

## Transcript for Graeme Wood | Understanding ISIS (Episode 613)

### Full show notes found here:

<https://theartofcharm.com/podcast-episodes/graeme-wood-understanding-isis-episode-613/>

GRAEME: It makes them sort of go to first principles and explain things to me as they would to an ignorant child. They realize that whoever this person is, he's not some spy who has an ulterior motive, he doesn't have some agenda that he's trying to push. He's just here to try to understand.

JORDAN: Welcome to The Art of Charm; I'm Jordan Harbinger. On this episode we'll be talking to my friend Graeme Wood, author of *The Way if the Strangers: Encounters with the Islamic State*. Lots of people requesting I interview someone related to ISIS. Of course Graeme is not a member of ISIS, just to be clear, but he's an expert in that niche and he's had close, personal contact with members from ISIS, and recruiters for ISIS which is freaking fascinating.

Today we'll discuss how and whom the Islamic State recruits, who's vulnerable, how they convince otherwise normal people to throw their lives away, how to persuade terrorists and terrorist sympathizers to talk to you in the first place, and practicals of how to travel and work in war zones. His job involves going frequently to places where he's never been and usually where people are killing each other and coming back with stories. So yeah, he's got some experience navigating these issues. All this and lots more stories to boot on this episode of AoC.

And if you're new to the show, we'd love to send you some top episodes and the Art of Charm Toolbox. That's where we study the science of people and discuss concepts like reading body language, having charismatic nonverbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, social engineering, networking and influence strategies, persuasion tactics and everything else that we teach here at The Art of Charm. Check that out at [theartofcharm.com/toolbox](https://theartofcharm.com/toolbox) or in our

iPhone or Android apps at [theartofcharm.com/iphone](http://theartofcharm.com/iphone) or /android. Also at theartofcharm.com you can find the full show notes for this and all previous episodes of the show. Whether this is your first or 500th episode of AoC, we're always glad to have you here with us. Now, let's hear it from Graeme Wood. Yeah I read the book and I thought, "Wow this is going to be really unusual and interesting and the title -- even the title's creepy, *The Way of Strangers*, but that means something, right? That's in the ISIS lore that means something.

GRAEME: Yeah, so it's *The Way of the Strangers*. What it means is "Al Ghoraba," in Arabic. So almost everybody I spoke to had been part of some group called "Al Ghoraba." And it was like social clubs, terrorist groups, in one case like a pub trivia team called "Al Ghoraba." And so, I had to ask them, "What does this mean to you?" And they would say, "Look we understand that we're weird. We're strangers. We're unwelcome in our home countries and in Syria and Iraq, the countries we're trying to get to. So for us, it's very important to understand that we crave a minority status and we think it means that there's something good about us because the prophet himself said that you should expect to be strangers and you should expect to be rejected.

JORDAN: Even that alone is kind of creepy. Because on one hand it's charming to say like, "Oh, it's almost like these religious hipsters who want to be different than everyone," and that's the allure. But then on the other hand it's "No, as soon as we're not extreme enough that we become mainstream, we kind of have to reel it in, rethink everything, and become strange again, become extreme again." It's even more bizarre that it's going to be a pub trivia team and a racquetball team along with your local suicide bomber squad is going to adopt the same nomenclature.

GRAEME: Yeah. It's been for Jihadists for a couple decades now, this trope, "The Strangers." So there's actually a song, they call it a "Nashid," called "Al Ghorba," which is just repeating the word, "Ghoraba, ghoraba, ghoraba," which Jihadists -- they'll chant

on the way to executions, they'll sing it on the way to trials. So it's been something that's been in the ether in Jihadism for a long time and then ISIS has just fastened onto it. And they just love to be emphasizing how different they are from the others and how that difference means they have a kind of righteous posture that nobody else can take.

JORDAN:

Ugh, man. When I read things like this, and I read your articles in The Atlantic -- some of them as well. They're super in depth and interesting and simultaneously terrifying. Who the hell is going to these recruitment meetings and over to Syria? You hear about it and you think, "Oh, it's two teenagers or there's this guy, this weird, local, imam guy who was rejected from his own mosque." Sure, but it's not just that. I mean, the borders of Turkey and Syria are saying things like, "Yeah we had 100 fighters in two days." That's not just the local weirdo and two impressionable teenagers. Those numbers might be old, there might be even more now at this point. Especially not just traveling over the line from Turkey, they could be coming in from other areas as well now that that whole area is a giant mess.

GRAEME:

Yeah it used to be with terrorist groups, you could look at their HR departments and look for them to seek particular people. So they would look for ideologues, they'd look for gunmen, they'd look for people with different skills. But it would be a fairly select group that they would be casting about for. Now with ISIS, they want to create a society, which means they're going to look for people who are brutal, people who can be the muscle, and they'll look for ideologues. But it also means they're looking for mothers, they're looking for people who are able to run telecommunications departments for the State, and so, you've got to expect that they're going to pull in people from all walks of life. What do they have in common? They all have a kind of belief in the Islamic State as the fulfillment of the religion. Once you get that baseline, there's really not a single type of person they will reject or accept. As long as you're willing to sign up for that and give allegiance to the State, they want you.

JORDAN: I think what freaks me out the most is looking at somebody who I would say, "Oh, this person's clearly intelligent." They're a surgeon or an attorney or some sort of banker that understands complex financial instruments, and also simultaneously has no problem with the complete lunacy of the rest of ISIS ideology. How is it possible to be that disconnected or am I the one that's disconnected and I don't understand that these things are completely separate?

GRAEME: No when I talk to people too, I would expect to find them to have a clear diagnosable, mental malfunction. Something that had truly made them unemployable, unlikeable in their home societies. That's definitely not the case with every ISIS fighter. There's a distortion that we see because a lot of people who hate ISIS for obvious reasons, they like to emphasize the people who are former rent boys or drug dealers or so on. People who have backgrounds that really would make them unemployable in Brussels or wherever. But actually, as you mentioned, we find people who are perfectly well-functioning surgeons, attorneys, computer programmers -- extremely common among ISIS. In fact, rather than just being miscreants, misbehaving criminals, we find that they're applying their intelligence that would have got them pretty far in normal societies to ISIS, full bore. They're very excited about it.

JORDAN: Why? Why do you think that is? And that's the big question obviously, but you're the expert.

GRAEME: Yeah for some of them, they have had certain setbacks in life. Usually not really professional ones. Maybe they had family issues, maybe you can see certain ways in which they've been challenged. And the challenge has made them wonder, "Is there more to life?" Now I'm also a little bit cautious about overly psychologizing them too because we ask, about religious people in particular, "What happened to them to make them like this?" We're less likely to ask the same question about what makes someone a Democrat or a Republican?

JORDAN: True.

GRAEME: Or a Trump supporter. In some cases, it's just because that person has come to the view that this is the right way to be. This is the right answer to the questions that matter most in the universe. For a lot of them, although you can look back at their past, they will certainly themselves, describe their journey to the Islamic State as the only rational way to be a Muslim. It doesn't mean we have to accept it at face value, but we have to at least give them the courtesy of listening to the rational explanation that they have and not going directly or exclusively to the sort of psychopathology type of explanation.

JORDAN: Right, because it is tempting to go, "Well of course this guy who went over there has all this violent crime in his past, naturally he's attracted to this sociopathy that is public beheadings and all this creepy stuff and all this rape and pillaging and then putting it on YouTube and having -- being patted on the back for it instead of getting thrown into San Quentin."

GRAEME: Just get to go pro with it.

JORDAN: You get to go pro, yeah.

GRAEME: So that for some of these people, you can really see the attraction. There's also this other current for the people who really have violent backgrounds, criminal backgrounds, which is not just ISIS, but the tradition of martyrdom in Islam, which long precedes ISIS, has said, "If you're a martyr, or if you're prophet," -- those are two categories of people, they get to bypass the purgatory phase of the afterlife. So, a normal Muslim who is eventually going to go to paradise, has to have his sins burned away and it's described in great detail how the fire will burn away those sins and it's unpleasant. Well, if you've got a long sinful history, that sounds pretty nice. You can shorten your life, you'll live only another year, or month, or day -- But the fact that you were gay in the past, that you were a drug dealer, that you drank alcohol, whatever the

sins that are -- things that are considered sins in conservative Islam. The penalty phase will be bypassed for you.

JORDAN: Right, so instead of saying, "Even if I'm a good Muslim now, my past requires me to burn in purgatory for a couple centuries," or however long that process is. It just becomes a -- like you said "rational" outcome to go, "Well look, I hate my life. I now live in Syria. I have no future and no family, no friends back home. I just got out of prison, I've got scars all over me or whatever. Mentally and physically. All I have to do is go shoot some people I don't know and care about and then get shot in the process and it's all good from here out?"

GRAEME: You get the get out of purgatory free card. Even someone like Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi, who's usually considered like the brutal godfather of ISIS. This is a guy who had tats, who had a criminal background, and I think a lot of people say that and they say, "Well, he certainly wasn't religious. He certainly didn't actually believe all this religious stuff that he's talking about." Oh, he definitely believed it. It just dovetails very well with a view of the world that says, "You can be forgiven for your sins if you take a particularly cumbersome path that requires a certain amount of bravery." That's exactly what he did.

JORDAN: How are people getting wrapped up in this? Because of course we see it in the media and things like that, but if I wanted to go join ISIS right now, I don't even know what the first step would be. And this is obviously, I just want to be very clear, not an instructional manual today on how to get into Syria and join ISIS. But how is ISIS reaching out to these people? Because I would imagine if I'm a computer programmer Muslim, non-Muslim thinking about converting, whatever. And I'm sitting in my office at some startup or Microsoft or just some super boring job in Texas or something, not to pick on Texas. How do I go from, "Man I'm so sick of filing these TPS reports and automating this software from parking structures," to, "I've got to go to Syria."

GRAEME: Yeah so first of all, ISIS has its own IT helpdesk so you might not like filing TPS reports in Plano but you might end up filing them in Raqqa, so --

JORDAN: I didn't come to Syria for this.

GRAEME: Now the way that you do it now is different from the way you would have done it a couple of years ago. Before ISIS declared its caliphate, it was doing this somewhat under the radar and Muslim communities were noticing this because there were tens of thousands of young men who were sort of disappearing, going to Syria, recruiting their friends back home. But it was a matter of joining the Jihadi superhighway, going to Turkey usually, and then crossing the border, which you could do pretty much without restriction. So you could fight in Syria and join the Islamic State or Al-Qaeda.

Now after 2014, and they declared a caliphate in June 2014, then it really changed where they became super vocal about the obligation of all Muslims to flock to the caliphate. And at that point, it didn't get much more difficult. There were in fact Lonely Planet style travel guides that were published to how to get to the Islamic state, what to bring with you, how to make sure that when you go you won't immediately be recognized as an ISIS follower. There was a system of safe houses in southern Turkey where people who weren't well vetted would be able to be kenneled for a few days while their social media accounts were scoured, all the kind of extreme vetting sort of procedures that we might associate with our own government now.

So, that changed probably about a year ago when ISIS started to say, "It's getting to be too tough. The border is closing down and now don't even try." So if you reached out to ISIS today and successfully made contact with ISIS as opposed to an FBI agent posing as ISIS, then they would tell you, "Attack in place. Do it now."

JORDAN: Really?

GRAEME: "Don't wait." And they even suggested, "Don't even try to get in touch with us. Trying to get in touch with us means getting disrupted." If you succeed, then they'll find out the chains of communication. If you don't succeed then you'll get rolled up and it won't work. So instead, just go to Crate and Barrel, get a knife, unwrap it, and go to town.

JORDAN: Oh, my gosh, that's equally/more terrifying because they really did figure out, "Okay we can't do top down communication anymore. We can't even do these isolated cells anymore because they get disrupted so we're just going to rely on you to,"-- like you said, "Attack in place." But the other thing that I'm not quite wrapping my head around is, if I have no sense of purpose and I really want to do something for ISIS but I don't have a connection with them, what's the motivation to then go to Crate and Barrel and get that knife out? I'm not getting any props from these people that won't even talk to me. So is it just the belief system that later on I'm going to go party with all my friends in paradise or something like that? Is that the only motivation?

GRAEME: Yeah that's pretty much it. So if you're doing this in Minneapolis, you know there was a mall attack in Minneapolis, then you're certainly not in this life going to be celebrated. You get full kudos in the afterlife.

JORDAN: Oh, man, so it seems like you have to then increase people's religious fervor and get them to believe in the most extreme version of afterlife, paradise, etcetera, and then get them to motivate beyond whatever very natural fear they might have going to a mall and killing a bunch of innocent people, and then dying in the process. It seems like that should be a very high bar for action and yet it doesn't seem to be. Although statistically, I guess the attacks are fewer --

GRAEME: They're pretty rare. There is a process of disinhibition that ISIS has. ISIS is very psychologically adept at talking to people in person and through just their propaganda and explaining why the things that seem right to someone who's raised in the



West, someone who is raised in the East -- those things are actually wrong and what's seemed wrong to them before actually right. That's part of the kind of psychological cell that ISIS has had for recruits for as long as it's existed. There's another thing though that I think we need to point out. These attacks, they're pretty rare. And the fact that ISIS is using them is in some ways a reflection of a response to the success that the United States and others have had in thwarting Al-Qaeda. So when ISIS decides to have a state, a utopia, they're doing that in part because Al-Qaeda spent the better part of 15 years just failing over, and over, and over again to have spectacular attacks that would be worthy of September 11.

JORDAN: Mm-hmm.

GRAEME: So ISIS says, "All right let's stop that. Let's try to build a state instead." Now, with the state being thwarted, they can't really go back to the September 11 style attacks because those have been thwarted, we know how to disrupt those pretty well. Not perfectly but pretty well. So what are they limited to doing? Things that are completely non-disruptable, you know? Cash purchase at Crate and Barrel is something that you can do just by, you know, recycling cans from the side of the road --

JORDAN: Sure.

GRAEME: -- and then getting the cheapest knife off the shelf.

JORDAN: You mentioned that there are ways that ISIS persuade you to ditch your western values and beliefs even if you are feeling alienated from your western home. What is that process like? One of the things that really freaks me out about all this is when I was younger, anything that would have given me a really strong sense of purpose -- and I'm talking about young, young, maybe 15 or 14 years old, would have been really cool. Even if it was something kind of awful, I would like to think I'm not crazy enough to go for something that's ISIS in scope. I remember thinking, "Oh, I'm going to join the U.S. Army and go do some cool spy stuff or whatever," and every kid dreams of

this 007 lifestyle. But I would have done pretty much anything that would have had any kind of cool purpose --

GRAEME: Yeah.

JORDAN: -- that felt bigger than going to school and getting bullied or, you know, reading science books. And that sort of troubles me on this internal level. Because I -- it's really easy to go, "These dumb Westerners who are going over there, they deserve what's coming to them." But really, they're just dumb kids in large part who are getting duped by these people into ditching the values that their parents and the West, the schools have taught them. How does that process work?

GRAEME: You're right to say that it's something that is really universal. I mean in our culture, there's perhaps slightly more of a premium placed on rebellion against the ways of one's parents, but you can see it in many different social phenomena. The Alt-right nowadays, they use this phrase "red pilling" and they mean it in The Matrix sense of choosing the red pill, going down the rabbit hole, and discovering that your reality is counterfeit and all the subjects that you thought were taboo, like the reality of race -- they're really big into that. They in fact are the central concepts that motivate history. ISIS has a very similar kind of M.O., where they point out, "Look you have in a kind of wooly way consider yourself a Muslim and let us show you something, something that will make you completely flip your categories of understanding of your religion and you show you that some of the things that you thought Islam forbade, actually were recommended by the prophet." And so they find old interpretations of say verses about sex slavery or about beheadings and they say, "Apparently these are part of your religion. So even if you thought that Islam was stopping slavery, abolishing slavery, there's actually a deep tradition of slaveries being practiced and recommended." So that's part of it. I had one conversation that I think illustrates this really well with Musa Cerantonio, who's in Australia and I spoke with at great length about the

Islamic State, who was at one point, asked to be the Islamic State's official English language translator.

JORDAN: Oh, wow and he lives in Melbourne right? He's just like this big Australian guy, white dude with a beard.

GRAEME: He's actually a delightful guy. I really enjoyed his company. He was very open in conversation and very knowledgeable about this very weird interpretation of Islamic scripture. He once though told me -- and this really shows how well integrated he is into the Western culture that he in fact grew up in. He said, "Look, you ever see the movie The Wizard of Oz? The Wicked Witch of the West -- we call her the Wicked Witch of the West, but is she really wicked? I think, in fact, she's the hero of the movie and Dorothy is the wicked one. Dorothy wants to steal the shoes. She's stolen the shoes, in fact, of the wicked witch of the west's sister at the beginning of the movie. Those belonged, by all rights of inheritance, to the Wicked Witch of the West.

And so, Dorothy is the one who's on this murderous quest to kill someone who's, already though, a grieving sister." His point was, I think, to say, "We have cherished categories of what's good and evil and we don't even think about them. But just stop for a second and imagine if the world might be completely inverted. If you're able to do that with the Wizard of Oz, you might be able to do that with the rest of the universe as well and come to the conclusion that ISIS has everything right."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: It's still hard to wrap my head around it because of the grotesque amounts of violence. Did you ask him what he thinks of -- "Okay well if it's so good, what's up with burning people alive or drowning them in cages or cutting their heads off and then putting it on the body and putting it on YouTube? What could possibly be good about that? Especially when the

person came there -- in the case of this British cab driver whose name unfortunately escapes me --

GRAEME: Alan Henning.

JORDAN: Yeah he came there to bring a bunch of medicine and food or something like that for children and they just went, "Oh, we've got to kill this guy because he's from the U.K."

GRAEME: Yeah.

JORDAN: Something -- I mean, essentially.

GRAEME: The Alan Henning case is one of the most grotesque of ISIS's. The most lovable fellow who comes from the U.K., drives to bring material to Syrian orphans, then ends up with his head sawn off on video.

JORDAN: Yeah.

GRAEME: So Musa's response to that was to say he doesn't like it. It's not nice to watch. On the other hand, it is simply permitted. In times of war, there are options for what you can do with a prisoner, those include ransoming that prisoner, enslaving him, or executing him. And Alan Henning, unfortunately, got the worst of those options.

JORDAN: I will probably never fully understand at an internal level what's happening here. I mean do you feel like you really fully -- you've been in contact with a lot of these people. How good of a grasp do you feel like you have? Of course academically and you know just about everything you could want to know about these guys and this group and the beliefs but, how much can you, even in the darkest depths of your mind, sort of identify with what they're doing and go, "Okay, I guess I understand why they feel that way."

GRAEME: There's a step beyond which I hope I never go. You know, I've watched many of these videos, beheadings and otherwise, and I was once a butcher -- slaughtered animals.

JORDAN: You were?

GRAEME: I was.

JORDAN: Actually.

GRAEME: I was personally.

JORDAN: Oh, okay.

GRAEME: And so when I see someone putting a knife to another person's neck and I remember that, you know, there's a certain kind of slackness to the skin that you have to use your thumb to eliminate before the knife will bite properly. I see them doing that. I have this kind of muscle memory of what it was like to do that with creatures, living creatures. And then to realize that someone is willing to do that, has been disinhibited so much that he's willing to do that with a human being, it really is beyond that final level of comprehension to me.

And I can get just to the point of where the knife is placed next to the neck, but when I remember how that might feel with even just an animal, it's a deep experience, and for a human being, it's absolutely inconceivable that I would do that. On the other hand, I know from having spoken to supporters of the group, what the intellectual justifications are, that they completely buy into. Well, what can I say? There's a wide spectrum of how human beings can explain things to themselves.

JORDAN: Sure.

GRAEME: Wider than I ever expected but it's finally -- the physical act is hard for me to understand.

JORDAN: Who's vulnerable when it comes to being recruited by the Islamic State? Because of course the fear mongers on the news are like, "It can happen to anyone. It can happen to anyone's kids," and I'm just -- I'm not sure. It seems like enough people would go, "Ha, no thanks, I'd rather play Xbox." I think a lot of people who are sitting in Raqqa right now, whose parents or even themselves went over there, are probably thinking, "I really wish I was at home in Canada playing Xbox right now."

GRAEME: I wish that were true. I don't think it is. I think there are a lot of people who have gone over there who regret going but most of them not. Remember when ISIS says, "Come to Raqqa. Fight for us," they are not offering comforts. They are offering privation, struggle, and so when shows up in Raqqa and discovers that life's kind of hard, the water's dirty, there are bombs dropping, it is exactly what they have been promised, and they like it. Now the question of who is vulnerable to this, when someone says, "Anyone could be vulnerable," this is the sense in which that's true. ISIS is playing on human frailty.

They're playing on a sense that we're not perfect, and none of us is, and there's a longing for something more in our lives. So they'll say, "Look what kind of job do you think you're going to have? Is that going to be -- Let's say you do it for the next 40 years, all the way to retirement, will that be deeply satisfying to you?" The answer is, for all of us, we always have to wonder, "Is that going to be enough?" So they're playing on a universal sense of existential dread.

Now most of us, when we feel that dread, we have enough other things in our life where we don't then think, "Maybe ISIS has the answer to it." Not everybody has that and ISIS -- it's thrust itself on our conscious so effectively that a lot of people -- they kind of look into the abyss. And then they look up, what they see is ISIS. We would hope that they would find something like, I don't know, Peace Corps, family, or really anything other than ISIS. Guess what? ISIS is in the news, it's simply an option that presents itself in -- especially in sort of alienated Muslim communities all the time.

JORDAN: Yeah it seems to be the case. Especially when I look at places like France, where there's really a highly disenfranchised Muslim minority, living in big cities. Perhaps not coincidentally the place that seems to be front and center for some of these attacks, especially from people who have either come back from Syria or are in place and affiliated loosely -- or claim to be affiliated with ISIS. We see less of it here maybe, but that could be in part because of the way that people in general assimilate in the United States. I have plenty of friends who I went to school with who wrote me letters when I had Sam Harris on. They're like, "Oh, I don't love this guy but thanks," you know, "I like the show." When I see their pictures, and you know, they've got beards and they look like some of the guys you might see on the news but I know from knowing them, and talking with them, that they're completely normal Americans.

GRAEME: Yeah.

JORDAN: So, is it just the idea or in part largely the idea that, "Look you have to feel separate, you have to feel like you don't belong, and that's the impetus." And forgive me if I'm trying to boil this down to much but I'm still trying to wrap my head around why somebody who lives in a nice country, with good food and plenty of water and education, would feel like they need to go and do that, and the only answer I'm coming up with is they don't feel like they're getting good food and education and have a future in that country.

GRAEME: I think you're partly right, partly wrong. So first of all, about Americans who are going to ISIS, there's very, very few of them. We're talking like 50 identified Americans -- publicly identified Americans who have gone over, out of the 40,000 people in total who have traveled to fight for ISIS and you compare that number has dwarfed by France alone. You're right to point to the communities of alienation in France. American Muslims, extremely well integrated, extremely rich.

JORDAN: Yeah.

GRAEME: Wealthier than the average American.

JORDAN: I'm from Detroit where all the Muslims I know were loaded and --

GRAEME: Exactly.

JORDAN: -- like more American than me probably.

GRAEME: And if you were to be from Paris, then the Muslims you would know would probably not fit that description. Here's where I think you're a bit wrong in the interpretation of them as not having good enough food or prospects and so forth. Now in France, those Muslim communities, they do not have good economic prospects in the sense of expecting to be leaders of French society. They will not be entrepreneurs. They do live though, in a European welfare state. So there's a sense in which they have a kind of cradle to grave security. They will be able to survive.

They don't have any kind of worry about having starvation or -- after you reach, in a kind of Maslovian Hierarchy, the level of feeding oneself, having some work to do, maybe informal work, then you start getting to the point where you're wondering what is there that's more. In some ways would be a defense against ISIS if the recruits were more deprived. Instead, they're asking, "Okay all the things that we're taught to worry about, whether we have work, whether we have food, those things are taken care of so now we have to consider these higher problems," and ISIS is right there to step in when those higher problems present themselves to the people's existential kinds of sets of needs.

JORDAN: So then why is the same thing not happening -- and maybe you've answered this and I've just missed it. Why is the same thing not happening in communities like Detroit which have the highest population of Middle Eastern people outside the



Middle East? And like I'd mentioned when I said, "More American than me," I was thinking more in terms of consumerism and things like that.

GRAEME: Oh, yeah.

JORDAN: I mean these kids I grew up with, I'd say, "Oh, so your parents are from Lebanon?," and they're like, "Yeah we own this restaurant, you should come try it," and I'm like, "I really like this food," you know we're all hanging out and doing that stuff and going to college and they have their Ramadan stuff and I'm learning all about this. Why aren't those people schlepping over to Raqqa if they have this same sort of postmodern concerns as somebody else who has food and shelter and education.

GRAEME: I think it's because they have ambition. The prospects for you if you're an upwardly mobile or upper middle class Muslim person in the United States include working for Google, the options are good and if you apply yourself and work, you have some realistic chance of joining whatever elite you're aspiring to. That is just not the case in France or in even a place like Norway. I spent some time with a cell of ISIS supporters in Oslo. I don't know if you've ever been to Norway.

JORDAN: I have. Oslo is so expensive. That's all I -- and everyone was really nice. That's what I remember.

GRAEME: Yeah I had that 40 dollar large pizza and --

JORDAN: Yeah.

GRAEME: Oslo there's no one who really needs to worry about his life if he's a citizen of Norway. What is it about Norway that's evidently unsatisfactory, to at least the 15 or so Norwegian Muslims who I was speaking to? And I really think it has something to do with Norwegian society having met all of these other deeper, more base needs and leaving them to think about, "Is there something more?" Is there something more

than just waiting for the grave while the Norwegian state takes care of you? For most of us, we would find, "Oh, well we've got families, we've got hobbies, we've got love." For them, it's not always enough.

JORDAN: So in many way, one of the reasons maybe we don't have as many people going off to Raqqa and Syria to join ISIS is because they're too busy working to try to survive.

GRAEME: Yes and working is a good thing, is a good way to spend one's life.

JORDAN: Yeah, I agree.

GRAEME: There are some ways that are less satisfying than others but it really does displace some of the sense of longing for something more. It helps a lot too, if you're in a society like the United States, where historically, at least the ideal is that this is a place where whatever your dream is, it can flourish here. You don't have to have your dream subsumed to other people's dreams or to a single American dream. But you can strike out on your own and do whatever your ambition is, you can fulfill it. Maybe in Norway, there is -- and certainly in France, historically, there has been this sense that the dream is, you can succeed by becoming French. You can become Descartes. Creating your own dream and having that be fulfilled with the same level of glory as the single French dream, that's not quite how people are taught to conceive of their futures. So letting many utopias bloom, I think, has been part of the defense against ISIS recruitment in this country.

JORDAN: How are you getting these people to have 40 dollar large pizzas with you, whether it's in Oslo or some of the people that you'd mentioned -- I think, was it in the U.K. or Australia, that later on ended up taking a boat and essentially going missing? Obviously I would imagine they're floating on a shoreline somewhere at this point.

GRAEME: They were caught putting a boat into the sea. They probably would have ended up eaten by sharks or something on their way to Papua New Guinea but in fact they're in jail right now, with my expectation that they will be convicted for trying to join the Islamic State.

JORDAN: Oh, man, yeah that is kind of even more weak. Because now there's no lore of like, "What ever happened to them? Are they --" No, they're in jail --

GRAEME: Yep.

JORDAN: -- eating rice gruel or whatever you eat in Australian prison. Forgive the use of the word friendship here but how are you fostering almost a friendship with some of these folks, or connections in any case?

GRAEME: I don't mind the word friendship at all. Like I said about Musa Cerantonio who was one of the Australians who was caught, I really enjoyed my time with him. You know, the conversations I had with him, I would have extended those by weeks if I had the time. I played soccer with him and his Jihadist little soccer club, I went to their prayers, got hot chocolate with him, saw the sights around Melbourne. And I found him deeply charming, to use a word that's not normally applied to ISIS supporters.

JORDAN: Yeah, no kidding.

GRAEME: The question of how do I actually get in touch with them -- I think it matters what you ask them. So, ISIS supporters, especially ones who have a public profile as Musa Cerantonio did, even when I first talk to him, you have to make sure that you're asking the questions that they want to talk about. And there are many people who had approached him or tried to approach him with questions like, "How can you be so evil?" or, "Have you no shame?" or, "When is ISIS going to attack in Australia?" These are questions that they don't show any sort of openness to really any kind of answer. So I think that Musa

may have reacted positively because I was asking him a kind of deeper question within a sincere spirit of openness about what he really believed. I asked, "You are a follower of ISIS, what does ISIS really want? How did you get to be this way? How did you get to be so weird?" That's a question that he was totally ready for and seemingly not insulted by.

JORDAN: Yeah because it sounds a little bit insulting. If somebody asked me that, I would -- I don't know how I would react.

GRAEME: But remember, these are strangers.

JORDAN: That's right.

GRAEME: He's one of the ones who, very avidly, took on this role of "the stranger." And so if you ask him, "How did you come upon this interpretation of Islam that is shared by basically just a small sliver of the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world?" then how can he not understand that as simply a statement of fact? "Your interpretation is the weird one. It doesn't mean it's wrong, but it is weird." So I would ask him that directly and I think he would take very little offense at it.

JORDAN: Was he born into an Islamic background and family? Because it's hard to tell from -- I guess you can't really tell a Muslim by looking at them aside from the beard, but it looks like he could have -- if he had shaved his beard, he would look like somebody that played football in Ohio.

GRAEME: He was not born Muslim. He converted as a teenager. His name at birth was Robert Cerantonio. He comes from an Italian, really Calabrian Australian family. I met his mom, I met his brothers -- didn't meet his grandma but his grandma actually speaks Calabrian dialect --

JORDAN: Oh, wow.

GRAEME: -- of Italian to him. She asked him, "Musa, Musa, Perché sei diventato turco?" "Why have you become a Turk?" So he's really

coming from a family that has nothing to do with ISIS or Islam at all and he's undergone a metamorphosis that is absolutely complete.

JORDAN: Turk seems to be the comment that old people use everywhere --

GRAEME: Yeah.

JORDAN: -- for people who look Muslim. I don't know how that happened, I guess it's a European thing.

GRAEME: I don't know. Maybe she's old enough to think of the Ottoman Empire.

JORDAN: Ottoman Empire, yeah exactly. So what does his family think? I would imagine universally, families are pretty upset. Not just because of the conversion, maybe they were Catholic before that or something, but certainly after he ends up in prison or starts preaching online about Islamic States. Did you ask his family about any of that?

GRAEME: His mother would hover in the background when I'd be having tea with Musa at his house. And she was like reading fashion magazines and --

JORDAN: Sure.

GRAEME: -- like watching TV. She seemed to have only the foggiest notion of what her son was talking about. We -- like we were talking about questions like, "Under what circumstances is it proper to burn someone alive?"

JORDAN: Oh, man.

GRAEME: She's like flipping through her copy of Australian Vogue or whatever it was.

JORDAN: Oh, my gosh.

GRAEME: I think with the parents and families of ISIS supporters, there are different stages for any particular family. Denial seems to be a fairly standard one to go through. You find people who, to this day, believe that their kids who are definitely in the Islamic State, are handing out bottles of water to Syrian refugees and orphans.

JORDAN: Oh, wow.

GRAEME: And then you find others who have come to the realization that their kids are gone, their kids are never coming back, they're going to die. They're going to die dramatically, murderously -- Their tombstone will essentially be a suicide bombing video.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: I saw a video of -- was she from the U.K.? I can't remember. Her son vanished one day and then just kind of -- it was this poor older single mom and he turned up one day on Skype, you know. "Hi I'm in Syria." Eventually he cut off contact with her. Probably she was freaking out every time they called on Skype and it was no good and who knows he went to the front line, there's no Wi-Fi there. And then the next time she saw him was months or years later and it was just a video of basically his like, mutilated body on the ground and she was like, "That's my son."

Talking in one segment of the video and then the next is just burned, you know from a drone or a bomb or something like that. It's heartbreaking simultaneously but, I also think, "How did you not know that your kid was getting radicalized?" And it's really easy to point fingers and think like, "Oh, you're such a bad parent," but I don't know, I don't have kids yet but I know my parents had no idea what I was up to a lot of the time. They still have no idea about bad stuff I did when I was a kid. And that was before Internet was around where you could hide everything in this magical box that was password protected.

GRAEME: Yeah.

JORDAN: This is hiding stuff in my room for God's sake, they didn't know where this stuff was. How aware are some of these parents that their kids are undergoing radicalization or are they mostly in denial? Once you start to grow that beard out and you're posting online or you're talking about these things, there has to be a point at which you just can't ignore that anymore.

GRAEME: If you grow out your beard, as a young Muslim convert perhaps, that's not really a sign of anything.

JORDAN: That's true, that's true.

GRAEME: It might be that it's just simple piety in a mainstream Muslim form.

JORDAN: Sure.

GRAEME: I think many parents though, it's exactly as you say. Imagine, you know, what did your parents know about your online or computer activities?

JORDAN: Yeah.

GRAEME: Your hobbies in general. When you leave the house and you're a teenager, how much do you report back about what you do? It's the same thing with an ISIS supporter. They're of course, being cautioned as they get radicalized not to tell their parents too much about what they're doing and so yeah, I think for a lot of the parents, the first they hear about it is when either the FBI shows up and says, "We got contacted by your kids," or when they discover that their kids have gone to the airport and flown to Turkey and then will never be seen again.

JORDAN: There's a story in the book about, the parents thought the kids were upstairs and it turns out they were -- they'd already been apprehended at the airport.

GRAEME: Yeah there are actually several cases like that. The parents know that their kids are undergoing shifts in identity.

JORDAN: They're teenagers.

GRAEME: That's what teenagers do.

JORDAN: Right.

GRAEME: You would expect them to do that and if they don't do it, then you'd wonder why they were such lame teenagers.

JORDAN: Sure, yeah.

GRAEME: And instead the shifts bring them towards membership in a genocidal group. In my group I describe the American who's the highest level of the Islamic State right now. His parents knew for 10 years that his Islamic practice -- he was a convert, they were Greek Orthodox -- was a little out there, it was on the fringe. And, even after he was convicted of hacking into AIPAC, the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee's server and spent some time in prison, and got out, they sort of harbored the view that maybe he's on the straight and narrow. He seems to be okay, spending a lot of times with his books, just doing some odd jobs on the side. That's what happens when a kid starts to grow out of his misbehavior. Actually he was radicalizing and the first available opportunity he went to the Middle East and now he's in the middle of Raqqa.

JORDAN: Wow. I was surprised to hear that a lot of these kids who are going over there -- or people in general who are going over there, are showing up Skyping video. It's easy to think of Raqqa as this like tent city or something like that, but in reality, although war-torn it has 500,000 plus people, or it did at one time anyway.

GRAEME: It's a fairly small actually, kind of crappy town, even in the best of days in Syria. But yeah, it had Internet cafés that were



available first to everyone and yeah, you could go back and you could go to Twitter or Skype and communicate with your friends and encourage them to come. And then eventually it was slightly restricted. It was only foreigners who could go to those cafés. And now I think the cafés are completely closed. But for a long time, even after the declaration of the Islamic State, the beheading videos, yeah you could communicate from Raqqa without too much difficulty.

JORDAN: Do they have cellphone service and things like that there? I'm just wondering who's providing that technology.

GRAEME: Yeah, they do. It's I think important to understand how well integrated the Islamic State is into the world around it. So we have this sense -- because it's kind of a roach motel kind of phenomenon where people go and they tend not to come back -- that it is truly isolated. Actually there's economic activity, there is movement across the border. Up until I think the middle of last year, you could take a bus from Beirut, Lebanon and the bus would say in the front, "Going to Raqqa," and for fifty-odd bucks, you would eventually show up in Raqqa. So there's human movement that goes back and forth because it's part of the world. It's also how they get food, it's how they get money, it's how the Islamic State gets tax revenue, by skimming off the top off of normal commercial activity. So, although it seems like a complete hermit kingdom, it's not quite North Korea in levels of impermeability.

JORDAN: It's funny that you mentioned North Korea, I was just going to ask how it compares to North Korea. Because I've been to North Korea a few times, obviously as a tourist, and it's highly restricted, you can't walk around. I mean you can't even walk out of your hotel other than to the immediate grounds and there's always guards and they come out of weird places. I mean I swear these guys are coming out of the bushes if you're walking around or pretending to jog like I do. That's my favorite game is, "I'm going for a run." You know, "Oh, sorry, I didn't realize I was at the end of the beach," even though there's a bunch of rocks and a fence. Which is a good way to

get shot now, by the way, I found out. But, I'm still here. I mean I know there you can't move around. The phones don't necessarily go outside your city. If you buy a mobile phone in one town you can't necessarily call someone in another town. You certainly can't call internationally, you can't fax, you can't email. It seems a lot less restrictive than that.

GRAEME: Yeah in, say the city of Mosul. I was last in the city of Mosul at the very beginning of 2013. To my knowledge, there were no foreign correspondents who returned to the city of Mosul until it started to fall from ISIS's grip, last year, the end of 2016. So, think about that. That's three years of flying totally blind in terms of the intelligence we have openly about what's happening in the city of Mosul. That means Mosul -- we knew less about it than we knew about what was happening in Pyongyang. Now the city of Raqqa, even longer. There's been so few people who have come back from Raqqa who can explain how the government works, how it's been administered, that when that city finally falls, it's going to be nuts. People there have a view of the world that is so distorted by religious craziness and just general isolation. It'll be like cracking open the Branch Davidian compound except on the scale of a whole city.

JORDAN: A whole city, yeah, sure. So you do think it's eventually -- this whole project is doomed to fail at some level. I mean I don't think ISIS is going to take over the world either but in my amateur, my layman explanation in my head says, "Well that could just be a stalemate for 30 years or something." I don't know, I don't have any concept of the timeline here.

GRAEME: Yeah I don't think it's going to be a stalemate for 30 years. I think Raqqa will fall in 2017 and that will be the last of the really large ISIS population centers. But that's just territory. The caliphate was declared as a territorial state, so it's important that the territory be eliminated. But my book shows, if nothing else, that this is something way bigger than just territory. There's this whole countercultural view of the world that has inspired people in places like Tokyo and Melbourne.

The number of countries that are represented in the Islamic State, the number of languages that the propaganda appears in, demonstrates that it has become an inspiration to people in a huge range of places. So the territory, that'll disappear, the caliphate of the mind will survive.

JORDAN: It is disturbing to see, you're right. It is super international looks of the U.N. when you look at some of these photos and stories of the fighters there. Also I took a look at Dabiq, their magazine, and I was expecting a total P.O.S. PDF publication and this thing, it looked pretty good. They clearly have professional layout designers, graphic designers, copywriters. I don't even know what goes into creating something like that. But I know that when we create things like that for The Art of Charm, it can cost hundreds to thousands of dollars for even just a few pages, let alone all of the content that's going in there. They clearly have a lot of people that aren't just doing this on their 1998 Tandy computer, right? There's real --

GRAEME: Yep.

JORDAN: -- power behind this.

GRAEME: Especially in the early issues of Dabiq, which is sort of like the official inflight magazine of the Islamic State. Dabiq, in those early issues, they clearly had an art department that, if you squint at it, you might think it's an issue of like Maxim.

JORDAN: Yeah with the worst --

GRAEME: It's definitely not an issue of Maxim.

JORDAN: --centerfolds ever, yeah.

GRAEME: Right. And instead, I can say with pleasure that it has moved asymptotically toward a real P.O.S. magazine. It now is the kind of thing that you would think that some seventh grader had made after reading a QwarkXPress for Dummies book or something. So, I have to assume that it's because their

capabilities have been eliminated. Either because people outside the territory of the Islamic State are no longer willing to work on it, or because people inside the Islamic State have been picked off, through drone strikes or through suicide bombings. And if your HR department is not replenishing itself, then eventually you start looking much worse.

JORDAN: How can we protect ourselves if we think, "Whoa my kid or my family," you know, "the recent convert," or, "We're Muslims and my kid seems to be really studying this stuff, and I'm proud of him but I want to make sure he's not talking to some weirdo on Telegram or Whatsapp in an encrypted chat, that eventually I'm going to come home one day and there's going to be a note on the counter." What do we look for? How do we even begin to fight this in our own families, in our own communities?

GRAEME: In the United States I think we first need to realize that this is pretty rare. The fifty-odd people who are over there, those are the publically known ones. There's another 100 plus cases that are in the justice system. And we could say maybe another 100 who have made it. So now we're talking about 150 people. Still not so many. One is too many and if you're the parent of one of these kids, than it's absolutely tragic.

The main thing I would say for parents is, they want to not be in denial. They have to realize that denial is dangerous for their kids. Their own denial is dangerous for their kids. If they think, "Maybe he's getting into the Telegram channels of ISIS," trust that spider sense that's tingling and maybe look into it a bit more. You know, the numbers are so small that I wouldn't want Muslim communities to put these issues ahead of other, more pressing ones that they have.

You don't want Muslim kids to start moving to Raqqa, but there's -- right now they're really just doing that. So, there are other issues that they face as Americans, as human beings, that are not specific to being Muslim, that are probably more important than monitoring their kids for joining the Islamic State.

JORDAN: Right, so make sure they're not eating Cheetos for dinner is much more important than making sure the -- that statistically anyway, that they're not being recruited by ISIS.

GRAEME: Yeah, exactly.

JORDAN: Well you travel a lot in war zones, and in these crazy areas. Places where you've never been, where people are blowing things up or shooting or just acting up because there's no local authority that's going to enforce the law. Tell me some of the experiences you've had and how you stay safe and how you make connections in those areas.

GRAEME: Well usually, nowadays when I'm going, I'm going as a magazine journalist. And that really means that I have professional advantages from being ignorant. That is, I'm there not because I'm a long time Burma expert, but because I'm there to explain to my audience, which definitely does not consist of Burma expert, what's going on in a conflict area of Burma.

So I think the first thing that I do is I try to make my ignorance work for me. And that means arriving and immediately exposing myself to the ridicule of people by asking the most basic questions about their lives, which is a professional strategy because it makes them sort of go to first principles and explain things to me as they would to an ignorant child. But also, it confers a certain degree of safety because they realize that whoever this person is, he's not some spy who has an ulterior motive, he doesn't have some agenda that he's trying to push. He's just here to understand. And I find that a lot of people will -- have a much less hostile attitude, and even an attitude kind of, paternalistic, "Got to save this person from himself," that is -- it does confer a form of security.

JORDAN: Right, "Explain it like I'm five," pretty much shows that you don't have any preconceived notions of the place or an opinion that you're trying to enforce on other people.

GRAEME: And it happens also, to be perfectly honest, you know I'm often showing up in places where I just don't know the situation and I have to ask. This is true too of speaking to ISIS supporters. If you go to someone and you ask, "Tell me about what matters to you most in this world," then maybe they have hostile intent toward you, but it's such a basic question that no one will decline the opportunity to explain the answer to that if they have some strong beliefs that they've come to. So there have been journalists, better journalists than I, who have died in the line of duty, trying to get people to talk about, say "More sensitive subjects."

Daniel Pearl would be one example. He was trying to speak to Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, trying to speak to associates of him and then eventually dying by his hand. That's a concern, of course, that I have when speaking to an ISIS supporter or just going into an unfamiliar territory where people have guns. But for anyone, when you're interacting with someone, you have a kind of mental model for how that interaction is going to go. And it doesn't include that person being a completely open, deeply curious about what is most important you, and it helps when you start off with that kind of interaction. Then you can move, as time goes by, to some of the more sensitive topics.

JORDAN: That makes sense, right, because if someone sees you as almost a blank slate, it's really hard to paint you in a negative light.

GRAEME: Yeah. I know of journalists who have had their creep detector go off when they've met with people who they've known for a while, who were going to escort them into a part of town that they'd never been to before. Why did that moment seem to be the one where they said, "I'll pass on this particular opportunity because I think you're going to kill me?"

Now why was it at that moment? I think it was because it's people they knew before, people who they had had enough

interaction with, they had been able to think through how this might feel. How might this interaction go that ends with this journalist's death? But if you show up and you have just a very open attitude and have never met the person before and are asking questions that are important to the person but unexpected, then they're at least off their balance enough so that they'll just have to answer your questions and continue drinking that tea with you rather than go to the calculating posture of trying to figure out how to kill you.

JORDAN: Have you ever been in a situation where you think, "Maybe I shouldn't go on this field trip right now?"

GRAEME: I've been in situations before where I knew if I didn't extract myself I would be dead.

JORDAN: Really?

GRAEME: Oh, yeah. It was a couple years ago I was in Central African Republic. I was going to an area of town that was held by a group called the Anti-Balaka. It's French for "Balle-AK," AK Bullet. Anti-Balaka means that they believe that they are impervious to AK bullets.

JORDAN: How's that working out for them so far?

GRAEME: Well they're no longer in control, so --

JORDAN: Got it.

GRAEME: But they did have an area called Boyrab (ph) that I knew had important Anti-Balaka leaders in it. I went there with a photographer, Michael Christopher Brown. We got out of the car and the first reason I knew that we had made a terrible mistake was our driver just peeled off and left us.

JORDAN: After you got out?

GRAEME: After we got out. It would have been nice for him to wait a little bit. But he saw, before we did, that there were about five kids between the ages of about 9 and 14, who were decked out with witchcraft amulets. They had Kalashnikovs in hand and they were not ready to be interviewed and were definitely considering what to do with these two guys. In the end, there was an adult who showed up, that was not entirely for the good, he was clearly assessing our fate as well. And there were about three or four minutes where, at any point during that time, it could have been the end.

JORDAN: Wow.

GRAEME: The only way to get out in that case -- I said to the adult, "I'm here to conduct an interview. I want talk to you. I want to talk to these kids. I want to talk to whoever you want me to talk to." And he said, "There will be no interview." Now that could have either meant, "You go back down that road now," or it could mean, "You never go back down that road again." When we eventually walked away, there's this feeling that you can get in the back of your of -- it's sort of that red dot feeling where you're --

JORDAN: Right.

GRAEME: -- wondering, "I've turned by back. I'm getting further away but I'm still within range. This could still end poorly. The decisions are still being made right behind me. I might not know what those decisions were because I might not be alive anymore."

JORDAN: Yeah the last thing you might hear is a loud crack. Did you look back? I would be so afraid to turn around and look back thinking, "If I look back, that makes me look more guilty than if I just keep walking." That would be what was going through my head.

GRAEME: Me too. Yeah, absolutely. When I was making that walk, I was trying to use my peripheral vision a bit, trying to look like as much like the idiot I was as I could possibly look. If you show up in that situation then you've really made a poor decision. I



had made a terrible decision. That can work for you sometimes too if you show that, again, you're not some spy, you're not there for a sinister purpose, then people have an instinctive need to look out for fools and children. And so, you have to look like that.

JORDAN: Thank you so much. This has been super interesting. Is there anything else that I haven't asked you that you want to make sure you deliver?

GRAEME: I just want to say that talking to these ISIS people, I've stressed how much I've enjoyed being with them. And I think that comes through in my book. I mean, you've read it so you can tell me --

JORDAN: Yeah.

GRAEME: -- if it does. But it was a pleasure, they were funny, they were able to explain themselves. I really got a broader sense of the range of human personality from talking to them, so I hope that comes across.

JORDAN: It does, yeah. You definitely do not seem like an ISIS sympathizer in the book, but it does also come across as, "Wow you were able to get really close with them." You were in there house, you're talking about when you're in the house and the mother's nearby and the family's nearby and you're out to eat and you're drinking tea -- and you do talk about these people like you would talk about, maybe not a close friend, but certainly an acquaintance who you see all the time maybe at the gym or at the bar or something like that. Obviously no alcohol involved in your ISIS meetings.

But that in itself was pretty admirable because otherwise we have two camps -- the whole, "These people are bad, let's treat them as such," kind of the hard line journalist, Fox News-y approach, and then you have this other approach which would be, sort of this, "Well I completely understand everything that

they're doing and it's just another alternate view of politics," and you don't go down that road either.

You're clearly on the side of thinking that these people are absolutely bananas and they just have this weird warped worldview that is unhealthy and they're going to lose and thank God for that. And I think that's important to realize because I can imagine the email I'm getting where, "How dare he say this person's delightful? He would have blown himself up in a mall full of school children." And it's like, "Well there's a difference between having a charming personality and being somebody that you want to babysit your kids."

GRAEME: Yeah I would never want these people to be in any position of power, I would not -- I want them to repent, to be quite honest. I was recognizing them as being in a very creepy place, in a very evil place, but on the human spectrum of personality and that spectrum includes people you want to be with and people you don't. And often they were in that position of, despite the content of what they were saying, being absolutely charming.

JORDAN: Thank you so much.

GRAEME: It's been a pleasure.

JORDAN: Super interesting conversation. This is a ballsy guy, folks. Obviously. And really good insight into how this works. Really scary though that seemingly normal, intelligent people, who are otherwise high functioning members of society are the ones that are going over there a lot of the time. You'd like to think that it's just the local knucklehead criminal reject, societal outcast, but that's not the case. It makes it even more apropos, this show and apropos are our dangerous times here. And more important that we know this type of thing, of course, and can protect ourselves, protect those around us, and have a good, rational, understanding of this subject as much as possible.

Great big thank you to Graeme. The book title is [The Way of The Strangers](#). Of course we'll have that linked up in the show notes as well. If you enjoyed this one, don't forget to thank Graeme on Twitter. We'll have that linked in the show notes of course. And tweet me your number one takeaway from Graeme. I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter. I'd love to engage with you there, hear what you think about this episode, as it is a usual -- little departure from our usual fare, to be frank. And you can tap the album art, you can tap your phone screen to see the show notes in most applications in which you're using to play this on your phone.

Our boot camps, our live program details at [theartofcharm.com/bootcamp](http://theartofcharm.com/bootcamp). Join thousands of other people who've been through the program. They'll become your network for life. And a lot of people travel around the world, they work with other AoC people, we do retreats in other parts of the world. And to see people become part of the AoC family, the growth they experience over the next months and years, is just amazing. I love it. I love every minute of it. Remember we're sold out a few months in advance so if you're thinking about it a little bit, get in touch with us ASAP. Get some info from us so you can plan ahead. Our boot camp details, once again, at [theartofcharm.com/bootcamp](http://theartofcharm.com/bootcamp) or if you're feeling lazy or you're on the road, just email me [jordan@theartofcharm.com](mailto:jordan@theartofcharm.com) and I'll get you to the right place.

I also want to encourage you to join us in the AoC challenge at [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge) or you can text the word 'charmed,' C-H-A-R-M-E-D to 33344. The challenge is about improving your networking and connection skills and inspiring those around you to develop a personal and professional relationship with you.

We'll also email you our fundamentals Toolbox that I mentioned earlier on the show, which includes some great practical stuff, ready to apply, right out of the box on reading body language, having charismatic nonverbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, networking,

and influence strategies, persuasion tactics and everything else that we teach here at The Art of Charm.

This will make you a better connector, a better networker, and a better thinker. That's [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge) or text 'charmed,' C-H-A-R-M-E-D to 33344. For full show notes for this and all previous episodes, head on over to [theartofcharm.com/podcast](http://theartofcharm.com/podcast). This episode of AoC was produced by Jason DeFillippo. Jason Sanderson is our audio engineer and editor, and the show notes on the website are by Robert Fogarty. The theme music is by Little People and the transcription is by TranscriptionOutsourcing.net. I'm your host Jordan Harbinger. Go ahead, tell your friends because the greatest compliment you can give us is a referral to someone else, either in person or shared on the Web. Word of mouth is everything, so share the show with your friends and your enemies. Stay charming and leave everything and everyone better than you found them.



