Good Doctor*. As you say, five years on *Bates Motel*, and then again a big show in Vancouver. What is it like for a British actor abroad? There's quite a history of Brits going over, I think was it 1981 or 2? Colin Welland said the Brits are coming with his Oscar for *Chariots of Fire*, and ever since then, the tide has just kept bringing more and more off onto the Hollywood beach. Is there a real challenge, or do you find that people do favour you because of your native origins?

**Freddie:** I mean, I'm not sure if I'm the better person on this to answer that question...

**Caroline:** I'm gonna ask David in a minute.

**Freddie:** But I do feel very lucky that David had such a wonderful experience on *House* with Hugh Laurie, because I feel like if Hugh had messed it up, then David would be like, I'm not trusting a Brit again, like, I'm not gonna go down this route, I already had one failed pilot that was caused by a Brit failing to live up to American expectations, so I'm not doing that again.

To be honest, I'm not really sure what it is. I know that people talk about, you know, sometimes the answer seems to be a certain training that Brits have gone through, but I didn't really have that myself, so I don't really know, to be honest.

**Caroline:** Let's ask David, let's find out from the organ grinder. David, go on.

**David:** This is gonna be a gross oversimplification, but I think there is truth to it. It may not be the training, but I do think in my experience, what I've seen, overall there is a slightly different attitude among English stars. They don't consider themselves stars, they consider themselves actors and they approach it as a job.

That has been my experience with Freddie, that was my experience with Hugh, that has been my experience generally. Not that there aren't Americans that fall into that category, but I do think that that attitude is different. I don't know, maybe it's just me, maybe I just like Brits. I grew up in Canada, maybe I've got that connection somehow. But it's worked very well for me.

**Freddie:** I do feel like David has a British sense of humour, in the sort of stereotypical, quintessential dry British wit sense.

**David:** I take that as a compliment.

**Freddie:** Especially since this Zoom is for people in the UK.

**David:** (laughs)



**Caroline:** So, David, this show is now in season 5, and by no means you've proved your record, no fluke, what is the secret to a long-running US network show? How does one get that phone call from the chief saying, yeah, you've got another season, you're doing well? What is the special sauce?

**David:** What do you think the answer to that is? Cause I'd...

**Caroline:** No? You've got nothing?

**David:** Dumb luck? My attitude from the beginning—this is kind of a cop-out answer, I don't think it is—my attitude from the beginning from the time I started writing... I came into writing a little later than some people. I was in my early 30's.

And my attitude is always, I'm gonna write what I like, and I hope other people like it. And if they don't, that's okay. And I'm aware that I need an audience, and I'm aware that I need to entertain people, and I do try to entertain people, but my instincts are to entertain myself.

Do I find this interesting, do I find this fun? And is this a show I would wanna watch? And that doesn't guarantee success, but I do kind of think if you don't do that, you're perversely gonna kinda guarantee failure, cause you're not doing anything that you have any real passion for, or it doesn't have any significance in a way, it's just cookie cutter, trying to go, "Here is what they're looking for," and there's no real creativity behind it.

You absolutely can fail this way, but I think this is the only way you can succeed.

**Caroline:** Okay. Alongside that, you've got your own vision for the show, your precious, and then we've got, you know, the network. Their overriding... they have an umbrella agenda. How do you navigate, how do you stay true while staying in the room, staying on the right side of them?

**David:** First you have a one hit show, and then they let you do more or less what you wanna do on the second hit show.

**Caroline:** Right, right. Okay. So basically it's by being David Shore, at the moment.

**David:** It is funny, actually, cause once you're successful, they suddenly think you're a genius, not that you're any smarter than you were the day before, but they suddenly think they

know what you're doing. It doesn't mean you know what you're doing, it means you're successful, and they stop worrying.

It's... I have very long answers about notes and network notes, and you have to— Sometimes you have to say no to them, but not always. I mean, you have to listen to them. When you give you a note that's coming from them as an audience, like where they're confused or they're not getting something, then listen, cause they're your audience.

I try to see them not as a network but as an audience, the first audience who read the script. And if the audience isn't responding the way I wanted them to respond, then I did something wrong. But if they're giving notes that are... like, we think you should do this. No. Tell when you've got a problem, and I'll figure out what I have to do better. And I try to be very polite and respectful, but I don't know if I wanna go on any more than that.

**Caroline:** Okay, fair enough.

**David:** Go ahead, Freddie, what do you have to say?

**Freddie:** No, no, I didn't really have anything else to add on that, I think that's wonderful.

**Caroline:** It sounds like a high wire act, for sure. One more question for you on this thing. Medical procedural. I mean, obviously your brief is wider than that, *Due South*, but there is something about the medical procedural that continues to draw viewers and continue to have low hanging narrative fruit that you are happily picking, why is that?

**David:** You know what, I actually will add to my last answer, I just feel like if people are writers and showrunners... It is a high wire act, and you do have to be respectful, you do have the ultimate power, and so you have to make them happy. But it's not gonna succeed unless you're doing what you wanna do. It's a difficult navigation to honestly think about their notes, think about whether their notes will be helpful or hurtful and let them know why in as most respectful way as possible so that they are still on your side. And at the same time, they wanna be listened to, but they also wanna know that you understand the show better than they do.

They wanna know that you really are in control of the show and that you know what you're doing. And so that has to come across within it, so I

think when you say to them, "No, that won't work because of this, this, and this," if you do that in the right way, they will listen, and will be happy to have heard it, cause they want to have that confidence in you.

Why medical procedurals? I didn't plan on doing in a second time, as I said, I just saw this Korean show and really liked it, but there's a reason that TV keeps doing that.

There are real stakes, you know. I am taking this really interesting character and putting him in a situation where people's lives depend on him. That's just a great setup for learning about this character. And so it just works.

**Caroline:** I have one more question I need to ask Freddie some similar things, but as you mentioned the strength and importance of this character... He's not the first, as we've mentioned *House*, you've mentioned yourself, these are not cookie cutter creatures, these aren't from central casting. Do you know these people in real life? Are they in a cupboard of your imagination, how do they appear to us?

**David:** That's an interesting question, I don't know.

**Caroline:** Have you ever met House in real life?

**Freddie:** (laughs)

**David:** House is a little bit me.

**Freddie:** I was wondering if that was coming. (laughs)

**David:** He's a lot smarter than me, but House is a little bit me, and Dr. Murphy is a little bit me, too. Different aspects, perhaps a little closer...

But these characters are not that strange, ultimately. I think both those characters are obviously ultimately very accessible to other people, which is why the shows succeeded. I think people looked at these characters, and as superficially as they may appear, people looked at these characters and related to them, and rooted for them, and when they said things, they said, yeah, I feel that way, too.

I think television sometimes suffers from a lack of imagination and keeps putting those same characters up there, and then I've been lucky enough to have a couple of interesting characters, but, I mean, I think the response the world has had to the shows shows that these characters are not that weird.

**Caroline:** We are all confused outsiders inside.

**David:** Yes, thank you, I should have said that!

**Caroline:** You can have it. Freddie, is Shaun Murphy also a little bit you? I mean, David's claiming a bit of the pie, do you claim some other bits of him?

**Freddie:** (laughs) Sure. I mean, I feel like it's... There's something in, like, of oneself in every character that you play. I feel like I don't know what else— Of course there's, like, a research aspect to it, but at the same time there's something instinctive about being on set and filming, and without wanting to sound too much like an indulgent actor, like being in the moment, and that sort of freedom comes from something that is in you. Similar to how David was speaking earlier about writing stuff that he would want to see, and that he believes is good, rather than trying to guess what someone else wants.

I feel like acting is somewhat similar, you know, there's comedic beats in the show, for example, and I feel like you just have to play those in a way that you find funny, or amusing, or emotional beats in a way that you find moving and that you feel will work for your sensibility. Because otherwise I don't know how else you'd try and second-guess what someone else might be wanting to see in this moment.

If it's like, I think this is just really unfunny, but I guess I'll do it because someone else might find it funny, I'm not sure if that would work. So in that way, I know that's not a specific list of Shaun Murphy traits that I have, too, but I think there is something of oneself in every character, for sure.

**Caroline:** And you're an exec producer on the show as well, so wearing a different hat completely. You also write, you also direct, which one of these is the most enjoyable? Might be all, but maybe you're allowed to put your finger on it. But also tell us a bit about how they interrelate with each other. So first of all, I mean, you've moved from acting to more behind-the-scenes roles, what was behind that decision?

**Freddie:** I think it came... It started a little bit on *Bates Motel*, and just the desire to be involved in the wider process. And I think working on television where you spend time not just with these characters but in a certain world for so long, I naturally found myself thinking, oh, I'd love to



contribute in this way and have ideas how I could help out here, or I could suggest here, or ways how I would direct a scene, or ways that I could write a certain scene.

I don't think it came from, oh, I want to be directing, or I want to be writing, it more was like, oh, I have these ideas and therefore I realised that this is something I'm interested in.

And I'd spoken to David about that at the very beginning, this now famous breakfast that we had. And I am really appreciative of David for letting me do those things on this show, because I think—

**David:** I think I was contractually obligated to.

**Freddie:** (laughs) But I'm sure you signed off on it in some way. Basically I forced David's hand. No, but I can see that there would be a great fear as to letting an actor contribute in more ways, feeling that it would get to their head and they would have some, like, desire for world domination behind it. But it was genuinely, and I think David knew this anyway, it was just genuinely out of wanting to help make the show as good as possible. And I think David and I have always shared in that desire to just, you know, on the same page and wanting to make it as good as it can be.

In terms of those three, I know I got slightly off the topic of the question, but the... I love all of them. I feel like long-term, directing is something I could see as being wholly fulfilling. Like, acting and writing both seem to me to be quite different, and you have the sort of being on-set experience with acting, and obviously there's a certain preparation involved in that, too. But there's also the kind of slightly more hidden away writing, like academic, nerdy side of me that I think is fulfilled when writing, and directing somehow is like a merging of those two things

**David:** It's amazing. It's remarkable having Freddie... A lot of TV stars get that producer credit. Freddie actually earns it. He's very much involved. It's kind of shocking.

I am prepping to direct the next episode, and my first AD comes up to me, assistant director comes up to me and says, "Freddie thought we could move this scene to a different location." And I'm like, what? Yeah, I send him the schedules. I send him the shooting schedules, and he goes through them. He's involved in every aspect of it. And when he's on the set, he's an— He makes suggestions about shot lists and stuff like that, which I'm not inviting all actors to do, but Freddie does it in such a— I feel more confident, knowing Freddie is on the set, keeping an eye on production.

**Caroline:** Well, that's a pretty glowing testament right there. I'm going to take you both right back now, if I may, so I'll start with David. Freddie came from a very artistic TV family, you did not. You were bound for law, is what I read. So what made you desire to make the leap from law, which would have been safe and lucrative and also very performative, to this?

**David:** As I have said, I wanted to be a lawyer from the time I was 12 years old until the second week of law school.

**Caroline:** Quite a long time but a quick decision, from the sound of things.

**David:** Yeah. But I did stay with it and I practiced for a while. I had a friend in law school who was just going to law school to make his mother happy, and then he was planning on moving to Hollywood to be a writer. And I really think that that was... I know this sounds strange, but I think that like the moment I went, oh, oh! You're allowed to do that? That's something human beings— I mean, I knew in

theory that there were people in Hollywood doing stuff, but I just thought I can't do that. I'm not...

Since then I've learned that quite regular people do this. Many less than perfect, but I just thought they were just anointed by God at birth to be writers, directors, that's not true. And so he went, and it just stuck in the back of my mind, and I just kept thinking about it, and thinking about it, and wondering, do I have something to say, and something interesting to say in an interesting way, and I just decided to give it a shot, and packed my car and drove to Hollywood.

**Caroline:** And I must ask you now, what was it that you thought you had to say?

**David:** I thought I was funny, I guess. I don't think the thoughts were that much more sophisticated than that. I thought it would be fun, I obviously wasn't having as much fun practicing law, so I probably set it up in a way that made me seem altruistic, but the truth is I just wanted to have fun, I think.

**Caroline:** And you mentioned these quite regular folk that do make their way to the golden steps. Do they stay quite regular?

**David:** No. No. No.

**Caroline:** Good. So I'm relieved to hear that. Okay, now Freddie, now we move over to your much more kind of born into the cradle of this world. Did you realise at the time, I mean, you know nothing else. You were a fish swimming in that water, but when did you make the decision that it was something you wanted to do, or were you ever feeling you wanted to rebel against all of that, or did your parents try to persuade you in another direction? How did it all come to pass?

**Freddie:** It's always funny when I get asked this question. My mum is an agent, and my dad, a very long time, before I was even born used to be an actor. But I never felt like I grew up in a family that was... and I know this may sound ridiculous, but I never grew up in a family that felt like it was part of this industry. It never felt like even when I was acting when I was younger, it never felt that being at home was in any way connected to it.

We weren't really... I don't know, and I guess that was just probably the way that my parents dealt with it, especially when I was acting as a kid, you know, I'd sort of go away and film, and then I'd come back and go

to school, and hang out with friends and want to be a footballer and quite focused academically. And it never seemed... I ended up going to university, and it never felt like that part was a rebellion as such away from, like, this path of sort of artistic acting craft or whatever that sort of thing would have been.

I just felt like very normal, you know, to continue through the school system and go to university and I actually spent my year abroad, I did languages, I spent my year abroad working in a law firm, so that felt like an option.

And I guess the best way of describing acting when I was a kid was almost a hobby in the way that it wasn't a focus of my life. It was something that I did on the side. Not a hobby in, like, not taking it seriously, taking it professionally, but it wasn't in any way a focus of my childhood. Or if it was, I never felt like it was.

And so I think in terms of it becoming an active decision to be involved in this world longer term, that came really when I was towards the end of university and the opportunity to do *Bates Motel* came along, and that felt like the sort of biggest decision to take of like, okay, I could be doing this for a few years, as ended up happening through luck and through various reasons, but yeah, until that point, until the end of university, I never felt like that was my dream, or that was the thing I always wanted to do.

**Caroline:** From how you describe it now, as you say, childhood, child acting, university, straight into *Bates*, it sounds seamless. It's the career of dreams for young people, but have you faced any what you would describe as a huge challenge, along that time, professionally speaking? I mean, has it—

**David:** Can I just add, child actors, notorious. It's just notorious and it's problematic for all the obvious reasons, I mean, you almost expect it. I just wanna say, kudos to Freddie's parents and to Freddie because everything he's saying is absolutely true. Freddie's an incredibly mature and decent human being and a pleasure to work with, and he's on the call with me right now, so take it with a grain of salt, but I really do mean it. So well done, Highmores, all around.

**Caroline:** Kudos to the Highmore seniors, I think. But, yeah, please do, I'm thinking anybody watching this, it all sounds almost too good to be

true, but I'm sure you've had your own days when it hasn't felt so seamless and effortless, so what would you nominate as a time that was a little bit more challenging?

**Freddie:** I mean, I do feel like, you know, I've probably used the word lucky or fortunate a lot already, but I do feel like I've had a huge amount of luck. And I think probably recognising how much luck is involved in this industry, regardless of talent, is something that keeps you from feeling like you're in some way worthless as a person if you don't manage to get this role or that role.

And, you know, just because we're talking about television and *Bates Motel* and *The Good Doctor* are both amazing roles that I'm excited to be playing, and there's also hundreds of other roles that at some point in TV or in film I didn't get or I wasn't considered for that I would watch and think, oh, of course I would have loved to have written that, in the same way I'm sure David watches, whilst being aware of his own fortune, watches shows and thinks, oh, I could have written that, or I could have done this. Or there's always things that you're not, that you would like to be considered for that you're not considered for.

But I think, yeah, I think also I was lucky to have that transition from child actor to an adult actor sort of take place off-screen. I sort of took three or four years away, really, from the end of school and A-Levels. Are they still called A-Levels? They've got numbers now, don't they, instead of grades? I'm like 30 now, I'm already from a different academic system.

But I took three, four years away, and I think that, then, I didn't need to try and find roles that would take me from a younger actor to an older actor, it just sort of happened because when I came back, I was more a young man rather than a kid.

**Caroline:** Great. I know, yes, there are still A-Levels, you're okay, we haven't lost them.

**Freddie:** But GCSEs aren't called GCSEs now, are they?

**Caroline:** No, it's all very confusing.

**Freddie:** Yeah.

**Caroline:** David, similarly, the roll call is very impressive, but could you nominate a particularly challenging time in your career where you did feel like the dice were not rolling in your favour?

**David:** I hate to complain, because everything has worked out so wonderfully for me. My career literally could not have turned out better. I mean, it's beyond my wildest dreams. But absolutely, I think I've done some stuff very well, but I absolutely got lucky over and over and over again. And in ways that I could not have anticipated were lucky.

I got turned down for stuff that, had I been offered those jobs, my career would be completely different. Or perhaps non-existent. I was lucky enough to, you know, you mentioned *Due South*, it's a wonderful show, and I loved it, it was my first staff job, and was a great show. And it had nothing to do with me that it was a great show. I think I contributed to it, but that show, you know, I did not create that show, I was a baby writer on that show.

And I was lucky enough to have that be a formative experience in my career. And then I had a number of good turns, and then, like, I worked on a show where I was absolutely miserable, and I kind of got fired, and that's what convinced me that I wanted to do my own show, and that was my career.

And I spent a year basically writing *House*. That would not have happened, had I been happy on that show. And would the network been happy with me, they weren't happy with me, I wasn't happy with them.

So, look, everything's been fantastic. And I don't believe that everything always works out for the best, but you do have to take your experiences and move forward and make the most of them. And sometimes it works out. That was far from inspiring.

**Caroline:** No, I think out of the jaws of humiliation came crazy victory. I think you're fine. I've got some quick fires for *The Good Doctor* hyper-fans here. Can anybody tell me anything about the outcome of Shaun and Lea's relationship? Don't keep us guessing. Is there anything you can say without giving it away?

**David:** I'm gonna keep you guessing. Why would I not keep you guessing? Enjoy the show, watch the show.

**Caroline:** Watch the show, thanks, that's the answer.

**David:** I'm sorry.

**Freddie:** And watch an episode I feel like we can tease, one that... There will be something in an episode that



David directs that will be in some way interesting for the people who want to know that question.

**Caroline:** I think that's a nice little, just a drop of...

**Freddie:** Something.

**Caroline:** Please tell us Dr. Glassman is going to stay.

**David:** He's gonna stay.

**Caroline:** There we go. We've got one happy camper. Right. Long-running shows, how does one— I know it's in the hands of the gods, i.e. the execs of the studio, but how does one decide when to pull the pin and how does one go about giving fans what they want by way of a send-off? So how will you know when it's time for *The Good Doctor* to hang up his stethoscope?

**David:** That's a really good question. Early on on *House* I was asked if I knew how it's gonna end, and I said, yes, one morning I'll get a phone call from the network, saying the ratings have dropped and we're cancelling you.

I was lucky enough on that show, and I think I'm gonna be lucky enough on this show to choose the ending I want. We've had enough success that it will end at a time and in a way that Freddie and myself, when we figure we've told the story enough and we don't have a lot more story to go, and we've got a way to end it, we will figure out a good ending.

I don't want the show to be judged on the ending, but I do want it to be a great ending. I want it to be judged in its entirety, and I don't want it to happen tomorrow.

**Caroline:** Spin-offs. Lots of series in recent years, *Chicago*, *FBI*... Would *The Good Doctor* warrant a spin-off, and if so, who do you think it would be?

**David:** I hope so, I mean, we are currently talking in very, very, very general terms internally. What we wanna... There's a DNA to this show. This unusual character in a world you don't expect this character. And we're talking about taking that DNA and planting it somewhere else. That's as much as I can say.

**Caroline:** That's plenty, thank you. I think I've already guessed. Okay, one for each of you. What would be, apart from *The Good Doctor*, aside, parked in a safe drawer, what would be a project that you would both, either of you, want to get your teeth into, Freddie, in your case to be in and also helm, and David, to create? What's outstanding to both of you?

**David:** Go ahead, Freddie. No, I'm gonna go first, just so Freddie can go last, we can put you on last but, uhm...

**Freddie:** I'm ready, I've got one if you want, if you need more time.

**David:** Well, I don't have anything specific, I just, I've reached a point where I would love to work with Freddie again, I'd love to work with Hugh again, there are people in my career... Freddie doesn't love when I talk about my first wife, but that's...

**Freddie:** (laughs)

**Caroline:** Are you talking a House/Murphy mashup?

**David:** Oh, that's a great idea, yeah, that's perfect. I'm done. That's what I wanna do.

**Caroline:** Hang on, okay. Still medical, do you like that world, David?

**David:** No, it doesn't need to be medical. I don't— I am never attracted to the world, I'm attracted to the people, and finding interesting characters. It doesn't matter that

much. I mean, it does matter, but it doesn't matter... It's not what gets me excited. It's not whether he's a doctor or lawyer, accountant, dentist, whatever. It's the character.

**Caroline:** Okay.

**Freddie:** My answer was just gonna be doing something in the UK. It feels like it's been a long time here. In a wonderful way. Not in a way of wanting to escape what I have, but more to add to it and do something, do a few more things back in the UK, and working there would be lovely.

**Caroline:** Okay, fair enough. And I've got one question each for the pair of you left, which is...

**Freddie:** Uh oh, I feel like...

**Caroline:** Is there... save it, save it, you're okay. Apart from your own projects, that's a given, what is or are your favourite shows currently on television that is a not-to-be-missed show for both of you?

**David:** My wife and I are watching, we just finished watching *The Grey*. I very much enjoy that. We always are looking for stuff to watch together, and that's been a pleasure. There are so many good shows on... there's so

many shows on TV, and there's so many good shows, and it's a good time to be a TV viewer.

**Caroline:** What's so great about *The Grey*?

**David:** I find it funny, and yet, it's different. There's something very different about it. It shouldn't work, in some many ways it shouldn't work, and yet it does. They pull it off. The writing is slightly elevated but the actors pull it off. It's just, I watch it, and I go, that is a great combination, that is actors and producers and directors and writers working very well together.

**Caroline:** Okay, alright.

**David:** But don't ask me more questions, I hate telling people to watch anything other than *The Good Doctor*.

**Caroline:** Yeah, only during the breaks.

**Freddie:** A companion piece.

**Caroline:** And Freddie, what about you?

**Freddie:** I saw *Responder* recently. Is it *The Responder* or just *Responder*?

**Caroline:** *The Responder*, I think, yeah.

**Freddie:** *The Responder*, which I thought was brilliant. I feel like you should... You may not have seen it, David, I'm not sure if it's even come out in North America, but it's... I just thought it was brilliant, I thought the lead performance is amazing, I love the specificity of it, of the world, the setting, and the way that it obviously was about a guy who's a policeman but it wasn't... It was like a really interesting character-driven way of exploring that world. It didn't really... It wasn't really driven just by him and his, the breakdown, I guess that he was going on.

**Caroline:** There we go. We finished with some great recommendation from two great TV creators. So it just remains for me to thank David Shore and Freddie Highmore very much for spending their time with us today, sharing some secrets from *The Good Doctor*, which will return on Sky Witness on 7th June with episode 8 of the latest series. Thank you.

**David:** Thank you.

**Freddie:** Thank you, Caroline.