

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.

00:00:00	Music	Music	Dramatic, booming, militaristic music full of percussion and bells.
00:00:01	Ben Harrison	Host	<p>Sailors have a reputation as a superstitious lot, so it's understandable why they would take the wrong message from watching a champagne bottle bounce unbroken off the hull of the submarine they're about to board and take on its maiden voyage. I, a rationalist, look at this moment and am gratified to see that the hull of the ship and the hull of the wine are both well made, and capable of sustaining an impact without damage. But this is the moment that earns <i>K-19</i>, the first nuclear powered submarine in the Soviet Navy, its reputation as a death trap.</p> <p>Rushed into service, the ship already has a body count before it's even out of dry dock, owing to the USSR's eagerness to deploy their newest weapon in the nuclear arms race. And now Captain Liam Neeson is going to have to take a half-step back and let Captain Harrison Ford take over, creating the perfect Captain/XO conflict dynamic that is so widely prevalent in the sub-genre. Heh. SUB-genre.</p> <p>The <i>K-19</i> is a first strike weapon. It's supposed to lurk around off the East Coast of the United States, nuclearly deterring NATO from doing anything the USSR would make them regret. It seems like a simple task, but the ship itself might not be up to it. If you're like me, thinking that this champagne-proof boat is as well made on the inside as it is on the outside, think again. After some pretty intense, borderline foolhardy stress tests at the orders of Captain Ford, the ship successfully fires its test ICBM, but then quickly starts to suffer from engine problems. And that's bad, because the engine is just as nuclear as the missiles <i>K-19</i> carries, and someone forgot to pack radiation suits.</p> <p>What the crew had bargained on being a cold war against the United States becomes an extremely <u>hot</u> war against a reactor meltdown, as the cooling system has failed them, and the only way to fix it is by running a garden hose through an open door into the core.</p>
00:01:57	Ben	Host	<p>We've seen and enjoyed a couple of Kathryn Bigelow's films before on the podcast, and I'm sad to say that unless I can convince John and Adam that <i>Point Break</i> is about a war on banks, this is her last film on the list. This is far from her strongest work, and Harrison Ford's Russian accent is singularly weird, which I hate to say as this show's number one Ford defender. But there is a lot going on in this film, and Bigelow's particular insight into the male psyche is given a playground of different characters and scenarios, so it's really worth watching.</p> <p>"We deliver, or we drown" on today's <i>Friendly Fire</i>, as we review 2002's [<i>pronouncing the colon</i>] <i>K-19: The Widowmaker</i>.</p> <p>[<i>Music fades into the opening drumroll of the next song.</i>]</p>
00:02:37	Music	Transition	"War" off the album <i>War & Peace</i> by Edwin Starr. Impassioned, intense funk.

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!

[Song fades down and plays quietly as the hosts speak.]

00:02:57 Ben Host Welcome to *Friendly Fire*, the war movie podcast that we have to record ten minutes at a time, and when we step out of the studio we're covered with lesions and blood from head to toe!

[Adam laughs.]

But we do it out of our sense of duty to each other and the Union of Soviet... Maximum Fun... Socialist Podcasts.

[John and Adam laugh.]

I'm Ben Harrison.

[Music fades out.]

00:03:16 Adam Pranica Host I need to set down my lunch.

[John and Adam laugh.]

That I was starting in on—*[laughs]* in the middle of that intro. I'm Adam Pranica.

00:03:22 John Roderick Host And I'm John Roderick.

00:03:24 Ben Host *[Laughs.]* Longest intro.

00:03:26 Adam Host Yeah! I mean, that, uh... what you're describing is a big, big part of this movie. It's the part where the sailors are turned into pudding in ten-minute increments. It's pretty harrowing to watch.

00:03:38 Ben Host Yeah!

00:03:39 John Host It is. You know, the submarine trope of somebody needing to go down into the bilge, and then they get their foot trapped...

00:03:44 Adam Host Yeah.

00:03:45 John Host ..and they drown, and the rest of the crew has to super reluctantly

seal them off, is quadrupled down upon in this movie, because they're inside the reactor core.

00:03:58 Ben Host Yeah!

00:03:59 John Host Getting their bones melted.

00:04:01 Adam Host You don't seal away these bodies. These bodies are welcomed back into the ship, put in a rack, and then bandaged.

00:04:08 John Host Just totally irradiating everyone that touches them.

00:04:11 Adam Host Yeah! Oof.

00:04:12 Ben Host There is like actual practice surrounding radiation, of like, you can only be exposed for X amount of time. Because it's just—it's a matter of probability, right? Like, the amount of damage it's doing is reckoned in a probabilistic way. So the less exposure overall that you have, the less likelihood you have of symptoms. But ten minutes seems to be a totally arbitrary number that the captain comes up with.

00:04:41 Adam Host I love how disinterested he and everyone else is in those probabilities. 'Cause it doesn't matter!

00:04:46 John Host Well, this proximity to like, an active core? I think you're screwed either way. Although we see the captain go in and stick his head in there, and pull the guy out, and he lives to a ripe old age.

I feel like the setting of this movie, 19—early sixties, right? '61? Is that when we're set here?

00:05:09 Ben Host Yeah, I believe that is the date of the maiden voyage of *K-19*. Which, the nickname that the actual sailors aboard the *K-19* gave it was Hiroshima.

00:05:21 John Host Yeah.

00:05:22 Ben Host Not The Widowmaker.

00:05:23 John Host But *K-19* was the first Russian, nuclear-powered, intercontinental ballistic missile-delivering submarine.

00:05:30 Ben Host Yeah.

00:05:32 John Host So this was all new to them. Right? This was the first one. So I'm sure the captain was like "Uh, ten minutes! Ten minutes each!"

00:05:41 Ben Host Yeah.

00:05:42 John Host "Inside the popcorn maker."

00:05:43 Ben Host I think the Russians may have had submarines that were nuclear powered before, but maybe weren't also...

00:05:50 John Host Boomers.

00:05:51 Ben Host Armed with nuclear missiles.

00:05:53 John Host Right. Right.

00:05:54 Adam Host What you wanna do is build one of your first nuclear submarines as quickly as possible.

00:05:59 John Host Yeah. Yeah, race it—get those bargain basement parts out there and slap it together. I mean, did you read about the *K-19*, the actual *K-19*? Right? I mean, it seems like that's what they did!

00:06:08 Ben Host Yep.

00:06:09 Adam Host It's such a fun... conceit. I mean, a "conceit" argues that there's something manipulative about the storytelling here. But like, the idea of a race to ensure mutually assured destruction...

00:06:21 John Host Yeah.

00:06:22 Adam Host ...being the mission for this boat is amazing!

00:06:26 John Host Yeah.

00:06:27 Adam Host Right? "We've gotta hurry up and get out there and appear on satellite. We need to be caught doing this test."

00:06:32 John Host Right. "This boat is a piece of shit, but if we don't have it, there's nothing keeping the Americans from first-striking us."

00:06:38 Adam Host I love that.

00:06:39 John Host "So get that boat out to sea."

00:06:41 Adam Host Yeah.

00:06:42 John Host "And you have to shoot a missile, too!" As you're saying. Right?

00:06:44 Adam Host Right.

00:06:45 John Host "They have to pick it up, and know that we can do it."

00:06:48 Adam Host Yeah.

00:06:49 John Host Pretty crazy. But there is nothing fun about this movie. There is not a single fun moment of any kind. Nobody even slips on a banana peel.

[Ben laughs.]

There's no Rickles, there's not even like a—

00:07:01 Ben Host Well, one guy slips in front of the truck and gets—*[laughs]* greased.

00:07:04 John Host *[Laughs.]* And gets greased! There is no—no one ever smiles.

00:07:09 Adam Host I watched this film Roderick-style. Which is to say, uh, not in a bathtub, but after midnight.

00:07:15 John Host Yeah.

00:07:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** And I was not sleepy at all during. It kept me up!

John: I watched this movie in the bathtub, after midnight.

00:07:23 John Host And I love watching submarine movies in the bathtub.

00:07:25 Adam Host Oh, that sounds nice.

00:07:26 John Host Because whenever someone is, you know, bathing in radioactive grease water...

[Ben laughs.]

...that's basically what I'm doing, too!

00:07:34 Adam Host Yeah.

00:07:35 John Host I really feel like one of the cast. One of the cast and crew. Also I was wearing a stripey Russian submarine sailor shirt.

00:07:41 Ben Host That's a good look. I love the look of that shirt!

00:07:44 Adam Host What are all of the black cats in this film? There's the slapdash way the sub has been built. They run the test and all the electricals are fucked. You're going through this with your house right now. You gotta—

00:07:56 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Right.

00:07:57 Adam Host You gotta rip out all those electricals. We're using the wrong kind of fuses here. We got—

00:08:00 John Host There's the fact that the nuke officer is a drunk.

00:08:03 Adam Host Drunk nuke officer. Ship's surgeon hit by a truck.

00:08:06 Clip Clip **Multiple Speakers (Slackers):** He got hit by a truck!

00:08:07 Adam Host Wrong drugs! And also no radiation suits in the boat.

00:08:12 John Host Right. They just had chemical suits, because they didn't have any radiation suits in the warehouse.

00:08:17 Adam Host And on and on!

00:08:18 John Host Yeah.

00:08:19 Ben Host And the champagne doesn't break when they, uh—

00:08:21 Adam Host Yeah!

00:08:22 Ben Host —they commission the ship!

00:08:23 John Host Champagne doesn't break, and also a new captain has been put in charge over a beloved captain.

00:08:27 Clip Clip **Captain Styles (Star Trek III):** You do this, you'll never sit in the captain's chair again.

00:08:30 Adam Host It's bad luck to have two captains on one boat, right?

00:08:33 John Host We see this in almost every submarine movie.

00:08:36 Ben Host Yeah.

00:08:37 John Host That there's a beloved captain, and then there's a hated captain over the top that ends up—it ends up that his draconian processes save the day in the end, and he wins the respect of everybody. But through the whole movie we hate his guts.

But you can never hate Harrison Ford's guts! And that's a problem with the casting here.

00:08:57 Adam Host Ooh. *[Sighs.]* It is very stunty-feeling to me.

00:09:01 John Host It's super stunty.

00:09:02 Ben Host It's such unusual casting. Like, we've talked a lot about the way Harrison Ford picks roles, or is chosen for roles, on this show. And this is one of very few movies I can think about where he is pretty unlikable for most of the movie, and he like—he achieves some redemptive moments toward the end, but he kind of... plays the villain, in a lot of ways.

00:09:30 John Host But he agreed to do this movie because he's the ultimate—he was ultimately right the whole time.

[Ben laughs.]

Right? I mean, Harrison Ford—if he had actually been a villain, if he

had actually ever done a single wrong thing... But Harri—I'm sure he read this script and he was like "Yeah, well, he's the guy! You know, he is the Finnish carpenter of this movie."

00:09:49 Adam Host Did either of you see this in the theater?

00:09:51 Ben Host I think I did see it in the theater.

00:09:54 John Host Do you wanna know the crazy thing? This movie is so tropey that I don't know!

[Adam and Ben laugh.]

I was watching this and I was like "I've seen absolutely every single one of these scenes. I've seen Harrison Ford. I've seen Liam Neeson." I don't think I saw it in the theaters, and the re—the one thing that felt foreign to me was Harrison Ford doing an accent.

00:10:17 Adam Host Yeah.

00:10:18 John Host I don't think I've ever seen him do an accent. And he's—

00:10:22 Ben Host And now you know why. *[Laughs.]*

00:10:24 John Host *[Russian accent]* He's doing the Soviet speaking in the—he's sort of doing Boris and Natasha. But slightly less.

[Ben laughs. John drops the accent.]

And Liam Neeson also, you know, got swept into it, *[back into the accent]* and is also speaking a little bit of a *[garbled nonsense]*.

[Ben laughs. Accent stops.]

00:10:37 Adam Host The weird fucking movie equation happening in my brain as I watched Harrison Ford in this is like, "Harrison Ford was Jack Ryan!"

00:10:46 John Host Yeah!

00:10:47 Adam Host And Jack Ryan was in *Hunt for Red October*.

00:10:49 John Host Wait a minute...

00:10:50 Adam Host But not Harrison Ford, that was the other Jack Ryan.

00:10:52 John Host The better Jack Ryan, let's go—let's be clear.

00:10:54 Adam Host But also, Harrison Ford was in a Tom Clancy movie, basically wearing the American flag around himself in the movie poster.

00:11:01 John Host Right.

00:11:02 Adam Host That's *Clear and Present Danger*.

00:11:03 John Host Right.

00:11:04 Adam Host They made the exact same movie poster for *K-19*, except it's Harrison Ford's big face and a bunch of—

00:11:10 John Host Wearing the hammer and sickle around his shoulders.

00:11:12 Adam Host Yeah!

[Ben laughs.]

It's so confusing.

00:11:15 John Host It is. And this is Harrison—

00:11:17 Adam Host To me, anyway. The way my mind works. Like, I couldn't get out of that headspace.

00:11:22 John Host *Clear and Present Danger* is the beginning of Harrison Ford refusing to smile anymore.

00:11:26 Adam Host Yeah.

00:11:27 John Host And this movie is deep, deep in it. Like, you could have tickled him in this movie and he wouldn't have smiled.

00:11:33 Adam Host He really—like, his choice is "To look Russian, I must scowl."

00:11:39 John Host Yeah. Yeah, well, that's—right? That's our whole thing, right? That the Russians have no sense of humor, and the Russians have no—they're—it's all just like, step outta line and—yeah, and you're in handcuffs?

00:11:53 Adam Host What is more dangerous to the crew, this reactor or her captain? Sure feels like this captain is gonna get everyone killed, and I'm definitely on Liam Neeson's side on this throughout. Right? I was shocked when Liam Neeson puts down the mutiny!

00:12:09 John Host It seems like a thing—like, if you were to buy a muscle car on Craigslist, and when you went to look at it you said "Right, this car needs everything." Right? "It needs new shocks, it needs new brakes, it needs new rubber. It needs... everything." And then as you drove away from the transaction, you were like "Let's put this car through the paces."

[Ben laughs.]

And you drove it like you were driving it for a *Car and Driver* review the day it came off the assembly line.

00:12:38 Adam Host Yeah.

00:12:39 John Host That's what his, like, recklessness read as.

00:12:42 Adam Host He's hotrod dad!

00:12:44 John Host He is. He's hotrod dadding like a Pinto.

00:12:46 Ben Host Yeah. I literally wrote a note, "Don't lend your new car to Harrison Ford."

[Ben and John laugh.]

00:12:54 John Host I've never seen a movie where the pressure of going down below the operational depth actually caused the outside of the sub to crinkle.

00:13:06 Adam Host That was fun.

00:13:07 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Wow.

John: That was new, right?

00:13:09 John Host We always see bolts popping and water spraying. But this thing—

00:13:14 Ben Host You hear things that sound like metal warping, but you never actually see the metal... awarp.

00:13:19 John Host Although the underwater shots, the sub-in-action shots underwater in this one, were as bad as *Red October*. Or worse. I didn't find them

believable at all. But they built a full mockup of this sub for the, uh, boaty scenes, and I liked it!

00:13:37 Ben Host This movie had a \$100,000,000 budget. They had a one to one perfect reproduction of the interior of the real *K-19*—

00:13:46 Adam Host Wow.

00:13:47 Ben Host —that was different only in that they built tracks into the ceiling that they could suspend the camera from, so that when they did those long bombing shots down the ship they could, you know, stabilize the camera without bringing in a bunch of rails that, you know, wouldn't match with the rest of the set.

But then they also had like a real submarine that they heavily modified to look like the exterior of the sub. And then they—yeah! They—I agree, they kinda fell apart when they went to underwater shots of it. 'Cause... I think it's probably models with some digital, like, bubbles added. But somehow—*[laughs]* that was too difficult to make look good in 2002.

00:14:33 John Host Where is that mockup of *K-19*? Can you go tour it? Can you hook a chair up to the camera rails and ride through the mockup of the submarine like you're on a zip line?

00:14:47 Adam Host You know, Spielberg actually borrowed the *K-19* for an *Indiana Jones* film, and returned it after a week.

[Ben and John laugh.]

That's the story of this production.

00:14:57 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Nice callback.

Adam: He's constantly doing that.

00:15:00 Ben Host The interior set I think was on a soundstage, but the sub that they modified I think wound up sinking, and then the Navy used it for a while to like, do... to do like training exercises? Like, while it was submerged.

00:15:16 John Host I love everything about that.

00:15:17 Ben Host Yeah! It's cool.

00:15:19 Clip Clip **Speaker (*K-19: The Widowmaker*):** Noted, Comrade Captain.

00:15:22 John Host How many—you know, we should keep a running tally, how many submarine movies we've watched. They all are more alike than different.

00:15:30 Ben Host Yeah.

00:15:31 John Host But this is the rare one where there is no enemy.

00:15:34 Adam Host Yeah!

00:15:36 John Host They are not ever engaged, except after they've already... basically they're dead in the water. The Americans make an appearance as friendly helpers. And that's an interesting sort of scene, where they are—their friendly help is rejected because—

00:15:55 Adam Host Yeah, they're an obstacle and not a savior.

00:15:58 John Host Right. But all the tension, all the drama in this movie, is man against

machine, and men against one another.

- 00:16:07 Ben Host One of the things that maybe sets this movie apart as a submarine film is that, like, they head out. They're doing the obligatory drills that happen at inconvenient times, and drilling way harder than seems reasonable to the un-initiated people watching at home. And then about, I don't know, a little bit earlier than halfway through the movie, they finish the mission, *[stifles laughter]* and they launch the missile. Like, the thing that they were ordered to see—to go do, they do!
- 00:16:37 John Host And then it's like "Oh, since you're out there, why don't you go...?"
- 00:16:39 Ben Host Yeah, "Why don't you go be a first-strike vehicle parked off the coast of, uh—of Manhattan?" Or whatever.
- 00:16:46 Adam Host Did you approach the film knowing its story?
- 00:16:48 John Host I had a vague—as someone who has researched a lot of serial killers and a lot of submarine accidents...

[Ben laughs.]

...I knew about it. But I—but going into it, I didn't remember which one of the many submarine disasters this one was. Once it started unfolding I was like "Oh, this is the one that like, irradiated everybody."

- 00:17:10 Adam Host It was very enjoyable! Like Ben was saying, like, the mission succeeds halfway through. It was enjoyable to watch this film and not have any idea what the second half of the film was gonna be about.
- 00:17:20 John Host Yeah.
- 00:17:21 Ben Host I remembered the nuclear accident element of it from whenever I saw it the first time, and was bracing myself for that, 'cause I remembered it being very harrowing. And I—it really is. I almost wish the movie had figured out a way to have a little bit more... descriptive language around what the risks are, and what is happening to their bodies and stuff. Because like, they—unfortunately they get this like, replacement doctor, who eventually confesses he knows nothing about radiation sickness. He's like—he was like the base doctor at the submarine base. Doesn't have anything to do with his specialty.

And so we see these guys coming out melty. I read that they dialed back how disgusting that actually would have been, because they didn't think that moviegoers would believe it. But like, what happens to bodies that are subjected to that amount of radiation is like, way worse than what's depicted in this film.

- 00:18:27 John Host They just look burned alive, huh?
- 00:18:28 Ben Host Yeah.
- 00:18:29 Adam Host Wow.
- 00:18:30 Ben Host And we just watch it and are... you know, like, we are given no information as to why radiation does that to people. I don't know, maybe that's not interesting to other people, but I kinda missed it.
- 00:18:44 John Host I feel like it was a plot device! Because nobody on the boat knew, either. So there wasn't anybody that could explain it, and, um...
- 00:18:52 Ben Host Maybe the only one that did was the Peter Sarsgaard character, but

he was too deep in his panic attack.

00:18:59 Adam Host You know what, I was just gonna mention that. Like, there's such an interesting tension between the people who know the consequences of their actions and the people who don't. And Skarsgaard (sic) is one of the few characters who does. And his fear presents in almost the same way.

00:19:17 John Host Yeah. And Sarsgaard is so often, like a...

00:19:21 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** He's a lovable character in movies.

Adam: Mm-hm.

00:19:25 John Host He's got a sweet face. When he showed up I was like "Oh, that's fun! I like him! I'm glad he's in this movie!"

00:19:32 Ben Host Yeah.

00:19:33 John Host And then the movie really exploits our—

00:19:35 Adam Host *[Sighing]* Yeah.

00:19:36 John Host —intrinsic like of this actor.

00:19:40 Adam Host As stunty as you might feel the other casting choices have been, like, him as that character was totally traumatizing to me. When he broke down—

00:19:49 John Host Yeah.

00:19:50 Adam Host —he really played that great.

00:19:51 John Host He did. And that was a—and then you're in a position where you really hate him.

00:19:56 Adam Host Yeah.

00:19:57 John Host But you also can't blame him.

00:19:59 Adam Host No!

00:20:00 Ben Host That's gotta be a tough role to take as an actor, right? 'Cause like, you're being, like, the most hateable guy on the boat, for...

00:20:07 Adam Host *[Laughs.]* It's not the role that Harrison Ford would ever take.

00:20:09 Ben Host *[Laughs.]* Right!

00:20:11 John Host No, and hated because you're a coward! Right?

00:20:12 Adam Host Yeah! Yeah.

00:20:13 John Host I mean, cowardice in a war movie is like the greatest crime.

00:20:17 Ben Host Right.

00:20:18 John Host We watch guys commit terrible atrocities in these movies, but the movie doesn't want you to turn against them.

00:20:24 Adam Host You know what, there's such a physical reaction to what he's doing as an actor, that is different from the quote-unquote "cowards" that we see in other war films. Like, a coward in a war film is frequently like, a crying, "I don't wanna do it" guy. But Peter Sarsgaard can't even speak.

00:20:43 John Host Right.

00:20:44 Adam Host And he's like, spazzing.

00:20:45 Clip Clip **Speaker (K-19: The Widomaker):** There are no measures, it's

useless!

00:20:47 John Host He's the only one that we know anything about his life off of the submarine.

00:20:51 Adam Host Yeah.

00:20:52 John Host We meet his fiancée. So when he collapses, we have that additional knowledge that he's like "I'm—I have a life! Like, I'm gonna get married. I got called into this at the last minute. This isn't where I'm supposed to be." So you understand his meltdown.

00:21:09 Ben Host Ha ha, "meltdown!" I got it. Ha ha!

00:21:12 John Host Lawl!

[John and Ben laugh.]

00:21:13 Adam Host He's the classic "We aren't even supposed to be here!" guy.

00:21:15 John Host Right. Right. "So why should I be the hero right now?"

00:21:19 Adam Host Yeah.

00:21:20 John Host "I'm just trying to wait this out and get home."

Do you hate Harrison Ford for not abandoning ship?

00:21:26 Adam Host *[Sighs.]* I really do!

00:21:29 John Host Scuttle that baby and get off!

00:21:32 Ben Host Does—does a American-made war film about American servicemen ever present them with a dilemma like this? Like...

00:21:42 Adam Host Mm.

00:21:43 Ben Host Essentially "Turn over our materiel to the enemy and save your skin, or everybody dies."

00:21:51 John Host So that's an interesting subtext to this movie, and I think it is... it's brought to the fore in that scene where the propaganda officer—the commissariat guy—is showing them a film of America. And it starts off with Americans, you know, doing the jitterbug or whatever.

00:22:08 Ben Host *[Laughing]* Uh-huh?

00:22:09 John Host And then it quickly pivots to scenes of race riots. And he's giving this critique of the United States, that "Oh, we're meant—you know, what they project is only consumerism, and it looks like fun and individuality. But then what they don't show you is racist cops, and..."

I mean, he basically gives a critique of America that actually would resonate with... most of Twitter in 2018.

00:22:38 Adam Host Yeah, it resonates today.

00:22:39 John Host But—

00:22:40 Ben Host I have a moment of pedantry about that, actually!

00:22:43 John Host Some of those firehose scenes didn't happen until later?

00:22:45 Ben Host Yeah.

00:22:46 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Beeping as Ben speaks.]*

00:22:48 Ben Host "The film shown by the political officer shows civil rights abuses committed in Birmingham in 1964."

00:22:52	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: Riiight.
			Adam: Mm.
00:22:53	Ben	Host	<i>[Beeping stops.]</i>
			"Four years <u>after</u> the <i>K-19</i> was launched."
00:22:56	John	Host	Exactly. I—
00:22:57	Ben	Host	Actually, three. 'Cause the initial voyage was 4th of July, 1961.
00:23:02	Adam	Host	I want to amend what I said before about the commissar being right in his class, in his teaching about American civics. I—like, what I <u>wanna</u> say is that we are not <u>just</u> one or the other. And I think the message that he's giving the students in that—in the torpedo room is that we are <u>all</u> of those things. And we continue to be all of those things! We are not <u>just</u> the good parts. We're not just the jitterbug, and we are not <u>just</u> the Klan.
00:23:32	John	Host	But you see the sailors respond to that footage, and they're <u>horrified</u> .
00:23:38	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:23:39	John	Host	And what his point is in the end, is—and he says it! That what makes America an immoral country is <u>individualism</u> . Which is a weird point for an American movie to make. That the reason the captain is acting the way he does is that they have a—an <u>ethic</u> within their military, and within their <u>nation</u> at the time, that no one person—no <u>group</u> of people, even—are more important than the collective whole of the Soviet Union.
			And I think an American film—the individuality of each person, if they were confronted with this, I think it would be—well, we wouldn't have a movie. 'Cause the American captain would scuttle the boat and they'd all go to the movies. Or they'd all go out and grab a firehose, and...
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And spray some civil rights protesters. Or whatever it is that Americans like to do on weekends.
00:24:37	Ben	Host	But like, the act of—the selfless act of going into the reactor and jury-rigging the coolant thing is a kind of self-sacrifice we see soldiers make in all <u>kinds</u> of movies.
00:24:53	John	Host	But maybe in American movies, that self-sac—or that sacrifice even resonates <u>more</u> , because the heroism is so individual.
00:25:04	Adam	Host	You see it in a lot of different ways in this film, too. There's the <u>ordered</u> sacrifice, and then there's also the <u>request</u> sacrifice that happens later on, when Liam Neeson's character hips Harrison Ford's character to the idea of "You know... you could just ask."
00:25:18	John	Host	Yeah, sure, "Run it by everybody."
00:25:19	Adam	Host	" <u>Ask</u> them to sacrifice themselves for you, and you might get a different reaction." You get all different kinds.
00:25:25	John	Host	There's a lot to unpack when Americans make movies about Russians.
00:25:30	Clip	Clip	Nicoli Koloff (<i>Rocky IV</i>): We fight in Soviet Union! Or we fight

nowhere.

00:25:34 John Host Particularly like, this Cold—sort of a Cold War revisionism. At the time, I don't—you know, an American audience would have... I mean, maybe like, relished their Keystone Cop-ness.

But of course, in 1961 we couldn't characterize them as this sort of broken and befuddled, because our military-industrial complex relied on the idea that they were super-soldiers.

00:26:03 Ben Host Right, and they had super advanced technology that we needed to be constantly innovating past.

00:26:09 John Host Right. That's why we needed—I mean, in 1961 we were ducking and covering. And these guys couldn't—you know, they were out—*[laughs]*.

00:26:17 Adam Host Yeah, I mean, like, Russians have the reputation of fighting while on fire.

[Ben laughs.]

And charging at you.

00:26:23 John Host They do. That's something we know about them.

00:26:25 Adam Host Yeah.

00:26:26 Ben Host This movie came out in 2002, and would have been in production in 2001. Like, maybe even during the September 11th attacks. Our enemy had changed, as far as like, Hollywood was concerned. But this was probably written in that time where we were like "Uh, I don't know! Are we fighting the Russians still? Or are we, uh... like, who are the bad guys that we default to?" And so that's also like, a weird choice. Like, what does a filmmaker mean to say about our quote-unquote "former enemy" when they set about making this movie sometime in 2001?

00:27:08 Adam Host It sure seemed to have an effect on its ability to make money. It doesn't seem like there was much of an appetite for this type of film.

00:27:17 Ben Host It made \$65,000,000 worldwide.

00:27:20 John Host Oof.

00:27:21 Ben Host Yeah.

00:27:22 John Host Well, in 2001, we were into the Putin century. Right, we were coming out of the Yeltsin years. And that was a period I think where we felt—I mean America relaxed toward Russia, and felt like "Maybe they're our friends now! Maybe democracy! Maybe capitalism!" And if democracy and cap—I mean, we already saw the rise of the oligarchs, but there was that period where it felt like "Well, once capitalism arrives in a place, their access to blenders—"

[Ben laughs.]

"—and, uh, you know, and coffeemakers is going to—why would they ever go back? Why would they choose authoritarianism when they could choose, uh, this selection of DVRs? DVDs that play DVRs?"

			<i>[Someone laughs quietly.]</i>
00:28:09	Ben	Host	"We have made Coca-Cola and Levis available to them! They should surely be our friends now."
00:28:15	John	Host	"What else is there?!"
			And it was a—I think it was a weird period. And maybe it was exactly the time when you could make a big Hollywood movie that was exclusively about Russians and make them feel—and make it feel like they were heroic.
00:28:32	Music	Transition	Brief clip of "War."
			<i>War!</i>
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
00:28:33	Promo	Clip	Music: Relaxing ukulele music.
			Manolo Moreno: Hey, you've reached <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> . Leave your message after the beep.
			<i>[Music stops.]</i>
			<i>[Beep!]</i>
			Sara: Hi. This is Sara, and I'd like to tell you about <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> . <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> is a band of geniuses, or nerds, or brilliant artists, or kids, or some combination of all of those who get together to make a show like no other that's family-friendly. It's an interactive call-in gameshow podcast.
			When I found <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> , I found joy. I told my friends and family that if they weren't listening, they were <u>wasting</u> joy. I sent them the episodes that made me laugh until I cried, played it for them in the car. They laugh, too! Laugh their butts off. But they still don't listen on their own, so they're wasting joy. And I keep looking for someone to understand me. Maybe it's you! Give <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> a listen, and find joy.
			<i>[Beep!]</i>
			<i>[Music resumes.]</i>
			Jo Firestone: Listen to <i>Dr. Gameshow</i> on Maximum Fun. New episodes every other Wednesday.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:29:22	Promo	Clip	Music: Classical orchestral music.
			John Hodgman: Hey, everyone! It's I, John Hodgman of the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
			Elliott Kalan: And I, Elliott Kalan of the <i>Flop House</i> podcast.
			John: And we've made a whole new podcast! A 12-episode special miniseries called <i>I, Podius</i> . In which we recap, discuss, and explore

the very famous 1976 BBC miniseries about Ancient Rome called *I, Claudius*! We've got incredible guests such as Gillian Jacobs, Paul F. Tompkins, as well as star of *I, Claudius* Sir Patrick Stewart! And his son! Non-Sir Daniel Stewart.

Elliott: Don't worry, Dan, you'll get there someday.

John: *I, Podius* is the name of the show! Every week from MaximumFun.org for only 12 weeks. Get 'em at MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

[Music fades out.]

00:30:08 Music Transition

Brief clip of "War."

Huh!
Yeah!

[Music stops.]

00:30:10 Adam Host

There's a lot of demonstrable heroism in this film, in the sacrifices that a lot of the characters make for the rest of the crew. You get that. But Harrison Ford's character isn't a hero, and neither is Liam Neeson's, and yet they get the epilogue at the end. They get the toast with the rest of the crew. I feel like that is... a scene constructed mainly to forgive and lionize. Right?

00:30:38 John Host

Well, because they weren't lionized in their time.

00:30:40 Adam Host

No.

00:30:41 John Host

The actual men, all this had to be kept secret. And so the loneliness of having experienced all of that, and then there's no—you don't get to be a hero of the Soviet Union. You don't get to command a submarine ever again.

00:30:57 Adam Host

No.

00:30:58 John Host

You just wither away. That's some authentic pathos.

00:31:03 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:31:04 John Host

I mean, not as bad as dying of nuclear poisoning.

[Ben laughs.]

00:31:09 Adam Host

I guess in saying that, what I'm trying to draw attention to is the idea that the main characters of this film are not heroes in a conventional war film sense.

00:31:18 John Host

Right. Right.

00:31:19 Adam Host

And that's interesting.

00:31:20 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Ben: Yeah.

John: Not even likable.

00:31:22 John Host

No one's likable in this movie.

00:31:23 Adam Host

But this is a Kathryn Bigelow thing, too, right? When she makes a film about men with challenging jobs, they're frequently antiheroes, or they frequently don't rise to the level of conventional hero status that we get in a lot of other persons' films. Right? Is this part of a

theme?

- 00:31:44 John Host Where does this movie fit in her... [*deliberately over-pronouncing the word "oeuvre"*] ihhv-oo-wuh?
- 00:31:50 Ben Host She had made—I think she had made *Strange Days* already.
- 00:31:55 John Host She'd made *Point Break*. So this was like, maybe—not in the middle of her career—or yeah! Middle of her career, right? 'Cause *Hurt Locker* was 2008.
- 00:32:04 Ben Host Yeah, she had made *The Weight of Water* immediately before this. Took a pretty long break in between *K-19*—she did one short film and one TV episode before 2008, when she did *The Hurt Locker*. So turning in a movie that makes back \$35,000,000 less than you spent on it definitely... definitely would scuttle most directors' careers permanently.
- 00:32:33 John Host Sure, it bumps you down to—'cause *The Hurt Locker* felt almost like an indie movie.
- 00:32:38 Ben Host Yeah. They were definitely not risking the same amount of dough on that one.
- 00:32:44 Adam Host She escaped from director jail spectacularly with that movie.
- 00:32:48 John Host Right.
- 00:32:49 Ben Host Yeah! Absolutely.
- 00:32:50 Adam Host But so few get that opportunity, even.
- 00:32:51 Ben Host Right.
- 00:32:53 John Host So the experience of being in a submarine movie is always claustrophobic. It's always only dudes. It's always sort of man against machine, and man against man. Is this... a good one?
- 00:33:13 Adam Host I think for tension reasons alone, yes! Like, I can't explain why my body felt the way it did as I watched the film, but I was totally rapt.
- 00:33:23 Ben Host While it is using the tropes very heavily, like, it does sort of surprising things with them. The XO/Captain conflict is right out of almost every submarine film we've seen... and then it isn't. Like, when the XO comes back and he's got a mutiny tied up with a bow, [*laughs*] presented to him in pretty packaging, he rejects that mutiny. And that was a total stunner. Like, I mean, it's totally made up. Like it doesn't have anything to do with the real story of *K-19*, but boy, what a moment, right?
- 00:34:04 John Host Right. And submarine movies often threaten us with mutiny, but it always falls short of—or almost always falls short of actual mutiny. And this one goes over the top.
- 00:34:17 Ben Host Yeah, and like, they also really set their conflict aside when they are first jury-rigging the secondary coolant system. Like, there's a 30-minute span in the middle of this two-hour film where they stop being at loggerheads with each other just to get the ship survivable for— [*laughs*] for a while, you know?
- 00:34:40 John Host And then it's like "Not again!"
- 00:34:42 Ben Host [*Laughing*] Yeah!
- 00:34:45 John Host You know, one thing they didn't talk about was he did—the captain did justify his actions by saying if this boat went critical, and blew up

on the surface...

00:34:56 Adam Host

Yeah.

00:34:57 John Host

...and took out that American destroyer, that that might be the thing that triggered a war response from the US. And we all kinda go "Hm! Ohhh! I hadn't thought of that!"

What we didn't cover was, no character said "Yeah, but if we scuttle the boat and it goes to the bottom of the ocean, and then blows up... it'll be like one of those scenes—it'll be like a depth charge scene, where the ocean goes 'Blorp!'"

[Ben laughs.]

"And then... we're fine!" Right? I mean, if it—if—I don't know if we've ever seen a nuke explode on the bottom of the sea.

00:35:32 Adam Host

Yeah, it's not just a fart in a bathtub, John.

00:35:33 John Host

What is it—

[Ben laughs.]

00:35:35 Adam Host

It'll blow real big.

00:35:36 John Host

I mean, would it? If the sub sank down to wherever the *Titanic* is? Like, what would it do? It would—

00:35:41 Ben Host

Well, they say that it's a—the water is a mile deep where they are, so that's like—like, that's why they wanna take it down, is that if it blows, it's not gonna blow up in a way that triggers ICBMs.

00:35:55 John Host

Yeah, I mean, maybe it vaporizes the ocean right around there.

00:35:59 Ben Host

[Stifling laughter] Mm-hm.

00:36:00 John Host

I don't know! I honestly—this is like a question that I'm really curious about. What happens if a bomb goes off deep, deep down? Does it set—does it trigger a tectonic plate problem?

00:36:10 Adam Host

Is it like the worst example of grenade-fishing ever?

00:36:13 John Host

Yeahhh.

00:36:14 Adam Host

Like, is there like, 200 whales?

00:36:16 John Host

[Stifling laughter] Yeah!

00:36:17 Adam Host

Dead whales come to the surface, and...

00:36:19 John Host

Two hundred dead whales!

00:36:21 Adam Host

Be pretty awful.

00:36:23 Ben Host

Is this the same premise as *Red October*? Because like, the—this is a first-strike submarine that is meant to park missiles off the coast of Washington and New York, and the captain of the ship in that mov—in *Red October* is like, horrified by the implications of the *Red October*. These guys definitely are not.

00:36:47 John Host

No. The—it gives us a little *Red October*... temptation. But it's the opposite of *Red October*. There is no defection, but the Russian government thinks that that's what's happening. They're worried about a *Red October*.

00:37:04 Ben Host

Yeah.

00:37:05 Adam Host There's a pride, also, in leveling up your mission a little bit. Like, you succeeded the first time. Guess what's next? The best patrol.

00:37:14 John Host Yeah, that's right.

00:37:15 Adam Host Between Washington and New York. You're the Acela submarine.

[Ben laughs.]

00:37:19 John Host Everybody feels really—yeah. *[Laughs.]* On time and under-budget!

00:37:23 Adam Host Yeah.

00:37:24 John Host Everybody seems really proud of that, right? When they—when he's like "We have a new mission."

00:37:28 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:37:29 John Host "Go be a badass." The crew is like "Yeah, cool! High fives all around!"

00:37:33 Clip Clip **Speaker 1 (K-19: The Widowmaker):** Three hundred meters is close to crush depth!

Speaker 2 (K-19: The Widowmaker): I know.

00:37:36 John Host I wondered why they didn't just open the windows. You know, like, let that radiation get out! Put some fans up, you know? Like when you burn a ham.

00:37:46 Ben Host Yeah. I mean, this is exactly why I felt a little at sea with the radiation stuff, is the movie does not teach you the rules of this kind of radiation.

00:37:57 Adam Host Is it scarier for you to know, or not know, though?

00:38:00 Ben Host I think the tension makes—is easier to achieve when you do. Because like, the rules are very specific, and like, different kinds of radiation have different rules. But I think if they'd set that up, it would have been even more tense for me.

00:38:19 John Host What is the kind of radiation that turns you into a Spider-Man?

00:38:22 Ben Host But that's—it's the spider that got the radiation.

00:38:25 John Host Riiight.

00:38:26 Ben Host And then the spider did the biting.

00:38:27 John Host Right, it has to be transferred through a spider.

00:38:29 Ben Host Yeah.

00:38:30 John Host That's the worst kind of radiation. Or the best, depending on whether or not you wanna be a Spider-Man.

00:38:35 Adam Host Good thing that mouse didn't bite anyone after being irradiated.

00:38:38 John Host Turn you—turn somebody into Mouse-Man?

00:38:39 Adam Host Yeah.

00:38:40 John Host What are your powers if you're Mouse-Man?

00:38:42 Ben Host What kind of radiation takes you into the Spider-Verse?

00:38:45 John Host It's gotta be gamma radiation.

00:38:47 Adam Host You just knew that the introduction of that mouse to the scene was gonna be the—

00:38:52 John Host Oh, yeah.

00:38:53 Adam Host —uh, the mouse in the coalmine.

00:38:54 John Host Canary—*[laughs]* yeah, that's right.

00:38:55 Adam Host You know?

00:38:56 John Host Almost all of the movies we've watched for this show, with the exception of a very few—*Paths of Glory* or—no! *Paths of Glory!* Made during this period. Almost every movie we've watched was made during the nuclear era. Where nukes were a constant presence and a constant threat to everyone who was making the movie, and going to the theaters to watch the movies. And yet this is the rare movie where nukes play a significant role. Where nuclear power and the dangers of it are like a present character in the film.

For the most part, most of the movies we watch either ignore the nuclear question entirely by preferring to go fight a manageable war somewhere—

00:39:51 Ben Host Yeah, the movie we watched [last week](#) was—had the stuff set in the post-tsunami disaster area in Japan, and there was no mention of the nuclear reactor there.

00:40:04 John Host Right. Right. In *Dr. Strangelove* we see a nuke go off. But like, it's real—and that's the thing about *M*A*S*H* and all those Korean War things, and all the Vietnam movie stuff. It's all—they're all movies about wars that are happening during a period when nukes are poised, and we're scared of them.

00:40:27 Ben Host Yeah.

00:40:28 John Host But these are all the proxy wars. We love watching proxy wars get fought, because you know that the worst that's gonna happen is somebody drops a bomb or some napalm.

00:40:36 Ben Host Right.

00:40:37 John Host But there just aren't that many movies where it really explores the Cold War and the dangers. It's more boring, I guess.

[Ben laughs.]

Because it's all psychological.

00:40:53 Ben Host Hey, man, *Godzilla's* a movie about nukes.

00:40:56 John Host That's right. *Godzilla* is.

00:40:58 Ben Host We've talked about watching *Shin Godzilla*, but I don't think original *Godzilla's* on our list! Should it be?

00:41:03 John Host Godzilla, Godzilla, Godzilla, Godzilla...

[Imitates an instrument for a couple seconds into Ben's next line.]

00:41:08 Ben Host I mean, speaking of that, one thing I appreciated in this movie was they didn't use the geiger counter sound as a shorthand for "There are nuclear—or radioactive things around" until the geiger counter was actually out and getting carried around the ship.

00:41:27 John Host Right.

00:41:28 Ben Host Like, we—like, so many corny movies where there's radiation

somewhere, like, just seeing the radioactive thing, they give you those little like *[crackly sounds]*.

00:41:39 John Host Yeah, right.

00:41:40 Ben Host The little Geiger counter clicks, just to kinda... you know, underline the radioactiveness of it. This movie totally resists that temptation, and then a guy actually has a Geiger counter, and it's going crazy.

00:41:54 John Host Can you imagine what a bummer that would be? You're just sitting in your bunk, looking at your dead mouse, and the guy comes by and points that little rod at you and it's like *[crackly sounds]*.

[Ben laughs.]

00:42:03 Adam Host Well, that was a neat scene, too! Like, the counterpoint to that is the guy getting the Geiger counter waved at him and his back is turned. And they're like "Tell him he's fine!"

00:42:12 John Host *[Laughing]* Yeah, right.

00:42:13 Ben Host Yeah.

00:42:14 Adam Host 'Cause it doesn't matter!

00:42:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Right, tell him he's fine.

Adam: Would you wanna be told, or would you wanna be told that you're fine?

John: You know—

Adam: I think you know, also, if you're not fine, right?

00:42:23 John Host Yeah, but in a situation like that where you're still trapped in a submarine under the ocean? I would rather be told I was fine.

00:42:28 Adam Host Yeah...

00:42:29 John Host Save it! Save it for later.

00:42:30 Adam Host Yeah.

00:42:31 Ben Host To me it felt less like the moment where the soldier is on the slab and is like "I can't feel my legs, are they still there?" and they go "Yeah, yeah, no, no, they're there—"

00:42:39 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Printer noises.]*

00:42:40 Ben Host —and more like this is Soviet Ministry of Information dissembling about the truth kind of—

00:42:47 Adam Host Ooh!

00:42:49 Ben Host Like, it felt more like it was—

[Printer noises stop.]

00:42:51 Adam Host Give me a couple more pages of that paper!

[Ben laughs.]

00:42:53 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** I mean, I don't know—

Adam: That's interesting!

00:42:54 Ben Host I don't know what gave me that feeling, but it was like—

00:42:56 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Printer noises.]*

00:42:57 Ben Host "These people are all comfortable with kind of bending reality, you know, to achieve a mission" kind of a thing.

[Printer noises stop.]

00:43:06 Adam Host Wow. I did not make that connection! But that makes a lot of sense.

00:43:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** There is a weird—

Ben: I don't know.

00:43:15 John Host The movie does not make a—draw a clear line between the motivations that the sailors have as sailors, as just men in a—confronted with a situation where you have camaraderie, where you have a broken command structure, and where you have an imminent danger, vs. sailors that are part of an indoctrinated political culture that are doing things because they are communist automatons and are thinking of the motherland.

'Cause there's a lot of talk of like, "I'm doing this for the motherland!" "No, I'm doing this for the motherland!"

[Ben laughs.]

And we usually see someone in a situation like this roll their eyes at... Soviet-ism. Right? One of the characters would be sort of more of a realist, and less of an indoctrinate. And we get a little bit of that because the political officer is—like, Liam Neeson definitely brushes past him, gives him the straight arm a few times.

00:44:20 Ben Host Yeah.

00:44:21 John Host But that guy doesn't end up being a creepy traitor! Like, he ends up kind of being enfolded in the—I mean, he does. He's one of the two conspirators.

00:44:30 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:44:32 Ben Host Right.

00:44:33 John Host But he ends up being a—I mean, I guess that's the weird moment, right?

00:44:36 Ben Host Yeah!

00:44:37 John Host Where the political officer that was the stick-up-the-ass guy ends up one of the mutineers.

00:44:45 Ben Host Yeah, strangely the mutiny seems pretty reasonable in this film. Like, they have a very reasonable fear, and like, what they want is to get the ship back in control of somebody that isn't insisting on irradiating them to protect state secrets, right?

00:45:01 John Host Right.

00:45:02 Adam Host Do you think the commissar is on that team because of a sense of self-preservation, or does he believe a mutiny is actually justified given his reasons politically?

00:45:15 John Host I think he seems weak-willed. And scared.

00:45:20 Ben Host Yeah, I think he's super scared.

00:45:22 John Host He's in a little bit—in a little way—

00:45:25 Adam Host His job doesn't provide cover for this decision, is what I'm asking.

00:45:28 John Host Boy, I don't know. I don't know how he thinks he's gonna walk away from this mutiny. I don't see how any of them think that they're gonna come back to the headquarters having sunk their ship—

00:45:39 Adam Host Well, I mean, the justification is reading the rulebook. Like, that's—they say it to each other. Like—

00:45:46 John Host Right, but they're making—they're doing the thing where they are trying to save the crew by dumping this billion-dollar submarine.

00:45:53 Adam Host Yeah...

00:45:54 John Host And I don't think there's anybody up the chain of command back at old Kruschef HQ that's gonna endorse that decision.

00:46:03 Adam Host Yeah.

[Ben laughs.]

There are a lot of berks in that meeting going "This submarine has a very high dollar value."

[Ben laughs.]

00:46:09 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* There are. There are.

So I don't know how the mutineers—and the mutiny is a... is fake, right? It's a fantastical element here.

00:46:19 Ben Host Yeah.

00:46:20 Adam Host Yeah, the real captain of this submarine raided the weapons locker and then dumped all of what he found inside overboard to prevent—

00:46:27 John Host Threw all the guns overboard?

00:46:28 Adam Host To prevent a possible mutiny from ever happening.

00:46:31 Clip Clip **Speaker:** They can bill me!

00:46:32 Adam Host That's one way to do it.

00:46:33 John Host So the mutiny's a fiction, but yeah, I don't see how the mutineers thought that they were gonna be the heroes of this story. They're just trying to survive, I guess.

00:46:43 Adam Host I wanna watch that movie. How does the captain get sole access to the weapons locker, and then take all of its contents up top, topside, and then dump 'em into the water? *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:46:55 John Host Right, you can't imagine that he's carrying an armload of AK-47s up the ladder.

[Ben laughs.]

00:46:59 Adam Host You gotta make multiple trips!

00:47:00 John Host Yeah, right. So he must have had some sailors that he—he still had enough control that he was like "Alright, you guys."

00:47:05 Adam Host Yeah.

00:47:06 John Host "Dump your guns."

00:47:07 Adam Host Yeah.

00:47:08 Ben Host Maybe he like, put 'em all in like, duffel bags and then said like, "Alright! Bucket brigade. We're throwing whatever's in these duffel bags overboard, because they're heavy."

[John laughs quietly.]

"We need to cut weight."

00:47:19 Adam Host You know, it's not the flashiest scene, but one of the tropey submarine scenes I really love is the loading of the sub before shoving off for the mission. You talk about that bucket brigade, Ben—

00:47:31 Ben Host Yeah.

00:47:32 Adam Host Like, I love seeing crates of oranges and like, especially the food. I love seeing food going into a sub. That's neat.

00:47:38 John Host Yeah.

00:47:39 Ben Host That whole sequence felt very directly like an homage to *Das Boot*.

00:47:43 Adam Host Yeah. Yeah! This question may not have an answer with our assembled minds here, but on a modern submarine... there's gotta be an easier way to load one of those. There's a—there's like a—there's a specific cargo door for loading a submarine nowadays, right?

00:48:02 John Host Mm-hm.

00:48:03 Adam Host That's a little bit more efficient?

00:48:04 Ben Host Yeah, like, you get in on one side but then like sometimes they have the door open on the other side—

[Adam and John laugh.]

—and they're pushing in the service carts?

00:48:11 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Adam: Yeah.

[All three laugh quietly.]

Adam: That's gotta be it.

Ben: Little mini—miniature bottles of vodka?

Adam: Yeah. We've got many submariners in our audience for *Friendly Fire*. If you have an answer for how they load up a submarine before going out, I'd like to know more about that!

John: I think they use—I think they have a sort of palletized system. They're—

00:48:30 Adam Host You're not fitting a pallet down the aisle of a submarine, though!

00:48:35 John Host No, but they have doors in submarines.

[Ben laughs.]

They have big doors in them.

00:48:40 Adam Host Yeah, but those are for the missiles!

00:48:42 John Host No, they have other doors! You know, they have submarines that look like submarines, and inside the submarine is another submarine. They're like Russian nesting dolls, except it's got like a special Navy SEAL submarine in it, and the submarine drops the little Navy SEAL submarine out of the middle.

00:48:59 Adam Host Yeahhh.

00:49:00 John Host If they can do that, they can bring in a pallet of oranges.

[Adam laughs.]

00:49:03 Ben Host It gives birth to a little baby?

00:49:04 John Host It does! It does.

[Ben laughs, John stifles laughter.]

When I was at—when I was out at Bangor here on my submarine tour, with my submarine pals—

00:49:12 Adam Host Bangor? (*Bang her?*) Hardly knew that sub base!

00:49:15 John Host Eugh.

[Ben laughs quietly.]

There was a sub there that the chief was like "That's not really a—that's not a boomer." Which is their terminology for a nuke-launching one.

00:49:26 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:49:27 John Host "That's not the other kind, either. That's not a patrol submarine or, you know, a fighting one."

00:49:32 Adam Host Mm-hm.

00:49:33 John Host "It's a different kind." And I was like "What kind?" And they were like "We can't tell you."

00:49:36 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Ooh. *[Laughs.]*

John: And I said "Is it one of those ones that's got the SEALs in it?!"

00:49:39 John Host And they were like "Wink, wink."

[Ben laughs.]

"No, we don't know what you're talking about! Wink, wink." And I— and they were playing around, of course, and I was playing around. But it was really cool.

00:49:48 Ben Host Wow.

00:49:49 Adam Host I bet the SEAL sub is so small that you still need to hand-load your oranges into it.

00:49:53 John Host No, no, no! They—it—they make it bigger! They like, fatten it up! They put an extra section in there. Back in the—they have to have extra oranges for the SEALs!

00:50:01 Adam Host Yeah...

00:50:02 John Host Those guys eat a lot of oranges.

00:50:03 Adam Host You think—

00:50:04 John Host They eat 'em Denzel-style.

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

00:50:11 Adam Host Sticker and all!

00:50:12 John Host They just bite into 'em like a freakin' apple.

00:50:14 Clip Clip **Speaker:** [Intensely] Well, it's a family tradition.

00:50:16 Adam Host I'm not full of sub movies. Every other *Friendly Fire* movie could be a sub movie for all I care.

00:50:22 Ben Host Yeah! That's possible.

00:50:24 Adam Host Which is interesting because I feel like we've seen a couple Stalingrad films, for example. Feel like I'm doing okay on Stalingrad right now. What—

00:50:33 John Host See, I'm the opposite. I would watch a lot more Stalingrad movies.

00:50:36 Adam Host Yeah?

00:50:37 John Host And I feel like sub movies—I mean, what are the—what do we got in a submarine? We got "You're trapped." We got the "We've gone too deep, Captain." You've got a "What are you doing?" Everybody's looking over their shoulder at him like "Three hundred! Three hundred and ten! Three hundred twenty! Captain! Three hundred and thirty!" We see that every time.

00:50:54 Adam Host I haven't seen *Das Oranges*, the submarine movie about how many oranges you can put into a submarine.

00:51:01 John Host "Captain, we're running out of oranges!"

[Adam laughs.]

00:51:04 Ben Host Nary a depth charge in this film.

00:51:05 John Host That's true.

00:51:06 Adam Host Yeah.

00:51:07 John Host That's true.

00:51:08 Ben Host Nary a torpedo is fired.

00:51:09 Adam Host There's no naval combat!

00:51:11 John Host None.

00:51:12 Ben Host No naval combat at all! And—

00:51:13 John Host Although they fire a—they fire an ICBM, which we never see.

00:51:18 Ben Host Yeah. I can't think of another sub movie that deals with the reactor at all. Like, they've definitely have the diesel motor go out in some of the World War II films we've watched. But the reactor being the problem is—I can't think of any other sub movies like that!

00:51:38 John Host I mean, every *Star Trek* episode.

00:51:40 Ben Host Yeah!

00:51:41 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Which is effectively a sub movie, Scotty is—

Adam: Yeah, the warp core is the nuclear reactor.

John: Yeah. Yeah, Scotty's always down there saying that he can't get enough power.

00:51:49 Adam Host Right.

00:51:50 Ben Host Spock is always mustering up the courage to go in and...

00:51:53 John Host That's right.

00:51:54 Ben Host *[Stifling laughter]* Re-jigger the cooling system.

00:51:56 John Host "I will fight no more forever." And then he gets torpedoed down to a Gaia bomb, and then resurrected—

00:52:01 Ben Host Uh—

00:52:02 John Host —and... talks to whales or whatever? I don't—you guys are the experts on *Star Trek*.

00:52:07 Ben Host There's a Roger Ebert quote on Wikipedia about this very issue. "Movies involving submarines have the logic of chess. The longer the game goes, the fewer possible remaining moves. *K-19* joins a tradition that includes *Das Boot*, *Hunt for Red October*, and goes all the way back to *Run Silent, Run Deep*. The variables are always oxygen, water pressure, and the enemy. Can the men breathe? Will the sub implode? Will depth charges destroy it?"

So—*[laughs]*.

00:52:34 Adam Host "Is your captain trying to kill you?"

00:52:35 John Host Right!

00:52:36 Ben Host Yeah!

00:52:37 John Host "Is the XO the real hero of this movie?"

00:52:39 Ben Host Right. The captain and XO thing is so endemic to the sub-genre that I wonder what—like, if there's some truth to it. Like—*[laughs]*. I mean like, it's not obvious, right? Like, that the captain and his first officer would always have a disagreement, every time a submarine puts to sea? *[Laughs.]*

00:53:01 John Host 'Cause there's a captain and an executive officer on every ship! It's not—

00:53:05 Ben Host Right!

00:53:06 John Host Right? I mean, you could just—you could be a minesweeper!

00:53:07 Adam Host That's the rule.

00:53:08 Ben Host But somehow the second you seal them into the ship and sink it, they get really cranky with each other.

00:53:13 John Host Yeah. Why is the XO always the one that's the most intimate with the crew? He's always the one that is the most lenient with them, he thinks of himself as a father or an older brother, and then in comes stern and cranky...

[Ben laughs.]

...captain who's like "Let's see what this ship can do. Drills, drills,

drills!" Over and over!

00:53:37 Ben Host So many drills.

00:53:39 John Host I mean, that's kinda how this podcast goes.

00:53:41 Ben Host Yeah, I guess so.

00:53:42 John Host You know, you two guys in your stripey shirts were just chomping on oranges, and then I showed up.

[Ben laughs.]

Said "No more penis jokes!"

[Ben laughs.]

00:53:52 Adam Host Harrison Ford, his character's dad in this movie, was sent to the Gulag for being... insufficiently—like, what's the reason? Like—

00:54:01 John Host Well, that was that era when totally loyal and competent and great Soviet heroes were sent to Gulags just 'cause Stalin was afraid that they had too many friends.

00:54:11 Adam Host I feel like this movie is trying to make you believe this is why his character is the way he is, right?

00:54:19 John Host He's got a chip on his shoulder.

00:54:20 Adam Host "I will follow the rules to a T. I will drill people until they die. No one's ever gonna question my loyalty."

00:54:27 John Host But the movie makes the—the characters within the movie make the case that he married some high-ranking daughter of a *[three different tries at what I think is "politburo"]* member, and that's why he has to fight to make his bones. 'Cause people think he's a stuffed shirt.

00:54:44 Ben Host Think he's a social climber.

00:54:46 Adam Host I think much like the threat of radiation, I think it is more interesting and more scary for you not to know his backstory. Because I don't believe the film succeeds in making that a reason he is the way he is!

00:55:00 John Host Right. It doesn't really—he never shows any doubt, 'cause it's freaking Harrison Ford! He won't allow it!

00:55:06 Adam Host Yeah.

00:55:07 John Host God damn you, Harrison Ford! If you're listening...

[Ben laughs.]

Show a little freaking vulnerability! I wanna see you play a bad guy!

00:55:15 Adam Host You know, in the—

00:55:16 John Host You can use the same accent that you used in this movie.

00:55:18 Adam Host —original cut of *K-19*, Harrison Ford went into the reactor room first. But, uh, in this version, he sends a bunch of his sailors in.

[Ben laughs.]

00:55:26 John Host Oh, right, right, right. From the other *Star Track*.

00:55:28 Adam Host Right.

[Adam and John laugh.]

00:55:32 Adam Host [Pronouncing the colon] *Star Wars: The Other Star Trek.*

[All three laugh.]

We're making a bunch of shirts on this episode!

00:55:40 John Host I know. *Stars War.*

00:55:41 Ben Host Yeah, this is gonna be good! It's gonna be great for us.

00:55:43 Clip Clip **Speaker:** I'm going to make you pay for what you've done!

00:55:46 John Host My daughter understands that *Star Wars* is the original *Star Wars*. She calls it number one.

00:55:53 Adam Host Mm.

00:55:54 John Host But she also calls it *A New Hope*. And no matter what I've done to explain to her that that is some... revisionism, that's some retroactive appellation that we do not accept in this family—

[Ben or Adam laughs quietly.]

00:56:06 Adam Host She's getting that from the neighbors, right?

00:56:07 John Host We call it *Star Wars* here.

00:56:09 Adam Host Uh-huh.

[Ben laughs.]

00:56:10 John Host But she calls it *A New Hope* 'cause that's what the kids call it.

00:56:12 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** And she—you know, she's pretty well-versed in—

Ben: Yeah. Well, John, the generals are always fighting the last war.
[Laughs.]

00:56:16 John Host Well, that's exactly right. I'm gonna—you know, I'm gonna die on that Generation X cross.

[Adam and Ben laugh, John stifles laughter.]

I'm gonna die on that Generation X "X."

[Ben laughs.]

It's called *Star Wars*. [Laughs.]

00:56:25 Adam Host Which means you'll be sort of crucified at a, uh, 45-degree angle?

00:56:29 John Host That's right! That's right.

[All three laugh.]

That's right, they "X" you.

00:56:32 Adam Host That'll just look silly.

00:56:34 John Host Yeah.

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

No, no, no, you can be crucified at the normal way, but you're on an "X."

00:56:38 Adam Host Oh, the "X" is—

00:56:39 John Host Yeahhh!

00:56:40 Adam Host —is tilted at 45 degrees, not you.

00:56:42 John Host 'Cause when you're on a cross—

00:56:43 Ben Host Your legs are splayed out also?

00:56:44 John Host Yeah! You look like you're on a—you look like you're on an "X," right?

00:56:47 Adam Host I see.

00:56:48 John Host You just need to get the legs out!

00:56:49 Adam Host Yeah.

00:56:50 John Host Which would be worse, right?

00:56:51 Ben Host Yeah. Come on, Jesus! Get with the program!

00:56:53 John Host Yeah!

00:56:54 Ben Host Get those legs out!

00:56:55 John Host Get on an "X"!

[Ben laughs.]

00:56:57 Adam Host Yeah. You know Jesus isn't taking a lot of ball shots with his, uh—

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

—with his feet nailed to the bottom part of the cross!

00:57:03 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** That's right. That's the—

Adam: Like, if he were on an "X" with legs spread...

[Ben laughs.]

John: Yeahhh, that's the problem.

00:57:07 Adam Host You know those Romans would be going after those nuts.

00:57:09 John Host Well, sure!

00:57:10 Music Transition Brief clip of "War."

War!
Huh!
Yeah!

[Music stops.]

00:57:13 Adam Host It's rating and review time on *Friendly Fire*. And the reason that each film gets a custom rating system, it's—is so, uh, movies about Russia can't be compared to each other! Film last week was *Stalingrad*, this week's film is *K-19*. We can't have a rating system of five fathers for *K-19*, it wouldn't make any sense!

00:57:33 John Host No.

00:57:34 Adam Host The idea that we would compare the two films is totally unacceptable. That's why *K-19* gets a rating system of between one and five unbroken christening bottles.

[Ben laughs.]

00:57:46 John Host Ooh.

00:57:47 Adam Host Just swingin'.

00:57:48 John Host Wow, you're really—

00:57:50 Adam Host Just swinging in the dark.

00:57:51 John Host You're taking it to the next level here.

00:57:53 Adam Host It's a real tone setter!

00:57:55 John Host It is.

00:57:56 Adam Host It's hat-on-a-hat tone setting. It's black cat on black cat. It's cat on a cat!

00:58:02 John Host They all look at each other. That bottle bounces, and we see every main character look over his shoulder at every other main character and go "Oh, shit. That's a bad sign."

00:58:10 Ben Host One of them just says out loud, "We are cursed!"

[Ben and John laugh.]

00:58:16 Adam Host *[Sighs.]* I think a lot like that bottle giving you that sense that something's not quite right, maybe the film and the adventure is haunted... I think casting Harrison Ford as the Russian captain haunts the film. If you can't turn the corner with him as a Russian captain speaking in a... kind of fucked up, broken, Russian-English dialect, like, it's not good.

00:58:45 John Host *[Russian accent, kind of gargled]* Take this sub to 300 meters!

00:58:48 Adam Host He is not making consistent decisions with his "L"s and his "R"s. He is depending on his face to make this movie work. And I think when you're Harrison Ford, you can do that. You can credibly do it. Your face can get you through the performance. But when you're playing a Russian person who speaks English, your "L"s and your "R"s need to sound right! There needs to be a commitment to that that there just wasn't.

But if you can set that aside and just go with it—go with the sub movie as a thing that you love, which I was able to do—this film is very satisfying! It's, if not capably made, extremely well made, as sub-genre films go. The casting is stunky and interesting. I mean, swap Harrison Ford for... who?

00:59:38 John Host *[Normal voice]* What if it was Robert Redford? What if this—what if the—Robert Redford from 2001 was playing this captain? It might suffer from the same problems.

00:59:46 Adam Host I'd see that movie!

00:59:48 John Host Mm-hm.

00:59:49 Adam Host Honestly, I think I'd like it equally. Maybe it doesn't matter who the 60-year-old dad is playing the captain of this Russian sub.

01:00:00 John Host We've seen this movie with the captain being played by the dude

from... Tornado Movie.

01:00:07 Adam Host Yeah. There's Tornado Dad.

[Adam and John laugh.]

01:00:09 John Host Yeah, Tornado Dad! And we didn't like that movie any better.

01:00:11 Adam Host No.

01:00:13 John Host Who's the actor? Is it Jeff Bridges? *[Laughs.]*

01:00:16 Adam Host You're talking about Matt McConaughey.

[Ben laughs.]

In that other—

01:00:19 John Host No!

01:00:20 Adam Host You're talking about Tornado Dad being—

01:00:21 John Host No, Tornado Dad is the other guy! The—it's *[inaudible]!*

01:00:23 Adam Host Oh, Bill Paxton!

01:00:24 John Host Bill Paxton!

01:00:25 Adam Host Yeah.

01:00:26 John Host Right? That's Tornado Dad.

01:00:27 Adam Host Yeah.

01:00:28 John Host But what if it—I mean, what if it—well, it can't be Matthew McConaughey, but what if it was...

01:00:34 Ben Host Denzel Washington.

01:00:35 John Host Okay, there we go.

[Ben laughs.]

Denzel Washington as a 1961 Soviet submarine captain.

[Ben and Adam laugh.]

01:00:43 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** I would watch that movie.

Adam: That would be amazing.

01:00:46 John Host Because this is in that period of post-racial America where we don't see Denzel's color!

01:00:50 Adam Host No.

01:00:51 John Host Right?

01:00:52 Ben Host What about Hackman, though? Hackman could be—

01:00:53 John Host Ohhh.

01:00:54 Ben Host —could be the captain!

01:00:55 John Host Hackman would be great in this movie.

01:00:56 Adam Host You know who eats a shit-ton of oranges with the skin on? Denzel Washington.

01:01:00 John Host He does, yeah.

01:01:01 Ben Host Yeah.

01:01:02 Adam Host Goes right through it.

01:01:03 John Host Hackman would be good—*[stifling laughter]* what about Dustin Hoffman?

[Ben laughs.]

No. You're not gonna have Dustin Hoffman in this role.

01:01:09 Ben Host "Are you trying to irradiate me, Mrs. Washington?" *[Laughs.]*

01:01:13 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Adam:** If you almost ignore this film's—

John: Mrs. Robinson. Mrs. Robins—

Ben: Yeah.

John: Mrs. ROBIN—Mrs. Washington?! Good god! Augh!

Ben: I misspoke! *[Laughing]* Because I was looking at a picture of Denzel Washington.

01:01:23 John Host You are canceled!

01:01:25 Ben Host *[Laughs.]* I'm not canceled, I misspoke! I—I—

01:01:28 John Host *[Laughs.]* You know, that's what everybody that gets canceled says!

01:01:31 Ben Host Every time I go slightly off of the tightly scripted, uh—*[laughs]*.

01:01:35 Adam Host "Ms. Lady Bird Johnson, are you trying to seduce me?"

[All three laugh. John claps.]

01:01:45 Ben Host Alright, is the podcast over? Can we leave it with Robs from here? *[Laughs.]*

01:01:49 John Host *[Laughs.]* No, there's lots to go.

01:01:50 Ben Host Oh no, I just wanna go home! *[Laughs.]*

01:01:52 Adam Host I will—I'll wrap up my point and just say this. I think, like, the film can go sour if you can't get with Harrison Ford being cast as his character. I was able to do that. I don't know why, I can't explain it!

01:02:03 John Host You're amazing, is why. You're one of the heroes.

01:02:06 Adam Host All I know is from between one AM and three AM last night—

[Ben or John laughs quietly, Adam stifles laughter.]

—I was totally locked into this film in a way that I did not expect.

01:02:15 Ben Host Wow!

01:02:16 Adam Host It may be a reason for its high score. I'm giving this... I'm giving this four and a quarter unbroken christening bottles of champagne.

01:02:27 John Host Good gravy!

01:02:28 Ben Host Wow!

01:02:29 Adam Host I think this is a capital-G Good submarine genre film.

01:02:36 John Host Now, we should say that a one quarter of a bottle of champagne

actually has a name. It's called the piccolo.

01:02:42 Adam Host That's the part that the saber cuts off, right?

01:02:45 John Host No, no, no. A piccolo is a bottle of champagne that is one-quarter size.

01:02:49 Adam Host Oh!

01:02:50 Ben Host It's a little mini!

01:02:51 John Host So a bottle of champagne is called a bottle. And then—

01:02:54 Adam Host I am familiar.

01:02:56 John Host Right, and then a half bottle is called a demi bottle.

01:02:58 Adam Host Uh-huh.

01:02:59 John Host And then a quarter bottle is called a piccolo. So you've given it four bottles and a piccolo.

01:03:05 Adam Host I have. I have indeed.

01:03:07 John Host Can you imagine if you tried to christen a ship with a piccolo?

[Ben laughs.]

That would be hilarious.

01:03:13 Ben Host Yeah. I mean, it'd be hard, right? 'Cause the—you know, much more glass-to-champagne ratio.

01:03:18 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** So less delicate.

John: Right. It would bounce more often, right.

Ben: Yeah.

01:03:20 Adam Host "Piccolo" rhymes with "Bigelow," and it makes me wanna just drop one more thing into my review portion.

01:03:27 John Host Get in there.

01:03:28 Adam Host And that is I really like all of the edits that were hidden in this film. There's a lot of trickery involving bulkhead walls and periscope tubes that are hiding cuts going on in this film, and I found that very satisfying to observe when I saw them. So...

01:03:47 Ben Host Drafting on that, another choice that she makes in this that I thought was brilliant was every time we go into the reactor with men, we go to slow-mo. And you know that they are... cooking in there. And it's probably also very, very hot, but also radioactive. And the fact that the slow-mo is not super overwrought, but it just makes it feel that much tenser, because you're like "Ugh, speed it up! Get it done! Get out!" *[Laughs.]* You know?

01:04:20 Adam Host Yeah.

01:04:21 Ben Host And I thought that was brilliant! And I think it is a good submarine genre film, and I... I agree that, you know, you gotta get past those accents. If you don't, the ship will not penetrate the icecap as it ascends. And I think this ship penetrated the icecap, but like the *K-19*, sustained some antenna damage on the way up. So I will give it three champagne bottles and a demi.

01:04:58 John Host Wow.

01:04:59 Adam Host Wow.

01:05:00 John Host Three and a demi. Demi being a half of a champagne bottle.

01:05:04 Ben Host Yeah.

01:05:05 Adam Host I mean, submarine is one of Ben's favorite types of movie!

01:05:08 John Host Yeah.

01:05:09 Adam Host And so I—

01:05:10 Ben Host One of my favorite types of movie.

01:05:11 Adam Host This is a very low score, I feel like!

01:05:14 Ben Host I'm trying to give real-world scores that people can, you know, make their moviegoing decisions based on. Not just everything is four.
[Laughs.]

01:05:22 Adam Host Yeah, not like my fucking trash scores *[inaudible]*.

[Ben laughs.]

01:05:24 John Host Yeah, Ben and I are tired of this "grading on a curve" business where you give everybody an A.

[Ben laughs.]

01:05:28 Adam Host Yeah.

01:05:30 John Host Ben and I are ready to get real.

01:05:31 Ben Host Yeah.

01:05:32 Adam Host That's what makes you guys the darlings of [our Reddit page](#).

[Ben laughs.]

01:05:36 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Yeah, that's right.

That's right. Ben and I are gonna be the Boomers here and say "It used to be, movies had to work!"

01:05:43 Adam Host Mm.

01:05:44 Ben Host We need to teach these movies a little something called grit!

01:05:47 John Host Yeah, grit!

This was a popcorn chomper. And I was chomping. I was chomping popcorn throughout the whole movie. But nothing sticks, really, except for the nuke scenes. Which are cool. The Cold War setting is something that I like. But I just... you know, over time, I—you know, maybe I have submarine movie fatigue. But I see why this movie kinda bounced off the—the floor of the ocean.

[Ben laughs.]

You know? The movie going public was like, "Why? Why? What do I want this for? What's happening here?" And really what the movie was saying is "What you want is Harrison Ford and Liam Neeson chewing up the scenery." This is peak Liam Neeson. Right? Before he became a caricature of himself.

01:06:39 Adam Host Yeah.

01:06:40 John Host He's not avenging his daughter's death here.

01:06:41 Adam Host Before he became a nightmare for moviegoing audiences like us.

01:06:45 John Host Yeah. Yeah. I'm not—*[laughs]*. I don't ride for Liam like I used to, but he's great here.

01:06:51 Adam Host Sure is.

01:06:52 John Host But this is past peak Harrison. And I understand why they cast him, I understand why they felt like "Yeah, let's get him in there!"

01:07:00 Adam Host *Friendly Fire* is also past peak Harrison, as a show.

[Ben laughs.]

01:07:03 John Host Yeah. I'll say. When was peak Ben Harrison? Was it when he was operating the camera for Gizmodo?

01:07:10 Adam Host Yeah.

01:07:11 John Host What was the—what was top Ben?

01:07:13 Adam Host When did the water roll back on Harrison?

[John laughs.]

I don't know.

01:07:16 Ben Host Mm.

01:07:17 John Host Like, MaxFunCon 3?

01:07:19 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Maybe was peak—?

Adam: Oh, yeah.

Ben: Oh, that might have been it!

John: Peak Ben Harrison?

01:07:22 Ben Host Maybe this upcoming MaxFunCon, the MaxFunCon to end all FunCons, will be where I finally peak.

01:07:29 John Host A California wildfire will scorch the entire—

01:07:31 Adam Host Sure.

01:07:32 Ben Host Yeah.

01:07:33 John Host —top of Lake Arrowhead. That's—

01:07:34 Ben Host All of Lake Arrowhead will vanish.

01:07:36 John Host The only thing left will be the Scientology bunker.

01:07:39 Adam Host Mm!

[Ben laughs.]

01:07:40 John Host Where David Miscavige's wife is being held.

01:07:42 Adam Host Yeah, that's—that's where our sex party is.

01:07:44 John Host Yeah.

Um—*[sighs]*. So I... I feel like a real-world rating for this is three bottles of champagne. And I don't mean that as a—like, three bottles

of champagne compared to Adam's inflated rating system. I feel like this is a—it's a C! It's a C movie. Now I know in grading, right, that that's a 60%, which is a low D. But that does—that's never made any sense to me. I don't think this is a D movie.

01:08:18 Adam Host

I'm taking a prescription medication for my low D.

[Ben and John laugh.]

And, uh, the side effects are shocking!

[Ben laughs.]

01:08:27 John Host

So maybe I'll give it three bottles and a piccolo.

01:08:30 Adam Host

Huh!

01:08:31 John Host

Just to make sure that everybody understands I'm saying this is a—this is a movie that is a fun popcorn cruncher, but you're gonna come out of it I think wanting more.

01:08:42 Adam Host

You know what, if I looked at all of your film scores on paper and I saw three and something for this film, I would have thought that you didn't think it was fun.

01:08:49 John Host

Really?

01:08:50 Adam Host

And I might skip past it for that reason. I think fun matters!

01:08:54 Ben Host

That's because you're projecting your rating system onto John!

01:08:57 Adam Host

I know. I can't do that.

01:08:59 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: Nope, every movie is different.

Adam: We just got—we need to live our lives! Separately.

John: Yeah.

Ben: Yeah!

John: Yeah. I—

01:09:03 Adam Host

We should stop doing this show.

[Adam or John laughs quietly.]

01:09:05 Ben Host

I don't think this show would work if our ratings always agreed!

01:09:08 Adam Host

Yeah.

01:09:09 John Host

I have to criticize this movie a little bit! Because I felt like it—it—on the whole—it holds together! You never—it never asks you to suspend disbelief. I just didn't feel any... I didn't feel any character really lived for me, except for Peter Sarsgaard. It's the only one that really—he's the only one that... life really lived in. Everybody else was just walking around a submarine movie.

01:09:38 Adam Host

As Fred Durst would say, I think we're all in agreeance...

[Ben or John laughs quietly.]

...that this film should not have been caused for Kathryn Bigelow to be put into director jail.

01:09:49 Ben Host Yeah.

01:09:50 Adam Host And I am glad that she is out.

01:09:51 John Host Agreed.

01:09:52 Adam Host Like, this is not a life sentence type film.

01:09:56 John Host No. When we look at the history of Kathryn Bigelow, we do not have to make an allowance for *K-19*.

01:10:01 Adam Host Right.

01:10:02 John Host It looks good—

01:10:03 Adam Host Yeah.

01:10:04 John Host —within the tower of her achievement.

01:10:06 Adam Host Yeah. Harrison Ford gets to walk the streets a free man for his accent in this film, unpunished.

[Ben laughs.]

01:10:11 John Host He does. No, he should be punished for his later Jack Ryan garbage.

01:10:14 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** Boo!

Adam: Incorrect. Bad take.

01:10:18 John Host Because there's only one Jack Ryan for me, and that is—

01:10:21 Ben Host The guy from *The Office*? [Laughs quietly.]

01:10:24 John Host [Laughing] Yeah, the guy from *The Office*.

[Ben laughs.]

No! Not that asshole! No! Original Jack Ryan! The one Jack Ryan. The guy from *30 Rock*.

01:10:33 Ben Host [Laughing] The guy from *30 Rock*!

01:10:35 Adam Host There may be many Jack Ryans in the *Jack Ryan* canon. But there is only one guy that each of us has to choose in this segment of *Friendly Fire*. Ben, who is your guy?

01:10:46 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** [Stifling laughter] That rat that gets irradiated.

John: The rat?!

Ben: Yeah.

01:10:49 Adam Host You're always picking the animals!

01:10:51 John Host The dead rat.

01:10:52 Ben Host [Laughs.] How about you, John, did you have a guy?

01:10:54 John Host Yeah, my guy—so there was the mustache guy. Who—

01:10:58 Adam Host You're gonna have to be more specific!

01:11:00 John Host [Stifles laughter.] The mustache guy who led the rebellion.

01:11:02 Adam Host Mm!

01:11:03 John Host The mutiny. But then there was—

01:11:05 Ben Host Oh, that guy.

01:11:06 John Host Then there was second mustache guy. The guy that looks like a guy that you would see in any brewpub now. He's got a shaved head. He's slightly skinnier—

01:11:15 Ben Host Yeah, he's the NCO!

01:11:17 John Host He's the NCO. And he does some really good flop sweat in this movie. I believed that actor's performance. I believed that character was just trying to do a good job and not get irradiated. And I hope he lived a long and happy life. At the end of the film when they're all there in the graveyard, I'm sure he was one of 'em there in a fatsuit.

[Ben laughs quietly.]

With some *Smiley's People* glasses on. And I high-fived him at a distance.

01:11:44 Adam Host A part of me wanted Harrison Ford to be in that makeup the entire film!

01:11:50 John Host He looked great in that makeup.

01:11:51 Adam Host Right?!

01:11:52 John Host That was the best old—like, "aged a guy" makeup I've ever seen!

01:11:55 Ben Host Yeah!

01:11:56 Adam Host They kinda Cro-Magnon browed him a little bit, but in a way that really worked!

01:11:59 John Host Yeah!

01:12:00 Adam Host It obscured the Harrison Ford-ness of him.

01:12:02 John Host Yeah.

01:12:03 Ben Host And Liam Neeson looked like a retired Borscht Belt comic.

[Adam and John and/or Ben laugh.]

With the—*[laughs]* with the white sideburns and the—

01:12:12 Adam Host Yeah!

01:12:13 Ben Host —big crazy-rim glasses?

01:12:15 Adam Host Yeah, lot of girls are wearing that style of glasses these days.

01:12:18 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Ben:** *[Stifling laughter]* Mm-hm.

John: Yeah, I like it.

01:12:20 Adam Host My guy is connected to those oranges. There is a moment where we follow a crate of oranges into—

01:12:27 John Host Those are tomatoes, Adam.

01:12:29 Adam Host —the submarine.

01:12:30 John Host It's tomatoes. We're following tomatoes.

01:12:31 Adam Host And someone, who we don't see, grabs one out of the crate as it's making its way through the sub. I like that guy.

01:12:40 John Host It was Denzell!

[Ben laughs.]

He wanted to eat an—a tomato like an apple!

01:12:43 Adam Host "No one's gonna miss one of these!"
01:12:45 John Host No. Well, they're not gonna be any fresher than they are right then!
01:12:48 Adam Host Peak of freshness.
01:12:50 John Host *[Laughing]* Right?
01:12:51 Adam Host That's what that guy's going after.
01:12:52 John Host Three days later they start to get that wrinkly skin.
01:12:55 Adam Host My guy grabs the first orange.
01:12:57 John Host It's a tomato.
01:12:58 Adam Host And that's why he's my guy.

[John laughs.]

You think they're bringing heirloom tomatoes on the—?

01:13:03 John Host Yeah. You're—
01:13:04 Adam Host —on the sub? And that's why they're orange?
01:13:05 John Host This is a perfect Adam moment! Your guy grabs a tomato and thinks it's an orange!
01:13:10 Ben Host Pretty sure they were oranges, John.
01:13:11 John Host I thought they were tomatoes.
01:13:13 Adam Host You were watching the film on a watch!

[John laughs.]

In black and white!

01:13:20 John Host Across the room, 'cause I didn't wanna get the watch wet, so I set it up on the toilet.
01:13:23 Adam Host Mm.
01:13:24 John Host But I could see it!
01:13:25 Ben Host I found one interesting thing on the *K-19* Wikipedia entry that I wanted to share. In 2006, a section of the original submarine was purchased by like a Russian businessman who once served on the submarine as a conscript, with the intention of, quote, "turning it into a Moscow-based meeting place to build links between submarine veterans from Russia and other countries."
01:13:53 Adam Host Man, rich businessmen are so cool.

[Ben and John laugh.]

01:13:59 Ben Host *[Stifling laughter]* "So far the plans remain on hold, and many of *K-19*'s survivors have objected to them."
01:14:05 Adam Host Hm!

[Ben laughs.]

01:14:06 John Host Oh, that's what's crazy! We didn't cover this. *K-19* got rehabilitated and was in service until the nineties!

01:14:13 Ben Host Yeah!

01:14:14 John Host And continued to have mishaps and accidents!

01:14:17 Ben Host Yeah.

01:14:18 John Host Like, killed multiple other people in like weird—

01:14:21 Ben Host It like, ran into a US submarine underwater at one point. *[Laughs.]* Crazy.

01:14:27 John Host This submarine was fucked!

[Adam laughs.]

They should have broken that champagne bottle on it. They should have given it a second go.

01:14:33 Adam Host Did they just shoot the lady whose job it was to christen the boat? What ever happened to her?

01:14:38 John Host Oh, well I read that in reality this sub was one of the first or only ships that actually was commissioned by a guy! They found some sailor, and he was the one that broke the champagne bottle. Although—he was the one that failed to break the champagne bottle. Now why they wouldn't have—why they picked a—like a mousy girl to do it in this movie when it was actually like a weird, true thing!

01:15:03 Adam Host You know... eight years later Kathryn Bigelow makes that character a guy.

[Ben laughs, Adam stifles laughter.]

You know she does.

01:15:09 John Host Oh, for sure.

01:15:10 Music Transition Brief clip of "War."

War!
Huh!
Yeah!

[Music stops.]

01:15:13 Ben Host Well, guys, next week I think we are not going to be rolling a 120-sided die, because there is only one *1917* in theaters right now.

01:15:23 Adam Host I can't believe we're gonna anger the 120-sided die by ignoring it.

[Ben laughs.]

01:15:29 John Host We don't usually break our fundamental code, and I'm afraid the precedent is going to—is gonna result in a bunch of people flooding us with like, demands that we see movies. But *1917* does feel like a movie event.

01:15:45 Adam Host People should go see it! We don't negotiate with our listeners, either. We'll go see what we wanna see.

01:15:50 Music Music "War" starts fading in.

01:15:51	Ben	Host	Yeah. There were a lot of war movies that came out in 2019 that we haven't seen yet. But <i>1917</i> , you know, it's up for a bunch of awards and stuff. And so that will be next week's episode. So tune in next week to <i>Friendly Fire</i> for our review of 2019's <i>1917</i> . Which is a lot of numbers!
01:16:13	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:16:15	Ben	Host	We'll leave it with Robs from here!
01:16:16	Music	Music	"War" continues at full volume. <i>Absolutely— —nothing!</i> <i>Listen to me!</i> <i>War!</i> <i>It ain't nothing but a heartbreaker—</i> <i>[Music drops to play quietly as Rob speaks.]</i>
01:16:22	Rob Schulte	Producer	<i>Friendly Fire</i> 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. <i>Friendly Fire</i> 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 <u>all</u> the fantastic bonus content from Maximum Fun. If you'd like to discuss the show online, please use the hashtag #FriendlyFire. You can find Ben on Twitter at @BenjaminAhr. Adam is @CutForTime. John is @johnroderick, and I'm @robkschulte. Thanks! We'll see you next week.
01:17:14	Music	Music	"War" continues at full volume. <i>Is there no place for them today?</i> <i>They say we must fight to keep our freedom But Lord knows there's got to be a better way Oh!</i> <i>[Music fades out.]</i>
01:17:27	Music	Transition	A cheerful guitar chord.
01:17:29	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:17:30	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:17:31	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:17:32	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.