

**Lawrence:** Good morning to some, good evening to others. Thanks so much for joining. Obviously, we have Brad here, he needs no introduction. You can ask him anything: tips on writing, producing Stargate, Travelers, Outer Limits, early career, you can even ask him about other films and shows because he's just a huge sci-fi fan. He's been in the business for three decades. And yeah, the only rule, there's only one rule, please don't spam. Spam is great for a plate, but bad for a chat forum. So we'll get to as many questions as possible. And in the meantime, as you guys start asking questions now, actually lots of members started, like emailing a couple days ago, and also when they registered. So we'll get through some of those questions first as it builds up. But Brad first.

**Brad:** Can I say something that I know is going to be a question? I just want to say that. I know a lot of people are going to ask about a new Stargate project. And the fact is, I just want everybody to know that MGM and I are working on something. It's just too early to talk about. And, and it's partly too early because there's a pandemic going on. And that's kind of ground a few things to a halt. But we are working on something. It's very exciting. It's something that we've been talking about for a while now. And I love it. I'm excited to have the possibility of making it someday soon, or someday, period. I'll say this much I'll say that it exists in the universe that you already know. It's not a reboot. It's not a completely new thing. It's a continuation. And I'll leave it at that. I'm not allowed to say anything more.

**Lawrence:** It's what we want to hear, Brad. It's what we want to hear.

**Brad:** Good. Everybody's just going offline now. All right.

**Lawrence:** Yeah, we've done our job - AMA - thanks guys. Oh wow that's exciting. It's exciting. I don't know if I'm gonna see what's going on in the chat here, but hopefully, people are loving that. I'm seeing lots of 'woooos', lots of claps, 'thank you's', 'well dones', 'we need more Stargates'. That's what's happening. That's awesome. That's great news. What a way to kick off the AMA.

Let's get to some questions now. The first question comes from Krzysztof Kolata. And it's just a simple one: what are some of your favourite sci-fi books Brad?

**Brad:** Favorite sci-fi books? Oh, wow. I started reading sci-fi when I was like, in my early teens. I read all of Isaac Asimov. I read all as much Fred Saberhagen as I could get my hands on. And it was funny because of the time I just thought there would be an infinite amount of classic sci-fi out there, but there isn't, you know, there's a tonne of it but the stuff that's magnificent, you can kind of burn through it in a lifetime. So now I love Scalzi, John is a

great writer. We're kind of cut from the same cloth of not being able to write something that doesn't have humor in it.

I love hard science fiction. I love I love like the hardcore stuff. If you read my essay, I love fantasy too, *Lord of the Rings* was like epic when I was 12 years old. And I read that you know, all three volumes and you know, cried when Gandalf fell and my brother at dinner said 'Don't worry buddy, it's going to be okay'. And I got really mad at him for the spoiler. But mainly I love sci-fi and I love space opera. I love military sci-fi. I love writing military sci-fi. I don't know why. It well predated *Stargate SG-1* that I had this affection for military fiction too. Not that I'm you know hugely into war, it's just that it has such an impact on humanity and on the creation of civilization that it's impossible to ignore as a thing that happens in the world and has always happened in humanity. It's just what happens when people stop talking, you know, and I love science fiction set in the distant future. I'm trying to remember the name of that book that I just read. British author, brilliant, it's about spiders that evolve, meeting humans for the first time. It's brilliant. And somebody should tell me - somebody remember it and tell me

**Lawrence:** When you remember, we'll tweet it out later. Speaking of Scalzi, one of the other members that asked - Ian Zainea, he was asking - What role did John Scalzi play and what are some of his notable contributions to the *Stargate* universe?

**Brad:** Okay, so John... what he did was, he was at home and when I met him, we met him once we flew him out, we had a meeting. But what he did was he would read a script once I thought it was in good enough shape to share. And he read it from a science perspective... because with SG, we were trying to be more accurate. You know, my penchant for trying to be a little more accurate in terms of science and science fiction was getting more serious. John is a smart man and his knowledge is encyclopaedic. So I mean, he would read the scripts and say, you know, 'You can't possibly do that, in that much time', if we're talking about, you know, a flight at a certain speed. He's just smart. And but also, he's also very creative. So he would talk about character as well, but mainly, he was our science fiction consultant. And I loved getting his insights. And it's funny, I said, in my essay, too, I'm always a little bit embarrassed when I talk to real scientists about science fiction, especially my science fiction, because, you know, you start talking about - and it happened with John - you start talking about a structure that that was visible after the Big Bang that indicated that something happened before the Big Bang. Evidence of, of life before life was possible to exist. And I remember getting the email and him going, 'Wow, heady stuff, man' and being a little bit embarrassed, because I knew that he understood the stuff much more than I do. But he completely got it and completely helped us formulate that part of the story. It was great.

**Lawrence:** We got another question. This one came from a Twitter member, @sgcgate, and they wanted to know, who are your heroes in the field writing, acting, directing? And how do they influence your career? So kind of maybe even related to the last question as well?

**Brad:** I don't have any immediate heroes. Like I mean, I have filmmakers that I love. I just love Steven Spielberg. You know, and I loved early Lucas. I worry about, you know, having heroes because people's careers ebb and flow. I think Aaron Sorkin is among the greatest writers ever. And he doesn't do science fiction but his dialogue is so unbelievable and so captures real people. So I lean toward that kind of thing. I mean, I could go way back to Frank Capra. I love Frank Capra stuff and it's, you know, this incredibly old stuff but capturing humanity. Films and actors and writers and directors who can capture something with heart. Something that has an element of heart in it. And it could be you know, it could be *It's a Wonderful Life*. It could be *Aliens*. *Aliens* has got that "Stay away from her you bitch!" moment that is, as you know, technical and incredible and powerful, but it's driven by heart, this protective instinct, and so I would have to include *Aliens* in that. It's that film that when it's on TV I can't not watch it and it's just every scene is perfect to me.

**Lawrence:** I call those take-you-along-for-the-ride films where you accidentally get on a channel and it takes you on for a ride and then you're on it.

**Brad:** *Groundhog Day* is like that. You know like you're watching TV and you say 'Jesus, Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day* - I have to watch a few minutes of this' and you know, no matter where you are in the movie well you know when I go to bed, you turn it off. But yeah, you know, it's funny because sometimes it's *Stargate*. And you know, I'll be in my little gym doing my lamest sort of exercises and I'll be flipping and there'll be an episode of *Stargate* and it'll be 'Oh, God'. 'Yeah, I remember doing that'. 'I remember when Andy shot that'. And 'Oh, man, this was...' and it's funny because most people watch the episode, I watch that part of my life when I see that episode. Where I was, you know, where the director was in his career or her career.

**Lawrence:** So it takes you back to set and takes you back to that moment, rather than seeing just the story on screen?

**Brad:** Yes, it does. It takes me to... Great example, 2010, Andy Mikita directed it. The last act of that episode came out of my computer. I mean, I felt like I typed it in real time. And it didn't change at all. I mean, basically what I wrote in that moment, and then Andy came in with this amazing way of shooting it, a concept of shooting it. And it was if not his first episode that he directed, it was one of them. And in it it just made me go 'Oh, man, that was a great decision'. You know, hiring Andy as a director because he had worked with us for so

many years as a production manager and then it was producer and as a first AD early in *Stargate*. And so when he, you know, when he took off and directed 2010 as well as he did it, it blew me away. And you know, like music cues. I can't not watch the ending of a *SGU* - well, the last episode, it's not really an ending, although, to me it feels like an ending now - but Joel's final piece, that final piece of music that he wrote for that episode is just so good.

**Lawrence:** Nice. Nice. Another question, I guess, on writing is from Leslie Ann K. What does your usual writing process look like? Are you an outline guy? Do you write sequentially? Do you just tackle each scene as you're ready for it?

**Brad:** I don't recommend my writing process to anyone. Of course, I used to outline because you had to. When I was newer and younger, people had just to see your outline. But honestly, for me the outline process takes as long as this script process and it's less informative to me as a writer. I'm not a plotter. I don't think of the whole story ahead of time. I can't... I mean, I have and I do when I've had to. But I am much better as a writer when I'm in a scene. I know what the scene should feel like, I know what the character's goals and intentions are. But I don't really know what the scene is going to be until I get at it, until the one character says something and then I and I go 'Oh, this person should say this' and for me the process of discovery is way way better.

To give you an example, in the pilot of *Travelers*... I don't think this is too much of a spoiler - if you haven't seen *Travelers* you should! - but in the pilot of *Travelers* I hadn't decided if the cop character was going to die. I thought he might end up being a recurring character. And in that scene as I was typing, as he chases Philip down the alley, and, you know, I said 'What if he has a heart attack right in that moment?' And, you know, Philip knows what's going to happen, he just didn't know he was going to be there for the heart attack, or that he was going to be the cause of that heart attack. And I thought, well, maybe he'll maybe get over them and I thought, 'What a perfect way of encapsulating a protocol not just don't take a life but don't save life,' - which is protocol, something... three. And so Gower's chasing Philip down this alleyway. And in that moment, I decided that was the scene. And it ended up being way more powerful. And I ended up discovering that by writing the script, and I don't think I would have got there in an outline, you know, because I wasn't in the moment with the characters, I think the outline would have just achieved the story beat I was trying to achieve and I would have moved on and Gower may not have died in that moment, which was a very, I think, one of the best scenes in the in the episode.

But having said that, you can't run a show that way. And so in our writers room on *Stargate*, we had a big... - and in *Travelers*, and in every writing room I've ever been in - the way I like to do it is to put up a big whiteboard. And you put the beats that you... because somebody always comes in with a core idea: 'What if this happens?' Yeah. I'll use *SGU* for an example

of what if Destiny is hurtling toward a star, and you think, 'Oh, shit, we're all gonna die because it's powered down, and it's out of power, and that was a bad thing to happen'. But what if that's how Destiny gets its power? What if it's truly solar power, because I was realising that, if it was on a journey, as long as it is, it had to replenish its power. There's no such thing as an infinite power source. In that moment, you come in with that idea, and well, what do you do with everybody else. And so you put the beats you know, on the whiteboard and then all of you, as a writing team sit down and you fill in the holes, like, five acts of story and you put in the beats you know. Hopefully, you have an idea of how it's going to end - you put that down. You have an idea of what the teaser's going to be, how the show opens, you put that down. And you basically fill in the blanks, as a group, throwing out ideas, building on what is already on the whiteboard, sometimes taking the eraser and wiping it away again, which is important. And, then realising 'Oh, that doesn't get to that' or 'This doesn't make sense at all'. But that's what a writers' room is. The writers' room is beyond just the original spinning and spitballing and throwing ideas around. It's putting it up on the whiteboard. And I'll do that for my own stuff, too. But what I really like to do is to be minimal, to at least give myself for myself - this is when you're making your show - an idea of structure without committing to it completely.

When I'm creating a new show, when I'm writing a pilot, I just start writing and I don't recommend that to anybody. It's just... I've written so many hours of television. It's just that's the way it works for me and so that's what I do.

**Lawrence:** Was there actually a moment maybe where... you're obviously a huge veteran so you probably have structure and ideas down pat, but maybe for younger writers or maybe when you were younger yourself, maybe there was a moment you crossed over?

When I'm the showrunner in it, and I've only been the showrunner lately - for the last 20 years or so! - and I have that privilege but, you know, I can't just to a new young writer say: 'No, go write it'. Unless there's an enormous amount of time and they want to try that process. What it sets you up for, though, is the knowledge that somebody may have a big note that changes everything. And you may just have to throw away a giant chunk of what you've written. Especially like, at the high level. If you've written something, and they go, 'We love this and love this, but this whole ending, it's just not where we think it should go.' - 'Oh, well, I didn't write an outline, I'll just do a very heavy second draft and big rewrite.' And that's just, you know, par for the course when you do it that way.

And, then the other thing that happens if you have a lot of time, is I'll write a version of a draft, and, you know, I'll finish it. And it's just for me, I mean, it's not like I'm going to send it to anybody at that point. And I'll wait like a weekend or five, six days, and I'll read it again. And, and I'll go, 'What the hell is he thinking?' and immediately see what the solution... sometimes see what the solution is. But my other thing that I do - a thing that and I'm not

sure many people do this and I don't think a novelist could - but I start on page one every time. So when I'm writing, sometimes I'll come up with a bunch of pages. The next day, I go back to page one and I read it, read it and read it. Because sometimes what you've written informs stuff earlier, and you can seed ideas in, it makes you seem much smarter than you actually are. But no, I start on page one every time, which is why there are always more typos on the last page.

But also because when I'm in production, if I type the end, I immediately want somebody to read it and tell me whether it's as good as I think it is or not. So I hold off on that moment as long as possible. Again I don't recommend it, especially for young writers, because structure is really important.

**Lawrence:** When you wrote the Rules of Sci-Fi for us, did you use the same process where you start at paragraph one, and then wrote and then kind of go back?

**Brad:** Yes! Absolutely. That's a great example, when I wrote that essay. I just started the beginning, and that would change it, it would be very fluid. And a little joke or thing that I thought was great yesterday, I would think, 'How stupid is that today?' And yeah, that's that's definitely how I do it. And then when, of course, you get to the end, and you have to do another draft, you get notes from people. And sometimes it's notes you have to do, sometimes it's notes that are just suggestions, and you have to take those notes. And you generally have 55 pages of script. And you have to somehow make that work without adding more material because you can't write a 65-page script, you can't shoot 65 pages of script because every 10 pages, every eight-seven pages is an entire shooting day, which is \$80,000, \$100,000 \$120,000 worth of production. So when you write 10 pages that that you have to cut out, you've just pissed away a lot of money.

The goal is to write a script that is just long enough that in the editing room when you're done, you have two, three, four minutes, tops that you can shave off the episode to reach your programme length, or, which was the beauty of working for Netflix, you can shrink it or expand it to the size you want. But it was always for me around 44 minutes of screen time for an episode. And that in page counts are around 51 pages, 52 pages for me. So when you address somebody's notes, it sometimes means adding something, you have to find some stuff to take away. You have to get rid of stuff. I actually had a writer - I won't say his name - who I said 'you're too long' and he went away, this really happened. He went away and he came back and I went 'Okay, I don't know how you did that so fast.' I read it again and I said 'I don't see what you cut out'. He said, 'No, I just, I just changed the margins.'

**Lawrence:** It doesn't work that way! I thought you were gonna say I just deleted all the 'thes'.

**Brad:** Well, no that that would be hard to read. But he just changed, he altered the margins, and anyway...

**Lawrence:** ArcticGoddess1 from Twitter asks, what Ancient technology do you wish was real? And that we could use in our daily lives now?

I think faster than light travel would solve an enormous amount of problems. With that would come anti gravity. I mean, Ancient technology, as you know, in spaceships would be great. I think it would be wonderful, I think it would be really, really great if humanity could figure out a way to travel faster than light and go to other worlds, that would be wonderful. There's a lot of stumbling blocks to that, there's a lot in the way in terms of real science. You can't just go faster, you know, you actually have to come up with a way of changing a fundamental law of the universe, altering it in a way that we haven't come up with yet. And even then, you have to figure out how that gets around things like time dilation, and, and you have to come up with a power source for that. I mean, even if you came up with a science to make it happen, like the Alcubierre drive, I think I pronounced that right. I'm not sure. Like warp drive, basically, I don't think there's a dilithium crystal around that's going to do it. That would be great. But it's a real big challenge. And I don't think I'll see that in my lifetime. It's a dream, though. It would be pretty cool.

**Lawrence:** All right, another *Stargate* kinda question. Hunter Faulk-Burgess: out of all the characters, worlds and stories that we got to see in the *Stargate* franchise, which ones would you want to revisit? And why?

I always wanted to do another Aschen story. I liked the Aschen - like, again, 2010 - I just thought that their plan was so insidious. And Rob Cooper used to tease me about it because he felt that the long game that the Aschen played was undramatic, inherently undramatic. Which is why it ended up playing well as a time travel story, because by the time we realized what their plan was, it was already too late. And the only solution was to find a way to send a message back and, and not meet them in the first place. Obviously I have a thing for time travel. But, um, I think Rob's joke was, 'Oh my God, they stopped us from being able to grow corn' and at the time, I killed myself. But I thought I thought I could come up with another long game type story. I just, there was something interesting about a culture that had that sense of superiority and sense of the long game of what you know, 'We'll win, it'll just take 100 years'. I just thought that was so insidious. And I only got two episodes in that world. And but, you know, there might have been a third note there. Yeah, I'll stick with that answer.

Oh and the Nox! I loved the Nox. I thought the Nox were fun. They were so great but again, who they were, who they ultimately were in that episode kind of precluded our ever seeing

them again. It was like, 'Oh, you're so young to us', you know, 'You're just so not ready to be our friends', you know?

**Lawrence:** We're gonna try one more layer. We have a special guest for you, Brad, an old friend who couldn't make it. Want to ask you a question as well. So we're gonna cue that up right now.

**Brad:** Okay.Okay. A special guest. Okay.

**Naren:** Hey, Brad, it's Naren Shankar, blast from your past. So I got a question for you, man. Despite the enduring popularity of shows like *The Twilight Zone*, and *The Outer Limits*, which I worked on with you many years ago, with few exceptions, you know, maybe notably, *Black Mirror*, it seems like successful anthology series are few and far between these days. Do you think there's a place for anthologies in the current landscape of more novelistic television, love to hear your thoughts?

**Brad:** I love that guy. Naren, hey, I think I think the reason anthology can come back and and, and has in the form of *Black Mirror* is because now you're not dependent on the last episode to be able to air the next one. I think regular broadcast television made it difficult. And I think one of the only reasons *The Outer Limits* managed to go as long as it did was it was set up with a, literally a business relationship between MGM and Showtime, it was part of a larger deal. And so they knew they were buying to get access to MGM library. Showtime also had X number of hours of shows like *The Outer Limits*, which Naren and I had a great time working on together, it was so much fun. But I think he's right, that, that now might be the best time. And I would do that, again, in a heartbeat. As hard as it is. As hard as it is to do anthology. And it really is because it's like doing a pilot every week. You know, when we were doing 22 episodes of *The Outer Limits*, we were casting 22 separate pilots, essentially 22 separate shows. Like everybody who came in to be in that episode had to be cast, you didn't have recurring characters. And every set had to be new, there was no such thing as a standing set. So it was bloody difficult. But it's also so rewarding when you do an anthology episode that stands alone and is fun and is solid. And you have your dogs too, you don't have a recurring cast to fall back on. You don't have you know, a throughline or backbone that that is the reason the show got bought in the first place like a, you know, like a Sam Carter or Teal'c or Daniel that you can, you know, depend on to hold it together because of their own strengths as characters and as actors.

So it's risky. And I think that's part of the reason anthology has struggled. And I think networks tend to be risk averse, especially broadcast networks, because if you don't get an audience in your time slot for consecutive weeks, because the last one sucked and the next one was not much better... Well, the next one's fabulous, but if you don't get the eyeballs

on it, you're screwed. Whereas *Black Mirror*, it all went up at once on Netflix, everybody had the ability to if they didn't like it, watch the next one. I watched them all I thought it was terrific. I thought it was very, very solid, incredibly well written. And I think proved a point that anthologies like *The Outer Limits* and *The Twilight Zone* proved to a certain extent, and that is that you can grasp the theme and make that the throughline, as opposed to sets and actors and characters. And so that in a way the audience is getting the same show because it is like - *Black Mirror* is a perfect example - It was a side of technology, a side of this technology - the black mirror - took me like an episode or two to figure it out. So yeah, hey Naren, if you want to do an anthology at some point, let's do it.

I'd do *The Outer Limits* again, it was so much fun. Although I have to say this too. We did stuff on *The Outer Limits*, in terms of sets, and stuff in general, in terms of visual effects that you could not get away with now in terms of sophistication of the audience. I did a show 'The Light Brigade', which was in season two, almost a sequel to another episode that I had written in season one called 'Quality of Mercy', which was a bottle show. One set, two actors, saved a lot of money - and directed by Brad Turner, fabulous job, and Nicole de Boer's in it and Robert Patrick. Anyway. So I wanted to do a sequel of that, in that universe essentially, and so at least I didn't have to build a whole new universe again. But it required the building of a spaceship and because it was anthology, our per episode budget for sets was not super huge. But Steve Geaghan the production designer at the time, and I had this... what we used to do is I would write - and I do this to this day - I before I write a story, before I commit to a story, I have conversations with the art department, 'Hey, can we do this? Can I build this? What do you think? What stages should we put it in? How would we achieve this?' And so, you know, you can come up with ways of solving problems with the art department, put it in your script, and it sounds like you're smart at all right off the top. But Steve had to, you know, have some shortcuts. And so the hatches, the actual hatches in the tunnels - which were gigantic cardboard sonotubes that we painted the inside of and put ladders in - were actually garbage can lids, literal garbage can lids that were spray painted, which in a standard definition 4x3 look fine. In HD you go, 'Is that a garbage can lid?' And same with visual effects, you know? You could do a matte painting or you could do a you know an optical and you couldn't tell it was a model with modern 16x9 with 4k? Yeah, you would see that looks like a model or that looks like crap. And and so the level of sophistication will have had to go up. I think *Black Mirror's* achieved that, I think that the dogs in that episode were amazing. You have to be really good in terms of your visual effects. And so embracing an anthology, especially the way we've... I mean, we had we were writing them, you know, we were writing scripts, and we were shooting them weeks later, building the sets as we went along. I mean that's saying that's a breakneck speed that we operated at for *The Outer Limits*, but I'd do it again because it was so much fun and so rewarding and you know, you meet actors who want to do television because they don't have to commit to a whole series or multiple seasons. You know, they get to do a

character for one episode. We got some pretty decent folks to be in that show. I mean, I got to meet some great, great talent and it was great to work with. So yes, Naren, I think it's possible. Let's do it together. He's a really smart guy. He's so smart.

**Lawrence:** Throw Scalzi into the mix as well.

**Brad:** I think John did an anthology.

**Lawrence:** Yeah, I mean, he was he did some of the *Love, Sex and Robots*, I think - right? - on Netflix.

**Brad:** Yeah, there were his stories. It's funny, you know, I haven't... It's very different. Screenwriting and writing novels is a very different animal and, you know, characters on a page have to exist more complete on a page in a novel and whereas screenwriting, it's a marriage of the writing and the performer, you know? The character is not ever complete in a screenplay. That last step, that really important step, is when an actor breathes life into the character you've written. And it becomes a partnership going forward. So when I write a pilot, sometimes it's a favourite actor, sometimes it's just a, you know, a random voice I've generated in my own head. But as soon as you cast it, as soon as that role is a real person, that voice takes over as you're typing the character. And I think that's another huge difference between writing for a screenplay and writing for a novel. I am writing Eric McCormack's voice for *Travelers*. I'm writing Richard Dean Anderson's voice for *Stargate*, Amanda Tapping...you know their cadence, you know what they sound like, you know their rhythm. And so, once that partnership gets good, and once you hit the ground running, you know, they read the script, and it sounds like their character to them. You know, they go, 'Oh, this is me and I know how to say this'.

A part of that is to, you know, in a read through if they have a hard time... Like Rick hated long speeches, like, like he had kind of a two finger rule. And it's not because he didn't, like, memorize them. He just felt more real when he had, you know, shorter things to say. And I mean that he was a consummate professional, but he just didn't think O'Neill should do long speeches. And so and so, you know, that burden went to other people, obviously. But as far as *Travelers* are concerned, I actually wrote with Eric McCormack's voice in my head for the character, hoping that I might be able to get him because I knew he was Canadian. And I wanted this to be a Canadian show. And because I've worked with him before. But I didn't really think I'd be able to get him. It might be because I wrote it with him in my head, though, that I did get him because he read the script and went, 'Wow, this is something I could do - it speaks to me'. Patrick Gilmore, who plays David, I actually literally wrote the part for him knowing I could get him into audition. And so during the auditions - he went straight to callbacks - during the auditions, I hadn't seen in a couple years, like five or six

years, actually, and he was sitting in his car as I walked out of mine, to go into the casting studio with Morgan Webb, who was a brilliant casting director. And so he sees me anyways, and he rolls down the window. I go, 'Hey, Patrick, how's it going?' He goes 'Long time no see', and I said, 'By the way, I have to go in but just so you know, I wrote this part for you so don't fuck it up'. He went, 'You wrote for me?' - 'Yeah, it's... you can't really screw this up, I promise'. And sure enough, he hit it out of the park as I knew he would.

**Lawrence:** Alright, there's a lot of comments coming. He's not even a question. But there's a lot of comments in the chats. And they're wondering what's going on? Who are the cats in the background? And maybe describe your office.

**Brad:** So this is, uh, this is Lulu. This is a cat that we got for my daughter Kayla, when she was like five, and Lulu just passed a few years ago. And she was a lovely cat and actually went off to live with my daughter when my daughter went off to university. This is Napanee, Napanee was our first cat and then in the middle - I'll get out of the way in the middle - that's boo that was her dog, golden retriever/lab cross, who was with us for 15 years and has been gone for about five. But my wife for a few Christmases in a row had those made for me and and I just love them so they're in my office.

**Lawrence:** Here's an interesting question from wordsrmagic2me1. The question is: as a professional biologist, I'm curious how much thought and research into the biology of planets and aliens that appear in the shows?

**Brad:** Well, as a biologist, you are well aware that most planets we would go to, we would probably die. I mean, I started making jokes in SG-1 where there were so many trees, and so many planets where Johnny Appleseed went out into the universe, but we have to shoot on Earth. And so that's our limitation. I think that the tougher question is, why is everyone speaking English? Which, you know, at least *Star Trek* had the universal translator, which was their answer. For *Stargate* it would be such a barrier. We just hoped that the audience would accept it as a conceit just like they accept gravity on spaceships because it's very difficult to do anti gravity. The only person I think, who did it, Ron Howard did it in *Apollo 13* by building a set inside the vomit comet, which is a DC 10. He built a set inside a DC 10 and they did parabolas. But back to the biology question.

It is true that all the planets we go to seem to have perfectly breathable air but maybe that's why the Ancients put Stargates there. That was our answer. And sometimes it came we got story out of it. For example, the Rattus bug in the Pegasus galaxy is a creature that ultimately we wanted to plant something that was fundamental to what the Wraith became. But it was also a bit of a barrier, because of course, there would be indigenous life, right? We did an episode called 'Bane' that Robert wrote that was essentially about an indigenous

lifeform that that almost killed Teal'c. But, you know, changing the biology of the planet, or changing... or going to a foreign planet, unless that was about the story. It was incredibly difficult. From a technical perspective, we tried things we tried to change, like the color of plants, like just in color correct. I mean, *Star Trek* just made the sky red because it was a psych right, it was a giant.. it was the back wall of the studio lit red. And we just never found or rarely did we find creatures or things that unless it became an integral to the story. For example, I did an episode called 'Cloverdale' in Season 2, I think it's a Season 2 episode of *SGU*, and I realized I couldn't afford in a million years to do the whole episode and the defending the Gate aspect of the story... because those creatures, those plants essentially, were so expensive because every every frame of those scenes were, where they existed were CG and I think maybe it would be easier now to create planets, where there was a different biology and set, especially since the world the shooting world has changed. An alien planet 20 years ago, *Stargate* was driving out into the forest. The big problem was we couldn't see buildings, we couldn't see powerlines, you know, we shot in a lot of gravel pits. But now the city has grown so much that you'd have to go out of the zone, which is like a, you know, a place where you can legally and morally ask a crew member to drive in their car to a location within a shooting day otherwise you're really risking people's lives by making them work 12 hours and then drive an hour and a half on the other side. And so since the city has grown so beyond the zone, alien planets have to be in studio and green screen and in coves. So you know, that kind of thing, that kind of storytelling about biology, different biologies would be more available to us if I get to do it again,

**Lawrence:** Speaking of that, there was a couple of comments I'm seeing here... wasn't necessarily directly related to green screens, but I'm gonna find them here, was more around the Volume Walls, like in *The Mandalorian* and effectively those giant LED... Yeah, what do you think about those?

Brad: I would love to... Oh, I mean, as soon as I read about those, I sent the link to a couple of friends like Carrie Mudd, my producing partner on *Travelers*, I said, we need to shoot something on these. I said to Joe Mallozzi the same thing. Because, I mean, you have to do it all beforehand, I mean, all the CG of the world has to be created beforehand. But the benefits of being able to shoot actors in front of an environment that looks photoreal, to be able to light them, without worrying about green spill. For them to be able to see the thing that we're reacting to, I mean, it's, it's... man, telling an actor that they're, they're actually responding to a little, a little silver ball on the end of a stick that looks like this, you know, that our visual effects coordinator's holding up and that's the monster's head. So, you know, depending on the actor they go, 'Really?', or they're looking at the window of their spaceship, and, uh, you know, and they're firing weapons, and, you know, they're banking left and right, and there ain't nothing out there. There's the guy holding a little ball saying 'This is where your eyeline should go'. And what *The Mandalorian* has is the ability for the

actor in real time to say, 'Oh, my God, like, that's what I'm responding to'. It's funny when you do science fiction, and you do a screening, and I like to do that. I like to do screen episodes for the cast. If you're lucky enough to be finished an episode or two before you wrap and say, 'You know what, let's get a little gathering and watch one of these, you should all be very proud of it'. We did it for every one of our pilots, we'd have the whole crew and do a screening for them. And you know, for the actors to see finally, what that visual effect is, you know, that that they were imagining three months earlier or four months earlier... That would be the huge advantage to *The Mandalorian* style, that LED wall I can only imagine though, that they're really expensive right now and you would need to have a lot of faith that your show is going to go a very long time in order to make that kind of investment. I don't even know if anything like that exists in Canada yet. I'm fairly confident though that it will soon and that's the way to go. And I would also suggest that it's probably not going to be you know the way it is for everything. I mean, if you look at *Endgame - Avengers*, the *Avengers* movie - I mean, there was so much CG in that, I mean some scope to it. I don't think an LED wall could even work for something like that big. But I don't know. I would love to have one of those to play with.

**Lawrence:** Ian Zainea, he asked, I've seen some cool concept art for an *Atlantis* DHD that was quite different from the kind of like SG-1 style DHD and what was the ultimate reason for going with that which is essentially like a same DHD offworld for the for offworld gates, while keeping the decidedly cooler DHD for *Atlantis* control room and the puddle jumpers?

**Brad:** It becomes an art department thing, it becomes a design aesthetic. The one thing that I wanted - I don't think 'decidedly cooler' - we wanted the puddle jumper ship to have its own DHD built in, right. So it had to be part of that control panel. I really wanted, always, in SG-1, *Atlantis*, SGU and going forward for there to be a unique Stargate as well. I think that the *Atlantis* gate has a digital quality and so seems more, you know, advanced. Keep in mind that *Atlantis* could have existed and evolved and grown long after it left, but we wanted it to have a different look, different colours, so that you knew just by looking at the icon of the Stargate 'Oh, this is an *Atlantis* episode' - 'Oh, this is this is SGU'. And the design of *Destiny* itself... We struggled with that for a long time. And it's literally one of those drawing on a napkin stories. I was sketching shapes, right, and I was looking at a chevron and kind of elongated it and sent literally that chevron shape to James, our designer, and he made it real from there. But *Destiny* itself is an evolution of the Stargate shape. We just wanted each show to have a visual template all of its own unique to it. And and that's really the core reason for that difference.

**Lawrence:** Nice. I got another technical question from Ebrahim Said. He asked, what are some of the strategies that you use to stage scenes and fast moving productions? But

before you answer a quick side note, when we spoke to the VFX supervisor John Gajdecki, he told us that he would pre-vis everything with Fisher Price figures. Is that also right?

**Brad:** Yeah, John sometimes used little Lego guys in pre-vis. And I mean, pre-vis is great. Pre-vis is in fact, what they do in *The Mandalorian* - it's just that they take the pre-vis all the way to photo real. And then they project, I mean, that's basically what you're doing, you're doing something before you even shoot the thing so you know, 'Okay, roughly, this is what I mean'. John's figures were sometimes hilarious, because he would write the name on their little chest, on their little Lego chest, so he was, who was who. But helps with things like access, like which direction's the ship flying, if they if they're coming through the Stargate left or right, then on that CG shot, they have to come out of it left to right, stuff like that, otherwise, it crosses the axis. And we were much more in those days concerned with stuff like that than we are now.

I guess I've already sort of said some of it in terms of dealing with the art department: I'm a big, big, big believer in prep. You hear horror stories about shows where the production doesn't get the script until, you know, way late and the actors get new pages, you know, the night before shooting and they're building props and sets, you know, that the paint is still wet when they step on stage. And that to me is, A. Unfair to the crew, B. It burns money, C. It's just inefficient. And so the more planning you can have in advance the better. So much so that - and this started happening with *The Outer Limits* and then with Richard Hudolin on *Stargate*, and with every production designer and art department that I've worked with since, especially in science fiction - what's the line I like? One of my builders said, 'There's no drywall in space'. Which means that all the shapes that these designers come up with, they're all unique. There's, you know, there's very rarely a square room and a spaceship that is, you know, just simple. They all have angles, they all have structure, they have depth, and the more of that, usually the better. So when you build a swing set, which is a set that's only going to appear in one episode or two, it's really nice when you can use it over and over again. In SG-1, we had this benefit of having the available to us what... it's gone now, but it was at the time the largest soundstage in North America. Oh, it wasn't soundstage, it was an effects stage. Meaning that whenever a train went by, you can hear it and you'd have to stop and so poor actors were, you know... you get a scene where, Amanda Tapping or, or Jewel Staite is, you know, or anybody's doing this great scene that's rich in emotion. And, you know, the sound guy goes 'Pause for a sec', and you hear a train go by, and they're holding the emotion and they have to keep acting. People don't think acting is really hard, they should see somebody in that situation. But we had this gigantic effect stage and we built a village, we built an entire village, that could... because, as I said, even then we were losing places that we could, that we could go to and turn around and make look like it could be an alien thing. And because they're all there seem to be always humans, wherever we went, we were building these sets and using them once, like Richard built this fabulous

thing for an episode called 'Spirits'. And it was just hugely expensive. And it was used in one episode. So we started coming up with ways where we could use a set multiple times, multiple ways. And, of course, the village was almost a failed experiment, because I thought I was being really smart, but what I didn't realise is how expensive was going to be like the damn thing. Because you build something that big and you build it indoors, and if you want to try for daylight you have to bring in so much light. But, you know, we made our show look more expensive than our budget really had by knowing we were going to be there a long time. I mean, we had before the end of Season 1 we knew we were doing 88 episodes and before the end of Season 2 we were doing five seasons. That allowed us to invest in stuff that we would not otherwise do as a television show because you might get cancelled in two weeks, so you rent everything. That isn't to suggest that we bought lights because that doesn't make any sense either because you're really buying the bulbs and those things are the real price. And, and so you rent stuff like that. But you know, you build things that you know you're going to use again and again, at one point we had between *Atlantis* - and talk about efficiencies - we at one point we were producing *Stargate SG-1* and *Stargate Atlantis* in the same offices with the same writing staff, with the same production design team- one designer and two art directors working in the same office. And that made sense so that we could have those efficiencies, so that we could use our nine soundstages and build something that was going to be X in one episode, or SG-1 and Y in *Atlantis* and because our designers were so good you rarely saw... I could see, but you could at least know there was a difference between planet A and planet B and then Joe did a really smart thing. He did an episode called 'Whispers' and fogged the whole damn thing up and you could see the structure. And it was terrific. It was like another use of that place.

**Lawrence:** Speaking of Joe, he's going to be our second special guest and he's actually queued up right now and he's been waiting in this virtual backstage...

**Joe:** Hello. I was listening to you talk about about the efficiencies of producing *Stargate*, and frankly, you know, you sound like me or I sound like you, because whenever I do an interview, I talk about *Dark Matter* and the fact that you hear horror stories about other productions writing outlines on on on napkins or getting scripts the night before. And I always tell people, you know, the reason *Dark Matter* was such a pleasant set, and everyone was happy to be there was because we prepared. and the reason we were able to prepare is because I learned it from you, and Rob, on *Stargate*, the fact that, you know, if you're efficient, it just makes life easier on everyone And the money ends up on screen. You're just listening to you talk about that made me smile.

**Brad:** Well, great.

**Joe:** I remember you visiting the *Dark Matter* set, and I introduced you as my mentor. And I remember you laughing it off, but it is true. I mean, the reason *Dark Matter* turned out is as great as it wasn't, and it has its fanbase is because everything I learned working under you on *Stargate*.

**Brad:** That's great, Joe. And it's great that *Dark Matter* did so great. And looked great by the way. It was a great show. It's a shame it didn't continue, we both got the three season curse out of *Travelers* and *Dark Matter*.

**Joe:** We did. We did. But I came on with two questions. Now. Forgive me, I'm late to the chat. So in case someone has asked it, I'll move on. But you know, I would like to know what

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**Brad:** Brief.

**Joe:** Yes. Okay. So basically, I only have one question then. What was the most challenging episode to produce? And why, in the span of your career?

**Brad:** Okay, I can think of two and I don't mean challenging but just downright bloody scary. Do you remember the episode on the planet with the Cirque du Soleil mimes?

**Joe:** Yes, that was before my time.

**Brad:** Where we shot it, which was out in a place called Stokes Pit - which is gone now, by the way, it's just buildings which I'm sure you lament Joe - we were putting these people that were dressed in virtually nothing but makeup outside in temperatures that were pretty much zero and asking them to act. And act in an alien sort of way - speaking of back to the biological question - and I thought, 'Oh my God, we're going to kill somebody - They're going to freeze to death'. One of them happened to be a friend of mine who I had gone to university with. So we have these heaters set up. But it ended up the sun came out and it didn't rain - and I thought all of the makeup would have run off too if it had rained - it was like so scary.

Anyway, the other one was a *Travelers* episode, in Season 2 I think, where I had decided to - like a madman - shoot a skydiving episode. And literally devoted a whole section to the episode in the sky. I went to our producer's offices, 'We can do this right? Yeah, I can do this with GoPros'. So the concept of the episode was a traveler was arriving into the body of a skydiver. They didn't succeed in their mission and so we went back in time until just after that traveler, and over and over and over again while the traveler was falling through the sky, and basically sent new travelers into their host body. And so Amanda Tapping read the script, and - she directed the episode - and she came into my office, and I've never seen an

actor or director so frightened before because she was saying, 'So, Brad, you want me to direct this episode in the sky?' And I went 'You're gonna be fine', she said 'Okay, okay, sure, I just want to make sure'. And it ended up working really, really well because of her amazing planning and because we found an actor who looked just like the stunt person. But one of the reasons it was so scary, and it was so stressful and so risky, was we shot it in Spring and it - as you may know, Joe - it rains a little here and you can't jump out of the sky in the rain, it has to be sunny. And we were losing our lead actor to a pilot that she had got with like a much larger show. And it was Friday. And we needed her to shoot the scenes and we had to tie the skydiving stuff to her on the ground. And thank God on our last available day, the weather opened up, and we were able to shoot the skydiving scenes. And they ended up being magnificent because the sky was beautiful. And I will never do that again. The funny part is people kept... Go ahead.

**Joe:** No, it's just gonna ask: you said the final day... do you mean that you would schedule it for that week and if the weather was bad and you had to keep pushing or? And then that just happened on the last day she was available? Holy smokes. That is a...

**Brad:** There were windows of opportunity and the last window, otherwise I don't know what we would have done. I really don't know what we would have done. So don't do that. Joe on your next show.

**Joe:** I was like... suffice it to say I don't think I would do any skydiving or acrobatic scenes. My second question: You being practically the only guy I know who reads as much sci-fi as myself. I want to throw in a question. Basically, if you were given the opportunity to adapt any - I won't even say sci-fi novel - any novel to the big screen. What would it be? You have carte blanche.

**Brad:** I do know I have carte blanche. Okay. It's called *The Legacy of Heorot*. I think I made you read it.

**Joe:** Yeah, I love it.

**Brad:** Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, and it's a great novel. It's dated, but I think it's just got this fabulous twist in the middle of it that I love - *The Legacy of Heorot*. Joe, you were the one who turned me on to that. What's the novel about the spiders? *Children of...*?

**Joe:** *Children of Time*. Yes. Adrian Tchaikovsky. Terrific.

**Brad:** I was trying to remember that earlier before you came on. Now that's a great example of a book that I love that I don't think would make a very good film. Because of the time

jumping and because I don't know, you could anthropomorphize spiders as well as he does just by hearing their thoughts, you know? Yeah, I think you'd go 'Argh' and that'd be that.

**Joe:** Yeah, that's a good point. And a great answer. I thank you, sir. What I'm going to do is I'm going to log off so that I don't eat up your bandwidth. And I'm going to join the chat and talk about you behind your back. So thank you very much.

**Brad:** Good to see you, buddy. Good to see you.

**Joe:** He's frozen so I can't tell if Brad's angry every so I will see you soon.

**Lawrence:** If you can stay on for one more minute. There's actually a question kind of for both of you, from someone named Yoshida Babies. Which is, I always wondered this: How do you keep the scripts or the character in line when there are multiple writers?

**Joe:** I mean, to be honest with you on *Dark Matter*, I tended to do a pass on everything. And it's the same thing you did when we first joined *Stargate*. I mean, for several seasons. If the writers would all get in the room and we would break the stories together, the outlines would go through all the writers, particularly Brad and Robert, who would give their notes and then we would go through the various drafts. And when the scripts were, we thought perfect, then they would go to Brad and Robert, and Brad and Robert would do their passes on the script to ensure essentially, quality control. It's the same thing that happens on *Dark Matter*. I was a showrunner and all the scripts went through me.

**Brad:** Okay, so that's true, except when you have the ability - and the fortune, the good fortune that we did for as many years as we did - eventually, you all start hearing and reading the same voice, right? So yes, I did, I would do a pass on scripts early on. But, you know, by the time Paul and Joe were writing shows for a year or whenever it was, the voice that came out of their typewriter was virtually the same as the one that came out of mine. You know what I mean? O'Neill sounded like O'Neill, Carter sounded like Carter. At the very beginning it's impossible for the showrunner not to do a big pass. It's impossible. I don't care. I don't care how good a writer you are... quality control is a good way of putting it, but it's also for the actor, so that the actor picks up a script and knows, 'Yeah, that's my character', as opposed to, 'I wouldn't say that' and they might have said that had it been created by somebody else, but it wasn't. And you have this on *Travelers*, I can only name like three or four scripts that I didn't do a dialogue pass on. And of course, the longer you go with writers, the closer they're going to get, because they can see the episodes, they can see the performer performing those scenes and they hear the voice, they hear the character voice. And it would have happened, by the way, had I written *Dark Matter*, same thing would happen.

**Joe:** Well, I tried to get to write on *Dark Matter*. Both seasons! But you were too busy. So uh, you know, maybe next show.

**Brad:** Yeah, okay. Okay,

**Lawrence:** Joe, thank you so much.

**Joe:** All right. See you guys later.

**Brad:** See ya, Joe.

**Lawrence:** All right, Brad. So we're going to go now into some quickfire questions. I hope you're ready. Whatever springs to mind, hopefully...

**Brad:** I'm ready.

**Lawrence:** These will be, like, kind of snappy. There's 10 of them that are coming your way. Number one: What show should we all be watching right now?

**Brad:** Ooh, great. Great question. Not science fiction at all, *Ted Lasso*. So good. So moving, so funny, so modern, fabulous writing. I just love that. I absolutely loved it. *The Crown*. If you want to see money happening on a screen, watch *The Crown*. It's also brilliantly acted and written. *Travelers* - you should watch *Travelers* if you haven't.

**Lawrence:** Most bingeable series on Netflix. If you couldn't write, what else would you do?

**Brad:** Well, I started out as an actor. And then I realized I was a far better writer. But my first... I mean, I was in a theatre company for years in my 20s with my, with Debbie, who's my wife and has been ever since. We were in a touring theater company and we wrote social action theatre and we acted in our little plays and it was fun and funny. And I kind of miss the performance aspect of being on stage.

I'm drawn to science. I wish I could be... It's the math. The math just was too hard for me, so I ended up being able to write science fiction television, which was very lucky.

**Lawrence:** All right, five dinner guests dead or alive. Who do you invite?

**Brad:** Oh, that's too tough. Do I have to have five? I don't know. I'd like to meet Barack Obama. I really, I just think he would be great. You know what, my perfect foursome. I don't even know if they all golf. Jake Tapper, Barack Obama. Just just those guys, they would be...

I just think they're so fun and so smart. And I'd like to have dinner with Scalzi, I've never had dinner with him. He said he's a funny smart guy. That's good. I could actually possibly do some time when the pandemic is over. I don't have a lot of fantasy about stuff like that. I'm a little more practical. Yeah, I can tell you the five golf courses I would like to play. I would love to play Augusta. I'd love to play Cypress. Okay, keep going.

**Lawrence:** No problem. Here's a silly one: pineapple on pizza?

**Brad:** Oh, no. What's what is wrong with you? Why would you even ask that question? No.

**Lawrence:** Okay, who won the fight? Ronon or Teal'c?

**Brad:** Oh, they're still at it. They're still at it. They're like, one gets knocked down and the other one turns to the other and one gets up again, and gives it one of these. That's that's how that goes. I'd like to write that.

**Lawrence:** Yeah, if you write it will animate it. No problem. If the world is going to end in 24 hours and the only one who knows this, what's the first thing you do?

**Brad:** I don't know. I don't know. That's a good... I mean, the only thing I think of when you say that is I wrote an episode of *The Outer Limits* called 'Inconstant Moon'. It was actually a Larry Niven short story that I read, where - and this isn't an answer to your question, but I'm going to answer like this anyway - I just read it, it was so moving. It was about a guy who looks at the moon - 'Inconstant Moon', it's a line from *Romeo and Juliet* - and sees that it's so bright, and it's brilliantly bright. And he goes, 'Wow, look at that' and he phones somebody he knows who he kind of likes, that he's sort of flirting with and then it sinks in, 'Oh my god' - if this there's only one light source in the solar system, and if the moon is brighter, it's reflecting off the sun, the sun must have gone nova. And they're on the dark side. So when the Earth rotates back around again, they're doomed. And so he asks her out and he takes her on a date. And then they end up fighting for their lives. Because it wasn't a nova, it was just a severe flare. What a beautiful story. I had to write it, I had to turn it into an *Outer Limits* episode. I actually got to ask Larry Niven about it. I changed it in ways I didn't want to. But again, to the network and the studio I was new, so I had to do what they said. But yeah, that's my answer to that - 'Inconstant Moon'.

**Lawrence:** Thoughts on the *Lost* season, or series, finale.

**Brad:** Carl Binder, who I've known for 30 years and who... he and I did a show, we're the only writers on a show called *Neon Rider*, way, way back. My very first job. He's not a sci-fi guy, but I knew he would be able to bring the heart element of writing into the show. So I

brought him into *Stargate* - I think it's Season 4 or 5 - and he wrote all the way into *Universe*. So he ended up being with us in our writers' room and an executive producer on the show and he's extraordinary in his own right, of course, and ended up writing I think, the best SGU that we made, 'Epilogue'. But he loved *Lost*. He loved the series. And I watched the pilot and a couple of episodes. And I said to him... you know, we were having lunch in the writers' room and I said, 'Buddy, this show there's no plan. They're just making shit up. I'm telling you right now.' - 'No, no, no, I, you can see that it's like a jigsaw puzzle.' - 'No, there's just pieces everywhere. There's no puzzle.' And so I didn't watch the finale. But I remember the day he watched the finale. And I remember the day he walked in. And I said, 'Well?' and 'I don't want to talk about it'. I apparently was right. There was no plan. I do love that music cue though. When I write, I listen to soundtracks and that final music cue from *Lost* is beautiful. It's just very, very good.

**Lawrence:** Here's another show: thoughts on the sad cancellation of *Firefly*?

**Brad:** Here's an example of a network not seeing what they have. I kinda understand what they were afraid of. Because I watched the first episode that they put up and went 'How was that a pilot? I don't get it.' Turns out it wasn't, they aired them out of order. I didn't realize that until afterwards. And then I think it was Robert or Paul or Joe or both or all, and they said 'Brad, give it a chance. It's really good'. And I ended up watching them all one summer, I think after it was cancelled. And it's so good. The acting is so great. It's a shame it should have had multiple seasons. And it was, you know, that's a shame.

You know, that's how lucky we were. I don't think if we were in the same position, in a million years would SG-1 have gotten past episode five or six. I mean, we, you know, I think fondly of the season as a whole, but we've had some dogs in there early on. And, you know, if we were under the same broadcast network microscope that *Firefly* was under, I think we would have been in trouble. So, you know, obscurity can give you a long life. Not that we... we ultimately ended up being a pretty big hit. But, you know, I'm saying it was. It's a shame. *Firefly* was great.

**Lawrence:** Okay, um, last quickfire question, Who would you like to see at our next AMA, but whoever you say you got to help us get them?

**Brad:** Oh, sure. Joe, Naren, John Scalzi... there's lots of folks who would be better at this than me. You know, would be really fun because she's so witty and and, and charming and lovely? Amanda Tapping, and I will ask her - she's great. Do an AMA with Amanda. Be really nice to her or I'll kill you

**Lawrence:** I know, she's so great. Okay, well, time is almost up, Brad, do you have a few more minutes?

**Brad:** Sure, I can. I could. Yeah, sure. We could do another thing if you have something ready.

**Lawrence:** We got something really silly for you, which is we're going to find out which SG-1 character you are. I think Tommy is going to queue up some questions and then gonna do some kind of like, brain thing going on.

**Brad:** Oh, dear. Oh, no. Choose the word that appeals to you most: Power, culture, loyalty, peace, duty, justice - peace.

An alien race threatens to destroy your planet. What do you do? Laugh... Destroy. Okay, that's funny. Order and attack and remove yourself from combat, fight the enemy to the death, evacuate your people and stay behind to defend their exit, strategize with others the best way to proceed. Get everyone to someplace safe and fast. Uh, evacuate your people and stay behind to defend their exit.

Travelling to an unknown planet which of these do you take to defend yourself? Not a Zat gun, the good old nine millimetre. No weapon they invite violence.

You find a stone with strange markings your first instinct is to: take the stone - may hold some kind of power, scan for radiation, attempt to translate the markings yourself, talk to somebody who you could translate markings, leave the stone where it is. It's between the last two. Talk to somebody who could translate the markings. Scan it for radiation? I don't have that ability.

Which of the following would you do to live longer? Anything it takes, mostly everything as long as I can stay myself. I have to say three... I'd have my mind transplanted into a clone body? Sure I would. Why wouldn't I? Can I be taller? I can ask for that.

You discover a new alien civilization, your first instinct is to... attempt to make peaceful contact.

Your spouse has just been taken by your enemy, how do you react? Destroy your enemy's home planet... No. It's full scale war and attempt to recover your spouse. I'm going to strategize with others to figure out the best way to proceed because I don't have spaceship so I kind of stuck on my own

Which is your favourite colour of the following options?

**Lawrence:** Don't go with black, that's not a color.

**Brad:** That's how I dress most of the time. A mugger approaches you in an alley and demands while at gunpoint, what do you do? I'm gonna say reason with the man out of those choices.

Powerful warships have tonnes of weapons and stuff... What's the best form of transportation? Just jumped in. Whatever it takes to get me where I'm going quickest, that's my answer. How long is this quiz, Lawrence?

If it were illegal which of these crimes would you commit? Murder muhahaha... punch the vice president the face. That's out of character I know. Just the times, just the times.

Somebody love just died. What would you do? Get really mad... cry controllably, go somewhere quiet to reflect, attempt to help the family of the person for as long as I can. Do something to help the family. It's pretty obvious.

You discover incriminating photos of the President... Can I skip this question? Hasn't this already happened? Hide the photos - no, exploit the opportunity - no, throw the photos away - no, burn the photos - no. I kind of say turn the photos over to military personnel, cos that's a bizarre option.

What is your favourite animal? Sure. Panther, bear, worm, dog, monkey, parrot, bald eagle. Dog, dog, dog guy

Finally - it's very small type on my iPad - finally, which word best describes you? That's not fair. I don't wanna say any of those. Ah. The answer is 'awkward'.

**Lawrence:** Do you have a guess on who you might end up being?

**Brad:** I gotta be Daniel.

**Lawrence:** Daniel. Okay.

**Brad:** Thor?! Well, I didn't see that one coming. You know who's Thor the voice of?

**Lawrence:** I do. I do. The character you thought you were gonna be.

**Brad:** Michael Shanks, he's amazing. He loved doing it too, he was great. My favourite line

of Thor's was 'Hopefully it will be the last of the footwear to fall'. Anyway, so that was fun, Lawrence. Thank you, guys. I hope it was not a root canal for anybody. The technical problem was probably on my end. But I hope you could hear me and it was fine. So thank you very much. It's fun. Thanks to Joe and Naren for coming on.

**Lawrence:** Oh, yeah, that was really great. And yeah, no, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, to be honest, all of the members who showed up and asked all the questions there were, there's so many that we can get through that, you know, I've been scrolling through whether it was in the comments or previously, so I'll send them over to you.

Brad: Maybe I can answer some more online. Also, you know, guys, I said, I think The Companion is a great idea. And I really enjoyed writing my essay, and I look forward to writing more. And I really think that you're onto something really cool. So fingers crossed for big things.

**Lawrence:** Yeah, thank... No, thank you. And yeah, if you have any other final thoughts, Brad, it's over to you. Otherwise, you know, thanks to everyone else for coming.

**Brad:** Thank you guys. Bye, everybody.

**Lawrence:** Okay. Take care.