

00:00:00	Music	Transition	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.
00:00:13	Jesse Thorn	Host	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> I'm Jesse Thorn. It's <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:00:15	Music	Transition	"Huddle Formation" from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:23	Jesse	Host	Next up on the show, Hiam Abbass. Hiam was born and raised in and around Nazareth, in a predominantly Arab part of Israel. These days, she mostly lives in Paris. Hiam is an actor. She has nearly 100 credits to her name. Artsy indie movies, French TV dramas, Moroccan horror movies. But if you know Hiam Abbass from one thing here in the States, I bet it's <i>Succession</i> : the massive TV hit on HBO.
00:00:54	Music	Music	"Succession Theme" by Nicholas Britell.
00:01:02	Jesse	Host	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> Hiam plays Marcia, Logan Roy's wife. On a show famous for its craven, manipulative, sometimes frightening characters, Marcia dominates in all three categories.
00:01:15	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:01:16	Clip	Clip	Marcia (<i>Succession</i>): I have fought, and I have lost. And I have fought and won. But when I lose, the other one will generally lose and eye or so.
00:01:26	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:01:27	Jesse	Host	Hiam is also starring in a new movie called <i>Gaza Mon Amour</i> . It's Palestine's submission to this year's Academy Awards. <i>Gaza Mon Amour</i> is pretty much everything <i>Succession</i> isn't. It's a romcom. It's slow-paced. It's sweet in some parts, sad and scary in others. In it, Abbass plays Siham: a widowed tailor living with her adult daughter. She meets Issa, a local fisherman who never married. They start courting each other in fits and starts, missed connections, awkward conversations, brief affectionate glances. And like the title suggests, it's set in Gaza, a Palestinian city beset by conflict. Not your usual romcom venue.
00:02:21	Music	Transition	I'm really grateful to Hiam Abbass for joining me from her apartment in Paris, France. Let's get into it. Bright, chiming synth.
00:02:24	Jesse	Host	Hiam Abbass, welcome to <i>Bullseye</i> . I'm so happy to have you on the show.
00:02:27	Hiam Abbass	Guest	Thank you so much for having me.
00:02:30	Jesse	Host	Were you shooting to do more romantic comedies in your career? <i>[Chuckles.]</i> Was that your—was that your next goal? More romantic comedy?
00:02:38	Hiam	Guest	Maybe! <i>[Chuckles.]</i> Maybe.
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>

00:03:09	Jesse	Host	I mean, I don't know really. I never kind of like calculated things. You know? I just embrace whatever comes and this one came as a second experience with these guys, like with the Nasser brothers who—they just became part of my life, really, after the first one. And when they wrote the second one, it was just easy to go for it. And easy to work with them and fun to work with them on it.
00:03:16	Hiam	Guest	What kind of guys are they? I've—I saw pictures of them and it's not what I expected from watching their films. No one would expect it, anyway. When you talk about people in Gaza, I think—

[Jesse laughs.]

00:04:28	Jesse	Host	Even people of Gaza would have like a certain image of people there. What kind of people are they? They're just two beautiful boys. Big. Hairy. With beards, long hair. Black—green eyes with black in their eyes, black makeup. And they're wearing a lot of jewelry. They wear like stylish clothes. So, young, full of life, a lot of fun. They're really a lot of fun. And basically, for me, they're very, very good directors. So, it's very interesting to work with them as twins. You know? Because it's just like who do you listen to, basically. It's always the big question, you know. When you meet them in the beginning, it's such a shock. You say, "Oh! Is this really what it is?" And then when you start to know them and you know the difference between them—so, you relate to Arab as Arab and Tarzan as Tarzan, it's interesting to see the dynamic between the twins and the way they work with actors. And they work on the movie together.
00:04:30	Hiam	Guest	Did you make the film in Palestine? No, it was shot in Jordan, in Amman, in a refugee camp in the city of Amman, partially. And the sea part was in Portugal. That's why you—there is a Portuguese coproduction in there. It—what it was like to shoot in Amman, they did their first movie there. So, we just had the feel of what it is, really, to produce and to shoot a movie in Amman. It's never easy in a sense, because—so, what happened—it's—they were—they wanted so much the story to be authentic to Gaza that they went to a refugee camp that looked like their refugee camp where they came from. And they tried to use like real set—a real shop, you know, where they emptied it out of whatever the content was, and they built up the décor.

The thing with these guys is just like they like to do things themselves all the time. You know? Because they wanna make sure that everything they do is exactly what they left behind. You know? Because they haven't been in Gaza for like I think seven years, now. And they cannot go back. And so, they were really like very keen about being authentic to their own environment, to what they knew, so that the characters could be as authentic as they want them to be. So, shooting in a refugee camp, you know, it's really kind of fighting for your right to exist somehow. Because like everybody around just doesn't know what shooting is like. You know? Or they think like cinema has a lot of money, so it's—you know.

So, it wasn't easy. But because they come from that environment, they had the language. You know? They had the language to

00:06:31	Jesse	Host	communicate with people and to speak with them and to bring them into working with us. So, it was tough. Honestly, it was tough. Did you feel like an interloper? Did you feel like you were inserting yourself into other people's lives?
00:06:38	Hiam	Guest	I didn't because when I—when I film, I'm just like—you know, I'm kind of dressed as the character. So, I mean, I don't think I really looked like any different from women there. But sometimes like I was hot, so I'll take the thing off of my head. You know? And then—you know, people would look at me like, "Who is this woman dressed like—the bottom side is like a traditional woman, but like the head doesn't go with it."

[Jesse chuckles.]

You know? But it was fun! You know. They knew—they knew we were shooting a movie and they knew that I'm not dressed like this in normal life. So, you know, it takes time for people to accept you, but to be honest with you, once you are respectful of their life and the way they are, and you just communicate with them—you know. I speak the language, so like I'm not—I'm not an intruder, in a way. You know? So, once you do it that way, everything goes really like—with me, it was easy. I just liked the people there and—you know, I spoke with them. I think, for the artistic side, it was more difficult. You know? To keep silence, for example. That was really hard. To make people understand that, yeah, you cannot talk whenever you want. You know? So, it's—and to have like a greenroom, for example. You know?

00:08:16	Jesse	Host	What do you mean, greenroom? You know, like what does that mean? To bring the food at a certain time when we tell them and not when they want to make it. You know, it's an educational process, really, in a place where people are not used to that. When you started working with these guys who are so assiduous about recreating the place that they came from—which they can't physically be in, anymore—did they talk to you, or did you talk to them about that experience of having to leave home to become an artist?
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00:08:38	Hiam	Guest	I don't think, really. We kind of don't connect on that point together, because I kind of went through the same thing, though I don't come really from Gaza, itself. And I didn't really experience what they experienced—you know, as kids under the Hamas government or under the Israeli attacks from time to time. You know, because we know that it's every few years, you know, we had to declare a war against Gaza. Whatever. But I think, yeah, we relate to being far away from home. We relate to not seeing our parents for years. We... we talk about this. It's hard, but we kind of live with it, really. Because I think there is no other choice.
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00:09:26	Jesse	Host	More with Hiam Abbass in just a minute. Stay with us. It's <i>Bullseye</i> , from MaximumFun.org and NPR.
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00:09:33	Music	Transition	Bright, percussive music.
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00:09:35	Jesse	Promo	This message comes from NPR sponsor Odoo.
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00:10:13	Jesse	Host	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i></p> <p>Welcome back to <i>Bullseye</i>. I'm Jesse Thorn. I'm talking with Hiam Abbass. She's a veteran actor from Palestine. She plays Marcia on HBO's <i>Succession</i>. She's appeared on Hulu's <i>Rami</i> and in the movies <i>Munich</i> and <i>Bladerunner 2049</i>. Her latest film is <i>Gaza Mon Amour</i>. It's a love story and Palestine's entry to this year's Academy Awards. Let's get back into our conversation.</p> <p>I was thinking about the fact that you're from Nazareth and, you know, I think to many Americans, Nazareth might as well be Sherwood forest or some other place from a story. You know?</p> <p><i>[Hiam agrees with a chuckle.]</i></p> <p>It's hard to imagine it as a—as a real place that exists in the real world right now. And I wonder if you could describe what the town was like when you were a kid.</p>
00:11:08	Hiam	Guest	<p>This is something I kind of like encounter in my life often when I say that I was born in Nazareth. It's—people look at me as if I was holy, myself. You know? Because of the religious—historical religious background of Nazareth. The city used to be a very beautiful city with specific monuments—religious monuments, really. Venues or churches or mosques or whatever that co-lived very well with each other. I knew it when I was young, and it was a much smaller place than it is now. So, now you have what they call Nazareth Illit, which is the highest Nazareth, which is on top. And normally, this city was the city where Jewish families lived. You know, Israeli Jews came into that place. And then downtown Nazareth stayed like the Palestinian side of the city.</p> <p>But like it got so—it's so different now. The old city is kind of like really almost struggling to exist and within the buildings and the changes that happened around it. So, it—for me, it's a place where even history has suffocated. You know? It's so different and so not what it used to be, for me, that I have a hard time relating to it. By the way, I just came back from my village, as well. Where I grew up, which—a village called Deir Hanna, which is north of Nazareth. And the same thing, I just like—every day, I woke up I was like in a shock of how quickly like the modern times take over and kill every single memory of you as a child so there is no relation to anything that you knew before, really.</p>
00:13:14	Jesse	Host	<p>When you were a kid, did you know mostly Palestinian Israelis, or did you regularly interact with people from other cultural backgrounds? Jewish Israelis and so forth.</p>
00:13:27	Hiam	Guest	<p>Only Palestinians from Israel, because I grew up in that village that was only from like Palestinians from Israel—divided between Christians and Muslims. But at that time, we never really talked about religion. We just like very well lived together, no conflict whatsoever. There's a mosque, there is a church. My best friends were the kids of the priest of my village. He was the best friend of my father. So, that's really how I grew up.</p>

But everything else, administration-wise, happened elsewhere. And this elsewhere was the nearest city to our—to my village. Which was Acre, Akka in Arabic. And this is where, when I used to go to the village, I would go there. And this is where I would suddenly—would have to speak Hebrew in order to get whatever I needed. So, this is where you kind of meet Jews, Israeli Jews, for the first time in your life. You know, once you need a doctor or you need to go for any administrative thing. But like the school happened in Arabic. Everything was—around me, was Arabic, really. So, we used to go like do our shopping for clothing and things like bigger than just food either in Nazareth—in Nazareth, everybody spoke Arabic at that time—or in Akka, which was a mixed city between Palestinians who spoke Arabic and Jews who spoke Hebrew.

00:15:03 Jesse Host

Did you have family have family friends elsewhere in the world? Your parents were first generation immigrants.

00:15:09 Hiam Guest

My father was from the same village. So, he always lived there. My mother comes from a family that was in Tiberias, the city of Tiberias. In '48, they had to quit with the exit of Palestinians and my grandfather basically did not want to cross the border, 'cause he felt that if he did, he would never come back. So, they've hidden under a tree for a night or two and then they tried to go backwards. So, they ended up in a village not very far from Tiberias at the time. And this is where they just lived. My grandfather went to see what happened to his house, never found the key for it. Never was able to come into it, because it was already occupied by a Jewish family. So, he just like went crazy, lost his mind, and died two years after, I think. And then my grandmother had to bring up nine kids. You know. At that time.

It's painful. Honestly, like when you hear these stories, it's very painful. But I appreciated a lot my grandmother for one reason. It's like, she educated my mom to pardon. My mom educated me to pardon. And I think both women just influenced my life in a big, big, big way. You know, where just like let's go with the flow and just like see how we get the best out of our life with whatever drama we had to live.

00:16:54 Jesse Host

At what point do you think you decided that you were going to, you know, get out of town, so to speak? How old were you?

00:17:02 Hiam Guest

I think very early. I think very early. I think at the age of 15, I already was dreaming of some kind of freedom that existed somewhere else. But I didn't know where it existed, really. I think I saw my future somewhere else, but I didn't know really, at that age. At that age, I couldn't give it any explanation, because even—you know, I mean, when you grow up in a village—though my parents both were teachers, and they were just educated people; it was easy to talk with them. Their goal was to educate us, so we had to be educated, basically, as they were. So, the most important thing was study.

00:17:50 Jesse Host

So, I had to choose something to study. But I didn't wanna study what they wanted me to study. So, I went to study photography. Yeah, did they expect you to do something practical? Like did they expect you to become a doctor or a lawyer or an undertaker?

00:17:57 Hiam Guest

Absolutely. Yeah. Doctor or a lawyer. That was the thing, really. Or a teacher, because it's a good job for a woman, because she could just like work half-day and go back home and have her kids and,

you know, bring them up in the right way. I mean, though my parents were very educated, they were still like traditional people, in a way. You know? Because they were living in these traditions, so they were kind of like trying to respect things to a certain limit where people would not make of them—make fun of them or just like talk about them in a bad way in the village.

So, this is what we—what I kept hearing all the time. And I kept fighting back, saying that no one would decide anything for me. It's like I have to decide for myself. So, it wasn't easy, but I really dreamed of a different life. Again, at that time, I didn't know what it was. The dream was just some idea that had no—that had no description to it. Like, I didn't know what kind of life I would have. What kind of job I would have. What kind of woman I would be. I didn't...

00:19:08 Jesse Host

What was the first thing you did that was concrete? What was the first step you took towards that?

00:19:19 Hiam Guest

[Beat.] Learning photography. Studying. And then, acting. Acting in school. It's something—every artistic activity that we had in school, I had to be part of it. That was my space of freedom, as well. You know. Like, I understood when I was acting or when I was singing or when I was—you know, playing the drums, whatever, this was a space that belonged to me. So, no one could penetrate that space. It was mine. And I could exist in it in a very free way.

00:19:55 Jesse Host

What kind of acting were you doing in school? Just like—I mean, *Oklahoma*?

00:19:59 Hiam Guest

I mean, we were doing all different kinds, really. But the one that sticks to my mind a lot is the one that made me believe that I could make something through this job, I was very young; I was like—I think I was nine or ten, really, and I was acting this woman—mother who had her child dying. And the child was almost as big as I was, but he was still like in my—in my hands. I was sitting down. He was lying on me. And of course, like in the—I cannot remember exactly the scene. The only thing I remember that I cried the death of my kid and once we finished and we just like—you know, went to bow in front of the audience that were people in my village that I knew and people from my school and my teachers—I saw everybody crying.

And I said, "Wow, this is like magical." Right? There's something to discover there. There's something really incredible, influential in a way. You know? Like something passing on from me to the others. And that was really an incredible feeling. I think this is something that followed my childhood for sooo many years after, that I just didn't know what to do with at that time. And once I finished my photography school and started working in photos, like as a photographer, I discovered a theatre that I suddenly belonged to, and this is how I really became a professional actor.

00:21:33 Jesse Host

Did you go to photography school because you aspired to be a photographer? Or simply because it was a way to make art that was in front of you, available to you?

00:21:49 Hiam Guest

Are you—like, do you read minds or what?

[Jesse laughs.]

Because like every time you ask me a question, it's incredible. I swear to you. It's like this is the third time I said like, "Does he know the answer or what?" Um. Yeah, no, it is incredible. Amazing. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. It's true. What you said is true. I went to a photography school to escape, really, and to just like—a form of art would have made out of me who I am now, otherwise I would've kind of like died doing something different in my life that I didn't like. So, it was for me just like a way to tell my parents basically that—I didn't go to photography school because I knew anything about photo. Like, I went there because I—my sister was doing another—she was studying another subject in that same school. And one day—'cause she knew me, she goes—she had already started school and she goes, "I think you must come here and see. I think there is a photography school here if you're interested."

I say, "Okay." You know. Talked to them, tried to find if I can have an appointment. So, she speaks to the director and apparently I get that appointment. I just had to tell my parents that I had to go. So, I told my parents that I'm going to see the school where my sister is. So, to make it easier on them, I said, "You know, my sister is there. So, we'll be together." You know. "You shouldn't worry. We will just kind of stand up for each other." Blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah. *[Chuckles.]* You know?

And they—my father said like, "Okay, so what photography? Like what is it? Is it—is this a job? Like what are you going to do with it?"

I said, "I really don't know, but I think I need to go and discover." So, I went there, and I spoke with the—with the director. They had already finished, really, the inscriptions. You know, like they wouldn't take anybody else. But I just like stood in front of this man and I said, "It's a matter of death or life." Right? "It's either you take me to your school, and you save me forever, or you let me die being a doctor or a lawyer or whatsoever." So, he was so intrigued that basically he said okay. Go on. You know, we'll take you. So, he added me to the list of students, and I went back home, and I told my parents that I—this is what I was going to do. It wasn't easy, but finally I just did it. And yeah, it was really—for me—a way to escape a different life and to stay connected to art.

00:24:35 Jesse Host

The thing about photography in this context is it is both an art form and a trade. Like, it is a—it's a job-job in addition to being something you do for fine art. And it also is—you know, as far as the arts goes, it's about as technical as it gets. Like, it's about as close to being a scientist as you can be. You know? Maybe architect or draftsman or something like that, but it's like a job-job. *[Laughs.]*

[Hiam agrees.]

00:25:06 Hiam Guest

It's a job you could sell to your parents. You know what I mean? Exactly. It is. But to be honest with you, I did that job for a few years after I finished school—while I was in school, and after. In order to pay my school, I had to do like weddings. You know? And then I did journalism. Like—and then I went to work in *[Inaudible]* University, as a photographer to document all the events that are happening around there. And I hated it! It's just like, for me—it's not a job. For

me, it wasn't a job, really. For me, it was just like a form of art that I had to perform, but I didn't know how. So, that's why I left it and I went to acting. And just through acting, I discovered that it was a great thing to learn, because it helped me suddenly—you know—achieve my goal in cinema. Because what is more than acting and photography? Makes a film.

So, this is how the two parts connected with each other later in my life after I finished with the theatre.

00:26:09 Jesse Host
00:26:12 Hiam Guest

What led you out of the country?

Suffocating. *[Beat.]* Having to prove to everybody your difference every single minute of your life. If you're a Palestinian, you have to prove to Palestinians why you are different, why you cannot be just like everybody else. And to Israelis, you're not enough of an Israeli. So, like—you know. Uh, it's—and the political issue, to add to it. I think really it was about me going to find myself somewhere else and maybe breathing in new air. I never really felt like that I felt—I left to leave forever. I left because I needed to breathe. I needed a new air. I needed to find myself doing something different. I had a feeling that I just like—that round was done. You know? The turn had—I took the turn and that's it. I felt I had nothing else really to kind of go for. And I just wanted to go to a country where, yes, I didn't have to tell everybody who I was and why I am who I am every minute of my life. You know?

And you know, with my parents, with my village, with the people of my village, with my society—it wasn't easy to be who I was, really. You know? I mean, being an actress in Palestine at that time wasn't something that—you wouldn't find—I think maybe we were two or three at the max. You know? So, while a lot of men were actors around us. So, it wasn't—especially coming from a village, you know, with a very kind of like limited possibility of people to know what it is. You know? It felt like—it's a discipline that people didn't know that it was possible for a woman to be—or to become.

At the time when I decided to leave, it's because I couldn't cope with all the components of the society and the politics around, you know. And the division between Palestinians and Israelis and—*[sighs]* I mean, it was too hard to cope with. And I just went to London, basically. I went to London, and I stayed there and then I went back three years after. So, for three years I decided to kind of like find myself, really.

00:28:57 Jesse Host

Did you always intend to be an international cinema actor? Or was your thinking that you would just—you would be glad to do regional theatre or whatever it was?

00:29:12 Hiam Guest

I don't think—I never intended, really, anything. I just like knew that I loved acting once I started to act as a theatre actress. When I moved out of the country, I thought I would continue working as a theatre actress. I—but I didn't know where I would work. You know? Because in London, I basically joined the group of *[inaudible]* that I started to work with in Jerusalem. They were in a tour and I kind of like worked with them again. And when I came to Paris, I didn't speak the language. So, I didn't know where I'm going with it. You know?

00:30:29	Jesse	Host	<p>But slowly, like I started to work on the language and slowly I started to kind of like—some people wanted to do small movies with me, and this is how I drew the picture, really. But I never intended anything. I just followed the stream and I continued to choose things that I would connect with later on, when I had the possibility of course. And things came up. You know? I don't know, really, if I—if I had to choose them or if they chose me. I—it's a mixture of things. We'll finish up with Hiam Abbass after a quick break. When we return, we'll talk about how she got the role of Marcia on <i>Succession</i> and whether or not she thinks Marcia actually loves her husband, Logan Roy. Yes, folks, <i>Succession</i> intrigue! Don't miss it. It's <i>Bullseye</i>, from MaximumFun.org and NPR.</p>
00:30:49	Music	Transition	Twangy, futuristic electronic music.
00:30:52	Jesse	Promo	<p>This message is brought to you by NPR sponsor Airbnb. Millions of people earn extra income by hosting their extra space on Airbnb. Income that can help with home renovations, paying for vacations, or saving for retirement. Maybe you have questions about whether hosting might be right for you? You can now ask a super host and get free one-on-one help from Airbnb's most experienced hosts. Go to Airbnb.com/askasuperhost and start asking.</p>
00:31:25	Promo	Clip	<p><i>[Music fades out.]</i> Music: Cheerful piano music.</p> <p>Jo Firestone: Hi, I'm Jo Firestone.</p> <p>Manolo Moreno: And I'm Manolo Moreno.</p> <p>Jo: And we host Dr. Gameshow, a podcast where listeners submit games, and we play them regardless of quality with a dozen listeners from around the world.</p> <p>Manolo: We've had folks call in from as far as Sweden, South Africa, and the Philippines.</p> <p>Jo: Here's an example. This is a game we called Zoo-ey Deschanel, where you turn a celebrity's name into an animal pun. You have an example, Manolo?</p> <p>Manolo: Brad Gorilla Pitt.</p> <p>Jo: Oh, that's a pun on gorilla pits?</p> <p>Manolo: Yep.</p> <p>Jo: I don't know if that—</p> <p>Manolo: That's Brad Pitt.</p> <p>Jo: Oh, okay.</p> <p>Manolo: That's a high-quality game that you could expect.</p> <p>Jo: Yep! Dr. Gameshow has new episodes every other Wednesday on Maximum Fun.</p>

Manolo: Check us out please!

[Music fades out.]

00:32:10 Music
00:32:15 Jesse Transition
Host

Thumpy music with light vocalizations.
It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. Here with me is Hiam Abbass. She plays Marcia on HBO's *Succession*. She also stars in the new movie *Gaza Mon Amour*.

I was thinking about your part in *Succession*. And you play the wife of the patriarch of the family that the show is about. And you know, I think a lot of—a lot of times—I read a lot of people describing your character as like enigmatic or mysterious or something. And the thing that struck me about watching your character onscreen was in this world where all these kids are trying to figure out how they belong—like, they—like it's—they're constantly juggling amongst each other and looking some combination of fake confident and scared.

Your *[chuckling]*—your character is like the one character on the show who is able to project that she belongs where she stands.

00:33:18 Sound
Effect Transition
00:33:19 Clip Clip

[Hiam agrees.]

Music swells and fades.

Marcia: Kendall.

Speaker: Hey, Marcia.

Marcia: Ça va? How was your trip?

Speaker: It was good. It was fine.

Marcia: No accidents? No hiccups?

Speaker: Uh, no. No hiccups.

00:33:41 Sound
Effect Transition
00:33:42 Jesse Host

Marcia: You've been through difficult times. You're a nice boy. But out of difficult times comes strong men. Right?
Music swells and fades.

00:34:04 Hiam Guest

And I thought like, well, here you are, traveling from country to country, working in *[chuckling]*—working in movies that are being made all over the world by people from all over the world. And so on and so forth. And like, the skill that you must have had to develop was looking like you belong in the place you're standing! You know what I mean? *[Chuckles.]*

Right. Yeah, you're right. You're really right! Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I never really put it that way, but I think yeah, it's very interesting to hear you describe it that way. So, maybe that's the connection between Marcia and myself.

00:34:18 Jesse Host
00:34:21 Hiam Guest
00:34:22 Jesse Host
00:34:25 Hiam Guest

Do you feel like you belong in all those places? Or are you faking it. I do. I do.

You're a good actor. So, either one.

Thank you very much for the "good actor", but yeah—no, I do. I really do. You know, there is something that I find very interesting about acting in that sense. Because like, yeah, you travel through

countries, you travel through sets with different cultures, different people, different languages. You use your body in a different way, as well. But every time—every time, it's home. That's really what I find interesting about it. Every single time, it's really home. Nothing seems very strange. Nothing seems awkward. You know?

00:35:09 Jesse Host Marcia is home.
So, every character on *Succession* is pretty craven. And you know, you're that—you are that patriarch, played by Brian Cox's, third wife. Right?

[She confirms.]

00:35:38 Hiam Guest When you—when you got that part, when you started getting scripts in the mail or by courier or email or whatever, did you have to choose, are you actually in love with him? Or did you ask, “Hey, am I actually in love with him?”
Uh, I think it's both. *Succession* came to me because they offered me the pilot. So, in the pilot, Marcia was not very, very developed, really. It's just like all the others almost existed in the conflict of the succession. Logan Roy was going to have that accident that—like a heart attack or whatever he had—and be in the hospital and Marcia was supposed to kind of be there next to him. Whatever was written in the pilot, I tried to do it with Adam McKay, who was very open and Jesse Armstrong—the writer, who—both creators—well. Who both were very open to suggestions at that time. And I think they loved whatever went with the—like came out from the actors but went in the direction of that characters that they imagined drawing at that time.

When we were picked up and I started reading, I had no doubt that I love my husband. Marcia loves her husband, and her husband loves her. It's more with the time—more with the time discovering how horrible these characters are.

[Jesse laughs softly.]

I asked myself like, “What is she doing with him?!” Right? So, I went, and I had to speak with Jesse, and I said like, “What exactly—like how do you see her, as a writer/creator?” You know. Like, “Where does she stand from there?” And I think we both agreed that, yeah, there is love. There is love there. You know? But their love is—like the word “love” for them comes from a different dictionary as it is for us, really. I think. You know? Love, for them, is more—it's like, you know, when Shiv tells Tom or Tom tells Shiv—I mean, yeah Shiv. Sorry. “I love you.” You know? He said like—this couple, like, do they really love each other? Or they just like have that act in order to—whatever. You know?

And the same with Marcia and Logan. I think—I think she loves him, and she loved him. Because I think she found somehow a safety, stature. You know? In life, where she can stick to. And I think, for him, it was a great deal as well. So, they kind of like—yeah, existed in that—in that love relationship that is really very proper to these kind of mentalities and these kind of people with that kind of—you know—social, financial stature, somehow. That doesn't belong—we

00:38:47	Jesse	Host	<p>don't belong to that. You know? I mean, I don't know what is that, really. Apart from imagination, as Hiam. You know?</p> <p>I sometimes think about why movie stars marry each other so much. And I don't think they marry each other so much, you know, absolutely. Like, I don't think more than half of movie stars are married to another movie star, but a lot more movie stars are married to movie stars than regular people are married to movie stars.</p> <p><i>[Hiam chuckles.]</i></p> <p>And like there's this thing that I feel like it must be like—I mean, I'm projecting, obviously—but like part of it is, “Well, I can relate to their experience. They can relate to my experience.” But also, just—as with Logan Roy, the patriarch of this family who's rich beyond imagining—it's like here's this other person who is—also has their thing. Like, doesn't need to take my thing and so I don't have to worry about whether that's what's going on. And there's something about that in both directions, bilaterally, in Marcia's relationship with Logan. Like, that each of those people is comforted by the fact that this other person is so themselves and has their own thing going.</p>
00:40:00	Hiam	Guest	<p>Yeah. Exactly. I think it's a deal. You know? It's really like a deal that they just like agreed upon. You know? I think in the beginning when they met, if I would imagine a past—like a history—I think they loved each other. They made love. You know, like every couple that meets, in the beginning. But then I think then the way Logan Roy kind of deals with his life and the way Marcia wants to live her life, they made a deal. You know? Keep their spaces separate, but at the same time—you know, work together in order to keep the appearance to people and, interiorly, they just like... each was in his own kingdom, somehow.</p>
00:40:57	Jesse	Host	<p>But that doesn't preclude love or affection. Right?</p> <p><i>[Hiam confirms.]</i></p>
00:41:05	Hiam	Guest	<p>Like that doesn't mean that they—yeah.</p>
00:41:10	Jesse	Host	<p>Yeah. That's why I think they really love each other. Yeah.</p>
00:41:16	Hiam	Guest	<p>You're talking to me from Paris, right now. You've lived there quite a long time. Does it feel like home to you?</p>
00:42:15	Jesse	Host	<p>Yes. It is. I mean, it's over 30 years now. I came to Paris in '89. So, can you imagine? It is. It is. I like it. I really like Paris. I like the history of Paris. I like—I like people. I like—life is easy here, somehow. It's very cultural. I like it. It's very mixed. I like it. I can see a lot of things that I cannot see in other places but in Paris. You know? Movie-wise, exhibitions, uh—books. Like I can buy books in English. I can buy books in Hebrew, if I want. I can buy books in Arabic. French, of course. Yeah, no, I really like it. And it's home for my kids, as well. So, that's another connection.</p>
00:42:18	Hiam	Guest	<p>Do you still think in Arabic?</p>
00:42:32	Jesse	Host	<p>Not much, no. I think in Arabic, I think, when I act in Arabic, when I'm supposed to do a show or a film in Arabic, but not in daily life. Very little.</p>
00:42:34	Hiam	Guest	<p>Is it French, in there?</p>
			<p>I think a lot in English and French. English is very, very present in my life. And French, of course, yeah, only because I live here. So, my cotillion life is French.</p>

00:42:50	Jesse	Host	Well, I'm so grateful to you for taking the time to be on <i>Bullseye</i> . It was so nice to get to talk to you. I admire your work so much.
00:42:56	Hiam	Guest	Thank you so much. It's really nice.
00:43:00	Jesse	Host	Hiam Abbass. Her newest movie is called <i>Gaza Mon Amour</i> . You can rent it right now on pretty much any video-on-demand platform. It's a beautiful and funny. It's a really great movie.
00:43:13	Music	Transition	Bright, chiming synth.
00:43:19	Jesse	Host	That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i> . <i>Bullseye</i> is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. We were in our office on MacArthur Park in Los Angeles, this week. And all of the dirt in MacArthur Park is covered with something white. We don't know what it is.
			Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producer is Jesus Ambrosio. Production fellows at Maximum Fun are Richard Robey and Valerie Moffat. We get help from Casey O'Brien. Thanks to independent producer Rebecca Roseman for recording Hiam Abbass in her apartment in Paris and to Mike Mills for getting vaccinated and coming in to see us in our studio. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Our theme song is "Huddle Formation" by the band The Go! Team. Thanks to them and to their label, Memphis Industries, for letting us use that great tune.
			You can keep up with our show on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. We post our interviews in all of those places. And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.
00:44:29	Promo	Promo	Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.

[Music fades out.]