

## [Transcript] The News Agents / Why is Liz Truss provoking China?

This is a Global Player Original Podcast.

If you become a member of that esteemed club, the National Union of ex-prime ministers, you know there is one golden rule.

It's that when you're abroad, you don't disagree with British foreign policy or go to places that are too sensitive for British foreign policy.

It seems that one of those members didn't get the memo.

We know what happens to the environment or to world health under totalitarian regimes that don't tell the truth.

You can't believe a word they say.

They have already made their choice about their strategy.

The only choice we have is do we appease and accommodate that strategy or do we take action now to prevent conflict?

That was the MP for South West Norfolk, one Liz Truss.

And she's in Taiwan at the moment and she's made a pretty extensive speech about the need to take Taiwan's fears seriously in the face of China aggression.

And the question is, on whose behalf is she speaking?

The Taiwanese people, the British governments or Liz Truss?

Welcome to the News Agents.

The News Agents.

It's John.

It's Emily.

And it's Lewis.

We're going to be talking to the Oscar-winning actress, Rachel Weiss.

We will be talking about life in America.

We will be talking about abortion, reproductive rights because of a new TV series that she's done.

We'll also be talking about James Bond because her husband has just stopped being James Bond.

But we're going to start in Taiwan.

I mean, we're not in Taiwan.

But drumroll, Liz Truss is.

And as you may know, Taiwan is the kind of center of global right now because Beijing claims Taiwan as a province of China.

Xi Jinping, the president, has not ruled out using force to get to where he wants, i.e. reunification.

And the people of Taiwan, the government of Taiwan reject this prospect of Chinese rule.

And really, if we start to see conflict, then the fallout both economically and militarily is devastating, huge for the whole world.

And the good news is, is that Liz Truss is there.

You always think with Liz Truss that the kind of phrase, there is no situation so bad that a few well-chosen words from Liz Truss can't make worse.

Yeah, well, we should talk about this speech.

It is, of course, the latest foray that Liz Truss has made back into public life in British politics.

Of course, she does remain an MP.

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And we are in this really unusual situation, which almost never happens, where Rishi Sunak has not just won, but three former prime ministers from his own party on his back benches. And Liz Truss, obviously, barely out of office, barely in office, but nonetheless, touring the world and making, I mean, we were talking about it earlier, I was trying to think of an analogous situation, a parallel, a former prime minister of the UK wading in into such a controversial foreign policy topic.

I mean, just to rewind a little bit, just in case you're not following it, Taiwan is one of the major centres of geopolitical tension right now between the United States and China. China wanting to reclaim Taiwan, the US, as it has done for decades, having this sort of strategic ambiguity about whether it would defend Taiwan if China decided to invade. And right into that steps, not contempt with her record on the British economy, steps Liz Truss, former foreign secretary and former prime minister, issuing the most bellicose language about China and the Taiwanese situation.

Well, she's poking the bear, but to what ends, yeah, or the dragon, whichever kind of animal, mythical or real that you want to choose, for no apparent deliberate strategic ends other than she knows it will rile the Chinese, it will play to a certain amount of the conservative base, who are becoming increasingly synophobic, and it will go down very well in America. But the former speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, also went to Taiwan, and that led to Chinese military exercises, which were pretty scary over Taiwan, literally over Taiwan. It made life much more difficult in the White House.

And do we think that the Chinese are going to take the views, oh, well, Liz Truss, she's just an ex-prime minister, she's nobody, they will probably take the view that Liz Truss is there on behalf of His Majesty's government, and see that as a serious provocation. And even synophobes on the conservative back benches, and I'm thinking of Alicia Kairns, the chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House of Commons, saying that this is Instagram diplomacy on the part of Liz Truss, she's going there to get a nice photo. So I've read the speech in full now, and I think if you remove what you know about Liz Truss and her pension for Instagram, and her economic failures as our own prime minister, and you just look at the speech, actually, it is extraordinary important, and it's hard to disagree with a lot of what she says.

And what she does is she actually draws the link between China and Russia, and I think this is at the heart of what she's doing.

She says, you only need to look at recent statements by European Chinese diplomat, repudiating the independent existence of the Baltic states to see these theatres are inextricably linked.

And in a sense, what she's saying is, we took our eye off the ball with Putin, we didn't get there on Crimea in 2014, we are not going to make the same mistake with China and Taiwan. And I know what you're going to say, you're going to say it's not for her to do it.

No, no, no, I'm not going to say that.

All I would say is that if she can't do this now, when can she do it?

Because she couldn't do it as foreign secretary because it wasn't British policy.

She couldn't do it as prime minister because it would have thrown all the toys out of the China pram.

We get that.

And in a funny way, if she now wants to be the Cassandra, which I think she does, saying

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you've got to wake up to how perilous a situation Taiwan is in right now, why shouldn't she?

My point is not that she shouldn't make a speech about Taiwan and the position it's in and the threats that are being posed by China's increasing militarisation.

I think that's all absolutely legitimate territory for an ex-prime minister to go down.

It's going to Taiwan to make the speech that is the controversial bit.

That is the bit that is going to provoke China.

China broke off all communications with the US after Nancy Pelosi's visit.

My understanding is that when there was the whole episode with the spy balloon that was shot down after it had been over Montana and wherever it had been, there were no lines of communication over between, now I'm not suggesting that Britain is anything like as important as the United States of America.

But we are members of the Security Council, one of the five nations that are permanent members of the Security Council.

For Liz Truss, a former prime minister to step foot in Taiwan is massively controversial.

And I was with senior foreign office people last night.

They were aghast.

Taiwan is playing a really odd game at the moment internally because it sent the leading politician of its opposition party recently to Beijing.

The Guomindang is sort of seen as the more, I don't know, loyalist, royalist, whatever sort of party.

And they went to try and calm the waters, let's say.

And China, we have seen, surround the island in recent weeks with what is meant to be,

I think they'd call it a sort of trade blockade or something that looks as if it could be what we used to call a domestic.

It isn't.

The moment you start assuming that Taiwan's problems are China's problems and not everyone else's problems, I think we've missed a trick.

The thing is, though, I mean, I think that you can imagine a situation there or have been on our occasions when incumbent governments send their former leaders, one can think of US presidents doing this, for example, to go and say things and do things with their permission that they themselves cannot say, which send a signal.

I think the problem here is that Liz Truss is clearly doing this without the sanction and permission of the British government and the Foreign Office.

Were this all part of a very quiet attempt to set a very considered attempt to send some signals to the Chinese, that would be one thing.

I think the problem is about what Liz Truss's motives are.

And although I've no doubt that she believes what she's saying about China, she has to realise it.

She has real responsibility as a former British prime minister.

She wants to re-enter public life.

There could be plenty of time for that.

This is a deeply tense situation.

And you have got to also, I've got no time for the Chinese government and the Chinese Communist Party, but you also do have to consider the legitimacy of how they might see this.

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We all know China historically has deep grievances about Britain and the British Empire, the Boxer Rebellion, Britain's role in the 19th century, what they see is the carve-up of China, et cetera, et cetera.

And here you have a former British prime minister essentially off her own back going to Taiwan and saying these things.

I think if it is not part of a more concerted and considered attempt to extract and do some real diplomacy about this, then don't do it.

We've done the appeasement thing for a long time.

I used to live in Hong Kong.

I used to spend a lot of time in China between 1992, 1998, when it was all about making China the most favoured nation, all about giving it better trading status, all about helping it with the Olympics to get round its human rights record.

It was all about bringing it into the family.

That didn't work.

And Xi Jinping is a very, very different leader to Deng Xiaoping, who was still alive in the 80s and 90s.

And I just think there comes a time when you just go, oh, hang on a second.

If you look around the countries of the former Eastern Bloc, Lithuania has made a deliberate strategy.

Lithuania has said, do you know what?

I don't want to be bullied by China anymore.

And they've just gone down the Taiwan route.

They are trading brilliantly now with Taiwan.

They have cut China out of what they're doing.

Their economy is thriving.

And Lystras references this in her speech.

She says, it's not impossible to say, yes, I know we want to work with China on climate change.

Yes, I know we want to work with them because they're a big global power.

But actually, it can't all be one way.

And it has all been one way for 30 years.

But she sets up this dichotomy where she says there's a choice between accommodation and appeasement or confrontation.

I think you can argue that is just strategically wrong, that there is a third option, which is containment.

And you can make an argument that all these predictions about this was going to be the Chinese century, that are proving not to be the case.

Lots of people.

But Xi Jinping is not into containment.

That's the point.

Well, as we know, he said that by the end of this decade, he wants to take Taiwan back.

When I was living in Hong Kong, Martin Leo, senior Democratic sort of Senator politician said, don't worry about Hong Kong.

They're not interested.

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Don't worry about Macau.

They're not interested.

The big story is Taiwan.

That is when the China family will be complete.

This has always been the end goal.

And that's where she is right now.

Yes, of course.

And that is not the argument.

I suppose the argument as well, and it's something we talk about quite often on the news agents is the politicians who fail to differentiate between tactics and strategy.

And it looks like a tactical move on her part to get some attention for her China argument.

But strategically, is it smart?

Is it smart to do what she has done?

Is it going to make the life any easier for the British government or the US administration to try and work out a path with China?

They are still pushing Rishi, isn't she?

I mean, what she's trying to push Rishi, she's pleasing her American, presumably donors or backers in a big way, funders.

And she's pushing not just the bear or the dragon, but Rishi Sunak and saying, what are you doing about this?

But there is.

I mean, the point is, and that is always with trust, she talks in such black and white terms.

The fact of the matter is, and Emily, you're totally right, everything you're saying about Xi Jinping and containment and so on.

But look, policymakers like Biden and Sunak have got to reckon with the fact that, A, yes, we have got to prevent a third world war starting in Taiwan, that is clearly in no one's interest.

And secondly, also an economic war.

I mean, you think we've seen what happens when we unplug Russia from the global economy.

We see the inflationary pressures it's caused.

Russia is a tiny percentage of the world economy by comparison to China.

You want to see real inflation?

See what happens when we unplug China from global supply chains.

Maybe that's something we've got to do over the long term.

Or when you take Taiwan out of the semiconductor market.

100%.

So these are, this is not a black and white, absolute zero sum game here.

This is a delicate, delicate balance.

And as John said, I just think tactically, I'm not entirely sure who Liz Truss thinks she's doing any favours for other than Liz Truss.

We'll be back after the break with Rachael Weiss.

This is The News Agents.

You know, occasionally we like to invite our superfans to be part of The News Agents, come into the studio, make themselves at home.

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We found a superfan.

She's actually an Oscar winning actress, Rachael Weiss, and she listens to us every day. And she's just appeared in this extraordinary series on Amazon called Dead Ringers, where she plays not one but two people at the same time.

Rach, hello.

It's lovely to see you.

Oh, it's really lovely to be here.

I am a proper, like, proper superfan, so I'm very excited to be in the studio and seeing how it all happens.

Annoyingly.

The first question she asked was, where's Lewis?

Yeah, I know.

We're not going to talk.

We're not going to talk.

Well, hang on.

There's a bit, another bit we've got to reveal.

And that is that I knew that you two knew each other.

I've just listened to a conversation where you were talking about playing on each other's swings when you were children.

So you've known each other, actually, for a very, very long time.

Yeah, since we were some very small children, yeah.

We actually started the hamburger newspaper.

I sort of think that journalism's loss was Hollywood's gain.

But you know, we could have had a great future together with the hamburger newspaper.

It had a beautiful design on the cover with a bun up high and up low and all the different topics that were going to be within the newspaper.

You know, the lettuce was news and the tomato was fashion and it was multi-layered journal.

And was she bossy?

Was she bossy?

I'm just asking.

Not that I'm suggesting that in any way she can be, but...

I think we were mutually bossy.

We were just...

I didn't feel bossed by...

Did you feel...

No, God, no.

No, I think we were mutual boss.

This is sort of therapy now.

Right, okay.

Stand the chairs.

Right, we'll get on.

I thought Dead Ringers was amazing.

And I mean, it was a David Cronenberg film from the 1980s that Jeremy Irons had played, the role of twins, and you play the role of twins in this series.

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Let's just listen to a bit of the show now.

Oh, okay, yeah.

What is this?

Hello.

What are you doing?

Trying to get us the money earlier.

These are pie charts and bar graphs.

Did you make these yourself?

Hello, mantles.

Feel like I'm losing you.

How is that?

Can you plan on using this, you nerd?

Mantles.

Stop it.

Oh, my God, you're still just that 14-year-old wanking into her algebra homework.

Uh...

That didn't happen.

Basically, it did, but it didn't.

No, it could have.

Idiot!

And when you're studying them, when you're coming to the roles, do you feel like you're treating it completely separately?

I mean, each person, I guess, is a different character, but you have to, what, film every scene twice?

How does that work?

Well, I do film one side and then the other side, so we learnt to start with Elliot, because she sets the pace of the scene, and Beverly will just fit into the gaps that Elliot leaves her, which is kind of psychologically apt for the characters.

But, yeah, I mean, studying them, I had to just sit in my office and learn them both separately.

In my mind, I always thought that two people were going to play them.

Obviously, I'm not insane.

I knew that I was going to play them, but it felt like they were just two totally separate people.

Two totally separate roles.

Totally separate, yeah, but who are codependent on each other.

And was there somebody sitting opposite you?

Yes.

Did you have somebody sitting?

Yes.

A stunt double or whatever, kind of, to be...

I had a brilliant acting partner called Kitty Hawthorne, who had just graduated from drama school in London, and, yes, she was Elliot and then Beverly, opposite me.

And then in episode four, she plays the mother of the twins in the 1970s in the flashbacks,

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so Kitty can be seen in the show.

Rachel, it's hard to avoid some of the political context of dead ringers, because, of course, you know, you're talking about reproductive rights and the rest of it.

There was a lot of criticism or a lot of squeamishness from people, saying, watching it, thinking, oh, my God, there's so much blood and gore.

And yet, in America, mass killers, serial killers, are portrayed routinely.

There are mass shootings that seem to be too appenny in America at the moment.

Yeah, I think we've gotten very used to watching portrayals of men who tie up, strangle, dismember, rape women.

And that's just a kind of ordinary TV show or, you know, Silence of the Lambs.

In the 90s, a man who was thrown women into a pit and was fattening them up so he could then take off their skins and make a new body for himself.

I mean, I think there's a vast cinematic language in many different tones about violence, about death, about shooting, about legs coming off, blood spurting.

We're so used to that.

I'm talking about now in fiction.

You were mentioning the reality of America, but in the fictional representations.

We're just completely used to that.

Murder, death, violence, gore, spurting blood, young women being tied up, rape beaten.

But seeing a baby's head come out of a woman either through a c-section through her belly or from her vagina is, as you mentioned, you found it like gory.

There is blood involved there, but that's just the female experience.

I mean, for women that do have babies, that's their experience.

Were you surprised that it caused that people remarked on this,

given the levels of tolerance that there are for so many aspects of violence in other forms?

I think I probably was surprised because I was just telling this story about the female experience and it didn't seem to have been heightened or overdramatized.

There isn't music to make it more dramatic.

It's quite simple and photographed in quite a straightforward way.

I was surprised.

The women having a miscarriage, I've had a miscarriage, so suddenly you see blood coming out of your body.

These are just all part of a female experience of being alive.

We're not used to it.

I think we're not used to seeing any of those things being represented cinematically or fictionally.

Maybe this is breaking some new ground this show.

Was there pushback from Amazon or from any of the...

No.

Amazon from Alice Birch wrote The Pilot and it said on page five or whatever some tight close-up shots of babies being born.

There was always going to be that montage sequence.

It's all prosthetic. None of it's real. It's not documentary.

It looks incredibly real.

Some people have thought they were actually real babies being born.

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They're not.

But Amazon were right behind us all the way.

They knew that this was a groundbreaking area, that this hadn't been shown before and they were very interested in it.

We said right from the beginning, this is what we're interested in.

They went, we're on board.

So no pushback at all.

So that's probably why I was surprised.

Because we didn't get any pushback.

So I was surprised when people were like, oh my god, it's so gory.

I was like, well, it's just five minutes at the beginning.

And did it feel very personal to you?

Yes.

Yes.

In a sense, just personal.

I'm a mom. I have given birth.

When I had to imagine myself as an OBGYN,

so I had to become an obstetrician and see the babies being born from a different perspective, not from coming from my body, but coming from other women's bodies.

And I spent a lot of time with obstetricians and shadowed them and watched babies being born with them.

But yes, it was, of course, personal as a woman.

Yeah, definitely.

Rachel, one of the things that always puzzled me about America and attitudes was the pro-life lobby, i.e. anti-abortion,

also tended to be the most keen on capital punishment.

I know. Both ends of life have different rules.

I know. It's very strange.

Have you been able to rationalize that from the time that you lived in America?

I mean, also, it's a gun lobby.

Yeah. Well, children, they have to be born.

There's going to be no free health care for them.

There's no free schooling for children under the age of five.

And now, every day, there seems to be more and more of a chance that you might get shot by an assault rifle at school.

But that's not answering your question.

You're asking the question about, like, the government can choose to say you deserve to die at the beginning of life.

A woman has no choice.

Yeah. How do you rationalize that?

They're like just contradictions, aren't they?

I would think so.

How would you rationalize them?

It's very impossible.

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I think it's very difficult to say, on one hand,  
you have no control over your body, yet we can sanction whether someone lives or dies.  
Yeah, take away.  
You're bringing up a daughter now in America, which might have...  
She's in Camden right now.  
She's safe in Camden.  
But I mean, if America becomes a country where a woman cannot, you know,  
under federal law, get an abortion,  
would you want to bring up your daughter there?  
Would you say, yeah, well, this is fine. We'll get used to it.  
Laws are laws.  
No, I wouldn't. I wouldn't want to.  
I wouldn't want to, yeah.  
It's tough, isn't it? It's a big change.  
Yeah, no, it is. It is a huge, huge...  
Yeah, huge change.  
Yeah.  
I mean, it is the only area in America where,  
as we all know, the right in America,  
they want to deregulate absolutely everything except for women's bodies.  
It seems to be the only place that the government are totally interfering.  
And guns.  
Guns and... guns and uteruses.  
Sounds like the name of a really bad rock band.  
Guns and uteruses. Yeah.  
I mean, was that part of what attracted you to do this?  
I mean, I think, I mean,  
women's bodies have always been politicised,  
and we discovered and learnt about all of these things  
as we started to work with the writers  
on the six hours of television.  
Initially, it wasn't like, oh, this is a really rife political area,  
but it certainly became one.  
Were you happy that it's a psychological study as well of twin sisters?  
Yeah.  
It's also bigger than that, it felt, to me.  
Yes.  
We learnt so much about the system.  
Yeah.  
In America, it is one of the most expensive places to give birth  
and one of the most dangerous, which is quite a staggering fact.  
I mean, the thing from my time there was,  
if you have got money, you can get the most unbelievable medical care  
with the most cutting-edge science.

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And if you haven't, it's kind of, you know,  
it's much more haphazard what you're going to get.  
Yeah. I think that's right.  
When you chat about a series, do you talk about the end?  
I mean, would you...?  
We can now.  
Can we?  
Yeah.  
Yeah.  
So we don't have to say spoiler alert.  
Oh, no. Well, we can.  
We can.  
Let's say it.  
Spoiler alert.  
Yeah.  
Spoiler alert.  
We can talk about it, yeah.  
Go on.  
Yeah.  
Tell us how...  
Because I watched it and then I had to re-watch it,  
because I was like, I'm not quite sure I've...  
I know what has happened, yeah.  
Elliot has pushed this lady over the penthouse,  
over her penthouse when she's high on drugs with her,  
and she's killed her.  
And the police are kind of after her now.  
They're on to her.  
So Elliot will go to jail, where she won't do very well.  
And so Beverly comes up with this plan.  
Beverly's always really wanted to get away from Elliot.  
She... Elliot's very happy with his co-dependency,  
but Beverly would like to escape from her.  
And so Beverly comes up with this plan  
that she should die, sacrifice herself,  
and that Elliot should become Beverly  
in the ultimate twin swap.  
Yeah.  
So she gives up herself.  
Her identity.  
And that's why there's the slash of the stomach  
to make it look like she's just given birth.  
Yeah.  
So it looks like Elliot has just had a C-section,

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and Beverly's babies are removed,  
given to Elliot, and then...

Twins, of course.

Twins, yeah.

So it becomes Beverly, and Beverly is dead  
down in that lab.

Which is the ultimate twin eating the other twins.

It is. It's the ultimate swap,  
which happens all the way through the series.  
You see them swap with each other.

Yeah.

So it's a big identity swap.

When do you think a spoiler stops being a spoiler?

I mean, like, you've found it okay to tell us that now.

We always have this debate on a Tuesday morning argument,  
on a Tuesday morning after succession has been on  
about whether we can talk about it.

And our whole team sit there with headphones on,  
because they don't want spoilers.

And we're like, oh, get on with it. It's 24 hours.

When do you think it stops being a...

That's a great question.

I mean, I feel like the whole season  
was dropped on April 21st,  
so there's been some time.

Yeah.

I don't know.

Maybe I'll be in big trouble, and I shouldn't have said that.

I'm not really sure.

We said the alert thing at the time.

Yeah, yeah, alert, alert.

And the feedback when a whole season drops,  
are you kind of there...

I mean, this is not your first rodeo.

You've done all sorts of acting roles.

But do you still have that sort of slight knot in your stomach  
of how is this going to land, and will people like it,  
and will, you know, get slated, or do you think it's done?

I'm already on to the next project.

I don't know, of course.

Well, I've never done anything like this in my life.

First of all, I've never done a television show,  
a six-part drama.

Yeah.

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I've never produced something from scratch,  
so I've been working on it for many years now.  
And I've never played two roles  
that play opposite each other.  
So there was a lot of risk involved.  
Yes, and a huge amount of passion and joy,  
and it was very challenging, like an exquisite challenge.  
But, of course, yeah, I know, I care about it a lot.  
Yeah, I'm completely not on to the next thing, is my answer.  
Yeah.  
Do you think it takes time  
to kind of decide what to do next  
if you have invested so much in it?  
And I'm sure that there are those actors  
who just seem to go seamlessly.  
I mean, Tom Hanks, you know, there's one film  
after another after another after another.  
And, you know, great roles and all the rest of it.  
But I guess if you've put that much emotional commitment in...  
Yeah, so I'm definitely not doing anything right now,  
apart from coming to talk to you guys.  
Yeah, I'm not looking for the next fiction.  
It's hard at the moment, because everyone's on strike, right?  
Yeah, the writers are on strike, yeah.  
Do you have a sort of solidarity  
with the guys over the writers' guild?  
Yes, completely, yes, absolutely.  
I mean, just describe what it's been like  
for young writers starting out  
who are doing these amazing shows  
and getting what massively underpaid...  
Where's all the money going?  
I think the two big sticking points is AI,  
that the streamers won't agree to saying we won't have...  
Categorically, we'll not have AI right in place of humans.  
And also the mini writers' room.  
So sometimes Amazon or Netflix,  
or someone will say, let's just have a mini room  
for a couple of weeks.  
Those writers are not paid properly,  
they're not paid at the level of a big writers' room.  
But wait, what do you mean AI?  
You mean actual...  
AI writing the script?

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I don't know any real information about it,  
but I know that is a big sticking...  
This is happening already in Hollywood?  
Yeah, yeah.  
Well, I don't know if they know that they're capable of doing it  
in an interesting way or not,  
but there's potential for it, yeah.  
Would you act a script that had been written by AI?  
I personally, and I'm sure like lots of young people say,  
I don't know what I'm talking about,  
but I don't believe that AI  
would be able to write a really nuanced script  
in the way that some, like Alice Birch wrote Dead Ringers.  
I just don't believe in it,  
let's see what happens, but I don't believe it could happen.  
Are other actors kind of willing to give it a try?  
I mean, I'm sort of fascinated because I guess there's a point  
at which we don't ever believe this stuff  
until it happens and then everyone goes,  
oh, yeah, no, it kind of works, yeah, it's fine.  
Yeah, I don't know.  
Someone was telling me about a trailer  
for a fake Wes Anderson film that doesn't exist,  
but it looks like the perfect trailer  
for a Wes Anderson movie.  
But my response to that was, well,  
it's maybe easy to do over three minutes  
to capture somebody's visual tone and humor  
and sense of writing,  
but I don't know over 90 minutes or over six hours.  
It's hard to imagine, isn't it?  
The subtleties of human interaction  
and the nuance and a facial expression  
can be captured by a computer programme,  
however clever.  
Yeah, I don't believe in it,  
but I don't know enough about it.  
Can I ask you about the Cannes film, first of all?  
I was reading a piece by the French actress Adèle Hanel,  
who said that the lessons of the last five years,  
you know, all the Me Too era,  
all the Harvey Weinstein stuff,  
has been forgotten.  
She's written an open letter denouncing

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the leaders of the film industry,  
saying it's basically, this is Cannes,  
a festival for rapists.  
Is that how it feels to you  
that things haven't moved on,  
they haven't got better for women,  
or does it feel like a place  
or an industry that still covers up  
bad behaviour by men?  
I mean, it's a great question.  
I haven't personally experienced  
sexual assault in the workplace  
or sexual abuse or any of those things.  
I was really moved by the Me Too movement.  
I thought it was, you know,  
a woman standing up and just saying,  
quite simply, Me Too,  
and another standing up and saying,  
Me Too, and all these women joining hands  
and having strength in numbers,  
so I thought it was really, really important.  
I sort of just look at it more from the point of view,  
in terms of representation,  
rather than abuse or assault, you know, crimes.  
I'm not thinking of it so much  
in terms of criminality,  
as in how women are being represented.  
And how they're being portrayed as well.  
Well, that's what I mean.  
I mean, literally the writing,  
so representation through writing on the screen.  
And I think that's good.  
I think things are really looking quite interesting  
in that department.  
I don't think women are just playing wife roles  
who have no character or no psychological complexity.  
I think women are getting really interesting roles  
written for them.  
So women are being represented as people,  
as humans who are complicated, interesting.  
So I think that's  
that area of the industry.  
Things are happening.  
I think there's a lot of women writers

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writing for women, about women.  
And directors. Yeah.  
And it feels like there's a lot of women  
writing for other women at the moment.  
Yeah, and it's about point of view.  
So if you're a female producer,  
if you're a female director, you have a point of view  
where you're going to be representing  
and portraying women in interesting,  
complicated ways.  
So I think that's all looking pretty good.  
And because you are an Oscar-winning actor,  
I'm going to ask you,  
because you've mentioned wife roles,  
are you really relieved that colonial  
isn't doing any more bond?  
I mean, is that a good thing for the family,  
or do you have to give the keys to the Aston Martin?  
The keys to the Aston Martin.  
And it back.  
Do you have to sort of cover your eyes thinking,  
oh my God, what's going to happen at work today?  
You mean when he was born,  
how dangerous it was?  
It was very dangerous.  
I mean, he got injured a lot.  
Really? Yeah.  
Because he did his own stunts,  
she said angrily.  
So the danger question has definitely gone down.  
Yeah.  
So are you relieved, do you sort of think  
that we can go and garden?  
I think it's a much less stressful time  
for him.  
I'm really proud of his time as Bond,  
and I think he was really, really brilliant.  
But yeah, it's much less stressful now.  
And the time when you are...  
I mean, you've played a variety of roles.  
You know, you're kind of...  
If you look at what you've done...  
I love being a wife in real life, I should just add.  
Yeah, no, no.

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Just wife roles on the screen in the 90s,  
particularly it was a really rough time  
to be a woman, I think.  
In Hollywood, they were just terrible,  
they described the roles, it was just wife.  
That's it. Nothing else.  
But did you ever feel that you were Mrs. Bond?  
In real life.  
In real life where people are thinking,  
oh, look, there's James Bond.  
No, not Mrs. Bond,  
because I think that character is a bachelor,  
right, through and through.  
The whole premise of his character  
and his psychology is that he doesn't settle down.  
So no, I never felt like I was Mrs. Bond.  
No.  
But can we finish where we started?  
I'm a fan, obviously, of the news agents.  
And they talk about this sort of blue spot thing,  
which is when you go to the moon  
and you look back on Earth, you see Earth  
in a very different way.  
As an actress or as a Brit living  
in New York, in America,  
well, how do you see the UK now?  
How does it make sense to you?  
What does it feel like  
when you sort of look at us from afar?  
Well, you know,  
I think it was Lewis who was saying a few days ago  
that, you know,  
the thing that the right are trying to do here now  
of creating this populist extremism  
is not going to work here  
in England in the way that it has in America.  
You know that they're kind of borrowing  
from the right in America and just saying  
we're extremely extremist.  
And I think that's what I think about England.  
I think that, you know,  
Mosley didn't really catch on, did he?  
He had a go.  
I think that England's got a sensibleness

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and I know things have not been rosy  
and it's been, like, very difficult here,  
but I see England  
as being quite sensible and quite sane.  
Is that...  
What do you think?  
I think it's always bloody Lewis.  
Whatever we do.  
I was very excited  
when you were talking about him getting at his acorn  
at 9 o'clock.  
And actually, that's the thing that I really miss most.  
Lewis is acorn.  
Lewis is acorn,  
but also just sexual innuendo  
as a kind of...  
It's such a British pastime, isn't it?  
And in America, it really doesn't exist.  
Like, did you notice that?  
Oh, God, all the time.  
I don't irony as well.  
It's a bit lacking, yeah.  
Emily's asked that question of how do you look at Britain.  
I mean, where do you feel more at home?  
This is my home, yeah.  
And New York is, you know, work.  
It's a fantastic city.  
I love New York. I love living there.  
But home is, like, I don't know, it's the Wizard of Oz,  
no place like home, and it's London for me.  
It's, yeah, England's my home.  
Rachel, thank you so much. This is your home.  
Yeah, New Zealand's HQ.  
We set up a little bunk bed,  
a camp bed, a zen bed in the corner.  
Lovely to have you.  
Lovely to be here and see these blue lights.  
This is The News Agents.  
Welcome back.  
And, Lewis,  
what do you think about having  
an Oscar-winning actress  
as a fan of your small acorn?  
Well, it's...

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It wouldn't be the first time, Joe.  
I have to say, but I don't want to talk about that anymore,  
because it's subject to various legal restrictions,  
so I don't want to talk about that.  
But what I do want to talk about, by the way,  
is we need to make a correction.  
But an apology and a correction,  
and the apology goes to the Real Sun Centre,  
where I actually say the SC2 Centre.  
Presumably, the Sun Centre Mark 2.  
It's like the QE2. They sort of rebrand it.  
Because yesterday...  
Rumours of its demise.  
...greatly exaggerated, like Mark Twain.  
Apparently, we, I said yesterday, had been told,  
having spent many of our childhoods some of there,  
that the Real Sun Centre had closed,  
I've been told by Laura Lou, 1988,  
on Twitter that I must just pick you up.  
You and Emily are up on the point made  
about the Real Sun Centre.  
However, it has not been closed down.  
It's been published into the SC2.  
It's absolutely brilliant. It has got lots of slides,  
and your listeners should go.  
Yay! I used to try and get a tan there.  
Because it's very hot. It's like being in a botanical bath.  
In real? In real indoors?  
Hang on, hang on. You went to Real for a Sun Centre?  
I assumed that you could actually get a tan in the Sun Centre.  
Hmm.  
Maybe this is why I thought it closed,  
all these people thinking that.  
Coming out disappointed with no tan.  
I think the first live show of the news agents  
should be now in Real.  
Well, I'm sure they'd have us. Yes.  
I think they would. In the SC2.  
Well, on the subject of Twitter,  
someone else has had a bit of a pop.  
People like Lewis Goodall,  
and outlets like the news agents,  
so we're guilty by association, I think, make this,  
will be the downfall

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of Western civilisation.

Lewis, how do you plead?

Well, guilty, obviously.

What's nice is that, on Twitter,

it's nice that we don't get

particularly frenzied comments or anything like that.

Or hyperbolic, in any way. No, it's just such

a measured place, I always find.

To be honest, Sable and I have been saying that

about you forever. We were like,

shall we go and work with Lewis Goodall,

or will he create the downfall of Western civilisation?

Hell of a story, though, wouldn't it?

We'd cover it, maybe the day after.

From Small Acorns, grow downfalls.

Bye. Bye.