

*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	"The Rescue" by Trevor Rabin from <i>The Great Raid (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)</i> plays in background throughout introduction. Slow, lilting, woodwind-and-strings-heavy movie music.
00:00:01	John Roderick	Host	When we started recording <i>Friendly Fire</i> back in the spring of 2017, we didn't really have a plan for it or a home for it or any kind of timeline for its debut. We just liked the idea of doing a war movie podcast together and maybe didn't have a Plan B on that! I don't think we expected to record for months before we premiered, but by the time <i>Friendly Fire</i> appeared in your podcatchers in January of 2018, we already had several months of back catalog in the can. As anyone in media can attest, having a trove of unreleased material is like having a cupboard full of canned soup. Or for you sports fans, it's like having <u>three</u> flasks of brown liquor taped to your calves.

We used up that buffer over the next couple of years—taking vacations and getting into tumultuous and ultimately gratifying but, alas, somewhat ill-fated affairs with carpentry bloggers who lived in Palm Desert—such that earlier this year, we had almost no buffer at all! Nerve-racking, to say the least! So we kicked it into gear and recorded ten shows a week until we built our cushion back. But that luxury comes at a price! Like all luxury. Except this price isn't paid in pieces of silver or in your tarnished, filthy lucre earned at the expense of an exploited working class. It's a price paid in sometimes forgetting having ever watched a movie in the first place.

I don't think it's an indictment of any one particular movie that three or four months later, I only recall some mist-shrouded details. Like... wasn't Marky Mark in this movie? I could swear that he was! Maybe it is an indictment of the film. I don't remember. The point is, that Ben... or Adam... wrote this particular intro. I'm not sure which. And I can't tell anymore because they've stopped using their homey, regional vernaculars of Kirkland, Washington and East Bay private school.

Suffice to say, this well-written and professional intro is full of cleverly researched bits and is of the "summarize the plot of the film; don't just talk for five to seven minutes about some ideas you had three minutes ago about the 1970s, Bismarck, Coney Island hot dogs, and the nature of man." Anyway. I'm gonna read this intro straight. Because it was composed by one of those adorable ding-dongs, it's good. And I honestly can't remember this movie at all. Except that it features a prolonged crawling sequence and stars Marky Mark. Or someone who looks like him.

00:02:39	John	Host
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To wit:

*[Clears throat.]*

"John Dahl started his directing career making music videos for Kool & the Gang, and it's been an interesting ride since then. Used to be, honing your chops on music videos and then making a big transition to the silver screen meant you had secured your place as a Hollywood director. He has some buzz early on, making films like

*Red Rock West*—never heard of that—"and *The Last Seduction*—also never heard of it. "Largely forgotten now." Oh, thank you.

"But well thought of in their day. Then he cemented himself in the psyches of emotionally stunted college-age bros forever with the film *Rounders*, a Matt Damon/Ed Norton gambling movie that probably did more for the playing card industry than a midsize riverboat casino in the decade after its release. Dahl mostly directs television now, and the film we're here to watch today is one of his last big-screen releases. Stepping back down to direct television used to be considered a stunt at best—like Quentin Tarantino directing an episode of *ER*—or a late-career slump at worst. But John Dahl's career arc has landed him in the director's chair of some fairly prestigious television shows in the Age of Peak TV. So you could drag the guy and say that today's film is part of why he's not making feature films anymore, or you could look at it more charitably and say he made a transition into the part of Hollywood where all the excitement is these days."

00:04:03 John Host

"This film had almost everything it needed to be as great as its title implies. A jailbreak is a perfect setup for a war film! The stakes of the challenge are clear and interesting, and all you need to do is pick a perspective and populate your story with interesting characters. The jailbreak in this film takes place on Luzon, late in the war, and the prisoners in question are American and Allied POWs who landed in a prison camp after surviving the Bataan Death March. Unlike many of our previous POW entries, this story is primarily told from the perspective of the group of Army Rangers who lead the mission to free those prisoners. Benjamin Bratt"—oh, right!—"plays the colorful Lt. Col. Henry Mucci, the leader of the raid. And we get a B-story about Margaret Utinsky played by Connie Nielsen, an American nurse secretly helping the Filipino resistance movement at the same time as the raid." Totally forgot about that.

"I'll reserve my judgments about the overall quality of the film for later, but it's interesting to think that a movie with this amazing a true story to base its script upon could have landed its auteur in Director Jail and ironic that the film in question is about one of the most amazing wartime jailbreaks of all time. I'm not talking about the publicity, Bob, I'm talking about the kind of glory you carry inside you the rest of your life knowing you've done something worth remembering. Something that made a difference. Today on *Friendly Fire... The Great Raid!*"

00:05:38 Music Music

[*Music swells, ceases.*]

"War" off the album *War & Peace* 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.]

00:05:59 Ben Harrison Host Welcome to *Friendly Fire*, the best-trained, least-proven war movie podcast on the whole internet! I'm Ben Harrison.

00:06:05 Adam Pranica Host I'm Adam Pranica.

00:06:06 John Host And I'm Colonel John Roderick!

[Ben laughs.]

00:06:12 Ben Host Colonel? Walk this way with me.

[Multiple people laugh.]

We're gonna draw some shapes in the dirt. [Laughs.] I love the scene where they have the map out and they're like—

[John laughs.]

—all looking at the map and then he goes and draws the map on some dirt?

[John continues to laugh; claps slowly.]

00:06:25 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** [Through laughter] It's so good! It's so good!

00:06:30 John Host **Ben:** 'Cause you have to have that in a movie about a raid! He's like, "Okay. And then at the next stage—"

[Ben laughs.]

"—we're gonna move away from this detailed map. Come over here with me while I draw in the dirt with a stick."

00:06:37 Ben Host A more gestural version of the same thing. [Laughs.]

[Adam laughs.]

00:06:42 Adam Host The thing I love about how drawn-out that scene is, is like as... James Franco is drawing it out in the dirt, he's waiting for the cut to happen to the actual action? And the raid happening? There's, like, these pregnant pauses as he's drawing things. Like, okay, we're gonna go in here and then he almost looks to camera like—you're gonna cut away and show that at this moment, right?

00:07:03 Ben Host This is kind of like an *Italian Job* type deal?

[All laugh.]

00:07:07 Adam Host That's really, like, the thing about this movie. Is that it's like so strictly linear. You just live in every moment. Outside of cutting around to the concurrent story, it's like we're not moving through

00:07:26 Ben Host time at all. And it's such a weird sensation to watch a war film that is so strict about that.  
Yeah. Yeah! That said, like, this movie is kind of corny and, like, I totally understand why it was a giant box office flop. But I kind of liked how linear and just kind of like stubbornly... straightforward it was. Like, I think there's—like, we can get into a lot of the things that I would cite as shortcomings. But I was like—I was watching this movie and I was like, "I guess I'm gonna just add 'raid' to my list of favorite film genres? Alongside 'con artist' and 'submarine'?"

00:08:00 John Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*  
Wait. "Heist," also. Don't forget "heist."  
00:08:02 Ben Host I mean, "heist" and "raid" are like cousins, I think. Yeah.  
00:08:05 John Host Yeah. You're right. That's true. The linear nature of the film—I didn't object to either. Because you're right. It was so strict. I mean, it starts—the poor movie. It starts—

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

—on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941.

*[Ben laughs.]*

And it explains to us that Pearl Harbor was bombed that day. By the Japanese. It's James Franco explaining it to us.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:08:45 Adam Host In the most patient way—and augmented with real footage. Real footage, guys! From the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Boy, it really set the scene for me.  
00:08:56 John Host You know what? Like you laugh at the real footage in the beginning.  
00:08:58 Adam Host I thought the real footage at the end was super affecting and great.  
00:08:59 John Host Like, I loved the credit rollout was killer.  
The real footage at the end was the best part of the movie!  
Yeah.  
To see these guys—the actual guys—and in some ways how good the casting was of some of them. And watching them and realizing that these were pictures of these guys, y'know, hours after they were rescued. *[Laughs.]* And it was—that was phenomenal!  
00:09:19 Ben Host There was an internet pedant that actually noticed something because of that footage, I think. That they then shared on IMDB. In the film, Lieutenant Colonel Mucci wears the second pattern herringbone twill fatigue uniform—

*[Adam laughs.]*

—during all of his scenes. The second pattern—also the most common style of all of the U.S. Army herringbone twill uniforms—can be differentiated from other versions via the large chest pockets stretching all the way to the waist. Designed to hold boxes of K-rations. However, in historical photographs of Mucci—

*[Sound of telegraph plays in background.]*

00:10:03	Adam	Host	—he wears the older, first pattern uniform. Which in turn can be identified due to its much smaller, pleated chest pockets. Yeah. You're not gonna carry a lot of field rations in <u>those</u> tiny pockets.
00:10:06	John	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Come on! That's a killer pedant! Thank you, sir!
00:10:12	Ben	Host	Oh man. Yeah. I expanded it for understandability, but this person starts—introduces the phrase “herringbone twill” and then parenthetically gives “HBT” and then returns to the abbreviation, “HBT,” later in the— <i>[Laughs.]</i>
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:10:32	John	Host	—stage of time. My hero. My hero, the sartorial pedant!
00:10:36	Ben	Host	I love it.
00:10:37	John	Host	Me, too.
00:10:38	Ben	Host	This is my kind of pedant. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:10:40	John	Host	I mean, when Mucci arrives on the scene—portrayed by Benjamin Bratt—his particular choice of rakish chapeau—
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:11:00	Ben	Host	—kind of sat me up in my chair! I mean, we talk a lot about the great hats of <i>Friendly Fire</i> , but this is, um...
00:11:01	John	Host	It's an all-timer! It's a heck of a good hat! And I—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:11:21	Ben	Host	And at first I was thrown off! It's like, wait a minute, is this a hat that—I never see this hat! As an army—a World War II Army Ranger hat?! That an officer would wear? But then those—that footage of him at the end, he's wearing the very hat! He's very careful about the way the brim kinda comes down on one side and goes up on the other. It's a good hat movie overall. I loved the hat game of the Filipino guerillas.
00:11:33	John	Host	Oh, their cowboy hats?
00:11:36	Ben	Host	They all had really cool hats. And the Ranger hats are cool!
00:11:39	John	Host	I feel like that hat that Benjamin Bratt—the Bratt Hat—
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:12:00	Ben	Host	I feel like that hat—it reminded me of Dr. Sidney Freedman from <i>M*A*S*H</i> . This is a reference that— <i>[clears throat]</i> I'm turning now to camera. I'm turning directly to the Generation X listeners of <i>Friendly Fire</i> . Addressing them. Adam is Gen X.
00:12:02	John	Host	<i>[Adam laughs.]</i> Yeah, <u>barely</u> . I'm saying—
00:12:06	Adam	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Is this a Hat Pack movie?

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

And the Bratt Hat is like the Dean Martin hat?

*[Ben laughs.]*

Go on with me here. That makes the Franco hat kind of the Joey Bishop?

00:12:23 Crosstalk Crosstalk

**Ben:** Yeah.

00:12:25 Adam Host

**John:** Mm-hm.  
Hat? I mean, Franco also wears a good hat. I don't want to diminish the hat achievement of James Franco in this movie.

00:12:31 John Host

Not as good, though. Not as good.

00:12:33 Adam Host

Not as good. What other hats do we have? We have the hat of the Philippine colonel.

00:12:40 Ben Host

Is that the Sammy Davis Jr. hat?

00:12:43 Adam Host

Captain Pajota is the Sammy Davis Jr. hat, of course.

00:12:47 Ben Host

We're gonna get the fan art up to a point where somebody can actually draw it. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:52 Adam Host

The Bratt Hat Rat Pack is what this is.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:12:54 John Host

You know who's got the killer hat in this movie? Dale Dye! wearing his flat cap! He's—Daryl (*sic*) Dye's got the Hat Pack Flat Cap.

00:13:07 Ben Host

Damn.

00:13:08 Adam Host

I love Dale Dye. But Dale Dye is not good in this movie.

00:13:12 John Host

I've figured this out. This is what you need to know about a Dale Dye movie. If Dale Dye shows up in a movie and he is in a scene where the camera is in a medium shot, where Dale Dye is talking to two other characters and you see all three of them in the shot? Dale Dye is amazing. But any time—

*[Ben laughs.]*

—a filmmaker cuts to Dale Dye—where there's a camera on him—it falls to shit.

00:13:38 Adam Host

The way you use a Dale Dye in a movie is having him chewing someone out. And I think the Dale Dye effect in this film is that he's reasonable and measured. In a way that felt unfamiliar. I wanted to see him tear someone's head off.

00:13:52 Ben Host

The general that he played was also a German immigrant. And apparently had, like, a real thick German accent?

00:13:59 John Host

Uh, Kreuger was a pretty famous general, actually.

00:14:03 Ben Host

That's a character I would love to see actually played as being German. 'Cause like, what World War II movie do we get the German-ass American general bossing everyone around in?

00:14:14 John Host

What's crazy about Kreuger is that he was an immigrant to the United States and joined the army in World War I. And fought in World War I as a soldier with a thick German accent. And then stayed in the military for the rest of his career and was, like, really old during World War II. So old that he felt like it was—it stood out that he was given such a high command in the Pacific Theater.

00:14:45 Adam Host

I want the Walter Kreuger story! That's amazing! Give us that movie!

00:14:49	John	Host	He's an interesting general. And yet at the time I think he was criticized for being too cautious. But like MacArthur never wavered in his support for the guy. It's like a soap opera.
00:15:02	Ben	Host	Too cautious? This raid is downright daring!
00:15:05	John	Host	Well, yeah, I know. But— <i>[Laughs.]</i> But he didn't—he's not one of those guys that kept prosecuting the advantage.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Right? He would—he was always, like, "Let's hold on just a second. Let's regroup."
00:15:16	Ben	Host	Mm. He was all about losing the initiative?
00:15:19	Clip	Clip	<b>Speaker 1:</b> Please!
			<b>Speaker 2:</b> <i>[Inaudible.]</i>
00:15:21	Adam	Host	Kreuger wasn't the only character given very little attention in this film. I thought for a main character—Did you read at all about Margaret Utinsky as a person?
00:15:32	John	Host	Yeah.
00:15:33	Adam	Host	Hers was a really interesting story, and... I mean, we're given so little of it. Hers could be a story of her own film, also. And you're given so little of it that narratively when she arrives at the end, I was like, "How did she get there? What is Margaret doing in the camp at the end during the liberation?" It didn't make any contextual sense. It gave her so little in the film.
00:15:58	John	Host	What she was doing was—after having escaped over the mountains in the war-torn chaos—she was showing up at a camp in a perfectly white, freshly laundered blouse—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			—with her makeup and hair done perfectly. And walking ankle-deep in infectious disease.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:16:18	Adam	Host	That does her real story such an injustice, though. Because if you read about her—like, unfortunately the film makes you read about her to actually get her real sacrifice. But like, she was tortured for a month. And had, like, gangrenous flesh surgically removed from her body without anesthesia.
00:16:36	John	Host	Not surgically. Cut off of her with a fucking knife.
00:16:41	Adam	Host	But like, she should've arrived on the scene bedraggled to the degree that we would understand how horrible her circumstances were up until then. And for her to arrive in a beautiful dress, not walking with a limp—it makes you doubt what she went through.
00:17:00	Ben	Host	I think they kind of rewrite her to be mostly just a love interest?
00:17:04	John	Host	She's in this movie as the woman that is doing all the behind-the-scenes work and never gets her hair mussed. <u>And</u> is the romantic lead.
00:17:17	Ben	Host	You know what they say—behind every great quinine-smuggling operation—
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			—is a great woman.

00:17:25	John	Host	<p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i>  Adam, to further your point, I think, not only was Margaret Utinsky underserved by this movie... but somehow a great raid—let's called this raid one of the great raids—</p>
00:17:41	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i>  Okay.</p>
00:17:42	Ben	Host	<p>I wish that had been the title of the movie! <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:17:45	John	Host	<p><i>[Through laughter]</i> Not only is it a great raid—</p>
00:17:48	Adam	Host	<p>Is this is a show about all the great raids?</p>
			<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>
00:17:52	John	Host	<p>Can we say that?</p>
00:17:56	Adam	Host	<p>I wish it were a show about more of the great raids.</p>
00:17:57	John	Host	<p>Mm-hm.</p>
			<p>But somehow this great raid—one of the greatest of all raids—the raid where the <u>most</u> American servicemen were rescued in <u>all</u> of American history—this raid which had never really been given its proper due in film—which is <u>crazy</u> to me! That they were making movies all through the fifties and sixties and seventies about <u>imaginary</u> raids, and they just left this <u>real</u> raid on the table!</p>
00:18:24	Ben	Host	<p>A real raid that there's, like, footage of! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like, you could do your research!</p>
			<p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p>
00:18:31	John	Host	<p>And this is a very expensive movie. You can see how expensive it is. They <u>threw</u> money at this expensive raid, featuring real-life heroes—a <u>real</u>-life great raid—and they made <u>such</u> a boring movie around it! Because the raid in this movie is pretty great! It's a pretty great raid! One of the great raids!</p>
			<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>
00:18:54	Adam	Host	<p>It's not mistitled!</p>
00:18:57	John	Host	<p>No! But 70% of this movie is not the raid, and that 70% is a cliché-ridden, like... dead fish of a movie! I'm just coming right out. I'm coming after it. Ben was like, "There are plenty of things to say about this movie." And I'm saying 'em.</p>
00:19:15	Ben	Host	<p>Well, now that we're getting to them, I'll <i>[inaudible]</i> it up a little bit. I mean—</p>
00:19:19	John	Host	<p>Let's go! Tell us your story!</p>
00:19:22	Ben	Host	<p>I felt like they set the table for a much different movie than we got. Because... they—the whole thing about the beginning of this movie is that Lt. Col. Mucci is obsessed with making this, like, a really effective fighting force that he's in command of. But for all the work he has done in preparing them, they have never actually done anything. Like, they talk about like they've never even fired a shot downrange at the beginning of the movie. And then like there's no, like, "Oh, Daniel-san is understanding why he was waxing on and waxing off" in this moment? Y'know?</p>
			<p>Like, he's—there's not like two guys who are like, "God, I'm really nervous about this 'cause, like, obviously we've practiced a lot but now we're gonna be shooting at real guys! And I just don't know!" And there's no—like, once the raid starts, they're just fucking great at it. Like, they kick <u>all</u> of the asses. They lose two guys. And, like, you don't blame them for it. It's not like, "Oh, these guys are a little</p>



00:20:37	John	Host	<p>green, so they lost two guys.” It’s like, “They took on a force twice the size of their own and lost only two men? They did great!”</p> <p>The movie tries to introduce those two GIs. One of whom has a Virgin Mary card and the other guy—although he is <u>totally</u>, like... <u>visibly</u> a caricature of an Italian guy...</p> <p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i></p> <p>This Italian guy has apparently never seen the Virgin Mary before. <i>[Adopting caricature-y Jersey accent each time he speaks as one of the Italian-American characters]</i> “Hey, yo! Oh, so what am I supposed to do? Kiss it or something?”</p> <p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i></p> <p>And the other guy’s, like, “Hey! I’m also a caricature of an Italian guy and I don’t know! Hey! Catholics!”</p> <p><i>[Someone laughs.]</i></p> <p>When he hands him the icon for the other guy to go, “Hey! But I’m Jewish!” And it would’ve been a laugh line or something? But they just—they skate it. So they give us those two guys. And they never show us those guys in battle. Or if they do, they never make it clear. And then at the very end of the movie they give us those two guys again. “Hey, what do you mean, I gotta pay you for that? I thought it was—I thought your grandmother gave it to you!” “Hahaha! I was just kidding!”</p>
00:21:36	Ben	Host	<p><i>[Thick Jersey accent]</i> “I thought pictures of Jesus were an abundant resource around here!”</p>
00:21:42	John	Host	<p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>Those were not to be confused with the two guys who were—one was the RPG shooter and one was the loader, right?</p>
00:21:48	Ben	Host	<p>Right.</p>
00:21:50	John	Host	<p>Oh, there was so much foreshadowing about <u>those</u> guys! How that relationship between the super quiet and laconic guy who is introduced to us in the ultimate Murdock introduction. It’s like, “Hey, you’re the best shot in this crew so you’re gonna be the bazooka guy!” That guy’s like, “Oh, I prefer to shoot my M-1” and it’s like, “Here’s your bazooka.” And it’s like, “Oh wow, this massive and unsophisticated foreshadowing! This guy’s gonna take that bazooka and take out the—” and he kinda does later.</p>
00:22:24	Ben	Host	<p>Yeah. And Sam Worthington is the loader, right? Like, just the most... tiny role he’s ever been in.</p>
00:22:31	Adam	Host	<p>That was—I think—one of the few moments, Ben, that you get a sense of their unpreparedness. Like, that moment when Prince is delegating tasks and Bazooka Guy gets asked who he wants to be his loader and he’s like, “Well, I dunno. I guess Lucas is as good as anyone else!”</p>
00:22:48	John	Host	<p>He does that and the commander goes—kind of <u>winces</u> and goes, “Really? Lucas?”</p>
00:22:54	Adam	Host	<p>Yeah.</p>
00:22:55	John	Host	<p>And all of that suggests that we’re gonna ever see these guys again or get to know anything about them!</p>

00:23:01	Ben	Host	The character development that Lucas undergoes is putting rockets in the back of the bazooka and then screwing the cap on. That's it. The other big thing that I, like, thought this movie was setting up that... like, when I started to catch whiffs of it maybe halfway through the movie, I was like, "Oh, this is a—this is also a very interesting thing!" And then the movie never does anything with it. Which is the kind of Prisoner's Dilemma thing that happens between Joseph Fiennes and...
00:23:33	John	Host	Marton Csokas?
00:23:34	Ben	Host	Yeah. And Margaret Utinsky. Like, they're both in custody. And they're both being told things about what the other one is saying about them by their captors. But neither of them believes it for a second and neither of them, like, does anything to like rat the other one out. And I was like, that—there's a very interesting movie there, as well. Because like... in the Prisoner's Dilemma, we're typically talking about two criminals and these are two characters that we like and want to win. And the captors are the bad guys. And that's like a—I don't know. An interesting way of turning a kind of classic story trope on its head and telling it—retelling it in an interesting way. And that's like <u>two</u> scenes and then the movie totally forgets about it. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:24:21	John	Host	We also had the thing where the two prisoners—Major Gibson and Captain Redding—Captain Redding is razzing Gibson about the fact that if he doesn't get back to the world and marry Utinsky that <u>he's</u> gonna do it. And there's that dynamic of two World War II guys fighting over the same woman.
00:24:47	Ben	Host	Right.
00:24:48	John	Host	In a way it's played as part of Redding trying to get Gibson to survive the war? But there's no resolution to that or actual tension in it, I guess.
00:25:01	Ben	Host	And then when Redding like goes and escapes, dooming himself and ten other guys to summary execution, it feels so unmotivated. Like, there's no... it's not like Redding was, like, escaping left and right before that.
00:25:16	Adam	Host	It comes so close to making it motivated. I think that's... that's the frustration in a movie like this. Is like, I can't remember seeing—like, we see execution scenes in war films a lot. But I can't remember seeing one that was quite so violent. Like—
			<i>[Sound clip of light music and sound of gunshot plays in background.]</i>
			—the bodies were like on ripcords being pulled forward as they were being shot. And like the pausing to reload?
			<i>[Gun reloads.]</i>
			In a better movie, I think that is a scene that you remember. And you remember as being great. But in the middle of this film, as it is, it—you just see it as a missed opportunity, almost. Because it's surrounded by something that should make you feel and instead does not. Like, it approaches the idea of feeling something.
00:26:04	John	Host	I'm glad you pointed that out. Because the violence in that execution scene is <u>incredibly</u> well executed.
00:26:14	Adam	Host	Yeah.

00:26:15	John	Host	We've seen <u>real</u> footage from World War II of people being shot in the back of the head, and it's not as violent and affecting as this.
00:26:25	Adam	Host	You get ten looks at the same sort of physicality. And I thought for sure they were on a cable. But if that is just physical acting it's really amazing. And scary.
00:26:35	Music	Music	Short reprise of theme song "War."
00:26:36	Promo	Clip	<b>Music:</b> Upbeat, cheerful music plays in the background.

**Allie Goertz:** Hi, I'm Allie Goertz!

**Julia Prescott:** And I'm Julia Prescott. And we host—

**Both:** —[Round Springfield!](#)

**Julia:** *Round Springfield* is a new *Simpsons* podcast that is *Simpsons-adjacent*—

**Allie:** Mm-hm.

**Julia:** —um, in its topic. We talk to *Simpsons* writers, directors, voiceover actors, you name it, about non-*Simpsons* things that they've done. Because, surprise! They're all extremely talented.

**Allie:** Absolutely. For example, David X. Cohen worked on *The Simpsons*, but then created a little show called *Futurama*!

**Julia:** Mm-hm!

**Allie:** That's our very first episode.

**Julia:** Yeah!

**Allie:** So tune in for stuff like that with Yeardley Smith, with Tim Long, with different writers and voice actors. It's gonna be so much fun, and we are every other week on [MaximumFun.org](#) or wherever you get your podcasts!

00:27:18	Promo	Clip	<i>[Music fades out.]</i> <i>[A quick, energetic drumroll.]</i>
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**Music:** Exciting techno music plays.

**Jarrett Hill:** Hey, I'm Jarrett Hill, co-host of the brand-new Maximum Fun podcast, *FANTI*!

**Tre'vell Anderson:** And I'm Tre'vell Anderson. I'm the other, more fabulous co-host, and the reason you really should be tuning in!

**Jarrett:** I feel the nausea rising.

**Tre'vell:** To be *FANTI* is to be a big fan of something, but also have some challenging or "anti" feelings toward it.

**Jarrett:** Kind of like Kanye.

**Tre'vell:** We're all fans of Kanye. He's a musical genius, but, like, you know...

**Jarrett:** He thinks slavery's a choice.

**Tre'vell:** Or, like, *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*. Like, I love the drama, but do I wanna see black women fighting each other on screen? *[Singing.]* Hell to the naaaaw. To the naw-naw-naaaw.

**Jarrett:** We're tackling all of those complex and complicated conversations about the people, places, and things that we love.

**Tre'vell:** Even though they may not love us back.

**Jarrett:** *FANTI!* Maximum Fun! Podcast!

**Tre'vell:** Yeah!

00:28:07	Music	Music	<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:28:09	Ben	Host	Short reprise of theme song "War." Well, this movie starts in a way that is... basically the highest degree of difficulty. Because it gives us a bunch of real footage of post-Bataan Death March American troops who are gaunt and covered in, y'know, sores and stuff. Like, really tough to look at. Like, y'know, humans that have been degraded within an inch of their life. And then when we cut to, like, the first scene of the film—which is about some guys who are supposed to have been through that and are now being burned alive in an air raid bunker—we have to believe that those guys are the same as the dudes with the ribs poking out that we saw in the stock footage from the real thing.
00:29:28	John	Host	And then we have to think, like, "Oh my god, like, they went through all of that and now they are being burned alive and like... this is gut-wrenching. Like, to think about." And I think you kinda set yourself up for failure when you do that. Because the real footage is just so... awful to look at. And then you have these healthy, handsome dudes from Hollywood, like, pretending to be burned alive while digital flames are introduced to their proximity.
00:29:32	Ben	Host	Yeah. It looks like a movie of the week. Like, I think that the violence is portrayed pretty well in this movie, and that execution scene may be the best example of it. But if that opening—if you don't get the gaunt, like, malnourished dudes for that beginning scene, it doesn't work. And so the movie's already kind of coming off the blocks with a major issue. And it just never gets its footing after that.
00:29:55	John	Host	I feel like a big part of that is the score. Maybe the corniest thing about this movie.
00:30:03	Ben	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah.
00:30:03	John	Host	It's all sort of... sentimental, attempting to be sweeping, and it comes in every time...
00:30:13	Music	Music	<b>Music:</b> "Closing Titles" by Trevor Rabin from <i>The Great Raid (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)</i> plays in background. Sentimental, dramatic, symphonic music featuring horns and rising orchestra and chorus.
00:30:15	John	Host	—there's any kind of wide shot. Any time they're establishing a scene. Any time something interesting or important is happening.

Here comes this like, *[sings melodramatic, sweeping score against the real score in the background]* and not even that jazzy!

*[Ben laughs.]*

Right? Like, it's just like—no jazz to it at all, in fact. It's just Hollywood sentimental score. And it comes in right at the start of the movie. It may even be accompanying the stock footage!

00:30:44 Ben Host  
00:30:44 John Host

Yeah.  
And when that score arrived... I rolled my eyes—and I did that a lot in the first 30 minutes of this movie 'cause it was one cliché after another.

*[Ben laughs.]*

00:30:58 Adam Host

I thought the score sounded Bruckheimer-esque. Did it sound that way to you? Like it belonged in that kind of movie. And so I looked into who did this score. It's Trevor Rabin. Do you—is that name familiar to you, John? He was—

00:31:12 John Host  
00:31:13 Adam Host

What?!

Yeah. He was in Yes in the nineties! He got his first job doing a movie score directly from Steven Seagal in exchange for guitar lessons that he gave him.

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

Steven Seagal was so impressed and grateful to Trevor Rabin for teaching him how to play guitar that Seagal's like, "Y'know... let me know if I can ever do you a solid in exchange. I think you're a really great guitar teacher." And Rabin was like, "Y'know, I'd really like to get into film scoring." And he's— *[through laughter]* and then Steven Seagal's like, "Great. You can score *The Glimmer Man* for me."

00:31:48 Ben Host  
00:31:49 Adam Host

Wow.

And so he did! And that started his film scoring career. He did 13 Bruckheimer film scores.

00:31:55 John Host  
00:31:59 Music Music

Trevor Rabin. He plays on "Owner of a Lonely Heart."

**Music:** "Owner of a Lonely Heart" by Yes from the album *90125*.  
Rapidly paced electronic music.

00:32:00 Adam Host

In, like, seventies and eighties rock music? Like, he's a guy! He's a known guy! That got into film scoring through Steven Seagal! Who has that story? *[Laughs.]* It's nuts!

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

00:32:14 John Host

But somehow transitioned into making super... corny film music?  
Or—

00:32:21 Ben Host

It sounds like the music in, like, scenes of... a war movie that they're making in another movie? And it's like meant to—

*[John laughs.]*

Yeah. Like, they're like, this kind of like trying to be like kind of Oscar-bait type of war film.

00:32:37 John Host

So he did the soundtrack to *Enemy of the State*. He did the music to *Gone in 60 Seconds*.

00:32:44 Adam Host

He's got some real interesting credits here! And not all of them are clunkers! *Armageddon* was a massive film that he scored.

00:32:52 Ben Host

Wow.

00:32:53	John	Host	He did <i>Snakes on a Plane</i> ! So.
00:32:55	Adam	Host	Yeah.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:32:57	John	Host	Y'know. Done and done! I do feel like that would've been a fine soundtrack for a movie. Some movie.
00:33:04	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam:</b> But not this one, maybe?
			<b>John:</b> But to put it on—
00:33:08	John	Host	Not this one! To put it on this—well, first of all, we didn't need all that signaling. As Ben says, we've got pictures of guys—of gaunt guys being burned alive.
00:33:19	Adam	Host	I'm gonna take the other side of this, John. I think you <u>do</u> need it. And I think the reason why is that our characters... this is, like, part of my main issue with the film, is that it adheres so strictly with its source material and it <u>must</u> be factual. Like, it <u>must</u> tell these true stories about its characters that it does not allow itself the benefit of... like, what <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> does to its characters. It doesn't give you anything that helps you understand them or like them. If it's not true. And so because we don't get anything extra for our characters, I feel like we <u>need</u> the crutch of music to make us feel anything for them! I'm not saying that the film was effective in its use of the music. But I think the film and the filmmakers knew that it wasn't enough to have James Franco read this dialogue. Because I think—honestly—the dialogue—it is so thankless, what this film makes its actors do.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			With regard to its dialogue. It really is. And I place none of the blame for this film's failings on the actors. Who are performing these roles. I just think it's a failure of imagination!
00:34:31	John	Host	Well that's—I mean, my objection to that score is... that it points a glaring finger at the failure of the film.
00:34:41	Ben	Host	It's a film that the studio, I think, knew was bad.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			The Wikipedia entry has some—it says, like, "citation needed" on this. But it says that this film was shot in 2002, which... I guess kind of explains why Sam Worthington is just an extra in it, and not like in a bigger role? 'Cause like a couple years after he shot this he was like in the running to be the new James Bond and narrowly lost that to the blond James Bond.
00:35:11	Adam	Host	I did not know that!
00:35:13	Ben	Host	Yeah. He like—his star was much higher by the time this film came out in 2005. And it came out right around the same time that Bob and Harvey Weinstein exited Miramax. So it seems like Miramax, like, had this and put it on the shelf and when the Weinsteins left, they were like, "Eh, might as well put this thing out. See if we can like... make something off of it." But this was an \$80 million film that made \$10.8 million at the box office.
00:35:46	John	Host	It's so funny to think that they didn't go and find <u>every</u> bit of footage of Sam Worthington that had ended up on the cutting room floor.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>

00:35:59	Ben	Host	And just <u>find</u> a way to make a storyline for him? I know! I know! Yeah! Like... go like do one reshoot where you just like have him, y'know, I think they shot this in Australia so probably not hard to get Sam Worthington to just come out and run around in the forest for half an hour. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:36:14	John	Host	Give him, like, <u>a</u> story arc. Give <u>anyone</u> in this film a story arc except for the five leads.
00:36:20	Ben	Host	That's the thing. Like, even the—even some of the leads don't really have arcs. And that's... that's so frustrating. Like, they—the thing when you're writing a character is you want that—like, the character won't feel real if the character knows it's a character. And like... anyone that isn't above the title on this movie poster knows that they're an extra in this film. Like, the doctor is, like, introduced as the doctor so that when he gets killed, they can all be like, "Oh no! The doctor got killed! Dammit!" And that's all he does! He doesn't do anything other than get killed!
00:36:59	John	Host	Right. <i>[Laughs.]</i> He—well, he is a doctor. So that's doing something. And then he gets killed.
00:37:06	Ben	Host	I wonder how the box office was in Japan for this film. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:37:10	Adam	Host	That's an interesting question because like, among the better performances in this film are the two Japanese heavies! Like, the actor who plays Yamada and the actor who plays Nagai are, like, I think are really great and really well acted! But again, like, you want more of the pathos there. They're very one-dimensional.
00:37:28	Ben	Host	Right.
00:37:30	Adam	Host	For as well acted as they are.
00:37:33	John	Host	You cannot identify a third Japanese. Right? There are the two heavies and then... there are just soldiers and henchmen and whatnot. There's no Japanese person in this film has a relationship to another Japanese person.
00:37:46	Ben	Host	And the film isn't interested in them. Like, they're—it talks about at the beginning, like, the Japanese treated the POWs like shit because they had no respect for people who had surrendered. It was, like, shameful to them. Which is something we hear about the way Japan behaved in World War II all the time. But like they're human beings! Like, they arrived at those beliefs somehow and may have given some consideration to whether those beliefs were true or not. Or questions about the orders that they were being given to pour a bunch of kerosene on the guys that they'd been keeping captive for three years and burn them alive. Like, "Why are we doing this now? Why not before?"
00:38:28	Adam	Host	You can tell that the film was influenced by better films in some ways. Like, all of those scenes that you get of... Fiennes and Nagai together feel very like <i>Bridge on the River Kwai</i> . Like, Saito and Nicholson having a drink. Together. Like—
00:38:44	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Ben and John:</b> Right.
00:38:45	Adam	Host	—you can tell this film understands, but it is not quite inspired enough to actually give us a Saito-like character. Like, that's what makes <i>Kwai</i> such a great film! Is like, you—you don't <u>agree</u> with Saito's character, but you understand him a little more than—
00:39:02	Ben	Host	You understand the pressures he's under.
00:39:05	Adam	Host	Yeah! And I wanted that so much here! Imagine running a POW camp during the last weeks of the war and you know it's over and... and like, why are you doing the things that you're doing? Like, why are you rolling these barrels of fuel into these bunkers and killing

			people? Like, there's a senselessness to it that tells a story, but I think there's—there's something else more interesting that's possible to say.
00:39:29	Clip	Clip	<b>Speaker 1:</b> Do your doctors think they can cure you?
00:39:32	Ben	Host	When Fiennes tells the Japanese camp commander that he'd like to be here for his surrender—
00:39:38	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:39:39	Ben	Host	That sets that up. Like, you could just have the rest of the movie be partly about this Japanese camp commander thinking about the possibility that he <u>will</u> have to surrender to Ralph Fiennes. And what does that do to a guy like that?
00:39:54	Adam	Host	Right. Cruelty for cruelty's sake is too simplistic for a story like this.
00:40:00	Ben	Host	I just think that, like, it's so strange to make a movie in 2002... that does this. Like, we get to know a bunch of Japanese characters and have plenty of interactions with them and yet the movie is totally uninterested in giving them any dimensionality at all.
00:40:18	John	Host	Go back to <i>Bridge over the River Kwai</i> . When Alec Guinness is standing there at attention in his office, and he offers him a drink, and Alec Guinness refuses it... you understand that as part of the process of not just characterizing the Alec Guinness character, but kind of indicting him, too! I mean, the movie develops those characters <u>so</u> strongly.
			But in <i>The Great Raid</i> , we get Joseph Fiennes standing at attention in front of this guy's desk and he offers him a delicious glass of cold water. And Fiennes—he doesn't accept it but he doesn't, like, aggressively refuse it? It's kind of a pointless gesture in this movie. Like, dude! Have the water! It's a—you're fucking dying of malaria. Have a glass of water, for Chrissake! Your pride here is not developed enough... and there's no strategic point to what you're doing. You're just being rude! For the sake of insulting the guy.
00:41:17	Ben	Host	Yeah. Like, an interesting thing to do. Like, "I'd like to be here for your surrender" is a very insulting thing to say to this guy.
00:41:24	John	Host	Yeah!
00:41:25	Ben	Host	A very provocative thing to say. And it's like, okay. Like, we're—
00:41:28	Adam	Host	Why don't you do the thing that makes that possible? By drinking the water? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:41:32	Ben	Host	Right! Like—
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
			I also just was very distracted by the fact that the camp commander's building clearly used to be a jungle Pizza Hut.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			It was the only one of the buildings in that camp that had that roofline.
00:41:49	John	Host	You know the—you guys know the Bechdel test.
00:41:53	Ben	Host	Mm-hm.
00:41:54	John	Host	Whether or not two women in a film talk to each other about something other than a man?
00:42:00	Ben	Host	Yes.
00:42:01	John	Host	And if—there are so many movies where you have female characters but they never talk to each other or about anything other than one of the male characters.



00:42:09	Ben	Host	Yeah. <i>Friendly Fire</i> films tend to not to pass the Bechdel test. [Laughs.]
00:42:13	John	Host	But we should have a version of the Bechdel test, which is—do two—‘cause you almost never see this in a World War II movie about the Germans. We should have a version of this where—does the enemy—whoever the enemy is—does the main enemy guy ever talk to another one of this own enemies—enemy people—  [Ben laughs.]  —whether it’s Germans or Japanese or Russians or whatever—do they talk amongst themselves about something <u>other</u> than... the enemy? Do they ever have a conversation about a thing that develops their character at all? ‘Cause we do see movies where the—y’know, the German officer turns to the other officer and is like, “I love the music of Mozart.” Or—y’know, whatever. They do some little bit of making them something other than <u>just</u> an antagonist. And in this movie, the—no Japanese character talks to another Japanese character about <u>anything</u> ! Let alone about something other than the prisoners.
00:43:14	Ben	Host	Yeah. Like, you coulda just had like two guys blowing a butt outside the camp commander’s office going, like, “This place used to be a Pizza Hut, y’know?”
00:43:21	John	Host	Yeah, right! Or the... the sadistic guy whose job it is to burn these guys alive turns to another guy and says, “Boy, this job sucks.”  [Adam laughs.]  “I hate burning dudes alive. I really do. Frankly, I <u>look</u> hard... but I’m really not that hard.”
00:43:39	Ben	Host	“This is tearing me up inside.” [Laughs.]
00:43:41	Adam	Host	I wonder if we aren’t still just interrogating the difference between a real-life event and what makes for a good movie. Right? Because we’re not attempting to both-sides what happened at the POW camp. But I think what we are doing is describing the many ways in which this movie could be more interesting. Or at least as interesting as its source material would seem to be.
00:44:09	John	Host	Because doesn’t it feel like a propaganda movie that was made either during the war or in the immediate aftermath of a war? It feels like a propaganda movie! The Japanese are <u>only</u> evil. Like, not just bad.
00:44:22	Ben	Host	The Filipino guerillas are... seen as, like, not like—not really worth much respect until we really need them. And then like there’s some kind of... there’s some lip service paid to Lt. Col. Mucci having to go, like, hat in hand to Capt. Pajota to like apologize for dismissing him before. But it kinda treats them the same way as it treats the Japanese, where like... what their journey is to get where they are, like, is treated as a <i>fait accompli</i> .  Like, their being allies of the United States is a <i>fait accompli</i> that they are going to want to help them do this raid. That they’re gonna—like, they basically do all of the hard shit. Right? Like, getting—sourcing the carts that they’re gonna need to get all the dudes that can’t walk out of the camp. Seems like a <u>massive</u> logistical headache that the Rangers walked into this raid not

having considered at all. And the guerillas are like, “Yeah, we can sort that out in 24 hours. Don’t worry about it.” [Laughs.]

[John laughs.]

00:45:26 John Host Right. [Laughs.] “And we’ll hold the bridge against the numerically larger and stronger Japanese force at the bridge while you guys assault the camp. We have the harder job.” And, y’know, a lot more Filipinos died than Americans in that.

00:45:43 Ben Host Yeah. Like— [Laughs.] “On balance, as an occupying army, we preferred you to the Japanese” is basically— [Laughs.]

[John laughs.]

00:45:55 John Host —the message? [Laughs.] Like, “If we have to be occupied by someone?” I don’t know, man. Like— [Laughs.] I mean, the relationship between the Filipinos and the Americans is—ever since the Spanish-American War—is a movie that we haven’t seen yet. And I think the filmmakers understood that they needed to recognize the Filipino achievement. Partly because this is an event in particular within the Philippines is remembered as a—I mean, because after the war the Philippine fighters were the one group that was excluded from... like, the American government went ahead and recognized the soldiers of all the different countries and territories that fought with us and on our behalf. And gave them pensions. And acknowledged their service. And the one group that was sort of systematically, universally excluded were the Filipinos! Who fought for America—y’know, they were on the Bataan Death March in even larger numbers. And they’re an American protectorate!

00:47:00 Ben Host Yeah. Like, that’s the thing that’s very easy to forget is that the Philippines was part of the United States when this war started.

00:47:06 John Host Right. They use the American dollar, y’know, they’re part—I mean, they’re—they were not an independent country! They were our one actual colony, if you accept Puerto Rico and Hawaii as—in one case—a state and in the other case—a—well, still a protectorate. But the Filipinos that fought with the Americans had to petition for recognition and that recognition came over many decades.

00:47:38 Ben Host It feels very analogous to like the Algerian soldiers in World War II. Where it’s like, “Yeah, we’re happy to have you fight on our behalf, but you’re not gonna be treated as, like, full citizens of this republic because we happened to take over the country that you lived in at some point.”

00:47:56 Clip Clip **Music:** Dramatic, tense film music plays in background.

00:47:58 Adam Host **Speaker:** Wow. Those goddamn flyboys. I think we were really onto something and we don’t do this on this show, but the comparison to *Bridge on the River Kwai* is so apt. I feel like the soldiers in the POW camp here are victimized in a way that you don’t feel in other POW-centric... war films. And I wonder about the relationship between heroism and victimization. Like, the POWs in this film are just brutalized constantly and you rarely, if ever, get the moment of stiffening the backs and resisting. Because they’re hurt so badly. Y’know? They’re never given that opportunity. Well, let me ax (ask) you this, Adam. This movie is two hours and twelve minutes long. That’s plenty long. What would you cut and

00:48:40 John Host

00:48:59	Adam	Host	<p>how would you redirect the camera to make this a better movie? We need more POW time. Right? Or at least—different POW time. I'm not so sure! Like, I think one of the things about this film is that it's so democratic in how it spends its time. I don't think it really has ton of conviction about what its own A story is. Because it attempts to give such even runtime to all of the stories told concurrently. I wish it just picked a lane. And made it the most important thing. I think it would have served its story better. And I think you could choose <u>any</u> of these stories and have it work out.</p>
00:49:29	Ben	Host	Yeah. Just zero in on something.
00:49:33	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:49:34	John	Host	My feeling about it—the Margaret Utinsky sub-story—is that there should be a film about Margaret Utinsky and this isn't it. And you could take the Utinsky story away. You could take that story out of the relationship between Gibson and Redding... and spend a lot more time—like, we watched the Rangers crawl on their bellies across several hundred yards. Which seems like a major feat!
00:50:05	Adam	Host	The whole 300 yards in broad daylight thing? I wanted so much more of that. That tension is the main tension.
00:50:13	Ben	Host	I wanted the perspective of one of the guys in the towers not seeing it. 'Cause I wanted to understand, like, how they were able to do it. It's amazing! Like, it's a real thing that they really did! They got all those guys across that field, y'know, with the help of one airplane for distraction at a certain point. But, like, there were guard towers! Like, there were guys that were actively missing what was going on. Just beyond the fences that they were guarding. And that's an interesting vantage point that you could put a camera in that this film just, like, never bothers with.
00:50:47	John	Host	Yeah, that whole part of the mission where it's like, "We need an airplane to overfly this camp, behind enemy lines, just to distract them for like 30 seconds while we cross this ditch." That was incredible! But we never—y'know, if they had at the beginning of the movie shown the Ranger squad training to crawl under barbed wire or something, which is a classic training sequence...
00:51:16	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:51:17	John	Host	Just some kind of thing where we're given a sense of like, "These guys are super good at crawling!"
00:51:22	Ben	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> I like that they didn't have helmets because the helmets make too much noise. That was a little detail that the film throws in that I'd never heard anywhere.
00:51:30	Adam	Host	I like that. Some <i>Friendly Fire</i> movies are like this, right? Some <i>Friendly Fire</i> movies be like that. Like—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Because it's got—it's so close. It's got so many neat details, but the package it comes in just... just fails. I don't know. You ready to review?
00:51:51	Music	Music	Short reprise of theme song "War."
00:51:52	Music	Music	Up-tempo rock music plays quietly in background.
00:51:53	Ben	Promo	Support for <i>Friendly Fire</i> is brought to you in part today by Manscaped. Dedicated to being the <u>best</u> in men's below-the-belt grooming! Manscaped offers precision-engineered tools for your family jewels. I started using Manscaped's Lawnmower 3.0 trimmer

just recently, and... let me tell ya. It's a big hit with the wife. Anyways. Their goal is to reduce manscaping accidents because they have a cutting-edge ceramic blade and advanced skin-safe technology. It's water-resistant. It lasts up to 90 minutes. And it has an LED light so you can see what you're doing. If you know what I mean. They've also upgraded to a 7,000 RPM motor with quiet-stroke technology! What do you know about quiet stroking? Get 20% off and free shipping with the code "Friendly Fire" at [Manscaped.com](https://www.manscaped.com). That's 20% off with free shipping at [Manscaped.com](https://www.manscaped.com) and use the code "Friendly Fire."

[Music ends.]

00:52:52 Music Music  
00:52:55 Adam Host

Short reprise of theme song "War."  
I do think that there's a lot to enjoy here with *The Great Raid*. I think a few of those aspects are: it is an incredibly good-looking film. I think we've gotten a couple of these war movies that are so good-looking that if you maybe mute the film? [Through laughter] You could get something good out of it. The cinematographer for this film you might recognize from films like *Die Hard With a Vengeance*. Couple of John McTiernan films. There's some Joel Schumacher in there. Like, this is a guy that shoots really interesting, good-looking action films and I thought, like, the pedigree was noticeable. I think this is a good-looking film to me. I thought.

00:53:39 Ben Host  
00:53:40 Adam Host

Yeah.  
But when you dig down into it... is where the flaws reveal themselves. I think—y'know—you get so little of Margaret, but there is a scene where Margaret is repeatedly interrogated and one of the ways in which her interrogator gets one up on her is by producing her Bible. This Bible has a picture of Joseph Fiennes inside. And Yamada uses this as evidence that she's an enemy collaborator. And we're gonna make the Bible the rating system for the film. Because for religious people, a Bible contains the truth. But for people like Margaret, it conceals the truth. Or attempts to, anyway. So for a film that is based on a true story and adheres so closely to it... unlike some other films that we've talked about, I think rating the film is gonna have a lot to do with how a film and its strict adherence to its story may diminish it as the film it tries to be. Right? So from a scale of one to five Bibles, let's review *The Great Raid*.

I thought—like, in addition to how great it looked—I really liked seeing a film set in the Philippines that depicted Philippine soldiers and their experience. I feel like we've gotten a lot of John Wayne Philippine movies set in this country. And we get—what do we get from the Philippine people? We get canteens. Places to eat and drink. And women to screw. Mostly. But I really liked seeing a little bit more of the Philippine culture here. I... I sort of respect how strict this film is about the way it tells its story. But then it totally fucking breaks its own rules at the end! Like, at the end it gives us the flashback scene when Margaret reads the letter? And during this moment I was like, "You mean we could've been cutting around the whole time?"

[Multiple people laugh.]

“And we chose not to?” I was so mad!

*[John laughs.]*

Because up until then I was like, “Good. We’re on rails on this movie. Like, make me watch what you want me to watch!” And then for it to do that trick at the end with its narrative, like, it just felt cheap. Like, at least be the film you set out to be or not. But... I thought that was an easy way to conclude the film and it kinda disappointed me. I mean... this is not the actors’ fault. This is a failure of writing to me. And I think a war movie has to be more than just about good and evil sides! Like, I want to root for characters and I want to feel bad when characters are hurt. I think the way this movie feels is more like an extremely high-budget documentary recreation than a film that you go and see in a theater. So I’m gonna give it two Bibles.  
What?! Adam Pranica?

00:56:35 John Host

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

Two Bibles?!  
That’s like half as many Bibles as I was expecting! *[Laughs.]*

00:56:40 Ben Host

*[John laughs.]*  
That’s like negative one Bibles for the rest of us!

00:56:43 John Host

*[Ben laughs.]*

Adam! Burning this one to the ground, I think!  
I think over the course of *Friendly Fire*, the one thing that I think you’ve come to expect more than a four-thing review from me is that I really depend on... on characters and character development to enjoy a film. Any film. Especially a war film. And this one just doesn’t have that.

00:56:50 Adam Host

Yeahhhh.  
I agree. I think that... I try not to read this part of, like, every—I always read the Wikipedia entry about the movies that we watch. As the start point of my research. And sometimes also the endpoint, I will admit. *[Laughs.]*

00:57:08 John Host

00:57:12 Ben Host

*[John laughs.]*

The *USA Today* review of this movie had a quote that I just can’t get out of my head, which is, “Just about any Golden Age Hollywood hack could’ve made a zestier drama about one of the greatest rescue mission in U.S. military history.” And I think that that’s the key for me. Is like, this movie feels very old-fashioned in its conception. It feels like the kind of movie that, y’know, like, “Oh, yeah, like it’s not—like John Wayne was gonna be this part but it went to, y’know, some other guy.” *[Laughs.]*

00:58:01 John Host

00:58:03 Ben Host

William Holden!  
Yeah. But it went to William Holden and so, y’know, like, what an interesting thing to think about the movie it could’ve been. Or whatever. But like, the idea... that it just says, like, “Okay, here’s the thing that happened and we’re gonna tell the story of some guys that participated in it?” Is something that those like forties and fifties

World War II movies that we watch do all the time! And it's not a bad way to set out to tell a story. It's just that, like, somehow this one doesn't have the courage of its convictions in telling that story, and it doesn't quite—it keeps setting up things that it doesn't pay off.

And that winds up feeling extremely frustrating because you wanna know what it is like to be an elite soldier on a crazy raid like this who's never actually been in combat before. You wanna know, like, what is going through their heads as they do it! And we just don't really know them well enough to do that. And I think that the 1940s propaganda film would have actually introduced us to characters. In a way that this movie just utterly fails to. And in a way that's really surprising! Like... I don't know. Yeah! This director has done some really cool movies that I like a lot, and I'm surprised that this one falls on its face so hard. I'll join you at the two Bible mark, Adam.

*[John whistles, decreasing in pitch as he goes.]*

00:59:37	Adam	Host	There's some interesting and cool things about it, but I would not recommend it.
			Yeah. I mean, I don't hold this as a strike against anyone involved. That's—like, when you were talking about the pedigree involved in this film? It's just—it's surprising more than anything.
00:59:47	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:59:48	Adam	Host	Like, it's like a parent telling a child, like, "I'm not mad. I'm just disappointed."

*[All laugh.]*

00:59:56	John	Host	That's how I feel about this movie! Well, what we didn't talk about in the episode is laying this—laying the failure of this movie at the feet of the writers. It's a great cast. They have <u>great</u> source material. The cinematographer and the director and the budget... it <u>all</u> was there! Even Trevor Rabin and his "Owner of a Lonely Heart" score—like, they <u>had</u> ... everything they needed. But the writers failed. This movie is <u>nothing</u> but a pile of clichés. And every time you think the cliché couldn't be worse—
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*[Ben laughs.]*

—things that actually were interesting in real life? Somehow they robbed them of a portion of what was interesting about them. You got no character development. The enemy is just one-dimensional. And it's all the writing! The director made some bad mistakes. I think the voiceover is bad. I think the... using the score to telegraph stuff that he should've done with his story, I think, is bad. I mean, what this movie feels like is a classic product of a bunch of suits sitting around a table. It feels like a script written by 15 different people. It feels like a movie made by committee. And as a result, it's a—in a way it's kind of an insult. You know, it—talking about it just as something to watch on an airplane? I feel like this is a movie you could watch on an airplane and be like, *[unenthusiastically]* "Huh." But that's all it is.

01:01:37	Ben	Host	Yeah. You would see somebody else watching this on an airplane and you'd be like, "What the fuck movie is that? How have I never heard of—"
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:01:44	John	Host	"—whatever that is? I wanna check this out!" Yeah, right! Super exciting! Like, y'know, "What is it, man? That seems cool!" But what it is, is a way to take away two hours and twelve minutes of a flight.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And then you play Solitaire on your phone for another hour and then you watch a—some kind of goofy comedy or maybe sports and then you're in New York. I kept thinking about the movie <i>Enemy at the Gates</i> . We don't compare movies here, but Joseph Fiennes appears in <i>Enemy at the Gates</i> . That whole substory of Rachel Weisz as, like, the romantic lead and all that stuff? But <i>Enemy at the Gates</i> <u>is</u> a beautiful movie, but also succeeded in—I mean, we <u>know</u> —deeply <u>know</u> —eight people in that movie. And care about them all! And the enemy—the bad guy is fully fledged and so I feel like two Bibles is generous.
			But I'm gonna give it two Bibles because the actual raid... and by that, I mean the raid that begins when they leave on the march. Like, the actual like—once they're through the gates and they're just shooting in every direction? That's only fine. It's only a fine—it's only a couple of notches above an <i>A-Team</i> episode.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:03:18	Adam	Host	But the raid itself—like, the whole process of it—is like, yeah! I would watch a movie about that. And did. For <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
01:03:20	John	Host	They should make another movie about this.
			That's right! But I give this two Bibles. I give it two Bibles for the things about it that <u>are</u> quality.
01:03:28	Adam	Host	Wow. The rare triplicate score! From the assembled hosts of <i>Friendly Fire</i> . Alright!
01:03:34	John	Host	Yeah.
01:03:36	Adam	Host	I have my doubts that we will all choose the same guy, though. Ben, who's your guy?
01:03:39	Ben	Host	I don't remember his name, but one of the Japanese officers that is typically the one getting the job of doing the pistol-based executions?
01:03:50	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<b>Adam:</b> Mmm.
			<b>John:</b> <i>[Through laughter]</i> Ohh.
01:03:53	Ben	Host	He's my guy, because he does something very smart that I've never seen anyone do in a war movie, which is that he has like a Croakie on his pistol. He's—it's like attached to his uniform with a piece of rope. Which I just feel like—if you're in a war, you might be like running and jumping a little bit? Keep your pistol on a rope, it's not gonna fall off!
01:04:13	John	Host	Yeah. A lanyard!
01:04:15	Ben	Host	Yeah!

*[Adam laughs.]*

A lanyard! That's the term I'm looking for. Thank you, John.

*[Multiple people laugh.]*

01:04:23	Adam	Host	Uh, who's your guy, Adam? <i>[Laughs.]</i> I really liked Redding. He had a pretty tough job, tending to a very sick, malaria-ridden Fiennes here. But he was always like—if you're feeling super sick I think he's the guy you want around, right? He's always sarcastic. He's a caring, sarcastic person. I would say that I like those qualities in a person. I thought for sure, Ben, that your guy would be the guy who tried to get himself executed among the ten by saying it was his fault.
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*[Multiple people laugh.]*

01:05:00	Ben	Host	That seemed like very Ben Harrison quality, to say it was my fault when it wasn't.
01:05:04	Adam	Host	Well, I mean—it kinda was his fault. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Right. <i>[Laughs.]</i> But Redding... Redding does a bad thing later and that part of him I don't like.
01:05:13	Ben	Host	Oh, you don't like how he got ten other guys killed? <i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:05:16	Adam	Host	No. Definitely—

*[John laughs.]*

01:05:24	Ben	Host	—definitely did not like that. That's the reason for him not to be my guy. I'm just choosing to ignore that part.
01:05:25	Adam	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Fair enough.
01:05:27	Ben	Host	"Redding as nurse" is my guy.
01:05:30	John	Host	How about you, John? Did you have a guy? You know, I started out that first 40 minutes of the movie feeling like what I—what my takeaway was, was the acting was good in this movie. That the actors were working hard! And I felt like this movie was garbage from the—basically—note one.

*[Ben laughs.]*

And it confirmed that it was garbage. But the fact that I thought the acting was good—at first—like, over the course of the movie I didn't keep feeling that way. James Franco—this is during the James Franco period where he was—where—I mean, people laud James Franco as this polymath. And it's because he teaches finger-painting at Yale or something.

*[Ben laughs.]*

01:06:46	Adam	Host	And wrote a book of, like, subpar poetry and... y'know, every once in a while portrays himself in a slightly unflattering light. And that—these days, at least—qualifies as genius acting? But this is James Franco at his most... unexpressive. He never—he—it's not that he doesn't break character; he never changes his face. Or his voice! He has no character to break!
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01:06:49	John	Host	<p>He doesn't! He never shouts! He's leading a raid! And he never goes, <i>[yelling]</i> "Come onnnn!" <i>[Regular voice]</i> He's just like, <i>[unenthusiastic version of Charlie Brown adult babbling]</i> "Mrm. Mrm. Mrm, mrm, mrm, mrm." Anyway. I'm going to agree with Adam that Marton Csokas as Redding... <u>steals</u> this movie for me! He's—every time he's onscreen, he's just chewing it up. He's the only thing you wanna see. I think he's a great actor, but he's not my guy. My guy is the prison camp doctor. And you can tell he's the doctor because he has glasses.</p> <p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i></p> <p>And he does the worst job in the prison of anybody—any prison doctor I've ever seen. Because we never see him <u>once</u> interact with Joseph Fiennes.</p> <p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i></p> <p>And this doctor just appears in the background. And then we see him at the very end of the film—when they've made it back to the base—and he is ministering to the very sickest of the men. Again! Not even ministering to Joseph Fiennes! Who dies... there and then! But we see him and then they cut to the real-life footage, and we see the <u>actual</u> guy <u>actually</u> wearing those very glasses, and looks <u>exactly</u> like the actor playing him. So we know he was real! And they—he's actually ministering to real soldiers in that final scene! And it's like, "That was a real guy! Who did a real thing! He was really in that prison camp and he was really a doctor and he was really—"</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>"—and this all happened!" And that—where was that guy? He was the character, I think, of all the people in this movie that could have made <u>so</u> much happen by virtue of just appearing one time with a thing of quinine and saying, "Come on. Take it!" So he was my guy.</p>
01:08:45	Music	Music	Short reprise of theme song "War."
01:08:49	Ben	Host	Okay. Well, we just had a heck of a MaxFunDrive and we—first of all—just wanted to say how much we appreciate all the support we got from everyone.
01:09:00	John	Host	Yeah. What a great event it was for us. We were at a somewhat of a disadvantage. We postponed the Drive a few times this year—for obvious reasons—but it finally went off and went off without a hitch. We got so much support from everybody. Really appreciate it.
01:09:17	Adam	Host	Yeah. It feels like our listeners dropped all their support on our position. And we thank them.
01:09:23	Ben	Host	Yeah. Thanks for blowing us to smithereens with your money.
01:09:26	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i>
01:09:30	Adam	Host	Probably not <u>all</u> your support. There are people out there that could still give.
01:09:32	Ben	Host	We did miss a stretch goal.
			We didn't trigger the stretch goal, but we did want to express our appreciation somehow. So what we've decided to do for next week is review the hit World War II naval combat film <i>Greyhound</i> .
01:09:45	Music	Music	Tense, dramatic orchestral movie music. Heavy on strings.

01:09:47	Ben	Host	So that's gonna be next week's film. That's our thank-you to you, and—y'know, in addition, obviously, to the bonus feed that everyone who signed up has now got access to. We're really excited about this episode and that will be next week!
01:10:03	John	Host	It's available on a service that I know <u>everyone</u> has—the kind of globally respected movie platform ApplePlus.com/plus.
01:10:16	Ben	Host	I think there's like a free trial. Like, I think you can get a free trial for a week or something.
01:10:20	John	Host	Oh. Nice, nice one.
01:10:21	Adam	Host	I think you can get it for longer than that! That's how I watched the movie!
01:10:24	Ben	Host	Oh yeah?
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:10:25	Ben	Host	I think I got it for free for a year 'cause I bought a phone recently! So—
01:10:27	Adam	Host	There ya go!
01:10:28	John	Host	Woo!
01:10:29	Ben	Host	Yeah. You may have free access to this thing already if you haven't looked into it. But we just watched the movie. It's worth checking out. And that'll be next week's episode. So we're gonna leave it with Robs from here. For Adam Pranica and John Roderick, I've been Ben Harrison. To the victor... go the spoiler alerts.
			<i>[Theme song continues playing at full volume until it fades in the background for Rob's dialogue.]</i>
01:10:55	Rob Schulte	Producer	<i>Friendly Fire</i> is a Maximum Fun podcast. Hosted by Adam Pranica, Ben Harrison, and John Roderick. The show is produced by me—Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music. And our podcast art is by Nick Ditmore. Thanks to everyone that supported us in the four-week MaxFunDrive. We appreciate the support!
			Please check our back catalog Pork Chop episodes! They're a whole lot of fun. If you're looking for more <i>Friendly Fire</i> , last year the crew reviewed <i>The Patriot</i> from 2000—a revenge-fueled film about a fictional character and fictional events set during the American Revolutionary War. Starring—you guessed it—Mel Gibson. Don't forget, you can follow us on Twitter and Instagram under the handles FriendlyFireRSS. Thanks for listening! We'll see you next week with another episode of <i>Friendly Fire</i> .
			<i>[Theme song continues playing at full volume, then fades entirely.]</i>
01:12:06	Music	Music	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:12:07	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org.
01:12:09	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:12:11	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:12:12	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.