

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	"Barbarian Horde" composed by Hans Zimmer and Lisa Gerrard from <i>Gladiator: Music from the Motion Picture</i> plays while Ben speaks. It's an ethereal, dramatic piece, beginning with a flute underscored by ominous woodwinds and strings.
00:00:03	John Roderick	Host	You know, every once in a while, Hollywood makes a movie that justifies the whole sordid enterprise. All the crazy money and soulless fame and exploitative sex and crashed cars and smeared mascara and various other smeared things. And nose jobs and boob jobs and penis augmentation procedures that were billed as foot surgeries. And prop rental places and Chateaus Marmont and wasted sushi sitting by the pool and Ayahuasca ceremonies where nothing was learned. And overpriced monkey adrenal glands and what Venice Beach used to be and what it's become. And Robert Evans' house that he lost and Jack Nicholson bought back for him. And Marlon Brando's house that Nicholson bought and tore down. And the neglected dogs of every aspiring comedian in Atwater Village whose newly retired parents are about to cut them off.

And every car chase that somehow finds its way into the LA River, even though the LA River is not on the way to anywhere, and it isn't between any two places that anyone would ever chase a car from or to. And especially not in the way you always see it where one driver seems to know where every pile of trash is and the other driver didn't even know there was a river in LA. And most of all, that particular way that production people have of making you feel that they could kill you with a hammer right here on the sidewalk in front of your own home and never be prosecuted for it, just because they're getting paid to put gaffer tape where Scott Baio's stunt double is supposed to stand. The whole of gyre of human misery turns suddenly and briefly to triumph with the production of a single film.

I'm not saying *Gladiator* is that film, because this is just the intro. The whole point of this podcast is that we review it later. Sometimes in these intros, it's hard for me not to just say, "This movie is worse than acne. And I don't even remember what we said about it, but I'm sure that Adam loved it. One eyepatch," or whatever. I don't want to spoil the show. It's a good show!

What I will say about *Gladiator* is that it makes you think, leaving the theater, that you're pretty much an expert on the Roman Empire now. And also, hmm, pretty good at hand-to-hand combat. And maybe if you talked a little less, people would take you more seriously. And from now on, you're gonna talk less and be more intense and see how people like it.

00:02:24	John	Host	<p>What you won't learn in <i>Gladiator</i> is anything good or useful about sex. It's a major rapey perv-fest full of palpable malice. And even Maximus' chastity is weirdly scary. And that's not even counting the little figurines in the leather pouch. But on the plus side, there are more tunics and baby-oiled biceps than a stack of 1970s weightlifting magazines. But it all feels smart and historical and important, so the beefcake is cloaked in virtue.</p> <p>I'm not gonna sing the praises of Russell Crowe either, because it's not on brand for me to earnestly appreciate the intense commitment of some dumb, foam-throwing actor from a far off desert planet. But I will say that every once in a while, God winds up one of these human wolverines and sets them loose on the world as a prank. And in this case, we were lucky that Russell Crowe stumbled into acting instead of collecting bounties on kangaroo poachers or training falcons to hunt cats or working in a semi-official capacity for an unlicensed casino.</p> <p>Well, this is a war movie. Or, at least it's a war movie enough for me. It's a Ridley Scott film from the year 2000. It won Best Picture at the Academy Awards for that year. Crowe won Best Actor. Plus Oscars for costumes, sound, and effects. There was once a dream that was Rome. You could only whisper it. <i>[Whispering more and more dramatically as he continues to speak]</i> Anything more than a whisper, and it would vanish. It was so fragile.</p> <p>Today on <i>Friendly Fire: Gladiator</i>.</p>
00:03:58	Music	Transition	<p><i>[The theme finishes in an orchestral swell, and a drumroll begins, which leads into the theme song.]</i></p> <p>"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> <p><i>[Song fades down and plays quietly as host begins to speak.]</i></p>
00:04:19	Ben Harrison	Host	<p>Welcome to Friendly Fire, the war movie podcast that—when we die and die we shall—our transition will be to the sound of <i>[light sound of clapping]</i>. I'm Ben Harrison.</p> <p><i>[Adam and John chuckle.]</i></p>

00:04:30	Adam Pranica	Host	I'm Adam Pranica.
00:04:33	John	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> And I'm John Roderick.
00:04:35	Ben	Host	I think people will be happy when we die, right? They'll give us a little... little clap for our trouble.
00:04:41	Adam	Host	That was the moment where I both loved and hated Proximo. Because I'm like, "Come on, Proximo! Like, do more than the golf clap, right? It's not gonna be—it's not gonna be that sarcastic."
00:04:53	Ben	Host	I always wondered about Proximo, because when I first saw this movie, in the scene where he dies, I just thought something looked weird about him—
00:05:02	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:05:03	Ben	Host	—but I could never put my finger on it. And I finally read about the fact that he—the guy that played him—passed away <u>during</u> production, and they had to fake his last few scenes.
00:05:13	Adam	Host	Oliver Reed's whole deal with this movie is amazing. Like, he— <i>[chuckles briefly]</i> he was offer-only forever. And he was working on some production and the actor he was with was like, "You know, this is this is a Ridley Scott joint. Do you think you could maybe suspend your offer-only and actually go read for him?" And Oliver Reed's like, "Fuck that!" And then he finally kind of got worn down.
00:05:37	John	Host	Wow.
00:05:38	Adam	Host	And then he did it. And I think we're all glad that he did. I think he's a great part of this movie.
00:05:43	Ben	host	It's an amazing thing to think about an actor, like, being at that level where, like, \$100 million Ridley Scott swords-and-sandals movie does not entice you at all. Like, "Uh, yeah, I'll give it a try. Like, I'll—I'll take a crack at it."
00:06:00	John	Host	He was a—he was that classic era of British hard-drinking movie stars. He was Keith Moon's drinking buddy. So, I don't—
00:06:09	Adam	Host	God, that's awesome. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:06:10	John	Host	—I don't think that it was so much that he had—he was at that level, exactly, as an actor. It was that he was at that level as a drunk.
00:06:21	Ben	Host	So it just didn't occur to him to accommodate anyone.
00:06:25	John	Host	<i>[Chuckles]</i> Yeah. I mean, he died during the filming of this movie, but he was the ripe old age of 61.
00:06:31	Ben	Host	Being a boozier is hard on the heart, I guess.
00:06:33	John	Host	Yeah, he raised hell.
00:06:35	Adam	Host	That's not the only drinking story having to do with this movie. I read that Joaquin Phoenix was so nervous about acting across Russell Crowe and Richard Harris that Russell Crowe and Richard Harris had to go get him drunk to loosen him up.

[Ben and John laugh loudly.]

He was too tight.

00:06:54	John	Host	Wow.
00:06:55	Adam	Host	And they—and they totally did. Like, he did some scenes drunk because of it. It totally worked.
00:07:00	Ben	Host	That's a—it's a very old-fashioned movie in that way.
00:07:02	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:07:03	Ben	Host	Some of the stars are drunk sometimes.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:07:05	John	Host	I noticed for the first time—a thing that I love about Richard Harris that I'd never really put together until this movie, but Richard Harris is a mouth breather.
00:07:14	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:07:15	John	Host	And the whole opening scene of the film, he's Marcus Aurelius, and he's watching the battle unfold. And he's mouth-breathing the whole time. And it's his signature look, but I finally put it together, and I was like, "Right on, dude. High five. You made it this far."
00:07:32	Adam	Host	It's interesting how dispassionate a person looks when they breathe that way. If he were tightly lipped upon his horse watching the battle, I think that's a very different vibe to him—
00:07:44	John	Host	Mm-hmm.
00:07:45	Adam	Host	—then the one that we get in this movie, which really does make him look sick and feeble.
00:07:50	John	Host	Yeah. Or like he's pooping. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:07:52	Adam	Host	Yeah, yeah.
00:07:55	Ben	Host	Well, yeah. You wanna breathe through your mouth when you're pooping for obvious reasons.
			<i>[John chuckles affirmingly.]</i>
00:07:59	Clip	Clip	<i>[Sounds of a fight, with some crashing and muffled yelling in the background.]</i>
00:08:03	Ben	Host	That opening battle scene is so incredible. It draws some interesting stuff from <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> . Like the, you know, 45-degree shutter angle for the combat is very <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> —Normandy Beach scene.
00:08:19	John	Host	Explain what that means.

00:08:20	Bewn	Host	The way a camera's shutter works is that it's a—it's like a spinning disk. And the shutter angle is like the amount of that disk that opens the aperture to exposure. So you typically shoot on a 180-degree open shutter. So, that means half the time that the film—the piece of film is in the register, it's exposed to light and the other half, it's not exposed to light. And, you know, the amount of time it's exposed to light has implications for how bright the film is, but also motion blur. And there's almost no motion blur when you narrow the shutter angle to 45 degrees. And that's why those scenes are so, like, kinetic and almost stop-motion looking.
00:09:07	John	Host	Oohhh. I see.
00:09:10	Adam	Host	I had read one of the reasons they did that wasn't just stylistic, though, Ben. It's that they were losing the light on the day. And they didn't want to reset. Like, they didn't want to relight things. And so they depended on shutter angle to allow for more light.
00:09:26	Ben	Host	Wow. Yeah, I mean, like, you only get to burn the forest down one time, right? <i>[Chuckles.]</i>
00:09:31	Adam	Host	Right, yeah.
00:09:32	John	Host	You can't reset the entire forest.
00:09:34	Adam	Host	It's such a great tone-setter of a scene in a movie like this. I think we've talked about this before, but this is really Hans Zimmer as a main character in a movie.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			That score is so center and central to all of the important moments in this film, and it starts there.
00:09:55	Ben	Host	Yeah. I'd forgotten which movie this score was from, because I feel like this has—just, people have gone on to use music cues from this film—
00:10:05	Adam	Host	Mm-hmm.
00:10:06	Ben	Host	To indicate, like, prestige action drama in cultural reference ever since.
00:10:12	Adam	Host	Right.
00:10:13	Ben	Host	But it's—it's pretty iconic. He got sued for part of this score, right? Like, it sounded a little like something else?
00:10:20	Adam	Host	It was a little too much like Holsts' "The Planets."
00:10:24	Ben	Host	Yeaahh.
00:10:25	Adam	Host	But I think a lot of—a lot of movie scores around this era could have been sued for such a thing.
00:10:32	Ben	Host	It's such an interesting, like, moment in cinema, because it's got, like, <i>Saving Private Ryan</i> stuff going on in it, but it also feels very old-fashioned in a lot of ways. And yet, like, I don't think you could have <i>Lord of the Rings</i> or the Marvel cinematic universe without this movie. Like, I—
00:10:52	Adam	Host	Oh!

00:10:53	Ben	Host	—I think it kind of presages a lot of filmmaking that came after it. The idea of, you know, characters fighting in a space that is 90% green screen, you know. <i>[Chuckles.]</i>
00:11:05	John	Host	The opening battle is among the great battle scenes of—like, we don't get this very often, right? We—there are swords-and-sorcery battles—or, swords-and-sandals battles, I guess. There's no sorcery in this. But we usually see them depicted in kind of desert environments, you know, if you're looking at Roman battles. But you don't get this—Romans on the edge of the empire fighting the Germans in swampy forests. And it's so evocative. You can—you can really smell it.
00:11:38	Adam	Host	Mm-hmm.
00:11:39	John	Host	And the fact that it's freezing cold. It's—watching it, I was watching this movie with a friend, and she said, "I don't remember this whole opening." And I was like, "It's because it's like its own movie."
00:11:51	Adam	Host	<i>[Ben makes a few affirming sounds as Adam speaks.]</i> Yeaahh. There's so much detail to it. Also, it's not just two armies running to the center of a field and fighting. Like, I feel like you get that kind of fight in a <i>Braveheart</i> , and you feel like, "Well, that's all you can do with a set piece like this." But the details of this battle having to do with, like—I love the mini-trench of flammable liquid that the archers used. That little detail was neat. And the pots that were filled with incendiary that were catapulted through the air and hit—would hit the trees. Like, it's also that first moment where you recognize the greatness of Maximus as a leader. He's granted the—not just the allegiance of his army, but the love of that army, by virtue of him—his just being able to walk through it like he's anyone else. He's the Everyman.
00:12:42	Ben	Host	It's a save-the-cat moment, because, like, he's got all this status, but he has a very, like, egalitarian relationship with the men, you know. Like, going around and give them a little, you know, fist to the chest like, "Hey buddy, we're gonna—we're gonna take these guys down." Whereas Quintus—his, like, his lieutenant—is there, being a dickhead to the men. And, you know, saying, like, "These people should know that they're conquered." Which, you know, immediately makes you think, like, "Oh, okay, like, Quintus is not necessarily the nicest dude in the world."
00:13:19	Adam	Host	Quintus is such an interesting character to me. Like, maybe one of the most interesting in the film is his story. And this is like that moment where you get to understand their differences, where, like, Maximus is like, "Fuck the Yankees—" <i>[Ben chuckles affirmingly.]</i> "—but I still like watching baseball." And Quintus is like, "No. <u>Fuck</u> the Yankees. Like, I would—I would run my car into their team bus if I could." Like, there's a difference between being sporting and being the way Quintus is.
00:13:46	Ben	Host	Right. But he's not a weasel, crucially. Like, if he was a weasel, he would still be Team Emperor in the end. The choices he makes are not always, like, totally expedient, like, what's best for Quintus in this moment.

00:14:01	Adam	Host	I think what Quintus is best at is that he sizes up a moment immediately. And I think that's what makes him the ur-weasel, is that he—that moment at the end, he absolutely knows the moment. And he knows the result. And he knows that by asking the guards to sheathe their swords, like, he's ensured his own survival.
00:14:23	Ben	Host	Hm.
00:14:24	John	Host	Yeah, he's an interesting character, Quintus, because he's in the movie throughout. We see him over and over, but we are never granted much insight into what his life is like or what he's thinking. He's—he's there at the beginning as kind of a, like, a high-ranking dick. And then he's kind of just a rubber-stamping dick all the way through. And then right at the end, yeah, we need somebody to step forward and he does it, but I never loved him. I never loved him, Quintus.
			<i>[Adam laughs quietly.]</i>
00:14:58	Ben	Host	He makes a pretty big choice when the emperor dies, which is side up with—with Commodus. Which I guess is just because, like neither Marcus Aurelius or Maximus have apparently told anyone else what the plan is for the succession. If they had just told <u>one</u> other person—
			<i>[John laughs briefly.]</i>
00:15:21	Adam	Host	And then <u>they</u> tell a person?
00:15:22	Clip	Clip	Wayne Campbell (Wayne's World): <i>[Voice is electronically distorted, echoing]</i> And they tell their friends, and so on and so on and so on. <i>[Voice resumes a regular tone]</i> You know how these things go.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:15:29	John	Host	But Maximus isn't gonna step in and say, "Hey, wait, wait, wait. He—he made <u>me</u> protector of Rome."
00:15:35	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:15:36	John	Host	Cause Maximus didn't want the job. It's an example of a short-sightedness on Maximus's part. Because he thought he was gonna be able to just waltz back to Spain.
00:15:38	Adam	Host	I think there's something interesting about how alike and different Quintus is to Cicero. Because Cicero is in a very similar position, I think, in his proximity to power. And I think Cicero is—I think—crucially, at enough distance to where he does not have to act for Commodus. He doesn't have to do anything awful on his behalf the way that—that Quintus has to.
00:16:19	John	Host	Cicero's a servant.
00:16:21	Adam	Host	But he—he's no longer a servant after Maximus is arrested, right? He's a free agent, isn't he?
00:16:28	John	Host	Yeah, but without any power.
00:16:30	Ben	Host	I got the sense that he stayed with the army. Like, he continued to camp with them.

00:16:36	Adam	Host	We see so little of him until Maximus arrives in Rome. I kind of wanted—like, and we're, like, relieved to see him in the crowd.
00:16:44	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:16:45	Clip	Clip	Gracchus (<i>Gladiator</i>): He enters Rome like a conquering hero. But what has he conquered?
00:16:49	Ben	Host	When Commodus returns to Rome, there's no mention of, like, what happened to Rome's greatest general. Like, there isn't a cover story of, like, "Yeah. Tough—tough news. He, like, caught the plague while we were travelling back." Or, "Yeah, we found out he was scheming on the emperor and we had to what we had to do," or anything. Like, there—doesn't seem like anybody's curious about, like, "Hey, good job winning all of the wars. Uh..." [<i>Chuckles.</i>]
00:17:18	Adam	Host	And who would be the most curious in that moment? It would be Lucilla, right?
00:17:22	John	Host	Yeah.
00:17:23	Adam	Host	And she's <u>there</u> in that moment. And she doesn't even ask.
00:17:25	Ben	Host	She could tell that asking would be detrimental to her health. [<i>Laughs.</i>]
00:17:28	Adam	Host	Yeah. [<i>Chuckling lightly</i>] That would be bad. Right.
00:17:32	John	host	In a lot of movies like this, the script is really pretty weak. You know, it's a high-concept movie, but it—but it's a janky script. Especially in a situation like this one, where there's so much artistic license being taken. There are real figures from history alongside fictional people. Like, the actual outcome... it's not quite <i>Inglorious Basterds</i> -level, but the outcome of the—of history is monkeyed with. You know, like, they're all real people, but this isn't how it went at all. And yet, this script—and I read quite a bit about the fact that there was no script and—and it was— [<i>Ben laughs.</i>] —they were making it up as they went.
00:18:18	Ben	Host	[<i>Amused</i>] Like, Russell Crowe wrote a lot of his own dialogue.
00:18:22	Adam	Host	It seems like the most terrifying position to be in if you're an actor. Like, I totally understand what a fucking twit he was on this set. Because he's—I think he's seeing his career flash before his eyes.
00:18:35	John	Host	What's astonishing is that it <u>works</u> ! Not only does it work—
00:18:40	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:18:41	John	Host	—but it—the story is <u>great</u> . The script is <u>great</u> . There's depth in this movie that it—when it happens, it's kind of astonishing. Over and over, you're given more and more complications, but it all—it all works. There's not—there's no storyline that doesn't get resolved. There's no character that you see at the beginning that you don't see at the end.
00:19:04	Adam	Host	[<i>Thoughtfully</i>] Yeah.

00:19:05	John	Host	And Russell Crowe is a flawed man. We see his agony. Like, how is it possible to have made a film like that where—where going into it—according to all reports, what script there was was lifeless on the page. None of that character development was in it. You know, all of the stuff about—I mean, the initial draft of the script, Russell Crowe’s family wasn’t even murdered. That was just, like, thrown in there to give his character a complication. Well, it turned out to be—it’s like the heart of the film. That is— <u>that</u> among all the other things about this movie that are mind-blowing, that’s the one that I just can’t... I cannot believe—because we watch so many movies where it’s clear the script has gone through 50 hands.
00:19:54	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:19:55	John	Host	And the movie is just dragged down by the bad writing.
00:20:00	Adam	Host	It really made me appreciate Russell Crowe more than I ever have. Because, I mean, if he’s not believing in the quality of the words he has to read, and he’s still giving it what he’s giving it through such a flawed production, I really think that’s part of the magic of this movie and the magic of him as an actor. Like, he redeems—he redeems the quality of the script. And that’s a quality that changed throughout the production.
00:20:29	Ben	Host	It’s something I always wonder about, ‘cause, like, you know, when I read, like, a novel or when I read a screenplay, I try to imagine how a character might feel in a filmed presentation of it. And it seems like he understood who this character was and what he was all about before the script did.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			You know? Like—
00:20:49	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:20:50	Ben	Host	—like, he wanted to do this film, like, you know, fought for it and got the part. And then, you know, they started—I think they had 32 pages of bad script when they started shooting. and, like, he came up with saying, “Strength and honor.” Like, he came up with describing the house that he wants to return to.
00:21:12	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:21:13	Ben	Host	Like, that’s him describing his real house in Australia, apparently. And, like, it just fills this story with vivacity that it didn’t apparently have when they, you know, when they set out to go shoot it. And—
00:21:27	Adam	Host	I think it’s important to note that those details are <u>him</u> . And that supports your argument, Ben. Like, it’s what Russell Crowe gives it himself, through his own life experience and his own appreciation for the details of his life.
00:21:39	Ben	Host	Right.
00:21:40	Adam	Host	Like, that—that’s what makes Maximus real.

00:21:42	Ben	Host	And his willingness to, like, back that conviction up with being recalcitrant. Like, I think that there are—there's a lot of conversations happening in Hollywood now about, like, people who are assholes to work with and whether or not, like, we should tolerate that as a—as an industry anymore. But, like, in this case he was walking off set when he didn't get answers he liked, because the movie wouldn't have worked if they didn't, you know, answer his questions satisfactorily.
00:22:13	Adam	Host	Yeah, it's rare to find yourself on the side of an onset asshole. <i>[Ben laughs lightly.]</i> But I utterly am here, in this case.
00:22:20	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:22:21	John	Host	I just can't imagine—especially in a production with this many legends in it—Russell Crowe was 36 years old and was not yet a big star, right? He'd been in <i>L.A. Confidential</i> , a couple of other things...
00:22:37	Adam	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Can you imagine being in a scene across from Richard Harris, and you're the one that walks offset and Richard Harris is left, like, breathing through his mouth like, "What—what is wrong with that guy?" <i>[All three laugh.]</i>
00:22:52	John	Host	Yeah, his Best Actor Oscar was always due to him, given the quality of the performance. But when you realize what he—what he put into this movie, boy, he kind of deserves Best Screenplay, too. <i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
00:23:11	Ben	Host	Yeah, it's kind of amazing.
00:23:13	John	Host	But credit to Ridley Scott. Credit—I guess—to the editors? The process of making this film in post-production must have been incredible, right?
00:23:22	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:23:23	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:23:24	John	Host	Right? They had to invent two whole minutes of Oliver Reed using digit—year-2000 digital technology.
00:23:30	Adam	Host	Imagine being the extra that had Oliver-Reed body. <i>[Ben laughs heartily.]</i> And, like, you're being—like, that's a real—that's damning— <i>[chuckling]</i> —like, you can't feel all the way good about that, right? <i>[John makes an affirming sound.]</i> Like, "Hey you're getting a field promotion to on-camera. Except we need your body because it looks the most like Oliver Reed's body."

00:23:51	Ben	Host	<p>Yeah. “The director said you had a real rockin’ Reed bod?”</p> <p><i>[Adam chuckles.]</i></p> <p>“And I’m not sure what that means, but he asked me to bring you to his trailer.”</p>
00:23:59	John	Host	<p>No, they went out to the—they went out to the Teamsters that were leaning against their trucks, and they were like, “Let’s see... you!”</p>
00:24:05	Adam	Host	<p>“Uh, by the way, here are the clothes he died in.”</p> <p><i>[Ben and John chuckle.]</i></p>
00:24:10	Music	Transition	<p>Theme music plays, “War” by Edwin Starr.</p> <p><i>War!</i></p>
00:24:12	Promo	Promo	<p>Music: Three bouncy, electronic synth chords.</p> <p>Graham Clark: Hi, my name’s Graham Clark, and I’m one half of the podcast <i>Stop Podcasting Yourself</i>, a show that we’ve recorded for many, many years. And at the moment, instead of being in person, we’re recording remotely. And you wouldn’t even notice—you don’t even notice the lag.</p> <p><i>[Long beat.]</i></p> <p>Dave Shumka: That’s right, Graham! Aaand the great thing about this—</p> <p>Graham: Oh—</p> <p>Dave: Go ahead?</p> <p>Graham: No, you go ahead.</p> <p>Dave: Okay, and—</p> <p>Graham: Okay. Go ahead?</p>
00:24:43	Promo	Promo	<p>Dave: And you can listen to us every week on MaximumFun.org.</p> <p>Graham: Or wherever you get your podcasts.</p> <p>Dave: Your podcasts.</p> <p>Music: Three bouncy, electronic synth chords.</p>

00:24:54	Promo	Promo	<p>Music: Fun, upbeat music.</p> <p>Dave Hill: Hi! I'm Dave Hill. From before. And I'm very excited to bring Dave Hill's Podcasting Incident back to Maximum Fun, where it belongs! You can get brand new episodes every Friday on MaximumFun.org. Or, you know, wherever.</p> <p>And what my partner Chris Gersbeck and I might lack in specific subject matter on our podcast, we make up for in special effects! Chris, add something cool. Right here!</p> <p><i>[Gunshot or whip snap.]</i></p> <p>Also, we have explosions!</p> <p><i>[Explosion.]</i></p> <p>Animal noises.</p> <p><i>[A goat braying]</i></p> <p>And sometimes, even this!</p> <p><i>[Two comedic timpani "boings," a springier "sproing" sound, and what sounds like a human scream.]</i></p> <p><i>Dave Hill's Podcasting Incident!</i> Every Friday on Maximum Fun. Chris, do another explosion right here.</p> <p><i>[Another explosion, right here.]</i></p>
00:25:39	Music	Transition	<p>Theme music plays, "War" by Edwin Starr.</p> <p><i>Huh!</i></p> <p><i>Yeah!</i></p>
00:25:40	John	Host	Do you think ancient Rome had a podcast equivalent of <i>Friendly Fire</i> where they reviewed gladiatorial matches and talked about their verisimilitude to the historical battles that they purportedly depicted?
00:25:55	Adam	Host	I mean, that's what the great philosophers would talk about with the little kids up on the mountaintop, right?
00:26:02	Ben	Host	<i>[Chuckles]</i> Yeah. Like, I thought it was so cool, like, that they're showing these, you know, reenactments of great Roman battles, and they have this historical aspect to them and also a propaganda aspect. I read that one version of the script had the gladiators endorsing products, and I thought, "What a shame that that's not in the movie." 'Cause there's so many things that are like now, but just ancient, you know? That's one of the things that's so attractive about spending two and a half hours in ancient Rome, I guess.
00:26:35	John	Host	Yeah. Did—have you watched the miniseries <i>Rome</i> ?
00:26:39	Ben	Host	Huh, I think I missed that one.
00:26:41	Adam	Host	Yeah, I haven't seen it either.
00:26:42	John	Host	Yeah, for people who are sitting around in quarantine wondering what to do with their lives, the miniseries <i>Rome</i> —

00:26:51	Ben	Host	Step one, MaximumFun.org/join . Step two, miniseries <i>Rome</i> .
00:26:58	John	Host	That's right. First, donate to the production of <i>Friendly Fire</i> podcast. But <i>Rome</i> was a TV show created by John Milius. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:27:10	Adam	Host	Helll yeah. Alright, well, you got my attention now.
			<i>[Ben chuckles.]</i>
00:27:14	John	Host	It only ran for two seasons on HBO in 2005. And it was—and they couldn't keep making it, 'cause it was too expensive.
00:27:22	Ben	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Uh-huh.
00:27:23	John	Host	Uh, but it's a <u>great</u> television show. Just phenomenal.
00:27:28	Adam	Host	<i>[Intrigued]</i> Hm.
00:27:29	John	Host	And it was made in this post- <i>Gladiator</i> universe.
00:27:33	Ben	Host	Is it like, "What if it was <i>Gladiator</i> , but Connie Nielsen had her top off half the time?"
			<i>[John chuckles.]</i>
00:27:40	Adam	Host	Hey, man. I'm—I'm not making fun of Connie Nielsen in this movie. I think Connie Nielsen walked so Angelina Jolie could run. Her Jolie vibes in this film are—are impeccable and amazing.
00:27:52	Ben	Host	She's fucking great in this movie. I'm just making fun of John Milius, that he would probably have it be a much hornier show than this movie.
00:27:59	Adam	Host	Oh, yeah.
00:28:00	Ben	Host	But the horniness in this movie is needle-pegging. And between Russell Crowe and Connie Nielsen, it's like this, "Oh, come on, man! Just, like, get over your—your dead family and go for Lucilla!" And—and then she turns around and has a scene with Commodus, and you're like <i>[makes a few nervous sounds]</i> .
00:28:20	Adam	Host	Where they get about as far.
00:28:21	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:28:22	Adam	Host	It's interesting, like, how in-parallel those relationships are, right?
00:28:25	Ben	Host	<i>[Thoughtfully]</i> Yeah. And I think that, like, I don't know. There's something about, like, the suspension of disbelief that's so interesting, where you accept immediately that these two are siblings. And then every time he makes an advance on her, it is utterly creepy.
00:28:44	Adam	Host	There's an undercurrent to Joaquin Phoenix in everything he does that feels threatening—
00:28:50	Ben	Host	Mm-hmm.
00:28:51	Adam	Host	—or on the verge of tears. There's, like, an intensity there that—it's something that he has that very few other people do. I think you could cast Commodus with any other actor and I don't think that that's a quality to this character that he's able to bring to it.
00:29:07	John	Host	Joaquin Phoenix is <u>terrifying</u> .

00:29:10	Ben	Host	Yeah, it kind of hinges on how Rome is in terrible hands if Commodus gets to keep the throne.
00:29:17	John	Host	Yeah. If Commodus was just mean—if he was just a bad guy the movie would be much less. The sentimentality of the movie and the kind of corniness of it would be a lot more to the fore.
00:29:32	Ben	Host	Mm.
00:29:33	John	Host	It's—it's just that Commodus seems like a character—he's the thing that locates it in 180 A.D., somehow.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			You know? He's the one that makes it feel like this isn't just some Hollywood romp.
00:29:51	Adam	Host	I think Joaquin Phoenix embodies the part of the film that people like us—I think—appreciate most and the regular filmgoer might recognize and appreciate least. I think a certain filmgoer loves <i>Gladiator</i> for its action scenes, but I think what makes <i>Gladiator</i> great to me is what it does with tension. And it's those moments before the gladiator scenes where I actually felt nauseous. I felt nauseous like three times in this film. And they were ahead of those big battles.
00:30:23	John	Host	Yeah.
00:30:24	Adam	Host	The way that this film creates tension and lets you sit in it before something exciting happens is a quality of it that makes it great. But I think Joaquin Phoenix's scenes are also every single time an embodiment of that. Like, things are happening slowly. He's choosing every work super-specifically. Where he is resting his eyes in a scene is an example of this.
00:30:51	John	Host	Yeah.
00:30:52	Adam	Host	The way it's lit. The way he moves. Every—every part of every scene that Joaquin Phoenix is in is about that kind of tension. And because it's impossible to live in a movie where you experience that kind of tension for all two and a half hours, like, you can't have it all the time. But when you get it, I think it makes you appreciate those moments so much more. It's like the punctuation of the gladiatorial combat scenes just serve these quiet, more tense scenes all the more, I think.
00:31:21	Ben	Host	I think that another thing that's really powerful about his performance is that, while all of his public actions are execrable, the, like, private Commodus—the one that is, you know, having a conversation with a senator in his chambers or whatever—is, like, motivated by things that are very relatable. Like, “God, I can't understand, like, why every time I do this—”
00:31:47	Adam	Host	<i>[Amused]</i> Yeah. Uh-huh.
00:31:48	Ben	Host	“—like, they like him more and they like me less.” And it's just, like, somehow you can kind of get inside his head.
00:31:56	Clip	Clip	Speaker: I have the freedom to totally stop anytime I want.

00:31:59	Ben	Host	He's not just a—like, a villain full-stop. He's dimensionalized in this way, where you can—you almost sympathize with him in certain moments.
00:32:08	John	Host	Yeah.
00:32:09	Adam	Host	His pain is relatable and familiar, but what he does with his pain is not.
00:32:15	Ben	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
00:32:16	John	Host	<p>And it's Lucilla that is the source of so much of the stomach-in-knots of the second half of the movie. You know, Lucilla also isn't entirely blameless, right? She was there when her father died. She knew her brother killed him. Her actions were—or, her choices were limited in that moment, but, you know, she's living in the palace and acting on behalf of her son.</p> <p>And she gets in too deep, right? She doesn't realize how—the danger she's in until it's too late. And then she's... she's caught between Commodus and the world. And the tension in those scenes where she's just sitting there, kind of staring straight ahead, and we see him coming in from, you know, stage left and just sort of, like, slowly just ogle her. And you're like <i>[makes gurgling sounds]</i>.</p> <p><i>[Ben chuckles.]</i></p>
00:33:17	Adam	Host	<p>It's such a miracle how much tension is in those scenes. And then you're like, "Well, this is—this is pegging the needle for tension." And then you get that little B-story scene. And you get the version of shattered that Lucilla becomes after—after having to out the plan in order to save her son. It's exquisitely done, I think. Like, you don't think that Joaquin has another gear to him. And when you see that scene, you realize he does. He has all the gears.</p>
00:33:49	John	Host	Where his eyes are welling up with tears of betrayal and rage. And you're like, "How do you—"
00:33:54	Adam	Host	Yeah. Yeah.
00:33:55	John	Host	I mean, it's one thing to be able to cry on camera. It's another thing to be able to cry tears of betrayal and rage.
00:34:00	Adam	Host	<p>It's like Joaquin saw the scene where Russell Crowe is snot-crying.</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>
00:34:04	John	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Oh, and that's great, too.
00:34:06	Adam	Host	And he's like, "Guess what? I'm, like—if this is a cry contest, I've got this."
			<i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
			And he does!
00:34:12	Ben	Host	Oh, man.

00:32:13	Adam	Host	They both kind of suspend their vanity in an interesting way in those scenes, right? Like, Joaquin Phoenix is a—is a beautiful-looking man, and yet in this scene he is—in this movie he's often puffy and on the verge of tears and—and ranting and raving. This is also a quality of a Joaquin Phoenix choice. Like, he chooses roles like this that aren't flattering. And Russell Crowe, I mean, we laughed about the snot-cry, but I was very affected by that scene. And it's because he was willing to go all the way. He was able to suspend his vanity.
00:34:47	John	Host	When Maximus meets Juba and they're kind of talking about their families and talking about the afterlife—and I never noticed it before watching it this time—and, you know, I've seen this movie several times. But Maximus says to him, you know—they're—he's like, "Do you believe that you'll see your family after you're dead?" And Juba says, "Yes." And then he says that his wife and son are already waiting for him. When Juba says, "Well, you know, I'll be in the afterlife a long time before my wife and child," Maximus kind of entreats him and says, "And you would wait for them, right?" And Juba says, "Absolutely." And I never noticed it before, but it's a scene where—where Maximus is looking for reassurance that his wife and kid are in the afterlife and are gonna wait for him. And are gonna be—I guess, faithful to him in heaven?
00:35:53	Ben	Host	Right.
00:35:54	John	Host	And he's asking because he want—because he's—he is planning to be faithful to them. He's not gonna take a mistress. He's not gonna be with Lucilla.
00:36:06	Adam	Host	And does he have enough time to do what he wants to do, also?
00:36:09	John	Host	It's this tiny little scene—a tiny little moment that Russell Crowe didn't need to put in there. It didn't have to—knowing what I know now about the making of the film, it is not a moment that is the result of some genius screenwriter who had the whole script mapped out. It's Russell Crowe making himself look vulnerable and—and without confidence in that relationship with Juba.
			And that is their relationship, right? Juba is constantly kind of almost paternal to him.
			<i>[Ben and Adam make affirming sounds.]</i>
			Which is, you know, it's a real inversion of what you would—what you would normally get out of that.
00:36:52	Adam	Host	I like that they're roommates—
			<i>[Ben and John chuckle.]</i>
			—at the Colosseum. I think that's really cool. Like, we don't get why that is. But I'm glad they are. And I wish we got a few more scenes of them being roommates. 'Cause the ones we do get are really nice.

00:37:06	Ben	Host	<p>I think that Maximus' emotional journey is also just such an interesting and unexpected path in this movie. 'Cause it's—it sort of starts feeling like this is going to be a revenge movie. And it hits a lot of the beats of a revenge movie, but at a certain point he realizes that there's something, like, bigger he can do than revenge. Something more important.</p> <p>Like, if it was a straight vengeance play, he would have—he would have taken the arrowhead and stuck it in Commodus' neck that first moment they're face-to-face in the Colosseum. But like, through conversations he has with Proximo about becoming, you know, a little bit more of a showman and conversations he has with other people about, like, actually trying to get done what Marcus Aurelius was trying to get done. Like, it's a bigger middle finger to Commodus to, like, carry out Marcus Aurelius' dying wish than just to stab him in the neck, you know?</p>
00:38:10	Adam	Host	It's a bigger arrow.
00:38:11	Ben	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Yeah.
00:38:12	John	Host	There is a lot about the movie that you—we cannot ignore how Hollywood epic it is in a lot of ways. I think over the years, it's gone up in esteem for me. Such that it <u>ranks</u> now. You know, it's—it's in that list of movies where you go, "Hey, I don't have a lot to say about this movie that isn't praise."
00:38:38	Adam	Host	I kind of flinched before seeing it, thinking that it would be subject to that <i>Titanic</i> effect of, like— <i>Titanic</i> was three years before this, but the effects work in that film I don't think have aged nearly as well as they have here. This is a film that leans very hard on its ability to make you believe that this is Rome in all of its scale. And I was shocked and delighted to find that I believed it.
00:39:09	Ben	Host	There's really, like, very few scenes that look—that look bad, you know?
00:39:13	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:39:14	Ben	Host	Like, most look good to great. And there's, like, one or two moments where it looks like a bad television comp of—
00:39:22	Adam	Host	Mm-hmm.
00:39:23	Ben	Host	—you know, looking out over Rome at sunset or whatever. But I mean, there's nine minutes of visual effects shots in this two-hour and 35-minute movie?
00:39:34	Adam	Host	Wow.
00:39:35	Ben	Host	That was a shocking number for me to read. 'Cause I would have guessed a much higher number. And... nine.
00:39:42	Clip	Clip	<p>Katie Bueller (<i>Ferris Bueller's Day Off</i>): Nine times.</p> <p>Ed Rooney: Nine times.</p>
00:39:45	Ben	Host	And that includes two minutes of—of Proximo being—
00:39:49	Adam	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Of Oliver Reed?
00:39:51	Ben	Host	Yeah. Being digitally comped into shots. It seems like a lot more. They spent a million dollars building a giant Colosseum set.

00:39:59	Adam	Host	Guys, I'm gonna assume that you've all been to the Colosseum in Rome, right? At one point or another?
00:40:05	John	Host	Yes.
00:40:06	Ben	Host	I've not been <u>in</u> it, but I've walked around it.
00:40:08	Adam	Host	What was your takeaway from being there and how did it compare to what you saw in this film?
00:40:14	Ben	Host	I did not know men could build such things.
			<i>[Adam chuckles and John laughs loudly.]</i>
00:40:19	John	Host	The crazy thing about being in the Colosseum is that there's no floor, right? So you—you look down and you see the catacombs of dressing rooms or whatever. You're told that all those rooms underneath were where all the action was happening backstage. It's very hard to be there and picture, "Okay, now the—here's a floor and there's sand and it's covered with lions and tigers and bears."
00:40:44	Ben	Host	Underneath that, there's, like, a couple of dirty couches and a hummus plate—
00:40:48	John	Host	Right.
00:40:49	Ben	Host	—and, like, some coffee.
00:40:50	Joh	Host	Exactly. And somebody—somebody keeps coming in and saying, like, "You guys need anything?" And then—
00:40:54	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:40:55	John	Host	And you say, like, "Yeah, could we—" but they're already gone?
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
			There's, like, half a thing of Red Bulls—warm Red Bulls under the—
00:41:02	Adam	Host	"I've got two more people to add to the list."
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:41:05	John	Host	"Hey, which of you guys am I supposed to settle up with after the show? Is it you? You? No. You? Okay."
00:41:11	Adam	Host	I was struck by that, too, John. It was really hard to imagine a flat-floor Colosseum in the way that you see it here. But I think to be up in the—up in where the crowd was, it felt like a stadium in a very conventional way that surprised me.
00:41:29	John	Host	Yeah. Well, there's so much about Rome in particular when you walk around the city, and you're trying to imagine it in its time. And—and there are Vespas going by and people—
			<i>[Adam chuckles.]</i>
			—you know, people listening to De La Soul. And you're like, "What the hell is going on here? Like, can you be quiet please? I'm trying to picture, like, horse races."
00:41:54	Adam	Host	"Is this the dream of Rome?"
00:41:56	John	Host	Yeah.

00:41:57	Ben	Host	The masculinity that Maximus has is—I think—very identifiable to us today. When he’s alone, he really lets it go. But I wondered about that. Do ancient Roman men perform their masculinity the same way that, you know, contemporary men do? And I guess there’s not really any way to know for sure.
00:42:24	John	Host	It does feel like a—a kind of masculinity. He would not—I don’t think—make special pleading. He would not go to Proximo at the beginning and say, “Look, I’m a Roman general and here’s what I’m gonna do.” You know, there—
00:42:43	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:42:44	John	Host	He could have been more revealing, more vulnerable, but I don’t think that would have been accurate. I think he—I think he’s behaving the way men have always done. And particularly in this era, where stoicism was—was such a prized attribute. You know, you take your punishment in silence. That’s a—that’s a thing that you could learn, Ben.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:43:10	Ben	Host	<i>[Chuckles]</i> Well, that—yeah. I mean, that sort of feels, like, related to why he didn’t protest at all when Marcus Aurelius was obviously murdered, you know. He didn’t—he’s not in the room going, “No, no, guys! Gotta believe me. Right before this happened, he had <u>me</u> in his tent, and he had this whole thing about, ‘Commodus is not a moral man.’ Case in point. And I’m gonna take over.” Like—I mean, like, it’s interesting that he doesn’t—
00:43:38	Adam	Host	“You do believe me, don’t you, Lucilla?”
00:43:40	Ben	Host	Yeah. Like, he is in, like, his position of his greatest strength in that moment, right? He’s in the military camp with the army with 5,000 soldiers that are super-loyal to him.
			<i>[Someone makes an affirming sound.]</i>
			And he does not speak up on his own behalf in that moment.
00:43:54	Adam	Host	But it’s also the moment he’s at his weakest, too. It’s at night. And when Commodus calls the guards, he orders them to take him a day’s ride out. The plan seems pretty airtight to get Maximus off the board.
00:44:11	John	Host	It’s interesting the way the film gave us that scene in the camp earlier that day, where Commodus has his shirt off and is engaging in, like, sword practice with five aggressors, right? And he’s like—
00:44:28	Adam	Host	Right. The sparring scene.

00:44:30	John	Host	<p>He's sparring. Right. If we hadn't had that to establish that Commodus actually—for all of his cowardice and sloth—that Commodus was actually formidable? He didn't come into battle not because he wasn't a good fighter, but because he was a—because he's a chicken shit.</p> <p>But, like, Commodus does such a good job of—for such a callow person—and an incurious one, in a way—he, like, runs the board on everybody. He's often in an extremely vulnerable position. But somehow, like—I mean, I guess like the greatest despots, he manages to turn the senate on its head. To capture the loyalty of the people in the army. To outwit all these, like, people with more wit.</p>
00:45:21	Ben	Host	<p>I also loved how in that sparring scene, Commodus' body is like—he's not like modern, jacked, movie-star body. He's like fifties movie-star body.</p> <p><i>[Adam giggles.]</i></p>
00:45:31	John	Host	Yeah
00:45:32	Adam	Host	Did you read that that was a choice that Joaquin made?
00:45:35	Ben	Host	No.
00:45:36	Adam	Host	<p>Ridley Scott called him out. He's like, "Are you getting fat? Like, what is happening to you?"</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs loudly.]</i></p> <p>And Joaquin is like, "You know, I just sort of thought that once Commodus ascended to the throne he would have gotten a little bit, uh—a little bit puffy, you know? Eating all the food and being—and being the Caesar." And Ridley's like, "Knock it off. Lose the weight."</p> <p><i>[Chuckling]</i> And so he tightened it up towards the end of production. But that was—I love that—I love how Joaquin freelanced that on his own.</p> <p><i>[John chuckles and Adam laughs.]</i></p>
00:46:09	Ben	Host	Apparently Ridley Scott wore the USS <i>Alabama</i> hat from <i>Crimson Tide</i> , the—
00:46:14	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:46:15	Ben	Host	—the— <i>[chuckles]</i> —the hat that Gene Hackman wears in that movie.
00:46:18	Adam	Host	That commands some respect.
00:46:19	Ben	Host	Yeah. Yeah. You—when you tell somebody to knock it off, wearing that hat—
00:46:23	Adam	Host	yeah.
00:46:24	Ben	Host	—they'd best knock it off!
			<i>[Adam chuckles.]</i>
			Alright, guys. I have a moment of pedantry here.
00:46:30	John	Host	There have got to be <u>1,000</u> .

00:46:32	Ben	Host	It's one of the longest IMDB Goof sections I've yet encountered. Um, "After the first fight in the Colosseum, Commodus refers to the battle being reenacted as the battle of Carthage."
00:46:45	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Morse code signals play as Ben speaks.]</i>
00:46:46	Ben	Host	"It was actually called, 'The Battle of Zama,' as it took place on the plane of Zama. Carthage stood for decades after Hannibal's defeat until the third Punic War."
00:46:57	John	Host	Mmm. Yesss.
00:46:59	Adam	Host	I wasn't clear on which Punic War it was until you said that.
00:47:01	Ben	Host	<i>[Amused]</i> Mm.
00:47:02	John	Host	Busted. Busted.
00:47:03	Adam	Host	But yeah. I'm glad to have that cleared up.
00:47:05	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:47:06	John	Host	It's one thing about this movie that could have been improved. And I know this is a—this is a horn I toot. But the actual geography of the movie is really fascinating. It opens in Austria. You know, they're fighting the Germanic tribes basically at the Danube. And then he—after the failed assassination, Maximus rides all the way to Spain to his hometown, which is, like, over by Salamanca, sort of close to Portugal. And then he's captured and they take him to Algeria. And then from Algeria, they end up in Rome. And that's a—that would have been really interesting to see on a map. And this movie isn't the kind of movie that's gonna throw up a <i>Raiders of the Lost Ark</i> map with the little line going from place to place.
			<i>[Ben chuckles.]</i>
			It wouldn't have worked.
00:48:11	Ben	Host	Would that have been a—like, a galleon that he would have been in, to get to North Africa? 'Cause... that's the short way, right? Like, the long way is--
00:48:21	Adam	Host	Was Pangea still connected at that point?
			<i>[John chuckles pointedly and Ben laughs.]</i>
00:48:24	John	Host	Yeah, they went a—they went across the Bering Sea land bridge.
00:48:28	Adam	Host	Right.
00:48:29	John	Host	No, that's the thing. We never see them cross an ocean. And they had to—they had to do it twice. You know, at least they had to go across at Gibraltar initially. And then—you know, I think when I first watched the movie, I imagined that it all took place in Asia Minor.
00:48:49	Ben	Host	Right.
00:48:50	John	Host	I knew that he was from Spain, but so much of the gladiator training seems to be happening in Lebanon, you know? Or, like, Syria.
00:49:01	Ben	Host	Right.

00:49:02	John	Host	I didn't ever—oh! And it's partly—it's because there <u>are</u> a couple of title cards that pop up.
00:49:08	Ben	Host	It's like that movie <i>Alexander</i> , where, like, all the title cards give place names that are, like, 2,000 years old and nobody's ever heard of. <i>[Chuckles.]</i>
00:49:16	John	Host	<i>[Chuckles briefly]</i> Right, I think it would have helped the movie—it would have helped my understanding in watching it. I mean, what the movie's trying to say is that Rome is enormous and that all these places—that Maximus could be this incredible general and never have been to Rome.
00:49:34	Adam	Host	Yeah, that's so interesting.
00:49:35	John	Host	And when we see him super-tired, riding to his home, it's because he's crossed the Alps on horseback and ridden across all of Gaul. Like, and then—
00:49:48	Ben	Host	The Alps and the Pyrenees.
00:49:49	John	Host	And then the Pyrenees! Right. So, like, that's quite a horse ride. <i>[Chuckles lightly.]</i>
00:49:55	Adam	Host	That aspect to Maximus' character is what grounds him in his motivations for the entire film, right? He's fighting for an idea that he's never seen. Based on the strength of one man's description. Marcus Aurelius'.
00:50:12	Ben	Host	The motivations for war are something that get interrogated in a lot of war films. And I think in this movie, it's one of the most interesting takes. Because Maximus has an almost naive belief that Rome is the light and the rest of the world is brutal and bad and needs to be civilized. But, like, they also talk about, like, "What are we doing fighting these Barbarians? Oh, like, advancing the greatness of Rome? Or is it just, like, controlling arable land that we can use to feed our populace? Like—"
00:50:47	John	Host	There's an implication that it's just bread and circuses, right? "We're fighting just because that keeps the people at home reading the newspapers."
00:50:54	Ben	Host	Right. It's popular. And that's discussed as well, like, "There's not actually any reason for these wars, but, like, people are super-psyched every time we go out and kick another ass."
00:51:04	John	Host	Which is an interesting critique to make in the year 2000.
00:51:08	Ben	Host	Mm-hmm.
00:51:09	John	Host	This movie is pre-9/11. And, you know, and during a period of <i>pax Americana</i> , in a way. And it foreshadows a lot of the kind of imperial nonsense that's followed with our kind of wars of adventure of the last 20 years.
00:51:32	Ben	Host	Yeah. And it's so interesting that the goal, like, the overarching goal of restoring Rome to its original conception as a republic is—I mean that's, like, ahistorical as far as I can tell, but I think that, like, we still—as a movie-going public—imagine ourselves to be—
00:51:57	John	Host	Oh, a direct line.

00:51:59	Ben	Host	Yeah. Like, "Oh, yeah. Like, we'll have—it'll be a republic again. Like, once Maximus kills the emperor and restores the republic, history will be fixed."
00:52:10	John	Host	Yeah, you can't—you're always—as an American at least, or I guess as a Western movie-goer—you always are on the side of the senate. Even when the senate seems kind of contemptible and corrupt and political—
00:52:27	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:52:28	John	Host	—and—I mean, one of the—one of the great characters in this movie Derek Jacobi's Gracchus—like, Gracchus is such an unapologetic snob and aristocrat and—
00:52:44	Adam	Host	He seems better than the gladiators he's going to see. I love that scene where he sits down, and the rest of the senators are like, "What are you doing here? This is a ball game. You <u>hate</u> sports."
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:52:56	John	Host	And he says—he has some line where he says:
00:53:00	Clip	Clip	Gracchus (Gladiator): Well, I don't pretend to be a man of the people, Senator. But I do try to be a man <u>for</u> the people.
			<i>[Fanfare and cheering in the background.]</i>
00:53:07	John	Host	That's the great argument of the ruling class, right?
00:53:11	Ben	Host	He's a real John Kerry type. <i>[Chuckles quietly.]</i>
00:53:13	John	Host	<i>[Amused]</i> Yeah, right, Or a—yeah, sure. John Kerry is exactly who he is, right? He's got his collars popped, and he has a slave boy with—who's wearing dark eyeliner.
00:53:23	Ben	Host	Uh-huh. It's a scandal when a mosaic gets out of him riding a parasailing board.
00:53:31	John	Host	<i>[Laughs]</i> But, like, we are conditioned to prefer republican government. And this is a movie that—this is in that tradition of gladiator movies, where the emperor is—like, the original emperor is seen as a benevolent dictator. The subsequent emperor is a tyrant. And what we long for is a return to <u>democracy</u> . And it—it's a kind of Western civ propaganda trope that, at least in the 20th century—maybe 18th, 19th, and 20th century—has been just recapitulated so many times that we don't even think—we don't even think to question that what we want—what we hope is that Gracchus and his cronies are running Rome. What we secretly want is Maximus.
00:54:37	Adam	Host	Not Falco, though. 'Cause fuck that guy.
			<i>[John chuckles briefly.]</i>
			That guy's the senator we don't like.
00:54:42	Ben	Host	No.
00:54:43	John	Host	No. Falco's a creep in the pocket of Big Emperor.
			<i>[Adam chuckles.]</i>

00:54:47	Ben	Host	Like, we want Maximus to take power and then do the thing where he gets the senate up on its feet to run things, and then bows out. Like, we want him to be George Washington not going for a third term.
00:55:03	Adam	Host	You know what I like about what this movie does with Maximus? Because it doesn't make him knowledgeable about this stuff. All he has are the last words of Marcus Aurelius, and he almost parrots them during his death as his last wishes. And, like, all of the questions we're discussing here at the end about what happens to the form of government in Rome after his death is almost, like, inconsequential to Maximus.
			Did he deliver the order that he was supposed to, that he lived for? He did. And that's it. It—this is a film that doesn't ask much of you past that, in a way that it doesn't ask much of Maximus.
00:55:41	Ben	Host	There is actually a character in Roman history that did that. An emperor named Cincinnatus, after whom Cincinnati is named.
00:55:52	Adam	Host	The noodle emperor. He liked his chili on top of the noodles. <i>[Chuckles.]</i>
00:55:55	John	Host	Yeah, that's right. He was Emperor Five-Way.
00:56:01	Adam	Host	<i>[Laughs loudly]</i> <u>That</u> is your call sign, John. <i>[John and Ben laugh.]</i>
			There will never be another Emperor Five-Way. Long may he reign.
00:56:14	John	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> If nominated, I <u>will</u> serve. <i>[All three chuckle.]</i>
			But Cincinnatus was, like, the—he was George Washington's, like, model. Part—and he was part of the inspiration for Maximus. He's, like, this sort of gentleman farmer that restored the empire and then bowed out after getting the senate up and running. I mean, it's why they named Cincinnati Cincinnati. Yeah, it's why they named the chili after him. <i>[Adam and Ben chuckle.]</i>
			I hope one day to have chili named after me.
00:56:52	Ben	Host	That's the chili that's a can of meat chili and a can of veggie chili mixed together?
00:56:57	John	Host	That's right, mixed together with an extra pound of ground beef.
00:56:59	Clip	Clip	Angela Kelly (WLUK-TV Fox 11 News Report, October 2, 2013): This is Chili John's restaurant, where upon walking in the door, the smell of the spice slightly stings your nose. <i>[Sounds of metal clanking and a loud sneeze.]</i>
00:57:10	Adam	Host	An interesting way that this film ends is that last duel between Commodus and Maximus is done without score. God, that wide shot of Commodus' body in the dirt as Maximus is carried out of the Colosseum, I think is one of the best shots in movies.

00:57:31	Ben	hsot	<p>Yeah. It's great. I did get a little bumped, 'cause I just imagined somebody in the crowd who's, like, not been keeping up with the newspaper being like, <i>[Whispering]</i> "Why—why are they leaving the emperor there and carrying that guy out?"</p> <p><i>[John starts laughing.]</i></p> <p>"Why's—why do they like that guy more than—he's the emperor, right?"</p>
00:57:47	Adam	Host	<p>The one guy who doesn't read the room who's like, "We still love you, Commodus!"</p> <p><i>[Adam and John laugh.]</i></p> <p>He's the guy holding two loaves of bread that were thrown into the crowd. He really made out like a bandit.</p>
00:58:00	John	Host	<p>I can't imagine that somebody didn't want to at least rifle through his pockets.</p> <p><i>[Adam laughs briefly.]</i></p> <p>I'm sure Commodus had some cool shit. That gold knife!</p>
00:58:08	Adam	Host	<p>The button on the movie is Juba burying Maximus' little figurines that represented his wife and his son. And that was a scene that was supposed to be Proximo.</p>
00:58:20	John	Host	<p>Oh, really?</p>
00:58:21	Adam	Host	<p>Before Oliver Reed died. Yeah. But I think it really worked with Juba. I think if you don't get a Juba scene at the end of the film, you might feel like, "Well, what was their—what was their friendship really about?" I think you need a postscript with him—</p>
00:58:36	John	Host	<p>Yeah.</p>
00:58:37	Adam	Host	<p>—in the way that you get it.</p>
00:58:38	John	Host	<p>Juba's a great character. And Djimon Hounsou is from Benin, right? He's a West African. It's not made clear where in Africa he's from. And so it's, I think, an example of the script doing that thing—or between script and casting—some kind of thing where it's like, "Oh, he's from Africa? Then he must be, like, as dark as a person can be." But he's an incredible character. And I think the fact that he is West African gives that extra feeling of—of him being so far from home that, you know, that he's a lonely foreigner, kind of.</p>
00:59:26	Adam	Host	<p>Didn't you get André-the-Giant-from-<i>Princess-Bride</i> vibes from Djimon Hounsou in this movie? He's so tall. He's so kind.</p>
00:59:38	Ben	Host	<p>Hm.</p>
00:59:39	Adam	Host	<p>He kind of nurses Maximus back to health, for what? Because he is a nice person? He's a formidable warrior. There are a couple of characters like that. The Ralf Möller character is like that as well. Like gladiators with a heart of gold.</p>
00:59:56	John	Host	<p><i>[Imitating André's voice as Fezzik in The Princess Bride]</i> "Does anybody want a peanut?"</p>

[Adam chuckles.]

00:59:59	Music	Transition	Theme music plays, “War” by Edwin Starr. <i>War!</i> <i>Huh!</i> <i>Yeah!</i>
01:00:02	Adam	Host	It’s time to, like Commodus, watch what we have seen happen below and give this film either the thumbs up—which allows it to survive—or thumbs down, which will mean its death. <i>[Ben snickers briefly.]</i> I like these moments in the film. You understand how much power Commodus has in these moments. And what a weird feeling that must be to, like, not only be the conductor of the performance, but decide whether or not the band lives or dies at the end of it. It was wild. And it might be a little on the nose for a movie review show, but in one very crucial way, we will be reviewing <i>Gladiator</i> using a rating system of one to five thumbs. And it is the extra three thumbs allowable to all of us. <i>[Ben laughs.]</i> As we rate this film, we’re not gonna use two thumbs like—like stupid movie-review rating systems use. That’s just an insufficient amount of thumbs.
01:01:06	Ben	Host	Not enough thumbs!

01:01:07	Adam	Host	<p>We're going one to five. And that's what we will use to review <i>Gladiator</i>. I think the only question that I can think of that may weaken what would be a super-strong rating of this film is whether not it is a war movie. But while the war primarily occurs on the floor of the Colosseum, in other ways the war scenes are just as strong as any other war film we've seen. We've got the battle scenes that bookend the film. We've got the great and often quiet moments among soldiers on the battlefield, which were great in this movie. The reasons the battles were fought, both on the battlefield and among the senators for power. And in all of those ways, I think it makes <i>Gladiator</i> a real war film.</p> <p>One thing that we didn't talk about during the course of our conversation was the lessons this film might teach other films. This was the film that launched all those haircuts, maybe. But it's also the film that launched all the other loincloth films that followed. And I think you can tell, when you watch those other films, what other aspects of <i>Gladiator</i> those films thought were most important. And I'm thinking of a film like <i>Redbad</i> as an example. Like, you know what parts of <i>Gladiator</i> that film lifted, and unfortunately, those weren't the most important parts.</p> <p>I love Russell Crowe in this. I love Joaquin Phoenix in this. I love all the actors in this. What a great cast. I love the story of a troubled production that somehow pulls itself up off of the ground and makes itself great. I think the legend of this movie is a big part of why I love it so much. I think it aged—it aged <u>really</u> well, and I'm glad that it did. This is one of those great returns to a 20-year-old film that you're glad you get the opportunity to experience. So, I'm gonna go all five upward-facing thumbs for me.</p>
01:03:21	Ben	Host	<p>Nice. Yeah, this is definitely one of those ones where I was bracing myself when I fired it up last night. Like, "I hope this holds up," because I remember really loving this movie.</p>
01:03:34	Adam	Host	<p>Yeah.</p>
01:03:35	Ben	Host	<p>But it had been a long time since I had seen it and I was expecting—you know, it's like rewatching <i>Jurassic Park</i>, where you're like, "I can't believe this is still fucking great!"</p>
01:03:45	Adam	Host	<p>Yeah.</p>

01:03:46	Ben	Host	<p>Like, "It's still great!" Yeah, like, no major complaints. I think something that, you know, pops into my head surrounding historical accuracy—and we've had this conversation on this show and online with, you know, people—like, blurring the veracity of things is controversial to some people. But this makes me want to, like, read that Marcus Aurelius book I have. It makes me want to, like, learn more things about ancient Rome. And it's the steady hand of Ridley Scott that I think is to thank for that, because he did set out to make, like, as accurate a movie about ancient Rome as he could.</p> <p>But that wasn't the top line goal. The top line goal was make a great movie and where possible, make it super-accurate. So tossing out things like having the gladiators endorsing products in the Colosseum, because it's just gonna bump the audience and they're not gonna—you know, they're gonna think that this is—that this is nuts and it's like something about—you know, that it's some kind of metaphor about modern times that it's not trying to be. And leaving out details like that.</p> <p>But then you get to read about it later, you know? Like, that—and that's one of the things I love about doing this show with you guys, is that I get to see these movies and then have a richer experience having this conversation afterwards. And this is—this is definitely one of those movies where I watched it and I was like, "Oh, shit. I got some reading to do before I hop on the mic with these guys." Because I can't just come in going like, "Cool movie, right? Alright. Bye!"</p>
01:05:29	Adam	Host	Yeah, that's my job.
01:05:32	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs]</i> Anyways. Five thumbs up.
01:05:34	Adam	Host	Whooaaa.

01:05:37 John

Host

[*Whistles*] I don't remember the last time I saw this movie, but it was, you know, probably in the last ten years, certainly. And I remember then kind of feeling like my feelings about it had—had solidified. So going into this watching, I didn't have the same apprehension that I have with some other movies that the critical eye of *Friendly Fire* was gonna somehow reveal that it was full of holes. We've certainly had that experience together with movies that I loved. But we've had the opposite experience enough times. Watching *Lawrence of Arabia* or *Master and Commander* where it's like, "This is a good movie, and actually watching with a critical eye, it's a really good movie still."

[*Ben chuckles.*]

So, I didn't have that fear. And I saw a lot more in it this time, because I... and I wasn't—I didn't know about that whole story, about the writing of the script until I started reading about the movie after having watched it. I just saw the vulnerability in Maximus. And not because I was looking for it. But I just—it's just the fifth time you watch a movie, you're looking for other things, and all of a sudden, Maximus became much realer to me.

I mean, unlike a lot of movies we watch, there's no point in it where I leaned back in my chair, rolled my eyes—

[*Adam laughs.*]

—like—you know, roll my eyes audibly at a thing.

[*Someone makes an affirming sound.*]

Like, that never—it never happened. I'm in the movie from beginning to end. We watch a lot of World War Two movies or war movies where the events of the film are fictionalized, but they're set within a historical context that is true. And it makes these kind of fantasy movies where you—somebody kills Hitler just, like, intolerable to me.

But this is an example of that kind of movie, right? That, like, Marcus Aurelius did not die at his son's hand. He actually ruled side by side with Commodus. And there was a—you know, and peacefully transferred power to Commodus. And Commodus was not killed as a gladiator in the ring but was actually, like, strangled by his bodyguard. And at the end after Commodus died, like, a great peace did not befall Rome, but in fact it was like—it ushered in an era of total chaos. So this movie, if you were looking at it from a Roman classical perspective, this movie is way worse than *Inglourious Basterds* in terms of presenting a fiction set within an ostensibly real world of people and events.

01:08:22	John	Host	<p>But I'll tell you what: that 2,000 years of separation makes me not give a fuck. Because—</p> <p><i>[Ben and Adam chuckle.]</i></p> <p>—you know, because the Roman Empire is <u>centuries</u> long. And the end result of the Roman Empire now, it feels like these—it feels like a heist movie set in World War Two, where it's like, "Well, if they stole a bunch of Nazi gold, is that really gonna change the outcome of the world? Probably not." You know, if Donald Sutherland has 50 bars of gold in his apartment in 1950, who cares? It's just watching <i>Gladiator</i>, what you're doing is saying, like, "Ah, if there were like a half a dozen emperors that kind of didn't exist over the course of 400 years—"</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>"—what does it matter, really, you know? The Pope's the Pope; am I right?" Even though I should—if I were being consistent—should stand on principle, this is just a five-star movie. It's everything you want out of a epic—</p>
01:09:28	Adam	Host	Sorry, what?
01:09:29	John	Host	I'm sorry. It's a five-thumbs-up movie.
			<p><i>[Someone whistles.]</i></p> <p>It's everything you want out of going to the movies.</p>
01:09:37	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:09:38	John	Host	<p>It's just—it's just big and impeccable and smart where it needs to be smart. And it's dumb where it needs to be dumb. It doesn't insult your intelligence. It doesn't bore you. There's enough of everything there for everybody. I think it's an astonishing accomplishment, this movie. And it's a—the type of movie that doesn't get made for some reason!</p> <p>Not being a filmmaker, I don't understand how you could set out to make <i>Pearl Harbor</i> with Ben Affleck or the <i>USS Indianapolis</i> with—</p> <p><i>[Adam chuckles.]</i></p> <p>—whoever the fuck was in that movie. And fail so utterly to even put yourself in a position where you're—where you're touching the coattails of a movie like <i>Gladiator</i>. They're both made in Hollywood. They both are made—they both had money to squander.</p> <p><i>[Adam chuckles again.]</i></p> <p>So yeah. It's five thumbs up for me. I want—merciful Emperor Five-Way—</p>
01:10:39	Adam	Host	<p>Wow.</p> <p><i>[Ben giggles.]</i></p>
01:10:40	John	Host	—wants this movie to live a long life.
01:10:42	Adam	Host	Wow.

01:10:43	Ben	Host	Emperor Five-Way the Merciful. <i>[Adam and John chuckle.]</i> I think we gotta talk about guys now, do we not?
01:10:50	John	Host	Who's your guy, Ben?
01:10:52	Ben	Host	He was standing right in front of Maximus the first time—the first time they're about to go out into the stadium in the Zucchabar region or whatever. He's the guy that's, uh, that's pissing himself with fear. And that just—you know, it's nice to locate yourself perfectly in the story of a film. That would be me.
01:11:18	Adam	Host	I love the take that Russell Crowe has here. Like, he doesn't ham—and—cheese it with his, "Step away from him."
01:11:24	Ben	Host	<i>[Chuckling quietly]</i> Mm-hmm.
01:11:25	Adam	Host	It's almost like a quarter of a foot, he takes. Stepping back.
01:11:27	Ben	Host	Yeah, yeah. Just enough to not get any splash on him. It would have been nice to turn around to give the guy behind him a heads-up, right? Like a, "Hey, just so you know, when you run out there's a puddle of pee-pee right here."
01:11:40	Adam	Host	My guy is also an extra guy. It happens the moment after Maximus becomes more powerful than an emperor and all of Rome. Like, the first big win he scores, he comes back down into the area beneath the Colosseum, and everyone's chanting his name. "Maximus. Maximus. Maximus." And you see the crowd. Everyone's, like, wanting to get a piece of him. One guy's not, though. One guy's just looking at him. He sticks out so much! Do you remember seeing this guy's face?! Everyone is totally enthralled with Maximus in this moment. And this one guy just looks at him and does nothing. <i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:12:21	Ben	Host	Made a different choice.
01:12:23	Adam	Host	Gonna have to do a little more to impress <u>that</u> guy. <i>[Ben and John laugh.]</i> So, uh—so he's gonna be my guy, for <i>Gladiator</i> .
01:12:30	Ben	Host	Adam—famously hard to impress—
01:12:33	Adam	Host	Right.
01:12:34	Ben	Host	—has found himself in this movie. <i>[Adam giggles.]</i>
01:12:36	John	Host	Uh, my guy of course is Tigris of Gaul.
01:12:39	Adam	Host	Mm.
01:12:40	John	Host	He really stood out to me in every—every time I've ever watched this movie. You know, he's played by Sven-Ole Thorsen, Arnold

Schwarzenegger's best movie pal, who's in *Conan* and he's in *Predator* and he's in—

01:12:55	Adam	Host	Yeah!
01:12:56	John	Host	—every Arnold Schwarzenegger movie as the big, Danish guy. And we've talked about him before.
01:13:03	Ben	Host	We sure have.
01:13:04	John	Host	So here he is again. And he—yeah, you know. When he speaks his line, you know, he's from—he's supposed to be from Gaul. And he says, you know [<i>chuckles</i>], [<i>In a Danish accent</i>] "For those about to die, we salute you!"
			[<i>Ben laughs.</i>]
			And it's like, "Hm. It's not really, like, I don't know, like, a French accent exactly."
01:13:22	Adam	Host	I love how contemporary that moment is, though, for Commodus. Like, "What is going to light this crowd on fire? Bring back Tigris of Gaul!" is what he does.
01:13:32	John	Host	Yeah, the big star.
01:13:33	Adam	Host	And it's like bringing Undertaker back to WrestleMania.
			[<i>John laughs.</i>]
			Everyone knows who he is. Everyone knows, like, his greatness. It's such an awesome moment.
01:13:42	John	Host	And he's <u>so big</u> . And it's like—it's a real bigness, right? He's so much bigger than Russel Crowe, and he seems really formidable and he puts, uh—I mean, that fight feels very real. So, he al—and I always felt, like, a lot of sympathy for him. 'Cause even after watching it this time, as I was kind of wandering around the house thinking about it, I was like, "Whatever happened to Tigris of Gaul after that?" Like, they carry him off. He's got a pretty bad foot wound.
			[<i>Ben chuckles and Adam makes an affirming sound.</i>]
			You know, a bloody nose and stuff. Like, he probably broke his nose. But he's fine. Right?
01:14:19	Adam	Host	Right.
01:14:20	John	Host	They're gonna bandage his foot up and then he's Tigris of Gaul... who got his ass kicked and [<i>uncomfortably</i>] was <u>spared</u> by Maximus.
01:14:27	Adam	Host	If you go back to Gaul, are you gonna tell anyone what really happened on your trip to Rome?
01:14:31	John	Host	I think you limp back to Gaul with your little purse of—of ducats and try and just keep it quiet.
01:14:39	Adam	host	The people of Gaul have to assume by virtue that you've survived your trip that you won.

01:14:45	John	Host	Right. Maybe the board is gonna get to Gaul. <i>[Adam laughs.]</i> There's gonna be some traveling salesman that—that shows up in whatever.
01:14:53	Ben	Host	"Boy I should have stayed retired. I had a unbroken, flawless record. Now, this."
01:14:59	John	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Yeah. Yeah, he's hanging out in Avignon, just, like, picking his teeth with that—with that lame foot up on a beer cask.
01:15:09	Adam	Host	His helmet with two small eyeholes in it.
01:15:13	John	Host	<i>[Laughs]</i> Poor Tigris of Gaul.
01:15:14	Music	Transition	Theme music plays, "War" by Edwin Starr. <i>War!</i> <i>Huh!</i> <i>Yeah!</i>
01:15:18	Ben	Host	Ah, fun. Well, the last thing we have to do here on the episode is pick our next episode. John, do you have the 120-sided dice handy?
01:15:29	John	Host	<i>[Calling from a distance]</i> I do right here. <i>[Back at the mic]</i> The legendary 120-sided die that a lot of people think is fake but isn't.
01:15:39	Ben	Host	It's real.
01:15:40	John	Host	And my dice—my dice cup is unfortunately full of coffee here. Hang on; just a second.
01:15:44	Ben	Host	Part of what you're paying for in the MaxFunDrive is the incredible amount of numbers available to us on the 120-sided dice.
01:15:55	John	Host	How many films are on our list right now, Ben?
01:15:57	Ben	Host	God. Over 200. A lot.
01:16:00	John	Host	That's four more years worth of <i>Friendly Fire</i> that we've got cued up.
01:16:05	Ben	Host	<i>[Chanting]</i> Four more years! Four more year— <i>[breaks off, laughing quietly]</i>
01:16:08	John	Host	Four years of <i>Friendly Fire</i> cued up, and you can make the difference—
01:16:11	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:16:12	John	Host	—at MaxFunDrive.
01:16:13	Ben	Host	And there's at least another year and a half of movies that are, like not available on streaming <u>yet</u> , but we are keeping our eyes peeled for them. So...
01:16:23	John	Host	<i>[Chuckling]</i> Plus, there are all those weird Viking movies that we kind of have eliminated from contention—
01:16:28	Ben	Host	<i>[Amused]</i> Yeah. Yeah.

01:16:29	John	Host	—‘cause they’re all—‘cause they’re all weirdly white supremacist. But we’re willing to review them!
01:16:34	Ben	Host	Yeah. That might be like, you know, year 10 <i>Friendly Fire</i> is just us slogging through the filmography of white supremacy.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
01:16:42	Adam	Host	If you don’t support the show, that’s what we pivot to. Uh-huh.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
01:16:46	John	Host	We’re finally gonna do, uh—what’s the fucking miniseries?
01:16:52	Adam	Host	<i>Triumph of the Will?</i>
			<i>[John laughs uproariously.]</i>
01:16:53	Ben	Host	Oh, you know, I wanted to talk about that! ‘Cause apparently the scene of Commodus entering Rome is, like, a self-conscious <i>Triumph of the Will</i> homage—
			<i>[Adam makes an affirming sound.]</i>
			—by—by Ridley Scott.
01:17:05	John	Host	Really?
01:17:06	Ben	Host	Like, he wanted Commodus to seem like Hitler entering Berlin.
01:17:10	John	Host	Wooowww.
01:17:11	Ben	Host	Which is interesting, because so much of the imagery that the Nazis, you know, promulgated was based on this idea of a continuity between them and the Roman Empire.
01:17:22	John	Host	Oh, that’s one of the things about Tigris of Gaul. When he first enters the—when he first enters the arena, he’s giving the Roman salute. You know, the—
01:17:30	Ben	Host	Right.
01:17:31	John	Host	—the sort of stiff-armed hand. The Sieg Heil. And no one else in the film does it, but he’s—
01:17:36	Ben	Host	Yeah.
01:17:37	John	Host	—you know, he’s old school.
01:17:38	Ben	Host	Yeah, well, he’s just channeling Laura Ingraham in that moment.
			<i>[Someone snorts with laughter.]</i>
01:17:23	John	Host	Here we go! The big die!
01:17:46	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Clinking sound of the die being rolled, clattering and spinning on a ceramic surface.]</i>
01:17:55	John	Host	Ninety-three!
01:17:55	Ben	Host	Ninety-three is... a drone war film.
01:18:04	Music	Music	“Joy Ride“ by Christophe Beck from the album <i>Good Kill (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)</i> plays for a few seconds. It is a soaring, uplifting string suite.

01:18:05	Ben	Host	<p><i>[Someone whistles.]</i></p> <p>From 2014, directed by Andrew Niccol, it's called, "<i>Good Kill</i>."</p>
00:18:09	John	Host	Oo—oo—ooh.
01:18:10	Ben	Host	Starring Ethan Hawke. Wow.
01:18:12	Adam	Host	Do you think at the end of their of their day out in the trailers, everyone gets out and high fives? "Good kill. Good kill. Good kill."
01:18:21	Ben	Host	<i>[Laughs]</i> Uh, Andrew Niccol's the guy that made <i>Gattaca</i> . And <i>Lord of War</i> !
01:18:25	Adam	Host	That's interesting, 'cause Ethan Hawke is in this movie.
01:18:27	Music	Music	Theme song slowly fades in as the hosts speak. "War" by Edwin Starr.
01:18:28	Ben	Host	It's true. It's like they have a good working relationship.
01:18:32	Adam	Host	Yeah.
01:18:33	John	Host	That's one of the great collaborations.
01:18:34	Ben	Host	That will be next week on <i>Friendly Fire</i> . Again, super-grateful to everybody that has contributed in the MaxFun Drive. Head to MaximumFun.org/join right now, and 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.
01:18:58	Rob Schulte	Producer	<p><i>Friendly Fire</i> is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Ben Harrison, Adam Pranica, and John Roderick. The podcast is produced by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is "War" by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music. And our logo art is by Nick Ditmore.</p> <p>If you'd like to revisit an older episode of <i>Friendly Fire</i>, check out our review of <i>A Private War</i> from 2018 that we covered in 2019. It's a film about Marie Colvin, one of the most celebrated war correspondents of our time.</p> <p><i>Friendly Fire</i> is made possible by the support of listeners like you. Please leave us a five-star rating and review on Apple Podcasts. You can also head to MaximumFun.org/join to pledge your support. Now would be a really great time to do that. During the MaxFun Drive, the support from listeners like you keep <i>Friendly Fire</i> alive and exciting. And not to mention that during the MaxFun Drive, you get a whole slew of new bonus content. <u>And</u> no matter what, you gain access to the Pork Chop feed, which is an extra episode <u>every month</u> of <i>Friendly Fire</i>. How exciting is that?</p> <p>Remember, you can now also follow <i>Friendly Fire</i> on Twitter and Instagram under the handles "FriendlyFireRSS." We've also got a discussion group on Facebook, if that's your thing. So, join in the conversation. Thanks for listening. And we'll see you next week on <i>Friendly Fire</i>.</p> <p><i>[Theme song plays for a while at full volume before fading out.]</i></p>
01:20:43	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.

01:20:44	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org
01:20:46	Speaker 2	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:20:47	Speaker 3	Guest	Artist owned—
01:20:49	Speaker 4	Guest	—audience supported.