

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	"Flight of the Intruder: The Bomb Run," composed by Basil Poledouris from the <i>Flight of the Intruder</i> soundtrack. Dramatic military drums and brass against symphonic background plays in background of dialogue.
00:00:04	Adam Pranica	Host	I was up late flipping the channels the other night, which is the best time for a local PBS station to put on their premium shit. If you're lucky, you'll get that <i>Alone in the Wilderness</i> show about Dick Proenneke and the sledding wolverines, or a mini-marathon of <i>Joy of Painting</i> , which is just the perfect way to fall asleep. And sometimes, one of a treasure trove of classic concert films. Now I know I present myself as the very hip and "now" host of <i>Friendly Fire</i> , but I'll have you know that my musical interests have always been before my time. The very first concert I ever went to was Jimmy Page and Robert Plant at the Tacoma Dome, the giant concert venue with the acoustics of a shipping container south of Seattle. I was in middle school and let me tell you: wearing that concert T-shirt the next day did not have the "making me cool" effect that I had hoped for. Except with the teachers, which—as you could guess—had the opposite effect.

So I really like settling into an old concert film from time to time, and one of my favorites that I've lucked into on PBS has been from The Highwaymen, recorded live at the Nassau Coliseum in New York in 1990. The first time I saw it, it blew my mind. Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings and Kris Kristofferson? They're the four richest men in country music and are singing songs about being long-haul truckers or ship captains or dam builders. Only Kris Kristofferson could credibly be all three. Four of the best, standing in a row, each taking a lyric before everyone sang the chorus. It made me wonder why we don't get more supergroups. The idea is so tantalizing and you don't just get them in bands. They're probably most pervasive in sports teams, but also—and maybe especially—in fictional worlds like comic books and movies. But a supergroup is no guarantee of success! That doesn't stop people from trying. For every Traveling Wilburys there's a 2004 LA Lakers; for every Velvet Revolver there's a... Justice League?

Look. You get my point. Just because you cram a bunch of talent into a project doesn't make it good. I should know. I'm one of the hosts of *Friendly Fire*. War movies are a movie genre especially tantalizing to a studio interested in supergroups, and I think that's because you can hire a guy for a day and kill him that night, giving their Star Waggon to someone else while the bed is still warm. It's why every great actor from 1998 is in *The Thin Red Line*. It's also why everyone who used the Star Waggon after Nick Nolte hated his guts. You just know that guy was murder on the plumbing. You can tell that this was the idea with *Flight of the Intruder*, a film that feels produced by the same people who make superhero films today. Willem Dafoe and the Marlboro Man have been in separate movies for far too long! Danny Glover should be in this! He's great in everything! Ving Rhames? Seems like he'll be a star one day. Let's use him now! We can't have only one director! That's horseshit! Give me John Milius and John McTiernan and fighter planes and a

rogue mission and the biggest drum of fake blood you can find. The movie poster practically designs itself!

This film should've been a license to print dong. Instead, this was just another supergroup that didn't work. Not even Basil Poledouris could save it. It, honestly, could've used a Waylon Jennings in it for a verse or two. And like a town square in Hanoi stocked with missiles, films like these make great targets for shows like ours. It's a spectacular mess, like "We Are the World." Tell ya what—I came here to bomb. On today's *Friendly Fire—Flight of the Intruder*.

00:04:00	Music	Music	<p><i>[Music ceases.]</i> "War" off the album <i>War & Peace</i> by Edwin Starr. Impassioned, intense funk.</p> <p><i>War!</i> <i>Huh!</i> <i>Yeah!</i> <i>What is it good for?!</i> <i>Absolutely—</i> <i>—nothing!</i> <i>Uh-huh!</i></p> <p><i>War!</i> <i>Huh!</i> <i>Yeah!</i> <i>What is it good for?!</i> <i>Absolutely—</i> <i>—nothing!</i></p> <p><i>Say it again, y'all!</i></p> <p><i>War!</i></p>
00:04:21	Ben Harrison	Host	<p><i>[Song fades down and plays quietly as the hosts speak.]</i> Welcome to <i>Friendly Fire</i>, the war movie podcast that came here to bomb! I'm Ben Harrison.</p>
00:04:26	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i> Sitting three wide with you guys, I'm Adam Pranica.</p>
00:04:32	John Roderick	Host	<p><i>[John laughs.]</i> And I'm John Roderick. I wear the silver star.</p>
00:04:38	Adam	Host	<p>I like it when the pilot and the bomber sit next to each other. That's nice.</p>
00:04:44	Ben	Host	<p>That is really sweet.</p>
00:04:45	Adam	Host	<p>Like a loveseat bomber.</p>
00:04:47	Ben	Host	<p>"Bomber is my copilot." <i>[Laughs.]</i></p>
00:04:50	John	Host	<p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i> On the <i>Intruder</i>, the weapons systems operator actually sits <u>slightly</u> below and behind the pilot. Just slightly. Just like... six inches below and six inches behind.</p>

00:05:06	Ben	Host	Like the way you sit on the set on a talk show? Like, David Letterman has to be a little bit higher and a little bit closer to the camera than you?
00:05:15	John	Host	Yeah. It's very strange. There's a couple of shots in the movie where Willem Dafoe looks really small? Really shrimpy? Compared to Brad Johnson, and it's because if you look at the seats in the plane they're actually staggered. Weirdly staggered.
00:05:35	Ben	Host	Maybe that's why Richard Gere turned the part down.
00:05:36	Music	Music	Instrumental intro to "KSI Exposed" by W2S. Expansive, percussive hip-hop beats punctuated by horns.
00:05:37	Adam	Host	Oh yeah. You wouldn't even see him!
<i>[John laughs.]</i>			
He'd be down in the footwell!			
One aspect of the A-6 that I thought was really interesting that they didn't carry forward into the film was that the bombardier wears a hood when deploying ordnance. They put their head into a big sack and Willem Dafoe is not gonna go for that. You're not gonna cover up that face with a hood. <i>[Music fades out.]</i> And so they left that detail out of the film.			
00:06:02	Ben	Host	Richard Gere tried to put a gerbil into the hood.
00:06:07	Adam	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Goddammit.
00:06:08	Ben	Host	And so they didn't wanna work with him. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:06:09	John	Host	The fact that the bombardier or the weapons guy flies with his head in a hood is a crazy detail of the way that that airplane operates, that I wish they <u>had</u> shown that in the movie. That's a super trip.
00:06:26	Ben	Host	Is it, like, to cut out the light?
00:06:27	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:06:28	Ben	Host	Most of the missions in this movie take place at night. Would you not need the hood on a nighttime mission?
00:06:36	Adam	Host	I think that's when you would need the hood especially.
00:06:38	John	Host	Yeah. You've got—all the instruments are all illuminated and—
00:06:42	Ben	Host	Oh.
00:06:44	John	Host	—want super-blackout capabilities.
00:06:46	Ben	Host	I liked the like Nintendo Entertainment System—level targeting computer. <i>[Laughs.]</i> That this airplane had, too. Very interesting to see like super-early versions of that kind of technology.
00:07:01	Adam	Host	A lot of people think—well, the people who flew them; the people who crewed around them—thought the A-6 was ugly. I don't think this plane is ugly! I think I like it! Call it a "drumstick"?
00:07:13	John	Host	It looks like a tadpole! Y'know, the F-15, the F-16, the F-14—all your teenybopper airplanes—they get <u>so</u> much screen time. We know so much about them. We hear about them all the time. Oh, all the famous planes. And the A-6 is like a workhorse. It's always there on the flight deck but it's never the one the hero flies. And I finally got a chance to spend some time with the A-6 Intruder and it was my favorite character! Like, I finally get to know what this plane does! I learned that after the B-52, the A-6 Intruder had the heaviest—could carry the greatest ordnance of any plane in the military!
00:07:58	Adam	Host	It's amazing.
00:07:59	John	Host	It can carry half as many bombs as a B-52 but it's just this little tadpole-looking drumstick airplane.

00:08:08 Ben Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*
 00:08:11 Adam Host Is that thing on the nose its refueling probe?
 Yeah. There's so much radar shit in its nose that there wasn't room to pack it away.

[Eighties synth-pop club music fades in.]

00:08:26 John Host Like some other fighter bombers can tuck it in. And then deploy it for refueling. This guy had to just hang it out there.
[Suggestively] Yeah. You gotta be able to tuck it in.

00:08:30 Ben Host *[Ben laughs as the music fades.]*
 I really wondered what... Milius was trying to do with this movie?

[John cracks up.]

00:08:38 John Host 'Cause it—
 00:08:41 Ben Host Let's get into it! *[Laughs.]*
 There are the things we know about Milius, right? Like, I think that it's obvious what he's trying to do with a *Red Dawn*. And, like, that movie can be enjoyed on the ironic level of like, "Can you believe somebody thought this?" And you can also enjoy it on the level of like, "Yeah! They probably will invade like this!" Y'know. Like, everybody can get something out of that movie across the spectrum from normal person to yo-yo. But like, I kept feeling like this movie was trying to make the case that the main character was a hero. And I just—I found him so unlikeable and I wondered, like, was that tension intentional? Is Cool Hand supposed to be a guy that we love and feel, like, got a raw deal in getting court-martialed and was saved by the bell? Or does Milius want us to see Cool Hand as, like, a dangerous renegade within the military?

00:09:42 John Host I mean, what's weird is that this movie is... another in the classic pantheon of "let's refight the Vietnam War." Except... in 1991, this is kinda Milius coming back at all of that with a movie about how we coulda won the war if it wasn't for the chickenshit politicians back in Washington or whatever. Y'know? Like, it's... this whole renegade narrative where *[intense bro voice]* if we would just let the A-6 Intruders go into Hanoi and blow up the secret ammo dumps—

00:10:18 Ben Host Yeah. In my head I kept cutting back to the Pentagon with Alec Baldwin playing McNamara, deciding on all the missions that these guys are going on.

00:10:27 John Host *[Laughs; normal voice resumes.]* Yeah! Right! I mean, the ultimate hero of this film is Nixon. Who— *[Laughs.]*

[Adam laughs.]

—at the end is like, "We're starting Operation Linebacker II: Unrestricted bombing over Hanoi!" And it's like, "That's our hero? This is the—"

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:10:47 Adam Host "This is the moment where the music plays?"
 That seems to be Milius's milieu. Right? Like, the—

[John chuckles.]

—what he prefers—what his special interest is, is the idea of a rogue agent. Right? When he rewrote the Sean Connery part in *Hunt for Red October*, he's a rogue agent. When he made *Red Dawn*, what war is that other than Rogue Teenage Agents fighting their war? This character here—our main character that we're supposed to love—I think we're supposed to love him, Ben! To answer your question!

[Ben laughs.]

I know it's hard! But, like, the fantasy of a rogue agent. Like, you have all this power: what if? And I think it's a really interesting time to have asked the question in 1991. Like, as the Gulf War begins. Like... the idea of a rogue agent fighter pilot, y'know, making a left turn and doing what they want to do plants an interesting seed, I think.

00:11:48 Ben Host

Kind of a terrifying seed, too, right? Like, the idea that there're guys that we're handing a plane that has this destructive ability over to, and hoping that they do what they're supposed to do with it?

00:12:01 Adam Host

Yeah, and that's too bad because, like, the seed is interesting but what grows out of this movie is just nothing. Like, you neither get the great celebration of a successful rogue mission or the horror of the idea of it happening to begin with. It's oddly... neutral about it. It's just a thing that happened and then—

[Ben laughs.]

—Cool Hand's gonna go live and work on Danny Glover's aircraft carrier later.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:12:35 John Host

Like, it's just fine.

Well, it's a thing that happened. They succeed, and we get the jazz of like, "We bucked the rules! And blew up all the SAMs! And we've saved American lives!" And then we get a court martial, but... y'know, we don't really feel like the court martial scene is actually that bullshit. It feels like pretty legitimate court martial. Everybody's being pretty legitimate here. And then it ends up, the bureaucracy that—in a way, like, the bureaucracy and political lack of program, lack of policy... ever-shifting sands—ends up kind of saving our heroes. Exact thing that this movie seems to be, like, tilted against. Which is that the people in Washington are just feckless and it ends up kind of serving our homies. And then what the—like, the end of the movie, they're just high-fiving on the deck of a aircraft carrier? Like, Danny Glover's gonna go on to—what? Command a ship in the malaise years of the mid-seventies Navy?

[Ben laughs.]

Where everybody's like doing cocaine off a hooker's ass on the bridge? Like...

[Ben laughs.]

00:13:52 Adam Host There's no happy ending here.
That would've made a great Milius film.

[John laughs.]

Cocaine Carrier.

[Ben laughs.]

00:13:59 John Host Directed by John Milius.
We segue immediately into the runup to the movie *Stripes* here.
Like, I mean, their next job is commanding the EM-50 urban assault vehicle!

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:14:10 Ben Host I actually did find an internet pedant that had a quibble about the court-martial scene.

[Sound of telegraph plays in background.]

00:14:26 Adam Host "The basketball court in the gymnasium where Cole and Grafton are questioned about the Hanoi bombing has a college three-point line. There was no college three-point line until the 1980s."
Wow.

00:14:27 John Host That has got to be the best pedant I've ever heard of.

[Ben laughs.]

00:14:32 Adam Host Can't do that!

00:14:33 John Host That is good shit.

00:14:35 Ben Host I found myself very drawn to the, like, non-war pedant stuff in this movie. 'Cause I mean, like, there's definitely like some equipment and uniform pedantry to be had here. But just, like, really delighted me that somebody was distracted by the floor in the gymnasium—

[John laughs.]

—in the most emotionally charged scene of the movie. That's all taking place in the Philippines, right?

00:14:56 John Host Subic Bay, yeah.

00:14:58 Ben Host It's a whole ship going there? Or is the ship just hanging around off the coast of Southeast Asia?

00:15:04 John Host I think that's the wonderful thing about being a Navy pilot is that you can fly somewhere else and the ship just stays out at sea. It's one of the shitty things about being an enlisted sailor because you don't get to fly your plane to Subic Bay to sit in the officer's club.

00:15:21 Ben Host You've just gotta rely on the shipboard library—

[John snickers.]

—for your entertainment.

00:15:27 John Host I wonder how that works, actually. I'm looking forward to hearing some commentary from the *Friendly Fire* contingent of former Naval personnel. Like, if you get shore leave, if you're, like, a Seabee, swabbie, *[through laughter]* whatever they are.

[Ben laughs.]

If you're a swabbo and you get shore leave, how do they get you there? Do they put you in one of those transport aircraft or do they put you in a boat? Like, how do they get you to the warehouses?

[Adam laughs.]

00:16:00 Ben Host The town they go to, though, is in Vietnam, I thought. Like when they're in that bar and they're practicing their hook landing? On the rig?

00:16:11 John Host Oh, I thought that was all in the Philippines.

00:16:14 Ben Host That was in the Philippines?

00:16:15 John Host I thought so.

00:16:16 Adam Host How do you fuck up the hook ride in that bar? I don't understand how you get that wrong!

00:16:22 John Host It's gotta be trickier than it looks.

00:16:23 Ben Host Yeah. Or is it just that you're, like, a mark if you drop the hook super early and people will be like, "No! Go back! Do it again!"

00:16:31 Adam Host It seems like the stakes are too high. And let's talk about the layout of this bar a little bit.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:16:47 John Host There is a giant mud pool on one end, at the end of this ride, and then there's an alligator enclosure on the other side?

00:16:48 Ben Host Yeah.

00:16:52 Adam Host I don't think it's on the other side 'cause then you'd be over it when you're getting into the chair.

00:16:56 Ben Host That would be scary. That would be scarier than the idea of flying into the mud.

00:16:57 Adam Host Yeah!

00:16:57 Adam Host It doesn't seem like this bar is being very efficient with its floor space.

[Ben laughs.]

00:17:10 Ben Host If what you wanna do is pack in your drinkers to make some money, why would you use so much of your space on mud and alligators?

00:17:12 Adam Host That can't be that big of a draw.

00:17:14 John Host No.

00:17:19 Adam Host I—it would not be much of a draw unless every once in a while someone lost an arm to the alligator.

00:17:20 John Host Oh, then it's great.

00:17:27 Adam Host But, y'know, the Philippines in the early seventies? I betcha they lost a hand now and again.

00:17:27 Adam Host This is the scene that crystallized for me how to watch this movie so that it wouldn't just make me mad and sad. Like... this is *Road House*. *Flight of the Intruder* is *Road House: The Naval Fighter Pilot Movie*.

[Ben laughs.]

00:17:50 Ben Host And as soon as I realized that? Like, all of my concerns went away. That's all it is.

00:17:52 John Host You realized that pain don't hurt.

00:17:52 John Host During that scene, I turned to the young lady I was watching this movie with and said, "We're watching fucking *Road House*."

[Adam laughs.]

And from that moment on, I was—I don't know if I like relaxed into it 'cause I didn't like the movie *Road House*—

[Ben laughs.]

[Through laughter] I definitely knew where we were. Right.

00:18:11 Adam Host
00:18:11 Clip Clip

[Sound of engines revving and glass breaking in background.]

Speaker: Let's gooo! [Laughs.]

00:18:17 Adam Host

God. I think this film is fascinating in its construction. If the three combined brains of *Friendly Fire* decided to remake *Top Gun* slightly differently, and in a way that goes something like *Their Finest*—y'know, hanging up those index cards for plot points? If we just reshuffle those plot points a little bit, this is a strange, blended version of *Top Gun*. And *Road House*!

00:18:48 John Host
00:18:49 Ben Host

And what else?

It's got a little *Star Wars*. Like, the way the special effects feel and look is definitely like outside of what *Top Gun* would've provided as a reference point.

00:19:02 John Host

Frankly, I saw a little bit of [The Final Countdown](#) in it. It felt like when we were transitioning from one movie to the next, it really felt like we were in a different movie. Like you'd be in a movie for a while and then all of a sudden you're in a—there was a domestic, like, kind of a sad domestic drama? There was a "I lost my partner; don't talk to me. I'm all deep now."

00:19:27 Adam Host

It feels like a film that probably worked better on TV. During its time as a TV movie of the week where you're given commercials to break up those scenes and feelings a little better. 'Cause as they are in sequence? It's, like, schizophrenic—feeling!

00:19:45 John Host

Well, but I don't see—yeah. Like putting commercials in between would be even more, like, you'd tune back in and feel like, "Wait a minute. Is this the same movie? It has the same people in it!" But like, when Willem Dafoe arrives you think, "Oh, this is a movie about a renegade." There's all that kind of foreshadowing. Like, when he and Danny Glover have that first meeting and Danny Glover's like, "You're a legend—and not in a good way! So—"

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:20:10 Ben Host
00:20:14 John Host

"But game recognize game, because I also am a legend!"

"Also sort of not in a good way! It's unclear!" Like, all of that is really foreshadowy about like, "Oh, Willem Dafoe's going to come in and he's going to take this battle-scarred young pilot and convert him into his nasty way of thinking." But then it goes the opposite way. And Willem Dafoe isn't the one that's got the screwed-up plan. It's Brad Johnson. I mean, it kept defying the rules that it was laying out for itself. But not in a way that felt like it was reinventing it or subverting it. It just was like, "You made some laws for this movie in the last scene. Why are we not following those laws in this scene?"

[Ben laughs.]

00:21:00 Adam Host

Do you have a good grasp of who the main character is in this movie? Because I know, like, the result of the film—the finished

00:21:25	Ben	Host	edit—gives us Brad Johnson as Cool Hand as its main character. But it kind of feels like it arrives there by default because something was cut out of the Cole and Camparelli stories to make that happen. In reading about the film, one thing I found very interesting is that this movie was adapted from the second novel that was published by the US Naval Institute. The first novel being <i>Hunt for Red October</i> .
00:21:38	John	Host	Whoa!
00:21:40	Ben	Host	The, like, adaptation of like the film of the novel was supposed to be directed by John McTiernan and he wound up having like a schedule conflict or something and that's how Milius moved into it. But the guy that wrote the novel of <i>Flight of the Intruder</i> is quoted in the Wikipedia article going like, "Yeah! Like, a lot of books don't—y'know, it's really different when they make 'em into a movie. And this book, they really nailed it! It's exactly like the book!"
00:22:07	Adam	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i> Yeah. That's faint praise. Right?
00:22:11	John	Host	<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i> Part of the problem, of course, is that Danny Glover is playing a role we've seen a thousand times. Which is the hard-bitten CO who's abusive to his subordinates, but he's only doing it out of love and because it makes them a better and more cohesive unit. And in reality he's got a heart of gold. Like, that's the character. It's a velvet glove cast in iron. There it is. Except Danny Glover is not <u>doing</u> a very good <u>job</u> of it. He actually seems just abusive. At no point do you ever see a twinkle in his eye, do you ever really like him. You never think, like, "Oh, this guy's being really hard but it's making his crew more cohesive!" It's just like, "This guy is just kind of a jerk!" <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:23:03	Ben	Host	Yeah. That last scene kind of solves the puzzle. It's not that he's abusive because he wants unit cohesion. He's abusive because he's an ambitious asshole. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:23:13	Adam	Host	I don't know how I got so far on the other side of this Danny Glover issue from you guys. But his sense of humor made it so that I could never take his abuse seriously. I never thought he was the jerk. If anything I thought he was <u>too</u> much of a clown.
00:23:30	John	Host	Maybe we're three blind men describing an elephant.
00:23:35	Ben	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> That's the tagline of this show!
00:23:36	John	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> There was something super-off about him and like where he was coming from, 'cause I feel like that role—if you are that hard-ass, when you're the hard-ass you've got to be really a convincing hard-ass and then when you break character, it's gotta be on purpose. It's gotta be in the right moment. It's got to serve the film in some way. And this just felt like—this was just like hamburger thrown around a mess hall.
00:24:05	Adam	Host	He felt like a composite to me for some reason. Like, his character was supposed to be <u>two</u> characters. And for some reason it wasn't.
00:24:12	Clip	Clip	Commander Frank Camparelli (<i>Flight of the Intruder</i>): I am a weapons system, and there was a cost overrun!
00:24:15	Adam	Host	There was no sense to which version of Camparelli you got scene to scene. Like, during a serious moment he would be funny and

weird and irreverent. And in what should be a lighter scene, he's the hard-ass.

00:24:29 Ben Host I wonder if that's symptomatic of that thing with Milius that you're identifying, which is that it's like the kind of character he likes to write is the renegade. And Camparelli is a company man and therefore maybe a little bit mysterious to Milius. But I think that Milius is a very conflicted person. Like, he's a very... right-wing guy that, y'know, lives and works in Hollywood around people that don't share his... values or his politics. And like, he talked about, like, making this movie how he felt like the studio was meddling with it the entire time but also how excited he was to be on an aircraft carrier. Like, it was living out a fantasy for him. And it's so interesting to think about, like, how those kinds of internal conflicts in an artist would manifest characters like this in a film.

00:25:29 John Host Yeah. You're right. Like, Willem Dafoe is a renegade. And Brad Johnson's a renegade. Danny Glover is kind of being portrayed as a renegade. Everybody in this movie's a renegade! But really they're just... they're just guys in the Navy who are fighting in Vietnam until Brad Johnson decides he's going to take the fight to the Vietnamese. But of all the renegades in the movie, he is the least convincing. He looks like, y'know, he looks like an underwear model, and we don't have any motivation for him to be a renegade other than he lost Murph—or Morg—whatever. He lost Morg—

00:26:11 Ben Host And Tom Sizemore.

00:26:13 Adam Host He's a Morg! Oh no!

00:26:15 John Host *[Multiple people laugh.]*
Oh no!

00:26:16 Adam Host Ahhhh!

00:26:19 John Host *[Through laughter]* Basically—

[Adam laughs.]

—the only thing that converts Brad Johnson into being a rebel is that he's sick and tired of bombing the tree line.

00:26:29 Adam Host Yeah. He gets no secondary explosions, man!

00:26:33 John Host Yeah! He didn't sign up for this! For just drilling out and dropping his bombs on, like, crossroads! He wants to fuck some shit up! There's no character tension there. Right? Like, all we get is that he's avenging Morg's death or something. But we don't even really—when he drops the bombs, he doesn't even like kiss his dog tags and say, like, "That's for you, Morg!" It's just—like, if he's truly a rebel he's gotta have some kind of—Tom Cruise at least has got a chip on his shoulder 'cause he's short. You gotta be motivated.

00:27:06 Ben Host Yeah. That motivation issue feels like it's missing. Because Morg dies pretty early in the movie but it's not like he turns right to the idea of exacting his revenge on the North Vietnamese or anything. Like, there's an hour of movie before he even comes up with that idea.

00:27:26 John Host Right? And the guy that killed Morg was a guy with a muzzle-loader. Some rice farmer with a muzzle-loader that just gets off a lucky shot. It's not even—we don't even get like the *Rambo* satisfaction of having some evil Commie bad guy that we keep cutting back to.

00:27:47 Ben Host *[Through laughter]* Right.

00:27:48 John Host Some evil Commie bad guy that's stacking barrels of gas on top of a waterfall.

00:27:52 Adam Host I mean, as satisfying as it is for films to have, like, the bad guy to blow up with an exploding arrow at its end... like, there's something interesting about the senselessness of a just fucking lucky shot that a farmer takes at your bomb guy. And the film refuses to lean into that, even!

00:28:11 John Host Yeah. That's right! I thought that was a great scene, and I waited for it to evolve into something. When the doctor comes up holding the bullet and he's like, "It's from a musket!"

[Ben laughs.]

00:28:29 Adam Host What a great debriefing that would be!
This is one of those examples, though. If you move the death of Goose to the beginning of *Top Gun*, how does it change the tone of that story?

00:28:36 Music Music Short reprise of theme song "War."
00:28:39 Ben Host Sizemore is kind of supposed to be the Goose.
00:28:42 Adam Host I thought Sizemore was the Sundown of this film. Because he's the guy who's always trying to get Cool Hand to, like, get back up on the horse! And to stop calling him "Morg." Y'know?

00:28:57 John Host But that's the crazy thing about Sizemore! Like, half the time his character is, like, sort of the saintly fool. And then he has that scene on the boat where he's like, "Yeah. I'm—y'know, I'm gonna marry this ugly girl. She's got a baby. It's probably not mine but it doesn't matter. That's cool, right?" And he has this whole soliloquy where he's just like, "I'm, like, a naïve cuck."

[Ben laughs.]

00:29:31 Ben Host "And just tell me that everything's gonna be okay, Dad."
00:29:34 John Host Yeah. He does get a lot of character development.
A lot compared to everybody else! But it's all character development in the wrong way. I mean, when he died I was kind of like, "Whew! Thank god that fucking turd is out of here."

[Ben laughs.]

00:29:46 Adam Host "Let's get on with this movie!"
I don't know. Like, isn't he so familiar as like, "I am a nobody in my job. I'm nobody in most aspects of my life. But I am the most popular guy at the whorehouse." Like, he has his place where he can feel truly alive? And like that's the tragedy of the Boxman's character! I think.

00:30:07 John Host The Boxman.
00:30:08 Adam Host Like, that that is his place!
00:30:11 John Host I would like for us to do a special episode of this show where we just interrogate Tom Sizemore.

00:30:19 Adam Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]*
00:30:20 Ben Host Wow.
00:30:21 John Host 'Cause he keeps appearing. He's in so many war movies. I don't know if he's ever been in a movie that wasn't a war movie?

[Ben laughs.]

00:30:30 Adam Host Or that wasn't a war movie to him as he was in it.

[All laugh.]

00:30:34	John	Host	And the thing about him is he is <u>always</u> extraordinary! Like, I really like when I see Tom Sizemore. When his name flashes in the credits at the start of a movie I'm like, "Well at least we know <u>one</u> thing's gonna be good!" But Tom Sizemore is such a fucking wreck of a person. Why is he even a movie star in the first place?
00:30:52	Clip	Clip	Speaker (<i>Flight of the Intruder</i>): You afraid of a few bugs, son?
00:30:55	John	Host	I really think we should do a special episode where we just—
00:30:59	Ben	Host	Sizemore ep. Wow.
00:31:00	John	Host	We'll do that when we go on tour. We'll just take snippets of Sizemore out of every movie and just watch the Sizemore scenes.
00:31:10	Adam	Host	We could call that tour "It's the Sizemore that Counts?"
00:31:13	John	Host	Hm.
00:31:15	Adam	Host	No?
00:31:17	John	Host	That might work for a <i>Greatest Generation</i> show.
00:31:19	Ben	Host	Tom Sizemore has 25 projects on his IMBD profile that are completed but unreleased; post-production; in production right now; in pre-production; or announced. 25 things!
00:31:37	Adam	Host	He's a real worker.
00:31:38	Ben	Host	The man is busy!
00:31:39	John	Host	But how many of those are never going to be released?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:31:44	Adam	Host	Y'know, you guys talk about the mess of the life that he's made over his career. I mean, it could just be that the work is his salvation and I hope he's finding it and working as hard as he is, 'cause he's clearly very talented. I mean, we love all of his performances. I love them in this movie! It's weird to feel empathy for a Tom Sizemore character the way I do in this film. Because I'm not used to conferring that to his characters in anything.
00:32:12	John	Host	And I think it speaks to how little you care about anybody in this movie. I cared about Razor 'cause he was getting shit on so hard, and then when Razor, at the end of the movie, is born-again hard and becomes like a kickass fighter pilot, I was rooting for Razor.
00:32:31	Adam	Host	To be clear, you don't have to stand at attention the way Razor does, right? Like, with your back fully bent? You don't have to go that deep into attention? Why is he doing it that way?
00:32:42	John	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> It makes him look like such a JG! Right? He hasn't figured out how to slouch at attention!
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:32:53	Ben	Host	But also like, Rosanna Arquette was in this movie for some reason. Does she ever come back after that one time where he hangs out with her on the beach?
00:32:58	Adam	Host	I don't think so!
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:33:00	Ben	Host	It would've been nice to have him check in with her. Like, "Yeah. I'm getting court-martialed." Like—
00:33:05	John	Host	Well, didn't he write a letter to her during that?
00:33:06	Adam	Host	Yeah. They use her for exposition with voiceover, but they never bring her back. I wonder if there's a Snyder cut of this? Because Milius says—
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>

—over and over again, like, how much studio interference ruined his vision for the film. And you can feel it. Like, you can feel scene to scene how tonally things shift for no motivated reason. And I wonder to what extent that Camparelli and Cole relationship was ruined by a producer somewhere who had an idea.

00:33:41 Ben Host Hm.

00:33:42 Adam Host It's weird to imagine John Milius being pushed around by a studio! Like, the reason you bring in a John Milius is to, like, give him a stack of money and send him on his way.

00:33:52 John Host I mean, does 1991 play into that somehow? This is his swan song, right?

00:33:57 Adam Host Yeah. It's a sad song!

00:34:00 Ben Host I don't think his career was exactly, like, about box office gold. Y'know. He has his hands on a lot of interesting projects and has a place in Hollywood history for sure, but I don't think he was ever like the "It" guy. The director you bring in 'cause he's gonna make a boffo box office picture. And this movie didn't really make its money back as far as I can tell. \$30 million product budget, \$14 million-something at the box office.

00:34:32 John Host Ooh! It was a dog!

00:34:35 Ben Host Yeah.

00:34:37 Adam Host Speaking of story avenues that turned into cul-de-sacs—did you think for a moment that Morg was the Phantom Shitter and that like his death would stop the shitting and then everyone would realize it was him?

00:34:52 Ben Host *[John laughs.]*
Wow. Morg was taking dumps everywhere! I also didn't feel like it was really resolved, though. Like, is Lieutenant Duffy supposed to be the Phantom Shitter but they caught him phantom pissing? Or is Lieutenant Duffy a different—he's a Phantom Pisser but there's also a Phantom Shitter somewhere.

00:35:08 Adam Host It's the conversation in the hallway that tells me that the Phantom Shitter has added a new weapon to his arsenal. That he's also pissing. That was the funniest scene to me, was that scene with Cool Hand and that guy speculating about the Phantom Shitter's methods and how dangerous he is? And they're talking about him so seriously.

00:35:30 Clip Clip **Speaker (*Flight of the Intruder*):** This war? This war's not gonna end.

00:35:34 John Host Speaking as someone who's lived a few lives, you don't escalate from shitting in people's coffee cups—

[Ben cracks up.]

—to pissing in their coffee cups. It goes the other way around.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:35:51 Adam Host You start as a Phantom Pisser.
Look—

[Ben laughs.]

I'm gonna ask you, believing that you know the answer, John, but if you're going to piss into a coffee cup, why do you put it on the floor and hit it from standing height?

00:36:02 John Host You don't. You hold the coffee cup. You can piss in it— *[through laughter]* I'll tell you what. You can piss in a coffee cup and be having a conversation with someone around a corner of a wall and they won't even know you're pissing in a coffee cup.

00:36:17 Adam Host You know what? I'm gonna answer the question myself, John. You can't piss into a coffee cup if you're holding it because of splash back! Unless you can moderate your flow in such a way that isn't gonna shoot it back up at your chest and stomach, that's just a recipe for getting your uniform covered in piss!

00:36:33 John Host No, that's not true. If a coffee cup—because it's a hand-held—because you can adjust the angle of attack by changing the cup. Not changing—you don't have to hold your peter. You just move the cup! So you can actually put the cup up under there like you're milking a cow—

[Ben laughs.]

—move the cup around. Down, over to the side, over here, over there. You can do it so it makes no noise and then you fill the cup right up to the rim before it becomes a—like, an issue.

00:37:09 Adam Host I don't know.

00:37:10 John Host Look, man.

00:37:11 Adam Host I'd have to practice this a number of times.

00:37:14 John Host I've pissed in a lot of coffee cups.

00:37:16 Ben Host What's the point of doing it if nobody knows you're doing it, also? It's not a prank war.

[Adam laughs.]

00:37:21 Adam Host Oh, Ben, it's because you get to relish in the victory in that meeting! It's the meeting where you get to realize all of the benefits of being the Phantom Shitter. Because Danny Glover's up there talking about what a monster you are and you get to sit back in your seat satisfied—

[John chuckles.]

—at all of your work!

00:37:39 Ben Host Maybe I'm just an only child that craves attention, but I would want someone else to know so that they could know what a diabolical caper I'm on.

[John laughs.]

00:37:48 Adam Host You would leave a shit in an ashtray and then put like an ace of spades card in it?

00:37:54 Ben Host Right.

00:37:57 John Host But that's what makes it crazy. Like, I'll piss in a coffee cup all day. I would never take a shit in a coffee cup! My god! What kind of a monster are you?

00:38:07 Adam Host It seems like if you're gonna be the Phantom Shitter that you would shit into a bag or something and then take the shit to the place where it goes? Like, you're never shitting in the shit location, right?

[Ben laughs.]

00:38:22 Ben Host That's too dangerous!
It's too dangerous to transport the shit, though! Somebody catches you in the hallway, "What are you doing? You got a mission in the morning, buddy!"

[John laughs.]

00:38:31 Adam Host "What's that smell, also?"
Yeah. You stick it in a bag and you stick it in your pocket.

00:38:35 John Host Mm.

00:38:36 Ben Host You are a brave man, Adam.

00:38:37 John Host Ugh.

00:38:39 Adam Host Getting back to that relationship between Cole and Camparelli, I didn't understand why Cole was so ready to commit Air Force–assisted suicide at the end. It didn't seem like it was resolving any of the conflicts of the movie. 'Cause you could've used it to have them, like, y'know, ride to the rescue of Camparelli. Right? And then suddenly their, like, extremely antagonistic relationship that's been marred by a court-martial, they have to set it aside because they're rescuing him and he's overjoyed at that. But they maintain hating each other even through that. *[Laughs.]*

00:39:18 John Host Yeah.

00:39:21 Adam Host I think one of the low-key—like, the mission behind the mission of the *Friendly Fire* show is to eventually uncover the Vietnam film where Willem Dafoe is not killed at the end.

[Ben laughs.]

00:39:34 John Host There's gotta be one of those out there.
You know I love any Vietnam movie where someone calls in "all remaining ordnance expended on my pos; it's a lovely fucking war." Like, that can be a real tear-jerking moment if you're like a self-sacrifice junkie like I am.

00:39:55 Adam Host You could fill a coffee cup with those tears, even.

[Ben laughs.]

00:39:58 John Host I did not get—but there was none of that here! Right? Like, he's not saying "drop bombs on the tree line because the NVA is about to overrun the camp" or whatever. He's not even doing it, like, "Save my guys."

00:40:17 Ben Host No. 'Cause the—it's like, "In lieu of bombing the NVA, bomb me!"
[Laughs.]

[John laughs.]

00:40:23 Adam Host I know exactly why Willem Dafoe wants the bombs dropped on him. It's that he doesn't wanna face Danny Glover after having applied blackface immediately upon hitting the ground.

[All laugh.]

00:40:36 Ben Host It's like not even nighttime and he's like, "Let's get the blackface going!"

00:40:39 Adam Host "What are you doing, Cole?"

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:40:42	John	Host	Yeah! He looks like a kook instead of a—at first—I think in the movie’s language, Milius is trying to get us to accept that he is a super–on-the-ground badass. He’s been—he’s survived behind enemy lines all this time. He knows what he’s been doing. He’s carrying a knife. Like a big—y’know, he’s carrying a Rambo knife.
00:41:04	Ben	Host	He’s also named “Tiger” so I thought he was gonna make tiger stripes.
00:41:07	John	Host	Well, he’s wearing tiger-stripe camo where none of the other pilots are. He’s got special forces—somehow he’s got a special forces flight suit.
00:41:17	Adam	Host	That was a really cool detail! I was hoping for a moment of pedantry having to do with that. Like, why is he <u>so</u> different in what he gets to carry, what he chooses to carry, and what he wears?
00:41:29	John	Host	‘Cause he’s been on the ground, Adam! He’s survived! But I don’t think—again, maybe a Navy pedant is gonna chime in here. But I don’t think there was such a thing as a flight suit in tiger-striped camo. I think that that was a camouflage pattern that was used by special forces and not by—it’s not like—I think that was a custom job. I think he probably had that made at Subic Bay.
00:41:55	Adam	Host	It’s pretty badass.
00:41:57	John	Host	But the problem was, he hits the ground, he puts the blackface on, he pulls his knife out, and immediately gets killed! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Y’know, like, he doesn’t survive behind enemy lines for ten days. He gets into a fight with a guy and the guy murders him.
00:42:13	Adam	Host	I thought it was interesting how he quite literally just ran into the first person, almost on accident. And gets into it with him. Right?
00:42:21	Ben	Host	Right.
00:42:22	John	Host	Yeah. But we don’t get the—the question of, “Is he actually, like, a totally killer fighter who just accidentally stepped on a landmine”—y’know, that is never answered for us. Like, we don’t know whether he put on all that blackface, pulled out that knife, and died because he’s actually a clown cosplaying a commando.
00:42:47	Adam	Host	It feels like the movie might be trading on a Willem Dafoe reputation in other films to make him seem more dangerous than he is in this film. I kept expecting him to pull a gun on Grafton. Like, on that mission where they’re flying downtown to blow up the missiles? I expected there to be more conflict between him and Grafton. But all we ever get is the conflict between him and Camparelli!
00:43:14	John	Host	Yeah. Once they decide they’re gonna go to Hanoi, they’re just high-fiving white guys for the rest of the movie!
00:43:22	Adam	Host	I like any movie or TV show where a couple of characters sing “Downtown.” That’s fun.
00:43:26	Clip	Clip	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Jerry Seinfeld (Seinfeld): Don’t hang around and let your troubles surround you! There are movie shows!
00:43:33	Adam	Host	Regardless of how you feel about what they did? I totally fell for that moment. Like, they pull up the plane. They’re basically doing barrel rolls of victory. They’re lighting cigars or whatever. Singing a song. It’s a good moment.
00:43:47	Ben	Host	But the thing that I couldn’t get out of my head was, this was illegal! They went and bombed a city! They’ve done something that is a war crime!
00:43:57	John	Host	They went and bombed SAM Town, Ben.
00:44:00	Ben	Host	Which is in the middle of—?

00:44:02 John Host The Vietnamese were illegally building tens of thousands of toilet paper tube rockets.

[Ben laughs.]

00:44:18 Ben Host And they were camouflaging them on a schoolground and draping them with little kids and pregnant ladies.
Yeah. I loved the, like, HBO feature presentation–style miniature of Hanoi that they fly over?

00:44:27 Adam Host *[John laughs.]*
That was so fun! I totally dug how it wasn't just an explosion in the park of all these paper towel rolls. But it was also like, they were lighting off. And the missiles were shooting through other buildings.

00:44:39 Ben Host Yeah. Into children's hospitals.

00:44:41 Adam Host That's a pretty nice-looking children's hospital. Was that really what that was?

00:44:44 Ben Host That's what the accusation was when they got back.

00:44:48 Adam Host I thought those were lies in the room!

00:44:49 Ben Host It hit something, Adam!

00:44:50 Adam Host Yeah. Just imagine landing your plane after a rogue mission, what that had to feel like.

00:44:58 John Host Yeah.

00:44:59 Adam Host Like, when you're a kid, you come home from doing something bad at school and you know shit's going down. Like, you know you're gonna be punished big-time. Oof.

00:45:08 Ben Host Yeah.

00:45:09 Adam Host Nauseating. Ben, you don't know what that's like, but I'm more talking to John, I guess.

00:45:15 Ben Host *[John laughs.]*
I'll have you know that every single school year of middle school I was threatened with expulsion. I was no stranger to the ire of the administration.

00:45:29 Adam Host How about that!

00:45:30 John Host Because when Ben missed a putt, he always broke his putter.

00:45:35 Ben Host *[All laugh.]*
Yeah. Snapped it over my knee.

00:45:38 John Host That's bad sportsmanship, and that'll get you expelled right out! The problem with that is that they both knowingly sacrifice their Navy career, but in such a way that—as you were saying, Ben—there's no... they're the Phantom Shitters. Nobody's ever gonna know... Right.

00:45:58 Ben Host Like, the Navy's gonna cover up the hit. Probably no one on the ship is even gonna know, but it's not gonna matter because they're immediately going to be remanded to the brig and then sent to Leavenworth. Y'know? Like, there's no...

[Adam laughs.]

—they don't even get a party! I feel like the—y'know, in *Top Gun*, Tom Cruise fucks up. He fucks up over and over again. And yet in the end it's Tom Cruise that comes through cool-headed, defeats the Libyan Air Force or whatever. Whatever bullshit plot that movie has.

[Ben laughs.]

00:46:35 Adam Host But this movie has all those same pieces. It's just that they—
00:46:36 John Host *[Quietly]* What the fuck.
00:46:40 Ben Host —they put all the pieces in a bag *[through laughter]* and they shake the bag up—
With a turd.

[All laugh.]

They put all the pieces in a bag with a turd and then put it in Adam's pocket—

[John laughs.]

00:46:50 John Host —and had him walk around all afternoon.
Had Adam walk around with—meeting people in the hallways going, “What are you doing down here? Shouldn't you be on a different station right now?” And Adam's like—
00:46:59 Adam Host “Y'know, I heard the Phantom Shitter has changed methods. Watch out for that.”

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:47:06 John Host “Always use a cup with a lid.”
The building blocks of this movie are all in the wrong order. Like, the shoot-down isn't the climax. Why is the shoot-down the climax? Why is the rescue the climax? We never cared about Camparelli! Like, saving his life doesn't matter to us!
00:47:23 Ben Host Also, it's the first time we get any indication that Camparelli goes on missions?
00:47:27 Adam Host Yeah. It felt to me like the captain going on an away mission—like, it felt unusual to me in a way.
00:47:34 Ben Host Totally.
00:47:36 Adam Host That was a *Star Trek* reference.

[Ben laughs.]

00:47:38 John Host Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Red shirt, am I right?

[Adam laughs.]

It's the Morg! Oh no!

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:47:47 Ben Host You could make the case that what Cool Hand and Tiger do—like, the criminal act for which they are court-martialed—is something that happens out of radicalization. Like, they've been pushed to this fringe position that the death of Morg and then the death of the Tom Sizemore character, like, give them the resolve to go do an illegal act. And they go do it. And that's, like, the question I asked right at the beginning of this podcast. Is like, “Does John Milius want us to be radicalizing our own thinking alongside these guys, or is this more of a ‘descent into,’ like, ‘how did these two guys go so wrong?’” It kinda also gives us both outcomes, right? Tiger gets punished for defying the gods. Like, he did the bad thing and had to

00:49:03	John	Host	<p>get bombs dropped on him as this movie's form of punishment. But also Cool Hand, like, gets an attaboy from the boss and is gonna get to go serve on whatever ship he becomes the admiral of later. Yeah. Ultimately, their rogue mission ends up being... because of a—because of something that happened in the Paris Peace Accords ends up being American foreign policy. So it's not like they're heroes. They still have to cover over the thing. It's just that we're going now back into Hanoi two days later and we're going to do the same thing that you did, except now it's our policy. And yet we still lose the Vietnam War! Soo anyway... It's a massive circle-jerk. The only good thing about that final scene is that you get to see those Skyraiders come in low on the trees multiple times.</p>
00:49:46	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<p>Adam: Awesome. Awesome scene.</p>
00:49:49	John	Host	<p>John: The greatest of—</p>
00:49:52	Adam	Host	<p>The greatest of all close air support aircraft. Wingtip below the tree line is how those planes were flying. Outrageous. So great.</p>
00:49:59	John	Host	<p>I gotta say those Skyraiders are in my top five of all airplanes of all time. Y'know, Adam, that Skyraiders were super-dangerous on aircraft carriers because if they missed the tailhook and they had to go around? If the pilots would put the throttle full-forward, those engines produced so much torque they would just torque-roll on the deck of the ship.</p>
00:50:25	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	<p>Adam: Wow.</p> <p>Ben: Damn.</p> <p>John: Like, they would kill pilots just because they were <u>too</u> powerful.</p>
00:50:28	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Reverently]</i> God. That's awesome.</p>
00:50:31	John	Host	<p>Amazing.</p>
00:50:33	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i> <i>[Laughs.]</i> You know what? Like—that was such a... that was such an instinctual response. Like, I don't even remember saying those words but I know I did.</p> <p><i>[All laugh.]</i></p> <p>I read a really interesting longform article about a pilot who began as an A-6 pilot and then transitioned into F-14 Tomcattery. And the many differences between what it took to fly both of the planes. And that story you told, John, just made me think of that story as well. Like, you can't just hop out of one plane into another and expect it to land the same! Or to feel the same!</p>
00:51:17	Ben	Host	<p><i>[With Southern drawl]</i> You can't piss in a mug of coffee!</p>
00:51:23	Adam	Host	<p><i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i> And not all mugs are the same to piss in!</p>
00:51:25	John	Host	<p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i> You can't pull on Superman's cape! You can't pull a mask off the old Lone Ranger!</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>

00:51:33	Adam	Host	Imagine flying your whole career with your buddy sitting next to you and then moving into a plane where he's sitting behind.
00:51:41	John	Host	Or in a plane where you're all by yourself.
00:51:44	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:51:45	Ben	Host	That sounds great.
00:51:46	John	Host	You'd be so lonely.
00:51:47	Ben	Host	I'll take that third thing.
00:51:49	Adam	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i> Yeah. That's the plane for Ben.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			The F-19 Loner.
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
00:52:00	Ben	Host	The official fighter-bomber of <i>Friendly Fire</i> . I'm the pilot that goes off in the other direction on all the funeral flights.
00:52:06	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:52:10	John	Host	<i>[John makes airplane flying noise.]</i> The missing man formation.
00:52:12	Ben	Host	Yeah. When they lower the hook out of the helicopter to pick me up? The hook comes back up empty.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:52:24	Music	Music	I'm staying down here! <i>[Laughs.]</i> Looks too crowded up there in that helicopter!
00:52:27	Adam	Host	Short reprise of theme song "War." Well, this film begins more or less with the death of Morg, and like the scene where Maverick throws Goose's dog tags into the sea, so too does Jake Grafton.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			<i>[Through laughter]</i> I just can't get over his name. 'Cause his fucking name is ridiculous.
00:52:46	John	Host	Jake "Cool Hand" Grafton.
00:52:49	Ben	Host	There was a sequel to the book called <i>Final Flight</i> . Because they were like, "We've gotta get more Jake Grafton stories!"
00:52:57	Adam	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i> Jake Grafton is the name of a kid playing D&D who's designed a human character.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:53:12	John	Host	Given the name "Jake Grafton." Special skills? Dancing? I guess?
00:53:13	Adam	Host	Mm-hm. Anyway. Jake throws Morg's bloody dice overboard and I think it's a scene that's emblematic of the film itself. Because it's a moment that's supposed to make you feel a kind of way—like so many other

moments in this film—it's a moment that's happened before in better movies.

[Ben laughs.]

Fuzzy dice are fun, guys, but fuzzy dice covered in blood are not. And I think that's what makes those dice a great rating system for *Flight of the Intruder*. I think—in this film, especially—when things are bad or challenging, a line of dialogue you get all the time, “the encouragement to flow with it” is a thing. And I feel like this is a film that wanted that phrase to catch on. Y'know? But it just didn't. But what it was great at was conveying to a viewer how you needed to feel to get through the film. I had a feeling that this movie was gonna be a rough ride. Once I decided to just flow with it, it became a lot more fun for me. You can see where every scene is inspired from. You can see this movie struggle to be good.

But, tonally... this is a film that doesn't know what it wants to be, scene to scene. And I think you know you're in trouble where you end one scene and you get to the next scene and you're like, “What is this scene trying to say?” And then, “What is this scene trying to say?” You're like trying to build the runway for its story as you're watching it instead of just experiencing what these characters are trying to convey. And I kept on trying to build the film in my head as it was happening in a really strange way. It almost didn't feel like watching a movie to me. It felt unusual. So... maybe we didn't give *Top Gun* the credit that it deserved for riding that line between fun and action and grief. Because it takes a film like this to recognize how difficult it is to do that well.

00:55:24 John Host Don't try and turn your review of this movie into some kind of revisionist plea for *Top Guns*.

00:55:30 Adam Host We'll never know how the combined hosts—

[John laughs.]

00:55:36 John Host —of *Friendly Fire* feel about *Top Gun*. John, it's a tragedy!

00:55:40 Adam Host That's right. Lost to time. Like tears in rain.

It's the most superficial kind of masculinity and I kind of expected more from John Milius. Like, going a little deeper with these characters that he's given us. Like, it's strange that... that a guy like Milius—a guy who's like so hyper-celebratory of masculinity—has such a hard time articulating its qualities. Also, where did Callie go? I'm genuinely concerned that maybe Jake Grafton killed her. I don't know.

00:56:10 John Host Mm.

00:56:11 Adam Host Two bloody dice are what I'm giving this film. I hate to do it. There's just not enough “there” there. Like, give me 20 minutes more planes and that might be a three-dice movie, but... not enough planes. Not enough of the tone to work for me. So, two bloody dice.

00:56:28 Ben Host It's a trope salad, but it doesn't really—it didn't feel like a trope salad to me, watching it, in the way that some of the other films that we've watched have felt like. Y'know, like when we watched *Fury* I just kept feeling that movie ring the *Saving Private Ryan* bell. And it felt like it was trying to get itself up into a prestige that it wasn't earning by doing that. And this film is like... it is that. It's just a bunch of kinds of scenes and characters that we've seen in other

movies but I don't know. It's like two trope salads. It's like ambrosia dressing on a Caesar ingredients or something like that. It doesn't make any sense.

[Adam laughs.]

And uh— *[Laughs.]* And I agree! Like, more plane stuff, I think, may have made this more fun to watch. I felt like I was missing *The Final Countdown* every time we were seeing the mechanics of the carrier and, like, takeoffs and landings and stuff and this movie is—leans on that so much less, y'know. Like, it'll show the plane coming in for a landing and dropping its hook but that's a three-second interstitial between two character moments. But then the character moments are not satisfying, so I'm like, "Let's just go back and watch the totally amazing mechanics of a flight deck on an aircraft carrier. That's more interesting than this."

00:57:58 Adam Host
00:58:00 Ben Host
00:58:04 John Host

Yeah.

And I think I agree. I think it's a two bloody dice movie.

Yeah. You guys have said it all. It's a great plane movie. And I learned a lot about an aircraft I didn't know that much about. I did not learn anything new about human nature. I did not learn anything new about love. Or military command structure. I didn't learn anything new about... about loss. About how to survive behind the lines.

[Adam snickers.]

I didn't learn anything new about whores—

[Ben laughs.]

—or love of a good woman.

00:58:38 Adam Host
00:58:39 John Host
00:58:51 Adam Host
00:58:55 John Host
00:58:56 Ben Host

Alligators?

Alligators. I did learn about the Phantom Shitter, but I don't have independent confirmation of that as a longstanding Navy tradition. I learned how to pee in a coffee cup but not from the film. I learned that from you.

No, you learned that from me.

The film has misinformation on that subject. *[Laughs.]*

[Adam laughs.]

00:59:01 Adam Host

This film should come with a warning about that scene!

[Ben laughs.]

00:59:05 John Host
00:59:15 Adam Host
00:59:18 Ben Host
00:59:26 Adam Host
00:59:27 John Host

Let's see. It didn't occur to me to do, but apparently—Phantom Shitters are a Navy thing.

We heard about that in a submarine context, right?

Somebody wrote into *Greatest Gen* after we did a couple of submarine movie bonus episodes and told us about that.

Oh, yeah.

Yeah, well, so, I mean that's something that I guess I—having never been in the Navy, I haven't done that deep of a dive in Navy culture and now I know. After 180 episodes of this show or whatever, we're really digging down. I'm gonna have a lot of stuff to talk to the guys at the VFW hall about.

[Ben laughs.]

But otherwise, this movie just didn't—it didn't teach me anything. It made me just sort of—I'm not like you, Adam. I can't just like, "Relax and have fun! This movie's dumb!" Like, the dumber a movie gets the more that I just crack popcorn kernels between my back teeth.

[Ben laughs.]

But I can't hate it, because—I can't hate it all the way down to zero 'cause it's such a good airplane movie. So I'm gonna go with you guys. Two bloody dice.

01:00:23 Adam Host

Wow. Alright.

01:00:24 Ben Host

Three... coequal reviews. Very rare thing to happen on *Friendly Fire*. But do we all have the same guy? John, who's your guy?

01:00:36 John Host

I thought the best guy in this movie was Ving Rhames. He's so cool in everything and in this movie he's playing, y'know, like a chief. And he seems very capable. I kept wanting to see more of the chief. I wanted him to save the day more often. He's wearing a pair of glasses that I actually own. And wore for many years. But as soon as he appeared on screen in these glasses, I was like—*[gasp.]* "This is finally—like, it closes the circle! Now I understand! I understand everything now!" I don't know. I loved seeing him and I love his voice and... I love his glasses.

01:01:26 Ben Host

Um...

01:01:27 Adam Host

This is the sound of Ben trying to pick someone other than David Schwimmer as his guy.

01:01:32 John Host

[Through laughter] Ben, who's your guy?

01:01:33 Ben Host

My guy is the dude that goes into the mud pit just 'cause I think that if you're gonna go into a mud pit you gotta go all the way in and this guy really commits to that.

[Adam laughs.]

Like, he gets completely, like, coated from head to toe like a glazed mud man. And that moment is exciting because of how committed he is to doing it. And it was like—it's a scene that makes no sense but it was one of the most entertaining scenes in the movie. Which, y'know, says more about the movie than the scene, I guess.

[Adam laughs.]

01:02:15 Adam Host

But I respected that dude's commitment to the bit.

01:02:21 Ben Host

Yeah. You don't wanna be the guy hanging off of the edge of the ride and then losing your grip and then falling in feet first.

01:02:24 Adam Host

No. That would—that sucks! You don't wanna be that guy!

01:02:26 John Host

No.

01:02:27 Adam Host

What about you, Adam?

I don't know if my guy has a name, but you know him from a couple of scenes in that briefing room. Camparelli's always throwing to him. "Movie officer, what's the film tonight?" And I love the idea that there's a guy whose job it is, is to pick the movies for everybody else to watch. That is an incredible amount of power in that room.

[John laughs.]

And it's an incredible amount of risk if he gets it wrong. If he picks a movie that he likes that no one else does? That's pretty rough.

[Ben laughs.]

So just the idea of a movie officer intrigues me greatly and I thought that the movie officer in this film chose some pretty good movies!

So he's my guy.

Good guys.

Nice.

Short reprise of theme song "War."

Music: Dramatic organ/piano music.

01:03:10	Ben	Host
01:03:11	John	Host
01:03:12	Music	Music
01:03:14	Promo	Clip

[Background noise throughout: a howling wolf and cawing crow. April speaks in a sinister voice.]

April Wolfe: Hello there, ghouls and gals. It is I, April Wolfe. I'm here to take you through the twisty, sca-a-a-ry, heart-pounding world of genre cinema on the exhilarating program known as [Switchblade Sisters](#).

[Sinister echo on the title.]

The concept is simple: I invite a female filmmaker on each week, and we discuss their favorite genre film. Listen in closely to hear past guests, like *The Babadook* director Jennifer Kent, *Winter's Bone* director Debra Granik, and so many others every Thursday on [MaximumFun.org](#). Tune in! If you dare...

[Thunder booms, something growls over April as she cackles evilly, and then all sound abruptly cuts.]

April: *[Rapidly]* It's actually a very thought-provoking show that deeply explores the craft and philosophy behind the filmmaking process while also examining film through the lens of the female gaze. So, like, you should listen.

[Same sinister echo effect] Switchblade Sisters!

01:04:00	Promo	Clip
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James Arthur: Hi, I'm James, host of *Minority Korner*, which is a—
?

Speaker 1: Podcast that's all about intersectionality. It's hosted by James with a guest host every week.

Speaker 2: Discussing all sorts of wonderful issues; nerdy and political.

Speaker 3: Pop culture—

Speaker 1: Black, queer feminism.

Speaker 4: Race. Sexuality.

Speaker 5: News.

Speaker 6: You're gonna learn your history. There's self-empowerment. And it's told by what feels like your best friend.

Speaker 2: Why should someone listen to *Minority Korner*?

Speaker 7: Why not?

Speaker 8: Oh my god. Free stuff.

James: There's not free stuff.

Speaker 1: The listeners of *Minority Korner* will enjoy some necessary lols, but mainly a look at what's happening in our world through a colorful lens.

Speaker 2: People will get the perspective of... marginalized communities.

Speaker 1: I feel heard. I feel seen.

Speaker 9: Like you said, you need to understand how to be more proactive in your community? And this is a great way to get started.

James: Join us every Friday on MaxFun, or wherever you get your podcast.

Multiple speakers: *Minority Korner!* Because together, we're the majority.

01:04:50 Music Music
01:04:52 Adam Host
01:04:55 Ben Host

Short reprise of theme song "War."
We have a movie officer on our show!
That's true!

[John laughs.]

01:05:02 Adam Host
01:05:12 John Host

And it's Lieutenant Junior-Grade D120! *[Laughs.]*
[Through laughter] Right. I'd choose a different coffee cup than that other coffee cup, John, if I were you. Maybe give it a sniff first. See if you got one that's right for the die.
This coffee cup is my pee mug and my die mug.

[Adam laughs.]

Here we go—Lieutenant JG 120-sided Die, as commanded by... Captain John Roderick of the *Friendly Fire* aircraft carrier! Here it is!

[Sound of die clanking against hard surface.]

01:05:43 Ben Host

Three! The number is three!
Not going many years earlier in time of the events depicted. A couple more than three, but not too far back! We're going to the Cuban Missile Crisis, gentlemen! A year 2000 film directed by Roger Donaldson.

[Inspiring orchestral music from the Thirteen Days soundtrack, composed by Trevor Jones, plays briefly in background.]

			It is <i>Thirteen Days!</i>
01:06:02	John	Host	<i>Thirteen Days</i> with Kevin Costner!
01:06:06	Ben	Host	Kevin Costner as John F. Kennedy...’s friend.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
01:06:13	John	Host	Here’s a movie that does not have Tom Sizemore. It is not directed by John Milius.
01:06:18	Ben	Host	This is Bruce Greenwood as Kennedy, right?
01:06:20	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:06:21	Ben	Host	Fun!
01:06:22	Adam	Host	I feel like for a long time we were always looking for the Rickles of the movies and now it’s looking for the Sizemores. We’re finding more Sizemores than Rickles these days. That’s for sure.
01:06:34	Ben	Host	I think that’s just a function of the, like—we’ve watched like a lot of nineties and 2000s movies recently. It’s just been what we’ve been rolling.
			<i>[Theme song “War” begins playing faintly in background.]</i>
01:06:42	Adam	Host	Right.
01:06:44	Ben	Host	But I did a thing where I like highlighted all of the dates of all the movies on our list and then I highlighted all the dates of the movies on the list of movies we’ve watched. And the average year was like something in the eighties, but it was surprisingly close. Like, what the average came out to was surprisingly close in a fun way.
01:07:07	John	Host	I remember seeing this movie in the theater, so it’ll be interesting to revisit it. It’s been <u>20</u> years.
01:07:14	Ben	Host	Can you believe it.
01:07:15	John	Host	Since I saw this movie in the theatre. Crazy.
01:07:18	Ben	Host	Yeah. Alright, dudes. We’ll leave it with Robs from here. So for John Roderick and Adam Pranica, I’ve been Ben Harrison. To the victor go the spoiler alerts.
			<i>[Theme song plays briefly at full volume before receding into background of dialogue.]</i>
01:07:31	Rob Schulte	Host	<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.
			Are you looking for more <i>Friendly Fire</i> ? Last year at this time, your hosts reviewed <i>The Mouse that Roared</i> from 1959. It’s a satirical comedy with a “ban the bomb” theme starring Peter Sellers.
			How about supporting <i>Friendly Fire</i> ? You can do that by going to MaximumFun.org/join . For as little as \$5 a month, you can gain access to our Pork Chop bonus feed. And not only that—you get <u>all</u> the bonus content brought to you by the shows from the Maximum Fun network. And don’t forget you can now follow us on Twitter and Instagram under the handles FriendlyFireRSS. You do <u>not</u> wanna miss out on that online content! Thanks for listening. We’ll see ya next week with another episode of <i>Friendly Fire</i> !
			<i>[Theme song plays at full volume before fading out entirely.]</i>
01:08:54	Music	Music	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:08:55	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org.
01:08:57	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.

01:08:58	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:08:59	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.