

## 9.30.24 Inside J!

[00:00:00] From the Alex Trebek stage at Sony Picture Studios, this is Inside Jeopardy!

**Sarah:** Hello and welcome back to Inside Jeopardy, your exclusive and official podcast destination for all things happening in the world of Jeopardy. I'm Sarah Foss, I'm joined today by the man about town, the bon vivant, the Sam bassador.

Sam Buttrey, welcome back to the pod, Sam.

**Sam:** It's great to be here, recording live from the Inside Jeopardy! remote studio, perched in a hot air balloon, high above Times Square.

**Sarah:** Oh, it sounds like the perfect place for you to be. You know, I had to ask, as I was listening to the music and thinking about Michael always talking about Johnny Gilbert on the axe, you know, what would your instrument be?

in that Jeopardy music?

**Sam:** Well, you know, I'm a keyboard player in real life, so I break out the 1980s synth sounds, I think, you know, with the bendy and the slidey, and really help Johnny get to that final moment of beauty when the game begins.

**Sarah:** Sam on the synth, I love it. [00:01:00] Well, big week in Jeopardy! But first, we're celebrating something so special, Sam.

I don't know if you know, it's National Podcast Day today. The

**Sam:** greatest day of the year, National Podcast Day. Once again, bringing podcasts into your home.

**Sarah:** And did you ever think that you would be, you know, not only the Maybe celebrating National Podcast Day, but as a member of the Inside Jeopardy! podcast team.

**Sam:** Uh, no. That's an easy one to say no to. It's still, uh, amazing. I'm sitting in this weird room in my, uh, Inside Jeopardy! remote studio with a microphone and a big light and some cameras, and it is not the sort of thing I expected in my retirement.

**Sarah:** Retirement looked, uh, a little different in your mind?

**Sam:** Yep.

I'm celebrating National Podcast Day as much as anyone else, I think.

**Sarah:** I like it. I must say your ring light looks good on you, Sam. Really nice lighting for those of you who can't see it. I mean, he's, he's glowing. The problem

**Sam:** is it makes my hair look gray. What? Yeah, it's the light. Oh,

**Sarah:** it is the light. You know, it's all these studio lights we keep putting on you that this, everyone doesn't know the [00:02:00] truth about your golden locks.

**Sam:** Golden, yet red, yet brown. Okay, enough of that.

**Sarah:** All the locks. Uh, how's your weekend been?

**Sam:** My weekend has been a delight. It's been a huge run up to national podcast day here in the inside jeopardy remote studio. But actually right after I finished here, or shortly after I finished here, I'll be jetting off to Portland, Oregon, meet up with some family there.

So, uh, it's already, uh, excitement brewing for the butchery and related households.

**Sarah:** And what's it like when you travel these days, Sam? I know back in the day for me on the Clue Crew days, you know, I could, I could certainly wander the streets and go just fine. You know, I wasn't going to be mobbed by any paparazzi or anything, but there were those real fans who would be, you know, excited once in a while to come across someone from the show.

That has to happen to you. Either that or Steve Martin. I don't know what happens more.

**Sam:** I think it's now more of a delight when someone tells me that I look like Steve Martin without knowing the Jeopardy connection, but I do get stopped from time to time. We were at some food trucks up in the Portland area and somebody wanted to have their picture taken with [00:03:00] me.

It's a delight, you know, people are happy. And, uh, I guess I feel bad for the actors or actresses who portray mean characters. And apparently people on the street, stop them and, and, you know, yell at them for being mean on this weird fantasy world. But I don't have that. People are, people love Jeopardy. And, uh, you know, so they're happy to see me and remind them of all the happy Jeopardy times they've had.

**Sarah:** Well, you have brought us a lot of happy Jeopardy times. I don't know if you saw, but we finally can announce when Pop Culture Jeopardy is going to start streaming. Amazon, of course, had their first teaser, and we're a part of winning. Wednesdays. I mean, it has a ring to it. Of course, we're going to be on Winning Wednesday, along with Are You Smarter Than a Celebrity?

with none other than Travis Kelce, Buy It Now, Amazon Wishlist Games, and it will all begin streaming on Wednesday, December 4th. That's when the wait will finally end. Be over.

**Sam:** And if you have [00:04:00] access to a personal computer, a laptop, a phone, a tablet, you can go find the teaser. So I did. And I will say, while it was exciting, there was not nearly enough of pop culture jeopardy in the teaser.

**Sarah:** Right. I agree. I said that exact same thing to Alexa this morning. I said, I love the teaser. It was great, but not enough pop culture jeopardy. But that's okay. You know, the people, it's just going to leave them wanting more.

**Sam:** Wanting more. And just the occasional glimpse of Colin Jost, the host of Pop Culture Jeopardy, was enough to make me start marking the calendar for December 4th, that very first day.

I'm excited.

**Sarah:** Yeah, December 4th, it will happen. And I have to say, you know, over the weekend, SNL premiered their 50th season, which is just crazy. And I tuned into Weekend Update with a whole new point of view, having worked with Colin Jost. You know, taping those 40 episodes of Pop Culture Jeopardy! And really, I'm a fan.

**Sam:** So you got to work with Colin on Pop Culture Jeopardy! What was that like?

**Sarah:** You know what? He is a joy. He took it very seriously. He was [00:05:00] really making sure that not only did he know the material and how to

deliver it, but that he was also very familiar with it. with these teams and the individual contestants and their stories and that he approached the interviews with questions that would, you know, resonate with them.

And I think the biggest thing I was so impressed with is his talent of comedy. The way he can intersperse comedy within the Jeopardy format is something like I have never seen before. And I found myself laughing out loud at the judge's table many, many times. And that was a lot of fun. And he was just an all around really, really nice guy.

So I'm excited for everyone to get to experience what we all got to do during production.

**Sam:** And what a task he must have, combining the comedy with the very rigid adherence to the rules that are required by, in some cases, federal law.

**Sarah:** Yes. And with not three contestants, but nine, nine active buzzers. I mean, you know, Ken always talks about what it's like to be the traffic cop of Jeopardy.

And that's [00:06:00] one of your main jobs is basically traffic cop. So he's got to be a traffic cop to not three, but nine contestants. It's a huge task and figuring out, you know, who gave the last correct response and who do you call on? And then to be funny at the same time. Yeah, it's it's quite miraculous.

**Sam:** I'm just looking forward to seeing this new format.

**Sarah:** Yes, and you will see it, as we said, on December 4th. Well, we did have an event last weekend. You were missed, Sam, at Chapman University. We had the podcast, of course, and then we had an interactive game that Ken hosted, similar to what you hosted at SporkleCon. And we had young adults from from Howard University, from Spellman, from Morehouse, from Clark Atlanta, also playing along because the game is on your individual device.

So it was really fun. You know, Ken would call on someone from Howard University and say, all right, Laura, you're, you're the fastest and you're correct. Go ahead and select on your device where you want to go next. It was really fun. Gave prizes to the top five. You know, we play the Jeopardy round and final Jeopardy, and I have to tell you, [00:07:00] Sam, on the last clue in the Jeopardy round.

Someone said it. They said, bring it. So you were there in spirit.

**Sam:** Yeah, I like being there in spirit, but I would like even more to be there in practice. And my question is, who do you have to know to get invited to one of these? Wouldn't it be great Well, you

**Sarah:** know, I know. If

**Sam:** you're going to go to a university, if only you had a retired professor on staff, maybe that would help somehow.

**Sarah:** Well, we did talk about the fact of how excited you are to get out to these universities and colleges and that you are going to be our official Sambaassador. So You'll certainly be at the next one, Sam, and you were missed at this one.

**Sam:** Very good. Sounds like a lot of fun.

**Sarah:** And one special guest we had was nine game champion Isaac Hirsch.

Had a lot of fun catching up with him and figuring out how he's preparing for the tournament of champions. Here's a little bit of our conversation from the event.

**Michael:** So, uh, during your first appearance, during the interview, Ken immediately asks you, and he says to you, we just saw the clip, you're not the first member of your family to play on Jeopardy, you talked about your [00:08:00] dad having played on the show in the Alex Trebek era.

Yes. So, how Much banter how much conversation has there been

yeah, I mean I I have not teased him about it He's he's very proud and everyone, you know, it's great But I as I said, I spent most of my youth like taunting him about it inadvertently So I'm not gonna rub it in now that I've won like I'm We're all happy.

We're all happy. There's no, there's no taunting or teasing. It's, it's a, it's a Hirsch collective win. It's not just Oh, I like it. They built me up. I stand on the shoulders of

**Michael:** giants. I love that. How, uh, so how much of the 215, 000 did you give to your father? I stand on the shoulders of giants. I don't I don't pay them,

but okay, now

**Sarah:** will he be coming to the tournament of champions?

He

will 100 percent Yeah, they they know what happened now. So they they're like we want to be there. I'm like great I'll probably lose and you'll get to see that instead and then he can taunt me

**Sarah:** Well, I loved all the different stories you told [00:09:00] obviously the jeff goldblum was one of them But you said that was one of the most difficult things was coming up with those creative stories Now you're gonna have to tell more in the tournament champions as your girlfriend who I think inspired you to share You That story, has she been, you know, helping you out with some others?

Uh, yeah, I haven't thought as much about the anecdotes for Tournament of Champions. We've already gone through every interesting thing that's ever happened to me. So, I guess part of my Tournament of Champions prep is I'm gonna have to, like, skydive or something just so I can be like, well, Ken, you know, I did fall out of a plane recently.

**Sarah:** Although Ken has recently told us that by the end of his, you know, when he was on Game 75, He was actually making up stories. So I'm just saying it has happened.

That would be easier than actually skydiving.

**Michael:** So have you been preparing for the TOC?

Yes. Uh, I feel a great deal of pressure, uh, to be good in the TOC.

Cause people, people are like, Isaac, her, she's so good at Jeopardy. And I got a lot of the old imposter syndrome where I'm like, no, I was just very, very lucky. And so now I have to go back and be very lucky [00:10:00] again. So I'm trying my best to prepare, but you know, it takes a lot of luck to win a game of Jeopardy and especially in the tournament of champions where everyone's good it takes, there's way more variance and it takes even more luck so I'm not counting on anything.

I want to go in feeling prepared and just whatever happens, happens.

**Sarah:** Now I don't want to bring up a sore subject, but for those of you who didn't see, Isaac lost his final game in a bit of a wagering situation. There was math involved, maybe his calculation was slightly off. How much have you put into wagering strategy or mathematics as you're preparing for the Tournament of Champions?

I've spent a lot of time thinking about the exact situation, uh, that made me lose on Jeopardy. If I come across that exact situation, I think I'll handle it a little better the second time around. But surprisingly, I have not actually spent that much time just with a scratch piece of paper doing math, which I really should be, I should be doing grade school subtraction all day, every [00:11:00] day for the, until the tournament of champions at this point.

**Michael:** Yeah. Many kids who take math classes or statistics classes spend a lot of time thinking, when am I ever going to need this in my regular life? But on Jeopardy, you actually do need to have six subtraction and addition skills.

Yeah. I found one very specific situation where you are going to use it in your adult life.

So.

**Michael:** So, you know we have an elaborate, at this point, Jeopardy post season. You've already made it to TOC, you don't have to go through Second Chance, you don't have to go through Champions Wildcard, you go straight to the TOC. The winner of TOC goes into Masters. Um, if you do really well on TOC, there's a good chance you come back, you know, with that wonderful moustache and your Burbank vintage fashion, you come back onto the Jeopardy Invitational Tournament, you could be playing on Jeopardy as a young man, For many more years, how do you feel about that?

Let's not get ahead of ourselves. I have to do First I could just flame out and then that'll be the last you hear of isaac hirsch, [00:12:00] but Yeah, it'd be cool. Look, I love playing Jeopardy. It's really fun. I can't recommend it enough. If you can play Jeopardy, do it. It's really fun. But yeah, I would love to keep coming back.

**Sarah:** Well, we know you'll be back. I hope everyone will be watching Isaac in the Tournament of Champions. Thank you so much for joining us on Inside Jeopardy Live. Thanks, Isaac. Thanks

**Sam:** for having me. Yeah, he's yet another addition to a very strong Tournament of Champions field. I'm looking forward to seeing him compete.

**Sarah:** Well, the TOC will be fun, but today we are here to talk about regular Jeopardy! So let's get into the games. On Monday, returning champion Jen Feldman ran into a buzzsaw in David Erb. David found and responded correctly to all three daily doubles on his way to a convincing runaway win.

**Sam:** Yeah, very strong game by David, especially in the second half.

It was practically a three way tie. Uh, after the end of the jeopardy round and he really took off in double jeopardy and with his bold daily double wagers, he was able to make it an easy runaway.

**Sarah:** Yeah. [00:13:00] 22 correct responses, 30, 000 after double jeopardy. Those are some pretty great stats. There was a Steve Martin clue, Sam.

We always love a Steve Martin clue. It was key or peel for 800. In 2017, Keegan made his Broadway debut opposite Amy Schumer in Meteor Shower, a comedy by this man, a wild and crazy guy himself once.

**Sam:** David got it correct. The correct response is, who is Steve Martin? This is actually Steve Martin's second work to appear on Broadway.

He had a musical with Edie Brickell some years back. And yet, after all that he's done in show business, he's still most famous for being the most handsome man in the world.

**Sarah:** Which is why you guys are so similar. Well, after the game, David told Ken, Whether I win one game or a few, I've always wanted to be a Jeopardy!

champion. You know it well, Sam. The first time that host says to you, You are a Jeopardy! champion. It's life changing, right?

**Sam:** It is unforgettable.

**Sarah:** Well, David returned on Tuesday with another great performance [00:14:00] against two worthy competitors. After earning 10, 000 on a single Daily Double in Double Jeopardy, he secured a second runaway.



**Sam:** Yeah, that's another impressive game from David with no incorrect responses this time. And after his correct response in Final Jeopardy, the massive final score of 39, 488 was the highest score of this admittedly young season.

**Sarah:** Well, and we learn in this game that David is actually married to Bonnie Garmis, of course, known as the best selling author of Lessons in Chemistry, which then became a show on Apple TV starring Brie Larson.

So, you know, it's fun to see it all connected and Bonnie posted on Instagram. Hying up her husband's performance. So obviously a lot of love in the family. She joked, thanks Jeopardy for all the fun and stress.

**Sam:** Actually, Bonnie precedes David on the Jeopardy stage a little bit because her book was the subject of a clue in the Jeopardy Invitational Tournament, but it was a difficult one.

It fell through. It was a triple stumper. So David is the first one to [00:15:00] get a correct response in Jeopardy and their family.

**Sarah:** Yeah, and before David was even in the pool, we were talking to Bonnie. She was actually going to present a category for us on lessons in chemistry, a little take on her book. We weren't able to make the timing work.

So I was very surprised when David said, Oh, my wife, but I was like, wait, what? So you know, you never know who in a family you're going to meet first. But like you and Steve Martin, everyone is saying David Erb and Clint Eastwood. In fact, at the end of this taping, our co head writer, Michelle Lau said. You feelin lucky, punk?

I mean, it's, it's like looking in a mirror, those two.

**Sam:** First of all, I'd like to congratulate you on your surprisingly good Clint Eastwood imitation. But I certainly noticed it before it was mentioned to me, and not just because of the facial resemblance, although I think David does look like a younger Clint Eastwood, uh, but also his manner.

He's got sort of a, a restrained, I don't want to say stoic example, but he's not very, uh, effusive and, uh, that really brought to mind some of Clint [00:16:00] Eastwood's memorable characters. So he was great to watch.

**Sarah:** Agreed. And, you know, Rachel did not come up with a win, but she is winning in the department of Close to Our Hearts.

She shared a story about dressing up when she had a school project where she had to dress up like a famous Canadian. And of course she picked Alex Trebek. We shared the photo on our socials. There she is with her game board. Her tie, her card in hand. She is a spitting image of Alex. Well, you know, as a young child, minus a mustache.

But if you haven't checked it out already, check it out on our Instagram. Did you have a chance to see it, Sam? I

**Sam:** did. It was hilarious and beautiful. In the caption to the picture, she said, I had a little mustache. But in the photo itself, no mustache is visible. And honestly, maybe that's just as well. But what a cute setup with her little handwritten game board behind her.

And what a famous Canadian she celebrated.

**Sarah:** Yeah. And you know, Alex said the fake mustache is tough. That's why he said he shaved his mustache off, you know, was to make it easier for Will Ferrell to do his impressions of him back in the day. So, Rachel probably just coming up against the same challenges [00:17:00] that Will Ferrell did.

Well, Ken caught up with David after his second runaway win. Let's take a listen.

**Ken:** I was looking at the stats. All three of you were playing very well. You were buzzing in correctly on 30 ish of the clues, but David, your buzzer timing was just locked in today. How do you credit your, uh, your buzzer skill?

I have no idea when I, I actually practiced on the buzzer and, uh, I wasn't really very good.

**Ken:** Well, you figured it out somewhere during your first game and you were pretty locked in today. But of course, what swung the tide was having the guts to make a 10, 000 wager on a daily double. You didn't appear to hesitate. You were like a steely eyed gambler.

I really felt like I could find a word with all in it.

**Ken:** You did very well in a category about herbs and spices. You went three for five. Do you feel like you have some connection since your name is David Herb?

Really? No, but I really like to cook. So that's the, [00:18:00] that's the key.

**Ken:** Maybe that's not a coincidence. Maybe just following the, in the tradition of your herb forefathers.

Could be, could

**Ken:** be. We don't know.

**Sam:** Ken, really going for the cheap laugh there. I appreciate that.

**Sarah:** I love a good cheap laugh, Ken. I love it. Well, on Wednesday, I think we witnessed our best game of the season so far, Drew Goins got out to an early lead and appeared to be in control until David found the last daily double wagering another 10,000 and was correct to take the lead into final where he earned another exciting, exciting win.

**Sam:** That was an exciting win. And although it was a huge payday for David, you have to tip your hat. If you're wearing a hat, you have to tip your hat to Drew. And if you're not wearing a hat, I recommend you go get a hat. And then Tippett to Gru, who really did outplay the champ for most of the game. 22 correct responses.

Uh, and it was also fun to see their, uh, differences in personality. As we say, David is kind of a reserved player, and Gru very, uh, [00:19:00] enthusiastic and effusive. It was good to see them next to each other, and you had to feel bad for poor Diane. Shut out by these two very good players.

**Sarah:** Yeah, it was a game of the triple D's and actually Drew's choreographed higher than David's, which says a lot about his gameplay.

You know how I love to talk about second chance, Sam. And if I'm talking second chance, I gotta be thinking that Drew is in that conversation. And I think the fans on Reddit are agreeing. Just some of the comments we saw. Drew was wonderful and had a great time. Hope he's invited back for second chance. He was a joy to watch.

Hopefully Drew is remembered for Second Chance to do so well against David when David found both of the Daily Doubles in Double Jeopardy so impressive. Drew should be a shoo in for Second Chance. The whole time I was thinking either David is a lock for the Champion's Wildcard if he loses, or Drew is a lock for Second Chance if he loses.

Incredible game, and an exciting season.

**Sam:** You know, Sarah, you may have heard that Jeopardy is a sport, and I'm not What?! Yeah, no, [00:20:00] it seems crazy, right? But I will say, one of the differences between Jeopardy and other sports is that in the two games this week, where David got out to an early win and essentially ran away with it, those games were still exciting in a way that a 49 0 football game or a 12 1 baseball game is just not exciting.

But it's even more exciting. When there are two or hopefully even three players really going at it. That happened this time. And we talk about a lot of names for second chance and nobody asks me, my opinion isn't taken into account, but if they did ask me, uh, I would have to think about Drew Goins, what a player.

**Sarah:** Well, Ken spoke with Drew after the game about his impressive play and the Taylor Swift triple stumper.

**Ken:** I want to start with you, Drew, because I was just looking at the stats and you were actually out playing a very impressive champion. For most of that game, you just came out swinging. You were not intimidated by this guy at all.

I was watching him in the green room, and I said, Go big or go home.

**Ken:** Well, it almost came back to bite you because you went big on a clue about Gingham [00:21:00] that it looked like, to all of us, you did not know.

I didn't until We all found out together

**Ken:** You did kind of make a pained look into the crowd after the Taylor Swift triple stuff Are you in trouble right now with my

brother?

Yeah

**Ken:** Because he's more of a Swifty or because he knows you should have known

it He made me a full practice game that I did two nights ago. That was entirely Taylor Swift themed

**Ken:** Okay, Drew's brother was Fearless on the board, do you think?

Drew, do you pledge your life to studying more about Taylor Swift and her work? Till the day I die. Okay.

**Sarah:** I love this. I think if Drew makes it back for second chance and there's any Taylor Swift categories, I feel like it's, it's going to be better for him. What do you think?

**Sam:** I hope it is. But you know, it's hard to keep all of those facts crammed into your head.

I know my fear [00:22:00] was always not, not knowing something. In fact, in this case, I did not know the correct response. It's forgetting a thing that I'd already learned. So there's lots going on in the head of a Jeopardy player.

**Sarah:** Well, after surviving Drew, David faced more stiff competition on Thursday with Alex Mishev and Maddie Carwile, the three of them battling back and forth while David trailed in third place.

Alex protected his lead heading into final, but a triple stumper and a savvy second place wager from Maddie earned her the come from behind win.

**Sam:** It was a good game by Maddie, but, uh, Alex led going in and looked like he had controlled much of the gameplay. But she was right there, and Alex had to bet big on Final Jeopardy, so she made the right move and emerged as the champion.

**Sarah:** Yeah, Alex had the highest quarry out of the game, 18 correct responses. You know, I'm gonna say it, another second chance contender. We only have, you know, 18 spots, but it's okay. It's gonna be, I think, one of the toughest competitions of the year based on Who will make it out [00:23:00] of all of these great candidates?

Let's just talk about how great David was in his three games. Earned over 90,000, two runaway wins, averaging almost 24,000 a game, and 19 correct

responses each game. In daily doubles alone, he earned 36,000. Way to go, David. We know we'll be seeing him in Champions Wild Card, if not the TOC, that's all still to be determined, but he will be back on the Alex Trebek stage, and let's listen to how Maddie was feeling after the win.

**Ken:** Well, as you folks obviously know, when Final Jeopardy is tough, it's good to be in second place. So what that means is, if you had known that clue about the succession siblings and their rivalry, I think this game would have gone the other way. I've

never seen the show, so I guess that was my luck there.

Turned out

**Ken:** to be the right decision. Well, you're a Jeopardy champion, Maddie. How does it feel?

It feels really exciting. It was so great to play against two really great competitors and to be here. So I'm excited to come back tomorrow.

**Ken:** You were maybe not so excited to come [00:24:00] in against a three game winner with almost 100,000, I assume.

We

played some amazing games earlier, and so it was great. It's great to just be here.

**Ken:** What was the difference in this game, David? It seems like you never quite got rolling the way you did in your pregame stream.

Yeah, you know, sometimes the categories really click, and sometimes not so much.

**Ken:** Do you have areas that you knew going in might be a little bit dicey?

Oh, if it's anything to do with, let's say, rap music or, um, Broadway. Those are

**Ken:** your favorites, obviously. Yeah.

No, I'm at C. Okay,

**Ken:** well, you've got time to steady up on your old school gangster rap if that's what you're into, but Maddie We're gonna see you again tomorrow. You ready to play?

**Sarah:** Absolutely. All right.

**Ken:** Well, congratulations

**Sarah:** Well on Friday, we witnessed another exceptional game Maddie was in the lead when Kate scored 7, 000 on the final daily double on the third to last clue of the game. But then Maddie scored 2, 000 on the very next clue to take back the lead heading into final. But then Kate was corrected.

Maddie was not capping off another [00:25:00] very exciting come from behind win.

**Sam:** Great stuff to be watching this, but we do have to talk about Kate's daily double wager because it was one of those rare situations where. The final daily double is so near the end of the round that you know how much money is left on the board.

So, Kate's wager, had she gotten it wrong, would have put her out of contention. But getting it right didn't guarantee that she'd finish the second round ahead of Maddie. So, it was a difficult computation on her part, and I don't fault her. I have played with people who are very good at adding up how much money is left on the board, which, Which you could do with the help of some tricks, but perhaps the optimal bet might have been somewhat bigger to try to ensure that if she did get it right, that she would be ahead of Maddie going into Final Jeopardy.

**Sarah:** Yeah, well, as we know, a lot to think about in a short amount of time. It ends up working out for Kate, and she is now our champion, heading into today's game. We'll see if she can keep it going. And now it's time for our favorite new segment. But wait, there's more! So Sam, what do you have for us [00:26:00] this week?

**Sam:** Today's clue comes from Wednesday's game. That's the one in which David was able to hold off Drew, but it was Drew who got this clue in the category caves.

Let's take caves for 2000.

**Ken:** In 1900, a library cave of around 50,000 documents was discovered in the caves of the thousand Buddha On this ancient route.

Drew, what is the

**Sam:** Silk

**Ken:** Road? Yes.

**Sam:** Ah, the Silk Road. That's a collective name for a number of trade routes that connected China to the empires of the West, like the Roman Empire. Along the route, gold, silver, and wool traveled east, while silk traveled west. The story of how silk spread into the Middle East and then the West is a fascinating one for another time.

And other things besides goods also traveled along the roads, including Buddhism and, we think, Buddhism. The Black Death. But the Silk Road was largely abandoned by the 15th century, and that matters for our story. Now the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas are located on the Silk Road near Dunhuang in northwest China.

[00:27:00] So these caves were apparently dug by wandering monks starting in the year 366, so some time back, and many were decorated as temples and loaded with artworks. The Library Cave, filled with documents, was sealed around the year 1000, and then when the Silk Road was Apparently, forgotten for 900 years. In fact, the whole complex had largely been forgotten, except for a few monks as caretakers.

And one of them discovered the library cave, uh, as Ken says, in 1900. It's a remarkable repository of documents, and I'm just glad there wasn't an earthquake that came along to shake, shake, shake your Buddhas. And that's a disco reference, and I am not ashamed of it.

**Sarah:** Sam, you know, I was just waiting till you would make a fun disco reference, and here we are three weeks into the pod.

It has happened. I love it. It won't

**Sam:** be the last.

**Sarah:** Thank goodness. I'm looking forward to many more. Well, from But Wait, There's More to our host chat. Let's see what Ken responded when an



audience member asked him, At what point [00:28:00] during your run did you realize your life had changed?

**Ken:** Ooh, uh, I think I realized it very slowly.

Um, the money didn't seem real. And also, I didn't think my life had changed. Like, I kind of thought it would be kind of a, a nine days wonder. You know, the person at Costco looking at my card would be like, Oh, you were on Jeopardy! last night, but like, we did not at the time live in a world where just being on Jeopardy!

for a long time could change your life, so I had no expectation of that. I was very surprised when the show started to air and it became kind of a water cooler thing.

**Sam:** And much bigger than that, because of course, Ken came back to be the greatest of all time, and now the host of Jeopardy! What a life changing thing it must have been.

**Sarah:** Well, that brings us to the end of today's show.

**Sam:** And as always, if you have questions, send them to InsideJeopardyPodcast at gmail. com and we just might pick out one to answer on the air.

**Sarah:** That's right. And we will be back next week for more game highlights. See you then. Bye, Sam. [00:29:00] [00:30:00] [00:31:00] Bye.