

Note: This show periodically replaces their ad breaks with new promotional clips. Because of this, both the transcription for the clips and the timestamps after them may be inaccurate at the time of viewing this transcript.

00:00:00 Music Music Swing/big band music plays in background; emphasis shifts from brass to piano to clarinet and drum solos as the music progresses.

00:00:00 Adam Host A love triangle is not the kind of subplot that I prefer in war films. Pranica Because naturally I prefer submarines as bot plot and sub-plot. What is it about a war movie that so often invites these conflicts into them? Often it's a messy love triangle pitting flyboy against flyboy for the love of a nurse. Or an angry wife left at home who [*petulant voice*] "can never understand, man, why I gotta go back out there for another tour!" And sometimes it's a woman who simply needs to know what "expendable" means.

00:01:17 Adam Host It could be that these characters and storylines are unappreciated because they're relegated to the periphery. After all, would you rather see fighter planes taking off from aircraft carriers? Or the fed-up wife taking the kids to her parents' for a while? I know what I'd choose. What makes *The English Patient* different is that it elevates the love triangle story into the 'A' story, turning war into a place where this romance can play out and fully develops the characters using non-linear storytelling. It's like if *Pulp Fiction* was a film your mom could jack it to. Anyway, Ralph Fiennes plays Almásy, a sort of Indiana Jones type, if Indiana Jones was also into *The Cure*. He's got the hots for, uh, Kristin Scott Thomas's Katharine Clifton, who's going behind the back of her husband Geoffrey, played by Colin Firth. Geoffrey's got a much better airplane than Almásy, which kind of makes you hate him until you see how dirty Katharine does him. And you don't know if Geoffrey knows until it suddenly becomes very clear when he decides to use his plane in a way we can never forget. But alliances are what this movie is all about! Are we supposed to root for Almásy and Katharine to make it? Sure feels that way. Their romance begins forbidden. Like all the hottest ones do. And then evolves into the kind of gauzy, sensual, "my favorite part of your body will never be appreciated by your husband" kind of thing that invariably fizzles when the other man finds out, necessitating the breakup.

And now you're' actually committed to each other. Paying the mortgage. Raising your kids. And before long you've long forgotten all about your favorite mole on their body. Juliette Binoche's nurse character falls for Almásy, too! What is it with this guy? But the reason we remain suspicious about him is Willem Dafoe's Caravaggio. There to poke all kinds of holes in the sympathy he engenders from her. I think you'll find today's film better than *Seinfeld* made you believe. On today's *Friendly Fire*, as we discuss the 1996, nine-time-Academy-Award-winning, *The English Patient*.

[*Music continues, for a few seconds, then segues into the podcast's theme song.*]

00:02:49 Music Music "War" off the album *War & Peace* by Edwin Starr. Impassioned, intense funk.

War!  
Huh!  
Yeah!

What is it good for?!  
Absolutely—  
—nothing!  
Uh-huh!

War!  
Huh!  
Yeah!  
What is it good for?!  
Absolutely—  
—nothing!

Say it again, y'all!

War!

[Song fades down and plays quietly as the hosts speak.]

00:03:07	Ben Harrison	Host	Welcome to <i>Friendly Fire</i> , the war movie podcast that <u>wishes</u> this guy would quit telling his stupid story about the stupid desert and just <u>die</u> already! I'm Ben Harrison.
00:03:17	Adam	Host	I'm Adam Pranica!
00:03:20	John Roderick	Host	Is that a quote from the film? I don't remember that—
00:03:21	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>John:</b> —being taken from the movie!
00:03:23	Adam	Host	<b>Adam:</b> Yeah! I don't—
00:03:24	John	Host	That—that sounds like that's just coming from Ben!
00:03:28	Ben	Host	Yeah. Is that—is that like an addenda to the intro?
00:03:33	Adam	Host	No, that's coming from Elaine Benes! It was her famous quote about <i>The English Patient</i> .
00:03:34	John	Host	Right. Okay.
			Anyway, I'm John Roderick.
			[Ben laughs.]
00:03:40	Ben	Host	Uh—yeah! She didn't like the movie.
00:03:42	Clip	Clip	<b>Speaker 1:</b> [In an angry, high-pitched tone] I hated it!
			<b>Speaker 2:</b> Shhhh.
00:03:43	Ben	Host	I really liked it!
00:03:44	Ben	Host	This is the first time I'd seen it. So I'd—I'd—my primary association with it was a movie that Elaine Benes didn't like.
00:03:50	Adam	Host	It was mine, too, but I—I was also familiar with it as the book all of our moms jacked off too. Right?
00:03:56	John	Host	Hmmm.
00:03:57	Adam	Host	Like, this was a—
			[Ben laughs.]
00:04:02	Ben	Host	—super—like, everyone had this book. For a time. Right?
00:04:05	John	Host	There is literally a ripped bodice in this movie, so. I— It's one of the only <u>literally</u> ripped bodices you're gonna see. When it happened, I was like—wow!
00:04:13	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:04:14	John	Host	A ripped bodice!
00:04:16	Ben	Host	We have a, uh, a sound effect we use all the time on <i>The Greatest Generation</i> for “ripped bodice”—

[Audio clip of fabric ripping.]

And I feel like we should retire that one and isolate the little sound in this movie—

[Someone mimics sound of fabric ripping.]

—and use that instead!

[Sound of fabric ripping.]

00:04:29	Adam	Host	Almásy does that thing that—that—I sort of assume always happens after a ripped bodice? Is he has to sew it back together after. [Laughs.]
00:04:36	John	Host	He has to sew it back the next day? Yeah.
00:04:37	Adam	Host	Sorry! I just got a little excited. It was—
00:04:40	John	Host	What's crazy is when you rip someone's bodice that thoroughly, you're committed to spending the night together and for a good portion of the following day! Like, you better not do that if she has somewhere to be.
00:04:52	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:04:53	Ben	Host	Right. That walk of shame is going to be <u>very</u> complicated.
00:04:56	John	Host	And you'd also better have a place! Right? Don't just do that, like, in a bathroom in a bar.
00:05:02	Adam	Host	No. Yeah.
00:05:03	John	Host	Yeah.
00:05:04	Ben	Host	Yeah. Call down to the front desk, like, hey, uh, is there a sewing kit in the room or is that something that one of the bellhops can bring up?
[Adam laughs.]			
00:05:12	John	Host	Well I'm so glad to hear... that you'd never seen it either. Is that right, Adam?
00:05:17	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:05:18	John	Host	Uh—and you liked it?
00:05:19	Adam	Host	I did! Yeah!
00:05:20	John	Host	I'm really glad to hear that. Because I was super worried, going into it. Before watching it again. Like, is this some movie from the '90s that... that I remember really liking and now I'm gonna feel like a chump? I'm gonna rewatch it—
[Someone laughs.]			
00:05:40	Adam	Host	And it's gonna be like, oh! I really thought <i>Forrest Gump</i> was great the first time, but now I feel like a dummy! I thought it would feel a little more like <i>Titanic</i> in that way. Like, <u>massive</u> moment in the late '90s? Everyone loved it? Sort of a pseudo-romance...
00:05:49	John	Host	Set in a historic—yeah.
00:05:51	Adam	Host	Yeah! And I was expecting it not to hold up in the way that <i>Titanic</i> , I think, doesn't. If you were to rewatch it. But yeah! Super satisfying.
00:05:59	John	Host	It's—and—and—now watching it again, which—this is probably my <u>fifth</u> time through it?
00:06:05	Adam	Host	Whoa!
00:06:06	John	Host	Because—
00:06:08	Adam	Host	So you put in, like—

00:06:08 Ben Host Wow.  
00:06:09 Adam Host A good 24 hours into *The English Patient*.  
00:06:11 John Host I didn't watch all five times—no. I mean, I—not in the last two days.  
00:06:16 Adam Host We usually record two episodes—

*[Ben laughs.]*

—in one sitting? And, I mean, just to... give you a peek behind the show kimono, uh, we're only doing one today. And the reason is John had to watch *English Patient* five—

00:06:27 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** —five straight times.

00:06:28 John Host **John:** Five. Five straight times.  
'Cause I was like, listen.

*[Adam laughs.]*

I'm gonna get to the bottom of some of these questions that I have. And I do not pause!

00:06:33 Adam Host Right.  
00:06:34 John Host I don't pause and rewind! I watch the whole thing again.

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:06:36 Ben Host It's the first 40-hour workweek John has done in his entire life.  
00:06:41 John Host Uh, it was—uh, it was great watching it again. It really does hold up, I think. And—and again, I'm afraid of—that I'm colored by having watched it so many times and by having enjoyed it so many times that I can't not fall in love with Kristin Scott Thomas every time?

00:06:59 Adam Host Yeah.  
00:07:00 John Host Again, and I can't—again, fail to fall in love with, uh, sorry—Juliette Binoche. Uh, every time. And then I fall in love with—I fall in love with pretty much everybody!

00:07:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** With Colin Firth—

00:07:13 Adam Host **Adam:** I mean, we all fall in love with—  
00:07:15 Crosstalk Crosstalk With Willem Dafoe. I mean, as soon as—  
**Adam:** —he arrives on the scene.

**Ben:** *[Through laughter]* The most beautiful man.

**John:** He's really something.

00:07:18 Ben Host Yeah.  
00:07:18 Adam Host Youthful Willem Dafoe has got a special magic.  
00:07:20 John Host Everybody's chewing up the scenery all the way through the film.  
00:07:23 Adam Host I read that the Kirstin Scott Thomas part was going to be Demi Moore. She wanted it big time, and they were like nope!

00:07:30 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Not for you!

00:07:33 John Host **John:** Well, and Kristin Scott Thomas didn't want it—  
00:07:35 Adam Host —and had to kinda be talked into it?  
00:07:36 John Host Yeah.  
00:07:38 Adam Host Uh, or—oh, no. The studio had to be talked into it.  
00:07:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk I said Kirsten when I meant Kristin. I do this all the time.  
**John:** Kiersten is what he meant. Yeah.

**Adam:** With 'K' names. Yeah.

00:07:44 John Host Kareston.  
 00:07:45 Adam Host Katharine Scott Thomas? One of the great—  
 00:07:47 Ben Host That's just gotta be a curse. A—y'know, to have one of those names? 'Cause you're going through life correcting people all the time. Or just letting people say it wrong.  
 00:07:56 John Host In the '90s I dated a Kristen, a Kierstin—or Kirstin—and a Kareston.

[Ben laughs.]  
 00:08:02 Ben Host Wow!  
 00:08:03 John Host 'Cause it was—  
 00:08:04 Ben Host You, uh, you covered all the bases!  
 00:08:05 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** 'Cause they—y'know.

**Ben:** That's great! [Laughs.]  
 00:08:06 John Host 'Cause those were all girls that were born in the '70s when that name was really getting—getting—uh—uh like, shot around the tennis court.

00:08:12 Adam Host Yeah.  
 00:08:13 John Host How can we change the pronunciation of “a” and “e” in order to make our Kiersten—our Kiersten a different gal. Well, so, I uh—I've—I just think it's a spectacular movie. The sound design deserved four Oscars?

00:08:29 Adam Host Yeah.  
 00:08:30 John Host Or 40 Oscars?  
 00:08:32 Adam Host Sure! Why not?  
 00:08:34 John Host I mean, every transition also is a sound, um, like, fade? Like, a sound starts in one scene and then it become—it changes into a different sound?

[Audio clip of engine fading, sputtering, and voices rising.]

As we follow the—the transition, sometimes, like, going back in time. Sometimes going forward. Somebody tapping their finger on a desk becomes someone, y'know, swinging a hammer. All that stuff is so artfully done, where it could be super corny. And this is a movie where we go back and forth, back and forth, through about 40 different periods. But at least—having watched it a bunch of times—I don't get lost now. Did you guys get lost?  
 00:09:16 Adam Host If you were to... before even going into production, make the case that you're going to... go backwards and forwards in time 40 times, and there would be an associated... sound? To that? I would say that that's... that's going to be awful. And people are going to notice it and hate it.

00:09:35 John Host Right.  
 00:09:36 Adam Host But I didn't find that to be the case here.  
 00:09:38 John Host You noticed it. But didn't hate it? Or you didn't even notice it.  
 00:09:41 Adam Host I barely noticed it and I think that's the sign of a great edit. I mean, this is one of those Walter Murch films. Like, one of the best in the game. Edited this one. And it seems like the degree of difficulty here was extremely high.

00:09:54 John Host You see it almost in every transition. There will be the sound of an airplane, like, [makes low-pitched airplane whirring noise] and then as it fades to... 20 or 5 years in the past, that will then reappear—it's the same, y'know, the sound is the same but it's the sound of a truck. Or the sound of a—of a ship or something. And you don't—but it's a felt sound? As well as a heard one? So you feel the kind of

tension rising of a—of the sound of a machine or the sound of water? But—and you don’t notice that it has guided you through the window.

00:10:28 Adam Host *[Whispering]* That’s a great fucking paper right there.

00:10:31 Ben Host That’s just a great paper.

00:10:32 John Host So hot.

00:10:33 Ben Host There’s an entire... book about the editing of this film. Written by Michael Ondaatje—I’m sure I’m pronouncing that incorrectly—but who wrote the novel that the film is based on. Uh, because he had a bunch of, like, really interesting conversations with Walter Murch about the edit, and uh, and published a book about it! Like—

00:10:54 John Host And Walter Murch is—also did *The Godfather*, right? I mean, he’s like—one of the great editors.

00:10:59 Ben Host And *Apocalypse Now*. He’s got a few films on our list for sure!

00:11:04 Adam Host *Apocalypse Now*—also a film that sort of moves through time non-linearly. Like, he’s a guy that’s uniquely suited to a project like this!

00:11:12 John Host The editing is just extraordinary. And the—and having watched it as many times as I have now, I’m conscious of it? The timeline is difficult to follow only because the story takes place in, like, three different theaters that are not entirely familiar. To a filmgoing audience. Right? It starts in Tunisia? In the ‘30s. And it—and then it’s in Libya. It’s in Egypt. It’s moving around different places in North Africa without a ton of explication. We don’t have a Indiana Jones map where the—we watch the plane bobbing around. And it’s all pre-war! So it’s not clear, like, what—what exactly is going on. And then we’re in the Italian campaign. With a bunch of Canadians. You know, there’s like—we—we’re bouncing around in history but we’re never in Paris. We’re never—we never see Hitler. You know. There’s not—there’s not those usual... um... little—little tombstones that allow us to know where we are.

00:12:11 Adam Host I never thought of Indiana Jones once.

00:12:13 Ben Host And despite being in Italy with a bunch of Canadians, nobody says “pasta” *[pronounces it with a flat ‘a’ sound, like ‘at’ or ‘anecdote’]* one single time in the whole movie! Like—

00:12:19 John Host You notice there’s not a single bite of pasta! Oh no, wait! Doesn’t William Dafoe say, at some point, uh—here, go with... uh... go with this gal, she’ll take you and—

00:12:30 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** —feed you?

**Adam:** I love how you’re interrogating the pronunciation of “pasta” while calling him William Dafoe!

*[All laugh.]*

00:12:37 Adam Host I love this show! This is the best show.

00:12:41 Ben Host Uh—*[Laughs.]*

00:12:43 John Host Well, I was talking about Ralph Fiennes *[pronounces it “Ralph” instead of “Rafe”]*—I was talking about this movie all the last couple of days, like Ralph Fiennes! Ralph Fiennes! And then people were saying—as they were—they didn’t correct me? But they were just like, yeah! Ralph *[pronounced “Rafe”]* Fiennes was really good in that movie! And eventually I said—why do you keep saying “Rafe”? And they said, because that’s how his name is pronounced. It looks like Ralph.

00:13:05 Adam Host He’s really interesting casting in this film? And it’s—it shocked me at how big of a dick he was, for like, the first hour and fifteen minutes. He is awful! And you hate him!

00:13:18 John Host A very unlikeable—  
00:13:19 Ben Host Yeah.  
00:13:20 Adam Host And he ends up being, like, the major love interest of the thing!  
00:13:24 John Host He's—well he's an unlikeable posh dick at the beginning, the middle, and the end!  
00:13:28 Adam Host Yeah.  
00:13:29 John Host Which makes the love affair... so much—I think it just adds so much to the love affair! This—the movie is a love story.  
00:13:38 Adam Host Even unlikeable people deserve love! Is that what you're saying, John?  
00:13:42 John Host God, I hope so.

*[Adam laughs.]*

It's my only—it's my only shot at happiness!

*[Adam laughs.]*

00:13:48 Ben Host It seems like he's—like he is honestly an asshole, too. Not—he's not, like, negging. Right?  
00:13:53 John Host No. No, no. No. He's in love with her and can't—  
00:13:56 Adam Host He's like, nice—nice paintings you did! Up in that cave. I mean, a little childish.  
00:14:01 John Host He's in love with her. Can't stand the fact that he's in love with her. But he's not trying to win her by being a dick to her; he's trying to save himself and save her by just, like, being just... unapproachably shitty. But he's also just unapproachably shitty!  
00:14:18 Adam Host It's self-defense shitty, though. Isn't it? Because he—  
00:14:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Some of it.

**Adam:** —falls for her—  
00:14:22 Adam Host —right away, and knows that he can't have that.  
00:14:24 John Host Some of it, but I think he's also this—he's—this is just who he is. And you know Ralph Fiennes—once I learned that his name was pronounced “Rafe,” I went and—  
00:14:32 Ben Host Are you talking about Ralph Nathaniel Twistleton-Wykeham-Fiennes?  
00:14:36 John Host Yeah.  
00:14:38 John Host He's also a posh dick! If you go and read about him?

*[Ben laughs.]*

Like, he's been a real cad to the women in his life and he's like very posh and very... I mean, I love—I love him to death as a actor, but I think he was—it wasn't a stretch for him. To play this role.  
00:14:53 Adam Host If he and, uh, and Posh Spice ever made a baby, would it just be like a chunk of coal?

*[All laugh.]*

00:15:03 Crosstalk Crosstalk Just too posh for this world!  
**Adam:** Is what that child would be.

**John:** Extremely posh.  
00:15:05 John Host But the—you know, the love affair hinges on... an idea. That... well basically that infidelity is super romantic. If you're really hot for somebody.

00:15:18 Ben Host Yeah.  
00:15:20 John Host And, y'know, Kristin Scott Thomas is cheating on her perfectly good husband. That she's in love with! Even! And says so. She's not—  
00:15:29 Adam Host She says so while bathing with Almásy.  
00:15:32 John Host Yeah. While bathing Almásy!  
00:15:34 Adam Host Yeah.  
00:15:34 John Host You know, like, she's rubbing a sponge on him and like—and he's like, what do you love? And she's like, my husband. And you know—  
00:15:40 Ben Host Sex in a bathtub?  
  
*[John laughs.]*  
  
That doesn't work!  
00:15:44 Ben Host That's another Elaine Benes line.  
00:15:45 Adam Host Mm. Yeah.  
  
*[All laugh.]*  
00:15:47 John Host I mean, it doesn't work in a full bathtub.  
00:15:50 Adam Host Mmm. Yeah. You need about an inch of water.  
00:15:52 John Host Yeah. Two inches. Two inches of hot water. Warm water.  
00:15:56 Ben Host Well the woman can't be behind the man. Anyways.  
00:16:00 John Host Hey—hey, Ben, big spoon, little spoon. I know that—I know that you tower over your wife, but you're still the little spoon. I've—I've—  
00:16:06 Ben Host But I'm saying like, this is crank—loop down and go back behind him? No! It's not sex! Elaine is wrong on this one!  
00:16:14 John Host What—when you're talking about Elaine Benes—  
00:16:16 Ben Host They're just spooning!  
00:16:17 John Host —not everyone listening to the program knows that you're referring to a character on *Seinfeld*.  
00:16:20 Adam Host I think—I think most people would consider a bathtub hand job to be sex. Right?  
  
*[Ben laughs.]*  
00:16:26 John Host You know—there—for the record, there's a lot of non-penetrative sex.  
00:16:32 Adam Host True!  
00:16:32 Ben Host Not according to Bill Clinton! Who was president when this movie came out! Q.E.D.!  
00:16:39 John Host There's Ben's paper.  
00:16:40 Adam Host What do you think, uh, Almásy's doing to that, uh, suprasternal notch? Probably blasting all over that thing, right?  
00:16:46 John Host You guys, I'm-  
00:16:47 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** This is not an episode of your dumb *Star Trek* podcast!  
  
**Ben:** Oh, yeah. Filling it up! *[Laughs.]*  
00:16:51 John Host This is a serious program!  
00:16:52 Adam Host I—  
  
*[Ben laughs.]*  
  
I've never been able to find the suprasternal notch, so I—I don't even know what Almásy's talking about.  
  
*[Ben laughs.]*



00:17:01 John Host But—but it's interesting that a lot of the time—most of the time—when you're asked to sympathize with a—with a—with the central love story of a—of a film—

00:17:11 Adam Host Yeah.

00:17:12 John Host Where the central love story is... is... uh... an act of infidelity, you're, um—we are led by filmmakers to... to... uh, approve of that infidelity because there's a reason for it. Right? That the husband is a jerk. Or an alcoholic. Or—and all... um... The—the only crime in this film is that Colin Firth is... acting on behalf of the British State Department as a spy in—in preparation for war. Right? He's like a hero, actually. And yet we—and yet the movie makes us... really believe that the—that the passionate love between the two main characters is defensible—it's like—it's beautiful!

00:18:02 Ben Host Yeah. Like, Colin Firth is—is not, like, is not an alcoholic. He doesn't hit her. He's not—there's nothing objectionable about him other than maybe he's like a bit boring compared to Almásy?

00:18:14 John Host And they have a—sort of a brother-sister relationship? He describes at one point. Because they've known each other since they were kids?

00:18:21 Ben Host Yeah. That was pretty creepy. *[Laughs.]*

00:18:23 John Host Well, but not quite enough to... make you forgive her...

00:18:27 Ben Host Right.

00:18:29 John Host And forgive Ralph Fiennes. And yet... I don't know! I think it's really interesting that... the scope of this movie includes this... this—well, I mean, and it's focused on this super passionate affair that really is... like, one where they're destroying themselves and their world. And I mean, the thing is that—

00:18:51 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** They get punished! They get punished, right?

00:18:54 John Host **Adam:** They're cutting their hearts out, John!

00:18:55 Adam Host Like, everyone dies.

00:18:57 John Host Yeah.

00:19:11 Adam Host And... and—y'know, and before—before dying, like, our hero is horribly mutilated. So the movie—we get our retribution for this infidelity. But we sure—we sure, like... luxuriate in it.

00:19:14 John Host The original cut was like four and a half?

00:19:15 Adam Host Was it?

00:19:16 John Host What did we miss there?

00:19:17 Clip Host I would watch that.

00:19:19 Ben Host **Speaker:** I'm in love with ghosts.

00:19:32 Clip Host I wanted to talk about the fact that Colin Firth is sort of a spy. In this movie. 'Cause he's not the... y'know, the debonair, like, international man of mystery kind of spy.

00:19:33 Ben Host **Speaker:** Oh, behave!

00:20:09 John Host He's like, attached to a royal... archaeological society mapmaking expedition. But secretly also giving those maps to the military. And I thought it was really interesting that like the map of the world was a very proprietary item in—in the era that this film depicts? Like—like it's a big deal that Almásy gives their maps to the Germans? Because it's like a massive betrayal of the—of this, like, y'know, closely-held secret information that the British have gathered about North—North Africa?

00:20:09 John Host I mean, this was during a period when then Rommel swept across North Africa, and—the early days of the war, it seemed like this was a area of advance where the Germans were going to take over

the—take over the Western world. And the British were in real trouble there.

00:20:26 Ben Host Yeah. And it's just, like, hard to like... cast yourself back to that as—as being like, a part of reality, though. Like, y'know, if I wanna look at a map of something, it's like it couldn't be easier. Y'know? It's in my pocket all the time. The entire world map. And like, there's still a lot of the world that they're like, shit. We gotta like send, like, a bunch of people and a couple of biplanes and trucks out to just, like, drive around the border between Egypt and Libya and like see what's over there.

00:20:55 John Host Uh-huh. *[Laughs.]* Uh-huh. And I think it's—and I think those maps probably also were, um—there was a time sensitivity to it! Like a lot of—you're talking about an area of shifting sands. Roads come and go. So maps that were made in 1880 weren't going to be as relevant.

00:21:14 Ben Host Right.

00:21:15 Adam Host How do you fall asleep during a sandstorm? Talking about shifting sands? I think that's the one thing you can't do! How do you let your vehicle get buried?!

00:21:24 John Host Well, y'know. Those guys have been in some sandstorms.

00:21:27 Adam Host Oh, yeah.

00:21:28 John Host They're like, let's wait this one out.

00:21:29 Adam Host It's—it's extremely loud white noise?

00:21:32 John Host What I want to know is how do three guys fall asleep in a truck cab that's on its side?

00:21:37 Adam Host Yeah.

00:21:38 John Host I mean, you just—what are you, just curled up like cats?

00:21:41 Adam Host Yeah. It's not so much the sandstorm, it's—

00:21:43 John Host It's like, where are we all sleeping?

00:21:44 Adam Host I mean, are they standing up?

00:21:46 John Host Uh, yeah, that's the thing. Where did—where were their legs? That was the hardest thing for me to put together.

00:21:52 Adam Host That's your moment of pedantry?

00:21:53 John Host *[Ben laughs.]*  
Yeah. I was just like, you can't get three guys in a truck like that. They'd all just be standing like—like, uh, celery sticks in a—in a little container!

00:22:01 Ben Host Oh, I have a moment of pedantry about maps! I almost forgot!

00:22:04 Adam Host Hey!

00:22:05 Ben Host This is one that I was actually really glad that somebody added to the goof section 'cause I thought it was interesting! When the British soldiers—

*[Morse code telegraph noise plays in background.]*

—are discussing getting through the mountains, one says—the Bell maps show a way. To which another replies—let's hope he was right! In fact, Bell was Gertrude Bell, the first woman to be hired as a British military intelligence officer!

00:22:26 John Host Ka-pow! Oooh!

00:22:29 Adam Host Are they derisively saying that because of her gender? Or just because they may or may not be trustworthy in general?

00:22:35 Ben Host Uh... no. I think—

00:22:38 John Host No, they just—they misgendered her in the script.

00:22:41 Ben Host Yeah.

00:22:42	Adam	Host	Oh!
00:22:43	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:22:44	John	Host	Yeah.
00:22:45	Ben	Host	And I looked this, uh, this lady up. She's like, uh, compatriot of T.E. Lawrence's. She's like... somebody that, uh, was instrumental in setting up the modern state of Iraq.
00:22:55	John	Host	Yeah! She's really famous.
00:22:58	Adam	Host	Whoa!
00:22:59	John	Host	I've—I've been, uh, I've been—I've been following her story for—for a little while. I kinda want to do a show on her.
00:23:06	Ben	Host	Is this a Gertrude Bell stan account?
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:23:08	Adam	Host	Does she follow you on twitter?
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:23:10	John	Host	If you—if you put the name “Gertrude” into google, the first thing to come up is Gertrude Bell. And then “Gertrude Bell husband.” She—and Gertrude Bell hu—Gertrude Bell, uh, uh, net worth. Yeah.
00:23:26	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:23:27	Ben	Host	I—I use a different, uh, search engine and it was Gertrude Stein for me? But then Gertrude Bell was the second.
00:23:31	John	Host	Sure. But she's extremely... uh, she's extremely famous. One of—one of those, uh, people that like in a different time would have been, like, a household name.
00:23:41	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:23:42	Music	Music	“War” theme plays.
00:23:45	Adam	Host	Do you think making the Colin Firth spy character a... unsexy kind of spy? Was a way of... like, was intentional?
00:23:58	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam:</b> When you put him in opposition with—
			<b>John:</b> Well here's the question—
00:24:00	Adam	Host	—the very cool Almásy, you know, like, yeah, he's a spy. But he's more of a photographer, which isn't as cool? And he's—isn't even as cool as Willem Dafoe's spy character!
00:24:09	John	Host	Uh, this is a question for the—for the, uh, female listeners of, um, <i>Friendly Fire</i> . And—
00:24:16	Adam	Host	So you four—be sure <i>[through laughter]</i> to write in. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:19	John	Host	That's not true.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:24:20	John	Host	But also—also for the, uh, for the listeners of any gender who like Colin Firth.
00:24:25	Adam	Host	Yeah!
00:24:26	John	Host	He is regarded as a sexy man! In some films. Right? In... <i>Bridget Jones's Diary</i> ? Isn't he like a sex figure?
00:24:37	Clip	Clip	<b>Speaker:</b> And I should, of course, be bereft.
00:24:39	John		I do not personally find him... to be... um... hot. I don't think—he's obviously handsome, but like you're saying—he feels a little bit limp, and so he seemed like perfect casting here.
00:24:54	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:24:55	John	Host	He didn't need to be—his spy-ness didn't kinda need to be further... neutered? Because he just seemed really good at—I mean, every time he was there—every time he appeared on screen it's good acting.
00:25:07	Adam	Host	Mm-hm!

00:25:08	John	Host	I felt like, oh, man. Get that nudge out of here so we can get this party going!
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			Like—like he’s just gonna bring this whole thing down with his like weird uncomfortable laugh.
00:25:19	Adam	Host	Yeah, it’s interesting, like, when you see... Almásy kind of bloom? In love? He never becomes, like joyful in any way. Or unlocked. He’s still the guy that we know in the first hour of the film! He’s just a little <u>less</u> asshole.
00:25:35	John	Host	Yeah.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			But you see the—you see the... I mean, it’s—it’s an example of like, how—somehow putting chemistry on screen... um... and it—and it succeeds! You never once doubt this affair. You never once doubt the passion of it. And—
00:25:52	Adam	Host	The codependence of it felt <u>very</u> real.
00:25:54	John	Host	Intensely real. And something that you could go to this movie and— and come out the other side, thinking, I wish I had something like that in my life. But then—
00:26:05	Adam	Host	That’s such an amazing statement to say in a film about this infidelity. This is an issue—my wife and I watched this together. And she was like—were people inspired by this film? In some ways? Like, if—if the love that you have isn’t the <u>hot</u> love as depicted in this relationship between... Katharine Clifton and Almásy, like... does it—does it make it acceptable to seek it out or have it visited up on you in the way that it is here?
00:26:32	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:26:33	John	Host	But that is the—that is the crazy question of the film! If you’re—if you are just married to an aristocrat who... who wears a tuxedo to dinner and you have everything you could ask for, don’t you <u>deserve</u> to burn it all down—
00:26:47	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>John:</b> —in order to have hot love with—
00:26:48	Adam	Host	<b>Adam:</b> Especially ‘cause society— —kinda fetishizes the idea of like, yeah! I—I—was—I married my high school sweetheart. We’ve known each other for <u>30</u> years. And we’re still married.
00:26:58	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>John:</b> But society—also fetishes, like—
00:27:00	John	Host	<b>Adam:</b> And then you—and— “You deserve passion in your life!”
00:27:02	Ben	Host	And “Get your bodice ripped, ladies!”
			<i>[Noise of fabric being ripped.]</i>
00:27:04	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>John:</b> Yeah! Right!
00:27:07	Adam	Host	<b>Adam:</b> It really— <i>[Sighs.]</i> I mean, it holds up the two options as, like... if your love isn’t <u>hot</u> , <u>hot</u> love—
00:27:12	John	Host	Right.
00:27:13	Adam	Host	Why isn’t it?

00:27:14 John Host Well, it's the whole, like, "Get you a man who brings you breakfast in bed and clips your toenails. But also, you gotta get you another man who rips your shirt."

00:27:24 Adam Host *[Noise of fabric being ripped.]*  
Colin Firth is the toenail clipper.

00:27:25 John Host Yes he is.

00:27:26 Adam Host Almásy's going to blast on your throat.

00:27:27 John Host That's right. Wow. Ugh.

00:27:29 Ben Host The spiciest thing Colin Firth does in the movie is try and kill Almásy!

00:27:32 Adam Host Yeah! He tries to 9/11 him—

00:27:35 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** In the sand dunes.

00:27:37 John Host **John:** One of the greatest—  
And I swear to you, when that happened—when I watched this in the theater—now, how did this affect you? Did you see it coming? Did you—did it—did it shock you?

00:27:44 Adam Host The moment that was more shocking than the plane crashing was the aftermath where... uh, Katharine says, he knew and he was telling—he was yelling at me that he loved me and that, like, it was the retroactive understanding of that that moment was that was more shocking than the moment itself. But in that way I found it totally effective! It would be different to be in the cockpit and hear him screaming at her, like, and we're following it in from their point of view? But we never leave Almásy's side there. It's only his perspective.

00:28:15 John Host We see—we see Firth lean out and look down at him. But it—but—but when I saw it in the theater, I didn't—even in that. Even as we look as his—I didn't register the look on his face, I guess? In the theater? It just seemed like he was looking for a place to land? And then he— *[Laughs.]* As you say, 9/11's him.

00:28:36 Crosstalk Crosstalk *[Ben laughs.]*  
And, uh—  
**John:** And it just—it was—

00:28:39 John Host **Ben:** He kinda 9/11's himself!

00:28:40 Adam Host He does. But—  
He went to Stearman Flight School. He never learned how to land on sand dunes.

00:28:56 John Host Which has got to be, like, among the more difficult pilot challenges that you can have. I mean, that Stearman didn't have... bigger tires and wheels for—for dune duty!

00:28:59 Crosstalk Crosstalk You just turn into the wind, Adam! Full flaps. Turn into the wind.  
**Adam:** You know what I love it—is the crab landing—

00:29:02 Adam Host **John:** Get it down to stall speed.  
—on a tail dragger that you have to do before turning square. That's nice.

00:29:06 John Host The thing is, those guys—y’know, they—they could get to airspeed of about fifteen knots. Right? You could walk alongside of them. ‘Cause their planes were made out of balsa wood.

00:29:14 Adam Host Yeah. You’ve gotta have plane envy if you’re Tiger Moth guy and that—and that Stearman drops in—

00:29:19 John Host For sure.

00:29:20 Adam Host —and parks next to you.

00:29:21 John Host For sure!

00:29:22 Adam Host That’s like, uh, that’s like a Prius parked next to a—a Ferrari.

00:29:26 John Host Uh, Ben did that scene surprise you? Did it catch you off?

00:29:31 Ben Host Did not see it coming. Did not think that, uh, think that that was gonna—‘cause you know that she’s gonna be in another plane later. So...

00:29:38 Adam Host Right.

00:29:40 Ben Host Like, part of the confusion is that you don’t know that she’s dead in that—in that opening scene. It’s—it’s like an expertly-laid film surprise!

00:29:49 John Host It—it felt in the theater like he crashed that plane into me.

00:29:53 Ben Host Yeah.

00:29:53 John Host Like, just—

00:29:55 Adam Host Into your heart? Maybe?

00:29:56 John Host Yeah. Just like—wow. ‘Cause—y’know, we know he knows. But he also seemed to just settle in to, like, permanent cuck-itude!

00:30:04 Adam Host He spends that entire night out in the car, just watching her getting sad.

00:30:09 John Host Yeah. Just drinking his—

00:30:10 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** What a bad time!

00:30:11 John Host **John:** —out of a flask.

00:30:13 Adam Host Well, what a bad time for his chauffer!

00:30:13 Adam Host Yeah.

[Ben laughs.]

00:30:16 John Host Yeah! I mean, do you just wait there?

00:30:18 Adam Host [British accent] Old man, stay in the car!

00:30:26 John Host I mean, when he goes out to use the bathroom and it—does he like, tap the chauffer, like, hey, watch out for her? I’m gonna be gone? Be back in five?

00:30:36 Adam Host I mean, I—that—that is the one—that’s the one part of that whole scene that I was like, you have a driver, sir. Did you make him sleep sitting up? Like, how did that play out?

00:30:37 John Host I mean, the way they use the locals.

00:30:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk Yeah. That’s the problem.

00:30:41 Ben Host **John:** It’s—it’s colonialism, isn’t it, Ben?

**Adam:** It’s really ugly. Yeah.

I mean, that’s, like, one of those things that’s really interesting about Gertrude Bell when I was like looking at her. Was like, oh! She’s—she does have a very interesting history and a lot of it is about how— [Laughs.] How the British Empire spread itself across the Middle East and North Africa. And... the... like, the movie is definitely... not... uh... trying to... trying to make any statements about, like, any of that. It’s just the setting of a love story.

00:31:09 John Host Yeah. But you def—you do get a—you did get a wonderful scene where, like, nine people in tuxedos are sitting in a hotel bar in Cairo having drinks.

00:31:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yeah. Getting served by guys in fezzes.

00:31:23 John Host **Adam:** By beautiful—  
And I know—I know, Ben, that that rips at your heart. Because the socialist in you is like, how dare they!

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:31:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk And the—  
**John:** And the Ben Harrison— *[Laughs.]*

00:31:31 Ben Host **Ben:** And the outfit nerd in me is like—  
Ah, I kinda wish I was like... I like—practiced Islam so I could wear a fez? *[Laughs.]*

00:31:37 John Host It's not just the outfit nerd. You're like, also the cocktail nerd. Also—I mean, the—basically the 90% of you that is a colonialist? Is like, God, I would love to be—

00:31:45 Ben Host I'm a man at war with myself.

*[John laughs.]*

00:31:48 John Host Who'd love to be in that bar. With someone fanning me with a frond.

00:31:52 Ben Host Yeah.

00:31:53 Adam Host To have a woman not angry at you for leaving... her alone? While—while you go and have drinks in the men's bar?

*[John laughs.]*

00:32:04 Clip Adam Clip Host And—and for her to be okay? Just saying, I was enjoying my book!  
**Speaker:** We're not accustomed to the company of women.  
That's my moment of pedantry! There's no fucking way she's okay with that.

*[John laughs.]*

00:32:09 John Host Well, y'know. She's a—she's an aristocrat! Right? Um... they're used to all kinds of things.

00:32:15 Adam Host The—the real Katharine Clifton's like, what the fuck, guys? Really? The man's bar? Give me a break.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:32:21 John Host Well, it's because—and you know, that's an interesting scene that gives us an insight—again, an insight into... Colin Firth's character. Because he abandons her—

00:32:31 Adam Host He does.

00:32:32 John Host And goes into the men, and it's Madox—who is the weirdly stable, unsung hero of the whole adventure.

00:32:41 Adam Host He really is.

00:32:41 John Host Everyone leans on Madox, because he's the stiff upper lip. Like, Brit. Who's really—who does have a heart of gold, although—although, um, Almásy... uh, "Almashy"? How are we saying it? "Almásy"?

00:32:56 Adam Host "Almashy."

00:32:56 John Host Almásy. Um—

00:32:58 Adam Host Yeah. You wanna ask me about that. *[Laughs.]*

00:33:01 John Host *[Ben laughs.]*  
Yeah. But he's—y'know. He's a little bit—he's—he is—he loves Madox. He's—he, um, he relies on Madox but he's also—he also describes him as a—as a Brit that has no—he's not connected to his—his feelings at all. But it's Madox that leads the party out into the bar and clearly he stood up and said, *[British accent]* We can't—good grief, man! We can't leave her in the bar! And they all get up and—and go in. But, y'know, Colin Firth didn't... take that lead for his own wife.

00:33:29 Ben Host Yeah.

00:33:31 John Host So that's one of about three things in the film where you're like—well, of course Colin Firth deserves to be cheated on and—

00:33:37 Adam Host I really like that about this movie and about that characterization, though! Because it's so much easier to paint the Colin Firth character as a dick or an asshole? Or an adulterer? Of his own? But to make him just sort of like... okay.

00:33:52 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Yeah. It's a little weak—

00:33:54 Adam Host **Adam:** I—it's such a more—

00:33:56 John Host It's a more interesting... path to take.

00:34:11 Ben Host Right. Because Almásy is also a desperately weak man. In—in certain ways. But like—but super-duper... um... I don't know.

00:34:12 Adam Host Strong by comparison. Or a different kind of strong.

00:34:15 John Host Yeah.  
I—that's what I keep telling people about myself. Is I'm a different kind of strong! *[Laughs.]*  
A different kind of strong! Yeah!

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:34:18 Adam Host Not Army Strong.

00:34:19 John Host No!

00:34:20 Adam Host A different strong.

00:34:21 John Host Just... different! Yeah.  
The whole third act of Almásy's life, where he is laying on a gurney—burned beyond recognition, with half of a functioning lung—it's the narrative device that walks us through the film. But you really wonder what... he's doing. Like... why didn't he ask someone to smother him with a pillow, like, three days after he woke up?

00:34:43 Ben Host He wants to see if Hana and Kip get together!

00:34:46 John Host *[Through laughter]* He's only alive because he can't die until he tells us his story.

00:34:50 Ben Host Yeah. I wondered about that. Like—like—he doesn't have a future. He's got—he's gotta be terribly uncomfortable but also like... there's plenty of people that don't—don't take the medically-assisted suicide option in—in situations like that. I mean, the—the survival instinct is very strong and—and—like, he—he seems like such a nihilist at that point in his life. Which is—y'know. Like, he almost seemed—seems like a nihilist before that. But... but at this point with his—his dead beloved K dead and—and the—y'know, this—insane war happening all around him. I mean, he's just like—he's just kinda like watching everything that—that happens from the, uh, the confines of his weird monastery room.



00:35:37	Clip	Clip	<b>Speaker:</b> <i>[Dramatic movie music plays.]</i> Gentlemen? To mapmaking.
00:35:39	John	Host	<b>Chorus of voices:</b> To mapmaking! We—we've spent most of this time talking about the—the heart of the film, which takes place in North Africa immediately before... uh, before WWII. But there's a entire second film! That's happening in Italy toward the end of WWII.
00:35:54	Ben	Host	Right.
00:35:55	John	Host	The—where the setup is a lot more—it—it—it requires that we suspend disbelief in a few different ways. Like, when Juliette Binoche takes him off the ambulance and takes him to that ruined, um... monastery. And sets him up there. And then William Dafoe arrives—sort of like looking for heroin. And then Kip arrives with his sergeant. And they all make camp here. Like, we watch an entire season go by.
00:36:24	Adam	Host	That's such an interesting observation! And I wonder if—did you get that after subsequent viewings? Because after seeing this for the first time I wasn't really aware of... that kind of passage of time.
00:36:34	John	Host	You know, she runs out there at one point. She's—she's sown a bunch of seeds and the crows have come and eaten them? And so she builds a scarecrow? And then throughout the film, we see her out there and watch her cabbages grow—and you guys leave that alone! Do not <i>Greatest Gen</i> me!
			<i>[Ben laughs; Adam groans as through he's straining to control himself.]</i>
			We watch those big, succulent cabbages grow in that field. And she just keeps watering them and keeping that soil moist.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:37:06	Adam	Host	And then—then we see those cabbages harvested.
00:37:07	John	Host	Ughhh!
00:37:10	Ben	Host	And served. Serving succulent cabbages.
00:37:14	John	Host	Would you say she busts big coleslaw toward the end of the movie? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:37:24	Ben	Host	I never actually see the cabbages get served. But—but we see—a <u>long</u> time passes and it's this—this idyll. She seems to never run out of morphine. Although...
00:37:31	John	Host	Yeah. I wondered about that. Like, did she just get left with a truck full of morphine parked in the garage of the monastery? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:37:38	Adam	Host	I mean... morphine, like—not being free, and Willem Dafoe is stealing morphine out of her bag the whole time, too...
00:37:39	John	Host	It's kind of a Hanukkah story, isn't it? Yeah, right?
00:37:41	John	Host	<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:37:44	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	It's the one—the one little—the one little candle— <b>John:</b> —that keeps on giving! Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<b>Adam:</b> Eight sleepy nights!
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>

00:37:49 John Host So we're—we're in a dream state. That's built on top of a dream state. Right? We're, like, we're in three different levels of dream in this movie. Which again I would find super off-putting normally, but somehow it doesn't... it doesn't hurt in this movie! I'm content to be there.

00:38:10 Ben Host Her big date with Kip is like one of the most—like—it's almost magical realism, except for it's not. *[Laughs.]*

00:38:16 John Host Right—it's all—it's Wes Anderson-y! Right? That he like rigs up this—rigs up this harness and all of a sudden she's flying through the air? And she's holding that torch. And we get that—and the torch is giving us like three things: it's providing total smoke atmosphere; it's also illuminating her face and the wall; and it gives her like a magic wand! That she's flying through the air like a fairy, trailing this like glowing cloud. I mean, it's so magical. I think when—when this movie came out, every woman my age... uh, turned to the person they were in the movie theater with—

*[Ben laughs.]*

—and said... why have you never flown me through a ruined church? Uh—

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:39:02 Ben Host Holding a—like a burning torch?

00:39:03 John Host Yeah.

00:39:08 Adam Host And whoever they were on the date with was like—uh, I didn't know—I didn't even know that was a thing!

00:39:17 John Host Do you think the film suggests... the reality that... Sikh people were given shit jobs? Like bomb de-fuser?

00:39:20 Adam Host That's not a shit job! He was a combat engineer!

00:39:32 John Host No, I mean—here's—I—I mean shit as in like the most dangerous... job. Like, let's—let's stick the Sikhs in that. Like, they—they're talented and great, but like, we don't want our white people to be—

00:39:33 Adam Host Ohh.

00:39:34 John Host —blown up by bombs. Do you think that was—

00:39:35 Adam Host I think—

00:39:36 John Host —ever a suggestion?

00:39:40 Adam Host I think a combat engineer is a prestigious job, but also the Sikhs—

00:39:41 John Host I'm not disagreeing with that! I'm trying—*[Laughs.]*

00:39:49 Adam Host I think the Sikhs are—you know—famously pro—perform a real, like, elite role in the British armed forces.

00:39:50 John Host Yeah.

00:39:59 Ben Host As commandos and as... um—I was surprised to see—to see him in an integrated context? Not as a member of a Sikh battalion?

00:40:03 John Host 'Cause his—his sergeant is... white. And—

00:40:05 Adam Host Right. Everyone else is.

He seems to have a cool sergeant, too. Like the morning after the sergeant knocks on the—on the door and he's like, hey, is Kip there?

*[John laughs.]*

00:40:16 John Host And she's like, no, you can't have him! We just fucked. And he's like, well, I mean, I kinda need him?

Yeah. There's a bomb and stuff?

00:40:18 Adam Host Yeah.  
00:40:18 John Host Yeah.  
00:40:19 Ben Host You got a little something there in your supersternal notch. What is that?

*[Multiple people laugh.]*  
00:40:27 John Host But I think the fact that—  
00:40:28 Adam Host Oh—I—I see he’s, uh, unexploded your bomb!

*[John laughs.]*  
*[Inaudible.]*  
00:40:31 John Host I really—I really hate this.  
00:40:32 John Host Looks like you found all the wires!  
00:40:34 Adam Host He was down in the trench, with, uh—  
00:40:35 Ben Host

*[Multiple people laugh.]*  
00:40:39 John Host Robs—just edit all of this out.

*[Multiple people laugh.]*  
00:40:50 Adam Host You can just—you—you know what? You can cut it all out and put it in the *Greatest Gen* feed and people will celebrate it.  
Yeah.

*[Ben laughs.]*  
Talk about, uh, flooding the basement!

*[Ben laughs.]*  
Don’t wanna drop your pliers!

*[Both laugh. John, notably, is not laughing.]*  
00:41:06 Ben Host This is the best show.

*[Adam laughs.]*  
00:41:11 John Host So awful. Uh, the—the author of the book—whose name is Ondaatje *[pronounces it “Andachia”]*? Is that how you would pronounce it?

00:41:18 Adam Host You keep asking me. *[Laughs.]*  
00:41:19 John Host “Andatia”?  
00:41:20 Adam Host Sure.  
00:41:21 John Host It’s a Dutch name but he’s, like Sri Lankan.  
00:41:23 Ben Host Yeah.  
00:41:25 John Host Uh—the fact that he... was... like, from British Ceylon or whatever, I think that the—transferring that to being a Sikh? Was—was probably like, um, a thing that made that relationship more... apprehensible? Like—

00:41:44 Ben Host Hm.  
00:41:45 John Host Whereas—as—as a—as a Sri Lankan, maybe that would’ve been, like, three... more degrees of... exposition you would’ve needed to do to just contextualize it? So I think that was probably pretty smart.

00:41:58 Ben Host Is he the one having the conversation with... the Count about the book that, uh, the Rudyard Kipling stuff?

00:42:05 John Host Oh! Yeah! He does! That’s when they’re together.  
00:42:07 Ben Host Yeah!

00:42:08	John	Host	The Count wants him to read <u>Kipling</u> to him.
00:42:11	Ben	Host	I'm sure people have been screaming at the podcast for the last ten minutes.
00:42:14	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam:</b> Yeah.
00:42:15	John	Host	<b>John:</b> Oh, wowwww! And he's like—I don't wanna read Kipling to you because... you—I don't think—and that—that was...
00:42:21	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>John:</b> That was pretty—
00:42:23	Ben	Host	<b>Ben:</b> That's like the one part of the movie— —that does kind of address the issues of colonialism that are attendant to so much of it. But... otherwise uncommented on.
00:42:31	John	Host	In a way, again, like a—like, very forward for 1996.
00:42:35	Ben	Host	Right.
00:42:36	John	Host	To—to put an Indian character in that position where he says, like, yeah. Let me—let me tell ya who your Kipling—let me tell you who the natives are in this story. It's me and my people that were getting—that were getting destroyed by your—by your little enterprise. Yeah. That was a—that was—that's a moment that just <u>bounces</u> .
00:42:54	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:42:54	John	Host	Bounces past. But it—it um... it lands pretty hard and it also... it's another thing that kinda discredits Almásy... as a hero.
00:43:04	Ben	Host	Right.
00:43:05	John	Host	Right? It—it puts him in the role—it puts him back in the role of asshole aristocrat.
00:43:09	Ben	Host	Yeah. I mean, and—an asshole aristocrat is something that—it's all over him! Like, no matter where he is. Like, he's in the middle of a fucking desert with like three other people and he <u>still</u> , like... he still carries himself as a count. Like— <i>[Laughs.]</i> I thought that that was like totally amazing. Like, when the—like when he walks out of the desert, y'know, to try and get some help for Katharine, he—like—the guy says like what's your name? And the first word out of his mouth is "Count." It's like—wow! <i>[Laughs.]</i> "Count!" That's—
00:43:40	John	Host	That's right.
00:43:42	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> <b>John:</b> Suck it.
00:43:43	Ben	Host	<b>Ben:</b> Your title is—is—
00:43:46	John	Host	Is the first part of your name when you're a count. And that has to have been true. At that point in time, in that place in time. Uh—where the people that were doing that kind of exploring were all... like... "Livingston, I presume!"
00:43:58	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:43:59	John	Host	You know it—this was the playground of... of the... of aristocrats who were out adventuring! And also making maps for the war. God, what a bully time! Pip pip!
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:44:14	Adam	Host	But you know, Almásy was a real person!
00:44:17	John	Host	Yeah. Statue and everything! Yeah. Like a real—a real person who did these real things. They—they—the, um—

00:44:21 Adam Host But the film takes great pains in telling us when the credits roll—hey, just a reminder—this is a work of fiction. Don't believe everything you've seen.

00:44:30 John Host The primary work of fiction being that Almásy is gay in real life! And, like...

00:44:35 Adam Host Yeah. He was blasting on man-necks!

00:44:40 John Host *[Multiple people laugh.]* He was an—gay and also like having affairs with... aristocrats! Like, Egyptian princes. During this whole period.

00:44:48 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Wow.

00:44:49 John Host **Ben:** Whoa!  
Um... so like down there and doing all these, uh, amazing wonderful things, but not seducing the wives of any British aristocrats. At all.

00:45:00 Ben Host I'm looking at the Wikipedia entry about Almásy. And it says that letters discovered in 2010 in Germany prove that he was, in fact, homosexual. So maybe it wasn't well-known!

00:45:11 John Host Ohhh.

00:45:13 Ben Host They found, uh, a cache of letters and several man necks! And they—and they—and they knew!

00:45:19 John Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*  
I'll give you guys a man neck.

00:45:23 Ben Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*  
May have, in fact, had lovers of both sexes! So—

00:45:26 John Host There ya go. There's my guy.

00:45:28 Ben Host Who knows? *[Laughs.]*

00:45:29 John Host Uh—it's—uh—a few interesting sort of... things about this movie. It was produced by Saul Zaentz.

00:45:36 Ben Host Yeah.

00:45:37 John Host Who was—

00:45:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Credence money!

00:45:41 John Host **John:** —the man who—  
That's right! Who famously... uh... stole all that money from John Fogerty. And—

00:45:46 Adam Host How do you know that, Ben?

00:45:49 John Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*  
And wrecked Credence Clearwater Revival!

00:45:51 Adam Host Wow.

00:45:52 Ben Host A lot of the time we'll watch a movie and then I'll like do a little reading about, y'know, how it was produced.

00:45:57 Adam Host Oh.

00:45:58 Ben Host And like who was involved in the production.

00:45:59 Adam Host Alright.

00:46:01 John Host But so Saul—Saul Zaentz famously, um—

00:46:04 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** —got into this—

00:46:06 John Host **Adam:** See, I'm just over here writing clit jokes!  
Yeah, I know.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:46:09 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** He famously brings a—

00:46:13 John Host **Ben:** We all bring something to the table, Adam! *[Laughs.]* Famously was in a forty-year war with John Fogerty. But he took the money that he stole from Credence... and the first film he produced was *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

00:46:23 Adam Host Okay!

00:46:24 John Host Co-produced with Michael—with a 28-year-old Michael Douglas. For which he won... Best Picture Oscar. And then... he continued to, like, burble along in Hollywood until, uh—

00:46:36 Adam Host If you're Michael—if you're Fogerty, are you less angry when that film gets an Oscar? You're like, well at least you did some good with it.

00:46:42 John Host *[Ben laughs.]* No. It made Fogerty furious. Uh—and Fogerty, actually, in the '80s came out with a solo record—the famous one that had, like, *[singing]* “Old man on down the road!” And he had a song on it called “Zaentz Can't Dance!”

00:46:57 Ben Host *[Through laughter]* You just named ten Credence songs. *[Laughs.]* Just now.

00:47:00 John Host Well he—so Zaentz sued him because he said “You're just rewriting Credence songs, which I own!”

00:47:06 Adam Host Yeah.

00:47:07 John Host And you're putting new titles on them, including, like, ones that—that actually like slander me.

00:47:11 Adam Host Yeah.

00:47:12 John Host Um...

00:47:13 Adam Host “This—this old man down the road” sounds a lot like the old “old man down the road.”

00:47:17 John Host *[Through laughter]* That's right. *[Laughs.]*

00:47:19 John Host But—And—anyway. Then—then in the '80s, Zaentz produced *Amadeus* and won a second Best Picture Oscar and then he won a third for *The English Patient*!

00:47:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Oh my God.

00:47:32 John Host **John:** So this is a guy with three Best Picture Oscars. You know. And—from a rock standpoint, we all know him just as the guy that, like, that robbed John Fogerty!

00:47:38 Adam Host Yeah.

00:47:39 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** He's—that's pretty—I wanna see the film about this dude.

00:47:42 Adam Host **Adam:** If he didn't rob—

00:47:45 John Host If he didn't rob Fogerty, would these films have ever... existed?

00:47:51 Adam Host No. No. He'd be sitting in some record company office somewhere putting his cigar out on background singers.

00:47:54 John Host Stealing from Fogerty benefitted the world!

00:48:02 Crosstalk Crosstalk Also, Zaentz was the guy that secured the rights to *Lord of the Rings*! In the '70s. He's the one that made the animated *Lord of the Rings*.

00:48:04 John Host **Ben and Adam:** Whoa.

00:48:12 Adam Host And then he was the—the—he like got Peter Jackson and made all those—he didn't like, produce those films, but he had the rights.

00:48:14 John Host He really took that stolen money for a ride.

00:48:14 John Host He did, man.

[Ben laughs.]

00:48:18 Adam Host He took us all for a ride with that stolen money!  
00:48:19 John Host That's great.  
00:48:20 Ben Host He was like, get in the car.  
Harvey Weinstein also, uh—heavily involved in this film and heavily involved—from what I read in making sure it was Kristin Scott Thomas and not, uh, Demi Moore—in the Katharine Clifton role.  
00:48:33 John Host Oh.  
00:48:34 Ben Host There was—there was like pretty... heated... argument between, um, uh, Anthony Minghella and the—and the studio about... uh... about the casting of that role in particular. That the studio really wanted to, uh, insure the film against bad box office by putting extremely famous people in all the parts. And Harvey Weinstein was apparently the one that smoothed things over or whatever. I'm not—  
00:49:02 John Host Oh, well that's good that your hero—  
00:49:03 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Your hero got in there.  
**Adam:** I bet he smoothed things over.  
00:49:05 Adam Host It's gotta be hard to argue with Harvey Weinstein while he's jacking off in front of people.  
[Ben laughs.]  
00:49:11 John Host Now that's, uh, that's the comedian. Uh, the redheaded guy. That does the jacking off.  
00:49:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yeah. C.K.  
**Adam:** Harvey Weinstein—  
00:49:17 Adam Host —was blasting into potted plants all the time! The guy—I'm not even gonna say “allegedly.” Like, I think it's—I think he's a creep, right?  
00:49:24 John Host I don't know. I didn't read all the—  
00:49:25 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** — the depositions.  
**Ben:** He's definitely a creep. I mean—  
00:49:27 Adam Host It sucks to see great films of this era with the Miramax logo and like be pre—... disappointed.  
00:49:34 Ben Host Right! Yeah!  
00:49:36 Adam Host Like, that sucks! There are so many good Miramax films! And then you open with the logo and you're like, fuck. Did he jack it in front of Juliette Binoche? Like... is that... what happened?  
00:49:47 Ben Host Yeah. You have to wonder about every woman you see in a movie. With the Miramax logo on it. And that's...  
00:49:52 Adam Host Yeah.  
00:49:53 Ben Host Uh... she—Kristin Scott Thomas wrote something for *The Guardian* about how she got the part for—in 2016. And—and really, like, gives him a lot of credit. And...  
00:50:05 Adam Host I mean, you look up Binoche and she... she's not a defender of Harvey Weinstein, but—but she was like, hey. Lay off and let this play out in courts. Like, she didn't... she didn't come out against him publicly.  
00:50:17 Ben Host Hm.  
00:50:19 John Host Yeah. I don't think that you can look at any—every Miramax film and... I—I think it's a discredit to sit and speculate on whether the

00:50:35 Adam Host lead actresses all had to perform some extra duty. I—I don't think that's the lesson we should be taking away.  
I don't think that's what we're saying, either!

*[John laughs.]*

00:50:47 John Host But we're—but we're saying... it's... unfortunate that... we're even thinking of such things... based on—on a—on a logo before the movie starts.  
00:50:48 Adam Host Yeah. It is.  
00:50:50 Ben Host And it will forever be that way!  
I know it—I mean, maybe Juliette Binoche, like, legitimately didn't know anything about what was going—like—what he was up to, or, y'know, maybe she never had a bad experience and never—never caught a whiff of it. And... that's a reasonable reaction in that case! Y'know?

00:51:07 John Host Let's—let's take her at her word.  
00:51:08 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** I think is the—yeah.

**Ben and Adam:** Yeah.  
00:51:11 Adam Host Absolutely do. I believe women, John!  
00:51:14 John Host I know you do, Adam.  
00:51:15 Adam Host Well that was a super fun episode—

*[John laughs.]*

—that we just sort of crashed into the sand!

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:51:20 John Host Well—we'll leave it with Robs from here!

*[All laugh.]*  
00:51:23 Music Music "War" theme plays.  
00:51:27 Rob Schulte Producer *Friendly Fire* is a Maximum Fun podcast.

*[Audio clip of record scratching.]*  
00:51:30 Ben Host One thing I—I—I feel like we should talk about a little bit, since this is a war movie podcast, is all the depiction of war stuff. Which is very... background. In this film. But like there is... a shot of like... thousands of German paratroopers descending on... uh... Northern Libya. That just is just one shot that's in there and it probably costs a million dollars to get that shot! But it looks fucking great. And... it's in the movie.

00:51:58 John Host Yeah. There's war happening all around, right? I mean, there—but—but we're seeing it... um... in microcosm. There's a mine—there's a mine that kills a girl in a Jeep.

00:52:09 Ben Host A couple of Germans in a dune with a anti-aircraft gun.  
00:52:12 John Host Right. There are some—yeah. There's a British guy and his sergeant's sitting at a desk.

00:52:17 Adam Host I mean, there's another theater you're not talking about. It's, uh, it's the battlefield that is love!

00:52:23 John Host That's right.  
00:52:24 Adam Host You guys.  
00:52:25 Ben Host Yeah. Well. You need to—you need to get a Hungarian count to make a map for ya, buddy!



00:52:29 Adam Host That part sucked. When his name got him in trouble and he got thrown in the train and you're like, looking at the clock! Like how long is she gonna live in that cave? As soon as it goes bad at the desk with that clerk? Like, she's dead.

00:52:42 John Host And that's the problem. Right? In that moment, he's so insensible from lack of water; time in the desert—that he doesn't understand that this is the one time in his life he cannot be an imperious dick.

00:52:54 Adam Host He can't lose his chill.

00:52:55 Ben Host They do pour him, like, a four-ounce glass of water. Which—I was like—come on, guys! *[Laughs.]* This guy just walked out of the desert!

00:53:03 John Host Until that moment, the fact that he is Hungarian royalty... um... it never occurs to us that—that the day the war starts, all of a sudden... these, um... these friendly alliances between British aristocrats and Hungarian ones in the deserts of—of Libya... are suddenly... going to be... like, impolitic. Right? Like, Hungary was an Axis country. Or at least—I'm sorry. Axis-allied. Um... well, I mean, y'know. Not—well, it's... Hungary's role in WWII is complicated. But y'know, he's not a friend of—

00:53:40 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** That's the part of the show that's gonna get the most letters.

00:53:43 Adam Host **John:** —the Brits.  
That one right there.

00:53:44 John Host *[Ben laughs.]*  
Yeah, I know. There's gonna be a lot of, like... uh—*[Laughs.]* Like, uh, Hungarian revisionists who are like—you know, it was Versailles where it all started! Where it all went wrong!

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:54:12 Adam Host But the, uh... that moment when he's standing in front of that desk and we're used to thinking of this guy as of—as someone—as a member of a British expedition. Friends of—of the Brits. Like, uh, working on behalf of the Crown in some respects.

00:54:17 John Host Who's known! Like, a celebrity! I thought he'd be like, I'm fucking Indiana Jones, man! You know me!

00:54:46 Adam Host And he should've—he—he—he should've mentioned all of his credentials. He should've said, here's who I work with and for. But he's so used to... people... y'know. Lower-ranking people saying, like, "yes, sir." That's he's just like, goddammit, give me your—give me a Jeep! But he doesn't realize that the war has started and now he's looking at somebody who is empowered to make a decision about someone who comes in out of the desert and feels absolutely no obligation to go to a higher-up and ask questions.

00:54:56 John Host Yeah.

00:54:57 Adam Host When you know she's dead—it's such a specific moment in this film. And it's so interesting that the moment she's dead is... when he's having that conversation.

00:54:58 John Host It's not when he's on the train.

00:54:59 Adam Host Right.

00:55:07 John Host You don't see that wash over him later. In the fetal position on a boxcar. It's when he's... screaming at a guy at a desk that you know that it's over.

00:55:07 John Host Right. Yeah. I've got a half an hour to get started if I'm gonna get to her.

00:55:11	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:55:12	John	Host	Oh, I mean, he says in the voiceover, like, it's gonna take me three days to get there and three hours to get back.
00:55:16	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:55:17	John	Host	Um—so... you can—if she really only <u>did</u> have a broken ankle? It didn't—she didn't die in three days.
00:55:24	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam:</b> Yeah.
			<b>Ben:</b> No.
00:55:25	John	Host	Um... but yeah. The whole prison train and everything, like, and then... how did he end up—I mean, he had to <u>get</u> to—
00:55:33	Ben	Host	Yeah, he had to find those Germans and then get to the plane. Wherever it was.
00:55:38	John	Host	Show them the maps that he had hidden.
00:55:40	Adam	Host	The revelation of that was... really well-done. Like, the—you don't see all of it? But you see enough of it to understand. What Willem Dafoe's beef was.
00:55:51	John	Host	Right. 'Cause he's voice-overing that whole time. I mean, that's a thing—so—where are we in time at that moment? We're listening to that story in the—being retell—retold in the monastery. Uh, he's telling about the events... <u>before</u> the plane crashed. Before the opening of the film. This—this is the thing that we see fore—it's foreshadowed through the whole film. Like, this is the... little kernel where all of these stories are... are—are cycling around this, like, gyre of a moment.
00:56:21	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:56:22	John	Host	We've waited the whole film to be there. And it just feels—it feels like we're—we're behind, like, seven proxies. At this point. Each proxy being... some trip we've taken forward or backward in time.
00:56:34	Adam	Host	Is that... [ <i>Sighs.</i> ] God. I'm trying to—because I've only seen the film once, you—you could answer this question, John. But, like, that part of the film is montage. Right? We get the voiceover. We get the passage of time where we see him and then he—his arrival at the plane. The giving of the maps. His arrival at the cave. He takes her out. Like, that—
00:56:52	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam:</b> Those are rapid succession.
			<b>John:</b> It's all montage. Yeah.
00:56:54	John	Host	And he's talking about it. He's talking about it in—in—um—in like voiceover. There's no—we don't hear any dialogue.
00:57:01	Adam	Host	Ralph Fiennes is so stoic through so much of this film. Even in—in the times where... like, he's the most quote-unquote "passionate"? That when he breaks down, carrying K out of the cave, I was... <u>super</u> smashed by that moment. That was really hard to see.
00:57:19	John	Host	Yeah.
00:57:20	Adam	Host	How he just loses it. That—that moment really worked for me. It sort of pays off! How... how shitty he's been the entire way! I think if you like him more? That moment might not resonate as much.
00:57:34	John	Host	Yeah. You always wonder in a—in a film like this, if you—if you step away from the events and you say—now what would've happened if Colin Firth hadn't crashed his plane into—into the desert at that moment? Like—
00:57:49	Ben	Host	Yeah, what if he'd tried killing him in a different way? Like, what if he just brought a gun and shot him?
00:57:54	John	Host	What if he just hadn't gone out to pick him up? And... Almásy is out in the desert and—and Colin Firth and Kristin Scott Thomas go

back to England and live their merry lives out. Would Almásy have ever come to England to find her? Like... the—the tragedy of how it all... went down... it—it—it's all sort of... held up by the passionate summer-long affair. Of these people. And it's the—it's the idea that you can find your—your one love and that that one love can destroy you and everybody it touches... that is the—I guess—the whole heart and point of the film. If everybody had just gone their separate ways—if Colin Firth just hadn't done that, like, ill... conceived... anniversary... plan. Where he—

*[Adam laughs.]*

—parked outside of her—her apartment and—y'know, with a bouquet of flowers. And saw her begin her affair. Or, like, saw her conduct her affair. I don't know! It's just—it's like... within the world of the film... it's all so... believably felt. But stepping outside of the film, if you told this—if you wrote in to Dan Savage and was like, “Dear Dan—”

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:59:18	Ben	Host	“My wife is having an affair with a Hungarian count.”
00:59:20	John	Host	Yeah. This is a DTMFA moment! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:59:21	Clip	Clip	Yeah.
			<b>Speaker:</b> I hope you're watching the clothes, because I can't take my eyes off the <u>passion</u> .”

*[Laughter.]*

00:59:25	John	Host	You know, there's nothing super sympathetic about anybody.
00:59:28	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:59:29	John	Host	But we're so invested in it. I was so invested in it.
00:59:32	Ben	Host	Well, y'know, I—I think it's Dan Savage that says that the, uh, that the victim of the affair isn't always the victim of the relationship.
00:59:39	John	Host	Okay.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:59:40	Ben	Host	So maybe he is—maybe he's an emotionally-distant douche! You know? We just don't get the—we don't—we just don't know.
00:59:48	John	Host	How could you know?
00:59:50	Ben	Host	I wanted to talk really briefly about the, uh... the look of this film. It was shot on... uh... Eastman... 500T film stock. Which is—
01:00:02	John	Host	Ooh, it's got high t!
01:00:04	Ben	Host	It's a—well, it's a ver—it's—that's <u>tungsten</u> film stock, so it's—it—it's mostly shot outside. Like, so much of the film takes place out in like the bright desert. And... uh... so—and so they're—they're gonna have to put filters in front of the lens to correct for the fact that it's a tungsten film stock to begin with. But then it's also, uh, high ISO, which is why the film is so grainy. It's a <u>very</u> , very grainy-looking film. And you don't need to do that. It's, uh, it's just an aesthetic choice. Like, they could've made this much less grainy looking as a movie if they had shot on... y'know... 100 ISO film. And—and they chose—they chose this, uh, I have to imagine, because... they wanted the grain. And... I think it's really—it's a really beautiful film. But uh—I don't know. Did—did that stand out to you, John?
01:00:56	John	Host	I watched it on my Apple watch.

[Ben laughs.]

01:01:00 Ben Host So—so it was pretty—pretty tiny little screen there. [Laughs.]

01:01:03 John Host Yeah. It seemed really tight on that film.

01:01:05 Ben Host Yeah. Yeah. [Laughs.]

01:01:07 John Host Uh, well, so—so explain this to me more. Like, the grain... makes it look... older? Or the grain makes it blur or what is—what—what would 100 ISO film have done for the picture? What would that fidelity have made it look like to my untrained eye?

01:01:26 Ben Host It stood out to me because it's just... it's so much grainier than anything... needs to be when you're shooting in super bright desert light?

01:01:36 John Host And—how does that—what does that grain look like? Like, it—does it look like Kodachrome? I mean, I—give it to me in—in, uh, in layman's terms.

01:01:45 Ben Host It's literally, like—you know—when you expose an image on a piece of film it's... uh... it's registering on, like, silver halide molecules. And depending on how fast the stock is, I think those molecules are bigger? Because—

01:02:01 John Host Hm.

01:02:02 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Big molecules.

01:02:03 Ben Host **Ben:** Like, a—  
Yeah. Like—like—like the—like the bigger the size of them, like, the more... likely they are to encounter a photon? 100 ISO film is—is very crisp and clean-looking. And... and higher ISO film is—y'know, looks—maybe... more old-fashioned. And more... like, you—you see it. You see, y'know, each image. The—the grain is a little different because it's... a chemical process. So it's... it—it kind of gives some—some dance and some boil to the image that you might not, uh, have in a—in a lower ISO film stock. And, uh—I'd say that the one moment that really stuck out to me was when he dies at the end. When he's administered his lethal dose of morphine. It's a static shot. It's a—I think it's a still that they, y'know, reproduced over and over again. It's not—it wasn't him just holding super still. It's like, it's one image. It's—it's not actually live film. And... because of that, the grain doesn't—doesn't boil. The same way that the rest of—it does in the rest of the film.

01:03:13 Adam Host Ben, I read that... due to the budget of the film, they shot a lot on a soundstage. A lot of the conversations? Like, what I read specifically was that the reverse angles were shot on a soundstage. And I wish I had known this trivia about the film and the noise of it. So I could've better... paid attention to some of this stuff. Because I wonder if—if you're intercutting soundstage with desert vista footage... the fidelity of that image is going to look a lot different.

01:03:52 Ben Host Mm-hm.

01:03:53 Adam Host Because I don't think you're going to use the same film stock on a soundstage as you did when you were outside. And so—

01:04:00 Ben Host What I read is that they used one film stock for the whole movie. Which is—

01:04:04 Adam Host That's bonkers. I mean—

01:04:05 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** —that seems like—

01:04:06 Adam Host **Ben:** It's crazy. [Laughs.]

01:04:07 Ben Host —the right decision.

Yeah.

01:04:08 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** *[Inaudible.]*

**Adam:** For continuity.

01:04:11 John Host **John:** Is that not—  
Is that not the case normally? You pick your film stock depending on what you're—where you're at?

01:04:16 Ben Host **Ben:** Yeah! Like, this is tungsten film and you would choose—you would choose... y'know, daylight film for shooting outside. Typically. So—that—like—just that is an interesting choice. Because... y'know, like I think a normal movie they'd shoot—if they're shooting something indoors they'd use the tungsten version of the stock and then there's a daylight version that is, y'know, like—like—there's—there would be a 500D version of this—of this film stock, I think. And a—a—a very unique and weird decision. But that is good.

01:04:49 Adam Host **Adam:** That is really interesting stuff. That... makes me wanna watch the movie again.

01:04:58 John Host *[John laughs.]*  
**John:** As someone who's watched it multiple times, I say that it—I—I can assure you that, um... it pays off!

01:05:03 Adam Host **Adam:** Yeah.

01:05:04 John Host **John:** A repeated watch.

01:05:06 Adam Host **Adam:** I mean, this is... sort of related to the idea of... the film that was used? But—I was shocked at the freeze-frame death of Almásy. Like, his crossed eyes.

01:05:22 Ben Host **Ben:** That freeze frame is, like, I think—really intense because the grain goes away. For it.

01:05:28 Adam Host **Adam:** Yes. Yeah. I really love this film. I do not love that part of it.

01:05:35 John Host **John:** Really, that freeze frame alone just—like—seemed like the end of an after-school special or something?

01:05:42 Adam Host **Adam:** Yeah. It—it was not effective to me in the way that it intended. It took me out of it a little bit.

01:05:49 John Host **John:** Huh.

01:05:49 Adam Host **Adam:** Like—oh. He couldn't hold the face.

01:05:52 John Host *[Laughs.]* Hm.

01:05:53 Adam Host **Adam:** That's—that—it felt like a production choice. Like, well we need a grotesque death mask for this man. But he can't hold the face or his eyes long enough to make it believable. So let's—

01:06:03 Ben Host **Ben:** But you'd think under all that—all that makeup he would be able to! But I guess not.

01:06:08 Adam Host **Adam:** Do you know—one of the other things I read was that, uh, Ralph Fiennes... uh... had the body burn makeup applied to him every day, even when his torso wasn't shown? In frame?

01:06:20 Ben Host **Ben:** Whoa!

01:06:21 Adam Host **Adam:** Like, he wanted the whole thing done. Every day. And I guess—

01:06:24 Ben Host **Ben:** Damn!

01:06:25 Adam Host **Adam:** —it was like five extra hours of work to get it done.

01:06:29 Ben Host *[John whistles a "whew."]*  
**Ben:** That is a lot of work. *[Laughs.]* A lot of time in the makeup chair.

01:06:33 John Host **John:** It doesn't seem like the move of a posh asshole.

01:06:35 Ben Host **Ben:** Yeah.

01:06:36 Adam Host **Adam:** His nipples melted off. You see a lot of nipples in this film and you don't see his!

01:06:42 John Host You do see nipples in this film. And throughout the movie, for a long time—like, the whole—once Juliette Binoche takes us to the monastery, the first four or five things she does... she... takes off her shirt. She... bathes. She changes clothes a lot. She's—and we never see her... there—there's all the—

01:07:08 Adam Host She cuts her hair, which is how you know she's—

01:07:09 John Host She cuts her hair.

01:07:10 Adam Host —going through a trauma.

01:07:11 John Host Well that's how you know that, like—yeah. She's—like—somebody that definitely I would date in the '90s. Someone cutting her hair in a monastery tower.

01:07:20 Ben Host There was a—there was a goof that, uh, her armpits wouldn't have been shaved in this era.

01:07:25 John Host Oh.

01:07:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** I thought that was interesting.

01:07:28 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Or in the mid-'90s. [*Laughs.*]  
**Ben:** [*Laughs.*] Right. Yeah!

01:07:31 Adam Host **Adam:** But maybe they cut out the part—

01:07:32 John Host —where she cut her armpit hair!

01:07:36 Adam Host Yeah! That's right, Ben! She shaved it with the—with half of a scissor blade.

01:07:37 Ben Host Yeah.

01:07:44 John Host They cut out the part where she was in an airplane accident that burned the skin under her armpits and then she couldn't grow hair there anymore.

01:07:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk I think it—I think what happened at—this happened a lot in the '40s, when you were Jitterbugging? You'd get lifted up in the air so many times that your—your—uh—underarm hair—  
**John:** —would get ripped off.

01:07:54 John Host **Adam:** Oh, there you go! Yeah!  
But—but—but we see her—there are so many opportunities for there to be a gratuitous sort of, like... like... breasts, um, unveiling? And—and—we're not given it! Uh—three, four, five, six times where it's like, okay. She's got her shirt off and we're in a—all she's gonna do now is turn around and we'll—

01:08:14 Ben Host And we know she's French! So.

01:08:16 John Host That she's French, so we know—and we never see it. And then later on... she's laying with Kip and we get—and then—the full breast appears. And it's not... connected to—there's no reason for it. And we see Kristin Scott Thomas in the bathtub after lots of opportunity and—and—it's—it seemed to me a very conspicuous creative choice to make sure that both of our female leads... had—had a topless scene. At one point or another. It—even though... it was never kind of where you thought you were gonna see it. It was never—there—no—it was never seductive. No one ever like took off their blouse and revealed themselves.

01:08:58 Adam Host It was another way that this film felt like a contemporary to *Titanic*. It felt like... Kate—Kate Winslet's breasts were used in that film in the same way that—that they were used in this film.

01:09:10 John Host Like, Kate Winslet, we see her nude because she's, uh, she's, like, laid out on a couch while... uh, Leonard DiCaprio is painting her. Right? So—the whole, like, seductive female body is really on

display. And here the—the... the... the toplessness is... we miss a lot of opportunities to—like, the bodice-ripping!

*[Audio clip of fabric ripping.]*

If you're gonna have a bodice-ripping scene and you're gonna show her breasts in the movie—

01:09:38 Adam Host

That is a bodice-ripping scene without breasts!

01:09:40 John Host

No, but you—but he rips the bodice and then immediately is there and you don't—it's—so—you know, like there are three or four opportunities if you were going to—whatever. Pay the union scale for toplessness.

01:09:52 Ben Host

Yeah.

01:09:53 John Host

To do it in a different way than, like, this sort of casual, offhanded, like—whoa! Did I just see her nipple? Well, I sure did!

01:10:00 Adam Host

Also, Ralph Fiennes? Hang some dong! If you're acting—

*[John laughs.]*

01:10:08 John Host

—with people who are—who are nude in your film? Come on.

01:10:10 Adam Host

You—you think he should insist?

01:10:13 John Host

He should've stood up out of the bath and—and hung it!

01:10:14 Ben Host

Mm-hm.

01:10:15 John Host

Yeah!

01:10:16 Ben Host

Mm-hm.

01:10:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Let's see—

**Ben:** —that... dong!

01:10:19 Adam Host

**Adam:** It's only fair!

My question about... fuel burns—and I think we—I think we can know for sure that, uh, aviation fuel melts—

01:10:28 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Adam:** —face skin.

01:10:30 Adam Host

**John:** Steel beams. Yeah.

Uh—does duxelles cure third-degree burns in the way that it's used in this film? Like, he's—his face is covered with a mix of... ground mushrooms and then—and then a—a wet washcloth is—is put over his face. He's tied to the single hump of a camel? And then ridden throughout the desert? Like, that worked!

01:10:56 John Host

I don't think that you can second-guess... traditional medicine.

01:11:01 Adam Host

Adam.

Exactly. It's insane that you watch this—this entire scene and you're like, yeah!

01:11:07 John Host

Sure!

01:11:08 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Adam:** That—that cancels out.

01:11:10 John Host

**John:** Sure! The guy—

Yeah! The guy chewed up some... uh... some berries that he found and—

01:11:14 Adam Host

Those were single-hump camels. That they've put the stretched on, in the middle, and it somehow stays up and level.

01:11:22 John Host

So if you're living, Adam, in a world where the dromedary—which is the single-hump camel—is your main camel—

01:11:28 Adam Host

Sure. Yeah.

01:11:30 John Host

You're gonna have to put that stretcher up on—you can't tie the stretcher on the side of a camel!

01:11:33	Adam	Host	It's not your first time stretchering a body to a camel if you're those guys.
01:11:38	John	Host	What I don't understand is why they don't tie one end of the stretcher to the hump and one to the top of the camel's head.
01:11:43	Adam	Host	Right.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:11:44	John	Host	So you're like— <i>[singing]</i> boombadoombadoombadoom! I think the camel would—would resist.
01:11:48	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:11:49	Ben	Host	If it's anything like Yassin—the camel that I recently rode—that would—that would be bad for whoever was in the stretcher.
01:11:55	John	Host	What did Yassin do?
01:11:56	Ben	Host	Yassin was a biter.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:11:58	John	Host	Yeah. A biter.
01:12:00	Adam	Host	Uh, that—the last thing you want to be if—if you've suffered from—from burns of this nature is to be bitten.
01:12:07	Ben	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Camel saliva is not a—a salve.
01:12:12	Music	Music	"War" theme plays at full volume.
01:12:16	Adam	Host	We give every film on <i>Friendly Fire</i> its own custom rating system, and that's because we can't dream of comparing any of these films to each other. It's impossible. And in the case of the incomparable <i>English Patient</i> , there are a number of items that... would make for a great rating system! So many great planes. So many great... caves.
01:12:39	John	Host	Mm-hm.
01:12:41	Adam	Host	So many parts of a woman's body I didn't know exists. 'Til watching the movie. But in the end it's gonna be a bomb. It's gonna be that bomb that Kip works on at the end. It's the—it's—maybe the part of the film that felt like you were the <u>most</u> in a war! You've got tanks about to roll through. Victorious tanks, though. Celebratory tanks.
01:13:03	John	Host	Mm-hm.
01:13:04	Adam	Host	Everything is vibrating. You never feel as close to death in this film... as you do when you're in that hole with Kip. And it happens in the last—what—20 minutes of the film? The entire film feels fraught with danger, but never the sort of danger where you feel like your life is in danger. It's just, like... the danger of being caught. In an extramarital relationship. So—I thought in a film that... extruded the kind of tension that it had throughout to sort of <u>dot</u> the I with life and death danger at the end? Was a nice little... bump! In the stress of the film. I thought it was really good and I thought it was really well done. Did you guys expect Kip to die? In that moment? 'Cause I <u>really</u> did.
01:13:58	John	Host	The whole film sets you up. Everybody—everybody that Juliette Binoche ever meets dies. It's said repeatedly.
01:14:05	Adam	Host	I expected to cut to a wide angle? Like, the territorial view of the bomb going off as, uh, as Hana's riding through town. Like I thought for sure she'd hear it and know.
01:14:16	John	Host	Yup.
01:14:16	Adam	Host	Or see it and know.
01:14:18	John	Host	That was the scene that we were led to believe we were going to get.
01:14:21	Adam	Host	Unintentional comedy in the beginning is death of Jan? And the dummy blown into the air off of that Jeep? You know they could



only shoot it once. But that dummy is comically, like, spread-eagle to the—

*[John laughs.]*

—into the air? *[Laughs.]* Before dropping. *[Sighs.]* That was too bad. I expected to see Kip's body. Thrown into the air. I'm very glad that we didn't get it.

01:14:43 John Host  
01:14:45 Adam Host

Yeah.  
It was that kind of surprise at the end of a film that was quite surprising throughout. That embodied my feelings for the film and those feelings are extremely positive. I'm glad I saw it. I think most people should see it. How could I—how could I not give it... all five bombs? It's—it's—beautifully made. It's very well-constructed for its degree of difficulty. I thought they pulled it off in every way. The casting's... casting's great, especially when you think about what it could've been cast like. I don't think there's anything about it I didn't like! I'm—I'm an anti... Elaine Benes about this!

01:15:26 Ben Host  
01:15:27 Adam Host

Wow.  
I'm gonna give it five bombs! I can't think of a reason not to. I'm sure you guys have 'em, so let's hear 'em!

01:15:34 Ben Host

Well you shouldn't—certainly have to be patient to make it through this movie. It's a long one. But it... and it's—I really like—it's not, like, pace-y or anything. It's—

01:15:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Ben:** It's slow and—and—

01:15:46 Adam Host  
01:15:48 Ben Host

**Adam:** But you do have to be English!  
Because that—this is an English-language film.  
You do have to—be able to speak English. Or read subtitles. It's a great point. *[Laughs.]*

*[Either a fake snore, or the sound of an airplane engine engaging.]*

But the... yeah! I really appreciated the pacing. Like, I think that... I think that the pacing is appropriate. Like, it's not... it's not super fast-paced and it shouldn't be. It's... a little bit boring and it should be! And it's fucking gorgeous. And... uh... it—I think—I think you're right! Like, it really accomplishes what it seems to set out to achieve. So. I'll join you at the five-bomb level!

01:16:29 Adam Host

Wow.

*[John whistles a "whew."]*

01:16:32 John Host  
01:16:33 Adam Host  
01:16:34 John Host  
01:16:35 Ben Host

Cutting the right wires!  
Yeah. That's right.  
This film does.  
That's right. That—  
It didn't really look like there were other wires when he was cutting that wire. Like, you usually get like—there's like a green and a red and a black and they're trying to pick? It just seemed like he had one to clip, right?

01:16:46 John Host

Well, and he actually says, like, I don't know which wire to clip! And then it—and then we're like, there's just the one wire, guy!

01:16:52 Adam Host

I was... gripping my seat during that—when those pliers go in the muddy water? I'm like—we're gonna get a scene of him backing

away from the bomb, closing his eyes, and then we cut wide to the explosion. Like, that's how—that's how it's done.

01:17:06 John Host That is how it's done. There—there are four or five scenes—that one; the Juliette Binoche flying around the church. The plane crash. The opening credit scene and it's also the closing credit of the—of the sand dunes as the—as the moth flies.

01:17:26 Adam Host Sand dunes look a lot like burned skin, don't they?

01:17:28 John Host They do. Uh—that—and all of those scenes are like, iconic moments in cinema. Not just of the '90s, but beyond. Um. I think that this film is just... uh... just extraordinary. I think that the—the more you look at it, the deeper you go into looking at the—the way sound is used. The way the transitions are used. Just the—just the masterful editing where we go back and forth in time to multiple places. And we've seen other films try it. Uh, with varying degrees of success. But—but it's so well done here. There's—there's never a moment really where—even if you're like, where are we now? It's never off-putting. You're never—it never takes you out of the thing. Half of this film is set in a weird corner of the borderlands between Egypt and Libya? In a time that no one remembers. Mid-'30s Sahara. And yet... you... you know where you are. You love it. It's beautiful. This film's got a lot of politics. It's got... it's—it's basically a love story. But war is on all—all four corners of it. I think it's a five-bomb film.

01:18:45 Adam Host Whoa.

01:18:46 John Host Um... and as I was watching it I was like—am—where—where am I supposed to not like this film? Like, the snobs—

01:18:54 Adam Host Yeah.

01:18:55 John Host —are standing somewhere. The Elaine Beneses—although Elaine is just being difficult. She's just trying to get Jerry's goat. She's just trying to—

01:19:05 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** —antagonize people.

01:19:07 Ben Host **Ben:** Well she gets fired by, uh—

01:19:10 Adam Host —Jay Peterman over—over not liking the film. So. I think most people like *Sack Lunch* more than *English Patient*.

01:19:15 Ben Host *[Ben laughs.]* That's funny! Want to know what's in that sack!

01:19:19 John Host *[John laughs.]* *[Through laughter]* But... but the, uh—I don't see where—I—I can see a film snob finding—taking issues with all kinds of stuff. But I don't care! About them. They can email us at... GoFuckYourself—

01:19:35 Ben Host *[Ben laughs.]* *[Through laughter]* Oh good! It's an official episode. *Friendly Fire!* *[Laughs.]*

01:19:42 John Host Go to [MaxFunkenstein.sex](mailto:MaxFunkenstein.sex) and email us at [Adam@GoFuckYourself.MaxFunkenstein.sex](mailto:Adam@GoFuckYourself.MaxFunkenstein.sex).

01:19:48 Adam Host I think it may finally be time to activate that email account.

*[John laughs.]*

Make it real. We've got enough mileage out of that reference.

*[John laughs.]*

01:19:59	Ben	Host	But it changes a little bit every episode! So I don't—I'm not sure <u>which</u> — <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:20:03	John	Host	We have to make them <u>all</u> active. So five bombs from me.
01:20:07	Adam	Host	Wow. It's a rare <u>perfect</u> score on <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
01:20:10	John	Host	Doesn't happen very often! But this is a classic. And I—I think everyone—and it is long.
01:20:15	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:20:16	John	Host	And it does require sustained attention. But.
01:20:19	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>John:</b> It never hurts.
01:20:21	Adam	Host	<b>Adam:</b> I never— Sometimes with these long films I'll—I'll stop it midway through. I just need a break from it. Sometimes it's because... war is hard to experience for three straight hours? And a lot of these films make that a—a difficult chore? But... like... I wanted to sit through all of this film and I did.
01:20:38	John	Host	Yeah.
01:20:39	Adam	Host	Unbroken.
01:20:40	Ben	Host	Well... John. Did you have... a guy?
01:20:46	John	Host	I couldn't be—I couldn't pick any guy other than Madox. Because so much of what Madox is doing is off screen. Madox is referred to a lot in the film? But also... there's something about him that's kind of anonymous? Anonymous British... aristocrat?
01:21:05	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:21:06	John	Host	But on the fifth watch, you realize—he's in this movie a <u>lot</u> . He's the center of all those expeditions. Even though we're—we—we spend a <u>lot</u> of time with Laszlo. Um, watching him brood and fuss and... and futz. Uh, it's really Madox that's like, paying everybody? <i>[Laughs.]</i> And, um... and interacting with the higher-ups. Like, he's the center. And he just has that... late colonial... like... British guy with <u>all</u> the right intentions doing a <u>bully</u> job and... when you hear at the end of the film that he <u>shot</u> himself. Because of <u>shame</u> . Because, uh, because Almásy betrayed him. It's like—in the context of all the tragedies we see piling up there? At the end of the movie where it's like, oh, well, everybody dies in—unless they're horribly burned and die. Or die some other way. And also <u>Madox</u> shot himself? The—the tragedy of it sort of just bounces by? But we <u>register</u> it because it's one of the last things that—it's—Willem Dafoe... y'know, <u>uses</u> it against Almásy to like <u>hurt</u> him. And it <u>does</u> hurt him. It hurts him more—almost more than anything else in the movie.
01:22:29	Adam	Host	Because Madox was a good man.
01:22:31	John	Host	Yeah. And—and it's the last thing Almásy expected. And he knows that he's destroyed everybody. He knows that he's—he—he admits that he... he... basically... is responsible for the death of... Colin Firth and Kristin Scott Thomas both. But he just never saw Madox dying that way. And <u>all</u> that—y'know—I—it—he—that character... this—in this watching just... <u>really</u> struck me as... again, this is an incredible ensemble film. Everybody is killing it. But that role... that role... played by Julian Wadham. I don't know. He just—he nailed it for me. He's my guy.
01:23:18	Adam	Host	I like that you don't see him... shoot himself. That it happens far away. Long ago. I love the dual grief that you can sort of project on Madox, too? It's not just the double-cross that he... that you can... you can get a sense that he's like, I should've seen it coming. Like, why didn't I... why didn't I recognize this in someone I was so close

01:23:52 John Host to? And also, that scene where Almásy is back at the Tiger Moth? Like, pulling the map out of his plane. And giving them over.  
01:23:56 Adam Host A plane that has a sign on it that says, “Come See Us In Devon!”  
The contrast between that cheerful sign. The maps being given to Nazis. The knowledge that Madox has killed himself. The feeling that—the other feeling that Madox had to have, which was like, why did I leave my maps in my airplane?

01:24:11 John Host Well and also, those are my maps! I made the maps that allowed the Germans to take El-*[inaudible]*.  
01:24:17 Adam Host There’s a triangulation of choices that really weren’t his fault? But that... but added up equal to... the reason for him to kill himself that... it’s just really well done and you don’t see much of it!

01:24:31 John Host Any of it. Right.  
01:24:32 Ben Host Yeah. It’s like a Z-story. Like, there’s—there are so many overlapping stories in this and that—it’s a tragedy that’s just like... suddenly layered through the whole movie!

01:24:42 Adam Host Yeah. Good guy. Ben, who’s your guy?  
01:24:47 Ben Host I wanted to pick Madox, but my... wife kept leaning over to me and telling me how hot she thought he was.

01:24:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Ooooooh.

**Adam:** Oh. Can’t have that!

**Ben:** So, uh. *[Laughs.]*

*[John makes a hissing sound.]*

01:24:58 John Host Boooo!  
01:25:00 Ben Host I don’t want Madox ripping my wife’s bodice!

*[Audio clip of fabric ripping.]*

01:25:12 Adam Host I didn’t take two years of sewing classes in—in grade school to have somebody else rip my wife’s bodices! Do that myself!  
Ben’s like, uh, these are curtains. When do we sew the bodices?

*[John laughs. Ben joins in.]*

01:25:21 Ben Host This isn’t a sewing class, Ben! *[Laughs.]*  
01:25:22 Adam Host Yeah.  
This is gym!

*[All laugh.]*

01:25:26 Ben Host I mean, if—I don’t know. Maybe it’s cheating. But I—I think I wanna pick Kip! I... I liked his character. I like the idea of—of like, setting up a tent just outside the—the, uh, monastery to be... y’know, available sexually for the pretty nurse inside? But not, uh—y’know. Not pushing it on her or anything?

01:25:48 Adam Host He’s been in enough buildings rigged with bombs though that that—that is to just make a lot of practical sense.

01:25:53 John Host Well, yeah.  
01:25:54 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Is there a—

**Ben:** Yeah.  
01:25:55 John Host Is there a more dangerous bomb than a Quebec—Quebecois nurse?  
01:26:00 Adam Host Mmm.

01:26:03 John Host *[Ben laughs.]*  
I mean, I don't—*[Laughs.]* I don't know how much time you guys have spent in Montreal. But.

*[Adam laughs.]*

01:26:10 Ben Host No way.  
01:26:13 John Host Getting her attention by, uh, by licking a shot in the atmosphere? Yeah. *[Laughs.]* Kip is such a gentle soul. Right? I mean, every time we see him he's just—he's—he's clearly so smart and so... such a sensitive!

01:26:23 Adam Host What makes Hana think that he needs any help with his haircare, either? His hair is beautiful! He doesn't need that olive oil!

01:26:30 John Host Well, you don't have hair like that so you don't know how much olive oil a man might need.

01:26:34 Adam Host I'm saying in the context of the film? His hair looks great. And it doesn't need help.

01:26:39 John Host Well, that's between a woman and a man.  
01:26:43 Adam Host I, yeah. I'd never understand that.

*[John laughs.]*

01:26:49 John Host Show up—show up at the doorway to your bedroom sometime and hand your wife a little jar of olive oil and say, "I found this olive oil for your hair."

01:26:57 Adam Host How many laughs are in this film? Serious question. I think that's one of maybe... one or two.

01:27:03 Ben Host She suggests that she should've been playing Bach on the piano and maybe that wouldn't set off the bomb? That was pretty good.

01:27:10 Adam Host That's a second laugh.  
01:27:10 Ben Host A nice bit.  
01:27:11 Adam Host Yeah. Yeah. But where Kip asks if it's for his hair—  
01:27:13 John Host Yeah.  
01:27:14 Adam Host Like when she walks up. That's—that was great.  
01:27:16 Ben Host Yeah. It was good!  
01:27:18 Adam Host You want a bomb diffuser with a sense of humor. Kip also, uh, his character's the inventor of, the, uh, "If you see me running" style of bomb defusal shirt!

*[John laughs.]*

That you see, uh, in a novelty store!

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:27:33 John Host But you know, Kip says a famous—like, a pretty famous line. When they're laying together—lying together—  
01:27:39 Adam Host Mm.  
01:27:40 John Host And, uh—  
01:27:41 Adam Host Yeah. You know who's lying together? It's Almásy and K.  
01:27:43 John Host That's right. But Kip says to her—she says, y'know, like—"You spend all day looking, but at night you wanna be found." And he says—"At night I do want to be found." And that little... exchange. The way that that, um... set up a kind of relationship. A—a male-female relationship dynamic. Watching this in 1996? I... was struck by it. Y'know. I remembered that exchange. And that also felt like a new way of expressing a—a new way of seeing that expressed in

film. Which is just a—it's—like, nowadays you would see that on a poster in a dentist's office. But—

*[Ben laughs.]*

But then it felt like a kind of male vulnerability that you didn't see in a lot of film.

01:28:31 Adam Host

I don't think you're going to—to a dentist if that's what you're seeing.

*[All laugh.]*

01:28:38 John Host

*[Through laughter] [Inaudible.]* I mean, dentistry is one of the things that she does?

01:28:41 Ben Host

Adam, did you have a—

01:28:42 Adam Host

A guy? I did. Uh, but my guy... you never see him in the movie. I really love the quality of a person that goes, like... a person's telling you a story, and they're telling you a story about something or someone else? But what you're doing when you're listening to them tell this story is learning about them. You're learning about the storyteller in the process. And there's a moment in this film that is... exactly that. It's the—it's the truck ride in the desert with Almásy. And, uh, and K riding shotgun. And she's—she's a road trip talker. And it's the sort of quality that Almásy at this point is not admiring at all. And I think... she sets him up with—with a question. That results in the story about one of the best road trips he ever took. It was a road trip that he was taking to Faya, and his tour guide took him out there and it was a trip that took nine hours. And he was wordless the entire time. Except at the very end. When they finally arrived. He gets out—

*[Adam laughs.]*

—of the vehicle and he points to Faya and says, "Faya!" And then that was it. *[Laughs.]* And then he went home.

*[John laughs.]*

Almásy said that was—that was the best trip he'd ever taken up to that point. And my guy is that tour guide. The guy—

*[John laughs.]*

—who has a job. Who's taking a person he probably hates out to his destination? Gotta run the Count out to Faya. Guy's probably an asshole. Just look at him. He's a count. And so he does the bare minimum. He does his job. He gets it out there. He doesn't try to be friends. And I think that story in that moment in the film says so much about... Almásy? And... it's cutting to K. In a way that is, like, indirect? That I just love. Like, the telling of a story that—that tells you more about yourself than anything happening in the story, I think, is like that three-dimensional conversational chess that I just love. And at that moment in the film, is so well-placed. It's, uh... I just really love that moment. And it's not a character with a name, even. I even wrote down that his name might be Faya, but it's clearly not. But that Faya story and the tour guide in it is my guy. I really admired him!

01:31:10 John Host And it's—it's such a great scene because when she recovers from the burn?  
01:31:14 Adam Host Yeah.  
01:31:15 John Host Um, and—  
01:31:16 Adam Host Yeah. You talk about who's—who had the worst burn in this film?

*[John laughs.]*

01:31:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** It might be K after that!

01:31:21 John Host **John:** She gets burned a lot. But she comes back at him after that. With a—with a smile on her face. Like she—she heard the—she got the burn. It was solid.

01:31:30 Adam Host Yeah.

01:31:30 John Host But it was a bonding moment between them! Because it was him very clearly saying, like... yes, I'm in love with you. And I do not care.

01:31:38 Adam Host Yeah.

01:31:39 John Host If I hurt your feelings right now.

01:31:41 Adam Host Yeah.

01:31:41 John Host Um—

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:31:44 Adam Host Because, like... shut the fuck up.

01:31:45 Ben Host Yeah.

01:31:48 John Host Would you say that that moment was straight Faya?

01:31:51 Adam Host Ugh. It was like a Faya Festival.

Mmm.

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:31:54 Music Music It was both of those.

01:31:58 Adam Host "War" theme plays at full volume.

01:32:02 John Host But what will be our next film? Only John's 120-sided die...

01:32:03 Adam Host Here we go!

01:32:04 John Host —can tell us.

01:32:07 Ben Host Making it here—okay. Here we go.

01:32:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk What was up with that German nurse cutting that guy's thumbs off?

**John:** Well, that was a—

01:32:13 John Host **Ben:** And she agreed to that!

That was a pretty gnarly scene. Uh, really tense scene. And uh, good old Jürgen Prochnow—his cameo in this film all the way from... *Das Boot*...

01:32:28 Adam Host Yeah. That was nice.

01:32:30 John Host Was nice, right?

01:32:31 Adam Host Nice to see an unfriendly face again. *[Laughs.]*

01:32:33 John Host Mm-hm. *[Laughs.]*

*[Ben laughs.]*

Okay. Here we go.

*[Sound of die tumbling.]*

Oh, wait. Let me get the mic down there.

[Sound of die tumbling, but more loudly than before.]

01:32:52 Ben Host And—we are at number... 35, Ben! 35. 3-5.  
Wow. Well, uh, number 35, uh, doesn't take us terribly far from this region of the world!

[Music starts playing in background; dramatic movie music with an unexpected amount of synth.]

01:33:05 John Host But, uh, it takes us a little bit earlier in time. It's a World War One film set in Turkey.  
01:33:06 Ben Host Uh-oh!  
01:33:12 John Host 1981. Directed by Peter Weir. It's... *Gallipoli!*  
01:33:13 Ben Host Wow. We've been waiting for this one for a while.  
01:33:15 John Host Yeah!  
Have you seen it? Ben?

[Music ceases.]

01:33:17 Ben Host Uh, I saw it once in high school. Uh, I think my friend had to write a paper about it for a... for history class or something and—and I watched it with him. So it's been a long, long time.  
01:33:29 John Host Have you seen it, Adam?  
01:33:30 Adam Host Exact same context.  
01:33:32 John Host Oh!  
01:33:33 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Wow!

01:33:35 Adam Host **Adam:** Here's a question—  
—I kinda want to float into the, uh, into the *Friendly Fire* viewership? Teachers of *Friendly Fire*? It seems like there's a collection of war films that—that are shown. In high school and junior high. And this is one of 'em. Like, *Glory* was another? How are those decisions made? It—are—is there a—is there a pool of films that you can select as a teacher? Uh, do you get special versions?  
01:33:58 Ben Host Is *The English Patient* not on that list because boobs?  
01:34:01 Adam Host Yeah. Like, I kinda wanna know more about... how these films are shown and why. And like—  
01:34:07 Ben Host Yeah.  
01:34:08 Adam Host Maybe how much freedom you have in the curriculum to... to, uh, to do the deep dives. That we so famously do on *Friendly Fire*. A show that is, uh, almost definitely not appropriate for—

[John laughs.]

01:34:24 Ben Host —middle school, high school, or adulthood.  
I mean, we could—we could make it appropriate, but we're too drawn to the—

[“War” theme begins playing quietly in background.]

01:34:32 Crosstalk Crosstalk —temptation of making jokes about... dropping—  
**Ben:** —loads of cum—

01:34:34 Ben Host **Adam:** About neck-blasting?  
—into supersternal [through laughter] notches. [Laughs.]



01:34:38 John Host Well that's a really interesting question and I would be interested to hear, uh, from—

01:34:43 Adam Host Yeah.

01:34:44 John Host From the teachers of *Friendly Fire*.

01:34:46 Adam Host I've got a couple of teachers in my life. I think I'll ask 'em!

01:34:49 John Host Yeah.

01:34:50 Ben Host Well. I'm looking forward to next week. We will leave it with Robs from here. So in the meantime, for John Roderick and Adam Pranica—I've been Ben Harrison! To the victor go the spoiler alerts.

*[Music plays more loudly, then fades into the background somewhat as Rob gives the outro.]*

01:35:05 Rob Schulte Producer *Friendly Fire* is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Ben Harrison, Adam Pranica, and John Roderick. The show is produced and edited by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, and it's courtesy of Stone Agate Music. And our logo art is by Nick Ditmore.

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01:36:16 Music Speaker 1 Music Guest "War" plays at full volume, then fades out entirely.  
 01:36:19 Music Speaker 2 Music Guest [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).  
 01:36:20 Music Speaker 3 Music Guest Comedy and culture.  
 01:36:21 Music Speaker 4 Music Guest Artist owned—  
 —Audience supported.