

00:00:00	Music	Music	<p>“Valley of Jezreel” by Ernest Gold from the album <i>Exodus: Original Soundtrack from the Movie by Ernest Gold</i>. Violin-forward orchestral arrangement with quick changes from sweeping to sprightly and back again.</p>
00:00:03	John Roderick	Host	<p>I have so much to say about <i>Exodus</i>. Of course I do. But I can't really muster the courage. I <u>want</u> to describe in incredible detail my analysis of the Israeli project, the diaspora of Palestine, the history of Jews in Persia, the girls of the IDF, the Lost Tribes of Israel, the Sephardic flight from Spain, Golda Meir, the Balfour Declaration. I want to describe King Abdullah of Jordan, and the films of Anne Bancroft! I wanna talk about drip irrigation and the Uzi submachine gun, but I'm certain that if I do, I'll attract some portion of the ire of the <u>entire</u> body of our listeners, and I'm just not feeling up to the task of reading your 100 emails explaining to me why I'm a fascist, and by the way, that's not how the chain of command works.</p> <p>Like anyone interested in military and cultural history, the 72-year-old history of the nation of Israel is irresistible to me, and I've studied it voraciously, and I wish I lived in a world different from this one where I could fix <u>all</u> the problems by unwinding time at my leisure and coaxing—midwifing—the whole experience, so that everyone involved, then <u>and</u> now, got <u>exactly</u> what they wanted, <u>plus</u> a little extra at the expense of the other guy, and now lives happily somewhere better than where they lived before. That's my fantasy, but honestly, I'm just as ready to dive in and try to help aid and abet a solution to a current situation that honestly cannot not be fixed at any price.</p> <p>Did you know that King Abdullah granted all Palestinians Jordanian citizenship, and offered to administer the Jewish state as a province within his own kingdom? Ah! But there I go! I don't wanna get <u>into</u> it! <i>[Sighs.]</i> Do you, the listener, have a position on Israel? Probably! You probably can get pretty riled up about it, can't you? But do I wanna hear it? NO! Of course I don't! I have my <u>own</u> <u>very</u> strong feelings about it, and if I wanted to stand around the student dining facility arguing with <u>you</u> about it over a card table that you set up with a cardboard sign that said “Free Palestine,” then I would have done that back when I had the chance! And I <u>did</u> do it, in fact, and I learned <u>nothing</u>, except to avoid people who carried a certain kind of Swiss Army surplus gas mask bag as a purse.</p> <p>I <u>wanted</u> to argue with you then, because I still believed in ideas and in reason. Ho ho! What an ignoramus I was! You didn't care what I thought about it. You wanted to tell me what <u>you</u> thought about it! And I <u>struggled</u> to not think <u>you</u> were an idiot, and I <u>failed</u>! Meanwhile, wars and wars and endless wars.</p>
00:02:51	John	Host	<p>That's neither here nor there. Do people care about each other? Of course they do! Is the majority of the world racist and antisemitic? I frankly don't think so! I think that people are wired to feel like resources are scarce even when they're not, which is why so many of us order extra meat for a dollar, even when the regular-sized portion of chicken-fried steak has <u>plenty</u> of meat, and anyway meat is third on the list of reasons you even <u>order</u> chicken-fried steak,</p>

after the breading and gravy. So people get especially torqued when resources actually are scarce, and there is no extra meat for a dollar or any price. And then the great schism becomes most evident.

And I mean by that the divide between people who believe that to help other people—and by that I don't mean a lonely traveler who ran out of gas on the highway, but I mean help fellow humans—have a better lot in life... Well, some people think that's a mitzvah, versus other people who feel in their hearts that helping other people comes at a cost of squandering the precious little that they have to survive themselves. I mean, that's a reasonable position. And often the people who most generously aid a guest or fellow traveler are the least likely to believe that a rising tide of justice lifts all boats. So it can get confusing quickly when everyone imagines that they are very generous to other people, and why aren't most people the same way? The fact is, though, that very few people have any interest in fairness until they feel that they themselves are being treated unfairly.

Well, what does this have to do with *Exodus*? I'm not talking about you right now, okay? I'm sure that you, the listener, are very generous to travelers and to your fellow humans. I'm not suggesting that any particular position as regards the nation of Israel is ungenerous or mean. I'm just free associating because I really, really desperately want to talk to you about Israel, and frankly, this is my chance! I have the microphone plugged right into your ears, and I could just delete any email I got with the header, "You're so wrong about Israel!"

But just like getting an Israeli stamp in my passport and then having to endure the stink-eye from some border guard in Yemen—[sighs]—I just don't have the strength. Look, I had plans to go to Yemen, and then this fucking endless war spilled over, and now look at it. It's funny. You'd think I'd want to visit Jerusalem. You'd think that. But frankly, Jerusalem gives me a headache. I don't believe any of it! What a load of bull! Human beings are ridiculous! Jerusalem, of all places! If you're going to fly to Heaven on the back of a Buraq, which is a horse with a human face, of all the godforsaken things, wouldn't you beg God to send you to a place with nice beaches, or summer winds, or peach trees at least? Figs? Olives? Get outta here with that bougie crap!

00:05:51 John Host

[Sighs.] I want to visit Tel Aviv. It seems like a place where your hotel room would have a sliding glass door, and you could drink fresh mixed fruit juice with mint, and wear a shirt with epaulettes. And the person who invited you there would have a linen shift over her bathing suit, and her hair piled on top of her head in a messy way. No one ever flew to Heaven on a horse with a face from Tel Aviv. I might even consent to debating about Israel with the young intellectual crowd in the hotel bar, who came to hear my talk at the event sponsored by the embassy, and while they generally agreed with my theses, they wanted to add a few clarifications about how the command structure works.

[Sighs.] "Each person on board this ship is a soldier. The only weapon we have to fight with is our willingness to die." Today on *Friendly Fire: Exodus*.

00:06:52	Music	Transition	<p><i>[Music fades into the opening drumroll of the next song.]</i></p> <p>“War” off the album <i>War &amp; Peace</i> by Edwin Starr. Impassioned, intense funk.</p> <p><i>War!</i>  <i>Huh!</i>  <i>Yeah!</i>  <i>What is it good for?!</i>  <i>Absolutely—</i>  <i>—nothing!</i>  <i>Uh-huh!</i></p> <p><i>War!</i>  <i>Huh!</i>  <i>Yeah!</i>  <i>What is it good for?!</i>  <i>Absolutely—</i>  <i>—nothing!</i></p> <p><i>Say it again, y’all!</i></p> <p><i>War!</i></p> <p><i>[Song fades down and plays quietly as the hosts speak.]</i></p>
00:07:10	Ben Harrison	Host	<p>Welcome to <i>Friendly Fire</i>, the war movie podcast whose hosts—depending on how you feel on this episode—you <u>may</u> count among the names of the dead at Yom Kippur.</p> <p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i></p> <p>I’m Ben Harrison. <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:07:20	Adam Pranica	Host	<p>That sounds... scary! I’m Adam Pranica.</p> <p><i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i></p>
00:07:24	John	Host	And I’m John Roderick. Yeah...
00:07:26	Ben	Host	Fraught topics today.
00:07:28	Adam	Host	That’s what <i>Friendly Fire</i> does, though!
00:07:31	Ben	Host	Yeah. We don’t shy away!
00:07:32	Adam	Host	No.
00:07:33	Ben	Host	We get into it!
00:07:34	John	Host	<p>I mean, you could argue that—well, a lot of movies we’ve watched in the course of this show, particularly ones that are like, “Is this a war movie?” They’re the <u>spawn</u> of <u>this</u> movie. In a couple of different ways.</p> <p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p>
00:07:47	Ben	Host	<p>But, you know, politically—</p> <p>Hm.</p>

00:07:48	John	Host	—this is depicting a—it's depicting the run-up to a conflict that has created... uh—well, a constellation of global fires.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			That we watch movies about all the time.
00:08:04	Ben	Host	Right! I think that structurally, this movie is so interesting, because it sort of positions itself in between conflicts, in a way.
00:08:11	John	Host	Yeah.
00:08:11	Ben	Host	Like, there's—World War Two has ended at the beginning, and the wars that Israel fought with its neighbors have not totally begun yet at the end.
00:08:22	John	Host	The very <u>last</u> moment of this film is the first day of the civil war in Palestine that leads to the 1948 war. So what makes this a war movie is that it's wars on both sides. Right? A foot in each war.
00:08:36	Ben	Host	"Both sides." That's our—that's our happy place! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:08:38	John	Host	Hey, let's do it! Let's stay there! <i>[Chanting]</i> Both sides, both sides!
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:08:42	Adam	Host	The film really draws a straight line between, like, end of World War Two <u>and</u> ... boats at Palestine. But what the film really made me think about a lot were like, what other ideas were on the table? What a <u>crazy</u> moment in world history for the war to have ended. You have a Jewish population that has been traumatized the way that it has been. What do you <u>do</u> ? What doors are open or shut? Like, what can you <u>make</u> Germany do, or not do?
00:09:13	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:09:14	Adam	Host	At the end? Playing out the possibilities was I think a more interesting exercise than watching the film, personally.
00:09:21	Ben	Host	Ouch. Wow. Fucking <u>nuclear</u> hot take there.
			<i>[Ben and John laugh.]</i>
00:09:27	Adam	Host	It makes me wonder how many other films set in this time period may have gone in different directions as far as what <u>could</u> have happened. What <u>might</u> have happened.
00:09:37	Ben	Host	I read a little bit about the actual ship that is depicted in this movie. This is kind of a pretty heavily fictionalized version of this ship, but this ship, like, sailed to France, and the French authorities were like, "Well, you—like, the Jews can get off the boat if they <u>want</u> to get off the boat."
00:09:53	Adam	Host	Just classic French passive aggression.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			Like—
00:09:57	Ben	Host	Well, no! It was that, like, they were willing to have them, but it was pretty clear that the English were just kind of trying to dump the problem of, you know, "Where will these people go, and what will they do to survive?" onto the French. And I think that that's kind of—that's a big part of what they were fighting against! It's such a mind-

fuck that, like, these people are running away from Nazi concentration camps, and then just put in other camps by other big nation-states.

00:10:24 Adam Host

Right.

00:10:25 John Host

The real story of the *Exodus* is a terrible one. Not anything like it's depicted here. When the *Exodus* arrived in Haifa, they didn't disembark. They forced them to turn away, and then it became this, like, ship that nobody wanted, and most of the refugees on the *Exodus* ended up in a internment camp in Germany, where many of them spent several years. So to call this the *Exodus*, and to portray the first act of the film as this—like, it was a publicity event that galvanized a lot of support around the world. But it did not have the happy ending or the, like, patriotic ending. It was the worst. And if you'd made an actual movie about what actually happened to the *Exodus*, it would be a... super-downer!

But you know, this is based on a novel by Leon Uris, that was a very popular novel, and a—and a great novel! I mean, I've read it, and he's a great author. I remember reading it... I don't know, 35 years ago, and thinking it was amazing. But he's like a James Michener! You know, he's writing historical fiction, basically. And the novel itself is, like, much broader, and much... you know, it tells the whole story of... Palestine. Or at least, you know, Palestine as it confronts Zionism.

What they chose to put in this movie and what they chose to leave out is super-weird.

00:12:00 Ben Host

Yeah. I mean, like, if you haven't watched it yet, uh, we cannot stress this enough: It is a three-and-a-half-hour movie, so the things that are left out are almost mind-boggling to contemplate. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:11 John Host

Well, that's what's crazy! I mean, they spend—there's—there are scenes in this movie where they burn six minutes watching a guy open a can of soup.

*[Ben laughs.]*

But then there are giant parts of the story that they just, like, condense, like—at the—this scene, as soon as the British allow them to leave Cyprus... we, like, jump-cut to everybody in Haifa getting off the boat, like, high-fiving each other or whatever, and then jump-cut to basically a new movie!

00:12:41 Adam Host

Is that where "high-five" came from? Haifa?

*[Ben and John laugh.]*

Like—

00:12:45 Clip Clip

**Kitty Fremont (*Exodus*):** I don't know much about the mandate, but I do know the Jews were promised a homeland in Palestine.

00:12:51 John Host

We have this great movie setup where we—we're spending all this wonderful time with Ralph Richardson, and we're like, "Hey, this is great. Any time you get to spend with Ralph Richardson, you're having a good time." *[Stifles laughter.]* And then we never see him again! You know?

00:13:04	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:13:05	John	Host	We get 40 minutes with him, and it's like... we get set up thinking we're in one place, and then we—
00:13:10	Adam	Host	It really feels like three films. It feels like as much of a TV film as we've ever gotten, with the long fade-to-black almost <u>on</u> the hour.
00:13:21	John	Host	Right. That was a weird—it was a wonderful fade-to-black at hour two!
00:13:25	Adam	Host	Uh-huh. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> That's when you knew you only had 90 minutes left.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:13:29	John	Host	But you know, Ralph Richardson and Peter Lawford are top-billed. They both go away, you know, I don't know what, minute 40. And then we're like, "Oh, I—who's—who are the new—? Who are our <u>new</u> friends?"
00:13:41	Adam	Host	Especially when I feel like you're trained as a movie viewer to be introduced to characters that go through changes. Like, you see the Major Caldwell character and you're like, "Eugh. This guy— <i>[stifles laughter]</i> —this guy is troubling. I don't like him. Is he going to die, or change?"
			And the answer is neither. He's just going to go away!
00:14:03	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah.
00:14:06	Adam	Host	I mean, I—I teased a little bit earlier, I didn't feel like there was enough of that for me here.
00:14:11	John	Host	Well, that's the thing. If you're gonna fictionalize a story, and also try and tell the true story, why wouldn't you fictionalize it so that we had Ralph Richardson also be the British Administer of—Administrator of Palestine?
00:14:31	Adam	Host	Mm-hm.
00:14:32	John	Host	Or have Peter Lawford continue in some capacity. Because we have British bad guys, but they're faceless. They're nameless, faceless bad guys.
00:14:42	Ben	Host	There is some casual antisemitism in those characters. What's really preventing the war refugees from having any, like, hope for the future is this kind of bureaucratic bullshit that is made a little bit easier by their casual antisemitism but is not, like, completely linked to that. And you know, in the time we're watching this, an interesting thing to think about, like, the way people's racialized worldviews can kind of undergird the, like, injustices that they help support. If you went up to Major Caldwell and said, like, "Hey, like, how do you feel about Jews?" he'd be like, "Don't care for 'em."
			"Do you think that we should, like, let these people rot in camps?"
			And he'd be like, "Well, that's above my pay grade, so I'm just gonna, like, keep doing what I'm ordered to do." You know?
00:15:31	John	Host	But that's what would've been so fascinating. Because I agree, it's really interesting to watch and it contextualizes the beginning of the movie. But—but there are no Arabs! In that first part. And we're

watching the antisemitism and the—and the—you know, like, low-grade antisemitism and bureaucracy impede their—the actual exodus to Israel. But the question—the real question at all of this is like, now we're in Palestine. The British have made contradictory promises to the Arabs and to the Jews.

00:16:07 Ben Host

Right.

00:16:08 John Host

And are trying to solve this problem by shuffling paperwork around.

*[Ben laughs.]*

And by—you know, by, like, saying, "Well, the treaty says this, and we can't—you know, we can't all—sorry, this one has to go here, and that one—"

And meanwhile, you know, the situation's spiraling out of their control, but we don't see any of that! We can kinda hear it. Because everybody's—you know, Paul Newman is staring off into the middle distance. Giving a, uh, "I have a dream" speech every 15 minutes.

00:16:38 Clip Clip

**Taha (*Exodus*):** In this valley of Jezreel, we... we dwell together as friends.

00:16:43 Ben Host

This movie comes to us two years before *Lawrence of Arabia*, and it is in that same weird tradition of just casting a Western white actor and, you know, putting boot polish in their beard to make them seem like an Arab.

00:16:59 John Host

Only a weird tradition if you were born after 1980.

*[Ben laughs.]*

Prior to 1980—

*[Someone claps once.]*

—standard form.

00:17:06 Ben Host

Yeah!

00:17:07 John Host

And if you look in the background, you see a supporting cast of very—

00:17:13 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:17:14 John Host

You know, of very dark people. Yet none—like, we never get—and particularly the women. We never get a woman who steps forward into the light that has—that basically has curly hair. You know? Like...

00:17:26 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:17:28 John Host

Uh, we do get some dark, like, complexioned dudes, but like, Sal Mineo is Sicilian. You know what it is?

00:17:36 Ben Host

*[Laughing]* Right.

00:17:37 John Host

I betcha they just didn't have any Jews in Hollywood at this point that they could've used.

00:17:41 Ben Host

Mm. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:42 John Host

As, like, lead actors.

00:17:44 Ben Host That must be it. They—the background actors must all just be... Israelis that they cast, right?

00:17:50 John Host Yeah.

00:17:51 Ben Host Like, that—this was all shot on location, so...

00:17:54 John Host They went to the kibbutz and they said, "Everybody line up."

00:17:56 Ben Host But is that like, a self-conscious choice, to make it more palatable to a—an American audience that may have some misgivings about the Jews, or—or what?

00:18:07 John Host Choosing to have the young girl that is kinda the stand-in for, like, a Holocaust survivor who has a hopeful outlook on life, and who gradually—um, her character arc is that she gradually realizes that Israel, the Zionist cause, are her place, and where she belongs. She doesn't want to escape to America. These are her people. You know, she, like, undergoes an identity journey. Until she becomes the martyr of the movie.

And the choice of her being Danish—you know, Jewish, but Danish—rather than looking like Sarah Silverman... it had to have been a choice. And there are just so many ways that you could have had a dark, curly-haired girl in that role.

00:19:02 Adam Host She was a non-professional actor, like, plucked from obscurity from Otto Preminger, right? Like, wasn't that her story?

00:19:09 John Host But casting her then, like, requires that you ask and answer all these questions. And we have that little moment where Eva Marie Saint says, "Oh." You know, "So your father was Jewish." When she kinda looks at her in the camp, and she's so blonde, and she's like, "Who—how are—why are you here?"

*[Ben laughs.]*

And she says, "Oh, yes, and my mother, too." And we get that little bit of—that little moment where our expectations... Kitty kind of is our stand-in for our surprise. Like, "Don't think that we all look a certain way."

But at the same time, if you're gonna have one girl as your tentpole Israeli? You know, to choose to have her be from a—a minority of, like, Jewish Danes, it's like having a Japanese girl and saying like, "Well, you know, there are Jews in Japan."

00:20:03 Ben Host She was in another Otto Preminger movie that's on our list. *In Harm's Way*, starring John Wayne and Kirk Douglas.

00:20:10 John Host Ooh.

00:20:11 Ben Host Yeah, but I think that you're right, John. Like, the—there's so much table-setting, understanding what overcommitments the British Empire had made to people in this region, uh, that you can get through watching *Lawrence of Arabia*, that this movie kind of elides. Like, you just have to take for granted that this is a very complicated geopolitical puzzle that needs to be solved by the United Nations.

And it's amazing how much that UN vote is referred back to over the course of the film. It's like—it's this momentous off-camera thing that



we never see. We're never in Geneva in the movie. We don't ever hear anybody's opinion about it that isn't, like, on screen, you know? Like, that vote just is a Sword of Damocles that's hanging over the action. And their goal is to elicit the sympathy of the world, basically.

00:21:12 John Host

I think there's so much revisionism about this moment, right? That we—the world now... tends to think of Israel as a kind of American, you know—or it couldn't survive without American help, American arms, and American aid. And yet in the early days, and really, you know, all the way through the seventies, you know, Israel was really on its own. And didn't have any big patrons. The guns that they managed to put together to actually fight that war in 1948, they got from Czechoslovakia. And they got it in defiance of an arms embargo. That scene where they're listening to the United Nations vote on Partition, and it comes down to, like, what Paraguay thinks...

*[Ben laughs.]*

And what—you know, what 1948 Paraguay thinks. There are a lot of nations voting in that referendum that are like—what—in 1948, what the hell is going on, even? In... Uruguay. And yet that's where the future of the Middle East, and ultimately the future of the world—because this hot spot continues to be the flare-up point—

00:22:32 Adam Host

That would have been such an interesting third part to this film. To remove the second part, keep the boat, keep the exodus in the beginning, move act three to act two, and then see in act three a country get its feet under itself. But the idea that the film ends with—what no one agrees on is—is like—it's a really nice sentiment of these two people being buried together, and eulogized in the way that Paul Newman does, but like, did anyone feel that at the end of this film? At this moment in time? Like, in 1960, as in now, it felt hollow to me! It felt manipulative. And untrue.

00:23:15 John Host

Taha is the only Arab we ever know by name. And his love for Ari Ben Canaan is one that we're told about over and over. "We grew up together, we love each other."

00:23:28 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:23:29 John Host

You know, "He's like a brother to me." But we never—

00:23:31 Ben Host

"We used to be roommates in college!"

00:23:33 John Host

*[Chuckles.]* Right! But we never see it, really. We just see them together a couple of times and they don't seem to be too in love with each other.

00:23:40 Adam Host

The part that affected me so much more than the funeral was the moment where Taha was like, "Look, man, we've been brothers forever, but like, it's—it has to be over for us. We're not going to be friends anymore. I'm gonna leave the room and I'm never gonna see you again."

00:23:55 John Host

Well, and that's the story. Right? That's the story of 1948.

00:23:58 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:24:00 John Host

The whole folly, I think, of a lot of the moderate Zionists was that they believed they could create a Jewish state, and that the Arabs and the current residents of Palestine could continue to live on their land, and continue to be now effectively a non-voting minority, in the new

state of Israel. And so many—um, so many of that first generation believed that. Not all of 'em. Right? But David Ben-Gurion believed it. And it was, you know, Begin that didn't.

- 00:24:36 Adam Host It was incredible to experience that moment in this film and be like, "God, they really thought that, didn't they?" Like, "Why isn't everyone celebrating with us?! This is weird!"
- Like, that—that whole tonal shift?
- 00:24:47 John Host Like, no person in any leadership position on the Arab side ever for a minute agreed with the idea that this was gonna be a pluralistic state where they were—they went from being the majority to the minority in the space of an afternoon.
- 00:25:04 Ben Host Do you think that that's because of the history of getting fucked over by various, like, colonial powers in the region? Like, I mean, they'd been under the boot of the British, and then before that the Ottomans, and they never really had any political agency in that region, right?
- 00:25:23 John Host Well, but there wasn't a—I mean, this is where we're gonna get into a place where a lot of people are gonna write us letters.
- 00:25:28 Ben Host I mean, 'cause what I'm wondering about is, like, did the Jews coming from Western Europe, having seen, like, the... like, all of the extremes of Western nominally democratic governments, like, came with like a different concept of how you might go about setting up a state than people who had been living in Palestine the entire time. Like, all of their lived experience was based on being ruled from afar by imperial powers, right?
- 00:25:56 John Host Well, the thing is, like, the British colonial period lasted for... 30 years here. But the Ottomans ruled this region for 400-plus years. And during the Ottoman period, there was—it was all part of the Ottoman Empire. There was no distinction, really, between any, you know, region, or the people that lived in what we think of as Palestine, or Jordan, or Lebanon, or... you know, like, I think as it veered into Syria or into Iraq, you started to get more sort of nationalist identities in those places?
- But in general, it was a—it was a varied Arab population. You know, a lot of nomadism. And they were all ruled by Constantinople.
- 00:26:58 Ben Host Yeah. But you might consider yourself a member of your tribe, like, as the top line in your concept of your identity first, right?
- 00:27:08 John Host Yeah. Well, first, second, and third! This is true of the Jews that were living in Palestine, too. The idea that everyone in the world is a born nationalist, and that they stand on their plot of ground and put up a flag and say, "My primary allegiance is to my nation"? It's a real 20th century overlay. It's widely understood that most of the people in the region didn't have a—there wasn't a Palestinian state, or aspiration for there to be a Palestinian state.
- 00:27:38 Ben Host I mean, that's one of the things that they cover in *Lawrence of Arabia*, right? Is that he's like, trying to gin up this sense of Arab nationalism so that they can make the Arabs a thing that the Ottomans have to deal with, instead of just a part of the Ottoman Empire, right?

00:27:54	John	Host	<p>Well, yeah. And I think Ben-Gurion actually fought <u>for</u>—during World War One, he puts, like, a Jewish brigade together to fight <u>for</u> the Ottomans. <u>Against</u> the British. And then sorta switched sides halfway through, from the Arab perspective. There wasn't a clear recognition of what was happening <u>until</u> they perceived the threat of the sort of Zionist intentions.</p> <p>You know, which was a real gradual—like, the first Zionists to appear arrived and, like, <u>bought</u> their farms. For a long, long time, the Jewish plan was to just <u>buy property</u> there. It wasn't to form a <u>state</u> and fight wars. It was just, like, "Let's all move to Palestine and buy farms. And when there's enough of us there, we'll have a community. And when there's enough of a community, we'll have—we'll put together like a government, and then eventually a state."</p>
00:28:52	Adam	Host	<p>It feels like Taha would have been the perfect character to give voice to all of that context. And I think that's, like, what I was aching for during this film was, like, Taha to be like, "I've lived here forever, and I've seen it change in these ways, and what's happening now is pretty scary, and I'm gonna tell you why. And it's also gonna be the reason why I can't be friends with you, Ari Ben Canaan."</p> <p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>And I really feel like his utility as a character was... underused. I wanna know that stuff, and it sucks that the conversation's more interesting than the movie to me!</p>
00:29:25	John	Host	<p>To have one British character who was sitting at a desk, and at various times talking to Arab leaders and Jewish leaders, and trying to, in their perfunctory way, like, appease? And explain, and adjudicate this growing dispute. Where it's like, "Well, wait a minute. We were all living here just fine, but now—now you wanna do this? And now—now where are <u>you</u> going?" And to just see one guy over his head—increasingly over his head—would have been a <u>great</u> proxy for us.</p> <p>Because we spend <u>all</u> that time with the Israelis, and Paul Newman is <u>such</u> a—he never smiles in this movie, right?</p>
00:30:10	Clip	Clip	<b>Ari Ben Canaan (<i>Exodus</i>):</b> I'll be here on the terrace from seven o'clock on.
00:30:13	John	Host	<p>He's a super, like, <u>pinched</u> character in this movie. Not a sympathetic one. We only love him 'cause he's beautiful and he's righteous.</p>
00:30:23	Adam	Host	<p>I can't believe how they kept Paul Newman's character totally clean and coiffed throughout. Like, he gets up out of the water after swimming off of that boat? His hair is perfectly done.</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>And his hair never gets out of place for the entire film! He's on a boat full of people on hunger strike. He's not suffering. His uniform is clean. He gets to wear the suit on that date with Kitty. Like, I think we talk about this in other films. Like, how much we admire a willingness for an actor to drop their vanity a little bit, and to get down in it. And I—and that was one of the elements of the film, like, I wanna—I wanna feel more trauma from a traumatic story. And if Paul</p>

			Newman's not willing to go through that with me and for me, it's gonna be hard for me to get there with a film.
00:31:15	John	Host	That's why Sal Mineo got nominated for a Oscar for this role.
00:31:20	Adam	Host	What a fucked-up job interview that was, though.
			<i>[Ben and John laugh.]</i>
			That's like, "Tell me about a time you've been traumatized." With one of those open-ended interview questions.
00:31:31	Ben	Host	Yeah, yeah.
00:31:33	Adam	Host	And then like—ugh. Brutal.
			<i>[Ben laughs quietly.]</i>
00:31:36	John	Host	"What's your <u>weakest</u> quality?"
00:31:37	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:31:38	John	Host	"As a manager."
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:31:40	Music	Transition	A brief clip of "War."
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>Huh!</i>
			<i>Yeah!</i>
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
00:31:43	Ben	Host	Reputedly, Otto Preminger and Paul Newman hated each other's guts and had a extremely conflicted relationship on this film set, and like—
00:31:53	Adam	Host	Did you read the dummy story? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:31:56	Ben	Host	Yeah! Like, it's like a on-set prank where Paul Newman was, like, pissed off at Preminger about something, and they had a scene on a balcony, where he finished shooting the scene and threw this dummy off, and made Otto Preminger think that he'd, like, slipped and fallen off of the— <i>[laughs]</i> —off of the building. And Otto Preminger had, like, a heart attack and had to be, like, carried off set.
00:32:18	John	Host	That sounds fun.
00:32:20	Adam	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> We know how terrible dummies were in this era of Hollywood.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Like, I—I kind of admire Paul Newman's ingenuity to make a realistic-looking dummy! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:32:30	Ben	Host	Yeah. Well, I wonder, like, which side the cleanness of Paul Newman came from, though. Like, was it Paul Newman's vanity, or was it something about—
00:32:37	Adam	Host	Yeah.

00:32:38 Ben Host —the way Otto Preminger saw that character? 'Cause I was reading about the novel. There's a really amazing quote from Leon Uris in the *New York Post* on the Wikipedia article about the novel. I'm gonna read the whole thing. He says:

"There is a whole school of American Jewish writers who spend their time damning their fathers, hating their mothers, wringing their hands, and wondering why they were born. This isn't art or literature. It's psychiatry. These writers are professional apologists. Every year, you find one of their works on the best-seller list. Their work is obnoxious and makes me sick to my stomach."

[Someone whistles.]

"I wrote *Exodus* because I was just sick of apologizing, or feeling that it was necessary to apologize."

00:33:23 John Host Yeahhh! Boom!

00:33:25 Adam Host Wow.

00:33:26 Ben Host And I wonder if that's—

00:33:27 John Host Hot!

00:33:28 Ben Host —what Otto Preminger is trying to do with this. I mean, like, this is a very unapologetic movie. It does not start the way I start every *Friendly Fire*, which is by apologizing for having an opinion, [laughs] you know? Like, it very forcefully makes its case. He also, like, hired Dalton Trumbo to write the screenplay, despite the fact that Dalton Trumbo was on the Hollywood blacklist. It's like a—this movie is a "Fuck you" to anyone that disagrees with its stated opinion.

00:34:01 John Host And there are aspects of the movie where that is clear. You know, it has a side. Right? And in fact, it only shows one side. But there are other long, sweeping portions of the movie where it just feels like a propaganda film. You know, every time somebody says, "Everyone, gather 'round!" they all do, and they're all quiet.

[Ben or Adam laughs quietly.]

And listen as someone gives them, like, a really inspiring speech. And that—that felt like it veered away from... well, just veered away from the story, in order to be a—like, a sentimental, long advertisement for Israel.

00:34:43 Ben Host Do you think that that's partly because of, like, when in history this movie came out? I mean, I'm just trying to, like, think about the American audience for this film maybe, you know, having a vague sense of what the Holocaust meant to the refugees at the beginning of the film.

00:35:00 Adam Host Like, how shocking was Dov's *Sonderkommando* story to someone like that?

00:35:06 Ben Host Yeah!

00:35:07 John Host Well, much more shocking, the sodomy aspect of it, I think.

00:35:10 Adam Host Right.

00:35:12	John	Host	But I do think that this movie played a huge role in making an American audience aware of Israel, and making Israel the—the, uh, protagonist. I mean Israel's only, at this point, 12 years old?
00:35:26	Ben	Host	Yeah. It was like, pre–Six-Day War that this came out?
00:35:30	John	Host	Mm-hm.
00:35:31	Ben	Host	There's an idea out in the world of Israel that is this country that is constantly besieged by its neighbors that maybe, like, hadn't been, like, fully articulated yet at this point.
00:35:42	John	Host	The book, and then the movie, followed on the heels of the Suez Crisis. And the Suez Crisis—after 1948, when the Israeli Defense Force just basically handed their asses to every other nation in the region.
00:35:58	Adam	Host	I mean, you can <u>see</u> how that would have happened with all that stick-fighting practice you see in <u>this</u> movie.
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
			Very formidable military on the way, I think!
00:36:07	John	Host	Right. One gun for every 15 people? No, I think the foundation myth of Israel is that—not myth, but the story is that the Arabs outnumbered them, had more weaponry, more everything. And on a shoestring, basically, with sticks and a bunch of trucks that didn't have anybody in them... but with this <u>incredible</u> sense of purpose, they defeated overwhelming odds. Because the Arabs didn't have, at the time, much of a <u>collective</u> sense that they were working as a unit.
			But in—in fifty... sssix, the Suez Crisis was a situation where Israel invaded Egypt when Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal. And they invaded Egypt kind of, you know, as a—the tip of the spear for this British plan to recapture the canal. And it was a—kind of a disaster. And it wasn't a disaster <u>militarily</u> . Like a <u>diplomatic</u> disaster. And the USA <u>and</u> the <u>Soviets</u> <u>both</u> agreed—you know, they both turned on the Israelis and the British, and it was a huge humiliation for everybody, and they had no international support, and they had to back out.
			And so I think this movie was made in the <u>context</u> of this post-Suez sense that the Israelis had overstepped their bounds. They were part of this fucked up conspiracy. Their reputation wasn't that good at this moment.
00:37:52	Clip	Clip	<b>Dr. Lieberman (<i>Exodus</i>):</b> No, no trouble at all.
			<i>[Rattling thunk of an old phone hanging up.]</i>
00:37:55	John	Host	But what is this? This is right before the Cuban Missile Crisis, Bay of Pigs...
00:38:00	Ben	Host	Exciting time to be alive.
00:38:01	John	Host	<i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> Right? There's like, a <u>lot</u> of shit going on geopolitically. So this movie, even though we never hear about Russians, that's not part of the story of the <u>movie</u> , it's part of the story of the time the movie was made.

00:38:16	Ben	Host	And there may be being some effort by the filmmakers to rehabilitate the image of Israel in making this film. If that's, like, the first thing everybody remembers about Israel. "Oh, they were involved in that weird Suez Crisis thing. Eugh."
00:38:33	John	Host	And you put a bunch of American actors at the front.  <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>  As a way of saying, like, "Israel: It's just basically like America! It's got Sal Mineo in it. It's <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> except, uh, over there!"
00:38:45	Ben	Host	"You just replace the cat and the hot tin with a fiddler!"
00:38:49	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.] "Fiddler on a Hot Tin Roof!"</i>
00:38:53	Clip	Clip	<b>Murdock (<i>Rambo: First Blood Part II</i>):</b> That's a hell of a combination.
00:38:55	Ben	Host	Uh, I've got a goof for you guys, from the IMDb goofs section:  "This film repeats a historical error contained in the original novel, when Karen tells Dov about King Christian X of Denmark—"
00:39:07	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Beeping as Ben speaks.]</i>
00:39:08	Ben	Host	"—publicly wore a yellow Star of David in defiance of a Nazi order that all Danish Jews do so. In fact, this incident never occurred!"  <i>[Beeping stops.]</i>  "Danish Jews were never ordered to wear the yellow star."
00:39:21	Adam	Host	See, I knew something smelled funny about that story. That's <i>Rudy</i> ! That's the story of <i>Rudy</i> !  <i>[Ben cracks up, Adam laughs.]</i>  That moment between Karen and Dov, when she tells him that story, and then she's like, "Well, if you don't get it, then that's what makes you the fucked-up person you are" was not sufficient enough to ruin her love for him.
00:39:43	John	Host	She really loved him.
00:39:45	Adam	Host	And I thought for sure that it would, right? Like, she loved him even though he didn't get that story.
00:39:49	John	Host	He—she was 15 when this movie was made, and she's playing a 15-year-old. And she does such a wonderful job of being 15. And never more 15 than in that scene, and in the final scene—
00:40:02	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:40:03	John	Host	—where he promises to marry her. And then he says, "Go back to the base. From now on, you have to do what I say." And she gets a look of absolute, complete satisfaction. Just like, " <u>Yes</u> ."
00:40:19	Adam	Host	"Finally, I've lost my agency!"
00:40:22	John	Host	She's <u>so</u> pleased.
00:40:25	Adam	Host	It's such a strange change! Because the first scene we get with them is her, like—he's completely lost it in that tent. He smashes the milk glass and is ready to come a-stabbin'. Karen defuses the bomb that

is Dov in that scene. It's so weird that she has so much power that she's willing to give up for him!

00:40:45 John Host It's weird only in 2020. In 1948, that would have been exactly the dynamic.

00:40:52 Adam Host It's cool and normal in '48. I getcha. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:40:55 John Host Well, not cool and normal, but like, that would've been the dynamic, right? Like, "I'm—"

00:40:58 Adam Host Yeah.

00:40:59 John Host "You can't tell me what to do, I'm gonna kick your ass. But now that I'm your wife..."

00:41:02 Ben Host It just gave me, like, a flashback to my wife going through our ketubah with a red pen and crossing out all the parts about her submitting to my will.

00:41:10 John Host *[Laughs and claps.]* But you know, in the style of the time, one thing we forget about marriages prior to... 1990, is that there's always been playacting, or, um, roleplaying!

00:41:25 Adam Host It always goes back to stories of your first marriage in 1990, John.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:41:29 John Host Yeah. That's right.

00:41:31 Adam Host It always does.

00:41:32 John Host But you know, like a little bit of a D/s—"D" slash lowercase "s"—like, shared conspiracy about what the gender roles are gonna be. In marriages where there was actual equality between people. Surely not—I'm not saying that this is true across the board. But it's—you know, that was a voluntary submission on her part, not—and you know, and I'm sure—if you wanna send me letters about institutionalized patriarchy, you can send them to Ben at...

00:42:01 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** *[Laughs.]* No, they'll just hurt my feelings!

**John:** ... *[stifling laughter]*  
gofuckyourself@maximumfunkenstein.org.

00:42:07 Ben Host Alright, but if you do send them to me, my wife is gonna be the one that replies. 'Cause she handles all our correspondences.

00:42:13 John Host Yeah. Let her—*[stifles laughter]*—let her read them, and then she'll—she can put the pen in your hand.

00:42:17 Adam Host She wrote that into your ketubah.

*[John laughs and claps.]*

00:42:19 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Mm-hm!

00:42:21 Clip Clip **Music:** A romantic violin waltz.

**Ari Ben Canaan:** Won't your husband have something to say about that?

*[Clip audio stops.]*

00:42:24 Adam Host One of the moments in the film that got me up outta the couch and was like, "What?!"



Some things I don't feel like are very forgivable in a film that's three and a half hours, and one of them is, like, continuity breaks that don't make a lot of sense. And one of them was Ari Ben Canaan meets up with Kitty after a long while, and they have that dinner. That dinner outside. And Ari Ben Canaan's like, "Babe, I know this menu top to bottom. Let me do the ordering. I'll get us a few more martinis while we're at it."

He does that, and then he gets that fake phone call. And then he leaves to go take that meeting.

00:42:58 John Host

Yeah.

00:42:59 Adam Host

The next day in movie time, he still gets that ride from Kitty out to the farm! And we get no resolution to the idea that he just fucking ditched her! With the dinner and with the check.

*[Ben laughs, Adam stifles laughter.]*

I spent the next ten minutes going, "Oh. Any time now, Kitty's gonna drop this bomb on Ari Ben Canaan about how fucked up it was the night before." Nothing.

*[Ben and Adam laugh.]*

00:43:25 Ben Host

Adam really watches this movie through the lens of his own life.  
*[Laughs.]*

00:43:29 Adam Host

I don't care what time period it is, you can't leave a dinner with a woman that you're interested in and expect there to be no consequences!

00:43:35 John Host

When he was—when he took that fake phone call, and it was like, "You've gotta go," and he said, "But wait a minute! I've gotta go say something to my date," and they're like, "Now or never," and he leaves, like, you—you're absolutely right.

The movie lit a fuse—what that was trying—what that established was that this was an important meeting. So important that he would bail on that. But it also—you couldn't leave that unresolved! And I also spent ten minutes going, "*[Chuckles]* Ohh, the shit hits the fan!"

00:44:01 Adam Host

A movie like *Goodfellas* makes that moment Kitty's realization.

00:44:05 John Host

Right.

00:44:06 Adam Host

Like, where all of a sudden Kitty is like, "Oh, this is an important and powerful and dangerous man." And it would have imbued the meeting with his parents with a different type of energy, too!

00:44:13 John Host

Right.

00:44:14 Clip Clip

**Karen Hill (*Goodfellas*):** *[Whispering]* Wake up, Henry.

00:44:15 John Host

But I, unlike you—

*[Adam laughs quietly.]*

—completely forgot it! As soon as the—as soon as they were together again, I was just like, "Derp de derp a-derp, along for the ride!"

And now that you bring it up, I'm outraged.

*[Ben laughs.]*

That the movie did not use that! You know, and the movie does that several times where it, like, lays out a thing where it's like, "When you come back to this, it's gonna make this movie incredible." And then they never come back to it.

00:44:44 Adam Host I wanna call attention to one thing. I've been slagging on Paul Newman a lot in this conversation, but at the end of that scene, he's hopped off the back of that motorcycle, and in one unbroken take, he gets off the motorcycle, climbs up that rock wall to the top, and walks out of frame. One of the things I liked about this movie was—were scenes like that! Like, we're not cutting away during some action, and I liked seeing Paul Newman physically climb up a wall when he had to. And that wasn't the only example where he or other people were called upon to do something like that.

00:45:18 John Host I would like to point out—this movie suggests that to live in Israel requires that you routinely scale a ten-foot wall.

00:45:27 Adam Host Yeah.

*[Ben laughs.]*

Dov did it all the time!

00:45:29 John Host Over and over.

00:45:31 Ben Host Dov was doing, like, parkour in the scene where he's, like, running around the church.

00:45:36 Adam Host Yeah. I don't know about you, Ben, but I don't have a lot of Otto Preminger reps in my movie-watching. And like, I really dug what he does with sequences. Like, it always felt like a conversation was starting, and then we were moving to two or three places within the room. And then it rested at B, with some sort of action in the background.

00:45:57 Ben Host Yeah. His, uh, ability to mount a scene is pretty great. I felt like this movie really moved! Like, I did not find it to be dull or challenging to get through the three and a half hours. Like, we sat down and watched three and a half hours of movie. We did not pause. We did not take long breaks. We weren't looking at our phones. It, like—it really had us, at my house.

And I think that, like, part of that is scope and scale. Like, we haven't even talked about, like, the huge jailbreak set piece in—that is like a—probably a 30-minute set piece that's really fun and well done, and has lots of great little moments, like all the guys, like, using the smuggled-in parts to make grenades and shit while they're supposed to be sleeping. *[Laughs.]*

00:46:43 Adam Host It was neat to see the photographs of the actual jailbreak compared to what we got in the movie. It was really well done.

00:46:51 John Host I felt like the sound was terrible. There was just a lot of room noise? You know, it felt like the dialogue was being captured in the moment, not dubbed.

00:47:02	Adam	Host	Mm-hm.
00:47:03	John	Host	But the mics seemed really kind of far away, and in these echoey rooms where I'm trying to make out dialogue, and I'm hearing people pouring water, and walking around in leather-soled shoes. But there wa—but also just, like, so much of the dialogue went into people's armpits in this movie that it became—it was a kind of a <u>stress</u> -watch for me.
			There <u>were</u> a couple of moments where things were dubbed. One time really badly, where the guy was calling, the muezzin, from the—you know, the top of the minaret, and he's like, "[calls out loudly in the style of the Muslim call to prayer]!"
00:47:42	Ben	Host	Yeah. [Laughs.]
00:47:43	John	Host	But you can see his lips aren't moving, or whatever. [Laughs.] And you're like—
			[Ben and Adam laugh.]
			He's really shouting that! You know?
00:47:48	Ben	Host	Yeah. He's not <u>that</u> out of focus, movie. [Laughs.]
00:47:51	John	Host	But can you <u>please</u> explain to me what was going on with the sound, and did you guys also notice it? I mean, admittedly I was watching it on my phone, and I also had the—uh, I was in the bathtub and I had the shower going. But it was hard to hear.
00:48:04	Ben	Host	This movie does <u>not</u> have the same level of restoration care brought to it that, for example, <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> did. Like, the version of <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> that we watched for this show was very recently remastered, and remastered at great expense and with a ton of care. And this movie is—you know, it's been scanned in HD, so it's been digitized fairly recently. But there are still scenes where you can see, like, damage to certain reels. Like, if this movie ever got the Criterion treatment, or had its place in history alongside <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> as being considered, like, one of the Important Films—capital "I," capital "F"—uh, we might have had a very different sound experience watching it.
			But this seems like it's just, like, analog sound that was as good as they could muster in 1960, but is crappy and, like, lo-fi by contemporary standards.
00:49:06	John	Host	But we watch so many movies from this period where the sound is good!
00:49:10	Ben	Host	There are some things like, you know, bad lip sync on dubs, and stuff like adding dialogue when somebody wasn't talking or whatever, that you still would have noticed. But I think that the, like, "straining to hear what people are saying" thing may partly be due to a production house that was sent a bunch of reels of analog film and said, "Digitize this in HD," and just, you know, ran it through the system, and didn't like, try and remaster the audio at all.
00:49:38	John	Host	The reason I ask—[chuckles]—I didn't want to—I didn't wanna out myself as <u>not</u> watching this on my phone, because it's part of my brand.

00:49:45	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:49:46	John	Host	But I had <u>just</u> , two days prior, purchased a Sonos soundbar.
00:49:51	Ben	Host	Ooh!
00:49:52	John	Host	For my giant 75-foot television. And, uh—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:49:58	Adam	Host	Wow.
00:50:00	John	Host	And so I have this soundbar now that makes everything seem like it's a hip-hop video.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And so I was like, "Yeah! I'm never gonna have—" You know. "I'm never gonna have that experience again of watching a classic movie where I can hear people's... <u>sweat</u> ." Which is different from being able to hear clearly.
00:50:21	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:50:22	John	Host	And then this just—the soundbar just made this—uh, made the kinda echoey, indistinct audio <u>worse</u> . So...
00:50:31	Ben	Host	Sounds like the good ship <i>Exodus</i> ran aground on a soundbar.
			<i>[Three seconds of silence.]</i>
			<i>[Adam bursts out laughing, followed by Ben.]</i>
00:50:41	John	Host	Rob, I hope you just leave that...
00:50:45	Adam	Host	I couldn't hold it, I wanted to hold it so much longer!
00:50:46	John	Host	...entire—entire pause.
			<i>[Ben and Adam recover.]</i>
			<i>[John chuckles.]</i>
00:50:57	Clip	Clip	<b>Karen (<i>Exodus</i>):</b> But I just keep thinking how <u>scared</u> he must be right now.
00:51:00	John	Host	I wonder, Ben—I mean, you know, we often watch movies and have very different experiences.
00:51:05	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:51:06	John	Host	You must have been preloaded, in the sense that when you kinda talked about—that this movie was next on your list, did you hear from your in-laws a lot of—did you get a lot of pre-funk on it?
00:51:19	Ben	Host	Most of my in-laws are non-podcast listeners, but there are people in my wife's family that do listen to the show. And one compliment I get from time to time is that they really appreciate that we have conversations on this show where we don't agree, and that we still have good conversations. Like, there's a feeling that disagreements are so intractable now in the world that you can't even have a conversation with somebody that isn't on the same page as you politically, and I think that is one of the strengths of this show, is that I have lots of preconceptions about geopolitics and history that I am

forced to test against your and Adam's scrutiny. And I think that, you know, that's true for all three of us.

And the folks that show up at Seders in my wife's family are—uh, are Zionists. And I—I've never talked to them about this movie in particular.

00:52:16 Adam Host

But when you're in their homes, do you ever see, like, the three VHS cassettes of—

*[Ben and Adam laugh.]*

—of *Exodus* under their television?

00:52:26 Ben Host

The *Exodus* poster signed by Otto Preminger?

00:52:29 Adam Host

Yeah.

*[Ben and John laugh.]*

00:52:31 John Host

Well, now you're gonna have lots to talk about, now that you've seen it. And...

00:52:34 Ben Host

Yeah!

00:52:35 Adam Host

Mm-hm.

00:52:36 Ben Host

I've never felt like I could form a really, like, cogent personal viewpoint on Israel/Palestine. And part of that is that I just—I feel... like... Who in the world is asking for another, like, non-Jewish Western white guy to have a really strident opinion about that? *[Laughs.]* Like, leave it to the people that live there to have their conversations.

00:53:02 John Host

I mean, the thing is that people not having a very good sense of what's going on here in this region—first of all, the more you know about it, the less of a good sense you have. But also, that's never stopped... anyone from taking a stance on it. And—

00:53:17 Ben Host

Well, and I've read a lot about it! But I—yeah, and I think that like, it's that the more I read about it, the less confident I am in my own ability to, like, decide what a good solution seems like to me. Because it's like I was saying before, like, if you have different—differences of opinion about this issue, like, it shuts the conversation down for a lot of people. You know? There, I think, have been, you know, just in my lifetime, like, pretty awful things done on either side of that issue. And I don't know how to do the moral math of, like, trying to like, balance the ledger. Because I just don't—I don't know.

So like, may—it may be a defense mechanism, right? Like, I think that maybe, like, if I stuck to the dictates of my political allegiances, I might show up at—at a Sukkot, and have really strident opinions that were very much against the beliefs of my extended family! And that would be hard for me to deal with.

00:54:19 John Host

You—you'd show up in your kaffiyeh with a—

00:54:21 Ben Host

*[Laughing]* Yeah! Yeah.

00:54:23 John Host

*[Laughs.]* With your Arafat T-shirt on?

00:54:25 Adam Host

Your mistake would be asking how your dictates. (*How your dick tastes.*)

00:54:28	John	Host	<p><i>[Groaning]</i> Ohhh, come on.</p> <p><i>[Adam and Ben laugh.]</i></p> <p>That—you get five minutes in a timeout chair, Adam.</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>
00:54:36	Adam	Host	<p>Really??</p> <p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>You were just talking about, uh—about how it doesn't <u>matter</u> how much you know about this conflict.</p> <p><i>[John laughs and claps.]</i></p> <p>And it made me feel seen!</p> <p><i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i></p> <p>Made me feel like a valued member of this show.</p> <p><i>[John claps again.]</i></p>
00:54:52	Ben	Host	<p>Um, but I also—like, and I watched this movie knowing that it was a movie mounted from a—you know, this viewpoint of a Austrian-born Jewish American film director, and a communist writer. And I found the viewpoint of this movie very compelling. And I think that like, it's pretty clear that they, uh, greatly de-emphasized the valid concerns of the Arabs in this movie, and essentially painted them out of the movie, or showed them being, like, shock troops that were aligned with the Nazis. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Which is not the most flattering depiction.</p>
00:55:34	John	Host	<p>That was a pretty over-the-top moment, yeah.</p>
00:55:36	Ben	Host	<p>But also, like, the problem at the beginning of this movie is, like, what the fuck are these people going to do? And I don't know that there was, like, a way better solution that was... not entertained. You know? I just don't know! What about you, John? What do you think?</p>
00:55:54	John	Host	<p>Well—</p>
00:55:55	Ben	Host	<p><i>[Laughs.]</i> I guess we're gonna—entering the review portion of our show, where we review the state of Israel!</p> <p><i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i></p>
00:56:01	Adam	Host	<p>I—even I wouldn't come up with a rating system for that, Ben. It's all yours.</p> <p><i>[John and Ben laugh, Adam stifles laughter.]</i></p> <p>I yield my time. And my rating system.</p>
00:56:11	John	Host	<p>One thing I've always avoided talking about in all of the podcasts I do is Israel. And over <u>time</u>, realized that the side that you take in this is almost arbitrary. Just depending on where you heard about it first, and where your sympathies lie, and what your idea of, like, <u>land</u> is.</p>

You know, like, whether or not war is just? And whether or not land—like, identity is rooted in land, or identity is rooted in something else.

00:56:43 Ben Host I always wonder, like, if I call myself a Zionist, like, I feel like that means different things to different people. And I think that that's part of where my, like, moral cowardice starts, is that I don't necessarily know what the word means to everyone that would hear it, and therefore don't want to use it for fear of misusing it.

00:57:04 John Host Right. Well, just in having said that, I know that there are a bunch of people that are going to be mad.

I think the Israelis proved themselves over and over militarily. They defeated all comers. They fought overwhelming odds. And just in terms of, like, whatever the—whatever the rules of war are, they've—I think have demonstrated claim to that land. Just because they took it! You know, if for no other reason! You know, in the same way that you could make a claim to any people having a nation—for any nation having a state—there's no reason that Hungary exists where it is, except for the Magyars came in there at a certain point and claimed it. And it happened long enough ago that we don't say, "We need to get these Magyars outta here and push 'em back over the Caucasus, because they have no right to be here."

00:58:01 Adam Host I've lost friends over—over my feelings about the Magyars, though, John.

*[John and Ben laugh.]*

So I definitely know what a hot potato this is.

00:58:10 Ben Host No, I mean, that's something I think about all the time! Like, there's not that many pieces of land on Earth that don't have some history of somebody taking it from someone else at the point of a gun, sword, or whatever.

00:58:22 John Host Yeah! Nobody's from anywhere, ultimately. If you listen to Michael Chabon, uh, the Jews should own Alaska!

*[Ben laughs.]*

Right? And that would have been a wonderful solution to the whole problem. Or Arizona and New Mexico, except there were people there already.

00:58:36 Ben Host It worked out great for them in that book.

*[Ben and John laugh.]*

And, like, how deep in history—like, you bring up the Magyars, like, as a joke, because it's like—yeah, it's long enough ago that nobody gives a shit about that anymore. Or at least nobody around here. And I guess this is such a hot conflict because there's a recency to it, and still a lot of, like, you know, racialized tension around it.

00:58:57 John Host In most cases, most of the wars we watch movies about are either wars where the invading army is there to either pacify, or to steal, or to, you know, destroy, but very seldom is it, like, an army that's come to take. To displace people and move in. But traditionally throughout history, that's a big part of what wars were!

The Norman conquest was not just to take candlesticks back to Normandy. The Norman conquest was to conquer, and actually push Anglo-Saxons into the Channel. And the European conquest of North America was a conquest. To take, and... populate.

00:59:49 Ben Host

Well, that one's different, though, 'cause God said we could.

00:59:52 John Host

God said we could, and also, there was no one here! Completely empty country!

*[Ben laughs.]*

But you know, we're doing a lot of revisionism now, or we're looking back at, for instance, the European conquest of North America, and we have a lot to say about it now. But that's kind of as far back as anybody's willing to go. Right? I mean, there's—the colonial period, globally, is what we're examining now. But nobody wants to go back to 1200. So it's just interesting that we are willing to go back to the 18th century, but not the 15th century. It's—you know, it's very much arbitrary.

01:00:29 Ben Host

Like, nobody's arguing that the Italians actually have a right to the land in Israel because it used to be part of the Roman Empire. And that it was unjustly taken away from them when Rome fell.

01:00:40 John Host

And I guess Israel is the most recent example. And I think maybe one of the only examples of a people that were stateless for... 2000 years. *[Laughs.]*

01:00:51 Ben Host

And crucially, somebody tried to get rid of all of them right before this.

01:00:55 John Host

Right! And the formation of the state and the kind of belligerence behind it, and the belligerence in Israel even now—maybe even especially now? I mean, Israel is what, seventy years old? None of this is set in stone. There's no guarantees. Right?

01:01:14 Ben Host

My dad's older than Israel!

01:01:16 John Host

Yeah! Right!

*[Ben and John laugh quietly.]*

01:01:17 Ben Host

That's the thing that sucks, is that you really, like, don't find people who are capable of changing their minds on this issue. Because if you're on the side of, "I'm pro-Palestine, anti-Israel, Israel is an apartheid state and rotten to its core," you know, "and that's where I—my beliefs are," you can't, like, rehabilitate your own image of that. It's possible to be pro-Israel and not pro—the politics of Israel, necessarily.

Like, I think that especially in the US, like, if you're not avowedly pro-Israel, you can be accused of being anti-Israel. If you're like, "I think Israel has a right to exist, but don't agree with X, Y, or Z," you can have the "antisemite" insult thrown at you pretty easily.

01:02:04 John Host

That whole thing of like, "My blood runs in the rocky soil of my father's olive orchard!" is just such a load of fucking mazurka-playing bullshit, in my estimation.

01:02:17 Ben Host

Well, that's also the, like—where, like, the religious import of...



01:02:23	John	Host	Jerusalem?
01:02:24	Ben	Host	...Israel comes in, and that's where all of the, like, rationality goes out the window at that point, you know?
01:02:30	John	Host	Well, and Jerusalem should be an international city, right? Jerusalem should be a freakin' space station.
01:02:34	Ben	Host	Almost like the Vatican, where it's, like, sort of its own thing, inside of another thing?
01:02:37	John	Host	Yeah! Yeah. A city-state. That's open to the people of all the world. It should not be ruled by any one group, and it should have—and there should be a circle around it 50 miles wide, and it should be unique in the world! Right? Because it's the temple of the three Abrahamic faiths.
01:02:57	Ben	Host	We should protect... the place that gave us the three Abrahamic faiths.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			The three forces for good in the world.
01:03:04	John	Host	Yeah, we should build a dome over it!
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			<u>Another</u> dome <u>over</u> the dome that's <u>over</u> the dome.
01:03:12	Ben	Host	Wow. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Triple dome!
01:03:14	Music	Transition	A brief clip of "War."
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>Huh!</i>
			<i>Yeah!</i>
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
01:03:17	Adam	Host	Well, I really wish someone would, uh, break me out of this conversational prison I've been in for the last... 25 minutes.
01:03:22	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> I'm so sorry.
01:03:27	Adam	Host	I'm looking around at all the—the contraband that's been sent to me. I'm checking my cakes to see if anything is inside.
			<i>[Ben laughs, Adam stifles laughter.]</i>
01:03:34	John	Host	What about you, Adam? What about you? What's your—what's your take? What's your hot take? Where do you fall?!
01:03:39	Adam	Host	I'm, uh—I'm uninterested and untrusting—
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			—of all religions equally. That's what I'll say.
01:03:44	John	Host	Yeahhh. Strong take.
01:03:47	Adam	Host	I read that Preminger thought the book was poorly written, but about an interesting subject matter. And the book has been called anti-

British. But I did also read that the book featured a scene where British warships rammed the *Exodus* boat.

01:04:06 John Host

Mm-hm.

01:04:08 Adam Host

Thought that would've been interesting in a three-and-a-half-hour movie. This is what gets to the heart of what I feel like I'm here to do. You guys did that thing that you just did. But I think we have—

01:04:22 Ben Host

You mean, "got canceled?"

01:04:24 Adam Host

Right.

*[Ben laughs.]*

What's great about the review portion of this episode is that no one's gonna stick around to here it. I think—I mean, I know we've talked about films with depictions of Israel and Palestine, and Turkey, and Armenia, and a host of others. And I did, and do, my best not to involve myself with the specifics of those conflicts. I think first, because I'm not educated enough about them. And mostly because I'm more interested in how a film handles those things.

Like, I—in a weird way, like, that is a film's job. In a subject like this. Can you teach me enough about the subject matter to where I can form an argument, and hang in a conversation? I don't think this one does that particularly well. I read a lot of reviews of this film, and "epic" was a word thrown around a lot. But I think while the film is epic in length, I don't think that story matches up with it.

So I think it has elements that were of great interest to me. The boat and the prison break were exciting parts of the story that I will think of when I think of this movie, and as far as a rating system goes, there is a scene where they've gotten Dov arrested. Which is a scene we are deprived of. Like, we're told, you know, "We're just gonna leave it up to Dov, whether or not he wants to turn himself in to be the inside guy to blow up the walls from the inside. That's—I'm not gonna order him," someone says. It's gonna be up to Dov. We never see that. We see Dov being sent to prison.

And inside, the assembled prisoners are given the tools they need with which to break out. These tools are contained in all manner of things. We've got—are those cows? What—what are the—what are the big meats carried in on shoulders, into this prison?

01:06:32 John Host

Have to be goats. Right?

01:06:33 Adam Host

Yeah. They look so big, though!

01:06:35 Ben Host

Yeah, they seem—they seem too small to be cows.

01:06:38 John Host

Big goats, small cows.

01:06:40 Adam Host

They're smuggled in via animal parts. They're smuggled in—you know, there's a scene outside the prison where the people are waiting to have their visits, and they're getting their sausages cut up, and their cakes. All of their gifts are just being slashed by these prison guards. It sucks! All these cakes getting ruined. But the cake filled with explosive is what we see later, specifically. I think non-specifically, we see envelopes being pulled from animal parts and

stuff. But it's inside the cake where we see the makings of an explosive device.

And I think the, uh—the contraband cake is gonna be the review system for *Exodus*. One to five of those will be how we determine how we feel about it.

I think—getting back to the idea of, like, the truth of a story versus its film depiction, like, one of the things that *Exodus* doesn't really do to my satisfaction is really take a side. I think that works fine for war movie podcasts, but maybe less so for the war movies. And I was shocked at how down the middle this thing played out! Up to the point where we finally get a Nazi leader that we can all agree to hate.

And, like, I feel like we started writing the story at the gravesite. I know all of these incidents are based on reality, but I feel like in a screenwriting perspective, we start at the gravesite and work backwards. And I think that's a very unsatisfying way to sketch out a story. There is a genre for films that don't take sides, and that play the stories from the middle, and those are called documentaries. And I wish Otto Preminger chose that as his project instead of this. Because I feel like when you're a filmmaker, it's your duty to—especially when you have a stated opinion about a source material the way he did? He thought the book kinda sucked! And he thought the story was more interesting.

Well, make something better, Otto Preminger. And don't leave out cool stuff like boat ramming.

01:08:48 John Host

Yeah.

01:08:50 Adam Host

I felt exhausted by the end of this movie, and not in a way I like to be after movies that I love.

It feels like an achievement in technical storytelling, and there are a lot of technical things that I like about this film. But it is a—it is an exercise in that, rather than one that is evocative in the way that I like my films. And I know this film and this story has a special meaning to a lot of people but, like, the duty of a filmmaker is, especially if you don't like your source material, make it good and interesting. And I was not interested in it.

So I'm gonna give it 2.75 cakes.

01:09:30 Ben Host

Boy. I, uh—there's a lot I disagree with about what you just said, and a lot I agree with. But I have a hard time imagining watching this film and feeling like it didn't take a side! It felt very pointed to me. It felt like it was very much yelling from the rooftops. It wants the state of Israel to be available to both people. Like, that's—that felt like the whole point of burying Taha in the same grave as Karen.

And, uh, I—I may be in the minority here, but I really enjoyed watching this film. I felt like it was interesting, and entertaining, and I didn't have the experience of finding that it dragged, or that it was losing my attention. I loved the language in the dialogue. I thought that the dialogue was particularly well written. And I thought it was really interesting that there wasn't—like, aside from the Nazi and the Arab storm troops, there wasn't a big bad.

Like, this movie does not posit a world in which all problems come from mustache-twirling evil people that are avowedly evil. Like, it says that there are evil people in the world, but a lot of the evil in the world comes from bullshit, like lightly antisemitic British officers trying to find a bureaucratic solution for a problem that doesn't really have a bureaucratic solution. And the heroes in this movie are taking matters into their own hands and cutting through that red tape, and making it their business to found a state, and I—I felt like I got a lot out of watching this one. And when we roll the dice and it lands on a three-and-a-half-hour movie—

*[Adam laughs.]*

—I think we all have a lot of misgivings about, you know, continuing to have a podcast when that happens. It's like, "Fuck. Really?"

*[Laughs.]*

01:11:31 Adam Host

Right.

01:11:32 Ben Host

But I was totally pleasantly surprised by this one, and I'm gonna give it four cakes.

01:11:38 John Host

There are quite a few movies in this movie. We talk about this a lot. Sometimes you can have a three-and-a-half-hour-long movie like *Lawrence of Arabia*, and there aren't a lot of movies in it. It's just one movie. And then there are other movies, sometimes really short movies, that still have a lot of different movies in them. And this one does.

That first act where Paul Newman is trying to, on behalf of the Haganah—which is kind of the—the movie sets up the Haganah as the moderate revolutionary group that's more politically inclined. But still, like... aggro. And Paul Newman, you know, takes this group of refugees and turns them into, you know, a political football. And we're pitted, then, Haganah against the British Occupation, and sort of the, like, post-war British global colonial project spiraling out of their control.

That's all really interesting. And really, there's a lot of history there, and a great opportunity to tell a—tell this sweeping story. You know, at this same moment, on the other side of the world, India and Pakistan are also partitioning. Also representing, in that case, a place where Britain has been a colonial power for centuries. Also, you know, kind of creating two new countries in a place that had been basically a shared space for thousands of years.

And in the case of India and Pakistan in 19—in this same—you know, within a year of the events of this film—like, 15 million refugees were produced in that partition. Seven million Muslims walked from what was—what were their homes in India to the new state of Pakistan, and seven million Hindus moved—walked, basically, on the same roads. *[Stifles laughter.]* On opposite sides of the same roads. And, like, over a million people died just in the transfer.

01:14:01 John Host

So the—you know, the events here are not only not unprecedented, but this was happening globally. I mean, the expulsion of Germans

from all of Eastern Europe, Germans in some cases who had lived there for generations, at the end of World War Two—that's a story that never gets told. The German expulsion of all these, like, people that were living in—[sighs]—Bulgaria, for 200 years. And it's like, "No more Germans. I'm sorry. If you're a German, you're back in Germany. Fuck you guys."

I know that I'm gonna get letters from people, being a apologist for Bulgarian Germans.

*[Ben laughs.]*

I think you know the email address.

But then this movie turns into basically a soap opera between the Haganah and the Irgun. And basically what they are are two different philosophies of how to resist the British. The Haganah want to take a diplomatic route, and the Irgun have decided that terrorism is the only way. And we pivot to this story of two brothers, estranged. One who believes in car bombs, and one who believes in the *kibbutzim* and the acoustic guitar. And big mustaches.

*[Ben or Adam laughs.]*

And then we spend the rest of the movie on the kibbutz. Both, kind of, supposed to luxuriate in its equanimity, and also, like, get ready to fight for its existence. And it just wanders! The movie just wanders off into the desert.

01:15:53 John Host

So I—I felt, as somebody that really cares about this issue, and this story—and I don't mean to make myself sound unsympathetic to the Palestinians. Like I say, I've chosen a side. And it's not that I don't have tremendous sympathy for the cause of the other. I don't think there's—there are very many people in this world who could look at either side and say—unless you have—unless you're completely indoctrinated—look at either side of this conflict and say the other side doesn't have almost exactly an equally good case!

It's just that if—you know, if it's a 50/50 split on which way you're gonna go, you have to just decide that it's 49/51. You know, just looking at the partition of India, and realizing that... that 15 million people made that transit. And over a million died. And then compare it to this situation in Palestine. And you're talking about 700,000 Palestinian Arabs were displaced.

And in equal number—this is the other side of this story that you don't hear very often. After the formation of Israel in 1948, the Jews that lived throughout the Arab world were largely expelled! From Morocco, and Iraq, and Iran, and Syria. Some—in some cases, communities of Jews that had been living there for thousands of—or centuries, at least—were expelled from those countries, because suddenly you were not—you know, there was so much anger in the Arab world about this. That although 700,000 Palestinians were expelled from Palestine, at least 700,000 Jews were expelled from other places, and went to the new state of Israel, because they weren't welcome in the rest of the Arab world.

			So a very similar partition story to Pakistan and India. It's just Pakistan and India was an <u>exponentially</u> larger number of people.
01:18:02	Adam	Host	Are there any other global controversies you want to include in the conversation?
			<i>[John or Ben laughs quietly.]</i>
			I mean, I don't want to leave any of them unreferenced.
01:18:11	John	Host	Well, I was just about to get to the Trail of Tears.
			<i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
			The Native American population of Georgia in 1805—no, I'm not gonna go there.
			I'm gonna go—I'm gonna—you know, it's the—it is— <i>[stifles laughter]</i> —I can't think of another instance where I am gonna sidle up next to Adam.
01:18:32	Adam	Host	Mm.
01:18:33	John	Host	I really feel like there's so much in this movie that's great. There's so much that—this is an example of a movie that I think everyone <u>should</u> watch. But cognizant of its flaws. So two slices of bomb-laden cake, and then three quarters of a slice that I'm gonna try and get away with saying I didn't have a third slice.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Like, "No, I just—I cut off a little bit over here. I just evened it up. That's what I did."
01:18:59	Adam	Host	You're really playing with fire when you stick bomb-making materials into a cake, and then that cake is cut by a guard?
			<i>[John or Ben whistles.]</i>
			What are the chances?!
01:19:07	John	Host	Oh—
01:19:08	Ben	Host	I was just thinking about <u>baking</u> a cake that has <u>gunpowder</u> hidden in it!
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:19:13	Adam	Host	I like the strategy of putting it into the heel part. Like, if you can—if you can cozy the material as close to the heel as possible, I think most guards aren't gonna cut through <u>the heel</u> .
01:19:25	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:19:26	John	Host	Oh, I thought—I thought that in the—we saw the guard cut the sausage.
01:19:30	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam &amp; Ben:</b> Yeah.
01:19:31	John	Host	But I think that that cake came presliced. I think that the people that made the cake—
01:19:34	Adam	Host	Mm.

01:19:35	John	Host	It's sliced bread, basically.
01:19:38	Ben	Host	Ohhh!
01:19:39	John	Host	And so the guard looks at it, and it's like—you know, if somebody's bringing bread through, and you're a guard, you don't wanna manhandle the bread <u>too</u> much. You wanna show some respect.
01:19:48	Ben	Host	I liked seeing that sausage. Somebody went and went to Zabar's and got a little present for the prisoners!
01:19:53	John	Host	Yeah, send a salami to your boy in the army!
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:19:59	Adam	Host	Oh, we gotta pick a guy before the show's over. Ben, who's your guy?
01:20:02	Ben	Host	My guy's an early-in-the-film character, Dr. Odenheim. He's the, uh—I think he was, like, the Chief Medical Officer of the Vienna School of Medicine, who winds up on the boat.
01:20:14	Adam	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> He has the epiphany that <u>maybe</u> children shouldn't be a part of a hunger strike. Cool, Doc!
			<i>[Adam and Ben laugh.]</i>
			I think we've all learned a valuable lesson here!
			<i>[Adam and John laugh.]</i>
01:20:26	Ben	Host	I love that guy! I love that he's just like, "Hey, uh... Why don't we put some bathrooms and stuff on here? What do you think?" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:20:33	Adam	Host	I like <u>that</u> idea.
01:20:35	Ben	Host	He would've been your greatest advocate, had you been—
01:20:38	Adam	Host	Oh, wow.
01:20:39	Ben	Host	—a war refugee on the <i>Exodus</i> , Adam.
01:20:40	Adam	Host	He would've been a hero to me.
01:20:42	Ben	Host	Yeah. And to everyone around you.
			<i>[Adam and Ben laugh.]</i>
01:20:47	Adam	Host	Yeah. My guy also comes from the boat. We get to know a few side characters during these scenes. And my guy, Lakavitch, was introduced—I think he's almost in the first shot in the film. He's cued up. He's one of the guys playing chess. And he wants—he would rather trade his shower time with someone else than quit the chess match he's in.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And, uh, I have at times been so involved in a game that I haven't wanted to quit for <u>any</u> reason. So... I feel that, Lakavitch. That's gonna make you my guy.
01:21:27	Ben	Host	I feel like that chess game is gonna get worse and worse as they get more and more malnourished, right?
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>

01:21:32	Adam	Host	Yeah. They're gonna be making some bad moves.
01:21:35	John	Host	Playing chess takes a <u>lot</u> of energy. You burn up those, uh—those bomb breads pretty fast.
01:21:41	Adam	Host	Who's your guy, John?
01:21:43	John	Host	My guy also is from the early part of the movie, and I have to think that because the three of us all have guys from the early part of the movie, that that was at a time when the movie was promising to be a different movie.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:21:57	Adam	Host	Mm.
01:21:58	John	Host	But when Paul Newman—
01:21:59	Ben	Host	Oh, I didn't watch anything after the boat stuff.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			What happened after that?
01:22:04	John	Host	Early on in the movie when Paul Newman puts on his British army officer's outfit, and is arranging to, uh—to procure a convoy to rescue all of the refugees, and he goes into the logistics office, and sits down at the desk of some junior officer and hands him a piece of paper with some forged signatures on it, demanding 14 lorries.
			The guy gets on the phone. He's like, "I gotta call my superior." And Paul Newman, super-chill in this moment. "Sure. Call him." You know.
			Picks up the phone, this beautiful, black 1940s telephone. And he rings up his superior. And for whatever reason, Preminger decides to make the voice on the other end audible. Now, what any other filmmaker would have done in this moment is we would have watched Paul Newman while the guy on the phone went, " <i>[Indecipherable chatter]</i> " and the officer sitting at the desk did a kind of Bob Newhart, and was like, "Oh! Yes, sir! Okay! Well, yes, sir!"
			But instead, we <u>hear</u> the captain. "What?! What does he want?! Oh, well, you know, uh—does he have the piece of paper? Well, is it signed? Well, did he use a pencil or a pen? Well! Then... You know, if it's signed, and he's got a piece of paper, well, then, give it to him! Why are you calling me?!"
01:23:34	John	Host	You know, like this, like, <u>inane</u> ... <u>Vaudeville</u> dialogue of a guy who's super-mad! When he picks up the phone, he's like, "WHAT?!" You know, he's like, super—he's like a caricature of a super- <u>angry</u> British officer. And we—and we sit— <i>[stifles laughter]</i> —it's why this movie's three and a half hours long! We sit through the entire conversation.
			And <u>instead</u> of focusing on Paul Newman's cool—instead of letting that actor have his Bob Newhart moment—we're <u>all</u> sitting there trying to make out this—what this guy is saying. And in the end, it's—it's just, like, three minutes of our time as movie watchers. And the whole time, I was like, "Oh, <u>that's</u> my guy."



*[Ben laughs.]*

My guy—I hate that guy. And I hate that that guy is in this movie. I hate that they hired a guy to do that. I hate that they put a mic on that. But that guy, for sure.

01:24:32 Ben Host

In the director's cut, there's actually a scene with that guy on the other side, and he's just lost a game of chess to Lakavitch.

01:24:39 John Host

*[Laughs.]* It's a split-screen, right?

01:24:42 Ben Host

He's like—*[laughs]*.

01:24:43 John Host

Where it splits over, and we're like, "Does he have the piece of paper? Well, is it signed?! Well god damn it, man!"

01:24:48 Music Transition

A brief clip of "War."

*War!*

*Huh!*

*[Music stops.]*

01:24:49 Promo Clip

*[A telephone rings.]*

**Hotshot Hollywood Producer:** Listen, I'm a hotshot Hollywood movie producer.

**Music:** Fun, grooving music begins to play quietly in the background.

**Producer:** You have until I finish my glass of *[articulating]* kom-bu-cha to pitch me your idea. Go.

*[Slurping sounds.]*

**Ify:** Alright! It's called *Who Shot Ya*: a movie podcast that isn't just a bunch of straight white dudes. I'm Ify Nwadiwe, the new host of the show and a certified BBN.

**Producer:** BBN?

**Ify:** Buff Black Nerd.

**Alonso:** I'm Alonso Duralde, an elderly gay and legit film critic who wrote a book on Christmas movies.

**Drea:** I'm Drea Clark, a loud white lady from Minnesota!

01:25:14 Promo Clip

**Ify:** Each week, we talk about a new movie in theaters and all the important issues going on in the film industry.

**Alonso:** It's like *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* meets *Cruising*!

**Ify:** And if it helps seal the deal? I can flex my muscles while we record each episode.

**Producer:** I'm sorry, this is a podcast?! I'm a movie producer. *[Disdainfully]* How did you get in here?

**Drea:** Ify, quick! Start flexing!

**Ify:** *[Dramatically]* Bicep! Lats! Chest! [Who Shot Ya](#), dropping every Friday on [MaximumFun.org](#), or wherever you listen to podcasts.

*[Music ends.]*

01:25:41 Promo

Clip

**Music:** Classical orchestral music.

**John Hodgman:** Hey, everyone! It's I, John Hodgman of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

**Elliott Kalan:** And I, Elliott Kalan of the *Flop House* podcast.

**John:** And we've made a whole new podcast! A 12-episode special miniseries called *I, Podius*. In which we recap, discuss, and explore the very famous 1976 BBC miniseries about Ancient Rome called *I, Claudius*! We've got incredible guests such as Gillian Jacobs, Paul F. Tompkins, as well as star of *I, Claudius* Sir Patrick Stewart! And his son! Non-Sir Daniel Stewart.

**Elliott:** Don't worry, Dan, you'll get there someday.

**John:** *I, Podius* is the name of the show! Every week from [MaximumFun.org](#) for only 12 weeks. Get 'em at [MaximumFun.org](#), or wherever you get your podcasts.

*[Music fades out.]*

01:26:25 Music

Transition

A brief clip of "War."

*Yeah!*

*[Music stops.]*

01:26:26 Ben

Host

John, you wanna roll that bone?

01:26:29 John

Host

Well, normally, under our regular circumstances, we have, a—we record this show in the morning. Usually I show up having only just awakened.

*[Ben laughs.]*

And, uh—and by this time in the show, I have, um—I've consumed my coffee. And I have an empty coffee mug to roll the die. But today, we had some technical problems earlier. Now we're recording the show at night.

01:26:58 Adam

Host

Yeah!

01:26:59 John

Host

And I don't have a coffee cup.

01:27:01 Ben

Host

Huh.

01:27:02 John

Host

Because I'm not drinking coffee at this hour.

01:27:03 Ben

Host

What the heck? What are we gonna do?!

01:27:05 John

Host

Well, what did happen today was I got a, uh—I got an envelope in the mail. Because I'd ordered on eBay some *Star Wars* figurines.

*[Ben laughs.]*

For my daughter.

01:27:18 Ben Host

Cool!

01:27:19 John Host

Who loves *Star Wars*. And the *Star Wars* figurines came in a Priority Mail envelope. Now, I have to say that the figurines themselves are *Clone Wars*-based figurines.

01:27:33 Ben Host

Hmm.

01:27:34 John Host

Not, uh, original eps. Because she is, uh—she's very into *Clone Wars*. So we've got all the little *Clone War*—we've got, like, young Anakin here. The person that sent these, though, did not turn their arms around right, so their arms all look screwed up.

Anyway, so I don't have the coffee cup, but I do have this plastic bag.

*[Rustling and crinkling.]*

*[Ben laughs.]*

I'm gonna roll the dice—

01:28:01 Adam Host

Listen to that!

01:28:02 John Host

—inside the plastic bag. Are you ready?

01:28:04 Adam Host

Wow.

01:28:06 John Host

And what's even more messed up is it seems like the person that sent these sprayed the inside of the bag with Febreze?

01:28:15 Adam Host

Mm.

01:28:16 Ben Host

Ugh!

01:28:17 Adam Host

Don't like that.

01:28:18 John Host

Just to make the figurines, like, smell fresh or something?

01:28:21 Adam Host

Mm.

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:28:22 John Host

But there's also a Lando Calrissian. That's weird.

01:28:23 Adam Host

Like, covering up that they'd lived in a smoker's household?

01:28:27 John Host

I don't know. They don't smell like smoke, but they do smell like Febreze. There's two Dark Vaders, which seems weird. And then there's that guy from the Trade Federation. Who cares about these? But she will. She'll love 'em.

Okay. Anyway. Here we go. In the bag. Ready? Here we go, in the bag.

*[Ben laughs.]*

*[Rustling, and indistinct noises.]*

01:28:51 Adam Host

I don't know why, but my mouth is watering.

*[Ben laughs.]*

*[Die rolls on a hard surface.]*

01:29:00	John	Host	Ninety-four! Ninety-four.
01:29:02	Ben	Host	Big 94 is a 2011 film.
01:29:05	Music	Music	"Age of Heroes Suite" by Michael Richard Plowman from the album <i>Age of Heroes (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)</i> . A slowly building, brass-heavy orchestral piece that wouldn't sound out of place in a superhero movie.
01:29:09	Ben	Host	Set in World War Two. Directed by Adrian Vitoria. It's called <i>Age of Heroes</i> .
01:29:16	John	Host	<i>Age of Heroes</i> .
01:29:18	Adam	Host	Hmm.
01:29:19	Ben	Host	Uh, interesting. This is maybe gonna be another kind of espionage-based World War Two film.

*[Music fades out.]*

Because according to IMDb, this is the true story of the formation of Ian Fleming's 30 Commando unit.

01:29:32	John	Host	Hm!
01:29:33	Ben	Host	"A precursor for the elite forces in the UK!"
01:29:36	John	Host	<i>[Murmuring]</i> Hmm, what do you know about <u>them</u> apples!
01:29:39	Ben	Host	And it's got Sean Bean!
01:29:41	Adam	Host	I do like a Sean Bean. I do not like this title, though! It sounds like a video game.
01:29:46	Ben	Host	<i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> It does kinda sound like a video game. I had—I have never heard of this movie before.
01:29:51	Adam	Host	It sounds like the name of an iPhone game that you see a weird commercial for late at night.

*[Ben and John laugh.]*

01:29:56	Ben	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
01:29:57	Adam	Host	Like, a ten-second commercial that says, "Download Age of Heroes."
01:30:01	Ben	Host	And it looks, like, fucking amazing, but then you download the game and it's like, <u>almost entirely</u> unlike what you saw in the commercial?
01:30:08	Adam	Host	Yeah. And then you need to buy a bunch of shit.
01:30:10	Music	Music	"War" is fading in.
01:30:11	Adam	Host	It's not free. It <u>says</u> it's free.
01:30:12	Ben	Host	Yeah. Hey, this has James D'Arcy playing Fleming! Remember James D'Arcy from <i>Master and Commander</i> ? He was like, the—
01:30:19	John	Host	Oh yeahhh!
01:30:20	Ben	Host	—the lieutenant who gets made captain at the end?
01:30:22	John	Host	He's wonderful.
01:30:23	Ben	Host	I like that guy.

01:30:24	Adam	Host	Cool.
01:30:26	Ben	Host	That will be next week on <i>Friendly Fire</i> , but we're gonna leave it with RobsRobsRobsRobs from here on. So for Adam Pranica and John Roderick, I've been Ben Harrison. To the victor go the spoiler alerts!
01:30:37	Music	Music	"War" continues at full volume.
			<i>Absolutely— —nothing!</i>
			<i>Listen to me!</i>
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>It ain't nothing but a heartbreaker!</i>
			<i>[Music fades down and continues quietly as Rob speaks.]</i>
01:30:42	Rob Schulte	Producer	<i>Friendly Fire</i> is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Adam Pranica, Ben Harrison, and John Roderick. The show is produced and edited by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music. And our podcast art is by Nick Ditmore.
			If you need more <i>Friendly Fire</i> , take a look back at our episode covering <i>Beasts of No Nation</i> , which we released this time last year. It's a film that follows a child soldier fighting in the civil war of an unnamed African country.
			Feel like supporting our show? Head to <a href="https://MaximumFun.org/join">MaximumFun.org/join</a> , and for as little as \$5 a month, not only will you receive our bonus Pork Chop feed, you'll also get <u>all</u> of the bonus content from Maximum Fun.
			And don't forget you can now follow us on Twitter and Instagram under the handles FriendlyFireRSS. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next week with another episode of <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
01:31:37	Music	Music	"War" continues at full volume, and gradually fades down.
			<i>They say we must fight to keep our freedom But lord knows there's got to be a better way! OHHH!</i>
			<i>War! Huh!</i>
			<i>God, y'all.</i>
			<i>What is it good for?</i>
			<i>You tell me.</i>
			<i>Nothing!</i>
			<i>Say it, say it, say it, saaay it!</i>

*War!*  
*Huh!*

*Good god, y'all...*

*[Music fades out.]*

01:31:58	John	Host	Phew! Well, I hope that Robs is able to keep us from getting <u>completely canceled</u> .
01:32:06	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:32:07	Speaker 1	Guest	<a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> .
01:32:09	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:32:10	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:32:11	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.