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RED EYE

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RED EYE

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INTRODUCTION

Red Eye, told over an adrenaline-filled six parts, is set between an all-night flight from London to Beijing, the streets of London, and the corridors of power within Whitehall.

Starring Jing Lusi, Richard Armitage, Lesley Sharp and Jemma Moore, the show has been commissioned by ITV's Head of Drama Polly Hill and written by screenwriter Peter A Dowling (*Black and Blue*, *Flightplan*).

Commented Polly Hill: "Red Eye is a brilliantly addictive thriller with an international story taking place on the red eye flight from Heathrow to Beijing. Thanks to Peter's scripts, the story will have the audience gripped and continually surprised throughout. It's got a fantastic cast and we are delighted to have worked with Bad Wolf on this exciting new show."

Directed by Kieron Hawkes (*Fortitude* and *Power Book IV*) and produced by multi award-winning and Sony Pictures Television-backed Bad Wolf. Executive producers are Julie Gardner (*I Hate Suzie*, *Doctor Who*), Lachlan MacKinnon (*Industry*, *A Discovery of Witches*), and Peter A Dowling, with Kristian Dench (*The Capture*, *Strike Back*) as producer and Jingan Young writing episode four.

Red Eye is the collision of three worlds – DC Hana Li (Jing Lusi), Journalist Jess Li (Jemma Moore) and MI5's Madeline Delaney (Lesley Sharp). All three women are thrown into the same life threatening conspiracy when a British doctor (Richard Armitage) is arrested for murder upon flying home from Beijing.

After attending a medical conference in Beijing and coming frighteningly close to dying in a car crash, Dr Matthew Nolan, played by Richard Armitage, arrives home and is immediately arrested at London's Heathrow Airport. A dead woman was discovered in his crashed car and, despite his protests that he was driving alone, Nolan must return to China to face charges.

DC Hana Li, played by Jing Lusi, is the no-nonsense, London police officer charged with accompanying Nolan back to Beijing. Born in Hong Kong and with a traumatic past, she does not want to go. So, once ordered, her resentment for this assignment, and of Nolan himself, is intense.

However, when a death occurs onboard, Hana begins to suspect foul play and she commences an investigation. Further deaths confirm that Nolan truly is in danger, and after a call from MI5, Hana finds herself embroiled in an escalating conspiracy.

Back in London, we follow Hana's half-sister Jess Li, a scrappy journalist played by Jemma Moore, with whom Hana has a fractious relationship. Trying to cash in on Hana's assignment, Jess runs her own investigation into Nolan's extradition and finds herself on the run from a lethal, unknown assassin.

And in Thames House, the head of MI5, Madeline Delaney, played by Lesley Sharp, breaks protocol and risks her entire career to not only help Hana and Nolan stay alive, but to expose an international conspiracy that seems to implicate both China and people in her own government for the murders on flight 357.

The project was developed and overseen by Bad Wolf's Director of Content, Dan McCulloch (*His Dark Materials*, *Endeavour*). Sony Pictures Television are responsible for the international distribution of *Red Eye*.

Commented Dan McCulloch: "*Red Eye* is Bad Wolf's first contemporary action thriller and we're so happy for it to have found its home at ITV. We're delighted with such a talented cast. Peter's scripts are the very definition of a page turner and will keep you guessing to the last minute. The producing team aspire to the highest ambition whilst Kieron Hawkes' craft and performance-focused direction all makes for true appointment to view TV."

Bad Wolf is the multi award-winning production company established to create ambitious, imaginative and relevant drama for the global TV marketplace.

Enjoying a strong partnership and launched with support from Welsh Government, Bad Wolf founded and supported Wolf Studios Wales, a world class production facility in Cardiff, and Screen Alliance Wales, an education and training scheme to engage with emerging talent to grow, nurture and build skills across the creative industries.



FOREWORD BY PETER A DOWLING

When developing a new show with the brilliantly creative minds over at Bad Wolf, I knew I wanted it to be an exciting, relevant, and timely thriller — a story with global stakes that remained rooted in the perspective of relatable characters. I've always been drawn to stories set in a confined location because I find that the restrictions, rather than hindering the storytelling process, actually ignite my creativity. I love nothing more than cornering a character in a life-threatening situation and then puzzling a way out.

Settling on an Agatha Christie-type murder mystery on a plane, I decided the heart of the story would be a police officer escorting a prisoner somewhere for a crime he claims he didn't commit. But the project only fully sparked to life when the idea of a red eye flight to Beijing was decided upon, which would dictate that the police officer escorting our prisoner back to China, to avoid cultural misunderstandings, would probably be Asian. As would the flight staff and many of the passengers.

Suddenly the show had a vitality and contemporary feel that reflected the multicultural world we live in. It was something I knew I had to write. As far as I knew, there had never been a Chinese-British policewoman leading an English show and, at that moment, DC Hana Li was born. A wonderfully complex woman who struggles inside with her own cultural identity but has no hesitance on the job or in her abilities as a detective.

All that we then needed was an equally multifaceted prisoner and when we landed up on the idea of a surgeon, Dr. Matthew Nolan, who had visited China to give lectures, we knew that he could be instrumental in helping Hana investigate the growing number of deaths onboard. Someone who could grow from her antagonist to her partner.

After writing the Jodie Foster thriller Flightplan, I knew that there was only so much of the pressure cooker tension inside a plane than an audience could take and so, in building out the world and the conspiracy, I decided to follow the battle-weary head of MI5 and a tenacious young journalist on the streets of London.

FOREWORD BY PETER A DOWLING

And in making both those roles female we developed three very unique, dynamic, powerful women, driving three parallel narratives. Each woman at very different stages in their lives and careers. Independently unearthing their own piece of the global conspiracy but, only when coming together and combining their knowledge do they get a full picture of why people are being murdered on North China Air 357.

But even then, can they each stay alive long enough to stop it?

Even though I've written and directed Hollywood movies, Red Eye is the project I am most proud of, so far, in my career. Spanning the globe from the nightclubs of Beijing to the streets of London, it is a fantastically visualized, brilliantly acted, wonderfully suspenseful series. I'm probably proudest of the responsibility we had in representing Asian characters - both British and Chinese – on screen in a mainstream drama.

We were so fortunate to have had Jingan Young as a writer for one episode, and she was also a creative consultant for the series. And the invaluable contributions of our Asian actors, development staff, and crew, all of whom strove to keep us authentic. And that, above all the action, mystery, and thrills, is really what makes this show fresh, relevant, and unique in the TV landscape.

I will be eternally grateful to everyone who realized this show. From our amazing director and cinematographer, through costumes, set design, editing... the list goes on. Everybody worked tirelessly to bring my words to life and I thank you all.

Here's hoping DC Hana Li can return for more.

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

DC Hana Li played by Jing Lusi

Hana Li was born in Hong Kong, but after her mother's unexplained death, moved to Britain with her father aged five. Raised to be Chinese within the home and British outside of it, Hana has struggled with her identity, ultimately finding solace in her work as a police officer. Hana is initially infuriated to be escorting Dr. Nolan, but through using her wit, intelligence and bravery to uncover the truth about the murders onboard, she embarks upon a journey of self-discovery. She rebuilds her relationship with her sister Jess, uncovers the truth about what happened to her mother and ultimately comes to accept her identity as a British-Chinese woman.

Dr Matthew Nolan played by Richard Armitage

Dr. Matthew Nolan is a respected medical doctor who, to his bewilderment, is accused of murdering Chinese national Shen Zhao after returning home from a medical conference in Beijing. An ordinary man thrown into an extraordinary situation, Nolan protests his innocence to his police escort Hana. As bodies begin to pile up on board, Hana begins to believe Nolan may in fact be telling the truth. Nolan, however, harbours a terrible secret... if he had been given the opportunity to save Shen, he's not sure he'd have been brave enough to take it. As the series reaches its climax and the wider conspiracy is uncovered, Nolan's bravery will be put to the ultimate test.

Madeline Delaney played by Lesley Sharp

Madeleine Delaney is the recently promoted Director of MI5 and leads the official response to the murders on Air China 357, through which she liaises with Hana. Delaney also negotiates with Chinese Minister Tang as the events on the plane unfold, whilst heading up the search for Jess in London. Crucially, Delaney's every decision is challenged by Tennant, her closest rival in MI5 whom she beat to get the top job; Tennant's constant undermining of her decisions leads us to believe he is somehow involved in the murders onboard. However, in the final episode, Delaney learns the true mastermind behind the conspiracy is someone much closer to home...

Jess Li played by Jemma Moore

Jess is Hana's half-sister and a budding journalist. Previously, Hana and Jess fell out when Jess tried to use dinner-talk to write a story about the police, but Hana refused to go on record. Both felt betrayed by the other... but when Jess realises Hana is caught up in an international conspiracy, she grabs the opportunity to help her sister and get her big break. Jess's investigation leads her to Sir George Chapman, the head of the company that organised Nolan's medical conference. The vital information she uncovers makes Jess a target for both a deadly assassin and MI5, but through helping to uncover the truth behind the conspiracy, Jess ultimately reconciles with Hana



INTERVIEW WITH JING LUSI

What were your first impressions of Red Eye?

I thought the scripts were brilliant. Total page turners and very clever. I loved the character, the concept, the intrigue, and I was desperate to know what happened next.

I was delighted at the prospect of playing Hana. She's a complete breath of fresh air. I have never seen an Asian character portrayed so realistically and genuinely in a British show before. Hana is a regular girl, doing her job, minding her own business when she gets pulled into this insane story. I am so happy to not only see an Asian character portrayed like this, but even more so that I got to play her.

You've described Red Eye as a 'turning point for British Asian representation' – why does it feel so seismic to you?

When we filmed Crazy Rich Asians, the whole cast felt that needle turning moment. I had exactly the same feeling when I read the scripts for Red Eye. And when we were filming, it was as simple as seeing so many Asian faces around me, doing their jobs, getting on with it. It sounds mundane and ordinary, but actually it is extraordinary, because you never get to see that. So frequently the Asian character is tokenistic, or fits certain stereotypes like the comic relief or the serious scientist. It was very moving to see this array of amazing Asian talent, all there for a reason that wasn't box ticking. I truly feel Red Eye is a turning point.

How would you describe Hana?

She is spirited and authentic. She's a real human, who is flawed, but not in a really obvious way – some characters in drama can feel quite extreme. Of course, these people exist in society, but often they seem to be the only ones that are portrayed on screen. For me, Hana is more like your everyday woman, who has her own struggles and her own history, but she feels very relatable.

Tell us more about Hana's relationship with her sister, Jess...?

Hana feels used by Jess, because Jess keeps trying to sell stories about her without her permission. But there is a more complex dynamic going on too. Jess is mixed race – she is Hana's half-sister and her mother is white. Hana has a real complex about that. Being a full Asian immigrant and seeing her sister enjoy half of this white privilege she thinks all white people have, it's the source of a lot of pain for Hana and shapes their sibling dynamic.

Hana is not impressed at being sent to China to escort Nolan (played by Richard Armitage), is she?

She's really annoyed by it, not least because she has to get on a long-haul flight only to come back immediately! But there is something much deeper going on too, as we find out over the course of the series. It is quite traumatic for Hana to go back to the East. Hana left Asia when she was five, and I also left China when I was five, so when I read that in the character notes, it felt like this was meant to be. When I went back to China for the first time as a teenager, there was something really triggering about that.

INTERVIEW WITH JING LUSI

Going back to my home country, even though I didn't have any real memories, it's stored in your system, your DNA. Hana's story is devastating, so when she's sent back East, there are some deeply buried wounds waiting to be confronted. If it weren't handled sensitively, the way China is represented in the show could be a potential hot potato. But the series takes you on a journey and invites us all to challenge our bias, preconceptions, and judgements along the way. This is one of the aspects of the show I really liked: how media and society can manipulate the narrative and influence our thinking.

Hana makes a snap judgement about Nolan doesn't she?

Yes, at the beginning she's on autopilot and immediately assumes that Nolan is a cold-blooded killer. In her defence, all the evidence she has been presented with points that way, and she thinks he's going back to China for a legitimate reason. She understands the assignment, but as things go wrong on the plane, her belief systems start to unravel, she doesn't know what's going on and starts to lose control.

It all comes down to trust. She doesn't know who she can trust on this flight, suspicion is cast on everyone. When I first met the producers to talk about Red Eye, it was the month after the first series of Traitors came out. I was obsessed and I kept saying, "This is like Traitors on a plane!" I love the dynamic between Hana and Nolan because just as she thinks she might be able to trust him, he breaks her trust. It's a psychological cat and mouse.

Does it come easily to Hana to go maverick and follow her own instincts?

She is prone to insubordination. She has been a bit maverick in the past, taking things into her own hands, which has proved frustrating to the chain of command above her. That's why her boss (Simon) told her at the beginning of the series that she needed to take the assignment of accompanying Nolan to China and not make a fuss. Hana loves to challenge authority, that's one of the things I love most about her.

What was it like filming on the plane set?

I loved the plane! We were there for six weeks, and it became a bit of a running joke because I loved that plane so much, I practically moved in. The little nook under the seat in front of me was like my second bedroom, full of my belongings: slippers, hoodies, snacks, umbrellas... They even got caught in a shot one time and the crew had to cut and clear all my stuff out! As much as I love filming on location, it's nice to get homely in a studio and really settle in.

Before we started filming on the plane, we weren't too sure how the space was going to work, because it wasn't a purpose-built set where you can remove the walls for cameras, it was a real plane. For example, every time we filmed a scene, someone would have to close the doors manually, so it didn't look like there was a door open on the side of the plane in mid-air! Thanks to the director, cinematographer, and the phenomenal crew, they made true magic out of that small space.

INTERVIEW WITH JING LUSI

Was it surreal to shoot at an airport while passengers were still going about their business (Stansted Airport stood in for Heathrow)?

Going from the plane straight to Stansted was like leaving a cosy cocoon and stepping into chaotic madness! It was a real working airport, they didn't shut it down for us, so we were filming among real people with flights coming in. It was completely unpredictable.

There's a big scene in the first episode where Nolan stands on the chairs in the departures lounge and gives an impassioned speech when Hana storms in with armed police to arrest him. There were about 150 supporting artists around Richard and everyone else was a real passenger waiting for a flight. We had a sign up saying we were filming, but if they were anything like me when I'm travelling, they might have had noise cancelling headphones and their head in a book. Then they would have suddenly seen Richard yelling like a crazy guy and people dressed as armed police swooping in... I would have probably wet myself but there were people applauding after the takes. It was like being part of a violent flashmob!

There's a fair bit of action in this show, was it a physically demanding job for you?

Yes, there was a lot of running and lots of walking up and down the plane, I definitely got my steps in! I had done a few action projects before Red Eye so I knew how demanding it can be and how important it is to take care of yourself and stay in peak condition. I made sure not to injure myself and get sick, however in the first week, I tripped over going to the bathroom in the middle of the night and ripped off my toenail! I had to do the entire shoot with a freshly ripped-off toenail - that was definitely not part of my self-care regime!

Had you worked with Richard before?

No, we hadn't worked together. I was always intrigued by who Nolan was going to be played by, and when I found out it was Richard, I could not wait to see him bring Nolan to life. Even though we didn't rehearse before shooting began, it quickly became apparent that we had a very similar way of working and approach. We would often have the same specific thoughts on scenes, even from the opposing perspectives of our characters. Between Richard, the director Kieron Hawkes and I, I felt there was an unspoken synergetic shorthand. It was a joy to play scenes with him.

Did you do any research ahead of playing Hana?

Yes, I like to do physical research for my roles where possible. My first TV role was on Holby City and for that, I watched open heart surgery and shadowed a heart surgeon. Having the visceral experience of something unknown, rather than relying on your imagination, is perhaps the most important key to understanding a character for me. I've played detectives before; I had experience from Scott & Bailey and Gangs of London. In the earlier Red Eye scripts, Hana was written as a Special Firearms Officer, and I had done a lot of gun training for previous projects. Even so, I thought if Hana was a specialist, then I should learn as much as I could outside of a stunt training on set. I was in LA a couple of months before filming, so I enrolled in tactical training classes and did shooting simulations. The devil is in the detail, things like knowing how to hold a gun, move with a gun, reload a gun. It's like anything, practice makes perfect. It's just somewhat harder to practice going about your day with a gun, for obvious reasons!

INTERVIEW WITH JING LUSI

How do you hope the audience will respond to Red Eye?

Red Eye is a fantastic, refreshingly original story and I certainly haven't read scripts like this before. I hope the audience is captivated. Even though it's a thriller, it's very character driven, so there is a lot for the audience to invest in emotionally. For me, the most exciting part is that this is going to be a real watershed moment in British Asian representation. We're seeing a wealth of successful Asian-fronted shows and films in America now, but we have yet to see this in the UK, until now. I believe this is the beginning of something really amazing and important. I hope the audience will embrace and enjoy this show as much as we loved making it, and that Red Eye will open the door for more Asians to have a voice and tell their stories.



INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD ARMITAGE

What first excited you about Red Eye?

I got the script with [writer] Peter Dowling's name on it and I remembered watching this brilliant film he made with Jodie Foster called Flightplan. I was slightly obsessed with it at the time, I just loved the scale of the aeroplane and the fact that the whole movie was set on this labyrinthine beast in the air. When I read the Red Eye synopsis, I realised that he was taking inspiration from that movie and expanding it into a six-part series, and I thought the idea of setting such a claustrophobic story on a night flight was just brilliant.

I liked the challenge of playing somebody of Nolan's status and intellect, being thrown into a prisoner situation where he has no authority. In a way, the aeroplane is its own little democracy because he's not on any country's soil, so he's thrown to the lions. I thought it would be really interesting to see somebody like him realising that he needs to fight for his freedom.

After I read the first two episodes I just really hoped the show was going in the direction I thought, and actually it went much further, which was brilliant. I love the fact that the scale opens up and we find ourselves dealing with an international problem working up to a big finale. It's always frustrating when dramas have a disappointing ending, but this is great. So much so that I want more, it was so delicious I'd love to see these characters thrown back into another political situation for a second season.

We're never quite sure if we can trust Nolan, was it fun to play with that ambiguity?

Yes, because he's a doctor, so on paper he should be extremely trustworthy. I trusted him at the beginning of the script, but then there were points in the story where I started doubting him – Is he a spy? Is he some sort of courier or mule? He had gained my trust but then I wondered if this man was really everything, he was telling us. It flips between scenes, and you wonder what he's up to, which is really interesting to play.

What was it like filming in departures at Stansted Airport (standing in for Heathrow)?

It was quite a big ordeal! It felt like harking back to my days on Spooks, where they didn't have massive budgets, but they would set up a long lens and we'd dive into very public places. Busy London streets and places like Liverpool Street Station. There were a few background artists secretly positioned around me at Stansted, but there were also a lot of real passengers who ended up in the scene too. It was like live theatre but for people that haven't consciously bought a ticket! You have to be sensitive to the public. There were signs up saying filming was in progress, but people aren't really as conscious of their surroundings these days, they're just on their phones. It's quite delicate filming a scene with actors dressed as armed police!

We rehearsed what we were going to do in a different corner of the airport, but we only had half an hour's notice before we could shoot and I knew we only really had one or two chances to get it right. The first time you do it is always the best chance to get real reactions. We wanted it to feel authentic, not staged, so they set up multiple cameras to get the shots. When I watched it back weeks later my heart was still thumping because I just remembered that feeling beforehand, knowing that I couldn't screw this up and something could go wrong. It was nail-biting.

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD ARMITAGE

You were shooting in and around London - were you disappointed not to film in Beijing?

I've been to China before, so I could draw on my experience of it. It's always nice to travel, but actually it wasn't really necessary for this shoot. The world they created for Beijing was pretty amazing. I walked onto that set, and it was a wow moment, I really felt like I was down a back street in Wangfujing, it was fantastic. I was more disappointed we weren't up in the air in the aeroplane, but that would have been a six-week flight. I still feel like we should have got some air miles from somewhere for the amount of time we spent in that's business class cabin!

Did you enjoy filming on the aeroplane set?

I was braced for it to be hell, because it was a five-week shoot on the plane and we were in a hot spell, so I thought it would be claustrophobic and horrible. But by the second day, we'd made our home in the business class cabin and we just loved it, it was brilliant. Kieron [Hawkes], our director, and the crew developed a special camera rig so that they could create these seamless shots moving through the aeroplane, which was very much in the vein of Flightplan, so I think it looks really good. I love the lighting palette as well – the detail was amazing, so it looked like we were above the clouds. I believed everything I was looking at, and it was always a surprise to me after a take when they opened the doors and we walked down the steps into a black sound studio, it really felt like we were in the air.

It was an amazing experience, and we missed the cabin after we left, especially Jing [Lusi]. Every time I've been on an aeroplane since then I've been sniffing around in the back looking for staircases and lifts, things you don't always see as the public!

This was your first time working with Jing, how did the two of you get on?

It was great, Jing is so brilliantly clever and she and I both write, so we were trying not to bother everyone with our ideas for the script! But we did make sense of certain scenes together. We tried to play opposite each other in an antagonistic way, but we were also getting to know each other and becoming friends, and that was part of the characters' story too. Jing has got a wicked sense of humour, so it was really nice when I was able to make her laugh as Hana – there is a lot of suspenseful earnestness in the story, so any chance for a little bit of humanity was worth it. I would say Jing took a lot of pleasure from the scene where she put me in handcuffs though, I told her she was enjoying it far too much!

We did get quite competitive when it came to organising treats for the crew. We fell in love with them, they were honestly one of the best crews I've ever worked with. One Friday it was crazy hot weather, so I managed to whip up an ice cream van out of nowhere to come to set – I couldn't believe they were available. A few weeks later, Jing then booked a Crepe Truck, which was insane, literally half the crew disappeared to get these incredible crepes. Then we started thinking about what we could do next and how we could outdo each other.

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD ARMITAGE

Nolan is a doctor, and there is a scene where you administer CPR, how did you make that look authentic?

We wanted to shoot the whole sequence in real time as far as possible, although I know in real life they would spend longer on the compressions, so our version was slightly contracted. I worked with a medic to just make sure we were using the defibrillator machine correctly. I was filming with a real person, so I couldn't really do CPR on him because I didn't want to break his ribs, but I wanted it to be as authentic as possible. Again we didn't over-rehearse it, because we wanted to get real reactions out of the background artists, who didn't know what was going to happen, I love working like that. You want it to feel as real as possible because the drama itself is heightened. There's a high body count in quite a short amount of time (10 hour Red-Eye), it reminded me of Agatha Christie's 'And Then There Were None' but set on an aeroplane. There are a lot of shocking moments as the story unfolds and you have to lean into the reality of them. It was really nice that we could shoot most of the scenes in order, which is unusual, but when you've got full control over an entire set like the plane you can do that. And then once we get off the plane the story takes a different course.

What was it like stepping back onto terra firma for the second part of the shoot?

I had worried that the claustrophobia of the plane was going to really restrict how physically explosive or violent the cabin sequences could become. You can't sprint on a plane in the same way, but actually it was really exciting and I enjoyed the restraint. Nonetheless, the minute we were off the plane and out onto the streets of London, it was like we'd been released from captivity, we were like wild animals! It was kind of brilliant. It was only then that I finally met Lesley Sharp. I've been such a fan of hers for so long, and we had only a couple of scenes together but I wish we'd had more. She brings an incredible gravity and intrigue to the role of Delaney.

It feels like you're always busy – have you come up for air since finishing filming?

I wrote another book called 'The Cut' after finishing Red Eye, and now it's finished, so that feels good. I've also been on the road promoting my first book; 'Geneva', so it's been a very fulfilling year. I've learned so much over my career, and as I'm moving into writing long form myself I'm drawing on what I picked up from my days on shows like Spooks, where you have to create lots of episodes with a really exciting story arc. I met Julie Gardner back in 2007 on Robin Hood and Lachlan MacKinnon from my Spooks days. They are both Executive Producers of 'Red Eye', and it's been amazing to be reunited with them again and collaborate all these years later – I truly adore them and they've taught me so much.

Was it nice to return to a busy set after spending so much time on your own writing?

I know writing seems solitary but I always feel like I'm in a room full of my characters and they never leave you, they invade your dreams! But yes the social side of going to work on a film set is really nice, especially because this aeroplane set brought us together, and we got to know each other very well. I also feel like I've discovered Kieron Hawkes as a director. I don't really want to work with anybody else at the moment because he was so brilliant, I absolutely loved his vision and he's got that David Fincher eye for camera work, it was very harmonious. My first book, Geneva is currently in development for the screen with Sony and actually I want to poach all of the Red Eye creative team for that!

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD ARMITAGE

What does it take to inspire you at this point in your career?

It just doesn't take much really – sometimes you get another job and worry it might be more of the same, but then it just takes one or two exciting ideas, or a new actor to work with, and you find new inspiration, it feels fresh every time. There's always a new seed that you can plant.

You've played such a variety of characters over the years, how have you avoided the common trap of being typecast?

It's funny, early on in my career I had the words of my father echoing in my head saying, "Don't get typecast". And then as I've got older I've been desperate to be typecast! These days I would kill for a long running returning series that we could do year after year. I miss Spooks, I miss the popularity of that show with its regular 7 million viewers over 10 seasons. I would love that staple diet now. I probably wouldn't have said that when I was younger, but now I realise that going back for another season with all the same people is something to cherish. Maybe we should resurrect Spooks! I'm trying to develop my own long-running series now actually – I've optioned a series of books by Joy Ellis in the hope of creating a crime series set in the Lincolnshire Fens. She has written 10 books, so it could potentially be a long runner. At this point in my career, I'm really interested in building a relationship with an audience, because I've been that viewer who is hooked on a show, wanting more and more. Downton Abbey is the perfect example of a show where the audience came back for the characters and the actors, not necessarily the storylines, and I'd love that relationship with the viewership again, I miss it.

Jing described Red Eye as a 'turning point for British Asian representation' – is that something you felt aware of on set?

I certainly felt the celebration of a lead female protagonist of Chinese origin. I knew how special it was to cast Jing and I know that so much effort went into making that representation as authentic as possible. In fact, the team consulted every actor that came on set, there was a lot of cultural exchange and collaboration, whether it was about a line of dialogue or something bigger. I felt it and I really appreciated it – it was sensitive and respectful.

How do you hope viewers will react to this series?

I hope that they will buy into the concept and also be shocked and jaw dropped by the claustrophobia and the extraordinary events that unfold as things run completely out of control. I hope they will ask themselves how they would respond if they were thrown into this situation, I'd like them to put themselves in in Matthew Nolan's shoes.

Could there be a second series?

I don't know, but these are some very compelling characters and I'd love to do more.



INTERVIEW WITH LESLEY SHARP

What drew you to Red Eye?

Aside from the fact that I thought Delaney was a really compelling character, the script was a real page turner, I was intrigued by what was going to happen next. I thought it was really audaciousIndividuals in mortal terror, unable to escape because they're 30,000 feet above ground!

How would you describe Delaney at the point we meet her?

She's a woman returning to work after a big moment in her personal life, where what she had taken for granted has been compromised. As she steps back into the work arena she immediately has to deal with this crisis around Nolan and she's forced to handle this situation against the backdrop of work place politics,.... other people want her job. She's fighting fires on several fronts in a really controlled and mindful way. She's not someone who loses it easily, she's very good at keeping it together.

Do you get the sense that she is well prepared for the difficult negotiations she is facing?

I think years of training allow people like Delaney to click into a totally focussed mindset. In heightened dramatic situations, They operate in a different way. Our director, Kieron [Hawkes] and I talked about Delaney 's back story. We decided she'd been an agent in the field and if necessary would have been a killer

Negotiating with someone who's got the ear of the President of China, and being authorised to give a statement on behalf of the British government is a huge responsibility. She takes it very seriously but wears it lightly. She has risen to the top because she's brilliant at her job, but she's also got a really good, moral, human core, which underpins all of that. She's one of the good guys.

Do you think she has been shaped by working in a male-dominated profession?

Absolutely, I really think that will be part of her generational story to be offered the role as Head of MI5, you know that will have come at a cost. And It will have meant that she really was the best of the best.

Delaney's husband is now severely disabled and requires a full-time carer. She also has a lover. How much do those complications in her personal life impact her?

As the drama unfolds we mainly see Delaney at work, but she certainly has a complex home life. She obviously had a very strong relationship with her husband, and she shares with him her attraction to Her colleague. The mutual respect is very moving. And when it all goes wrong, all he wants is someone who is worthy of her..

INTERVIEW WITH LESLEY SHARP

Are you fascinated by the inner workings of MI5, like so many of us?

Yes, absolutely. Every time I drive over Vauxhall Bridge, I have a look at that MI6 building and I wonder what's going on in there. I love John le Carre's Smiley books, Slow Horses on Apple TV.....I'm really heavily invested in that genre. I was super happy to be asked to play the Head of MI5 in Red Eye, what can I say, it's a dream come true!

Is it fun to play a woman who seems so utterly capable and in control?

Totally. It is amazing to play people who have exactly the right riposte at the right moment, or make the right decision, or even just manage to take a breath before they respond. Don't we all wish that we could be like that?!

What were the biggest challenges for you in making this drama?

I think after the readthrough it was difficult to say goodbye to all the colleagues who were going off to shoot the plane sequences! We then had a very concentrated period later on where we shot all of the MI5 scenes back to back.

Eventually the characters do all come together So I did actually get to spend time with Jing [Lusi] and Richard [Armitage], which was great. I worked with Jing on the last series of Scott & Bailey and was delighted to be working with her again. Richard and I have crossed paths for years – we have never worked together, but always wanted to, so we were so happy to be to be on the same set together.

There's so much suspense in this drama, was that hard to shake off at the end of the day?

The viewer sees all of that adrenaline in the final cut and they are being taken to the place that they need to go to for the story. But for me at the end of a filming day? I'm thinking about learning my lines for the next day and getting to bed early. Sleeping isn't a problem when there's a 5am start the next day!

What inspires you about new projects at this point of your career – are you looking for strong female characters like Delaney to play?

I think the optimum place for any actor is that they get offered a full range of characters to investigate. And it's also the credentials of the other people involved in the project... But mainly it's about terrific writing, I think describing female characters as 'strong' is kind of outdated now... and I don't really know what that means..... I prefer the prefix three dimensional or complex!

How do you hope viewers will respond to Red Eye?

I really just hope the series is the visual equivalent of a cracking good page turner, and at the end of every episode I would love people to say, "Oh my God, what's going to happen next?" And then either head straight for ITX to binge it all in one go or look forward to the next episode like we all used to...water cooler TV magic.



INTERVIEW WITH JEMMA MOORE

What first appealed to you about Red Eye?

When I first saw the character breakdown, I remember thinking this role was written for me – she's the youngest sibling in the family, she's working in a career where you constantly have to be pushing yourself... and in the early drafts she was even called Gemma! I saw a lot of myself in her, and in the way she spoke. I liked that she was quite cheeky and playful, but also really headstrong and determined. When I got the scripts I couldn't put them down. I remember having a glass of wine, sitting curled up with my dog and just reading them so quickly, my heart was racing as I turned the pages. I was super excited. I'm 31 and I had honestly never seen two female British East Asian roles written like this before, nothing like this has ever come into my inbox. So besides the scripts being thrilling and the storyline having all these twists and turns, I knew this was going to be a huge moment for my community. It was so exciting to see a super complex, flawed, determined British East Asian character in a story with so many different layers. I knew it was something I had to be a part of, and I told my agents I was going to fight tooth and nail for this role. I wrote a letter to the casting director after my recall audition and told them I had been waiting for a show like this for so long. I said even if I didn't get the job I just couldn't wait to watch the series, because it's going to mean so much.

How would you describe Jess' relationship with her sister, Hana?

When we meet them, Hana and Jess have fallen out because Hana has previously divulged information about her work to Jess, and Jess used that as an opportunity to further her career by selling a story. Hana felt betrayed and Jess is frustrated that Hana doesn't want to help her more. Although there is tension, Jess also really wants Hana's approval and these two sisters love each other completely, you see that as the story unfolds. Jess has so much respect for Hana and I think she recognises the difficulties that Hana faces – Jess is the younger sibling, so she hasn't had as much pressure or expectation on her shoulders. I am a younger child so I'm able to speak to that. Jess is able to speak her mind more, and to make more mistakes without the same judgement from her parents. Jess does forget her privileges in the world sometimes, being mixed race and having that proximity to whiteness, and I think Hana gets frustrated with her for that. It's a very push-pull relationship between them, but Jess is also fiercely protective of her sister.

Jess is determined to make it as a journalist, so when her sister finds herself at the heart of an international incident that's very tempting for her, isn't it?

Yes, Jess is fed up of temping and she knows that she's capable of stepping up as a journalist. I did my research and I actually spoke to a really cool journalist, who was telling me that journalism is mostly a slog of trying to get a story over the line and then you get this 1% of euphoric excitement when a story does come together. When Jess sees the video of Hana at the airport, she pieces the dots together and sees the story she can write, so she gets into this excited, laser-focused state. Then she becomes more frustrated as she gets closer to the story, because she has Hana to come up against! Jess believes that Hana owes her. This is a huge scoop for Jess – she's very career focused and she also has this sense of justice within her, so she really wants to get this story over the line, but she just can't get past her sister. It's actually a bit of a nightmare for her!

INTERVIEW WITH JEMMA MOORE

Do you think Jess is a bit naive in some ways?

I do think she's naive to the danger she might face, she doesn't quite realise how high the stakes are. She thinks she's untouchable in some ways, and she's just focussed on getting the story over the line, but she doesn't realise the consequences it could have, not just for her but also for her family. She's completely blinkered to all of that and doesn't consider other people's safety.

Tell us more about the research you did before playing this role?

I find the research one of the most fun parts of the job, and when I first got the scripts it struck me that Jess was working in a very male-dominated world and not being taken seriously. So I wanted to learn more about how real women operated in this space, and I spent time reading about highly respected female journalists around the world, and the skill sets they needed to succeed. I read about all these tenacious, brave and resilient journalists, like Alex Crawford and Marie Colvin, and listened to interviews they'd done. It was fascinating to observe their drive and determination. Weirdly a lot of it did relate to acting – the constant knocking down doors and facing rejection – so I guess there was a little research and a little life experience!

Red Eye is a great show for women across the board. Delaney, played by Lesley Sharp, is cool as chips, she's just so badass. I love the fact that all three lead women break the rules and trust their instincts, which is something women are constantly told not to do. These female characters are superheroes. They just go for what they believe is right, but they also work together as a team.

Jess begins her journey as quite the lone wolf, and she isn't on the plane with Hana – was it strange to film so separately from your castmates?

Yes, but I also think that reflects her journey and how Jess feels, she finds herself very alone. She has discovered this thread and she's pulling at it for the story, but she's completely on her own. She's trying to get people to go on the record, and through Jess we start to meet other characters that help tell the story. I do think Jess is also quite a lonely person, and that's part of what drives her to succeed.

Jess and Hana have a lot of phone calls in the show, so me and Jing would call each other up before filming those scenes and go through them together, even though only one of us was shooting that day. It meant that I actually felt quite connected to Jing, even though we were only speaking on the phone.

INTERVIEW WITH JEMMA MOORE

What was this show like to film?

I loved it, it was really fast-paced, but luckily I had some time to prep because they filmed the aeroplane scenes first. Our director made sure everything ran smoothly, even though we were trying to fit so much into the time we had, and we had lots of night shoots, stunts and different moving parts, even torrential rains at one point! But there were so many really fun moments I will never forget. It turns out Lesley Sharp is a badass driver, she can drive in six-inch heels, but she also had a stunt driver, called Lucy. We have a scene driving out of a car park, where she spun the wheel and did a skidding turn. She accidentally hit the radio button and the YMCA came on at full blast, so I was singing along in the back of the car, that was really funny! I just had so many laughs on this shoot and me and Lesley would talk a lot about the Real Housewives of Beverly Hills between takes.

We were working with such a great group of people, a lot of whom I am still really close with, who genuinely cared about the show and wanted to make something exciting. There's so much attention to detail, I think it's going to be really cool and the viewers will really enjoy it. I also had an amazing stunt double, who made me look incredible!

What do you hope viewers will most enjoy about the series?

I want them to constantly be on their toes – I'm hoping that every time they think they can guess where the story is going, the series will steer them in a completely new direction. People might feel a bit cocky thinking they know what's going to happen, but they will be surprised! It is an exciting, fast-paced show full of twists and turns, and you never know quite what's coming next.

The series is going to be huge for our community, everyone is really excited about it already, just through word of mouth. We've got an incredible mix of British East and Southeast Asian actors, and representation behind the camera too. It's really rare to see a British East Asian family portrayed on screen where the focus is a story and not where we're from, and to see characters in non-stereotypical roles. That's part of the appeal, showcasing the diversity within the British East Asian community, playing complex, flawed roles.



INTERVIEW WITH EXEC PRODUCERS JULIE GARDNER, LACHLAN MACKINNON AND PRODUCER KRISTIAN DENCH

How did Red Eye come to life?

Julie: I met our writer Peter Dowling a few years ago. We developed a female-led thriller set on board a submarine. But the brilliant Vigil got in ahead of us! So our beautiful show went down, but the relationship with Pete and ITV was still really, really good, we all loved his writing and his very propulsive, action-packed style.

So we developed Red Eye, which is an original idea from Pete. It started when I said how much I'd love to do a modern-day Agatha Christie. He was keen to set a show on a plane and so Red Eye was born. He brought all the research he'd done on the inner workings of planes for his film Flight Plan (starring Jodie Foster) but Red Eye also goes beyond the plane, onto the streets of London and into the corridors of power in MI5, becoming a story about a political conspiracy.

How did you get involved with the series, Lachlan and Kristian?

Lachlan: As Julie and I were winding down on The Winter King, I had a look at the script for Red Eye and it was like catnip to me, because I love political conspiracy thrillers. I loved Pete's writing and he brings so much authenticity to the environment of the plane, he knows how to get the drama out of it. It's so intriguing for the audience to be able to get into a space like that in a way they've never really seen before – given how often so many of us have been on planes it's so interesting to get behind the scenes.

What's fresh about the story for me is the fact that you have the concept of the Agatha Christie locked room, knowing there's no way out of this sealed capsule, but with the advent of WiFi on planes, you can also be dialling back to the corridors of power in London, letting the story unfold. All the elements work with each other and it just creates so much tension as you go through each episode. Also, Pete really leans into the characters and their worlds in an incredibly authentic way which keeps the story grounded, yet thrilling, and this is something you don't always experience in a pacey thriller.

Kristian: I'd not long finished another show, and this opportunity came up. The scripts are just so unique, they're really smart. Pete is English, but he's spent so long America that he nails that pace we see in American drama, where everything is urgent and confident, moving things forward. But he still keeps this touch of English wryness, so you're just captivated by his stories. I was hooked and it was a no-brainer to get on board.

INTERVIEW WITH EXEC PRODUCERS JULIE GARDNER, LACHLAN MACKINNON AND PRODUCER KRISTIAN DENCH

Were you intimidated by the prospect of creating the plane set?

Lachlan: It was challenging in many respects. Finding the plane was the easy part, but then the next step was working with the Director Kieron Hawkes and Director of Photography Oli Russell to make what could be quite a boring space look good on camera. It's just a small metal tube, so the tricky bit was finding different camera angles, and ways to bring it to life. Luckily Pete knows the plane so well, so there were interesting areas to explore like the crew quarters, which most of us don't even know are there, and the hold, which we all know exists but what's it like inside? It takes you to a whole new level. Doing a six week shoot chronologically worked really well creatively, because it meant the actors were completely immersed in that space and story.

Julie: The team created an incredible environment for people to work in. I was there for prep, and then I waved them off for filming and said "Good Luck, this is going to turn into Lord of the Flies!" With the best will in the world, I wondered how people would cope for six weeks in an enclosed space, but the actors were so happy, I got texts from Jing [Lusi] and Richard [Armitage] saying they were bereft when they left. I wondered if they had Stockholm Syndrome! It was amazing to see the creative endeavour in that space.

Kristian: Our two wonderful leads were so generous, and that set a tone on the plane. It was great because we had the same supporting artists acting as plane passengers for six weeks, and because we filmed chronologically they knew the story they were reacting to, which allowed for some great performances in the background. At times it felt like theatre, it was wonderful.

How challenging was it filming at Stansted Airport (standing in for Heathrow)?

Kristian: Our locations team did a fantastic job setting that up. There were a lot of logistics to consider, as you can imagine, because we are airside with about 200-250 people working as crew and supporting artists. You need a marshal for every four people, and every piece of kit needs a security check. But everybody rose to the challenge.

Lachlan: It's a live situation at the airport, so as much as you plan for it, there is huge organisation involved in getting 250 people through passport control. Then when you start filming you think you've planned everything out, but then a plane will land and passengers need to walk through the middle of your set for an hour. Kristian and Kieron (Hawkes, our director) really had to think on their feet, they did so incredibly well keeping everybody focused on what we had to achieve when they were under significant time pressure.

INTERVIEW WITH EXEC PRODUCERS JULIE GARDNER, LACHLAN MACKINNON AND PRODUCER KRISTIAN DENCH

What was it like bringing such a brilliant cast together for this project?

Lachlan: Jing was our first choice for Hana, and we were delighted when we heard that she loved not only the scripts but also our ambition for the project. We were looking for someone with her range and nuance, who can play all of Hana's subtleties as a character and who commands that presence and authority we needed for the role.

Julie: I had not worked with Richard for more than a decade, when I was a BBC Commissioner and it was the final season of Robin Hood and Richard was playing Guy of Gisbourne. I'd long wanted to work with him again.

Lachlan: I worked with Richard on Spooks, and I knew he'd be just perfect for Nolan, because he's so clever in his performances. Nolan goes on a journey across the series, and you need an actor who can embrace all of that. We were also so delighted that Lesley Sharp took the role of Delaney. This is a great story of power and politics, and Lesley nails the humanity of this character, in fact she makes you want to start a campaign for Delaney for Prime Minister. Jemma Moore who plays Jess was someone I hadn't worked before and we loved her from the moment she walked in the room. Her energy is contagious, and she totally nailed channelling her inner millennial.

How seriously did you take the responsibility of representing the British Asian community in this series?

Julie: It's been a privilege to bring a British Asian community to screen. It's been a great joy to collaborate with our cast, our episode 4 writer and cultural consultant Jingan Young and others in our team. We worked hard with our casting team, and with Jing and Jemma, talking through choices in the script, family dynamics, and even the set dressing of the Li household to get it right. I've learnt a huge amount on this journey.

Pete started the development process thinking about a British cop taking a possible criminal on a flight, and we had a lot of conversations about where the flight would be going and what would feed the thriller. I think Pete would say the piece came together for him when he started to envisage a female British Asian detective on the flight to China, and once he had that framework the stakes felt greater. The series felt more specific and relevant, and the casting potential that decision opened up felt really fresh and important.

Lachlan: We had some really amazing conversations with our cast and cultural consultant Dr. Jingan Young, on every level, even down to the dressing of the family home. We wanted to portray a world that exists in Britain today – you don't want to end up with a waving cat, just going through all the cliches that you've seen for many years. So it was a really important aspect of the development process to have that consultation and to make sure that representation was correct.

INTERVIEW WITH EXEC PRODUCERS JULIE GARDNER, LACHLAN MACKINNON AND PRODUCER KRISTIAN DENCH

This is also a story that champions women, isn't it?

Julie: Absolutely, the piece is built on the three women, on Jing Lusi as our lead, DC Hana Li, she is the active force in the piece. Then Lesley Sharp as Delaney on the ground for MI5 with that political conspiracy point of view. And Jemma Moore as Jess for a younger perspective, with a storyline to get us out of the confined spaces of the MI5 ops room and the plane, opening up the world. So the series is very much built on the point of view of these three amazing women.

What were the biggest production challenges on this job?

Kristian: It's always money! It's the same with every show, you have to work out how your budget can match your ambition, but we had a superb team and I can't stress enough how much everybody came together to provide solutions. There was such a great atmosphere and belief in the project, which made this a wonderful experience.

Lachlan: You always want to bring as much production value as possible to the screen. For example, when the plane takes off and the sunlight passes through the cabins, you have to think about how you light that. Another well-known show that used the same studio built huge LED screens to create that, but we had an electrician walking past the plane windows with a lamp on wheels to achieve the same effect! That is the epitome of ingenuity and resourcefulness. There was so much we wanted to achieve that was so expensive, so we just had to think like filmmakers back at film school.

Julie: The thing that haunts me most, even now, was the amount of time we had to spend discussing the timeline of the scripts, scene by scene, working out what time of day it is in London and what time it is on that plane. The plane is flying West to East, so the time and light is changing, so there were constant questions about the timelines.

What do you hope the audience will most enjoy about the series?

Julie: I would hope the show will feel very bingeable and that people will want to know what happens next. I've had people say to me they've watched all six episodes in one sitting and that's been the greatest reward. We want people to enjoy piecing together the conspiracy, and working out who the bad guy is, like a classic Agatha Christie. And...I love the idea that the next time the audience gets on a plane they will think about their own flight differently, I've definitely had that experience since working on the show.



INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR KIERON HAWKES

How did you get involved with Red Eye?

I had wanted to work with the production company, Bad Wolf for a long time, and then this script came in and it was brilliant. I love thrillers and Red Eye felt ambitious and fast paced with great characters, so I was in straightaway. It also felt like a very international show, and yet still had something very British about it. I fell in love with the character of DC Hana Li and how dynamic she was, and then Nolan is just such an interesting prospect, starting as a poor innocent and then leaving you feeling not quite so sure. I was intrigued by that ever-shifting feeling towards each of the characters.

Plus, I'm a massive Hitchcock fan, and it felt like there was something quite Hitchcockian and old school about the murder mystery element of the story. There were so many things that I was immediately attracted to and I could immediately see the show on screen, I understood what was required and how we would make the piece feel interesting, visual and energetic. Even though I knew there would be huge production challenges in terms of filming on a plane!

Is it tough to create and maintain that sense of suspense and tension?

Yes, it's definitely one of the challenges when you're directing a show like this, because you can find yourself leaning into one aspect of the piece and then something else drops off. So to get the right pace, you could forget to focus on the character element, but that's the bit that people actually connect with – we care about humans and what they're going through. I needed to make sure that Red Eye had the pace and energy it deserved, while also giving the audience an emotional connection to each of the characters and delivering their personal journeys and dynamics.

It's also tough in this series, because you're asking the audience to care about people they don't necessarily trust, and that isn't an easy thing to do. Thankfully I was working with actors of the calibre of Jing [Lusi], Richard [Armitage] and Lesley [Sharp], who are so good at playing complex characters, they can push and pull an audience at will, that was amazing.

How did you find the demands of filming on a plane?

It was a real challenge. This was an example of really technical filmmaking, thinking about lighting the space, working out all of the logistics and delivering the agreed schedule. One of the things I fought for very early on in the process was to shoot the plane scenes in continuity, so filming the first scene on day one and continuing in the right order. That is an incredibly rare thing in filmmaking, but it just felt like the quickest way for us to understand the story and allow it to grow. It meant that the plane became a really cool place to shoot, because we were all kind of living the story as it happened.

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR KIERON HAWKES

It was a difficult location to film in, but we brought in some cameras that were quite nimble. Being on a plane is amazingly immersive and it was really beneficial to have that set, and for me to be able to walk from the cockpit all the way to the toilets at the back. Everyone sort of recognises a plane, but it's my job as a visual storyteller to make this confined space look interesting and to develop a kind of visual language, as well as the atmosphere and claustrophobia that develops throughout the series.

Tell us about filming at Stansted Airport (standing in for Heathrow) – what was that like?

Any filmmaker would sweat listening to how we did it! We were given two days at Stansted, but the authorities couldn't give us specific times in advance of when we could shoot, because of planes coming in. So we had to be nimble on the day, it was an ever-changing schedule, which made it very difficult. We had a big scene with Nolan standing on a chair in the departure hall, shouting to everyone before he gets arrested, and we had half an hour's notice for that. So I had to devise a lot of that in the moment at 10am, knowing we were filming at 10.30am, it was terrifying, but also exhilarating! Definitely one of the maddest filmmaking experiences I've ever had.

Were you concerned about the reactions of real-life passengers, given you were filming with actors dressed as armed police?

We had signs up, but if you're planning to have cops bursting into an airport with prop firearms, people will react! So I decided we would shoot the sequence twice from two different camera angles. The first time we only shot up to the point where the cops come in, we didn't shoot with the guns. Then the second time, we moved the cameras closer and did the whole scene. But the turnaround of people at an airport is very quick, so within that time lots of new people had arrived in the departure hall.

It was definitely the most challenging day in terms of logistics and shifting people around the airport, it frayed the nerves, but it was good fun and exhilarating!

What was it like creating the world of MI5?

It's always interesting to me looking at those kinds of worlds because there are so many existing references. You have to lean into them at some point because they're a recognised thing and you lose people if you totally reinvent it, but lean in too much and it becomes a cliché. It's a really fine line. We were helped by the way Lesley handled the character of Delaney. The moment I saw her delivering those lines I knew this was a fresh take on that world – a much more considered, cerebral version than I had imagined the character to be. She wasn't talking fast and rushing down corridors, she was very in control. I just thought she was remarkable and we developed MI5 from her performance.

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR KIERON HAWKES

Was it difficult to tell this story without filming in China?

Well, I love shooting in foreign locations, and when I opened the script and saw the word 'Beijing' I was thrilled. But when I found out that we weren't travelling, another part of my filmmaking brain became really excited about working out how to achieve Beijing without going there, I love the artifice and make-believe of filmmaking, so for me it becomes quite thrilling working out how to deliver that. In this piece, the Beijing we see is mostly Nolan's distorted memory of the place, it's not necessarily an honest account, so it was fun for me to create that.

As well as being a rich, complex thriller, this is fundamentally a story about strong women, isn't it?

Absolutely. All of the women in this show are really powerful and strong, which I find really thrilling. If you look back at most of the stuff I've made, it all has very strong female leads – I don't want to tell more alpha stories from a male perspective, I'm just not interested in that. I grew up with a very strong mum and I see the world like that.

The drama also stands out for the way in which the British Asian community is depicted, was that something you had to pay consideration to?

I did. Any time I'm representing an underrepresented group of people it's very powerful to me, and I feel very proud of this drama. Seeing so many of our cast members, like Jing and Jemma [Moore] being so thrilled about the way the show handles its themes made it feel like an amazing project to be part of. That's why I'm a filmmaker, because I want to communicate people's stories.

How do you hope the audience will respond to the series?

I just want people to go on the ride. It's a thriller and it's good fun, but it's also about the characters. It's about big governmental conspiracies and how they affect people on the ground, as well as what's happening behind the scenes at various governmental levels, and that's something all of us can recognise right now. I think people feel so out of control about these huge global issues, like they can't make a difference on a human level. I just want people to be hugely entertained by this brilliant story, but invest in these characters too.

I think Red Eye is a real binge watch because I've been working on this piece for more than a year and it still thrills me watching the scenes, even though I should be sick of it by now! I'm still loving watching it, the characters really drag me in, so I think the audience will really enjoy it.

EPISODE ONE SYNOPSIS

Written by Peter A Dowling and directed by Kieron Hawes

A drunk and disoriented Dr. Matthew Nolan races through the streets of Beijing and crashes his car. Wounded, he catches a flight home to the UK, only to be detained at the airport and accused of murder. DC Hana Li is assigned to escort Nolan back to Beijing on the next North China Air flight. When a group of Nolan's colleagues land at Heathrow, they're asked to return and give witness statements.

MI5 director Madeleine Delaney is leading the operation, keeping close communication with Chinese Minister Tang and the British Prime Minister. She must tread carefully, as a Chinese-British nuclear deal could be at risk. CIA officer Mike Maxwell is also helping on the sidelines. Meanwhile, Nolan tries to escape police custody at the airport and videos of him publicly declaring his innocence go viral. Hana's sister and aspiring reporter Jess Li sees the video and jumps at the opportunity of a story.

On the flight, an incident onboard shakes everyone. Nolan believes he's being framed.

CHARACTER & CAST CREDITS

DC HANA LI.....	JING LUSI
DR. MATTHEW NOLAN.....	RICHARD ARMITAGE
MADLINE DELANEY.....	LESLEY SHARP
JESS LI	JEMMA MOORE
JOHN TENNANT.....	JONATHAN ARIS
MIKE MAXWELL.....	MIDO HAMADA
SIR GEORGE CHAPMAN.....	PETER GUINNESS
JENKINS.....	CHRIS ANDERSON
DESK SARGENT.....	JAMES ARDEN
SEBASTIAN BURKE.....	NICHOLAS BOULTON
OFFICER MILLER.....	KEN BRADSHAW
RÉN YÚNXI	TAI YIN CHAN
CAPTAIN CHÉN	THOMAS CHAANHING
CO PILOT WÚ.....	AIDAN CHENG
MR HONG.....	ANDY CHEUNG
MRS RUǺN YUÈ	DAPHNE CHEUNG
DANIEL LOMAX.....	RYAN CLOUD
RACHEL LI.....	CATE HAMER
OFFICER DOYLE.....	JACK COLGRAVE HIRST
RUTH BANKS.....	CASH HOLLAND
SUPDT. SIMON O'BRIAN	ROBERT GILBERT

CHARACTER & CAST CREDITS

MEGAN CAMPBELL.....	STEPH LACEY
FLIGHT ATTENDANT.....	BRIAN LAW
TONI ZHĀNG.....	DAN LI
FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL.....	EUAN MACNAUGHTON
LEN DELANEY.....	KEVAN MACKENZIE
DR. STEVEN HURST.....	OLIVER MALTMAN
DR. KATE WARD.....	LUCIANNE MCEVOY
NURSE AYESHA.....	SONAL NATASHA PATEL
COHEN	MARIA RIVERA
ERIC JONES	PARKER SAWYERS
SHĚN ZHÀO.....	ELAINE TAN
TIFFANY SÒNGYÚN.....	XIANGYI TAN
DR. AMBER HURST.....	ZOE TELFORD
ELIZABETH BURK.....	SARAH TOOGOOD
DR. CHRIS PEELE.....	RICK WARDEN
TÌN LOK LI	DAVE WONG

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Executive Producers.....	PETER A DOWLING JULIE GARDNER LACHLAN MACKINNON
Created and written by.....	PETER A DOWLING
Writer (EP 4).....	JINGAN YOUNG
Director.....	KIERON HAWKES
Producer.....	KRISTIAN DENCH
Director of Content Bad Wolf.....	DAN MCCULLOCH
Director of Photography.....	OLI RUSSELL
Supervising Editor.....	JOSH CUNLIFFE (EPS 1,3,5,6)
Editor.....	EMMA MARIE CRAMB (EPS 2&4)
Composer.....	IAN ARBER
Casting Director.....	CAROLINE STEWART
Production Designer.....	ALICE NORRIS
Line Producer.....	FRY MARTIN

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Consulting Producer.....LETITIA KNIGHT
First Assistant Director.....JORDAN KOTRAS
Location Managers.....JEREMY DEEHAN
.....TOM MELLISH
Production Manager.....CHRISTIAN OUGHTON
Sound Mixer.....ANTONY MEERING
Hair & Make up Designer.....JUTTA RUSSELL
Costume Designer.....IAIN MACAULAY
Script Editor.....JOE BARKER
Art Director.....CHARLIE FOWLER
Post Production Supervisor.....JACK GLOSSOP
Stunt Coordinator.....MARK MOTTRAM

ABOUT BAD WOLF

Since launching in 2015 Bad Wolf has been at the forefront of international TV drama, producing over 70 hours of high-end drama for HBO, BBC, SKY, ITV, Disney+, AMC and MGM+. Shows including The Night Of (HBO), His Dark Materials (HBO/BBC), A Discovery Of Witches (Sky / AMC Networks), Industry (HBO / BBC) and I Hate Suzie (Sky / HBO Max) have all gone on to achieve global recognition and win multiple awards at the BAFTA, BAFTA Cymru, RTS, Emmy and Golden Globe Awards.

Recent productions include The Winter King (MGM+/ITVX) which has become ITVX's most successful exclusive production since the launch of the streaming service, and the hugely successful 60th Anniversary Specials of Doctor Who with BBC Studios for BBC One and Disney+ topping the ratings charts with the Christmas Day special.

Thriller Red Eye will debut on ITVX in the spring, followed by the first full series of Doctor Who for Disney+ and a third season of Industry scheduled to air on HBO later in 2024. Currently in production is the second series of Doctor Who with Ncuti Gatwa as the Doctor, and six part series Dope Girls for BBC One.

In December 2021 Sony Pictures Television acquired a majority stake in Bad Wolf to become partners in the company's next phase of international growth.





If you are to use any material from the *RED EYE* production notes, please include a TX credit for the drama alongside a credit for ITVX.

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