

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	Tense, warlike brass and drums eventually give way to sweeping orchestral arrangements and triumphant full symphony.
00:00:02	Ben Harrison	Host	Ever since the end of World War Two, Russia has been the Big Bad for the United States. The end boss of the 16-bit, side-scrolling, thermonuclear clown fight that has been our time as a world power. We've been locked in a clash to determine which of our dumb civilizations will call the shots on a global basis... I guess after the other one is gone? The conflict has ebbed and flowed as the contours of the Cold War evolved. There were times when it even seemed like it might be behind us. The commentariat laughed at Mitt Romney and his 2012 campaign for president when he suggested that Russia was our biggest geopolitical adversary. But that seems like a quaint and distant time now.

Just recently, Alabama elected a senator who has been quoted bragging about how his dad fought communism in World War Two. Somehow, in his mind, the USSR seems to have replaced Nazi Germany as the bad guys we went to fight in the forties. It seems strange that a country as far away—as culturally and economically distinct—as Russia would be such a persistent counterpoint to the United States on the world stage. There is a theory dating back to Sallust, the Roman historian, that empires need adversaries. If that is true of the United States, then when the Nazis fell, the USSR rushed in to fill the vacuum. The nature of our adversary has changed in those years as we have seen them reform their government from Stalinist communism to Putinist kleptocracy with a brief stopover in Yeltsinist quasi-capitalism.

But what made them our adversary in the first place is the conceptual threat the Russian Revolution posed to American capital. The ownership class looked on the idea of a popular uprising putting a socialist economy in place as an intolerable hazard to their position of privilege. That's one of many reasons today's film is so interesting. It's nearly 100 years old and tells the story of the first Russian Revolution coming to a single vessel in the Russian Navy. The microcosm of the ship and then Odessa is a nice, bite-sized way of experiencing the arguments for and against the revolution and the violence used to try and advance and suppress the revolution.

While the film is silent, it's able to explore the personal motivations of some of the revolution's adherents, which is a perspective we just never get to see in popular American media. This film is one of the most important works of early cinema and we're lucky we get to talk about it on the show. Because unlike "people go to work in a French factory" or "train comes towards screen," this is a war film. We're also lucky it survived the clash of our civilization against our end boss. And lucky we live in a country that allows its populace to experience the media of its end boss. The same was not true of Russia for a long time. "We've had enough rotten meat! Even a dog wouldn't eat this! It could crawl overboard on its own." Today on *Friendly Fire—Battleship Potemkin*.

00:03:11	Music	Music	<i>[Music finishes triumphantly.]</i> "War" off the album <i>War & Peace</i> by Edwin Starr. Impassioned, intense funk.
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War!
Huh!
Yeah!
What is it good for?!
Absolutely—
—nothing!
Uh-huh!

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

Say it again, y'all!

War!

00:03:32	Ben	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 is loaded with maggots, but we're gonna try and serve it to you anyway.</p> <p><i>[Adam laughs.]</i></p> <p>I'm Ben Harrison. I'm Adam Pranica.</p>
00:03:39	Adam Pranica	Host	
00:03:42	John Roderick	Host	And I'm John Roderick.
00:03:45	Ben	Host	You guys think we're the officers or are we the noble sailors?
00:03:49	Adam	Host	The only people wearing glasses in this movie were the officers. The doctor, I think, was trying to make the case that, like, "You lower-decks types, you just can't see what these things are the way I can."
00:03:59	John	Host	I'm gonna take issue with that comment. There are glasses all over this movie! I feel like they're real signifiers of class and whatnot. I'm talking about the people in the massacre on the Odessa steps. You see glasses right and left!
00:04:13	Adam	Host	I think we're saying the same thing. There is a class distinction that the glasses demonstrate. And on the <i>Potemkin</i> , I'm saying that that is pronounced in that scene.
00:04:22	John	Host	Sure.
00:04:24	Ben	Host	Was the pince-nez a popular type of glasses at the time, or did they have, like, three pairs of glasses in the costume department and they put them on lots of different people?
00:04:34	John	Host	<p><i>[John laughs.]</i></p> <p>They were a popular style of glasses at the time. They seemed like a reference—in this movie specifically—to Trotsky. And that may just be that in 1925, like, Trotsky was really fashionable. Everybody was trying to bite his rhymes. His pince-nez rhymes.</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p>
00:04:53	Ben	Host	The quote at the beginning was originally a Trotsky quote. The version I watched had a Lenin quote, though.
00:05:00	John	Host	Yeah.

00:05:01	Adam	Host	Whoa! There are different versions with different quotes up top? I did not know that!
00:05:05	Ben	Host	There are a <u>lot</u> of different versions of this movie because it was variously censored by different governments and re-... finished and re-released. I don't know how many different versions there are online. I watched this on Criterion, and I think it was, like, pretty close to the 1925 original version. But there was even a version where they looped the dialogue!
00:05:34	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	John: Ooh.
00:05:35	Ben	Host	Adam: Wow.
00:05:37	Adam	Host	In the age of talkies. Yeah. It had to be an awkward moment when Eisenstein pushes this out into the world and then, like, a couple years later, <i>Jazz Singer</i> comes out. He's gotta be like, "Oh, fuck."
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			"Did we get any audio from set, guys?"
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:05:54	Ben	Host	"Tell me we got some audio!" "I remember the sound guy seemed very drunk, and it didn't bother me at the time. But in retrospect I wish he'd been recording."
00:06:02	Adam	Host	Eisenstein said that he would hope that a new score would be produced and attached to this film every twenty years.
00:06:09	John	Host	Really?
00:06:12	Adam	Host	And it made me wonder a lot about how just changing the score could change the feeling of the thing.
00:06:17	John	Host	Yeah. Where's the Neil Young score for this?
00:06:19	Ben	Host	Periodically, the roots of a film have to be replenished with the blood of patriots, right?
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:06:26	Adam	Host	I want the Hans Zimmer score of <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> . Inject <u>that</u> into my veins.
00:06:31	John	Host	No. I want Metallica to score it.
00:06:34	Ben	Host	I think the last score to be written was in 2011.
00:06:37	Adam	Host	Shostakovich was the scorer for the version we saw, right, Ben?
00:06:41	Clip	Clip	Music: Light, high strings play in background.
00:06:42	Ben	Host	Uhh, sounds Russian enough. Yeah! You're right!
00:06:43	Adam	Host	I'm just gonna say that it was.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:06:46	John	Host	Sure. Shostakovich. This movie came out—it was made in 1925, right? And that's a very fraught time in the Soviet moment. Trotsky was in line to be a leader of the Soviet Union and it was only Stalin—Stalin's rise that kind of edged Trotsky out and eventually—when this movie came out, Trotsky was still one of the leaders. But by 1929 he had been exiled. So it's possible that the original movie had a Trotsky quote and then got replaced with a Lenin quote.
00:07:19	Ben	Host	And Trotsky is Snowball, right?
00:07:22	John	Host	He's the falcon.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>

00:07:23	Adam	Host	See, I was gonna say Trotsky edging is when you can't finish until you finish reading <i>The Permanent Revolution</i> .
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:07:30	John	Host	Hm. Hm.
00:07:33	Ben	Host	This was, like, part of the commemoration of the 20-year anniversary of the first Russian Revolution. It was part of a big program of arts and celebrations. And one thing I read is that there was a very different script that was set all over the USSR that they went into production with and they had terrible weather-related production problems that forced Eisenstein to basically cut the script down and expand one scene that was set on a battleship and kind of center the story around the battleship. Because the other stuff that they were shooting just wasn't coming out.
00:08:17	John	Host	Yeah. It's a weird thing to commemorate, in that the 1905 Revolution—it was not successful. The Czar remained in power for another 12 years. But I think within revolutionary cadres in Russia it's credited with being the thing that—it was the revolution that allowed the Revolution to happen 15 years later. So in a sense, Ben, it's kind of like—I don't know. What would you say? The hip-hop revolution of the mid-nineties?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			No, maybe that was a dead-end thought. But strange to think that this classic film is commemorating a thing that—like, hardly anyone now talks about or thinks about the Russian Revolution of 1905.
00:09:08	Ben	Host	What would've happened to this boat? 'Cause, like, they sail through the task force that's been sent to deal with the <i>Potemkin</i> at the end. Is there a port that they can go to? They're in the Black Sea, right? Can they just get back to life as normal? I don't think they could, right?
00:09:25	John	Host	No. In fact, the <i>Potemkin</i> was reintegrated into the Imperial Russian fleet and they actually changed the name of the boat. They wanted to erase any history of the mutiny.
00:09:41	Ben	Host	Yeah. History erasure is kind of the national sport of Russia though. Right?
00:09:44	John	Host	That's right. They just painted the <i>Potemkin</i> out of all the pictures. There was Stalin with his arm around the <i>Potemkin</i> and then all of a sudden it was just Stalin.
00:09:54	Adam	Host	No one wants to be associated with either the <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> or Max Temkin.
00:10:00	John	Host	Oof. Oof. I think that the <i>Potemkin</i> raced to a Romanian port and the Romanians kind of gave it a berth. But it didn't end with everyone waving flags and eating fresh meat, I'll tell ya that.
00:10:17	Clip	Clip	Music: Fast-paced, tense, dramatic horns and strings.
00:10:20	Adam	Host	I wasn't expecting to be exhilarated by this film. But the moment they took the <i>Potemkin</i> out of harbor into the sea, I... <i>[Music fades out.]</i> I remember seeing this film once in film class and I didn't remember this part. I got <u>very</u> excited at the possibilities. As soon as they head out there. It felt very... pirate ship adjacent to me. What's gonna happen? They have all this firepower! The film itself is an inspiration to a lot of other movies, but that moment felt like the movie that inspired <i>Under Siege</i> . Y'know?
00:10:52	Ben	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Mm-hm. Definitely inspired a lot of movies. Like, it's like... among the most influential films in film history.
00:10:59	John	Host	Did both of you see this movie in film class?
00:11:04	Ben	Host	This was my first time watching it. And I—
00:11:07	Adam	Host	I'm shocked by that. You're not allowed to take a film class if you haven't seen this movie. Like, legally.

00:11:14	Ben	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> I may have fudged facts on my application to film school. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:11:18	Adam	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i> Geez.
00:11:21	John	Host	But it does seem like a movie that—like, you see it on all the lists. Right? It's right up there with <i>Citizen Kane</i> . "Top 20 Moves of All Time!" "One of the Great Films!" But it feels like it's very much in there because no one can put <i>Birth of a Nation</i> in there anymore.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:11:43	Adam	Host	And they have to have one epic silent film.
00:11:45	John	Host	You have to give the nod to Russia. You have to give the nod to Russia. But also, every filmmaker has... has taken a bit from this movie and incorporated it—I mean, you see so many little moments go by. But the movie itself in so many ways, it's like watching a puppet show.
00:12:02	Ben	Host	Yeah. The stakes never feel like they get that high in this movie. I was certain that the guys that they put under the tarp and were threatening to execute were going to get executed and that was going to be the inciting incident of the sailors overthrowing the officers. Like, nothing makes an audience cleave to one side of a conflict in a film like an injustice. Right? And there's several small injustices that lead to that moment. But the fact that the tarp is thrown off and none of those guys get unjustly executed— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Felt like, "You messed up the screenplay!" <i>[Laughs.]</i> Y'know?
00:12:40	Adam	Host	Well, even unwinding it to a scene before that— <i>[Sound of dot matrix printer in background.]</i>
00:12:47	John	Host	Like, there's no politics in starvation. Right? Whoa.
00:12:48	Adam	Host	You <u>must</u> be on their side.
00:12:49	John	Host	Yeah. Is this a film paper we're listening to now?
00:12:52	Adam	Host	Yeah! Yeah, it is!
00:12:53	John	Host	"There's no politics in starvation." Okay. Go.
00:12:56	Adam	Host	There's only one side to that argument. And it's the side of the mutineers. No one's gonna eat that meat!
00:13:02	John	Host	Yeah. But Ben's right. It keeps coming back to... I mean, they're basically mutinying and stealing a battleship because the food was bad. And having been on a few ships in my day where the food was bad... mutinying—they could all be put up against the wall and shot. So it is funny that the Odessa steps massacre—which I don't think actually happened in real life—like, the movie pours a lot of energy into showing the Czar's troops just killing civilians and wantonly firing into crowds. But somehow the movie wasn't prepared to have the officers of the <i>Potemkin</i> be any crueller than just... bad meat cooks.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:13:51	Adam	Host	It's interesting that the meat wasn't the final straw. It was the borscht. How bad could that borscht have been for them to refuse that?
00:14:00	John	Host	Oh, well I think it was—was it borscht? I thought that what happened was the chef took the maggoty meat and threw it in a soup.
00:14:07	Ben	Host	I think it's a little ambiguous, so... I don't know.

00:14:10	John	Host	The movie had to spend a lot of the screen time just having people look at the camera and make a karate-chop motion with their hand while they were pretending to shout.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			And so it didn't have the time to actually fill in some of that plot stuff. Because a guy had to make a karate chop and shout and then it had to switch to a different angle on him doing the same thing and then switch to a different guy doing the same thing.
00:14:33	Ben	Host	I mean, it's so early in film history that we're, like—we're seeing them make mistakes that you make in your first year at film school. In this, one of the greatest films of all time. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Like...
00:14:49	John	Host	I think that's the thing that stood out to me! Was that having—like every kid that ever got ahold of a video camera—having made a few movies where my friends and I went in the backyard and staged swordfights—a lot of those movies, a lot of the things that we were just inspired to do—the shots, I guess that seemed necessary to flesh out a film—I saw so many of them in this. That I wonder whether it's something innate in human beings. That you insist on getting all that coverage of people yelling.
00:15:27	Ben	Host	Yeah. Well, it's also, like, one of the earliest examples of montage. And we've talked about montage a bit on this show. How it's a film technique that arises in the USSR as a reaction against telling stories that are based on the subjective individual experience of a hero, because everything in the USSR is oriented toward collective action. So a montage lets you show lots of people participating in a story at the same time.
00:15:58	John	Host	Hm.
00:16:00	Ben	Host	And they're very rudimentary montages in this movie. Like, they haven't quite worked out everything that a montage could be, I don't think. But Eisenstein was like one of the people that invented it as an idea. Which is amazing. Like, it's amazing to see the early work of a filmmaker that actually invented something.
00:16:24	Adam	Host	Eisenstein was 27.
00:16:26	John	Host	Oh wow. Really?
00:16:27	Adam	Host	Insane. Right?
00:16:29	Ben	Host	Pretty bonkers.
00:16:30	John	Host	It's funny how impressive it was and how many of the shots you see, like, taken out of whole cloth in other films. That the iconic center of the movie <i>The Untouchables</i> —with Kevin Costner—of the baby carriage going down the steps is, like, note-for-note out of this! The whole “go to the mattresses” scene in <i>The Godfather</i> ?
00:16:54	Adam	Host	There's Nordberg going down the stadium steps in the wheelchair?
00:16:56	John	Host	Yeah.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:16:57	Adam	Host	In <i>The Naked Gun</i> .
00:17:00	John	Host	I could see like how this movie ends up on those lists, because every person who ever went to film school took a little bit. But it all feels like a... it all feels like those little bits—I don't know how they got away with stealing it in <i>The Untouchables</i> so completely. Like, every single filmmaker who saw that movie must have rolled their eyes. But for me, watching it as a 20-year-old, I was like, “Whoa. Genius!”
00:17:32	Ben	Host	I always thought that the <i>Naked Gun</i> scene was a parody of <i>The Untouchables</i> . But it's, like, a parody of an homage, I guess.
00:17:40	John	Host	Right.

00:17:41	Clip	Clip	Jane Spencer (<i>The Naked Gun</i>): Everyone should have a friend like you!
00:17:44	Ben	Host	<i>[Clanging sound, then a man cries out, followed by a thud.]</i> I mean, the mind boggles.
00:17:48	Ben	Host	<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i> It's also a movie that was considered extraordinarily violent when it was released. A lot of the censorship of it was about that more than the politics or, y'know, worker-oriented ethos of the film. A lot of the time they don't even really convincingly convey that the guns are shooting, y'know? Like, when the Cossacks are marching down the steps, it is a long time before you feel like, "Oh, these guys are actually firing their guns into the crowd." You see them holding the guns up, but you don't see puffs of smoke for a long time and you just see people kind of like falling over. You're like, "Are they scared and tripping down the steps?" <i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:18:34	John	Host	"Or are these soldiers doing something... atrocious?" <i>[Laughs.]</i> We're used to seeing violence depicted as <u>physical</u> action. We think of violence now in movies as kinetic. Exclusively. But implied violence is just as violent. Like, the violence in this movie is... political violence. And what I'm sure made it so controversial and made it so shocking to people was the murder of innocents. The kind of mechanical way those Czarist soldiers marched down the steps with no, y'know, they didn't respond to that mother's appeal. They just shot her. They didn't respond to the mother with the baby carriage. They just shot her. Even though we didn't see the explosion of blood, like, it must have been... <u>appalling</u> .
00:19:22	Adam	Host	There's something so scary about the Cossacks being faceless, too, right? We don't really see them and know them the way that we know the innocent people getting killed by them. I think that technique really ratcheted up the horror of that. And it had to make that scene shocking to a movie-going audience of its time.
00:19:44	Ben	Host	I had written a note watching the movie about the difference between... the violence that the state is perpetrating on the people versus the violence of the sailors rising up and attacking the officers, and how they feel really different. And in thinking about it—thinking about all of the violence that we've seen in all of the films that we've seen. Like, so much of it is actually state violence. But this feels uniquely condemnatory of state violence. In the films that we've seen.
00:20:20	John	Host	There are a lot of little moments in it that kind of mark it off as a film from the early Bolshevik period. And one of those is that they throw all the officers into the ocean. But still, as a group of sailors, they manage to command a battleship into action. And we see Vakulinchuk—who dies—is the one that inspires the revolt. But he's also the biggest, burliest, most mustachioed of all the men. <i>[Ben laughs.]</i> And after he's dead, his friend—who is the second-burliest, most-mustachioed guy—mostly takes charge of the battleship. And there's an important scene where somebody is on a telephone going like, <i>[makes nonsense chatting sounds]</i> , y'know, yelling down to the engine room. And he comes and actually pushes the guy out of the way and grabs the phone. And the Bolshevik implication is that without an officer class, a

group of one thousand sailors will just naturally—to each according to his need, from each according to his ability—

[Adam laughs.]

—figure out how to command a battleship. And the great thing—what makes this movie so 1925 is that in that scene in particular—and throughout the movie—the leader of the group is just the biggest dude with the biggest moustache.

[Ben laughs.]

00:22:06	Adam	Host	And the Bolsheviks would not have endorsed that!
			Because everyone's the same amount of bigness and everyone has the same moustache?
00:22:10	John	Host	Well, no. But it's not—the Marxist Revolution isn't about just reinstalling whoever the biggest bully is. At least not on paper. But this movie does not make the case that the guy that commands the battleship is the smartest one. Right? No skinny kid... by virtue of his ability, rises up in this movie to become the natural leader he is, irrespective of the class into which he was born.
00:22:45	Adam	Host	If there were, he would've been my guy.
00:22:46	John	Host	Right. Exactly. Instead what happens is it's just like, "Sailors are big and burly and the burliest one—" But somehow they also—like, this guy with one stripe on his shoulder knows how to command an entire ship of men. There's a lot of code and code switching in this movie.
00:23:07	Music	Transition	Short reprise of theme song "War."
00:23:10	Adam	Host	My moment of pedantry—

[Sound of telegraph plays in the background.]

—is that Vakulinchuk is an absolute unit.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:23:24	John	Host	There is no way he got that big eating half a cup of maggoty meat and a quarter-cup of borscht a day. Like... He's a big boy.
			<i>[Adam laughs.]</i>
00:23:27	Adam	Host	He's totally stacked!
00:23:29	Ben	Host	One of the things that really struck me about the cast was that they were not beautiful people. They just found regular-ass people. And I don't think any of these people were, like, movie stars or otherwise famous.
00:23:42	Adam	Host	Do you think that made the Odessa steps scene more effective to you? 'Cause I thought a lot about that during that scene. Like, "Look at all these people with interesting faces!"

[Ben laughs.]

00:24:02	John	Host	"Being shot." It made me feel that more deeply, I think, than if it were just Hollywood casting call faces for extras. I thought a lot about it in terms of it being 1925 and this being... not just set in Odessa but filmed there?
00:24:13	Ben	Host	Maybe these were the most beautiful people in Odessa?
00:24:16	Adam	Host	You're gonna have 1925 face in 1925.

00:24:19 John Host Yeah! Right? You are. There's—not everyone is gonna look like Lillian Gish. Y'know, this is a Black Sea population.

00:24:27 Ben Host Yeah.

00:24:28 Adam Host Everyone on the steps were teenagers! That's what's shocking.

[Ben laughs.]

Lotta city miles on those Odessa faces.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:24:34 Ben Host I think my wife's people kind of come from this part of the world, so it was very exciting for her to see kind of traditional life ways of the past being depicted. And also her ears really perked up—or I guess her eyes perked up, in the case of this film—when the line about “Let's get the Jews, also!” popped up on the screen.

00:24:56 Adam Host Boy, that guy really misread the room—

00:24:57 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** He sure did.

Adam: *[Through laughter]*—in that moment, huh?

[Ben laughs.]

00:25:00 Adam Host Yikes.

00:25:01 John Host As the town comes to see Vakulinchuk, and little by little... more and more people come to pay their respects, I think the movie is doing a lot of work to show that... at first the people there are the sort of lowest working class. And gradually more and more people from the upper class start to come pay their respects. The women in white dresses who are twirling their umbrellas. Y'know, lots of fancy people. And the fancy people are not paying their respects properly. Right? They come—they're kind of looky-looing. But they gradually start to—their sympathies start to be with the people.

And there's a lot of... stuff that I don't think we could ever properly read into the way that all those people are dressed and are behaving. Because I think to an audience in 1925 we would've seen that stuff as emblematic of a certain kind of person. A certain template of person. But that anti-Semite, who was, y'know, kind of smirking and... he was dressed a little bit nicer. He clearly represented a type. And the movie made such a huge point of, y'know, like, “The revolution understands that antisemitism is a ploy on the part of the moneyed class to deflect that energy.” Which I do not think is what the Bolsheviks ended up being. *[Through laughter]* Y'know? Like—

[Adam laughs.]

In 1940.

00:26:46 Ben Host Stalin certainly did not end up being... a friend to the Jewish people.

00:26:50 John Host No! And so that—from 1925 to 1940, that transformation... I don't—I don't think of the revolution—the Bolshevik Revolution as being one that... y'know, that took a hard stance against antisemitism. But this movie sure did!

00:27:11 Adam Host There are a couple of scenes where you get the sense that the mob is a living thing. And that's one of the scenes, right?

00:27:17 John Host Yeah.

00:27:18	Adam	Host	As soon as that guy steps out on that ledge with that comment, the entire mob swarms him and takes him down. We see it on the ship. We see it there. We see it on the steps.
00:27:29	Ben	Host	Yeah. One thing I felt very conscious of watching this was how much—even with translation—I wasn't getting. 'Cause I think that you're right, John. The way people are dressed or the kinds of adornments they have probably meant something very specific at the time. Like, it'll go in close on somebody's belt and there's, like, a duck on the belt? I'm like, "Is that like a super-evocative symbol in 1925? Or is just a duck on a belt?" Y'know?
00:28:00	Adam	Host	"Why is he smoking a cigar? We'll never know!"
00:28:04	Ben	Host	It seems like this movie is <u>loaded</u> with shit like that. The camera, when it goes in for a close-up, feels extremely intentional. But—
00:28:11	Adam	Host	I felt a lot of trepidation about doing this episode of <i>Friendly Fire</i> for that reason, Ben. I feel like you could spend an entire week doing research about <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> and feel like you have not done enough.
00:28:23	Ben	Host	Yeah.
00:28:24	Adam	Host	In talking about it.
00:28:25	John	Host	We're used to the volume being really turned up on how the privileged are portrayed. If the privileged are going to be made the enemy, by virtue of their distance from the people. But in this movie—again, because of where it's set and filmed—you know <u>nobody's</u> got good teeth. Doesn't matter how rich you are. It's just your teeth are just made out of a better class of mahogany.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:28:55	Adam	Host	Very early Affleck teeth in this film.
00:28:58	John	Host	For me, only the women that were in really, really white dresses? Was it made clear the distinction between them and the women in—whose dresses were dark. Y'know? You could see shabby versus clean.
00:29:13	Adam	Host	I think about that shot, John, where the woman in the white dress who's also wearing the white gloves is, like, "clutching at her gut" shot? And her gloves are torn, too? Can't stop thinking about that shot.
			<i>[Tense, frenetic music plays in background.]</i>
00:29:29	Ben	Host	Yeah. The one that really got me was the woman in the white dress twirling her parasol and then the camera cuts back down to the angle where she picked her parasol up from, and a guy with no legs kind of scoots over on the steps?
00:29:41	John	Host	Yeah. A great juxtaposition. But at that moment they're all united.
00:29:46	Ben	Host	Totally.
00:29:47	Adam	Host	I like it when that guy pops back up on the subway later.
00:29:50	John	Host	When he's running down the steps and he's leaping five steps at a time? It was like—
00:29:56	Ben	Host	That guy can really move!
00:29:56	John	Host	Killer stunt work.
00:29:58	Ben	Host	And he had those little... little handles that he was using to protect his hands from the ground.
00:30:02	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:30:03	John	Host	What I didn't fully understand—y'know, the officers... if you're talking about a revolution of the people, it's very tidy to have it happen on a ship in a military context. Because it's, like, it's clear who the... bourgeoisie are. It's clear who the feudal lords are. And it's clear who the people are.
00:30:27	Ben	Host	Whereas in real life, you could see me walking down the street and assume I'm a bourgeois pig, but I'm actually a man of the people!

00:30:35	John	Host	<p><i>[Through laughter]</i> Yeah. Yeah. A man of the people. That's why you wear that T-shirt that says "Man of the People; Please Don't Shoot Me."</p> <p><i>[Ben laughs.]</i></p> <p>But when the film takes to the streets of Odessa, it's a much more complicated situation. Right? The movie is trying to tell us that <u>all</u> of the people of the city are in support of the battleship.</p>
00:30:58	Ben	Host	Everybody's got a basket of eggs to donate to this battleship.
00:31:01	John	Host	Yeah! And the movie accepts the... the signing-on of people of all classes and creeds. And then again, the enemy is... just the army or the Cossacks or the—y'know, the Czar's minions. There isn't any element in this movie where... where actual class war is depicted.
00:31:28	Adam	Host	John, I have a question about that skiff scene. Before you get too far. I know so little about Odessa during this time that I took that scene as "everyone in Odessa has a skiff, and everyone is giving what they can to support the soldiers on the battleship." But the significance of that scene is very different if you're saying that the skiffs are for the riches and the riches are giving their nice chickens and pigs to the ship instead. How... how broad was the support of the skiff food relief scene? Because I interpreted it as the former.
00:32:10	John	Host	I don't think that the skiffs were, like, rich pleasure boats; I think that that was—that was meant to portray, like, the whole of the city coming out. But when we see them handing the crew geese and piglets and huge baskets of eggs? Interestingly, we never see a scene where a little boy holds up one bruised tomato. And says, y'know, "Take my—my contribution, too!"
00:32:45	Ben	Host	<i>[In British accent]</i> "This is me last tomato, m'lord!"
00:32:49	John	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i>
00:32:51	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	All we see is this incredible abundance. Adam: Yeah.
00:32:53	John	Host	Ben: Right. And I think the film is, kind of—either it's unclear or maybe we're not able to see what it's trying to say. Or it may be garbled. About like, "So wait a minute. Is Odessa an extremely rich town and everyone there has the ability to give a huge basket of eggs? Or are—is the moneyed class converted to the cause? Or are they just converted to the cause for the <i>Potemkin</i> but not for the next ship that comes in?"
00:33:22	Adam	Host	If you're making propaganda, I think Eisenstein has to be very careful in this scene. Right? To not cut from the gifts being given to the sailors taking a nap on deck, picking meat out of their teeth.
00:33:37	John	Host	Right.
00:33:38	Adam	Host	Y'know? You must remain on their side. And I think it was deftly done to just sort of cut from the gift-giving scene to another scene of conflict. Like you never see these guys lounging comfortably in the officer's quarters. It's cramped everywhere. No one's comfortable.
00:33:57	John	Host	Kinda just like this podcast.
00:33:58	Adam	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
00:34:01	John	Host	Yeah. You guys in your hammocks, always bumping me as I'm trying to walk through the corridor? Farting in the night?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>

00:34:08	Adam	Host	I think we touched on it earlier, but the difference in masculinity between the officer class and the unit class—
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			—in the hammocks. You get this effete person with a riding crop, like, whipping at one of the shirtless guys? Don't tell me that there's not a subtext there. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:34:27	John	Host	<i>[Suggestively]</i> Mmm. What is it, Adam?
00:34:30	Adam	Host	<i>[Pause.]</i> Just me? Alright.
00:34:32	John	Host	You know, the key to the 1905 Revolution—and I think the key to the <i>Potemkin</i> itself—was that this was the same year that—of the Russo-Japanese War. That happened on the other side of the world.
00:34:50	Ben	Host	They talk about it a little bit. “This food is worse than what you get in a Japanese prison camp.”
00:34:57	John	Host	And what happened in that war was that the Japanese handed the Russians their ass. In a way that no one in the world expected. The sailors had lost their faith in their officers because there was an overall loss of... faith in what had formerly been a kind of feeling of Russian or European supremacy.
00:35:19	Ben	Host	The Russo-Japanese War was about the Russians trying to invade, like, far enough south that they could have a warm-water port in—on the Pacific? Is that right?
00:35:31	John	Host	Yeah. It was about control over Manchuria and Korea. And I think China had had such hegemony over that whole region, and the Japanese and the Chinese fought ten years prior or whatever in the Sino-Japanese War. And the Chinese lost badly to the Japanese. And the Japanese were like, “Okay. We're taking over. We're gonna be the new dominant power here.” In the aftermath of China being defeated, the European powers saw a power vacuum and rushed in. And I think the Russians felt like they could just come in and take control of Manchuria. And there would be no resistance. And the Japanese hurt the Russians and then in the aftermath of that war, basically took control over Manchuria themselves. Setting up the first half of the 20 th century and all the bad things that happen.
00:36:34	Ben	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> Right. Yeah. It's totally amazing to imagine that the first Russian revolution was happening at the same time as that war. And like, all of the... all of the things that ensued from that.
00:36:44	John	Host	And the hubris that the Russians had, that they could—y'know, they got their warm-water port. Which is what the history of the last 200 years is all about. Russia trying to get a freaking warm-water port. That's why they invaded Afghanistan; that's why they expanded all the SSRs down there. Just trying to find some freaking place to get their boats out of the ice!
00:37:07	Adam	Host	Why don't they just heat their own cold-water ports?
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i>
			Why haven't they thought of that?
00:37:13	Ben	Host	That's the long game with global warming.
00:37:14	John	Host	You say that as a joke, but in fact, Vladivostok now <u>is</u> a warm-water port because they built a power plant—
00:37:23	Adam	Host	Wow.
00:37:24	John	Host	—that warmed the water! The power plant was to make power, but the side effect of it was it warmed the water enough that it— <i>[Laughs.]</i> That it keeps the ice out of the port! They used to have to have ice breakers. It's a crazy thing.
00:37:37	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: Brilliant.

00:37:39	Ben	Host	Ben: Wow. And now they're the scourge of the high seas with their vast navy.
00:37:42	John	Host	<i>[John laughs, applauds.]</i> Oh, well that's the thing! The Russians thought all they needed to do was take Port Arthur, but they neglected the fact that they had to supply and support this port all the way across the entirety of Asia. Every single bruised tomato they had to ship all the way across the world. So. Bad Czarist hubris.
00:38:10	Clip	Clip	Music: Light staccato strings.
00:38:15	Adam	Host	Lot of interesting meals in this movie. How about salt on bread?
00:38:18	Ben	Host	Mm. Salty! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:38:21	Adam	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i> And you know that loaf had a pretty tight crumb. That's some heavy-duty stuff.
00:38:25	Ben	Host	Not a terribly glutinous crumb structure.
00:38:28	Adam	Host	<i>[Adam laughs.]</i> John, did you ever eat fat on bread when you were in parts of Eastern Europe? When I visited Poland that was the main thing to eat all the time. Get yourself a tall glass of your beverage of choice and then, like, slather that fat onto your tight-crumb bread.
00:38:47	John	Host	Yup. Fat on bread and, like, rind? Fat rind?
00:38:52	Ben	Host	What are you talking about? Like, rendered—like, lard? Or—
00:38:55	Adam	Host	Yeah!
00:38:56	John	Host	But also just... straight-up—what they called “bacon” was just the fat part. Just the rind.
00:39:05	Adam	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
00:39:07	John	Host	And not the meat part. I had a guy in Romania tell me one time when I was like, “It's interesting because in America and Canada, what we call ‘bacon’ is like this part of the pig, except cut more deeply to where the meat is. And what you're calling bacon is just the fatty outside part.” And the guy looked at me and he was thinking about it. And he was like, “Yeah. Romanian pigs don't have <u>meat</u> .”
00:39:38	Adam	Host	That's so interesting. That explains so much.
00:39:41	John	Host	And I was like, “Wow. Okay.”
00:39:45	Adam	Host	<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> I looked down at this bowl of pig fat the same way. I was like, “So where's the rest—I mean, there's gonna be, like, pig... stuff on the menu, too, right? Like, pig meat?” <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:39:56	John	Host	No. They don't have meat.
00:39:57	Adam	Host	“Shut up, kid.” <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:39:58	John	Host	They don't have meat there. The meat gets used somewhere else.
00:40:00	Adam	Host	I tell ya what—it endeared me to my Polish family quite a bit to hang an inch of that pork lard on a slice of bread and take it down.
00:40:11	John	Host	With a little salt? Yeah. Or a lot of salt.
00:40:12	Adam	Host	Yeah.
00:40:13	Ben	Host	“I've been buttered up before, but this is ridiculous!”
00:40:17	John	Host	<i>[All laugh.]</i> I mean, you gotta say—lard is pretty darn good.

00:40:20	Adam	Host	It was really good.
00:40:22	John	Host	The guys on the <i>Potemkin</i> —on the battleship <i>Potemkin</i> —would’ve killed for a little lard!
00:40:26	Adam	Host	Yeah. They really would’ve. Not a lot of fat on that maggoty meat they were looking at.
00:40:30	John	Host	No. But a lot of fat on those big units.
[Multiple people laugh.]			
00:40:36	Ben	Host	Yeah. Those guys got some lard.
00:40:38	John	Host	Uh-huh. They’re thick!
00:40:41	Ben	Host	Hey, do you guys want to hear a moment of pedantry?
00:40:42	Adam	Host	Yes!
00:40:43	Ben	Host	“In the Imperial Squadron, near the end of the film, we see close-ups of triple gun turrets on <i>Gangut</i> -class dreadnought. It is possibly made this way to show the power of the Imperial fleet, but this is an anachronism for battleships of 1905 were much smaller pre-dreadnoughts with twin turrets only.”
[Sound of telegraph plays in background.]			
00:41:06	John	Host	“Just like <i>Potemkin</i> . <i>Ganguts</i> entered service in 1914.” I noticed that and it hurt me to see those big dreadnought turrets. I was like, “Come on. Come on, you guys!”
[Ben laughs.]			
00:41:15	Adam	Host	Did it also titillate you to see those turrets get greased repeatedly?
[Ben laughs.]			
00:41:21	John	Host	That was—
00:41:23	Adam	Host	Good lord. That was very suggestive!
00:41:24	John	Host	Yeah. That was something right out of <i>Emmanuelle Goes to Thailand</i> .
[All laugh.]			
00:41:30	Adam	Host	Yeah. I mean, is that one of the scenes that got censored?
00:41:33	Ben	Host	The Middle Eastern distributors made sure that that was cut out.
00:41:37	Adam	Host	I thought this film did a great job with that tension in the fifth act. The “will they or won’t they fire or be fired upon by the fleet?” Probably not something that people talk a lot about in terms of being... inspirational to the films that followed. Because I think we just sort of take it as, like, a quality that all films with third acts have. But I thought it was really well done here!
00:42:03	Ben	Host	It’s interesting that it doesn’t feel like a... <i>deus ex machina</i> that the sailors on the other ships just declined to engage them in naval combat.
00:42:16	John	Host	Yeah. Based just on some signals they sent up via flag and semaphore. Y’know, not being versed in semaphore, I wasn’t able to discern how convincing the argument they were making from ship to ship was? Like, “Join us! Fren!” And y’know, like, five other ships are like, “Yes, Fren!”
00:42:38	Ben	Host	They were very lucky that Darth was on that other ship.
[John laughs.]			
00:42:41	Adam	Host	There’s a fair amount of “semaphoreplay” before we get down to business, huh?
00:42:46	John	Host	Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
00:42:47	Ben	Host	Oh boy.
00:42:48	Adam	Host	There’s more where that came from, fellas!

[Multiple people laugh.]

I don't know about you, but it felt satisfying to have, like, the victory without firing a shot ending. It felt kind of Cuban Missile Crisis—adjacent at the end. Like, that exhalation of relief? Unclear what's gonna happen to this crew after, but could've been a whole lot worse. I liked it.

00:43:13 Ben Host
00:43:16 Adam Host
00:43:17 Ben Host

It is successfully triumphant—feeling at the end.

Yeah.

Do you guys also like get that thing of like... I kind of wanted there to be end credits on this movie? Like, it ends on such a high note and then it just cuts to black and you're just like, "Okay!" Like, y'know, enjoy our refractory period while we read about who the key grips were.

[John laughs.]

00:43:35 Adam Host
00:43:44 Clip Clip
00:43:46 Ben Host

Do you just get up out of your movie theater seat and walk out immediately? Is the lights-up cue just smashed right at the end of this? Deep drumbeat.

It seems like the premiere of this film—this was all a big gala for celebrating a major turning point in the revolution. But.

00:43:55 John Host

There would've been an overture. The symphony would've kept playing. It's interesting—we've seen a handful of films that are part of... sort of a nation-building project. Right? Film can be... really... crucial in establishing a sort of political story. But this is the—this is a movie that happens... that gets made during a period where the story is still being written. There was so much propaganda happening. Y'know, the Bolshevik Revolution was so self-referential in that it ushered in a new style of art. A new style of writing. A new style of... everything. New fashion.

00:44:43 Ben Host

It's like a very early example of a mass media piece of propaganda. Like, Goebbels' quote about this film is, "It's a marvelous film without equal in cinema, and anyone who had no firm political conviction could become a Bolshevik after seeing the film." And they were like, 'This is the kind of shit we need to be doing with our crazy ideology.'

00:45:04 John Host

Sure! It's—Leni Riefenstahl is the one that took the most from it. Right? Just in the sense of like... that kind of montage and that sort of like, "Here are the strong people against the cruel."

00:45:18 Ben Host

Yeah. In Leni Riefenstahl's version, the guy says, "Let's get the Jews!"

[John laughs.]

And they put him up on their shoulders and parade *[through laughter]* through the town.

[Adam laughs.]

00:45:30 Adam Host

And the Notre Dame fight song plays?

[All laugh.]

00:45:34 Ben Host
00:45:39 John Host

Why is that always playing when someone says, "Let's get the Jews?!" It's interesting that most of the movies that are made in America now... we are trying to write the story of history, of our own history. But the movies that we're making are always... we're always taking a hard look at ourselves. We're trying to rewrite the story over the top of the story that was written at the time. Y'know, all of our Vietnam movies, they're all us taking a critical look not at the regime that came before, but a critical look at ourselves. And so we keep writing and rewriting—overwriting—our own story.

00:46:19	Clip	Clip	Peter Howard (<i>The Patriot</i>): We <u>are</u> citizens of an American nation! In this constant process of trying to get it right or more right. More and more accurate. And a movie like this is, y'know, it's not condensing stuff in order to tell the whole story. It's not conflating two characters in order to make it more dramatic. It's trying to tell a story where they think there is no end. Right? This was the beginning of a thing that they presumed would ultimately sweep the world. This was the beginning of a revolution that became the future.
00:46:23	John	Host	
00:47:02	Adam	Host	Where is the line between pride in a successful revolutionary act and inspiration for future similar acts here? I feel like there's a tension in propaganda of this kind, right? Between those two ideas.
00:47:19	John	Host	Let's say you command a battleship in the navy of the USSR. Do you show this movie on Saturday night?
00:47:27	Ben	Host	You'd check with the guys in the mess first and be like—

[John laughs appreciatively, applauds.]

"How's, uhh... how are supplies looking?"

[All laugh.]

00:48:10	John	Host	I mean, that's something I've thought a lot about in the movies we've seen about soldiers in Russia. Is they seem no less invested in the economic ideology of the USSR than any other soldiers. And it was a pretty recent change for them! It's amazing to be in World War Two and be like, "I'm a lifelong communist. I grew up communist. My whole family's communist. We believe in this." But like, your dad's dad— <i>[Laughs.]</i> Didn't live there, you know? He lived under a totally different regime! Yeah. You have to think that—well, the story is that things were so bad for so many people that they had nothing to lose. But in this movie there are an awful lot of people that have geese and piglets and baskets of eggs.
00:48:24	Adam	Host	And a skiff.
00:48:25	Ben	Host	Yeah. It's all locally-sourced artisanal stuff, too. Organic.
00:48:29	Adam	Host	A pig that's almost entirely fat.
00:48:32	John	Host	All fat, no muscle?

[Adam laughs.]

00:50:00	Music	Transition	But I think we're seeing in our own time that the people that are the most disenfranchised by the regime—their revolt on their own isn't enough to ever overturn a regime. It requires buy-in by a lot of people that are probably complacent and comfortable most of the time. And at a certain point something tips. And people that actually have a lot to <u>lose</u> start to support the revolution. Y'know, that's the key to a revolution. It's not just the soldiers that have maggots meat. It's the people on shore with the white parasols that are like, "You know what? Yeah. I throw my parasol down so that the sailors can have better meat." I think this movie tells that story to those people at the time, right? This movie came out in '25. It was only seven years later that the famine in Ukraine started, that killed—I don't know. Ten million Ukrainians? So no one, I think, watching this movie is thinking, "Oh, well, one of the side effects of this revolution is that we're all going to starve to death."
00:50:03	Adam	Host	Short reprise of theme song "War." Much in the way that no one makes a film like <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> anymore, no one wears moustaches like the ones we see in this film

anymore, either. Good lord! Really powerful moustaches in this movie. Guys? This is our 149th episode. I'm hoping that moustaches have not been a rating system in a *Friendly Fire* episode before, 'cause I'm gonna make them the rating system for *Battleship Potemkin*.

00:50:32 Ben Host
00:50:33 Adam Host

I like it.

I felt a little bit of reluctance stepping up to rewatch this movie, because kind of a lot of films I watched in film studies classes are ones that I would call not necessarily rewatchable. Y'know? Like, you watch it for the craft, for the paper you have to write, and that's that. But I really enjoyed watching this film. It was really more trance-like than watching many other films. And I think it's gotta be because of its silent film quality. Just sort of give yourself over to this thing. And I mean, a film without dialogue means that you cannot look down at your phone and become distracted.

[Ben laughs.]

Like, you need to be in it visually to get the story. So I think that really helped, too! There was, like, attention consequences to watching a film of this era that I could appreciate. I got excited when I saw film techniques that I knew were among the first to ever be seen. Like, *Odessa steps* is a great moment in this film, but like... there are, like, dolly shots set up on those stairs! And I was just blown away by some of this stuff. And I imagined like... in the same way audiences getting up from their seats and running away from train driving at screen? Like, imagine the gasps of an audience watching some of these techniques for the first time. It must've just been exhilarating.

I've got a lot of respect for a film that somehow remains compelling after a hundred years. And I think a lot of notable filmmakers consider this one of their favorite films and I kinda roll my eyes at that, because it's a very cool director thing to say. That *Battleship Potemkin* is one of your favorite movies. I read that this film has 1,346 shots in it for its 86-minute run time? I think that's one of the things that makes it one of Michael Bay's favorite movies.

[Ben laughs.]

That's a shitload of shots. In a super-heavily-edited film. You might not expect that when you step up to the plate watching *Battleship Potemkin*. Sergei Eisenstein? More like Sergei Einstein! Because the formula for this film is $E=MC...$ stairs.

00:53:03 John Host

[Ben laughs.]

What is happening?

[Ben laughs louder.]

00:53:10 Adam Host
00:53:14 Ben Host

Who authorized that?

I'm gonna give this film four moustaches.

Wow. [Laughs.] I'm really glad I got to see this movie. It is such a different vernacular, and... y'know, we find that to greater and lesser degrees when we watch really old movies. Like, some of 'em are—seem so current and so... y'know, surprisingly... trenchant. And this one feels like it's both kind of speaking to people of a different mindset and people of just an unthinkable time and place. It's a fun watch, all the same, and it's a pretty light lift at an hour and six minutes. But I found myself drifting a

little bit, too. And I think it's just—it does not have all of the tools of a modern Disney action film to— *[Laughs.]* To keep my attention.

But if you're interested in history and the history of film, I think you gotta see it. I think I was really remiss in leaving this off my have-watched list for as long as I have, and I'm really glad I've seen it. And really glad that I can revisit the other films I've seen in this new context of having seen where some of the ideas of them came from. So yeah. I'll give it four moustaches as well. Really cool that this survives, y'know?

00:54:43 John Host

My dad was born in 1921. Like... he was older than the baby in the baby carriage. Like, he was... he was the toddler—not even toddler! He was a four-year-old when this movie was made. So although it seems like this movie is from one billion years ago, it's actually—I mean, my dad just died a few years ago. Well, actually a while ago now. It seems like a few years ago. But in living memory still, these events. And that's one of the things that's craziest to me. And we're now entering into a span of history unprecedented. Which is that from here on out, a hundred years ago will be better and better documented. So that the people in 2050 will have plenty of films from a hundred years prior. That will give them a really, really good idea of what it was like.

And for us now to watch a film from a hundred years ago, it just seems like the dawn of time. And part of that is the storytelling. Because we see in this movie, like, one of the very earliest movies, we still get the shot of a guy in the boiler room with some gauges and sweat and oil pouring down as someone yells at him to *[through laughter]* give us more power. But we see that scene in every single submarine movie. In every single battleship movie. I mean he's basically like, *[Scottish accent]* "I can't get enough power, captain!"

[Adam laughs.]

Y'know, it's—all the way to *Star Trek* and beyond. So in that sense it's—this film takes place in the modern era! But in the sense of how primitive the pace of storytelling is here. And it's weird, because this is coming on the heels of 2000 years of the tradition of theater. But because film is a new media, there's just shot after shot of people sort of recapitulating an idea. My only ability is to... either get into a story or not get into a story. And the story here is... y'know, is just really, like, these guys didn't get enough—they didn't like their food. They were mad. They mutinied. And then they came into the harbor and they thought they would be in trouble but the people supported them but then the government didn't support them, but then the other sailors did. The end. And it was like, "Aagh! Just give me something! One—just a—like—I never wished for a love story subplot more."

So I just feel like I often can see recommending a movie as a must-see even if it's not enjoyable? Like, I don't recommend anybody watch *Fires on the Plain* because it's, like, a date movie, but this movie, I just, ugh. But that said, how do you rag on *Battleship Potemkin*? I don't know. I feel like giving it the old "Adam four-and-a-half moustaches" just to get out of it. But I'm gonna give it a solid three moustaches. Just because I'm not... I'm not smart enough to have a take.

00:58:25 Adam Host

Well, the hard part's over. Rating the film. This is—it only gets easier from here, John, when we select our guys. Who's your guy?

00:58:33	John	Host	Well I mean, my favorite character in the movie is the sort of buxom and matronly woman with the giant sunhat who brings the goose to the <i>Potemkin</i> . She's the first one—in the entire flotilla, she's the first one there. And she brought that Christmas goose. I was so thrilled—like—pretty exciting to imagine that butcher, who was originally my guy, and they start throwing pigs through the window at him?
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			Like, that's a big day for him! Big day if you're like—
			<i>[Adam cracks up.]</i>
00:59:27	Adam	Host	—he's not just lounging in his hammock. He's got pigs to kill. But that woman, she was so excited to bring that goose to them. So she's my guy. Good guy. I am reluctant to choose main characters. I don't believe this qualifies. But Vakulinchuk is my guy because he's the classic "first guy to call the revolt" and also "first guy to die."
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
			From it. <i>[Laughs.]</i> "Hey, guys! Follow me!"
			<i>[All laugh.]</i>
01:00:28	Ben	Host	And then he dies for it. That's gonna be my guy-making most days. But his death made me think a lot about that shot in <i>The Master</i> . Where Joaquin Phoenix is, like, taking a nap in that netting and he's shot top-down? I wonder if in any way his death at the end of that rope inspired that composition. It feels like there's a long list of inspirational shots from this film for modern films. And Vakulinchuk's death was one that I thought a lot about. So he's my guy. What about you, Ben?
			My guy is—he's in the galley cleaning the plates for the officers before the revolt pops off. And he's the dude that is cleaning the "today is your special day" plate.
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			That says, "Give us This Day Our Daily Bread" and smashes it? He's doing a thing that—this may be the first time it was ever depicted in film. The whistle while you work and then notice something? <i>[Laughs.]</i> He's clearly whistling in that scene and noticed that plate and get real outraged by it? And I loved it. That was my favorite performance in the movie.
01:01:02	Adam	Host	Very realistic plate washing from him, too.
01:01:04	Music	Transition	Short reprise of theme song "War."
01:01:06	Promo	Clip	<i>[A quick, energetic drumroll.]</i>

Music: Exciting techno music plays.

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

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

Jarrett: I feel the nausea rising.

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

Jarrett: Kind of like Kanye.

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

Jarrett: He thinks slavery's a choice.

Tre'vell: Or, like, *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*. Like, I love the drama, but do I wanna see Black women fighting each other on screen?

Tyler Perry (as Madea): *[Singing]* Hell to the naaaaw. To the naw-naw-naaaaw.

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

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

Jarrett: *FANTI!* Maximum Fun! Podcast!

Tre'vell: Aa-ow!

[Music fades out.]

01:01:54 Promo Clip

Music: Chill, rhythmic synth music plays in background.

Jesse Thorn: Hey, friends! Jesse here, the founder of Maximum Fun, and I have some really great news to share with you. This year has brought a lot of changes for all of us, and one tradition that we were grateful to be able to hold onto is our annual pin sale to benefit charity. This year, through your generosity and love of pins, you helped raise \$95,400 for GiveDirectly. If you're a member and you bought pins, they'll ship in January. In the meantime, your support will provide direct cash relief to families impacted by COVID-19 across the United States. Even in this incredibly tough year, the MaxFun community remains extraordinarily kind. And whether or not you bought pins, you can continue to help by heading to [GiveDirectly.org](https://www.givedirectly.org). And as always, thank you.

[Music fades out.]

01:02:47 Music Transition

Short reprise of theme song “War.”

01:02:49 Adam Host

Let's see what the 120-sided die has in store for us!

01:02:53 John Host

'K. I gotta clean up this coffee mug here. Keep the grounds out of the die. My daughter made the coffee this morning. One of her new chores.

01:03:04 Adam Host

Maybe have her wash out that glass with a fistful of grass!

01:03:07 John Host

Yeah. She should.

[Multiple people laugh.]

My coffee mug that says, “Give Us This Day Our Daily Java.” *[Laughs.]*

[Adam laughs.]

01:03:14 Ben Host

Coming soon to the *Friendly Fire* web store. The “Give Us This Day Our Daily Java” mug.

01:03:21	John	Host	<i>[All laugh.]</i> She bought me a mug for Father's Day that said "World's Best Farter" and then underneath in little letters, it says "I Mean Father." And she's <u>so</u> proud of it. And every time she brings me coffee she puts it in the "World's Best Farter" mug and giggles and thinks it's wonderful.
01:03:39	Adam	Host	<i>[Through laughter]</i> We should make that mug just to imagine the dozens of conversations that go, like, "Oh, cool mug! What's that from?" And the mug owner's like, "Y'know that movie <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> ?"
			<i>[All laugh.]</i> "Give Us This Day Our Daily Java?!" That's from <i>Battleship Potemkin</i> ?"
01:04:04	Ben	Host	<i>[All laugh.]</i> Yeah! That's the coffee mug that was heard 'round the world. When it was smashed.
01:04:10	John	Host	<i>[John laughs.]</i> But anyway. This is not in the "World's Best Farter" mug. This is in my other mug, and now it's clean. So here we go.
			<i>[Sound of die clanking against hard surface.]</i> Twenty-six! Twenty-six. Wow. Twenty-six, a film no less prestigious. It's a 1994 film—
01:04:27	Ben	Host	<i>[Fast-paced rock music plays in background.]</i> —set in Chad and Libya, directed by Daniel Petrie, Jr. It's <i>In the Army Now</i> !
01:04:45	Adam	Host	<i>[Adam laughs.]</i> I did not think that's where we were going with that.
01:04:48	John	Host	Is this a Pauly Shore movie?
01:04:49	Ben	Host	Yeah. Pauly Shore, Lori Petty, and Andy Dick!
01:04:53	Adam	Host	Oh, I do like Lori Petty.
01:04:54	John	Host	Oh... man.
			<i>[Ben laughs.]</i> It may not surprise you to learn I did not see this movie in the theater. No kidding? <i>[Laughs.]</i> Are all the Pauly Shore movies in the same Pauly Shore universe? Oh. I don't know! 1994 is, like, the Adam film year, right? That was the year you worked as a projectionist?
01:05:02	Ben	Host	
01:05:03	Adam	Host	
01:05:09	Ben	Host	
01:05:18	Adam	Host	<i>[Theme song "War" begins playing faintly in background.]</i> '96, '97, '98.
01:05:19	Ben	Host	But '97 doesn't count 'cause that year never happened?
01:05:22	Adam	Host	Right.
01:05:23	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Adam: That's true.
01:05:26	Ben	Host	Ben: Right. Okay. This is gonna be great. You guys are gonna love it. <i>In the Army Now</i> , next week on <i>Friendly Fire</i> . In the meantime, for John Roderick and Adam

Pranica, I've been Ben Harrison! To the victor—[flubbing the pronunciation] go the spoiler alerts.

[John laughs.]

[Theme song plays briefly at full volume before receding into background again as Rob speaks.]

01:05:40	Rob Schulte	Producer	<i>Friendly Fire</i> is a Maximum Fun podcast hosted by Adam Pranica, Ben Harrison, and John Roderick. The show is produced by me, Rob Schulte. Our theme music is “War” by Edwin Starr, courtesy of Stone Agate Music, and our podcast art is by Nick Ditmore.
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Want more epic episodes of *Friendly Fire*? Last year at this time we covered Oliver Stone’s *Alexander* from 2004. An historical drama based on the life of Alexander the Great.

Feel like supporting our show? Well, you can leave us a five-star rating and review on Apple Podcasts, or you can head to MaximumFun.org/join and for as little as \$5 a month, you’ll gain access to our bonus Pork Chop feed. And all of the bonus content from Maximum Fun! And don’t forget you can now follow us on Twitter and Instagram under the handles FriendlyFireRSS! Thanks for listening. We’ll see ya next week with another great episode... of *Friendly Fire*.

[Theme song plays a full volume for a while before fading out entirely.]

01:06:59	Music	Transition	A cheerful ukulele chord.
01:07:00	Speaker 1	Guest	MaximumFun.org .
01:07:02	Speaker 3	Guest	Comedy and culture.
01:07:03	Speaker 2	Guest	Artist owned—
01:07:04	Speaker 4	Guest	—Audience supported.