

The Best 'House of the Dragon' Episode Yet? Plus, 'Star City' Episode 7 | The Watch

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I need support staff to clear the room. >> Stand up and walk now. >> Hello and welcome to the watch. My name is Chris Ryan. I am an editor at the ringer.com. And joining me in the studio, fresh off a 9-hour Twitch stream with Jaylen Brown, IT'S ANDY GREEN WALT. >> What do you mean? I just had a colonoscopy. What's up, brother? >> It's great to see you. >> Good to see you, too. It's the watch.

It's Monday. a lot to talk about. today on the show, July 4th, Taylor Swift wedding, England, Mexico. Where would LeBron James live in the tri-state area if he were to become a Sixer? House of the Dragon, the AY's Star City. >> Good God. >> but I only have an hour to talk to you, so I'm just kidding. >> That's exciting. >> it's great to see you. do the watch at Spotify.com, the watchpod on Instagram, >> ringer-tv on YouTube. You can watch us and listen to us on Spotify, which I hope you're doing, but you can also find us elsewhere. I wish they simal cast us on BBC World Service.

>> I think that could be arranged. I think we have a fan base over there. >> how are you? How is your how is your England Mexico experience? >> I mean, that was one of the greatest sports events of my life. I mean this sincerely and I understand what it would do to cheapen the nature of the event, but I wish there was World Cup every day for the rest of my time on this cursed earth.

>> Specifically, I want knockouts, but I want three of them a day that start at 9:00 and end at like 8:30. >> Yes. >> And I want both the Cinderella teams to win, but also for the best players to keep playing. >> Yes. And I want both teams to do their celebrations at the end because I love all >> had a leader who could make that happen. Huffy. >> If only a guy would step into the to the void and and say, "It's me.

>> This is actually about me. >> I can fix it." Only Only he can fix FIFA. >> It's true. >> It's true. I mean, when you have It's just a shame to see yet another institutionally clean organization lose its guard rails. You know what I mean? Like just historically, FIFA has always been so delightful. I seriously it is truly like it's like the heart recognizing its counterpoint in another. >> It's beautiful. These two deserve each other.

>> I just want to say we're recording this at 10:00 a.m. on Monday. So the USA plays Belgium in a couple of hours. Insanely bad sports karma. >> The worst. >> Like De Bruyne masterass is incoming. >> I I I I think that's likely. I Let's Let's focus. >> I think it's good. Like look, every country would do it if they could. >> Yeah. It is it is by far the most house sport in the world. Like people have won on hand balls. There there have been hundas that kidnapped people to win World Cups. I'm just saying >> I I just want to say as a longtime football fanatic at

least as far back as June.

>> Yeah. >> that was a red card. >> Which who's >> Yeah. >> So but I agree. I usually like to >> agree with him on some points. I just think nobody's wrong 100% of the time. True. >> Okay. I mean, show me who among us. This is a television pod that is increasingly just a friendship pod, which I think is good for us. But in terms of the television, >> the World Cup is the best television of the year. And I genuinely I like most of the time, and I'll I'll make this about me because I rarely do that. I feel bad for me like when my children won't watch sports with me because I like watching sports. I feel bad for them that they are not watching this. I felt bad. If you're listening to this and last night you were like, "Oh, the Legally Blonde prequel is on Amazon.

Let's fire that up." What are you doing? >> Yeah. >> What are you doing with your life? That was so wild. My two favorite countries in the world to visit at each other's throats. >> So, it does come back to >> the Andy Bowl. Yeah. >> Come on. >> And we're ultimately ultimately >> sure >> on the record right now, who are you cheering for? >> Who am I cheering for the most? >> Who were you cheering for?

>> That's England. >> Yeah, I can see >> I've been there more recently and >> both sides of the argument. >> Trying to secure the LA vote. Incredible. Incredible. the other thing that I want to say about this match though, it was incredible drama, incredible television, incredible sport, but it was also a match that began airing at 2 a.m. GMT. >> Yes. >> And we were texting with people. >> That's what they called the time zone in England.

>> Oh, look, look at you. Man of the people, Greenwich Meime. we were texting with people who were awake for this match. And I got to say >> in England. in England and I got barely me. I got to say >> if the situation was reversed and whether it was the USMT playing in a in the middle of the night for us or if it was the Eagles because I tried this last like the whole Super Bowl season of the Eagles.

>> They began that season playing a spirited contest in Brazil that I learned about via text messages from you and Zach when I woke up in England the next morning. >> yes. So, like I'm just saying I don't have that gear and I don't know if it's a particularly like an age thing. >> The reason the English were able to stay awake is in fact gear. >> Well said. >> Have you thought about that? >> Well said. Do you think that all the lads down at the pub weren't just they weren't on the Guinness all night?

>> I'll just say this >> more than that. I would not be shocked if the last season of Industry, the final season of industry, is about a cod trader who arrives at worked at 7 a.m. and accidentally caused a financial crisis >> straight from the pub from the session. Yeah. >> Okay. >> Yeah. >> Do but do you think you have it in you just purely on vibes like just natural the natural stimulant of enthusiasm? >> Yeah. Because honestly the thing that was almost more intoxicating than the match itself was the buildup. The buildup was so I I I it is a real like I will never quit this app moment was >> the pure storytelling chops of the world's collected meme makers as >> as we and also >> I mean what you when you watch Harry Kane sing a narco like you really are kind of like in the loving embrace >> two two of the best >> sentient intelligence >> two of the best meme creating cultures I would say the moresy Is that heard this match referred to?

>> Yes. >> any final thoughts? I believe Jordan Henderson played for Liverpool, your beloved Liverpool. >> Yeah, that was our like basically the closest we had to representation on this team. >> So for people, Representation matters, Chris. For people who aren't up on the World Cup and have not hit skip, skip skip. Jordan Henderson's performance last night was elite. He did not enter the match as a player. He was capped in the sense that he received a yellow card for talking essentially brought to provide veteran leadership and vibes.

>> And what the payoff on that, the return on that ticket was he got a yellow card for talking from the bench. >> And then in the celebration, he slipped and broke his wrist. >> He was up on an advertising hoarding during Wonder Wall and when he was trying to get down, he fell and seriously broke his wrist. >> Like had to be airlifted to a hospital. >> I needed oxygen. I mean, everybody needed oxygen. I needed oxygen. Yes.

>> But yes. and thus Liverpool's World Cup ends. >> Yeah. >> it's amazing. >> What other pop culture stuff I will say, and I'm sure Sean and Amanda will hit this cuz I'm stealing Sean's point. I I was I I saw him over the weekend and and he made this point, which is essentially that you can tell that the World Cup is is mega because like Minions was down bad. >> Oh, was it? >> And and Supergirl continued to be down.

Like I don't I think this is actually like >> I I personally >> forgot that I did House of Our Talk the Thrones when it came up on my feed. I was LIKE DAMN I DID THAT like >> that show was on tonight. >> In your defense in order to combat altitude in the house of our studio you were absolutely gagged on Beatroot and Viagra like the English national team. >> Yeah. >> Performance matters and everything.

yeah. Yeah, I mean look, we're back. >> So, I don't know, maybe people haven't seen what what what was a honestly like awesome episode of House of Dragon I am excited to talk to you about. >> I also did I I watched that episode before any of the knockout round matches this weekend. So, I think it's going to be interesting. Do we have conf we I heard over I heard prior to the weekend that Illumination Animation Entertainment Corporation confirmed that the Minions at no point worked for Adolf Hitler. Do we have >> what? Yeah, they they were asked about this.

>> Are the minions a a period piece? >> Yes, this is the thing. Okay, we'll get back. But I wanted to know if you think they've worked for Carmine Infantino, but yes. So >> Carmine, >> isn't it >> Giani? >> Johnny. >> Yeah. >> Why do I call him Carmine? >> Cuz you're racist against Italians. I don't know. >> Let me know next time they make the the Mundial. Okay. >> Oh, Carmine Infantino was the publisher of DC Comics. It's actually worse. I'm both racist and a big dork.

This is This is my Super Bowl. >> You got to do the Bill Simmons. I'm half Italian, so it's okay. I promise you I am not. But I did sleep at Holiday and Express last night. >> Oh my god. >> There you go. That's why I thought that. Anyway, the Minions have it's been established that these small little yellow friends have been in existence throughout history. And what they do is they find a menacing evil power and bootlick and do whatever they can to serve whoever has been evil throughout history. So there's like funny little shorts where they're helping a mean caveman and then the caveman dies and they're like, "Ooh."

And they go help someone else. >> So they're they're eternal. >> Yes. And this movie that came out this weekend that I also completely forgot about, I believe, is a period piece set in the silent film era. >> Okay. like, you know, it's it's really weird if you I can't believe it only made like \$35 million. Frankly, >> I want to protect you from like if you peel back the onion here. >> This is this is the line that I draw.

Okay. >> And and I shall not pass. I'm not going into the the minions verse, but >> I see it. I see like the Minions out on the highway. You know, >> you see the big one coming up over >> like I'm I'm familiar with their vibe. I know that like somebody >> who do they somebody's saying Bohemian Raps City in Minion. They're they're saying like there's lots of >> they're who who said that >> the internet it's like there are jokes about Emily Blunt speaks in minion and disclosure day and stuff like that.

>> Does she >> are you are you googling Carmine Empino right now? >> No, I know everything about Carmine the late great >> but yeah like I I my only point was just that like it was sort of amazing to see an event an event become so massive. >> Yeah. And I think between World Cup and people simply using data centers to power their Taylor Swift wedding snooping. >> Yeah. >> like everybody stayed home this weekend or you know went went out to July 4th party but did not go to Minions and did not go to >> did not go see Obsession probably because everybody on the planet already saw it.

>> So this is a headline again. You missed this because you could just chalk it up to the World Cup or your lovely holiday travel that we did together. But >> Minion, this is a headline from Deadline July 2nd. Dine July 2nd. Minions and Monsters director makes it clear Minions never >> Deadline Burbank. >> Minions no dine. A bunker underneath Berlin. Minions never worked for Hitler. >> Okay. >> Now, did they take a meeting? >> Do you have the phone call?

>> They were tech. >> We have the phone call. Who? I mean, it also then opens up the follow-up. So, were they with Mussolini? >> Yeah, exactly. >> What were they doing in the 40s? >> Minions and Monster co-writer, director, by the way, do you know the guy that created the Minions is named Pierre Coffin? >> >> see, if you How deep does this thing go? >> Cuz he's buried under that money. That's dude. For real though, he it it was a wild fan theory after 2015's film Minions revealed that they served Napoleon in the 19th century, leading quote many to wonder where they were during World War II.

>> Many many other side of the French Revolution. >> it it's a little bit unclear, but it does say the first Minions movie had them quote hibernating in a cave from 1812 to 1968. Convenient. Oh, actually, you know what? I don't think I actually know. I saw Napoleon and I can't remember what What did he do during the French Revolution? >> Wait, you're saying you saw Ridley Scott's Napoleon, but you don't remember the minion's role in the film?

>> I know. I don't remember Napoleon's role in the Revolution. >> I want to tell you for the record, that movie would have done double the bo if in the Ridley Scott director's cut. Hold on, shut the whole podcast down. >> I haven't seen the director's cut. For all I know, minions are all over it. Are they in the director's cut of Kingdom of Heaven? >> yes. >> Who would they work for in the Wayland Utani universe?

>> Paul Riser. >> A billion. >> Paul Riser is essentially a minion in Aliens. >> This is such Do you know how much money we're making for someone else right now? If you redid the entire Ridley Scott filmography, including Matchstick Men with Minions in it. Okay. He just All right. I'm I'm just letting you cook. >> I can't. It's too It's too rich a text, but it would be exciting. >> I just wanted to give you some space here cuz you're cooking.

>> Well, >> you're racist. You're doing You're doing alternative history. Minions are showing up in in Bladeunner. >> Yeah. >> what did you think of Taylor Swift's wedding? >> Rucker Hour or the rain falling on him and then the minions slowly ease him into the soil. >> It's beautiful. Okay. Sorry. What >> What did you think of Taylor Swift? wow, you are sweating. >> I I'm worked up about this. I think that if Also, it's the new lighting that we're not allowed to talk about. If we survive this period of of history, >> the World Cup, >> I mean, I might not survive that. I do think that this abomination in Manhattan will be looked back as a nadier. I do like a real bread and circuses moment. I find the whole thing really awful.

Really, really tacky. Really awful. I know that doesn't jive with the with with the general >> discussion. I I I was I was where you were at at various points. >> I know. But then what you did was you focus grouped it. You went out into America. >> You know what I did when is when I saw the guest list, I was like this is this isn't grotesque. This is just weird. I mean it is grotesque in a lot of ways but like I was like this is just strange >> because when you saw George Stephanopoulos >> Dean Blandino at her wedding you know is but even Travis Kelsey is Travis Kelsey friends with the Fox refereeing expert >> there's a version of this that is like it's actually when you are this rich and this famous friendship is a meaningless umbrella term and that's what you I think the end result of that is like we were so happy to be married by Cristiano Ronaldo has just got like a single tear going down his face while he listens to us before Portugal Spain.

>> I hope he listens to us. >> that's what you get when you have an invitation or whatever it was that said like know the postscript that was like we were married by our good friend Adam Sandler. >> Yeah. >> I challenge you to define the the word friend in that sentence. I imagine that you both enjoy the filmography of Adam Sandler and I'm sure both of you at some point were introduced to Adam Sandler at a party and you were like, "Holy you're Adam Sandler and he was like Zooby-Doo" or whatever. I'm trying to imagine what my Adam Sandler would be.

Do it. Do it. We're married by my good friend John Bernthal. This is right. And he's just like, "Okay, >> GOD DAMN. I DIDN'T KNOW TRUE LOVE WAS HERE." >> RIGHT. We all have our version of like Adam Sandler like the Oh Wouldn't that be funny? >> Mine was the late great Carmine Infantino. >> He could have talked about when he brokered the deal to have Spider-Man Superman cross over once in 1982. do you know what I mean? Like I I find that I mean Madison Square Garden, all due respect to the mayor of New York, Jaylen Brunson, but like that's not a particularly like intimate or romantic venue.

>> No, I mean there is obvious like technical reasons why they did it. It's because they probably because they filmed it and they're going to sell it. which is also strange. >> It's also strange is a politic word. >> Yeah. And I know that there was like, you know, everything about it was secure and that was the one way that they wouldn't

have helicopters taking pictures and they they had the security levels >> sure >> outside and that you could basically get a filming permit that would then shut down Midtown >> on July 3rd, which I'm sure was annoying, but >> you know, under Big Zo, everything just seems to just keep rolling. And that's it. It does work. You know, >> it's true.

>> Yeah. I I think that was my big I I looked at the list of the people who had been confirmed to have attended and I was just like >> this is just so random. Like there are just so many people where I'm like this guy from NCIS and >> it's a party for famous people. I'm Congratulations. >> Have a nice weekend. >> Okay, let's talk about House of the Dragon, I guess. >> Okay. on on Talk the Thrones, which I adore doing with Mal and Joe, and they did a great job explaining some of the >> kind of in-depth more textual readings of of of this episode. I declared this the best episode of the series.

>> Yeah. >> You agree with me? >> I I thought this is this is this is the the ego. >> Big praise, I guess, coming from you. >> Not at all. The ego of the very siloed. I was like, "Zag, this was a great episode of TV." >> Yeah. >> Apparently, not a zag. Apparently, I I think I think >> conventional wisdom. >> I think for maybe there are people who are like that was there might be people who are like that was boring and there might be people who were like but what about X Y and Z happening outside of the castle walls or whatever, right?

>> I just thought this this episode lack had what some of the other episodes lack, which is subjectivity. >> Yes. Well said. And I find that ironic because even though I have not read fire and blood I think that's the text this is based on >> that is famously or not even that is written from multiple perspectives sometimes conflicting accounts >> that is a quasi historical document about this time >> right >> and that the show is not really leaned into that it's never leaned into Mhm.

>> This was kind of perceived by this person in this way. >> And this was really like the first in my mind the first time we ever got to watch the events of a episode take place solely from the perspective of a character who is going through something >> an entire episode for sure. Yeah, I would take it a step further. I remember from over a decade ago now when we were doing After the Thrones and with with Jason and Mal and especially in their role as big fans of the obviously of the franchise, but particularly of the books that one of the things that made the books so indelible and attracted such an enormous audience even before HBO got interested was the very very specific way in which they were written which was in quite long subjective POV chapters. So that during a dance of dragons or whichever book it was is that a book >> that's what we're doing now that I think house the dragon is the dance of dragons >> we oh yeah it was like us >> song of ice and fire >> that's the series okay doesn't matter I'm already discrediting myself my point is the books that I haven't read are broken up and there's like a lot of Caitlyn Stark perspective there's a Tyrion chapter >> there's a Tyrion chapter and that brings you you know it brings you the subjectivity that I think is really really appealing when you are reading a book but also can be really really precious when you're watching a TV show.

Yeah. >> So my guess is that this is a meaningful episode not just for the House of the Dragon super fan but for the Westeros literati as well because this is I don't know if it's close but at least is tacking towards what drew them in in the first place. And I found it really really compelling and I also found it really reassuring isn't the

word but like and I think I I actually I'm going to say something I'd like to punt it to the end of our conversation just because it really speaks to the challenge of adaptation at all for medium to across mediums. watching this episode which had like not just warmth and subjectivity and interesting and unique perspective. it also had flickers of wit, it had more thematic elements to it, political elements that I found really really compelling. It's what >> like the sound design was incredible with like the the ticking and the rats scratching and all that. And I felt like what you could perceive in this hour of television was everyone in every department taking their shackles off and being like no no we know how to do this in a more traditional or enveloping way but we are making a show that has a god's eye fixed perspective and we are doing other things and to see them >> yeah the god's eye has to be very far away because you got to shoot the dragons and the dragon seems to be >> I think game of thrones was like the dragons are like the kind of the the carrot at the end of the you know like down the line for and the and the stick was sort of the brutal truths about families and and politics.

>> this show front-loaded dragons obviously and and like made the bet that it could take advances in VFX and depict the dragon warfare in a way that hadn't they hadn't even been able to do in Thrones. I don't know if I agree that they've succeeded necessarily, but what really struck me about this and I don't think I articulated this quite well enough on the episode that aired last night was I kept saying tempo and it is a fast episode. They people speak with a quicker tempo.

>> Yeah. But what I admired so much about what Clare Kilner, the director, and Sarah H, the writer, did with this one is in any other episode of House of the Dragon, a lot of these scenes would be conducted by two people standing in a static position in a room >> and the blocking was pretty vanilla and the like acting was kind of almost like coming back to the direction of single single master like over the shoulder like conversation stuff. And far be it for me to ask for like West Wing set in Westeros, but almost every scene in this episode was either a walk-in talk or someone moving around a room in a way that felt unconventional for the show. And even something like Allison coming to visit Reneer and Reneer's like, "How did you make all these decisions when you were kind of operating as the real >> head of the head of the state?"

>> I thought that Allison wandering around the room and being like, "This is so weird >> being here with you. Like, we're teen we were best friends. >> Now we're kind of enemies, but I'm also counseling you. Like, this is really strange." and Rene being kind of doubled over with menstrual pain and like you know like everything that's happening inside of her head and the paranoia that she's got. Even the staging of something like that where it's just two people who remain relatively static. There were little there were little kind of flourishes that really made those scenes come alive. Think about I think that's very well said and think about how think about the effect that the dragons had on people in Game of Thrones like people on the show. Yeah. Like because they hadn't seen them or they thought they were mythological or enough time had passed >> just for like they're never going to come back.

>> And so the what the wasn't overlooked before they started torching everybody. What was cool about this episode in the absence of dragons and just generally was that Reneer physically was the what the because she is someone who was an idea. She was a cause. She was a a shadow, a danger, a threat. >> She's supposed to be a prophecy. >> And now she's just a lady walking around a house and everyone's like, "What do you what?" You

know, and she's making decisions and it was like a workplace comedy. The scene with Allison where Allison is like, "Well, you killed my father." Yeah.

>> Was not not funny. Do you know what I mean? And I think that was and it was self-aware enough for that.
>> I the thing that I it's something that I noted last week and then I was happy to see played out differently this week. Last week because of the the necessities of plot and moving things forward, the two most powerful people in the realm, Renner and Damon, hop off their all powerful nuclear bombs and then just walk through the castle. Yeah. and they they are thus at risk and you know then the stakes shift accordingly. The same thing was happening in this episode but for much smaller stakes effects which made it a little bit more I don't want to say relevant it just made it more palpable. made it more engaging to me that her being there and making these decisions and all the decisions in front of her being bad was much more interesting in the sense of like she is supposed to be upon high and now here she is brought low and heavy as the head etc etc >> and that there is this like sort of spectrum of ideology that runs through the sort of cohort of people that have brought her to power or helped her get to power and you've got people like Misaria who are like well I kind of believed in you because I thought that you were going to be the person to change the way things ran for common people. And then Damon's like, I believe in you because you're the person who's going to bring the Targaryen line back to its customary place as basically demigods and and paying no mind to law or whatever, you know, you you know, and we should just go around burning up the rest of the world until we get to almost fantastical places, more fantastical than where we were now. And the way in which that information is conveyed was so much more witty, artful, but also like forget the the idea that these two people are like there are men with wings like in a like a land beyond the sea kind of stuff. It was just very fascinating to see these two who are like, "Well, on one level, you're the only one who who understands me, but on another level, you're pulling me right into the direction that Targaryens of the past and Targaryens of the future get pulled into where they think they're gods >> and that that that way spells doom." So, I just thought all of that stuff was so well dramatized.

>> I want to talk I want to talk about the the place the city on the edge of the world where men have wings. First of all, book me a ticket. Sounds awesome. And are they eligible to play for the US MNT? >> They have wings. They're very good play. We don't have a lot of wingers. We don't have a lot of wingers. >> Oh, that's good. Maybe we misheard. Maybe it's where men are natural wings.

Three and D stretch wings. They could play for the Sixers, too. >> This was something that I said probably too many times when we covered Game of Thrones. But I just felt that it was always important to not just not to serve what I wanted to see in the show, but to balance the scales of what what the the stakes were and what people were fighting for or fighting against, and that was to let us know what else they could be doing. Give make us understand the choice to continue to march towards King's Landing when you could, in the case of the original Game of Thrones series, show Arya going east. show what life is like in these other places. Is it better? Is it worse? Why do they keep coming back? Give us a sense of Dorne as being like, "It's pretty nice. Why don't you just stay here?"

>> Yeah. >> so that when Damon says it in when Damon talks just what you were saying when he is grandiose in this episode, it is night and day from when he was grandiose in the previous episode. In the previous episode,

he's reciting a prophecy that sounds as romantic as a to-do list. In this episode, he's saying here are all these things that are possible for us now. So what will we do? What when you can do anything, what will you do? This that absolute dogged march towards the nightmare throne is tough when you don't understand the psychology of why characters are doing it other than the fact that they have always done that or they have been told they are meant to do that.

>> Yeah. She's blinded by a a sense of destiny that I think is undermining her ability to maintain alliances, which is really well depicted in the scene with Corus, which they like finally brings to Steve Tasant off the bench and let him like do a cool scene where he expresses an emotion that he didn't even express when like his wife gets killed. You know what I mean? like he gets to say everything that's been like happening inside of his his person for like the last two or three years where he's just like you've got to be kidding me. I am asking you for one thing.

>> Yes. >> I have essentially like backstopped you this entire time against better judgment. >> Yes. >> And I am saying like you know we both know how things happen in bedrooms here. Just call these guys Valen is all I'm asking. and she doesn't because she doesn't want to bring in questions about like, oh, so now even bastards get special dispensation even though that's exactly what her sons have gotten. >> Also, look how nice it is when plot lines intersect.

>> Yeah. >> Like what he has been doing the last three episodes is is the the precursor to this conversation. So it carries episode to episode and and I do not mean this as faint praise. It's kind of an echo of what I said after the premiere, which is the people making the show are very good at their jobs. I think that the overall mission statement may be slightly off at this point, but the fact that they were able to execute a battle that big and then do the very basic stuff like like overlap plot threads in ways that are that create satisfying naughty circumstances.

>> I I don't want to discredit that. That is that is that is good work and it pays off when you can just take a breath in an episode like this. >> I would I would love nothing more. I have not seen the the the next episode. I would love nothing more than if the next episode continued with this pace and momentum and especially this sense of subjectivity. I don't know if this show has enough runway to start hopping around and really diving into you know the interior life of Orman High Tower. I know he is in the scenes from next week rather heavily >> and he certainly pulled a fast one on Reneer this week.

>> Yeah, talk about that. >> >> but you don't hire James Norton just to do like three scenes where he smells perfume and then walks away. So, I'm I'm excited for the emergence of that conflict to to come to the four maybe next week. But, I have I've really come back around on this. I think, you know, I wouldn't necessarily say it gives me anything close to the feeling I got watching Night of the Seven Kingdoms or especially Peak Game of Thrones, but it's a it's becoming more of a pleasure to watch, I think.

>> what what what hopes do you have for it going forward? >> I mean, I I I think it is an it is an old school TV move back when TV shows had to make 22 episodes a year or, >> oh, let's do one about this and let's do one

from her perspective. Let's see what else we can do. Let's see. Let's take this thing out on back roads or see it on the autobond or see if it floats, you know, like let's just see what it is that we have here. It is a luxury in this age of condensed seasons and years between them and expensive post, you know, postwork that's required. So, I I I feel I feel seen. I feel heard. I really enjoyed watching the episode. I think that the nuance that they were given that these characters were given for this one hour will pay some dividends going forward if it goes back into the churn of plot. but I also think the show is what it is. So, I feel I feel happy that we got here.

>> I guess it just I thought that this episode if you're not going to have part of the reason why season 2 kind of fell flat was because everybody was like, "Okay, when's the battle coming?" All right. Like, you just I understand if it's going to be quiet loud, quiet loud. We we have to kind of build up to this battle, but like the way in which it's quiet is so snail-paced and so kind of morose and sort of strange and Damon with the tree and and and all this stuff that's happening and >> you're just like, "Okay, okay, okay."

And then they don't do the battle, >> you know? And now the beginning of this season was almost too much battle. But >> it's been 2 years since we jump and start a massive naval battle >> with a character whose motivations I have somewhat forgotten, you know. And now obviously you can do your homework and find out. But >> I think that if they are going to have episodes where they don't have >> massive army on army, dragon on dragon conflict, this is a really good blueprint. But I I don't I mean obviously the show is done so I don't I don't know what >> No, but we're we're we are still God bless us, you know, we still are covering television on this podcast week to week in an oldfashioned model. And the truth is the majority of people who ever watch House of the Dragon will watch it when it's done streaming on, you know, the patio of David Ellison's mega yacht or whatever the case may be.

>> And it may be that much like when you know when you when you said things like, "Oh, what what's my reading order for Jonathan Hickman's Avengers?" It'll be like, "What's the best way to watch House of the Dragon?" And it may may well be to watch it in these chunks. And one chunk will be treating last season, season 2 as ending two episodes into season 3. And then maybe, you know, it'll advise you to take a walk around the block, take a break, and then pretend it's starting over here, and that will be a different experience. And that's okay. it just is clearly imbalanced in terms of the story. Couple thing in terms of how it was delivered to us. Couple things. A couple bullet points for this episode if I could.

>> one, I found it amusing that Dan Fogler is now on the show. >> That was funny. I was like, >> what? >> I mean, it was just funny because he's he's a he's a fine and amusing and good actor and he was doing a passable he was doing a fine English accent. It was totally fine. It was just like a what? It was kind of a lean-in moment and part of me was like, >> did we actually run out of British character actors because Night of the Seven Kingdom city and Star City took them all and they were like, "Oh my god, we've called the Royal Shakespeare Company."

>> Yeah. >> Is that where we're headed? And I'm kind of here for it. I thought that was amusing. do you think that King's Landing is ripe for a DSA candidate in the next election? >> I think that's what Misario wants. >> I think that's what she wants, too. But she is still, >> you know, she's just like allying herself with the Eric Adams administration being like, "No, no, we can do some work here in the margin from within." I I did really like I

again speaking of things I never thought I would see in a Game of Thrones show. I never thought I would see that cinematic staple giving out turkeys in the hood like on Thanksgiving. I really enjoyed that scene as well.

>> I also across 15 years of the show now, one of my favorite things of this world, one of my favorite things remains every so often when someone has a normal name and then it you get a line like an ADR line of you still have to kill Darren. which just sounds absolutely benol. >> The the hiding a child thing was pretty good. >> Oh, because they hid because they hid that kid. >> They hid that kid cuz Orman put that kid in the >> in the PR coffin somewhere. Well, he's not dead, but he just hid him somewhere.

>> The real one. >> Yeah. >> Yeah. But also, it's not that hard when only nine people have blonde hair. >> You just have to get some bleach. >> Yes. But it's like he's also playing on the fact that Allison hasn't seen this kid in years. So, it's not like he's hoping that people don't realize like what he's done until it's too late. >> It's also he he's really showing deep ball knowledge cuz he also knows that people haven't watched or thought about the show in two years and I don't even remember how many kids she has.

>> So, when a blonde kid, I was like, "Oh, guess there's another one." And that's him. He's just he's just a >> shar like a little bit of a a runner for fans out there who are like, "What?" I think he plays a different role in the text. M >> I don't think his actions are different, but I think he's a little bit more present. or at least people have a better understanding of what's going on with him. And I think that they were like, "We haven't cast him yet." You know, like so it was sort of strange.

And there's a couple of characters that it doesn't seem like they're going to introduce because they they've sort of >> maneuvered things so that they can do away with certain certain characters. But we'll see. >> Like Bob, >> yeah, >> Stevie, >> Christopher Sanchez. I I also did want to say like in in in the hopes that we can unite one of the more popular shows or worlds we cover on the show with one of the more divisive. I did enjoy Top Chef's King's Landing.

>> Which one's divisive? >> Well, I feel like sometimes people are like I'm I rock with these guys when they talk about obscure ass spy shows on Britbox, but the fact that they devote 10 weeks every year to cover season 23 of Top Chef might >> and argue about it as passionately as anything in the world. >> It's the only thing I care about. that's the only thing keeping me on to be honest. but on earth the truly the King's Landing episode of Top Chef where all the noblemen were there for the tasting and then they brought they but they did this they did the fine dining like they all placed it at the same time and everyone kind of recoiled like most people do at fine dining restaurants these days.

>> Tom would have been like, "Did you mean to caramelize the rat?" >> Yeah. Well, Tom would have been okay with the rat, but there was a little okra on the plate and he didn't like it. >> Right. No, you just didn't need another starch. I thought that too many starches on the rat. I I >> it solved two problems at once. >> Rats and the rich >> and needing a needing a protein for the evening. Yeah.

>> Didn't need a protein. I I enjoyed it. I I like the line I'm a wash with dilemmas and uncertainties. That's just

being alive in America, brother. >> Works us. Let's talk a little bit about Star City, which we usually save for the very end because I think we assume >> it's a not an acquired taste, but a niche offering. And and you know, it remains >> in and around like the bottom of the top 10 of Apple, >> which we don't know what that means.

>> I don't know what that means. I would like it to be in the the top five or the top three because I want it to be renewed because I want to keep watching this show. This was an interesting episode because it was a true testament to just my deep pleasure that I get from watching it. >> this had a year a year time jump to start. >> I don't think I think it was a it was into the next year. It was referred to as last summer. I think the implication based on the end of the episode was that it's been about nine months.

>> Okay. I believe you >> gotcha. and it's worth noting that I think it's becoming a little bit harder to avoid if you're reading about this show, the for all mankind character echoes, which I didn't know were as as extensive, but I think it's pretty cool and interesting. >> this was a very melancholy episode of television. Yeah. you know, like a a real like this is >> this is what a a sort of >> authoritarian regime leaves behind in its wake for the people who try to participate in different parts of government and different parts of society and like get broken because they >> they try to fly a little too too close to the desperate sun.

>> and I and in that it was great. I thought that the it essentially followed the same rhythm or rising action as the previous episode. So instead of and this is spoilers for the season of Star City and for this episode, but instead of the loss of the Veneira crew, we got the possible rescue of them or the possible >> signs of life. I still thought it was gorgeous the rock man enough playing as they as they break down these algorithms and and start you know doing secret channels to Anastasia up in this in the space station >> but also it's like there was a not insignificant montage of beautiful classical piano music while a man wrote algebra with a pencil.

>> Yes, >> thank you Apple. Like truly like that I cannot believe they got that through. I don't know how they pitched it. I don't know what it appeared like in the script, but that's that's not even the first thing to go. That's the thing where you're like in the room you're like it would be beautiful, but we will never have beautiful things in this life. And it was great. >> Again, I feel like I'm a broken record, but I I've said that there's been moments on this show that really play the espionage greatest hits. I thought Arena going to going to Ruscova's apartment, that brief look into her life of like kind of wearing this sad tracksuit >> and having something in the oven and then her revealing to Ruscoa that like she's been tasked with bugging her and she's like, "You should bug me." And then we're also going to like run a run a double on on Petroski who's taken over Star City. was awesome. you know, even if you've seen it before. And >> it was choosing who you work for and why and who's running who and how no one ever everything is an op. I will say just as a sidebar, last week you were wondering if Rossova was veering a little too English when she yelled, "Sort it out." I think discovering her in her flat dressed like she was in the Verve in 1997 was a real tell as to where her her allegiances lie.

>> Just listening to Urban Hymns. >> You caught me at a moment. You caught me at a very bucket hat time of my life. >> Out that the drugs don't work. >> Truly, it was beautiful. Oh, please continue your talk more. I just my my headline from this episode is >> Joseph Davies. he plays Sergey and >> he obviously gets like a kind of cool moment at the end of the episode, but his reaction >> Yes. Thank you.

>> to the entire process of >> trying to apply for a professorship somewhere like at a college somewhere. >> Mhm. which would obviously be a step down financially for him, but would be a break or an escape from Star City where he has essentially been demoted to the sub sub basement and they keep moving his stapler, you know. >> and then finding out not only that his apartment has been burgled or roused, but that the guy who was enticing him essentially to make this application was probably spying on him or working against him. And Davies's reaction >> Yeah.

>> to finding his apartment in this state because the apartment is really the only like his like cooking and his music and his books. >> It's his private world >> is the only thing that he has got that is like for pleasure in this life. >> I thought was like really legitimately like heartbreaking and a beautiful piece of acting. And he's he's probably the fifth or sixth build actor on this. And that character actually exists in the for all mankind universe. So, I think for some viewers, they're like, "This is extraordinary to get to see this guy as a young person." And apparently Davies's performance echoes the older actor's performance as Sergey as he gets older.

But I thought it was lovely and in an episode where a lot of the main faces, Tanya, the cosminauts, the chief designer are largely offscreen. Yes. >> He really stepped in. >> I love that you shouted him out, highlighted him. I agree. He was his performance is is brilliant and it's understated and it does what the best acting can do because we who have likely hopefully never had our inner sanctum, our private lives like tossed like that. He you could imagine >> this guy's got a lot of zen.

>> Oh no. Found some more. >> How old are these lozenges? >> Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2 on 4K. He wasn't fronting about physical media. >> He really he's really about this life as they quietly let themselves out. >> I think that our gut supposition about how we would feel would be one of of anger or sadness or about the mess or or whatever our natural pathways of emotion are. What he communicated in that moment was such deep indignity.

>> Yeah. He puts his hand over his mouth to like stop him from stop himself from actually expressing an emotion. And the camera captures the broken vinyl records and and it is a violation and it is just one indignity stacked on top of another. I only have this >> and you've put me in prison already and you've stripped me of my work and of my purpose and you've stopped listening to me and you've removed isolated me from my colleagues and now you've taken this was beautiful and and and the performance was so gripping that I did I hadn't like googled him before and realized like Adam Ngitis he was briefly in Chernobyl but where we had seen him before was Andor >> where he's one of the prisoners on Narina >> and >> and I I I'm not saying that like although I feel Like basically this podcast is constantly in service of this idea that Tony Gilroy is uniquely able to draw out nuance performances from British stage actors. But this performance and the role the character plays on this show is cut from the same cloth as to what Tony did with Andor where it's like private lives of >> public facing genre storytelling is it's an incredible feat. Do you think Andy Burnham should just cut the dole and just say we've been able to outsource funding for the arts to Tony Gilroy who will continue to put British stage actors in giant sci-fi epics.

>> I would bring it up but I think Andy Bernham's too busy doing would be viral Instagram things where he's

like they're like stone roses or urban hymns. That was he was asked that stone. >> I think he's calling Carmine Infantino about Quanza's red card >> and about and about Martian Manhunter's role in the original Crisis on Infinite Earths. Yeah, I thought that was incredible. I thought it was incredibly beautiful and I and I I would say to your original >> take on the episode, I think this may have been my favorite episode of the series to date. I thought it was >> It's not just that I thought the tone was so elegiac and interesting. It's it's of a piece of the conversation we were just having about House of the Dragon, which is like when you have a show that has a mandate in the sense that like the it was pitched and sold as a companion piece, as a spin-off, as a way to back >> for a lot of people like you know how this story kind of ends because we were already into the the I don't know like the 20th century 21st century on. Yeah.

So, so, so I think that when you accept a job or you or you're even the one who pitches it, like the larger assignment is manifest and it's and and servicing that takes up reasonably so quite a lot of your creative oxygen and your practical budget. So, finding the little pockets and the little space to make something that is special and stands on its own is even more precious and even more rare. And last week when I was talking about the show, I was saying I did feel a little bit of for all mankind mission creep. Not to diss that show, which I have regrets that I've not kept up on, but my feeling that kind of kept me out of it was that there was this inevitable drum beat of history, history, history, and it was telling us about it as it was breathlessly trying to catch up to what it wanted to say.

And last week there was I had that sense of like, well, now we're on to this next mission. Now we got to do this. this the fact that they took a beat that for a show that was notable for in episodes five and six picking up the action seconds after the previous episode ended like Arena in Tanya's apartment which was surprising to me that they did that but it felt reasonable and interest and not just reasonable it felt exciting >> that after this incredible cliffhanger of a of a crescendo of the previous episode that we begin months later it's just a it is a really masterful use >> they also just sewed it by having Rsova's report kind of basically yada yada what happened. You know, >> it's a masterful use of off-speed pitches, let's say. There you go, dog.

You know, of like, oh, now, oh, something has changed. And again, like I there was not a single moment in watching this episode that I thought the Venus mission was lost because these are three two no with Chadia joining it. I mean, she was not initially in the cast, but the other two are two of the leads of the show. And I'm not saying the show is so sentimental that it can't kill main characters, especially as it turns towards the 21st century, but that story wasn't done. You don't have >> what's his name?

>> Sasha, >> you don't not just Sasha, the other guy. >> Negatus. >> No, wait. >> Dalia. >> Sasha. You don't have Thank you. >> Sasha's Anastasia's husband. >> You don't have them fall in love accidentally and then leave Earth without some resolution. Yes. So, I knew they were coming back. The question is how do we get there? And I just think it's remarkable when you have creators who are like let's see let's solve this problem and see it as an opportunity. I thought it was totally pleasurable to watch.

>> Were you psyched to get a little George Bush cameo? >> I am always wondering >> what the Bush family is up to in an alternate history where you know they can sort of shake free of right and left you know and just be

good sense versus no sense. You know >> apparently it's an underrated presidency according to historians. I wonder if in For all mankind, George W. just stays as the Rangers owner >> and then becomes a painter.

>> Yeah. >> I mean, be great. >> Hopefully, we're going to have Matt and Ben, who created the show, on if hopefully this week. and I unfortunately won't be here for that episode because I'm going to be in Toronto, but Andy is going to hopefully be talking to those guys this week. >> Yeah. I Is this time for some other housekeeping? >> Sure. Well, I think that if if we are able to to line this up, >> this is exactly where Ka likes to keep all of our important show announcements at minute 52 about Star City.

>> You guys clip this, right? This is going to be good. that we will hold the episode till Friday when the season finale comes up. >> Yes. >> But also, I was going to I had an idea. >> Let me know how you feel about this because you're going to be traveling. >> So, really, I could just do it. >> You could do whatever you want, >> but I don't feel comfortable with that much freedom. Do you want me to drop questions from space and hope that they land?

>> Hope they land at the right place, but all the other podcasts find the questions and they get mad. I wondered if it would be useful to do a prompt if there I don't know if anybody cares about this stuff but if there's any like super specific like industry type questions of like working in the minds questions for me >> those guys or for them >> no or just like we could do an all >> ask Andy anything >> kind of is that I but within reason >> do you do whatever you want to do >> but you know what I mean because because I don't know maybe that's interesting to people >> yeah there's there's some actually like there are fair amount of question for Andy's in our inbox.

>> Okay. Well, I'm happy to tackle that. >> Where's your favorite piece of steamed fish you've ever had, you know? >> Well, that's a great question. Cafe Deco is amazing. Western's laundry, though, actually often has it's kind of deep in Arsenal country now, which is feeling a little iffy for me. >> Oh, do you want to announce your your Tottenham Hotspur lifelong fan? >> I don't need to announce something that's been part of me from the very beginning.

>> I think an Ask Andy Anything pod would be >> Will you slip in some questions that have been lingering? no. >> Just things you wanted to know. >> I got I think I know the whole story. >> Do you want to talk about the agency at all? I think I wonder whether or not like if you want I know you're up through three, right? >> Yeah. >> I am through five. We both think this season is extraordinary. We have had somewhat similar conversations as we've chipped away at this second season and they've basically been like it's funny to watch this very very very thrilling and expertly madeensive >> like cover song of of a song we adore and I think that that has disoriented us but I will say that I am fully loving the season. I would like to ask you a question. M >> is any of the methodical way that we are going about this >> tied not only to the fact that somewhat we know the story in the broadstrokes because we watch the bureau but also >> that Paramount has not announced it season 3 renewal.

>> It's it's not just that Paramount hasn't announced a renewal. It's that they dropped the entire season over a

weekend and which is not what they did with season 1. And correct me if I'm wrong, I have not seen any press. I don't mean like I haven't seen like wraparound ads on buses. I have had the people involved in the show. >> I do not have any grand theory of this, but I will say that I have seen on social media and various places a kind of wave of Michael F. Bender on the hardest scene from Steve Jobs. And I was like, why the hell is that a blog post?

And I'm like, oh, because they're asking >> Oh, he did do an interview about it. Well, no. They're doing the junkets, but I think so much of junket stuff now is a guy going in and he's got Katherine Wat and Michael Fastbender. He's like, I have to ask them about these five movies that they did. Like I can ask a couple of agency questions, but then it's like when you were playing David and Prometheus, did you think that you were supposed to and that stuff all then gets aggregated, but then the editors of these sites or these algorithms can just be like, "Nobody's watching the agency."

we can just publish all this Prometheus and Steve Jobs stuff. Now, I don't think that's not like a conspiracy or anything against the show, but I do think it's something interesting about >> it used to be kind of like you would go to these things and you would be like I have 10 minutes and I can be like what did you why did you what drew you to this role and all that stuff and now it's like I have 10 minutes hold a dog try a hot wing and tell me about these three movies that have nothing to do with the agency. So, I don't know if it's working for them or not, but like I do find that >> I have anecdotally heard from people out there. Yeah. Who are like, >> "Yeah, like I don't like starting shows that aren't going to finish."

>> Oh, for sure. We've heard that. Yeah. >> you know, this is a dense, complex, adult thriller >> that I think is hitting its stride and clearly was a massive investment to get Gear and Wright and Wat and all these people to do it. to say nothing of the British actors who were all sometimes playing Americans who were >> also they shot the show in London, Kenya, and Morocco. >> Yeah. Like that's like 2019 money.

>> It's wild. >> and we have the merger coming and we have >> no definitive news yet and it's been five weeks. It's been a minute since couple weeks since this came out. Do you feel like I am slightly to blame because when we had the entire cast of the agency available to us and I only asked Katherine Wat 10 minutes of questions about her role in the HBO Avantguard theater show The Third Day, >> I think that might have contributed to some some soft numbers.

>> I don't regret it. Fascinating show. I think that's really well observed. I think I I >> I I think this is an interesting conversation in relationship to Star City, too, which also has not been officially renewed to my knowledge. I know that Matt and Ben created the show, talked about like we're not going to do decade jumping. >> We're going to keep it in the 70s >> and tell the story of Star City specifically and not get into the Mars >> like what what's it like for a Russian like on the other side of a scene that you've already seen in For Mankind. But I do think that that there like it it would be a mistake to just say like we have the road map for a five or six season show.

Presumably Michael F. Bender committed to that going into this. >> Yeah. >> I I mean I think well a couple things. I think it would just because Le Well more than more than a few things. Leure is one of the great

television shows of all time. Everyone should check it out. The way that each season builds the world out while also diving deeper into the possibilities already presented by the characters we thought we knew is extraordinary and just worth watching whether you love TV, want to make it, anything. So, the thought of assembling this kind of Avengers and then not getting to do that level of work, knowing what could happen for Jeffrey Wright's character, for >> John Maggaro's character, >> like that is a real shame because it's the best of new TV in the sense of its ambition and old TV in the sense of god, I love that guy. I didn't even notice him for two years.

>> that's a real shame. I'll say that the my interesting experience with this season is that I am finding it incredibly I mean I love the story because I love the story. I love watching Richard Gear in a TV show. He's just cooking. I find I'm finding it incredibly engaging both because the story is engaging and because of the the pace of the storytelling. I am finding it a little >> You're also passionate about ethical diamond mining. Thank you. Well, and and accurate South African accent work, which frankly has been absent from our screens for some time since >> perhaps before Blood Diamond, you know, who knows?

>> Certainly before Blood Diamond. So, congrats to Michael Fazbender for bringing that back. >> I have found it a little hamfisted at times this season. >> Okay. both in the sense of like the John Maggaro character Owen like being bad at doing spy stuff and that's sort of textual like he's not good at it but then also the people around him being like I just trust you for some reason Steve let's go to the Central African Republic that's like we got to we got to get the show on the road but also that was weaker to me some of the other things that are going on >> and and weaker to you than the bureau version of it >> for sure I think the other thing that that frustrates me slightly I do enjoy the Butterworth's writing an American cast talking about American cultural perspective.

>> What's up, Snowflake? >> Yeah, it's like you libtard snowflake. Like, >> why why don't you listen to me talk about the English national team for 10 minutes? Then we can see how we're square. There are moments that I just feel like are missed opportunities, but the sort of missed opportunities that could become gold over the course of a longer run. Like, like Jeffrey Wright is so he's such a brilliant actor and he's funny. this show is not written so much for him to be funny. So that when he gets like a small crumb, like the scene when Fast Bender asks him to give him control of Gremlin, the agent they're running in Iran, and he goes, "Let me think about it. I thought about it. That's funny." And like I wish we could have a little bit more of that.

That's the No, but him he makes it funny. >> He does. And the show is written. >> And I love the whole like the Katherine W pulling the guy into the one. >> That was awesome. >> Blind spot and him then going and getting the device. Like of course it's a blind spot. Yeah. >> I love that. I just w I wish there was more room for that. But I sometimes feel like that that's the kind of like spontaneity that comes from more fluid productions as opposed to something that is so like we have this much time. and we are doing it on this budget. We have this blueprint and we have these very busy screenwriting brothers and we are going to execute.

>> Yeah. >> sometimes I appreciate that efficiency in terms of >> trying to kill one of them. >> It's possible. We don't know what's going on offscreen. Anyway, all this is to say we will circle back. We will cover the rest of >> So we have Thursday's show will be or Friday's show release will probably be Star City finale related and some

Ask Andy anything stuff. I then think you're out the following Monday. >> I am. We have a lot of travel this summer.

>> We do. And I'll do some exciting work that day. >> You should you should do an you should do a follow-up. >> But maybe maybe next Thursday. Are you back next Thursday? We can finish the agency. >> Do you think we should would you want to spend some of Monday factchecking my answers to the questions about me? And just being like that was a lie. >> No, I think you're like a dazzling broadcaster and I'm sure you'll really do a great job with whatever you decide to do on Friday and wherever you decide to take the show going forward.

>> Thank you. >> Thanks to Ka, Kai, and Sarah. We are going to wrap up there. we have explained the short-term future of this show. >> Sounds so dark. >> About twothirds of the way into the podcast. so just go and scroll on back if you want and we'll talk to you on later this week with some more Star City stuff and some more exciting television. >> Are you bullish on the long-term future of this podcast?

>> Sure. Wow. >> Sure. >> Wow. Okay. Great. Bye, guys.