

Note: This show periodically replaces their ad breaks with new promotional clips. Because of this, both the transcription for the clips and the timestamps after them may be inaccurate at the time of viewing this transcript.

00:00:01 Music Music

String music with a heartbeat-like drumbeat.

00:00:02 Ben Harrison Host

Who is on your list of greatest working film directors? If she isn't already, Kathryn Bigelow should be.

Take a look at her film resume, and it's clear she's assembled a body of work that is deserving of such consideration. But "great director" is maybe the only category that Bigelow fits neatly within, because her films cross genres and tones in such a way that it's incredibly difficult to characterize what a Kathryn Bigelow film is.

Tell someone you're going to see a Kathryn Bigelow film, and they could assume it's got something to do with Iraq or Afghanistan, the main character is broken in some profound way, and that there will be a generalized intensity that she's known for stoking.

But her filmography is not predictable, except in one crucial way: pressure.

00:00:50 Ben Host

The characters in a Kathryn Bigelow film are under extraordinary pressure. Professional pressure from those above them, pressure from within to succeed in their goals, the pressure of a life-threatening situation. Pressure is amorphous; it can envelop or it can be surgical. Its source can be specific or generalized. And it is genre-less.

Zero Dark Thirty has every kind of pressure there is, and CIA operative Maya is under a ton of it to do maybe the hardest thing a spy has ever been tasked with: finding Osama bin Laden post-9/11. And casting Jessica Chastain in this role is a stroke of genius, because few actors embody the kind of toughness that she can command.

That's why when you see Maya absorb her complicity in the horrors of torture, or the death of a coworker, or even a boss that underestimates her, we are put on alert. You aren't supposed to be able to rattle Jessica Chastain. She'll kick your ass.

So when we see her off balance, we are made to understand the growing desperation Maya feels. Whether it's getting a bite to eat at a hotel restaurant, or pulling out of her driveway, or cursing at Leon Panetta during a briefing, self-preservation becomes secondary to her pursuit of her target.

00:02:03 Ben Host

You know where all of this is leading, because we all remember where we were the night this story ends. And yet, Bigelow is able to derive so much thrill from the story and the characters that when UBL finally gets triple-tapped, it feels like you're considering the moment for the very first time.

But how are we supposed to feel? The film doesn't give us that answer, or any answer, really: the film is agnostic about torture, about risk, about the aftermath. Maya's in tears at the end of the film,

but is it relief in the wake of her accomplished mission? Is it grief that her reason for being is now gone? What now?

Bigelow doesn't give us the answers, because her skill is in asking the questions. She's kind of a master at that.

"Everybody breaks, bro. It's biology."

On today's *Friendly Fire*, we discuss 2012's *Zero Dark Thirty*.

00:02:53 Music Transition "War," by Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong, lead vocals by Edwin Starr.

War!
Huh!
Yeah!
What is it good for?!
Absolutely—
—nothing!
Uh-huh!

War!
Huh!
Yeah!
What is it good for?!
Absolutely—
—nothing!

Say it again, y'all!

War!

[The song continues at a lower volume as the hosts introduce themselves.]

00:03:14 Ben Host Welcome to *Friendly Fire*, the war movie podcast that's the only place that you can hear a review of *Zero Dark Thirty* by three dork zeroes. I'm Ben Harrison.

00:03:25 Adam Host Wooow! I'm Adam Pranica.

00:03:27 John Host I reject this introduction. [Ben laughs.] I am—
Roderick

00:03:31 Ben Host We—we were just talking about how you don't like wordplay! [John laughs.] Before we started recording, and I was—it was so tempting to reveal my opening barrage! [Laughs.]

[The music has faded out.]

00:03:40 John Host Oh, boy.

00:03:41 Adam Host I mean—

00:03:42 John Host I feel strafed.

00:03:43 Adam Host I don't wanna [Ben laughs] edit what you just did there, but I would be more of a zero dork forty, and then John's a zero dork fifty. Right?

00:03:51 Ben Host Wooow.

00:03:52	Adam	Host	I mean—
00:03:53	John	Host	Suuure.
00:03:54	Adam	Host	—we—
00:03:55	John	Host	I see what you're doing.
00:03:56	Adam	Host	Yeah!
00:03:57	Ben	Host	Is that a hat on a hat?
			<i>[John and Adam laugh.]</i>
00:04:00	John	Host	I really am—I—you know, I question doing this show all the time, but—
00:04:05	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: —now more than ever.
			Adam: Never more than now?
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>
00:04:08	John	Host	I've made a lot of choices in life and I'm—I'm re-evaluating them.
00:04:12	Adam	Host	This is a film that <u>inspires</u> a lot of questions. Right?
00:04:16	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Oh, god!
00:04:17	Ben	Host	Mmmmm. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:04:18	John	Host	It just keeps getting worse!
			<i>[All three laugh.]</i>
00:04:21	Adam	Host	<i>[Exhaling]</i> Ooh. <i>[He and Ben laugh.]</i>
			I mean, do you wanna stay with the wordplay—
00:04:25	John	Host	What—
00:04:26	Adam	Host	—or you wanna pivot back to show?
00:04:27	John	Host	What, uh, what did I do <u>wrong</u> ?
00:04:29	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: I don't know!
			Adam: You—you deserve this, John.
00:04:31	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Uh, yeah, Adam! Uh, this, uh, this—this movie <u>did</u> cause me to think a lot and—
			<i>[Adam laughs]</i>
			—re-evaluate a lot.
00:04:39	Adam	Host	Uh, just another killer combo—
			<i>[John laughs]</i>
			—of Mark Boal and Kathryn Bigelow.
00:04:44	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: Yeah!
			Adam: Keeping the team together!
00:04:45	John	Host	Yeah!

00:04:46 Adam Host You know, if he—if he doesn't watch out, Mark Boal is gonna be, uh, writecast as a certain type of screenwriter.

[Ben laughs.]

00:04:53 John Host He's definitely shagging some flies on this one.

00:04:56 Adam Host Yeah.

00:04:57 Ben Host I think this movie sets sail for the waters of controversy, you know, knowing that that's what it's doing. Right?

00:05:04 John Host Wow, that was really nice, Ben! "Sets—"

00:05:07 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** That was very poetic, yeah.

John: "Sets sail for the waters of controversy!"

00:05:12 Ben Host Yeah.

00:05:13 John Host Hoo!

00:05:14 Adam Host This is really *[laughs]* the Yacht Rock of war films.

[John and Ben laugh.]

00:05:16 John Host You guys are both just smokin' today! I—I feel like I'm—feel like I gotta—I gotta guzzle some coffee! Get up to your speed!

[John drinks, Ben laughs.]

Mm! But I think that's a very good way of putting it. There's so much—uh, there was so much controversy about this, from... *[darkly]* both sides.

00:05:35 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Crash of thunder.]*

00:05:38 John Host *[All three laugh.]* And, um—and—

00:05:41 Ben Host "Both sides" has really become kind of your catchphrase, John.

[He and John laugh.]

00:05:44 John Host Well, you know, as a boomer, *[Ben laughs]* I feel obligated to say "both sides" in response to everything.

But—but there was, uh, there was so much pushback both from the side of American politics that really objects to any sort of sympathetic portrayal of torture, specifically, but—you know, the idea that, um, the critical response to this that—that torture had not produced any actionable results, and therefore—

00:06:13 Ben Host Right.

00:06:14 John Host —this film was kind of a str—uh, like a—a weird thriller propaganda.

But then the pushback from the Intelligence Community, uh, that objected to being portrayed as torturers. Uh, it was—there was so much of it that it has colored the way we—I think the way we watch the movie now.

What—did you guys both see it in the theaters when it first came out?

00:06:38 Adam Host I did.

00:06:39 Ben Host I did!

00:06:40 John Host And were you aware of the controversy going in, or—I mean, were you reading the newspaper on your way into the theater? Or did you only—did you catch that after?

00:06:49 Ben Host I think it was hard to ignore the controversy. I mean, this came out in October, uh, right before Obama's re-election.

00:06:58 John Host Right.

00:06:59 Ben Host To his second term, and there—the—the republicans flipped out just that it was timed the way it—it was, like the allegation that it was, uh, timed to propel Obama to a second—uh, a second term in office.

00:07:14 John Host Because they assumed that it would portray the—the killing of, uh, Osama bin Laden as an Obama project. Although the movie doesn't, really. Obama is not, like, a main character here.

00:07:25 Adam Host They—they did decide not to use that as a working title.

[John laughs.]

The Obama Project—

[Ben laughs.]

—is going to be saved for something else.

00:07:32 Ben Host I mean, reading—reading back on it, and I don't know if I was totally clear on this at the time, but it really feels like both the republicans and democrats wanted to portray this movie as an unfair tool of the other party.

I mean, like, I—it, like—I feel like that is self-consciously what the movie is trying to be, is like, is something that is defiantly not coming down on one side or another.

00:08:01 John Host Yeah, which I think makes it such a sort of cipher that either side could employ to support their case, and I think both, uh, republican and democrats did cherry-pick aspects of it to say, "Well, this part of the movie's great. But..."

[Ben laughs.]

"Uh, the other side—you know, the other part of the movie is complete fiction," and the filmmakers also walked into that by saying "It's based on a true story, uh, and we stand by the characterizations made in the film, but also, it's a dramatization and a fictionalization of it. So a lot of the things that you're complaining about—you know, hey, it's just a—you know. It's a novel, not a documentary."

00:08:44 Adam Host Mm.

00:08:45 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Um—

Ben: Right.

00:08:46 Ben Host There's that opening screen that says, like, "This is based on interviews with the people who were really there," which—

00:08:53	John	Host	Well, and the cold open, real phone calls from 9/11—I mean, that's like—
00:08:57	Ben	Host	Right.
00:08:58	John	Host	—a real punch in the gut!
00:08:59	Ben	Host	Did we need to be reminded about how angering and terrifying 9/11 was to justify everything that happens in this movie or not?
00:09:08	John	Host	I—I remember sitting in the theater and feeling like that was very effective, because we were still in an era where you would see the <u>footage</u> —I mean, people would employ that footage of the towers burning—
00:09:20	Ben	Host	Right.
00:09:21	John	Host	—basically to sell car—car insurance, by 2012.
00:09:24	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Yeah, oh, yeah, The General.
00:09:26	John	Host	Yeah, and— <i>[breaks off, laughing]</i> .
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			When we, uh—when the movie—uh, when the movie comes up, I was here watching it with a friend, and she said—we were having trouble with, uh, with the computer.
			She was like, "Augh, the sound's not working!" And she got up and actually stopped the computer, and checked the connections and started it again, because all those title sequences—
00:09:51	Adam	Host	Yeah. The seven production companies involved usually have, uh—
00:09:55	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: <i>[Singing]</i> Boom ba-juh-duh boop-booo!
			Adam: —a music stinger or something.
			John: <i>[Singing]</i> Bum bedum-dum-dum. You know?
			Adam: Yeah.
			John: They all have a little, uh, their jolly little tunes.
00:10:00	Adam	Host	"Sit, Boo-Boo!"
00:10:01	John	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> And there was—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			There was, uh—there was none of that.
00:10:05	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:10:06	John	Host	And it was just, like, quiet and kinda staticky.
00:10:08	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:10:09	John	Host	It sounded like the sound wasn't working. And so—
00:10:11	Ben	Host	This is much more effective in a movie theater than it is in a home viewing, because that—
00:10:14	Adam	Host	Sure.

00:10:15	Ben	Host	—uh, like ten times outta ten, when a movie—when a filmmaker makes that choice, it causes me to get up and make sure the—everything's plugged in correctly.
00:10:24	John	Host	Yeah. Yeah. And—and—and I—
00:10:25	Ben	Host	Which is not a great, like, performance—
			<i>[John laughs]</i>
			—of a piece of art. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:10:29	John	Host	And, you know, they got in trouble for using some of those recordings of people without permission.
00:10:33	Adam	Host	Yeah. How horrible—
00:10:34	Ben	Host	Mm.
00:10:35	Adam	Host	—must it have been to have heard a loved one's voice in this film and—and to be surprised to hear it? Shocking.
00:10:43	John	Host	Yeah. Although if your loved one died on 9/11, I would—
00:10:47	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Probably not gonna see this movie, right?
			John: I would <u>tip-toe</u> into movies about 9/11.
			Adam: Or maybe this is your <u>favorite</u> movie!
00:10:52	John	Host	Right. They did—they did get the bad guy.
00:10:55	Adam	Host	I—
00:10:56	John	Host	Spoiler alert.
00:10:57	Adam	Host	—thought a lot about—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:10:59	John	Host	Spoiler alert.
00:11:00	Adam	Host	—using these voices and placing them where they are in the film, and conceiving of a version of this film <u>without</u> the 9/11 voices, I think, changes a <u>lot</u> .
			I think, Ben, you were alluding to this earlier—a lot about how you feel when you see some of the imagery that follows.
00:11:18	John	Host	Right, 'cause <u>immediately</u> we see people getting tortured.
00:11:21	Adam	Host	Right. It cross-cuts into that cell with Ammar from here. At—and you <u>must</u> remember—the film is telling you you must remember that the War on Terror is explicitly linked to 9/11.
00:11:34	John	Host	Right.
00:11:35	Ben	Host	And this is, like, the <u>immediate</u> aftermath, too. I mean, the movie kind of—it does, I feel like, take a position on torture. It—you know, there's some things that it kind of handwaves about it and doesn't take a position on, but it kind of repeatedly comes back and makes the case for this.
			Even though—there's a real guy that gave up the name of the courier, and he is <u>not</u> , uh—there's no evidence that he was ever

waterboarded or—and it is possible that, quote-unquote, "enhanced interrogation techniques" were used, but, uh, not as extreme as what is portrayed in this movie.

00:12:12	Adam	Host	I'm not sure I agree that the film has a side about, uh, the use of these techniques, and I think the first time I saw the film I was expecting Jason Clarke's character to basically turn to camera and go, "Torture, it's fantastic!"
			Like, I was expecting a <u>real</u> hard line on it! And when I didn't get it the first time I saw the film, it surprised me then, and it surprised me again watching the film a few days ago.
00:12:39	John	Host	That's a great lyric, by the way. "It surprised me then, it surprised me again." I'm just gonna write that down. Keep talking.
			<i>[Adam laughs. There is a sound that might be pages turning.]</i>
00:12:47	Ben	Host	You heard it here first, folks.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			John Roderick's new album will be out... eventually. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:12:52	Adam	Host	It certainly does not draw the line between the voices playing on 9/11 and a scene of torture. You know? There is no, uh—there is no comparable line between someone being tortured and the information given in that scene <u>actually</u> leading to something important happening.
00:13:09	John	Host	The first time I saw the movie, I thought that the one little scene—um—that—
00:13:16	Adam	Host	You really did write down what I said.
00:13:18	John	Host	Yeah. "It surprised me then, it surprised me again."
00:13:20	Adam	Host	Wow!
00:13:21	John	Host	You're gonna hear that one day.
00:13:22	Adam	Host	Someday I'll be thanked in some liner art.
00:13:24	John	Host	The thing is, <u>you</u> won't remember it—
00:13:25	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:13:26	John	Host	—when you hear the song
00:13:27	Adam	Host	Nope!
00:13:28	John	Host	But some nerd on the Internet will be like, " <i>[Clears throat.]</i> Adam deserves \$4!"
00:13:33	Adam	Host	You know what? You'll probably pronounce it like "thane" and "a-gane" <i>[John laughs]</i> or something. You'll give it some weird emphasis.
00:13:39	Ben	Host	Adam will be up on—
00:13:40	Music	Music	<i>[Music begins as Ben speaks.]</i>
00:13:41	Ben	Host	—some hunk's shoulders in a—
			<i>[John laughs]</i>

—an arena show.

00:13:45 John Host Yep.

00:13:46 Ben Host Swinging his shirt around his head.

[The music fades out.]

00:13:47 Adam Host I'm gonna—I'm gonna go to the Grammy Awards with you as the Delilah—

[John laughs]

—to your Plain White T's—

00:13:54 John Host I'm gonna—

00:13:55 Adam Host —song writer.

00:13:56 John Host Yep. I'm gonna point to you in the crowd—

[Ben laughs]

—and go, "Get up here!"

00:13:58 Adam Host Yeah.

00:13:59 John Host "Come on up here!"

[Adam laughs.]

Dance with me!"

00:14:00 Adam Host Uh-huh.

[Ben laughs.]

00:14:02 John Host So I thought—I thought that the connection to—between waterboarding and torture and the intelligence that they ended up expanding into—you know, the—the discovery of the courier—

I thought it all hinged on that one moment where they pull him out—um, they lie to him about the bombing that happened in Saudi Arabia, they explain to him that he actually gave them intel that prevented it, because he's in the dark about what has happened.

And he—they're feeding him dates, and like, "You want a cigarette?" Like, "You're our friend now!" And he gives them a little bit of intel there, and I remembered it as—

00:14:43 Adam Host Yeah, but dates don't qualify as enhanced interrogation.

00:14:47 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** They—they do with you.

Adam: They got—they got actionable intelligence—

00:14:50 Adam Host —uh, over—over cigarettes and coffee.

00:14:52 John Host But—but—

00:14:53 Ben Host But in the context of enhanced—I mean, they—like, preventing somebody from sleeping for 96 hours is torture. And—

00:15:00 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Well, now, hold on.

Ben: —it is in the context of—

[John laughs.]

Adam: I think—I think—

John: The administration would say—

Adam: —I think John's doing pot after 96 hours without sleep. *[John and Ben laugh.]*

John: Uh—*[coughs, laughs]*.

Ben: Oh, uh—"Dick! Great to have you here on the program!"

John: "Um, what?"

Ben: "Shot anybody in the face lately?"

00:15:16 John Host *"[Coughs.] Well—[coughs, clears throat]. I don't remember! [Clears throat.]"*

Ben laughs.

But in fact, the movie makes the case that—I mean, a lot of guys are getting, uh, enhancedly interrogatedly—

00:15:29 Ben Host

Mm.

00:15:30 John Host

—in this movie.

[Ben laughs.]

00:15:31 Adam Host

You wanna write that down?

[John laughs.]

As a—as a couplet?

00:15:33 John Host

And, uh, there's a lot—the—the—

00:15:35 Ben Host

Who said you don't do good wordplay, John?

00:15:37 John Host

[Laughs.] The movie is saying that they're—you know, through this process, they're sifting, sifting, sifting, and they got a—they got a lot of, um—the clean white flour of intelligence from this process.

00:15:51 Adam Host

You talking about flour like the—the baking ingredient?

00:15:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: Yeah! That's right.

Adam: Or—or something with petals.

John: You—you take—you take a rough—you take a rough flour, and then you sift it—

Adam: Right. You do.

John: And the—you know, this is a thing that used to happen back in

the old days before everything was made with computers.

00:16:04 John Host Including bread. *[Laughs.]*

00:16:05 Adam Host *[Laughing]* You can't make a bread with computers.

00:16:08 John Host *[Laughs.]* I read a—I—I read a, um, an editorial in the *The Washington Post* that was written by Jose Rodriguez, who was the guy in the CIA who designed the enhanced interrogation program.

And, like, the—during this period, like, ran the Counterterrorism Center, ran the Clandestine Service.

00:16:35 Adam Host This is the guy when Dan shoves Ammar into the box, he's like, "You're going into the Rodriguez box"?

00:16:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** That—that—

John: Yeah. He call—he calls it the olld Rodriguez box.

00:16:43 Adam Host Right.

00:16:44 John Host Um, and this guy—

[Ben laughs]

—in *The Washington Post*—and it's sort of at the time, right? He—this—this editorial came out during this whole hullabaloo.

And he said, "Look. Uh, this is a super fun movie. My beef about the torture scenes—I'm—"

You know, because a lot of intelligence people were coming out and saying, "We didn't get any intelligence from enhanced interrogation."

And he was saying, "That's not the—that's not the critique. We actually did get intelligence from enhanced interrogation. The—the—the beef—my beef is this isn't what it looked like. We never hit anybody. We tied some guys to some boards. We used water bottles to waterboard them. But we—"

00:17:31 Adam Host I love that—that he's making a granular distinction between like—

[Ben laughs quietly]

—a plastic Rubbermaid pitcher of water—

00:17:37 John Host Yeah! He really, in his—in this editorial, he was like, "We don't use pitchers! That's barbaric!" *[Ben and Adam laugh.]*

00:17:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** "We use—"

Adam: "That's way—"

Ben: "We only use Dasani!" *[John laughs.]*

00:17:44 Ben Host "Dasani: the chosen water of the Intelligence Community."

00:17:48 Adam Host "These floors don't have drains! We can't pour that much water onto them!"

00:17:51 John Host But so he got really granular, and what he was saying was the Abu

Ghraib footage of people being chained and naked and flogged—which was like a—like a major—that was a crime that was being committed by, you know, by army soldiers that were—had been given too much authority.

He was saying that has colored what we think torture looks like.

00:18:15 Ben Host Oh, you're saying it was kind of like a few bad apples and it didn't—

[John laughs]

—didn't really go all the way to the top, is that kinda—?

00:18:19 John Host No, what he was saying was that the black sites, the CIA black sites, were these super heavily monitored—that the—you wouldn't even slap somebody, because it was—because there were lawyers all over it, and it was hyper, hyper-meticulous torture.

He was really proud in this editorial of, like, how—

[Ben laughs quietly]

—meticulous our torture was! And he was like, "No—" and the—

00:18:42 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** It—*[sighs, laughs]*.

Ben: "You don't understand; the evil was so much more banal than you're depicting it!"

John: "Yeah, listen!"

00:18:46 John Host "There were at least three levels of administration between every slap!" *[Smack, like John has punched his own palm.]*

[Ben laughs.]

00:18:52 Adam Host The paper's like, "You know, we—we can offer you some copyeditor help if you'd like that, or someone to like, read over your work before it publishes," and Rodriguez was like, "No, man! I'm good!"

[John and Adam laugh.]

00:19:02 John Host Well, the thing was—*[Ben laughs]*.

00:19:03 Adam Host "Let's go with it!"

00:19:04 John Host He was—it kinda just felt like, "We—this is—you know, yeah, I'm really proud of this! Like, we really—we got some—you know, we—we strapped Khalid to a gurney," he said at one point! He's like—

00:19:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** "We never threw anybody on the floor!"

Adam: But he wrote that—

00:19:15 John Host "We strapped them to gurneys!"

00:19:17 Adam Host Did this editorial make the paper after Osama bin Laden—Laden was killed? Because I don't think he writes that before that, right?

00:19:26 John Host Well, no, this—this was 2013—

00:19:28 Adam Host Yeah.

00:19:29	John	Host	—that he's writing this. <i>[Laughing]</i> And I think he's also retired at that point.
00:19:31	Adam	Host	Like, doesn't the death of Osama bin Laden give someone, like, that cover to—to say those things the way that they're being said?
			'Cause that's sort of what the movie's about, right? Like, "do the ends justify the means?"
00:19:42	John	Host	Well, the reason that we wrestle with this, and the reason that it came out—that <u>when</u> it came out that it was so controversial, is that the time to have—the time to stop torturing was before we started torturing.
			We didn't do this before. It—or—
00:19:54	Adam	Host	Right.
00:19:55	John	Host	—at least, we didn't do it <u>publicly</u> . It was against the American way. <i>[Clears throat.]</i> And it's so hard now to look back and think in <u>recent memory</u> was a time when the entire idea of being—the—the—I'm sorry, the <u>public face</u> of American statecraft was that you didn't chain a guy in a shipping container and—and waterboard him!
			And I know that the cynics and, um, and the critics of American form policy are gonna say, "Ha ha ha, how naive! We always dumped guys down wells and slit their throat in the middle of the night," and so forth.
			But in terms of the way we conducted ourselves publicly in a—in a conflict like this? This was beyond the pale. And we <u>didn't</u> , as the American public, <u>Congress</u> —nobody actually did anything about it!
			And the Bush administration justified it, and wrote a bunch of memos justifying it, but we had our chance as the American people to condemn this and put a stop to it.
00:20:58	John	Host	And—you know, and it was part of what Obama <u>ran</u> on! Right? That he was gonna close down—
00:21:03	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:21:04	John	Host	—Guantanamo.
00:21:05	Ben	Host	They have a clip of—of—I think it's, uh, him discussing it in the context of a campaign in the movie, right?
00:21:10	John	Host	Yeah. It's the only scene—
00:21:11	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: —it's the only kinda <u>mention</u> of Obama directly.
			Adam: He's talking to Steve Kroft on <i>60 Minutes</i> in this movie, isn't he?
00:21:16	John	Host	Yeah. And just saying, like, "This is—this is what we don't do." I mean, <u>now</u> , who <u>knows</u> what the administration—
00:21:22	Ben	Host	I wonder about this, John, because we've watched so many Vietnam films that depict American soldiers doing really horrible things. Like, what—what is the distinction, there?
00:21:34	John	Host	The distinction is clear. Like, there are rules of engagement. And in

war, there's very little you can do to monitor every single soldier's conduct.

The whole thing about *Casualties of War* was not that these guys didn't go do this terrible stuff, but that that was a prosecutable offense.

And there was—uh, there were all kinds of cover-ups, there were people that didn't wanna deal with it, but ultimately a soldier that—that violated these terms—you know, the—the, um, the Articles of War or whatever, would—would be prosecute—criminally prosecutable!

And that's—that's always been true. I mean—

00:22:10 Ben Host

But it was like a slap on the wrist, right? I mean—

00:22:13 John Host

But—but still prosecutable. I mean, there are people all the time in public life that get away with murder. You know, get a slap on the wrist because there was—because the cops didn't put the bullet casings in the right bag.

There—there's a lot about the criminal justice system that you can pick apart. But—

00:22:30 Ben Host

I don't know about thaaat.

00:22:31 John Host

Yeah, you—you can critique it—

[Ben laughs]

—at a lot of levels, but it is a system, right? That does have—that does have pretty clear rules.

And for the administration to do this—to make a legal case for it, which is what they were doing, and to say, "No, no, no, this doesn't violate the—um, our code of conduct," was something very different than some guys out in the bush grabbing somebody and—and dunking his head in a well to get—or dunking his head in a swamp to get intel about where the sniper nest is.

You know, because we have the Monroe Doctrine, too, right? You don't go assassinate the leader of another country, and if you make a case that, uh—if you make a case that "Wellll, if we're dropping bombs from a drone or something, you know, it's not assassination. We—we weren't targeting that head of state. We were just—"

00:23:19 Ben Host

"We were targeting the guy right next to him."

00:23:21 John Host

[Laughing] Yeah, exactly!

[Ben laughs.]

"We were targeting his daughter."

Uh—you know, like, we're definitely in a place now where what were the hard and fast rules are starting to erode.

00:23:32	Adam	Host	I never understood how the Monroe Doctrine got its name. Like, what does Marilyn Monroe have to do with it?
00:23:37	John	Host	Oh, it was based on, uh, the character Monroe from the classic eighties sitcom <i>Too Close for Comfort</i> .
			<i>[Adam and Ben laugh.]</i>
00:23:44	Ben	Host	Oh!
00:23:45	Adam	Host	Thank you.
00:23:46	John	Host	Yeah. Based in San Francisco.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			Ben, I'm sure you—I'm sure you kinda lived the <i>Too Close for Comfort</i> life.
00:23:53	Ben	Host	Eh, I was <i>Hangin' with Mr. Cooper</i> , myself. <i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:23:55	Clip	Clip	Dan: When you lie to me, I hurt you.
00:23:58	Ben	Host	I definitely recall, you know, the media conversation about the kind of normalization of torture, and the way, like, the Bush administration was choosing to project American power being something that in the long run—uh, is potentially making the world a more dangerous place for Americans, because it—you know, it erodes our esteem.
			Like, it makes us seem, uh, cruel and vindictive and not honorable. And I mean, there's a lot in this movie that made me think about that, like the room full of children that watched a SEAL team come in and kill all the adults that they knew.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			Uh—like, it's hard to imagine that those people in, like, 15 years aren't going to be—aren't gonna have, like, a pretty major axe to grind. Right?
00:24:50	John	Host	When I first saw the movie, that was one of the most striking aspects of it! Was, uh, the idea that those—that the—that DEVGRU or whatever jumped back on their helicopters and left—uh, by some accounts, uh, Osama bin Laden had 22 children.
			And, um— <i>[clears throat, then laughs]</i> —all 22 of them seem to have been in that—
00:25:12	Ben	Host	Real stick man. You know?
00:25:13	John	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Yeah.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Uh, he had a few wives, you know? It was the—it was the style of the time.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			But, um—but yeah! All of those kids, like, that—a pretty formative memory! Um—

00:25:25 Ben Host Right.

00:25:26 John Host And they're—and—

00:25:27 Ben Host They're gonna be in therapy for years.

00:25:28 John Host Sure! They're—I mean, a lot of them are—well, they're all—they're all grown now, right? Um—

00:25:33 Ben Host I guess—I guess they would be.

00:25:35 John Host But—well, at least—what was that, eight years ago? When did it happen? No, that—the movie came out eight years ago. Two thousand—

00:25:41 Ben Host Two—

00:25:42 John Host Right before the election, right? So 2008?

00:25:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Uhhh—

Adam: Uh, it was twent—*[sighs]*. Well—

Ben: 2011.

Adam: Yeah.

Ben: May second, 2011.

00:25:48 John Host Is when the—is when the raid happened?

00:25:50 Adam Host Yeah, so check it out—

00:25:51 Ben Host Yeah.

00:25:52 Adam Host —they shot the raid part exactly a year after—

00:25:55 John Host *[Whispering]* Wooow.

00:25:56 Adam Host —the raid happened.

00:25:57 John Host Phenomenal.

00:25:58 Adam Host And this movie was released 19 months after it.

00:26:00 John Host Whoa! *[Clears throat.]*

00:26:01 Adam Host So as a production project, it's insane.

00:26:03 John Host Right.

00:26:04 Adam Host Like, they ended up having a film here that was totally about the failed capture of Osama bin Laden. And they were ready to shoot. Like, that week they were ready to shoot.

And then he's captured and killed, and Mark Boal's like, tearing up his script.

[John laughs.]

And they're having to start again from one. And he rewrote it in a matter of months, and then they were shooting it immediately.

Like, the pace of play here I thought was incredible as a project.

00:26:31 John Host I remember feeling that way about *Black Hawk Down*, too, that the movie came out soon enough after events that it felt like it was still,

um—it was actually part of the—the whole—

00:26:40 Adam Host Yeah.

00:26:41 John Host —arc of events.

00:26:42 Adam Host As if it were still going on.

00:26:43 John Host Yeah. Like—

00:26:44 Adam Host Yeah.

00:26:45 John Host —oh, this is—you know, and this is the kinda culmination of it, is—

00:26:46 Adam Host Yeah.

00:26:47 John Host —*[laughing]* that we've made a huge Hollywood movie about it.

00:26:50 Adam Host That's crazy. It doesn't seem possible.

00:26:52 John Host Uh, we're now only seven years after the fact, right? So—or eight years after the fact, at—at this time of recording, so some of those kids are still—Osama bin Laden's kids are still, like, standing up in class going, "Well, I have a—um, my book report is on enhanced interrogation."

[Ben laughs.]

00:27:09 Adam Host This film is so narrow in its focus, and this is part of—this is part of what I don't like about the film, is that it neglects to ask some pretty interesting questions about anything outside of its very tight focus.

Like "What happened to those kids?"

00:27:24 John Host Well...

00:27:25 Adam Host Like—

00:27:26 John Host We—we can't know, because the movie was made a year after!

00:27:29 Adam Host Well, no, I mean—like, we don't see them either getting on the chopper or being left behind, looking skyward as the choppers leave. Like, it doesn't even give us that.

00:27:38 John Host The chop—they're all the way—the chopper's back in Afghanistan, and those kids are still huddled in the corner sobbing.

00:27:43 Adam Host Yeah.

00:27:44 John Host I mean—

00:27:45 Ben Host Maybe I saw a different version of the movie than you guys, 'cause I remember—uh, I—I remember the guy from *Parks and Rec* holding his finger up and it starts glowing *[John laughs]* in front of one of the kids, and he says "I'll be right here"—

00:27:54 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** —and he touched—touches the kid on his heart.

John: *[Laughing]* He says, *[as E.T.]* "Ouuuch. Ouuuuuch." *[Ben laughs.]*

Adam: I don't remember that part. I do remember the part—

John: "Elliott."

Adam: —where he steps into that room and the kids approach from

a couple different sides, and he holds both hands out.

[John and Adam laugh.]

00:28:06 Adam Host As if he's communicating on some level with them.

00:28:09 John Host Mm-hm. *[Ben laughs.]*

I remember the kid *[laughs]*—the kid walked up to him and said, *[as Cole Sear from The Sixth Sense]* "I see dead people."

[Ben cracks up.]

00:28:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** The thing about, uh—

John: But it really was his parents.

00:28:16 Adam Host The thing about Osama bin Laden's kids is that, uh, you see the one dead ahead, but you neglect to see the ones approaching from the sides.

00:28:22 John Host Mmm.

00:28:23 Ben Host *[As Muldoon from Jurassic Park]* "Clever girl."

00:28:25 John Host Well, I—I—uh, I thought about it then, and I think about it now like the—the sun came up on that day, and those local dudes who had always been curious about what was going on in that big house all kinda walked through the gate.

There was a helicopter burning in the yard, and then the police must have shown up? And there—where did those kids spend the next night, you know?

00:28:46 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** I think you could've given—

John: In a hotel?

00:28:47 Adam Host —another 20 minutes to—like, there's always this guy in any raid, or any—or any, like, mission like this. There's the wheelman!

But the wheelman on this mission is the guy outside the compound watching the approaching horde—

00:28:59 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Ohhh. It's—

Adam: —of people who have been roused from their slumber—

John: Such a—*[laughs]*.

Adam: —*[laughing]* by the crashing helicopter.

John: *[Laughing]* Such a great scene.

00:29:05 Adam Host That guy has got a terrifically awful job. And it has got to be as terrifying as anything happening inside that house.

00:29:13 John Host One of the most memorable scenes of the film.

00:29:15 Adam Host Yeah.

00:29:16 John Host But I—I disagree with you about the narrowness of the scope. I think the narrowness is the movie's primary strength.

00:29:23 Ben Host It's a very strangely structured movie, right? Like, it's kind of—one half is just, like, Jessica Chastain doing research and—and running around interviewing people, and then like, there's, like, a hard cut, and then there's just a raid.

00:29:37 John Host Right.

00:29:38 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Like, it's not—it doesn't even feel like she's there for the last half.

00:29:47 John Host Or I—I guess it's not really half, but like the last hour, would you say? Is the raid? I—I—it feels like the movie is a full movie, and then the raid. Right? I mean, it's—

00:29:53 Ben Host Yeah.

00:29:54 John Host —it's a long movie, and it feels like, um—it feels like we have—we've been with her for a movie-length amount of time.

When—when we first went into Afghanistan, I think we had a real clear idea that we were gonna chase, um—we were gonna chase the Taliban and Al Qaeda up into the mountains around Tora Bora, and we were gonna bomb 'em back to the Stone Age, and that was gonna be the end.

And it was astonishing that they got away. How could they get away? They're—they're riding donkeys, and we have all the air power and all the commandos in the world, and—how did they—they went into what? Caves? What are you talking about?

Like, it seemed insane that you could escape—

00:30:36 Ben Host Right.

00:30:37 John Host —us at that point.

And it was an era where—where Rumsfeld and that whole group—uh, they really were invested in the idea that we didn't need big armies anymore. We could use surgical strikes and special forces, and you could just insert super highly trained dudes with fuzzy beards that are, like, cute at the same time.

00:31:00 Adam Host Have you ever seen the heat signature of a donkey? You should be able to *[Ben laughs]*—

00:31:03 John Host No.

00:31:04 Adam Host —to hit that thing with a cruise missile, for sure.

00:31:06 John Host You should. You should. From—from—from 30,000 feet?

00:31:08 Adam Host Yeah.

00:31:09 John Host And the fact that everything we—

00:31:10 Ben Host This movie does kind of feel like—it does feel insane that it took, like, this many billions of dollars and this many resources to get one guy.

00:31:19 John Host To get one guy! And how he got away in the first place, and how we couldn't—and this is the—the mystery, the great mystery of Afghanistan, Pakistan, the wall against which empires crash.

How it is that the British and the Russians and the Americans and—and, uh, Alexander the Great, and everybody, you know, they arrive here in these mountains, and they leave with their hopes dashed.

00:31:47 Adam Host

This is what I mean by the distinction between narrow and broad focus, though, because what you're describing is this greater understanding of—of this place in the world and the geopolitics surrounding it.

But what the film does is put a pin in 9/11 and a pin in the forehead of Osama bin Laden—

[Ben laughs quietly]

—and draws a perfectly straight line between them.

00:32:10 John Host

But that perfectly straight line shows us, like, the frustratingly granular amount of work that—that our heroine and all of her, like, friends and staff did—

00:32:21 Adam Host

We don't know anything about Maya at all! She is a—I mean, Jessica Chastain is great and I love her as an actor, and as Maya. She is good in this movie, but she is—she's nothing in this film as a character! She is—

00:32:35 John Host

You don't know where she's from, you don't know—

00:32:36 Adam Host

I don't know anything that she cares about besides killing bin Laden, which is cool—like, that's enough to—to be on her side. But she has no friends or family, or contacts or—like, she's not a real person in the context of this film, and you know she's based on a real person.

And I'm not advocating for some sort of, like, Valerie Plame—like outing of—of the real inspiration for her—

00:32:59 John Host

Well, thank god.

00:33:00 Adam Host

But good movies are made about interesting characters, and she is not a character.

00:33:06 John Host

What's her favorite band, Adam?

00:33:07 Adam Host

I mean—

00:33:08 John Host

311?

00:33:09 Adam Host

Misfits.

[All three laugh.]

Wouldn't that be interesting! *[Laughs.]*

00:33:17 John Host

[Laughing] If she had a Misfits p—uh—

00:33:19 Adam Host

Yeah!

00:33:20 John Host

—sticker on her laptop?

00:33:21 Ben Host

It's, uh, not until the Marriott that the movie even kind of acknowledges that, like—she's sitting down with, uh—with her friend, and they begin to have a conversation where it's like, "Okay! Finally we are going to get to know this—this lady a little bit."

[Laughing] And then the restaurant explodes, and they have to run off. Like—

00:33:42 John Host But isn't that the character? I mean, she has no—

00:33:44 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Yeah, no, I—I think that's—

John: She has no friends.

00:33:46 Ben Host I think the movie is very, like, specifically saying this never happens because she is so single-minded and like, the second she—she stops and takes a breath and tries to have a glass of wine and a chat with a friend, like, a—a truck bomb goes off outside the Marriott.

00:34:02 John Host Like, she is a classic deeply unhappy person. She, uh—

00:34:07 Ben Host I mean, like that—that moment at the end is—it—it—the implication is she has nothing to—

00:34:11 John Host Yeah.

00:34:12 Ben Host —like, nothing now.

00:34:13 John Host Right. The guy says "Where do you wanna go?" and she has—she couldn't even think of a place.

00:34:17 Adam Host That's where the non-work of her character development actually paid off for me at the end, because that—and here comes the film paper—like—

00:34:24 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Printing as Adam speaks.]*

00:34:25 Adam Host —that's how our country feels.

00:34:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Wow.

Adam: We just killed bin Laden.

00:34:27 John Host Whoa! *[Mimics explosion sound.]*

00:34:29 Adam Host Now what? It—like—did it really change anything?

00:34:33 John Host Adam just dropped a one-megaton film paper on this.

00:34:35 Adam Host Here's—here's the United States of America riding alone on the plane home.

00:34:39 John Host Yeah. "Where do you wanna go, America?"

00:34:41 Adam Host Yeah.

00:34:42 John Host America doesn't know.

00:34:43 Ben Host It really, uh—it reminds me of a classic Weird Al lyric. "I know Darth Vader's really got you annoyed, but remember if you kill him that you'll be unemployed."

00:34:52 Music Transition "War."

War!

[Music stops.]

00:34:53 Promo Clip *[Fast-paced background music and a cheering crowd.]*

Jesse Thorn: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the match game! Our contestants: Nneke and James from the hit podcast, *Minority*

Korner.

Nnekay & James: Hey!

Jesse: I'll ask you questions in a rapid-fire round! Favorite character on a Shonda Rhimes show?

Nnekay: Olivia Pope.

James: Ooh, I said Olivia Pope's wig.

[Buzzer.]

00:35:07 Promo Clip

Jesse: Ooh! So close! How do you feel about Disney?

Nnekay: They need to pay reparations to Black people because Mickey Mouse was based off of blackface.

James: I said get rid of the racist rides—Jungle Cruise, Splash Mountain.

[Buzzer.]

Jesse: Who are you voting for in the primary?

Nnekay: It's too damn early.

James: I'm just getting to know these fools!

00:35:20 Promo Clip

[Buzzer.]

Jesse: Ooh, no dice. What celebrity do you side-eye the most?

James: Kevin Hart. Can we get a real apology for your homophobia?

Nnekay: Justin Timberlake.

James: Nipplegate.

[Buzzer.]

Jesse: Favorite superhero movie?

00:35:29 Promo Clip

James & Nnekay: *Black Panther*! Wakanda forever!

[Ding ding ding ding ding!]

Jesse: Congratulations! But you still lose.

James & Nnekay: Now I'm side-eyeing you.

Jesse: Catch Nnekay and James, the Wonder Twins of podcasts, on *Minority Korner* every Friday at Maximum Fun.

00:35:41 Promo Clip

[Background music.]

Renee: Well, Alexis, we got big news.

Alexis: Uh-oh.

Renee: Season one? Done.

Alexis: It's over.

Renee: Season two? Coming at you hot! Three years after *[both laugh]*—

Alexis: Three and a half. Three and a half.

Renee: —our season one.

Alexis: Technically almost four years.

Renee: Alright. Alright. And now it—listen!

Alexis: Hm?

Renee: Here at *Can I Pet Your Dog?*, the—

Alexis: Yes.

Renee: —smash hit podcast, our seasons run for three and a half years. *[Alexis laughs.]* And then in season two, we come at you with new, hot cohosts. Named you.

Alexis: Hi, I'm Alexis. *[Both laugh.]*

Renee: *[Laughing]* We also have, uh, future of dog tech!

Alexis: Yeah!

Renee: Dog news!

Alexis: Dog news?

Renee: Celebrity guests.

Alexis: Oh, big shots!

Renee: Will not let them talk about their resume.

Alexis: Nope! Only their dogs!

Renee: Yeahhh, only the dogs! I mean, if ever you were gonna get into *Can I Pet Your Dog?*—

Alexis: Now is the time.

Renee: Get in here! Every Tuesday at MaximumFun.org.

"War."

Huh!

Yeah!

00:35:50 Promo Clip

00:36:02 Promo Clip

00:36:09 Promo Clip

00:36:23 Music Transition

[Music stops.]

00:36:24 John Host A lot of the, uh, reportage (*report-idge*)—the reportage (*repor-tahj*)—
00:36:28 Adam Host Mm.
00:36:29 John Host Um—
00:36:30 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.
00:36:31 Adam Host That's the way Ben likes it.
00:36:32 John Host Yeah. Uh, around this—it was very effective at describing, uh, a component of the American Intelligence Community, which is that a lot of the—the heavy lifting that the CIA did in chasing bin Laden was done by women.

Like, the—like, women made up a—a—like, a, uh—the—I think the lion's share of the—

00:36:52 Adam Host Right.
00:36:53 John Host —agents that were doing this hard work. And she's a composite of them. But if you think about everything we've seen about, uh—every—every depiction of CIA agents that we've seen in popular culture aren't completely fictionalized into, like, James Bond.

But even in a way, James Bond—they're always shown to us as emotionally detached—like, spirits crushed into tiny black pellets. If you think about—

[Ben laughs]

—*Syriana*, if you think about the, uh—

00:37:22 Adam Host *Poppy Seeds*, even.
00:37:24 John Host —*The Good Shepherd*—uh, *Poppy Seeds*, yeah.

But like, the—there's something—there's something in the nature of the work, if you're going to—if it—if it's appealing to you in the first place, if you have the right stuff, if you can pass every one of those little background checks, you almost definitely—like, to even be a CIA agent, you can never have smoked pot.

You can never have listened to the Misfits.

00:37:47 Ben Host You have to be a Jem and the Holograms?
00:37:49 John Host Yeah! You can't—you can't have an outside life, because you have to lie to everybody what you do. It becomes all-consuming.
00:37:56 Adam Host I'm trying to think of anyone I went to high school with being the type of person that would be recruited into the CIA.

[Beat.]

They're all idiots!

00:38:06 John Host Yeah. The—
00:38:07 Adam Host A high school kid?!

00:38:08	John	Host	You have to be a STEM person, I think.
00:38:09	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:38:10	John	Host	Right?
00:38:11	Adam	Host	You have to stick out as so CIA-worthy that I think it would be obvious that you <u>had</u> been approached and that it was already underway.
00:38:20	Ben	Host	Adam is just, uh, saying this here so we will <u>never</u> suspect that he is, in fact, an ag—a deep-cover agent. His cover story is that he's a podcaster.
00:38:29	John	Host	Yeah, he <u>looks</u> like a CIA agent.
00:38:30	Adam	Host	How badly do you wish that you—I mean, if only to say no. You wanna be asked.
00:38:35	John	Host	Actually— <i>[Ben laughs]</i>
			—both of you guys look like CIA—
00:38:38	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: —CIA agents.
			Adam: I know!
00:38:40	John	Host	I mean, Ben looks like a CIA agent from 1956—
00:38:44	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:38:45	Ben	Host	Right, I look like I was recruited from the ROTC at Yale.
00:38:48	John	Host	Right.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Adam, you just look like one <u>now</u> .
00:38:51	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:38:52	John	Host	That's creepy.
00:38:54	Adam	Host	How old do you think the CIA recruits? Like—like, if I—if I <u>wanted</u> to join the CIA right now as a 40-year-old man who looks like I do, <u>could</u> I?
00:39:04	John	Host	If you had skills, I think.
00:39:06	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: I think the CIA—
			John: Sadly—
00:39:07	Adam	Host	— <u>wants</u> people who—who are anonymous-looking like me or you or Ben. Like, we—we're their sweet spot!
00:39:13	John	Host	I—
00:39:14	Adam	Host	Shouldn't they <u>want</u> people like us?
00:39:15	John	Host	I am <u>not</u> anonymous-looking. <i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
00:39:17	Adam	Host	No one would suspect you! <i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:39:20	Ben	Host	I—I think the way you get in is the director comes back to his office one day and you swivel around in his chair and say, "I've penetrated—

[John laughs]

—as deep into the *[laughs]*—into the company as anyone ever has. I would like a job offer—uh, within an hour."

00:39:35 Adam Host

[Laughing] Yeah. John couldn't even answer the under duress question correctly. Like, *[laughs]* there is no way he's getting into that chair.

[All three laugh.]

00:39:46 John Host

Did I ever tell you the story of the WTO protests? Uh, late at night, the night before the protests erupted, a couple of friends and I—

00:39:55 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Ben: This was 1999 in Seattle?

John: 1999, yeah.

00:39:58 John Host

A couple of friends and I were walking around downtown, watching the preparations on—you know, uh, that like, the cops and the WTO were—were kinda prepping, um, a cordon.

And the protesters were already kind of starting to filter in, and—and devise their stratagem.

And I'm walking around the hotel where the WTO delegates were, uh—were staying, and you know, and it was all cordoned off. And, uh, a guy steps out of the shadows and says, "John Roderick?"

[Beat. Ben laughs.]

And I was like, "Yeah! Hey!" You know, I can like, hardly see his face. And I'm like, "Yeah, hi!", you know, and my friends kinda stepped back. And this guy steps out and he's dressed just like—in just regular Joe clothes, just looked like a regular Joe.

00:40:45 John Host

And he was a guy I went to high school—or I'm sorry, a guy I went to college with. And I'm like, "Hey, man! How's it going?"

And he's like, "Great, great! Great to see you, I haven't seen you in years!"

And I was like, "Yeah, what are you doing?"

He said, "I'm in the FBI. And, uh, you know, we're just making sure that everything is—you know, like, taken care of."

And he had the same sort of Adam Pranica—like—

00:41:05 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Adam: Yeah.

John: —the, uh—the you know, like—

[Adam laughs.]

00:41:07 John Host

—just sort of evenly colored, evenly sized—

00:41:10 Adam Host

Smooth.

00:41:11 John Host

Couldn't pick him out—*[laughs]*. Smooth.

00:41:12	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: Couldn't pick him out of a lineup.
			Adam: Smooth and hairless.
00:41:14	John	Host	And I was like, "Well, you know, a great, uh, like, get to—get a chance to say hi."
			And he was like, "Yeah, man! Well, you know, be safe!"
			And he stepped kinda—just took two steps back into the doorway and went immediately back into the mist. And I—so I—I—I encountered another intelligence creep on that, uh, on—during WTO that <u>really</u> put the fear of God into me, but that's a different story.
00:41:36	Adam	Host	Wow.
00:41:37	John	Host	But anyway, ever since then, I've been like, "I have a friend in the FBI!" I don't know if I—I don't know if I can call that in at any point, but he's got to have worked his way up pretty high.
00:41:47	Adam	Host	I have a friend in the Secret Service. <u>And</u> I have a friend who works at the Pentagon.
00:41:51	John	Host	You know, I have a—I have a friend that's <u>really</u> high up in <u>ICE</u> .
			<i>[Beat.]</i>
00:41:56	Adam	Host	<u>Whoa</u> .
00:41:57	John	Host	Super high up, in—in Washington. He listens to our show.
00:42:01	Adam	Host	Oh <u>no</u> .
00:42:02	Ben	Host	Yeah! <i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:42:03	John	Host	And he—well, the last time I was in Washington, DC, he <u>met</u> me. He was wearing a three-piece suit and, uh, in—on, like, the hottest day of the year.
00:42:09	Adam	Host	Was he wet from children's tears? <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:42:11	John	Host	Uh, he was—he was like—he's—he's been— <i>[stifling laughter]</i> he's been—he's been very clear about the fact that, like, Homeland Security has a lot of different people in it, and—
00:42:19	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: —you know—
			Adam: Not all Homeland Security?
			Sound Effect: <i>[Crash of thunder.]</i>
			Adam: That's what he was doing?
			John: That's right. Not—
00:42:21	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: Oh, yeah, yeah.
			John: He "Not all Homeland Security"d.
			Ben: Or "I'm just doing my <u>job</u> ." Etc., etc.
			John: But—but you know, he palmed me his, uh, challenge coin.

00:42:28 Adam Host Oh, god.

00:42:29 John Host And then he had a couple of other challenge coins from other agencies within the—

00:42:33 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Do you—

John: Homeland ICE community—

Adam: —do you put six of them together—

[John laughs]

—to make like a little challenge coin cage?

00:42:39 John Host You put—if you put six of them together, actually, it opens a portal.

[Ben laughs.]

00:42:43 Adam Host Yeah, a portal to Juárez?

00:42:44 Ben Host You snap your fingers and it—and it, uh, makes half of the people in the global south disappear?

00:42:49 John Host Uh, it does do that, but also it gets me through, uh, TSA a lot faster. It's sort of a—

00:42:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Yeah, without clear—

John: Yeah, it's a special—

Adam: Yeah, that's how you do it.

John: —a special line.

Adam: Uh, yeah, you save 70 bucks, John, but at what true cost?

John: *[Verbalizing a sound effect like a portal opening.]*

00:43:00 John Host Anyway, back to the film.

[Adam laughs.]

00:43:02 Ben Host I'm happy to say that all of my friends in the federal government have quit in protest.

00:43:06 John Host Mm. They're all working in non-profits now.

00:43:09 Ben Host Yep.

00:43:10 Adam Host Well, you can't dismantle something like that from the outside, so good for them.

00:43:15 John Host Wow. Are you part of the, uh, "You can only dismantle it from the inside" crowd? *[Ben laughs.]*

00:43:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** I like—I like being sneaky!

John: I see. I see.

Adam: Being inside a thing and then destroying it from within.

John: Just, like, stealing paperclips—

			Adam: That's how I treat all of my relationships.
00:43:27	Ben	Host	He's kind of a classic Marxist.
00:43:28	Adam	Host	Hm.
00:43:29	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> You know?
00:43:30	John	Host	Hm. Mm-hm.
00:43:31	Adam	Host	Where am I—where else am I gonna put these sabot?
00:43:33	John	Host	Mm. Mm. Hm. <i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
			Anyway, back to what I was saying.
00:43:38	Ben	Host	I—I'm just preoccupied with how many hateful Reddit posts there're gonna be about this episode.
00:43:44	John	Host	What—what do—what do you think people are gonna be maddest about?
00:43:46	Ben	Host	I'm sure that we'll get some stuff saying that like, you know, we're—we're naive idiots for saying that the US—you know, that the—the policy of torture was new for the US, I'm sure.
00:43:57	John	Host	Right, right, right.
00:43:59	Ben	Host	Saying that we've ever met anyone that had any participation in the criminal justice or Intelligence Community will—will get us a lot of shit.
			I don't know.
00:44:10	John	Host	Well, as you guys have reminded me over and over—
00:44:12	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Resounding thud before John's next word, and on the following three.]</i>
00:44:13	John	Host	Don't! Go! On! Reddit!
			<i>[Ben and Adam laugh.]</i>
			I say it to myself every morning. <i>[Slapping a surface on his words]</i> Don't go on Reddit.
00:44:19	Clip	Clip	Jessica (Zero Dark Thirty): We're just worried about you, okay? Is that okay to say?
00:44:23	John	Host	This movie has a—extremely strong female lead. It has multiple strong female leads.
			And it—in that sense, it's a rare movie that <u>we've</u> watched, although we've seen a couple in recent—in recent days, recent weeks.
			Even though she's, like, in some ways double, triple hard-ass, it's nice to <u>be</u> with a—with a woman all the way through this film.
			You see guys like this all the time in movies. But you know, not just a project leader but somebody that, when she encounters bureaucracy, she has a kind of, um, almost like she's on a spectrum of unwillingness to be brushed aside or—
00:45:04	Ben	Host	I—I think that's such an interesting—I mean, how many movies have

we seen that bureaucracy is the enemy? And this—it kind of—it's kind of like one of the main antagonists in the film.

00:45:17 John Host Right, although she is—
00:45:19 Ben Host She's not the kind of person that uses belt-fed ammo to take the bureaucracy apart, but—
00:45:23 John Host That's right. That's right. I mean, she—
00:45:24 Ben Host Uh—
00:45:25 John Host —she is working from within. But yeah, it's a—in that—in that way, it's another example of—well, now wait a minute. Let's think about that.

We see a lot of—a lot of movies where bureaucracy is the enemy and it keeps the guys in the field from doing their jobs. This is a lot more confusing about who—about what—where the bureaucracy is.

We see the tide turn. The implication is that Obama took that off the table. Although Jose Rodriguez says that they stopped using enhanced interrogation in 2003.

But we see this sort of sea change, political sea change, that the CIA feels as it reverberates down through what's allowed, and they feel like it's hobbling their ability to gain meaningful intelligence.

00:46:13 Adam Host Their decision-making is hobbled a second time, and corresponding time, because not only is that happening to one leg, if you were to give the Intelligence Community a body—
00:46:25 John Host A wooden leg named Smith!
00:46:26 Adam Host —but the other leg is hobbled too, because of what happened, uh, to WMD in Iraq. Like, everyone is, uh, reluctant to make a choice with anything besides 100% certainty.
00:46:38 John Host Right.
00:46:39 Adam Host And this is—this is a sidecar problem to the main problem throughout the film. It's like, "How much certainty is enough certainty to do a thing to risk being wrong?"

And no one is willing to take that kind of risk until the certainty reaches 100%.

00:46:54 John Host Well, but it never does, right? And—
00:46:55 Adam Host Right.
00:46:56 John Host —and James Gandolfini as Leon Panetta, um—we get this crazy moment where—and then—and that case that's being made in the halls of the White House, where the National Security Advisor is walking along with the—whatever, the counterterrorism CIA dude, and he's saying "Can you afford to be the guy in the White House that doesn't kill bin Laden?"

Like, you don't wanna—

00:47:19 Ben Host Right.
00:47:20 John Host —be the guy that does it wrong, you don't wanna screw this up.

But—but honestly, are you gonna be—how's your name gonna get written? It's a risk either way.

00:47:29 Adam Host Yeah.

00:47:30 John Host That's a crazy portrayal of a political—uh, like, knife-edge that we don't see a lot in films.

00:47:38 Adam Host I don't wanna skip over Gandolfini too much, uh, but now might be a good time to bring up that, uh, he had some feelings about playing Panetta.

00:47:47 John Host Oh, really?

00:47:48 Adam Host And actually, like, pre-apologized to him about, like—he was—he was nervous about it! Nervous about the portrayal, and was like, "Hey. Get—get a message to Panetta. Like, this is happening, and *[hisses, sharp inhale]* hope you like it!"

00:48:05 John Host What's his—what—why?

00:48:06 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** What's his connection to Panetta?

00:48:07 Adam Host **Adam:** And Leon—
—and Leon Panetta, like, wrote back and said, uh, said that he loved the performance. Said that, uh—said that the only thing that was wrong was, uh, was how little profanity—
[John laughs]
—Gandolfini used, because, uh, Leon Panetta was a known soapy mouth.

00:48:22 John Host He—is that right?

00:48:23 Adam Host Yeah!

00:48:24 John Host *[Ben laughs.]*
He was a swearer, huh?

00:48:25 Adam Host Which is, uh, one of the, like, winks at—at real life people is when Maya uses the word "motherfucker" in that meeting, and it, like—you could hear a pin drop afterwards.

Like, that would have been something that Panetta had said himself about his circumstances.

00:48:47 Crosstalk Crosstalk He's great in this movie, and again, like every time you see Gandolfini, you just, like—you miss him.
Adam: Big time.

00:48:47 John Host **John:** Yeah.

00:48:48 Adam Host Yeah.

00:48:49 Ben Host It sucks.

I read a—an op-ed by, uh, former Assistant Secretary of Defense Graham Allison in the *Christian Science Monitor* that came out when the film—it's interesting timing, 'cause it came out, uh, when *Zero Dark Thirty* was nominated for a bunch of Oscars.

And I think that's interesting because that's February, not October or November, like it doesn't—this is post-election. So doesn't come from a place of, like, trying to, you know, shift the electorate in one direction or another.

But, uh, he does make the case that the Bush administration had essentially, like, decided to stop committing resources to hunting bin Laden, and that it wouldn't have happened hadn't—had the Obama administration not kind of renewed the effort.

And I thought it was—like, one, interesting. Like—like, he's very critical of the way the film kind of portrays the—you know, that this is like one CIA officer who, uh, you know, never gave up and she, like *[laughs]*—by the time she, you know, has something to—to go on, it's the Obama administration that are like, "Oh! Huh! Bin Laden! Interesting! Well, we'll consider it!" You know?

[Ben and John laugh.]

00:50:05 Ben Host

Like, uh, at this point she's the only person in the world that gives a shit, and they're like, "Well, you know, like, we'll—we'll hear you out, but you're really gonna have to persuade us."

And—uh, I don't know what Graham Allison's, like, political affiliations are or whatever, but, uh—you know, in—in this refutation of some of the historical accuracy, uh, is making the case that this just simply would not have happened, you know, in the Bush administration or whatever.

And—and that Obama was, in fact, totally instrumental to this going down.

00:50:39 John Host

I feel like the—the movie as a political talking point, and a cultural talking point, is one way to look at—it—it's one way to look at it, now that we're looking at it.

00:50:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: Is basically—

Adam: You wanna write that one down?

00:50:54 John Host

[Laughing] Yeah, let me—let me write that down.

00:50:56 Adam Host

There's your chorus.

00:50:57 John Host

Um—*[laughs]*.

But I feel like at a certain point, all the chatter about whether or not this movie is a realistic depiction of one or another aspect of what it's doing—all that chatter you also have to filter through some kind of critical lens of who's saying it, and you just—you just—you just said that very thing, Ben.

Which is, like—

00:51:22 Ben Host

Right.

00:51:23 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: "Well, I don't know what this guy's political axe to grind is—"

Ben: Yeah. Looks like—

			John: "—as he—"
00:51:27	Ben	Host	—he was in office under Clinton, so—
00:51:30	John	Host	But you know, he's grinding on an aspect of the movie. And every single aspect of this movie gets—gets stuck in the craw of <u>somebody</u> . And—
00:51:41	Ben	Host	Right.
00:51:42	John	Host	— <u>all</u> those somebodies <u>also</u> have—you know, they're not just grinding on it because it's the wrong caliber of machine gun or those uniforms weren't used until 15 years after the—you know, they're not pedants like that.
			They're using this movie as a way of advancing their own political agenda or—or, uh, they want the story to be written a certain way.
			And past a certain point, I started to not trust <u>any</u> critical voice against this movie, because there were <u>so</u> many, and they <u>all</u> felt like they were <u>also</u> motivated by some kind of desire to have some part of the story written the—that—that—to shine a golden light on <u>somebody</u> .
00:52:28	Ben	Host	Right.
00:52:29	John	Host	And so, I—I had to start watching this movie as a <u>movie</u> , and recognize that there are lots of characters in this movie that are composites. There are also lots of characters in this movie that are just actual, real people in—like, Leon Panetta is a <u>real person</u> who <u>really</u> did real things.
			And they also watched the movie and had shit to say! Like, "Well, I—my mustache isn't that... bruffy" or whatever, you know? Like, it—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Uh—and it also depicts real events! A—these—
00:52:59	Ben	Host	Right.
00:53:00	John	Host	—this really happened! Um—
00:53:01	Ben	Host	Yeah, I mean, it's so different from watching <i>The Patriot</i> and having it kind of, you know, like, a bunch of inaccurate bullshit about the American Revolution color your—the way you think about that, is so different from something that is an extremely recent moment in history.
			And the ramifications of which are still playing out all around us.
00:53:21	John	Host	Right! And—and 20 years from now, I don't think that there—I think that <u>this is</u> , in a—in a way, going to end up being the definitive history of this event.
			I mean, the—once you—
00:53:33	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:53:34	John	Host	—put it into a Hollywood movie, um, it's such an—it's—it—it has so much <u>impact</u> to watch it dramatized this way.

Already I feel like I can't separate what I know about it—what I know about that whole 15 years, 1995 to—to whenever this movie came out, right? Because it—because there's this whole pre-9/11 kind of intelligence understanding of what was leading up to it and so forth.

But we can't look at this movie outside of all that knowledge, but also it is—it's a self-contained organism. And as a film, I think it works really well!

00:54:14 Clip Clip

00:54:15 John Host

Joseph Bradley: Don't you wanna see what's in the folder?

I mean, obviously it works well. There—how many—how many movies get editorials written about them in every single newspaper? That are—

00:54:22 Ben Host

[Laughing] Yeah.

00:54:23 John Host

—that are still being argued? Um, but I—I cannot speak to what actual enhanced interrogation looks like.

Because there are just too many competing voices, and all of them—uh—it—a lot of them from trustworthy sources, but the way things are politicized now, even somebody who steps out and says, "I am a non-political operator. This is—I'm a professional torturer, and here's what I say about what we do."

And everybody's like, "Well, that's—'course that's what you would say, professional torturer, because of your union, or what—"

You know, like—

00:55:04 Ben Host

"You're in the pocket of Big Torture."

00:55:06 John Host

[Laughing] Exactly! There's no—there—somehow, the loss of truth and the—and replacing it with truthiness—now it makes it incredibly difficult to watch a movie like this and be able to interrogate it!

Because based on what? All we can do is interrogate it based on our own political, uh, take, or desire for one thing to be truer than another.

That the—the fact is that eventually, we did find this guy and kill him at the—after expending billions of dollars, and—basically, like, chasing a guy.

And in a way that's—it's crazy that the world is still that big. I mean, if you think about—if you had to run today, Adam, the first thing you would do is run down to the supermarket and get your—with your ATM card and try and get as much money as you could out, which would be how much?

00:56:07 Adam Host

That's how dumb you think I am?

00:56:09 John Host

Well, you—the thing is, you got—

00:56:10 Adam Host

Fuck you, John!

[Ben laughs.]

00:56:11 John Host

You got—you—I mean, the last thing they're gonna know about you,

			Adam, is that you went to the QFC with your ATM card and withdrew... what?
00:56:18	Adam	Host	The maximum!
00:56:19	John	Host	How much is that?
			<i>[Beat.]</i>
00:56:21	Adam	Host	500 bucks?
00:56:22	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: I don't know, what's the maximum, Ben?
			Adam: I mean, isn't that what an ATM limit is?
00:56:25	John	Host	Sure—sure—oh, I don't—I think it—I think it— <u>think</u> it might be more.
00:56:26	Adam	Host	Yeah?
00:56:27	John	Host	So let's say you can get 800 bucks. Let me—let me just say that you get 800 bucks. How far can you <u>go</u> ? I mean, you don't have an international network of likeminded, uh—
00:56:37	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: I'm not like—
			John: —religious fanatics.
00:56:38	Adam	Host	I'm not like you that way.
00:56:39	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> But I mean, it's a crazy—it's a <u>crazy</u> story, no matter how you try and portray it. And this is a great lens, I think, to chase <u>him</u> through <u>her</u> .
			It's—it's almost the only way I wanna see it. You know? I needed this. I needed to watch all of the politics and all of the kind of rage—like, the white-collar rage filtered through all these scenes.
00:57:07	Music	Transition	"War."
			<i>War!</i> <i>Huh!</i> <i>Yeah!</i>
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
00:57:11	Adam	Host	As depictions go, I wanna talk a little bit about Osama bin Laden himself. Which you see for just a moment.
00:57:20	John	Host	Blurry.
00:57:21	Adam	Host	Blurry. At the moment he's being shot. How much thought do you think they gave to whether or not we are cross-cutting to him at any point throughout the film up until the end?
			Or do you think the entire time it—it could only ever be—like—there was never going to be, like, "And Burt Reynolds as Osama bin Laden!"
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
			Like, it was only ever going to be a bloody dead guy in a bag. Right?
00:57:47	John	Host	Well, the US government never released a picture of dead Osama.

Now, we've seen pictures of dead Saddam Hussein.

00:57:55 Ben Host I have a selfie with dead Gaddafi.

00:57:57 John Host Right, that we've seen dead Gaddafi. Uh, we've seen all of, like, uh, Hussein's kids, like—but the government specifically, intentionally did not ever let us see Osama bin Laden.

I think that is confusing to a lot of people why they didn't. And they had a reason.

00:58:19 Adam Host Torture may be beyond the pale, but broadcasting a photograph is beyonder the pale. Right?

00:58:25 John Host Except that it always—I mean, it's just like—we've never—we never saw a picture of dead Hitler. And so there will always be people that are like, "Well, he's not really dead."

There are always gonna be people that say, "Well, they didn't show him because X" or "because Y."

It—it introduces an element of doubt. And so for this movie to have given us a clear picture of dead Osama when we don't have that already in our minds, it would've been jarring.

So I think that's the—the best they could do is kinda give us this, like, "Is it him? She seems to think so!"

00:59:02 Adam Host Yeah.

00:59:03 John Host Um—

00:59:04 Ben Host There's never like a—a face-on shot of him.

00:59:07 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** Right.

Ben: It's always kinda up his nose or—or he's, you know, moving, and—

John: He's a—yeah!

Ben: —falling on the floor.

John: He's a tall guy with a long beard that's got some gray in it.

00:59:15 Adam Host It really stuck out to me as a very, very specific choice.

00:59:20 John Host But—but a weird choice on the part of the—of the CIA and the military. They dumped his body in the ocean!

00:59:26 Adam Host Yeah. Right over where Atlantis is, too, right?

00:59:29 John Host Hmmmm.

00:59:30 Adam Host Why? [Whispering] But why?

00:59:31 John Host They flew into the Bermuda Triangle and—

00:59:33 Adam Host Yeah.

00:59:34 John Host —came out without him.

00:59:35 Adam Host Yeah.

00:59:36	John	Host	Think about <u>that</u> for a minute.
00:59:37	Ben	Host	You know what else is a weird choice? And this is something that, uh, a pedant on the Internet noticed:
			Just, uh, as the Camp Chapman scene starts, set in 2009, Maya is shown talking to Jessica, who is frosting a cake, on the phone.
00:59:51	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Beeping as Ben talks.]</i>
00:59:52	Ben	Host	Maya clearly uses a BlackBerry Bold 9900 OS 7 series with a thick metallic frame around the phone, which was not released until August third, 2011.
01:00:02	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Wow.
			John: I <u>hate</u> this pedant. <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:00:04	John	Host	This is the kind of pedant—
01:00:06	Adam	Host	I thought this was gonna be a frosting pedant! And then it—
01:00:07	John	Host	Yeah.
01:00:08	Adam	Host	—really took a left turn!
01:00:09	John	Host	I was like, "She's frosting his cake, what?" <i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:00:11	Ben	Host	Gadget pedant.
01:00:13	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Wow.
			John: Gadget pedant!
			Ben: I used to work for a gadget blog, so I, uh—
			John: You did, yeah.
01:00:16	Ben	Host	I—I—I know these people.
01:00:18	John	Host	Did you—do—were you also mad about the—the—the BlackBerry?
01:00:22	Ben	Host	No, I mean, I—this is one of those movies that is set in a very specific time of smartphones, where they were still kind of a novelty, and <i>[laughs]</i> —and, uh, before they all looked just like—you know, extremely uniform black rectangles.
01:00:38	Clip	Clip	Murdock (Rambo: First Blood Part II): That's a hell of a combination.
01:00:40	Ben	Host	I feel like any phone pedant in like the last five years is gonna be—is—is gonna have a tough time, because phones are almost indistinguishable from each other now.
01:00:50	John	Host	Right. They'll just refer to the—to the phone case.
			"That tiger-striped—"
01:00:53	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:00:54	John	Host	"—phone case didn't come out at the mall kiosk <i>[Ben laughs]</i> until 2024."
01:01:00	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:01:01	John	Host	How did you guys feel about the fact that a big part of the—the middle of this movie was focused on basically just getting this guy's

phone number?

01:01:14	Adam	Host	And like, in that scene in particular it turns a win into something that is, uh—that is pyrrhic, almost, right? Like, they <u>see</u> the guy, and they take his picture, but they can't arrest him because they're playing a longer game.
01:01:26	John	Host	Right.
01:01:27	Adam	Host	"We gotta let him go."
01:01:28	John	Host	And with the—they've got all these stringers who are sitting out at a—at—with their little cart where they're selling shoestrings—
01:01:35	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:01:36	John	Host	—and their whole job is like, "He just drove by!"
01:01:39	Adam	Host	The excitement is in the environment. It's not in the actual, uh, spycraft vs. tradecraft going on.
01:01:46	Ben	Host	What they're telling us is—is very different from what they're showing us, too, because they're—they're making the case that they were out there doing that for <u>weeks</u> and <u>months</u> at a time, like <u>every single day</u> just driving around that town, trying to pick up the signal, and then <u>eventually</u> getting something that they could work with.
			But—
01:02:02	John	Host	Which ends up being <u>expensive</u> , right? They've—they've got 30—
01:02:05	Ben	Host	Right.
01:02:06	John	Host	—people that they're <u>paying</u> every day to just sorta sit there and wait for that white truck to drive by.
01:02:12	Adam	Host	Was the courier's biggest mistake—I mean, besides taking a job with Osama bin Laden—
01:02:18	John	Host	Sure, sure, sure.
01:02:19	Adam	Host	Let's be clear, it almost goes without saying.
01:02:20	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: Sure, we don't want anybody on Reddit to— Adam: You wanna— Ben: The courier's <u>second</u> biggest mistake. <i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:02:24	Adam	Host	You wanna turn down the interview when, uh, when UBL, like—
01:02:27	John	Host	Uh-huh.
01:02:28	Adam	Host	—reaches out to you. I think I'm gonna pass on this one. That's what the courier should have said.
			But it's buying that white truck, right? We hear time and time again, the white truck sticks out—
01:02:36	John	Host	Don't stand out. Don't stand out!
01:02:38	Adam	Host	That is <u>not</u> an anonymous vehicle, and I think the problem with the courier is that he has a sense of style, and he—he wants his vehicle to reflect his personality.
01:02:47	John	Host	Yep.

01:02:48	Adam	Host	Big mistake.
01:02:49	Ben	Host	It's like the guy in the heist movie that—that splashes out once he gets his, uh—
01:02:52	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:02:53	Ben	Host	—his share.
01:02:54	John	Host	Yeah. Right.
01:02:55	Adam	Host	Yeah!
01:02:56	John	Host	I should say that Adam showed up today in a linen shirt that is literally the color of... sage. I mean, it's the color of putty, basically. If you could—
			<i>[Ben laughs]</i>
			—if you could use Adam—you could—you could basically use Adam to spackle a, uh, a crack in your doorframe. It's—
01:03:15	Adam	Host	I can't tell if you are saying this to be complimentary or not.
01:03:19	John	Host	I'm saying it that you can—your tradecraft is <u>so</u> high—
			<i>[Adam laughs]</i>
			—if you—if I turned around and turned back, I might be like, "Who's this guy?"
01:03:29	Adam	Host	I wish you hadn't told Ben this—
			<i>[Ben laughs]</i>
			—because Ben's been encouraging me to wear colors and patterns, and then I show up looking like putty (<i>Puddy</i>)—
01:03:36	Clip	Clip	David Puddy (<i>Seinfeld</i>): You know, I think ultimately I'm upset with myself.
01:03:39	John	Host	I think if I went to a store and I saw a shirt that was the color of putty, I wouldn't <u>see</u> it! My eye wouldn't see it!
01:03:45	Ben	Host	It's possible, if you talk to Adam long enough today, you'll forget who he is—
			<i>[John laughs]</i>
			—and why he's in your house.
01:03:50	Adam	Host	I am <u>so</u> white that the color of my skin makes the color of putty <u>pop</u> .
01:03:55	John	Host	Well, yeah, right!
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			I mean—yeah, the color of putty gives—gives your, like—uh, it—
01:04:02	Adam	Host	It's good for my complexion, right?
01:04:03	John	Host	—your eternal pinkness, it—
01:04:04	Adam	Host	Yeah?

01:04:05 John Host —gives it a whole new—
 01:04:06 Adam Host Very complementary.
 01:04:07 John Host —new shade, yeah.
 01:04:08 Adam Host That's what I was going for.
 01:04:09 John Host I liked this movie. I liked it when it came out. I was—
 01:04:12 Adam Host Are we rating the movie right now?!
 01:04:13 John Host Not yet! Not yet.
 01:04:14 Adam Host Alright.
 01:04:15 John Host I wanna—I wanna—I—but I do wanna, like, stand in a moment here where the complexities of interpreting this movie, I think, add to it.

I think the fact that you're watching those torture scenes and you cannot for sure know whether they accurately depict what we did, and that is morally repugnant—

—whether they are an exaggeration or a—or a fictionalization of what we did, and what we actually did is morally okay—

—whether it is an accurate depiction of torture and that is fine because the end justifies the means and we ended up with—achieving victory—

01:04:56 John Host —or whether the entire—uh, the entire thing is indictment of the American way, and none of it was worth it, and Osama bin Laden was right all along and we—he should have—we should have supported him with, uh, with our tax dollars because he was upending the Jewish conspiracy that runs the world.

Like—

[Ben laughs]

—every single one of the—every single—

01:05:20 Ben Host Now you're talking! *[Laughs.]*

01:05:22 John Host Every single take that you could have when you're watching this movie—like, they—at least for me, they were all folded, uh, like—

01:05:30 Ben Host Yeah.

01:05:31 John Host —like layers of dough and butter in a delicious croissant—

[Ben laughs.]

01:05:32 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Printing as John speaks.]*

01:05:33 John Host —of cool movie.

01:05:36 Adam Host Wow.

01:05:37 Ben Host It's like—it's like *Cops*. Like, if you're a right-winger, you can watch it and just be like, "Yeah, these cops are really kicking a ton of ass!"

And if you're a left-winger, you watch it and go like, "Wow," like, "they keep pulling poor Black and brown people over again and again, and busting them for a dime bag like it's actually changing anything.

			Except for there are a zillion episodes of this show, and it's all the same."
01:05:58	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<p>Adam: But at the end of <i>Cops</i>, you don't unite the entire audience in a catharsis—</p> <p>John: <i>[Singing quietly]</i> Bad boys, bad boys, whatcha gonna do?</p> <p>Adam: —uh, where everyone can agree on—</p> <p>John: <i>[Still singing quietly]</i> Whatcha gonna do when they come for you?</p>
01:06:08	Adam	Host	<p>—on the relief of Osama bin Laden being killed! Like, is that not the—the unifying force of the film at the end? Isn't that the thing we can all agree on?</p> <p>That like, "Well <u>that's</u> good. We got him. We can cry on the plane alone now."</p> <p>This is, uh, an impossible mission. For—for this production team to have—to have made something that—that <u>wasn't</u> going to be treated this way.</p>
01:06:34	John	Host	One year later.
01:06:35	John & Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:06:36	Clip	Clip	Speaker: Did I hook you up? Did I?
			<i>[Someone is laughing or crying.]</i>
01:06:38	Adam	Host	<p>It's review time.</p> <p>And fortunately for us, uh, the story of the film hasn't changed right as we're getting ready to review it, in the same way that—that the screenwriter had <u>his</u> story changed before they were ready to shoot it.</p> <p>Seems like a miracle that this film was made the way that it was. Uh, not so miraculous is our podcast based on it.</p>
01:07:03	John	Host	Hm.
01:07:04	Adam	Host	I think our podcast would get a five-thing review, to be honest. And if you're out there, and you haven't—
01:07:08	John	Host	Right.
01:07:09	Adam	Host	—reviewed it yet, get off your duff. Give us the five things.
01:07:13	John	Host	Yeah.
01:07:14	Adam	Host	<p>When considering what the rating system would be for this film, I think—I think you <u>must</u> choose something, uh, of an ambiguous nature.</p> <p>I think that is one thing we've hit on consistently throughout the film, is—is the degree to which the film's ambiguity is real or not, based on your preconceptions coming into the film, or even leaving the film and having a conversation after.</p>

I think there's a line of dialogue here that—that succinctly places this film in that kind of thinking, and that is, uh, when Maya and Dan are talking about the changing policy surrounding, uh, what the film calls enhanced interrogation, but, uh, the hosts of *Friendly Fire* are probably more comfortable calling torture.

01:08:02	Adam	Host	Uh, Dan tells Maya that you never wanna be the last person holding a dog collar.
01:08:07	John	Host	[Whistles.] Ain't <u>that</u> the truth.
01:08:10	Adam	Host	That is, uh—a <u>very visual</u> metaphor for their circumstances, and so, on a scale of one to five dog collars, it shall be.
			Uh, I wanna be clear, and I think everyone who listens to our show would guess that, uh, if we were to give a review to torture, we would give that zero dog collars. This is not a pro-torture podcast. Right?
01:08:35	John	Host	This is—this is com—this is complicated.
01:08:37	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:08:38	John	Host	Zero dog collars <u>equals</u> —
01:08:39	Adam	Host	That's the—
01:08:40	John	Host	—no torture.
01:08:41	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:08:42	John	Host	Right.
01:08:43	Adam	Host	Try to hold <u>that</u> in your head.
01:08:44	John	Host	Hm.
01:08:45	Adam	Host	But we are reviewing a <u>film</u> . And a few times during this conversation, that—that would come up. We'd go on a tangent where we would interrogate what this film was saying about torture or the methods, uh, used in order to get the evidence used to get and kill Osama bin Laden.
			But this is a <u>film review</u> podcast. And so it feels more challenging than ever to review this film and <u>not</u> review the policy!
			But as a film, I think it is <u>really</u> , really strong, in spite of the things I didn't like about its main character. Like, the <u>absence</u> of character in its main character was a thing that—that rubbed me the wrong way, and I think it's—
01:09:32	John	Host	It's like the absence of a dog collar in a policy of no torture.
01:09:36	Adam	Host	I think it's because of my innate, uh, love of Jessica Chastain and her acting! Like, I really think she's great! Uh, like, she's hand-picked to be in this film.
			Kathryn Bigelow, also a big fan of hers, offered her the part over the phone directly. Like, wanted her to be in it. Mark Boal wanted her to be in it.
			Everyone wants Jessica Chastain to be in it, and she's great in the movie, but how <u>weird</u> that her greatness is also associated with, like, her very cipherness as a character. I thought that was a really

interesting challenge.

I thought the film was super frightening, and I think one of the things it does best is turn the places you think you're safe into dangerous places, like that double-decker bus. Like that Marriott. Like that military base, where they let in the red Subaru.

01:10:28 Adam Host

It is a creepy, creeping feeling throughout. Like when Maya leaves her driveway and—and you—god, like, the first time you see where she lives and you see that there's a guard tower in her driveway, is such, uh, a terrifying thought.

I think it is maybe the most challenging thing a filmmaker can do to maintain suspense in a story that you already know the ending to. And I think in that way, this film achieves greatness for what it is.

I'm going to give it four and a half dog collars. I think it's—I think it's in between really good and great. One of the things that pushes it towards great is its—is its effectiveness as an instrument for conversation, and I think our favorite films in *Friendly Fire* are the ones that really get us energized for that kind of thing.

01:11:19 Adam Host

And it's weird, too, because for as down the middle as this film plays it in terms of where it lands on being pro or anti-torture, like, it really encourages this sort of conversation in a way that I think weaker films, who make stronger cases for what it's advocating in its story, like, are—are less effective at.

I think it's kinda magical in that way. So it's gonna be four and a half dog collars for me. Really just troubling in a lot of areas, but, uh, a great film to talk about and sadly a film that is as, uh, resonant now as it's ever been.

Like—[laughs] we're all still crying on that plane. Like, the plane has not landed at the end of this film.

And that is pretty sad. What say you guys?

01:12:15 Ben Host

It's a fascinating movie. It's a tough movie to watch. I keep making the mistake of preparing dinner on Monday night—

[John laughs.]

—and my wife gets home, and we watch the *Friendly Fire*, movie, and—

01:12:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Ben: —you know, tuck into our—

John: With a big bowl of spaghetti. [Laughs.]

Ben: —mac and cheese while—

01:12:30 Ben Host

—the guy's shitting himself and getting stuffed into a box in the torture scene.

I think my favorite thing I read about this movie after watching it was, uh, an article in *Slate* by Emily Bazelon, uh, that discusses this issue of—

01:12:51	Adam	Host	Are we having to cite—
01:12:52	Ben	Host	—um—
01:12:53	Adam	Host	—all of this stuff in our footnotes? Because I haven't been writing my papers that way.
01:12:56	John	Host	No, it's alright.
01:12:57	Adam	Host	Okay.
01:12:58	John	Host	It's okay.
01:12:59	Ben	Host	I'm—I'm just saying something I like that I read!
01:13:01	John	Host	Adam didn't footnote his sources and he's gonna get a B minus on the paper.
01:13:05	Adam	Host	That's what I'm afraid of.
01:13:06	Ben	Host	Yeah.

She says the thing that is uncomfortable about this movie from a liberal perspective is that, like, while it definitely exaggerates the torture thing—for sure there—it overstates when—when and where it was used—we can't really know, as—as, like, not-top-secret-privy civilians, to what extent the torture actually did yield actionable intelligence.

And this movie depicts a very specific example of that that didn't happen, but, you know. Like, it—it makes the case that there were, like, a lot of other people in—in custody getting interrogated. We see lots of, uh, little grainy video clips of that.

And we can't say for certain that torture is—was entirely useless in the—you know? 'Cause—because it's—it—it would be comforting to say that. To say that this war crime that our country committed was also totally useless and didn't—didn't need to happen in the first place, because it didn't get us any—any further than we would have gotten just, you know, acting correctly.

01:14:10	Ben	Host	And I think that tension is in the movie. I think that the way it deals with torture acknowledges that. I think that tension is—is here, and I—I feel it all the way through this movie, and I think the movie makes a smart decision to exploit that tension to its own ends.
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And I think that it's—it's kinda the only way to tell this story in—in the time that it's told. Like, I think in—you know, in 10 or 15 years, there could be another movie about this that can use the kind of 20/20 of hindsight to make a more emphatic statement about it.

But it's an amazing—you know, it's an amazing adventure that happened, and I think that it does help us kind of—kind of dig into—into, you know, what—what we did in response to 9/11.

And I don't think I agree [*laughing lightly*] with what we did in response to 9/11, but I think that as a movie, this is a great movie. So I'll give it, uh—I'll give it a—I got—I—I guess four dog collars.

01:15:30	Adam	Host	It feels so weird to say that. [<i>Laughing</i>] I'm sorry.
01:15:32	Ben	Host	Yeah.

01:15:33	Adam	Host	Like—
01:15:34	Ben	Host	No, I think it's the right thing. I think it—
01:15:35	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:15:36	Ben	Host	I think you were using that tension in the same way that the movie is.
01:15:38	John	Host	I mean, speaking as probably the only guy on our show that <u>has</u> been the last one holding—left holding the dog collar...
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			More than once—
01:15:46	Adam	Host	Yeah, you're definitely the dog collar holder and not the wearer, huh?
01:15:48	John	Host	Yeah, for—for shiz.
01:15:50	Adam	Host	Oh, god. I—I grieve for your DMs.
01:15:53	John	Host	<i>[Laughs quietly.]</i>
			The thing that we did in response to 9/11 that was morally repugnant was start <u>two</u> global wars that lasted 15 years that expended trillions of dollars of treasure and hundreds of thousands of lives. Right?
			I mean—
01:16:11	Ben	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs, so does John.]</i> Not—not even really depicted in the movie. It's like—
01:16:14	John	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> Right.
01:16:15	Ben	Host	"You can only—you can only access that via the presence of Bagram Airforce Base" or whatever.
01:16:19	John	Host	Yeah, I mean a—a—we're, during the—during the whole—the whole, uh, scope of this movie, we're <u>also</u> in a protracted global war.
			This is a—this is a movie that depicts events that we all intimately lived through. None of this that we're seeing, uh, we didn't see in real time.
			We all read those editorials as they were happening. We—I'm—I'm assuming at least two of the three of us actively opposed the Bush administration in every—in every action they took!
			And the other one of the three of us was, uh, was just, uh, dressed in a putty color and sort of wandering the—
01:16:59	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: How dare you?
			John: —wandering the Earth.
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
01:17:02	Adam	Host	You won't be laughing when my putty cult strikes.
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
01:17:10	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughing]</i> He's lulling us into a false sense of security.
01:17:14	John	Host	I think one of the—one of the <u>coolest</u> things about this movie is it's

not like the Doolittle Raid, where, uh, you can watch a movie made about the Doolittle Raid and it's this sorta discrete event that is happening within a gl—uh, within a larger war.

But, um, we know the—we know the characters hear the airplanes, they leave the—they leave the, uh—

01:17:36 Ben Host "Well, gee, Mary-Anne, I'm off to torture Abu al-Husseiny—"

01:17:40 John Host And that's the thing. *[Ben laughs.]* We've seen the Doolittle Raid portrayed a few different ways.

01:17:43 Adam Host "Half-truths'll be treated like lies!"

[All three laugh.]

01:17:47 John Host And those—

01:17:48 Ben Host "Have dinner hot on the table when I get home!"

01:17:50 John Host There's not a ton of controversy about the Doolittle Raid, whether it was necessary. It was just a—it was just a high adventure.

But there's never been a portrayal of it that feels definitive. Right? We're going to see another one. We're gonna see that Doolittle Raid—

01:18:05 Ben Host Yeah.

01:18:06 John Host —again and again over the course of, uh, 200 years of American war movie filmmaking.

But this does feel definitive. And we—and it's showing us a side of something we all lived through that we didn't really have access to, and because it maintains a—like a—a detached tone, it feels like an apologia to some—uh—not just to some viewers, but at some times as you're watching it.

Like, "Wait a minute. Is this—whose side are we on?" Because we're so used to—

[Ben laughs]

—looking at everything from a—from a side, from an angle now.

We—we no longer think in terms of American interests. Right? I mean, no one ever looks at the Doolittle Raid and says, "Well, back on the homefront, fully 50% of the people were against the Doolittle Raid, because—" you know, "—because of political reasons."

01:19:01 John Host And during the events depicted, I was a member of the—you know, what would be described as the dissenting class! I didn't agree with a single decision the Bush administration made!

But I certainly rejoiced when Osama bin Laden was killed. And watching this movie and seeing what is—what is effectively, like, the story of Jason Bourne except without all the slow motion fight scenes, with all the—without all the exaggerated fantasy aspect of it—we see how boring all of the people supporting these missions—uh, how boring and grinding their lives are.

I don't see how you're ever gonna make a movie about this—about these events—that's better than this one. Any subsequent depiction of that raid is gonna be superfluous. Because we're not—it's not like we're gonna get any new information. And I don't think it's gonna be depicted any better.

We didn't really talk about the movie-making of, uh, of a lot of this movie, because we're so fascinated by the—by all the undercurrents and over-currents, all the politics. But it's a great movie.

01:20:23	Adam	Host	Yeah, as a production, there are things about this film that are—that are great. Like, capital-G Great. Like, they <u>built</u> the compound in Jordan. Like, <u>to scale</u> , based on documents.
01:20:33	John	Host	Yeah.
01:20:34	Adam	Host	Like, it actually existed. There were no, uh—there were no wild walls in it. Like, it was all practical as a compound, uh, to allow for—for like unbroken shots following the soldiers up the stairs and around corners and stuff.
			Like—
01:20:49	Ben	Host	You—you recognize it the second you see it.
01:20:52	Adam	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
01:20:53	John	Host	Yeah. It's astonishing. It—it—it's <u>lucky</u> that so many people had an opinion about this movie, because in <u>aggregate</u> , you can see how the chattering class, uh, works against itself!
			So I think this is an extraordinary movie, and, uh, and I think it's a five—dog collar film.
01:21:12	Adam	Host	Holy shit.
01:21:13	John	Host	I don't—I do not find a flaw with it.
01:21:16	Adam	Host	Wow.
01:21:17	John	Host	Because every flaw that you could find is a flaw that gathers so many other bits of source material to the—to the question that it becomes its own—it becomes a strength!
01:21:31	Adam	Host	Ben, who's your guy?
01:21:33	Ben	Host	Uh, this is a guy that we've talked about, uh, quite a bit whenever we see commandos.

Uh, we—we have encountered a couple of time, commandos who seem to be able to kind of give the thumbs up or thumbs down to their—to their job.

[John laughs.]

And, uh, the commando that I guess works at the—at the embassy in Pakistan that Jessica Chastain goes down and is like, "Hey," like, "I need your guys to be, like, going out and tracking this, uh, this courier," and he's like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, but they're—they're sleeping right now, so, uh, you know, you give me something—something to work with, and we'll get on it, but not before then."

01:22:14 Ben Host Uh, I'm fascinated by the—by the commando that gets to—*[laughing]* that gets to pick and choose what he does.

So, uh—and—and he also had like, a bit of an accent, so I—I kinda wondered about his background, like—like, no character in this movie do you get any—anything but what is presented on screen, you know? You know—

01:22:34 Adam Host Yeah.

01:22:35 Ben Host Nobody, uh—nobody recounts how they got into this racket. In fact, when Leon Panetta, the Director of the CIA, asks the Jessica Chastain character how she got into this racket, she says he's not allowed to ask her that question.

[John laughs.]

[Laughing] So—uh—but, uh—but, uh, that guy fascinated me.

01:22:53 Adam Host The commissary at the CIA headquarters has gotta be the most quiet place in the world, right?

01:22:58 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

And I also just love that move, when, uh—when their buddy gets out of the car, in, uh—I think it's Peshawar, maybe, that he gets out of the car to like, tell the two guys on mopeds to fuck off.

He does that thing where he takes out the pistol and presses it against the—the dashboard.

01:23:15 Adam Host Mm.

01:23:16 Ben Host Like he's gonna shoot through the car at those guys if—if it comes to it. Love that move. So he's my guy.

01:23:21 John Host That was Edgar Ramírez playing the role of Larry.

01:23:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** *[Laughing]* Larry—

John: CIA, uh—

Ben: Larry is my guy.

John: —sad song operative.

Adam: I believe that's your first Larry, Ben!

01:23:31 John Host Yeah. Good job.

01:23:33 Adam Host Uh, my guy is Thomas. And, uh, he's one of the many anonymous coworkers that Maya has. This film plays it so down the middle in so many areas that there's a moment that I couldn't help but laugh at reflexively, because it was so coded in a type of humor that I'm familiar with, but was so clearly not.

And it's the scene where, uh—where one of Maya's leads gets killed and Thomas, who's played by Jeremy Strong, like—like, it's one of the low points in the film. Thomas, like, puts a hand on her shoulder and is like, "Sorry, Maya. I always liked this lead."

Like—grieving the loss of a lead as if they were deaths. Like, that extra added grief about this that, in the moment, the first time I saw it, I was like, "That's just how it is in that office."

[John laughs.]

Like—like, treating it—

[Ben laughs.]

01:24:29 Adam Host But in the context of the film was, like, supposed to be taken seriously. Uh, Thomas is played by Jeremy Strong, who's an actor I really like from a show called *Succession*.

Uh, he is—he gets very little to do in this film, like most other characters in it. But I thought that moment was, like, so CIA. Up to your interpretation. That it was like, emblematic of anything else in this film.

Like, "Can I laugh? Is it okay to laugh?"

[Ben laughs.]

I don't think that it's okay to laugh. Like, he's being serious. Like, shit is fucked at this moment in time.

But putting it that way, in terms of—of the death of someone, uh, when it's really just about, like, the loss of a lead—uh, was perfect for me. And so that—that makes Thomas my guy.

01:25:15 John Host Uh, we've talked about my guy already quite a bit. Uh, he is, um, Hakim, who was also the CIA operative—uh, Ben just mentioned him. He's the guy that got out and talked to the kids on the motorcycle.

Uh, he's played by the actor Fares Fares. He is in so many scenes in this movie, and he is—he's a CIA employee but he's also part of their, like, Special Operations.

So he's—he's on the streets of Peshawar, searching for—searching for Abu Ahmed. But he's also at Area 51 looking at the helicopters. Um, he's a very capable guy, but he's—but he's, uh, he's thinking hard about everything he's doing.

So he's my guy. Hakim.

01:26:04 Adam Host Good guys!

01:26:05 Music Transition "War."

War!
Huh!
Yeah!

[Music stops.]

01:26:08 Adam Host Will it be a good movie next time on *Friendly Fire*? Only the 120-sided die can tell us.

01:26:15	John	Host	Here we go. 120-sided die.
01:26:17	Ben	Host	I had a dream that I saw an ad for a <u>130</u> -sided die. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[John laughs/groans.]</i>
01:26:22	Adam	Host	Sounds like a great dream!
01:26:23	John	Host	Yeah!
01:26:24	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Ben: It was pretty kick-ass.
			Adam: You wake up with a little, uh, wet spot?
01:26:26	Ben	Host	I never don't!
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:26:29	John	Host	Okay, here we go! Here comes the die roll!
			<i>[Die rolling on a hard surface.]</i>
			Number 70! Number 70.
01:26:41	Ben	Host	Number 70 is a 1959 <u>comedy</u> film—
01:26:46	Music	Music	<i>[War drums as Ben speaks.]</i>
01:26:47	Ben	Host	—directed by Jack Arnold, set in a <i>[laughing]</i> Banana Republic, it says here, called <i>The Mouse That Roared</i> .
			Starring, uh, Peter Sellers!
01:26:57	John	Host	Yeah, this is a—there's gonna be an <u>awful</u> lot to interrogate about this movie, I predict.
01:27:03	Ben	Host	Uh, this is one I—I feel like one of the ones that gets requested the most often.
01:27:09	John	Host	We may see some, uh, white guys portraying some, uh, some Latin people.
01:27:15	Adam	Host	Oh <u>no</u> . <i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:27:16	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: We may see some pretty broad—
			Ben: It was the style of the times. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			John: —characterizations. <i>[Laughing]</i> It was. There may be some brownface. It's, uh—I mean, not—it's—it—
			Adam: Hm.
			John: I don't think it's excoriatable, but—
			Ben: Oh, no, it's, uh—
01:27:29	Ben	Host	—this country is nestled in the French Alps, so I think, uh—
01:27:32	Adam	Host	Oh, it's fine! It's fine.
01:27:33	John	Host	John: Ohhhhh, okay!
			Ben: Yeah.

John: Alright. The French Alps.

Adam: You give the French a pass—

01:27:36 John Host

Yeah.

01:27:37 Adam Host

—on their brand of comedy.

01:27:38 John Host

Oh, sure, and Peter Sellers—very good at fake French accent.

01:27:41 Adam Host

Oh, yeah.

01:27:42 John Host

[French accent] "Cato!"

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

01:27:46 Adam Host

Wow!

01:27:47 Ben Host

Uh, look—looking forward to it. It's about a—a poor country that declares war on the United States.

01:27:52 John Host

Oh, incidentally, *Zero Dark Thirty*... war movie?

01:27:56 Ben Host

Hm!

01:27:57 John Host

Yes or no?

01:27:59 Ben Host

Ooh. Uh, yeah, I mean, I think it's... a War on Terror movie, and I think it makes the case that police action was a better way to think about everything and—

01:28:11 Music Music

"War" begins fading in.

01:28:12 Ben Host

—and that, you know, catching Osama bin Laden should have been exclusively this kind of work, maybe.

01:28:18 John Host

Rather than, like—

01:28:19 Ben Host

Right. Yeah.

01:28:20 John Host

—carpet-bombing two countries into submission?

01:28:22 Ben Host

Yeah. Like, at—like, at no point do you get the feeling that, like, setting up a provisional government in Iraq did anything *[laughing]* to advance this cause.

01:28:32 John Host

Right.

01:28:33 Adam Host

Yeah, I agree. I think it checks that box.

01:28:35 Ben Host

[Sighs].

But, uh, *The Mouse That Roared* will be next week, and, uh, in the meantime we'll leave it with our buddy RobsRobsRobsRobs.

So for John Roderick and Adam Pranica, I've been Ben Harrison. To the victor go the spoiler alerts.

01:28:50 Music Music

"War" continues.

*Absolutely—
—nothing!*

Listen to me!

War!

It ain't nothing but a heartbreaker

[Music continues as Rob speaks.]

01:28:54 Rob Schulte Producer

Friendly Fire is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Benjamin Harrison, Adam Pranica, and John Roderick. It's produced by me, Rob Schulte.

Our theme music is "War," by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music, and our logo art is by Nick Ditmore.

Friendly Fire is made possible by the support of our listeners. Like you! And you can make sure that the show continues by going to MaximumFun.org/donate. As an added bonus, you'll receive our monthly pork chop episode, as well as all the fantastic bonus content from Maximum Fun.

If you'd like to discuss the show online, please use the hashtag [#FriendlyFire](https://twitter.com/FriendlyFire). You can find Ben on Twitter at [@BenjaminAhr](https://twitter.com/BenjaminAhr). Adam is [@CutForTime](https://twitter.com/CutForTime). John is [@johnroderick](https://twitter.com/johnroderick), and I'm [@robkschulte](https://twitter.com/robkschulte).

Thanks! We'll see you next week.

01:29:48 Music Music

"War" continues.

Is there no place for them today?

*They say we must fight to keep our freedom
But lord knows there's got to be a better way*

[Music fades out.]

01:29:59 John Host

Yeah, and also go to Max Fun, uh, dot—Max Funnn—stein?

01:30:04 Adam Host

Sure.

01:30:05 John Host

What is the cult?

01:30:06 Adam Host

MaxFunkenstein.sex *[John laughs]* is where—*[laughing]* is where you can donate to the production of this show.

01:30:12 John Host

Yeah, donate to the production of the show on MaxFunkenstein.sex/friendlyfire.

01:30:17 Ben Host

My favorite website on the Internet.

01:30:19 Music Transition

[A cheerful guitar chord.]

01:30:20 Speaker 1 Guest

MaximumFun.org.

01:30:22 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:30:23 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:30:24 Speaker 4 Guest

—audience supported.