

Before We Got LOST...

there was the original J.J. Abrams creation, [Alias](#). It began in 2001 and ran for a total of five thrilling seasons. Its debut was actually delayed after the events of 9/11. Tonight, while others watched a race (snooze), I decided to revisit the series courtesy of the DVD collections I received as Christmas presents over the last 8 years (I only have the first three seasons).

In a nutshell, the series centers on young, very attractive, very talented college student and full-time “bank employee,” Sydney Bristow (played by the very attractive, very talented Jennifer Garner... Ben Affleck is one lucky man is all I’m sayin’). The bank employ is actually a cover for her role as a government operative. Miss Bristow believes that she is working for a “covert division of the CIA” known as SD-6. However as Sydney learns in the premiere episode, SD-6 is not at all what it appears to be.

As with Lost, there were many plot scenarios that if you missed one episode you became seriously confused. I honestly cannot remember if this is the way the entire series played out, but each of the first three episodes ended with a cliffhanger. This is reminiscent of other television shows’ practice of leaving the audience hanging at the end of the season. Just one of the many series that you wish you could revisit for the first time. But enough time has passed that it almost seems fresh.

Ms. Garner does have a tie to the area. She performed in summer stock at the [Barn Theatre](#) in Augusta, Michigan along with such notables as the late Jonathan Larson, creator of the musical Rent.

A Father's Day Ditching

So... the entire family (well the extended immediate... siblings, neices and nephews, parents, and I) went out for dinner this afternoon after I got off work at 2. Because I did not relish the chance to sit in the back and be squished, I decided to ride with big brother and two of his three little ones (E-beth rode elsewhere). The trip back was much more exciting than the trip there.

Jeff decided to take country roads (take me home) aided by his GPS (help us all... she did have a rather familiar voice). We came across a closed road so we turned onto yet another back road. He happened to glance ahead to see vehicles coming from the opposite direction on the closed road. Apparently, they were in the process of repaving... HMMM... where have I seen that before. So, he decided to turn around and go back. The road was only SLIGHTLY more narrow than he expected; consequently, we ended up in a ditch (It wasn't me this time). To make matters worse, the ground was still soft following the storms we had a few days ago. We were STUCK!

Along comes a helpful young man willing to go retrieve his tow cables. Unfortunately, they would have done more harm than good as his small car has nothing to hook a cable to without tearing off a bumper. Moments later, another vehicle pulls up. This car had a connection to my intelligent brother as one of the passengers is a student at the school he is employed at.

It was decided that my 13 year old nephew would gently push on the accelerator while four stout-hearted gentlemen pushed and guided the car to relative safety. I think someone forgot to tell Joshua what gently meant. We got the car out of the

ditch; however, the car continued to accelerate, move in a circle, and come within inches of going into the ditch on the other side of the road. I think the young guy finally figured out how to stop the car or else decided that taking the car for a joy ride was not such a good idea after all. I wonder if the helpful sultry, seductive voice was offering directional advice at the time. I forgot to ask what her name is

Joshua told his father that he hopes that he is not put in that position for at least three years. It only added 15 minutes to the drive... enough however to make everyone else curious.

Saturday In The Park

I think it was the 20th of June.

HELLO EVERY PEOPLE. Morat is a back in country of strange people. I a come to go to the Droobile with sister of strange person and the little people. I a would a like to go to parade but I a go to the church to hear a strange person sing. I a ride many rides that go a very fast and I a get dizzy, but they were a very fun. Morat also a meet people from other country who a work for the people at the Droobilee. Two little people win a blow fish when they pop a balloon. In Liswathistan, we a have Droobilee. Morat almost ride one ride. You a get in car and it goes over a steep cliff. WOOLY SHEEP! I a no try that.

Later, a woman yell out a to Morat. She a say she saw Morat on tv box and say Morat and friend very funny. She a ask if group do hiring out for a party. Morat say he a not know so woman give Morat card and Morat say he ask around. She say

she and her husband were a planning party for little people and a like Morat very much. Maybe Morat no ask group and find out when a dis party is and ask friend to help... if he a free (OH, SURE!) Morat a think about this. I a not sure how long he a be in OHHO. I a guess some people want a more Morat, yes? Others a not so much.

At a ten of clock, we a watch the show of LASER. I a no see anything like a dis before. Lots of light and a smoke, and music. I a see map of America country, picture of a Superman, and man bopping head (he a strange laser man). I a hear number one song of Liswathistan, *Jack and Diane* by Cougar man.

Strange person he a say tomorrow is day for fathers. I a not know what this a mean. Another strange custom in OHHO. And it also the day of birth of brother of strange person

Papa, Can You Hear Me?

This weekend being the one in which we all honor our fathers, I thought it would be fun to take a peek at fictional dads who have been presented in television. In the beginning, it seemed as if families were shown as perfect, squeaky-clean and conflicts could be resolved in 30 minutes or less. Conflicts like how to get your son to eat brussel sprouts (don't think I've ever had the opportunity to taste them).

I'm not sure when the switch from perfect family to more realistic family took place. I'm thinking in the 70s with *All in the Family*. I think ultra-conservative Archie Bunker was one of the first fathers to have more to solve than a scrape on the knee or to ease a bruised ego.

Today's popular, fictional fathers seem to be lovable

buffoons who somehow manage to fumble and stumble through parental misadventures but somehow come to a somewhat happy ending. Homer J. Simpson has been working at the power plant, drinking Duff beer at Moe's, and going home to his interesting family for 20+ years. A highly inflated picture of the blue-collar everyman... must still be working.

My own father is a combination of the three, not so much the idealised father of 50-70s television more like the Al Bundy type... HAHA. Wouldn't trade him for anything, although...

Before He Gets T00 0ld

I just learned that another [Indiana Jones](#) sequel is in the formative stages. Speculation abounds concerning the macguffin, the casting, direction, writing, etc. To me, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* was fun if a bit far-fetched. Transporting the intrepid archaeologist to the 1950s and the era of Area 51, nuclear test sites, etc was a good way to age the character. However, I was not keen on the whole happy family dynamic: even giving the son a canine nickname. It seemed like a passing of the torch to a new hero and I say NO. I also do not see it possible to recast Indy. It may have worked (for better or worse) over the course of the James Bond films but to me no one could capture the essence of Dr. Jones like Harrison Ford. I think that as long as Ford is willing and (more importantly) able to carry the whip, the franchise should continue but everyone grows old.

As far as the relic, I really don't think that the religious aspect is all important. The three original films dealt with religious artifacts but each one had a mystic quality to them. While reading some comments about a fifth movie, people

have mentioned items such as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the lost continent of Atlantis (which was actually bandied around the last time), Excalibur, and other relics.

Ok, tangenteers and other interested lurkers... what say you? More Indy? Recasting? And what famous device should be the catalyst for the show? However, they better get cracking, the three masterminds behind the franchise are likely to be in wheelchairs within the next 20 years.

Cyber Therapy

This week has been a bit rough. It actually started last Saturday when the manager asked me how I thought our newest employee was doing. Honestly, I thought he had been doing really well for having worked a total of 6 days even coming in on his day off for 90 minutes to learn how to change a ballast in the lights (something I know nothing about). I have worked the most with him – all but two of those 6 days. I found it really strange that he had not been learning the register since we are a small store and everyone is trained on it. Sometime soon, I was told (red flag number one should have gone up).

A week ago Monday, he asked if he could have a day off for family. The manager agreed to give him the requested day off since there was enough help scheduled. I do not know if she informed him that it was not a great idea to be asking for a day off so early in his employment especially when the schedule was already posted. The assistant manager approached me and asked if I knew why he needed the day off because he had asked another co-worker to take his hours so he “could go to the movie.” I knew for a fact that he was not going to the

movie and really wanted the day off for a legitimate reason. Plus if it was really putting a strain on his employment, why give him the day off to begin with?

I was also informed that he was not doing his job appropriately. Mainly that he really did not like to straighten shelves. Well... zoning, facing, OH, I think we call it fronting is one of my absolute FAVORITE jobs . I jokingly told him to suck it up and do it anyway to which he playfully (AND I MEAN PLAYFULLY) told me to "Shut up." I know how Nate can be (right [Mare?](#)) and I immediately gave him a look and shook my head... playfully or not it was not a good idea to tell a fellow employee to be quiet even if we know each other well enough to know that it was light-hearted. Correct me if I'm wrong, but you (or at least I) don't go through three months of rehearsals of a show and not know something about most of the cast mates. The nights I worked with him, he did everything I asked and a few things I did not that needed done. I even asked if he had been trained on the register anymore than the basics I showed him the day he started when it was just the two of us in the store for a busier than expected 7 hours. WOW... something really major must have happened those two days I was not there.

On Monday, I received a phone call. "What the fudge just happened?" I was beside myself. I had defended him and stated my position to the boss and for what?! Why did she even ask my what I thought. Was I the only one who thought he deserved better than 6 days to acclimate himself? Anyway, he was walking to my brother's house and I told him to wait there and I would be out to talk to him and try to make sense of it. I told him what I knew and told him in no way did I understand why this happened. After spending time calming him down, we watched a movie. The rest of the week at work, I have noticed a heaviness that has not been there before and have been asked if there have been any "repercussions" following his dismissal. I just say no and let it go at that. I made my

point a week ago... apparently not very well. Nate told me that he would see me next week as he went to spend a few days with family. Therapeutic.

They Know Me So Well

Tonight, I HAD to attend the opening night performance of the WCCT's latest melodrama to show my support of one of my dearest friends who had a couple of roles in the show. When I arrived, I knew I was in for a treat. There was a duo of western lawmen who began to harrass me (?) with the rifles. They even went so far as to frisk me. They made sure that I made my donation of a canned item for the area food banks. The officers repeatedly told audience members to look out for me and threatened harm upon my person if I got out of line.

In the preshow address, the three stooges pointed out that the audience show boo, hiss, and cheer but in no way were we to throw anything. I thought that was totally unfair. Two summers ago, I was in *Love Rides the Rails* and was unmercifully pelted by popcorn, Skittles (you know who you are), and other things I am sure. I thought I was the hero of the piece but judging from the audiences' reaction, I was anything but.

[Wild Oats](#) has all the traditional elements of the best of cornball melodramas: heroes, villains, damsels in distress, mistaken identity, and plot twists galore. The strong-willed heroine (the aptly named Kate) and the hero Jack were both wonderful. The villainous Ike Gammon had a slimy appearance and a voice that just made you want to hiss and catcall. The duo of Croftus Thunder and his trusty Indian sidekick (astride his mount) Corporal Crow were a hoot. I must say that my

favorite roles were a duo of hilarious stock characters named Mr. Kliegle and Mr. Leko who drew applause each time they made an appearance. And don't forget the all-important cameo of the Marshall who saves the day. There is also Ephraim Smooth a smooth preacher who steals several moments.

All in all a wonderful performance. I think the theatre should consider doing a summer melodrama every year. They are very light-hearted and fun not only to watch but to be in. Totally un-P.C. as a lot of issues get a fair amount of ribbing. But why do they always pick on me? Seriously, am I really that bad ☐

Road Work Ahead

Warm weather, baseball, county fairs, amusement parks, and **Torn Up Streets.** Yesterday morning, I was informed that I needed to move my car. I usually park across the street in front of the old school house to save on parking. However, yesterday began the inevitable tearing up of the pavement and resurfacing... right on North Michigan Avenue (aka ST.RTE 49). This morning, I debated whether to drive in the pouring rain or endure the flag lady even after I went around the block to avoid the machinery going up and down the street. I decided to stay dry. Fortunately, the wait was not too long. I was not needed at work right away this morning anyway since the truck was at least 2 hours late (good thing it was a small truck or I might still be there... then again a little overtime couldn't hurt... me, anyway). So... if you are passing through NW0 on OH RTE 49 be prepared for the red flags and revolving stop sign.

All The World's A Stage

and all its men and women merely players.

As You Like It (II,vii, 139-40)

I have often been asked what type of stage I enjoy performing on most. In response, I usually state that it depends upon what is being performed. Sometimes, a show is grand in scale and is meant to be presented on a HUGE stage with a HUMONGOUS audience. Other times, a play is more intimate and is meant for a more intimate setting. I have been watching a Josh Groban concert on PBS tonight (after the Yankees were defeated by the Red Stockings). Being pledge drive time, there are frequent breaks and during one Josh was interviewed. He had recently performed at Madison Square Garden: one of the world's grandest venues. This evening's taped performance was much more intimate: smaller stage, closer audience (in which he could see the "whites of their eyes"), almost a jam session in front of maybe 100 fans. Once again, I was in total awe. Such talent! Singing in Spanish, Italian, as well as English. Taking lyrics that I have no idea what the translation is yet conveying their message brilliantly. Looking forward to the concert version of *Chess* coming next week. Although it is a concert version, it will be my first time seeing any version of the cult musical.

WAIT! I think I have gone off an another tangent. Coming up in a few short months is the WCCT's production of *Little Shop of Horrors*. This is going to be done at the smaller of the two venues. I think it will be quite interesting to discover how we are going to have the huge flesh-eating Audrey II on a small stage as well as the scenery for Skid Row. Seems like a lot, but if it comes off it will be awesome and I think the

intimacy of the smaller, in your face venue will have an even more dramatic effect.

So, although I have kind of given a roundabout answer to my own question, it really does have more to do with the type of production being staged. I like being part of big, theatrical extravaganzas that call for a huge setting. I also am comfortable in a small, intimate space in which you can see the audience and know that there are actually butts in the seats.

Look For Him Tonight

My middle brother and his son are going to be at the [Great American Ball Park](#) for the Chicago Cubs-Cincinnati Reds game tonight. When I found out that Chad and Alex were going to the big city by themselves, I said "I hope they don't get lost." Chad got lost driving home from a town 8 miles away. Myself, I just can't find the destination I am going to but have never been lost. However, I believe they went on a charter bus. I remember back in the day when my elder sibling would go to his friend's house and open up his COMPLETE sets of baseball cards and trade them away... not some of his brighter moments. Our parents or his godfather would spend good money on these sets. He would even "autograph" cards himself which pretty well made them worthless collectible wise. During several summers, Chad, his friend, along with "E-town's Number One Fan" rode the bus to Wrigley to watch their beloved team play. Last year, Chad and our Aunt LuAnn rode the rails to Chi-town and watched the Cubbies lose. Lu wanted to keep her tally of MLB ballpark visits up but Uncle Bob had no desire to go with them. Some year (especially if the Bronx Bombers are in town), I must make an effort to go.