

# Making Apocalypse Now

## *Episode 5: The Hotel Room*



## Forward

By **CINEMATYLER**

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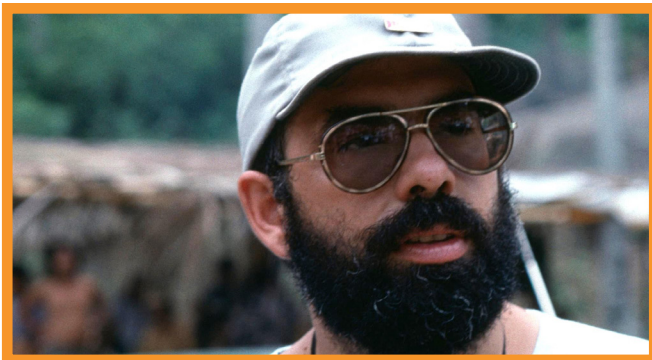
Thanks so much for your support! As you likely already know, I had a copyright issue with the previous episode. Warner Music Group manually flagged my video for the use of the Doors' song "The End" in the video and rejected my dispute. As of right now, most of my income comes from the videos I make, so when something like this happens, it can be quite tough (especially considering that I've been refusing sponsorships for this series). I really appreciate your support! You have no idea how much your support means to me and to the continuation of the channel. I started making these PDFs because people had been asking how to make a one-off donation to the channel and I felt it was

a good opportunity to give a little something extra to those who have helped me so much. I really feel like we can get to the point where most people feel comfortable contributing a dollar here and there to help support the content they like.

I'm currently working with a website that curates and organizes videos on film/television (8hours.com) to build an easy-to-use marketplace for creators like myself to earn more revenue by attaching low-priced extras to their video releases. More on this soon!



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# CHARACTERS



## **Francis Ford Coppola:**

The Hero. A director coming off the massive success of *The Conversation* and *The Godfather* parts I and II is about to embark on a journey that will test his limits—physically, mentally, and spiritually. Will he change the film industry? Will he survive?



## **Martin Sheen (Willard):**

The Face. An actor yearning to become a movie star will go through a journey similar to his character, Willard. In order to exercise his demons, he must face his one true enemy... himself.



## **Vittorio Storaro (Cinematographer):**

The Genius. An Italian cinematographer apprehensively accepts perhaps the most important role on this team—capturing the images that will tell this epic story. A true student of light and color, Storaro must bring these grand ideas into reality. Failure would bring a potential end to Coppola's career. Can he do it?



# Willard Introductions

JOHN MILIUS DRAFT - DECEMBER 5TH, 1969

MED. SHOT      BEACH      CAPT. WILLARD      OTHERS

In the foreground lies CAPT. B. L. WILLARD - about 35 - a craggy face with a long drooping moustache. His head is shaded by a large Vietnamese peasant hat on a stick. He stares up in the sky listening to a fly that buzzes around his head. Finally the fly lands on his hand - without moving his eyes fix on it.

In John Milius' 1969 draft, Willard is first seen on page 6. He is introduced on the beach attempting to sleep while a fly annoys him. The fly buzzes around a bit and eventually flies directly into Willard's mouth who swallows it with a smile. It's interesting to note that Willard is described as 35 in this script and Martin Sheen described himself as being too old for the part despite being 35 years old when production began.

Also, note the long droopy mustache.





# Willard Introductions

JOHN MILIUS DRAFT - DECEMBER 5TH, 1969

What follows is a scene similar to what happens in the final film—a groggy Willard is summoned to receive his next mission. It looks like the part where the confused Willard thinks, at first, that they are coming to arrest him was carried over into the post-drunken-night scene. In the film, he says this because he is extremely hungover, groggy, and confused (but was expecting a mission). In this version of the screenplay, he thinks they are arresting him because he isn't expecting a mission.

SERGEANT

Captain B. L. Willard  
4th Recon Company  
10 Battalion -  
173 Airborne Brigade  
- Sir --

Willard just looks at him and blinks - there is an embarrassing pause.

SERGEANT (continuing)

Sir?

He still just stares at the man.

SERGEANT

Captain B. L. Willard - 4th -

WILLARD

Affirmative, boy.

SERGEANT

Thank you, sir -  
We have orders to escort you to the  
airfield, sir -

WILLARD

What have I done?

SERGEANT

Sir?

*Similar to final film.*

(CONTINUED)

# Willard Introductions

JOHN MILIUS DRAFT - DECEMBER 5TH, 1969



*What are the charges? What'd I do?*

It appears that the biggest difference between this early version by Milius and what we see in the film is that Milius' Willard seems content to just lay on the beach while Coppola's Willard craves a mission and to return to the jungle.

Man on the beach you gotta have  
charges -  
Where those orders come from?

SERGEANT  
Headquarters - Headquarters Company -  
II Corps - 405th A.S.A. Battalion -  
S-2- Com - Sec - Intelligence - Nha  
Trang.

WILLARD  
Well that doesn't leave me much selection.

SERGEANT  
No sir, it doesn't.

Willard shrugs, gets up, picks up his beach towel - his peasant hat and bayonet and trudges off between the three soldiers down the beach. Nearby Marines look up and shake their heads.

CUT TO:

In this version, we question Willard's ability to carry out his mission.



# Willard Introductions

## FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA DRAFT - DECEMBER 3RD, 1975

Coppola's December 1975 draft introduces Willard on a "luxury cabin cruiser" in Marina Del Rey.

3 EXT. MARINA DEL REY

The VIEW finally SETTLES ON a particular luxury cabin cruiser harbored at a particular dock late in the day.

It is a large, pleasure boat: The people are relaxing in bathing suits and towels and robes. They are drinking cocktails, and snapping pictures. The boat belongs to the head of a large American Corporation, and this is his party. This man, CHARLIE, is sitting, his shirt off to catch some of the late sun. Others have their faces smeared with white suntan oil that reminds us of war paint. Charlie is going on and on:

CHARLIE

... It's crazy -- sugar is up to 200 dollars a ton -- sugar!

The CEO, Charlie, equates business to warfare and uses the toughness of his bodyguard, Willard, to impress his lawyer and accountant.

We are still the most powerful nation in the world. Militarily.

He leans to his associates, in a half-whisper:

CHARLIE

(continuing)

You know my bodyguard; he was a captain in Viet Nam. You talk to him, except he won't talk. This kind of man can kill you with his pinky. A nice quiet fella, though.

The VIEW BEGINS TO PULL AWAY from this group.

CHARLIE

(continuing)

Carries an attache case at all times. You know what's in it?  
(another sip)

An Ingram Machine pistol.

Gradually, Charlie's voice softens as we MOVE AWAY, and a

# Willard Introductions

## FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA DRAFT - DECEMBER 3RD, 1975

There is no mention of Willard in the opening description of the cruiser, so it appears that Willard's introduction begins in narration over Charlie posturing.



*Also known as a MAC-10, this blowback operated machine pistol was developed by Gordon B. Ingram in 1964 (Wiki).*

These introduction scenes show a clear divide between Milius and Coppola's sensibilities. Milius' introduction of Willard show a classic tough-guy who refuses the call, but will ultimately get the job done because of his bad-assery. In Coppola's version, this "tough-guy" character seems to appear as Charlie, a man who identifies with the violence committed by the American military and a Vietnam veteran/bodyguard (Willard) as a display of strength. Charlie seems to see no difference between cut-throat business tactics and warfare and claims a kinship between himself and professional soldiers. In this version by Coppola, we are introduced to Willard after the events of the film have already taken place and have taken their toll on his psyche. Willard is cynical about the war here—notice how he blames the war profiteers for the M-16 malfunction that cost his friend's life. In this way, Coppola's Willard almost becomes a critique of the mythic-warrior-Willard created by Milius.



# Willard Introductions

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA DRAFT - DECEMBER 3RD, 1975

3 CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLIE

I don't take chances, and neither should this country. If we're strong, we should protect our interests, and we should have the respect of the world, even if it takes another war.

WILLARD (V.O.)

Bullshit. You can kill with the ridge of your hand to the throat; you can crush a skull with your knee... but you can't kill anybody with your pinky.

The VIEW MOVES ALONG the guests of this small party: Pictures being taken some people are swimming. It is the good life. Now WILLARD'S VOICE TRACK DOMINATES.

WILLARD (V.O.)

The attache case has been empty for three years, but it makes him safe to think there's a machine pistol in it.

I don't like automatic weapons. They jam.

I saw a friend of mine get ripped open because he flicked his M-16 to automatic, and it jammed. How much money did the contractors make on the M-16?

Our VIEW IS MOVING through the people on the boat; some reading, flirting, drinking.

WILLARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

He likes to hear stories about Nam. I tell him I can't; they're not cleared. The truth is he wouldn't understand.

# Selected Comments

## APOCALYPSE NOW



Ryan Gettig

Jim Morrison's Feast Of Friends & HWY are gorgeous films! They played the film festival circuit when he was alive. He was friends with Jacques Demy & Agnes Varda. :) Agnes Varda laid the Seashells around Jim's tomb in Paris. Oliver Stone got his script "the Break" to Jim back in the day. :) Gave my own original script Washing Off The Rogue to Ray Manzarek back in the day :) ....

**CinemaTyler:** I didn't know that! Thanks for the info! Here are couple of pics I found.





# Selected Comments

## APOCALYPSE NOW



AlexTheMenace

I always knew the basic story of The End being played in the beginning as a joke and Jim and Ray being UCLA students (they didn't drop out btw) but wow, this is a lot of new information. No idea they considered Light My Fire for the opening instead (which imo would've completely changed the mood). Great stuff as always and can't wait to see what you got for us in part 5.



mykeadelic

I heard that they gave Coppola the rights to use any of their songs which is pretty rad, can't deny that the end works perfectly.



Driv3r Gabriel

Well, "Light My Fire" would pretty much fit with the whole theme of the War, Vietnam music had quite of a happy mood from such a fucked up time.



AlexTheMenace

@Driv3r Gabriel Yeah I know but tonally it's completely different from The End which is what I was getting at. The opening scene wouldn't have that same slow hypnotic effect.



SpChannel

The synthesised helicopter sounds were made by Walter Murch hitting a paper bag with a length of chain.

**CinemaTyler:** Fascinating! I managed to find a source on this. I'd love to try to re-create this.

66. Sound-editor Walter Murch produced the rotor beat by slowing down the noise of a chain hitting a paper bag. Coppola was forbidden access to sound recordings of military helicopters by the Department of Defense.

*Vietnam Images: War And Representation by James Aulich, Jeffrey Walsh*

# Corrections

## APOCALYPSE NOW

b

bronkawitz

Great job, but one small correction. You mention that in the novella the protagonist tells his story to fellow sailors aboard an ivory trading steamboat. Charles Marlow, the protagonist in *Heart Of Darkness* actually tells his tale to some companions on board a yacht anchored in the Thames river.



*Heart of Darkness* (1993 dir. Nicolas Roeg)



Josh Payne

Morrison graduated from UCLA. That narrative about him dropping out was created for "The Doors Movie."



Kubanakan Taino

Yeah don't forget that Ray Manzerak hated that movie.

B

Brian Walendy

@Kubanakan Taino I didn't know that! I thought it was pretty true to form, honestly. But what do I know, Jim was dead a decade and a half when I was born.

**CinemaTyler:** I actually managed to fix this when I had to re-upload. Thanks!



# Patrons

THANK YOU!!!

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