

EPISODE ONE HUNDRED AND SIX - THE ENDANGERED SPECIES

Original transcript edited by Tony

[BEGIN Episode 106.]

INTRO: Hey guys, quick plugs. Here's a new one: I am currently hard at work on the season four soundtrack album. You are listening right now to an instrumental from a song called Tender Is My Time from the episode 42 soundtrack. The album will be available on BandCamp and streaming services and free to \$5 and up patrons. So, get excited for that, and check out woebegonepod.bandcamp.com if you haven't already.

And if you want to see me stream on Twitch, I do that at twitch.tv/woebegonepod, where every Sunday evening I write the episode soundtracks and then I play a game of some kind. True to my word, this week I started *Nancy Drew: Secret of Shadow Ranch*. It has been great fun and admittedly nice to have the chat to point out when I miss something obvious. That's twitch.tv/woebegonepod.

And if you'd like to support the show, you can do so on Patreon at Patreon.com/woe_begone, where you can get early access to ad-free episodes, instrumentals, soundtrack albums like the upcoming season four album, Q&As, director's commentaries, postcards, Movies with Michael, and more. A lot of people have received their March postcards and it's great to see them compare their postcards in the Discord to discover a larger story. And if you sign up at the \$15 level by the end of March, you will receive April's postcard. Special thanks to my 10 newest patrons: [REDACTED] for supporting the show. Enjoy.

[Outdoor ambience, a truck idles.]

MICHAEL *[from a distance]*: Hey! Get in, dipshit!

[Running footsteps.]

TY *[panting]*: Michael!? Oh, it's great to see you! You didn't have to call me a dipshit, though.

MICHAEL: Nah, that's a term of endearment.

TY: What are you doing here!? How'd you know I'd escape!?

MICHAEL: I just had a hunch that you'd need a hand. Go on, climb in, pilgrim. We can chit-chat once we're on the road.

[Car door opens and shuts.]

MICHAEL: Hey, uh, you hungry? There's a Hesburger on the way outta town if we wanna grab a burger. It's gonna be a long trip and we might not get another chance to eat for awhile.

TY: Sure... A-Are we heading back to your apartment? In Riga?

MICHAEL: We're stoppin' by there for a minute. We can't stick around. I ain't exactly welcome there right now. We just gotta get in, grab what we need, and get out before anyone sees us. As of today, there is officially no Michael. Least that's according to the timeline. I have every reason to believe that the Hunters are responsible for perpetuating this disappearance, in which case they remember everything. Hunters don't know about me, though, near as I can tell. Mike remembers, but he ain't happy with me. And he sure as hell don't want me in that apartment. I gave him a chance to say his piece, but *[Sighs.]* I didn't like what he had to say so I had to leave him.

TY: Leave him? Leave him where?

MICHAEL: That's ain't important. I didn't kill him, though. I just needed to slow him down a little. But he sure as hell don't wanna see me right now. I am persona non grata, partner.

TY: Well, that makes two of us that are persona non grata, I suppose. But you know about that, don't you? You know what just happened in the Compound, right? That's why you showed up just in time to rescue me.

MICHAEL: I don't know the particulars, Ty. I just know that I was here tomorrow and that was too late. Something happened between now and then and Ty Betteridge was indefinitely unavailable. Don't know where you would be if'n I didn't show up today. Gone or hiding in that forest, I reckon. Livin' off the berries. So I had to go back and try again.

TY: It's a sorry state of affairs. I underestimated Hunter Jeremiah Hartley. All of the Tys did. I didn't think that he was capable enough to shape a timeline like he has. Getting control of Mike's Base is one thing, but the far-reaching consequences of their meddling is a sight to behold! Events have been changed far beyond what I initially expected. Now, that's the exact opposite of what the Hunters want, I'm sure. The more people who are affected, the more people that will want to undo their work.

MICHAEL: Yup. They just wanted to keep us Mikes in line.

TY: This new timeline turned my studies completely upside down, of course. Our research subjects were all altered. The Edgars were gone, the Mikeys didn't remember them, and the Michaels weren't cowboys anymore. *[Small laugh.]* It was depressing. And quiet, without all of the cowboys around. I missed you, Bi-

MICHAEL: Stop tellin' me what you was doing in there. And don't you even think about calling me 'Big Bear.'

TY: I know it's a sore subject, but *bear* with me. *[Michael groans.]* Yeah? *[Sighs.]* We, the Tys I mean, we— we were all running around, trying to salvage whatever we could from our studies. Some of the Tys thought that we could pick up the pieces and get back to work, keeping events the way they are. There were still Mikes and Michaels to study, after all. Others thought that it was vital to our studies to return to the previous 'iteration' as you call them. To their credit, the Compound pulled out an emergency backup to try to ascertain the damage. The backup Ty was trying to steer the Mikey from this iteration into performing a correction that would bring things back to how they were, though progress on that was still in the, uh... '*subconscious stages*,' as he called them. Priming him for action down the line. He hadn't received his first orders yet.

MICHAEL: Well, that sounds like a lotta different ideas for some iterations that all insist that they're the same guy, Ty.

TY: We *are* all the 'same guy,' Michael... *Were* all the same guy. It's just me. It's Ty Betteridge. We were all put in different positions by Kaz, by our jobs, by how the timeline affected us. So we all *acted* differently, but we all did what Ty Betteridge would do. And if you consolidated all of us together, then you would have a coherent whole person who made choices that were reasonable for the circumstances. And we would keep *[Sarcastic cowboy voice.]* 'truckin' along' *[Normal voice.]* as you might say, if you put us all together. **[MICHAEL (overlapping):** That is what I'd say.] It would be business as usual. I wouldn't miss a beat.

MICHAEL: So, that's what happened, right? You were consolidated? That's why you said 'were all the same guy?' Things got too hairy in there and y'all had to consolidate back into one? Now you're the, what, All-Ty with all the memories?

TY: *[Long, groaning sigh.]* How I wish that were the case, Michael. *[Clears his throat.]* These new circumstances gave Command the idea to eye our little operation with increased scrutiny. We were being micromanaged, which made tensions run even higher, which pressured some of the Tys into insubordination, like the Ty that was giving instructions to Mikey. Management would have never allowed us to use an outside Mikey like that. And in addition to the Hunter situation, management's close watch over us meant that there was a risk of them discovering a... a very important series of data breaches.

MICHAEL: And that data breach is us, I take it? You mean, you and me?

TY: Exactly. The 'Texas Data Breach' is the Ty Betteridge insider term for it. Sending us away was a momentary lapse in professional etiquette, sure, but also a fortuitous act of self-preservation. It is why there is still a Ty and a Michael left. There could be more of us from similar breaches for all I know, but we're the only ones left that I'm aware of. I haven't heard of any others. We are an endangered species, Michael.

MICHAEL: So the Compound never found out about the data breach? Not even with all their micromanagin'?

TY: Oh goodness me, no. After the Hunters took over, I was called back to the Compound by Green, that enterprising bastard. To his credit, he didn't send me to be immediately neutralized. He was content with merely covering me up. He couldn't have me running around in Texas, unaccountable to all the other Tys. But he also didn't want to consolidate me with any other Ty, out of fear that my 'going rogue,' as it were, would have affected the consolidated Ty. After injury, propagating harmful information through consolidation is one of the largest hurdles in the whole process. So, I've been living a life of solitude since the reset, hiding in an old Edgar room and keeping out of the way of management, lest they discover that there was one too many of us.

MICHAEL: So you been on the lam. Outlaw Ty. It's got a nice ring to it.

TY: *[Chuckles.]* 'Outlaw Ty.' I like that. *[Cowboy voice.]* Outlaw Ty, hidin' out and scrapin' by. *[Normal voice.]* Ooh, that rhymes. Ooh, that tickles! *[Laughs.]* You could write that into a country song, Michael! The Ballad of Outlaw Ty.

MICHAEL: If'n I get a chance.

TY *[singing]:* Outlaw Ty, Outlaw Ty! Hiding out and scraping by! Outlaw Ty— *[Clears throat.]*

MICHAEL: Can we, uh, get back to the yarn you were spinnin'?

TY: So, I was hiding out and scraping by. Meanwhile, the organization had a whole wing of Ty Betteridges with no research to do, which meant that they were on the chopping block. Too much redundancy. The organization would either need to find something else for them to do, issue a correction to retrieve their lost work, or allow them to retrieve their work themselves. To their credit, they did use their due diligence and pulled up a timeline backup out of storage to fully weigh all of their options. And the backup Ty made his best case to management that the project should continue...

MICHAEL: And I suppose they didn't take kindly to his case. Am I right?

TY *[getting upset]:* Yes... after what management called '*careful consideration*', *[Upset laugh.]* but I believe to be the easy way out, they decided... *[Sighs.]* Michael, they decided to permanently end the program. I-I've still got the blasted letter here that they all got in their inboxes. *[He digs around and unfolds a piece of paper.]* Just a moment... *[Clears throat.]* Yes, here we are.

Subject: Notice of Termination *[Sarcastic laugh from Ty.]*

Dear Mr. Betteridge,

I am writing to inform you that, unfortunately, your employment with our company will be terminated effective immediately. This decision was not made lightly, *haha*, but due to the current causal conditions and the need for downsizing, we must reduce our workforce.

Please note that your termination is not a reflection of your performance or contributions to the company. *[Small, upset chuckle.]* You have been a valuable member of our team, and we appreciate your dedication and hard work.

Please note that the directions to the neutralization rooms can be found in your employee manual. We request that you follow the guidelines provided for the neutralization process as it is essential to maintain the safety and well-being of everyone involved. *[Quietly.]* Apart from me.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your termination, please do not hesitate to contact us. We would be happy to address any issues you may have. We want to thank you for your service and hope that you savor your remaining time.

MICHAEL: That's what you sound like when you talk, you know. That sorta corpo-humanoid talk.

TY: That's not funny, Michael. They were making their way toward Neutralization when I escaped. I was more than a bit unnerved.

MICHAEL: I'm sorry to hear that. But I can't say that I'm too upset that y'all won't be experimenting on Mikes no more.

TY: There are no Mikes to experiment on anymore!

MICHAEL: W-Wh- When you said that we was the last ones...

TY: I meant that *all* of the Mikes on hand were sent to Yellow. Every last Mike and Michael in the Compound. And every Ty except for me went to Neutralization. The entire program has been shut down! The only way that i made it out was that Fe saw the letter that was going out to everyone and managed to sneak me a copy under my door, which allowed me to get out before anyone thought to look for me. *[In realization.]* Oh! Oh, Felix! I do hope that he is alright. He was always so good to me.

MICHAEL *[low and upset]:* So all them Mikes are gone. They... They-They killed 'em. Just like that.

TY: Well, we're still around, so they're only dead in a sense. And they could never kill all of you, Michael. They don't have access to all of you. They did have access to all of me, though, or so they thought. Oh, it makes me shudder. I'm only alive because I slipped through the cracks. I got lucky.

MICHAEL: I guess today's your lucky day, pard. Now, how're we gonna go about settin' this right?

TY: Well, I have a plan. It's your lucky day, too... um... 'pard.' Short for pardner?

MICHAEL: Darn tootin', it is.

TY: Well, it's your lucky day too, *pard*. Backup Ty isn't the only thing the Compound has in its storage.

[Opening theme plays.]

TY: Mmm! Mmm! *[Smacks lips.]* This is delicious! Thanks for stopping for lunch, Michael.

MICHAEL: Yeah, yeah. Don't mention it. I didn't realize that I was going to be paying for everything.

TY: I left in a hurry, Michael. And I didn't exactly have cash on me. A few American dollars from Texas. And I still can't use my bank account. Not now, maybe not ever. The Compound would come after me if they knew I was out there somewhere. *[Sad sigh.]* I guess I'm on the run forever, aren't I? I can't go back to my apartment, either. No money, no home... It hadn't really set in yet. *[A long pause, then another sad sigh.]*

MICHAEL: You gonna be okay, pard? That ain't no different than when you escaped to Texas, is it?

TY: ...Yeah, I'm fine. I'm just taking stock of my surroundings. No matter, though. This is only temporary, after all. Though, if we play our cards right, I could be right back in the Compound with my lab and my studies, and you—

MICHAEL *[overlapping and cutting off Ty]:* Uh, whoa. Whoa whoa whoa whoa whoa. No, you won't. You'll be back in Texas, with me.

TY: As long as we're doing corrections, I don't see why I couldn't correct the events that led to me having to flee to Texas while I'm at it. It's the perfect time for a fresh start.

MICHAEL: You're gettin' greedy. And it's gonna backfire.

TY: I'm just thinking out loud, Michael. I don't mean anything by it.

MICHAEL: If'n you did that, you... you wouldn't make it so I was stuck back in the Compound, would you?

TY: No! No, of course not! Your freedom isn't even connected directly to my work. I didn't get a chance to set you free before Blue got me to safety. It was him, not me, that got you out of there.

MICHAEL: You're right, but... I can't believe that even after all of *this*, you're itchin' to go back.

TY: I'm not even saying that I definitely *would* go back to work at the Compound. I got ahead of myself. That's far away in an alternate future. I shouldn't even be thinking about it now. We're just getting started. *[Ty takes a bite of ice cream.]* Oh! Ah, ow! Brain freeze! Ow!

MICHAEL: I swear to god, Ty Betteridge, if you get so much as one drop of ice cream on the interior of my truck, I'm turning around and taking you right back to the Compound. I paid good money for this thing. Had to call in a favor from Boris to get it so cheap. I ain't made of money. You'd best be careful.

TY: I am being careful, I assure you. I have my manners, you know. It's just difficult to adhere to them while eating ice cream out of a waffle bowl on a bumpy road in Latvia. Oh, you can have some if you want.

MICHAEL: What's all that drizzled on it?

TY: Salty licorice.

MICHAEL: Pass.

TY: Heh. You're missing out. You and your American sensibilities.

MICHAEL: If'n you say so. *[A pause, then he scoffs.]* Ty, you really don't wanna go back to Texas with me when all this is said and done?

TY: *[Sighs.]* It's complicated, Michael. I'm not well-equipped for the heat and it's not a way of living that I take to easily. The entire reason that I went to Texas is because you were the one who inspired me to go rogue. And you've got all your new Texas friends and you're a rockstar and you didn't want to be in my synthwave band and now August and Marissa know that you're there so they'll be around to visit you all the time so it's not like you'd miss me at all...

MICHAEL: You gotta toughen up, pilgrim. That's the life of a cowboy. You knew what you was getting into. Don't go whimperin' about it. I appreciate your company plenty. If anything, I rubbed off on ya too much. The Ty I knew wouldn't be so easily led around by his feelings.

TY: Yes. *[Sighs.]* Yes, my apologies. These are extenuating circumstances.

MICHAEL: Could you really go back to lookin' them Michaels in the Compound in the eye and knowin' what you're doin' to em? And sendin' 'em to Yellow to be put down like an old mutt like they was gonna do to me? Could you really go back to that?

TY: It sounds cruel when you say it that way.

MICHAEL: How I say it ain't got nothin' to do with how cruel it is.

TY: There's a saying in the Compound: 'The human cost is less than one. The human benefit is more than infinity.' Our subjects are duplicated and duplicated for use in our studies, but eventually they are returned to their pre-studied state, good as new. Duplicates are lost along the way, but the core of the subject remains. That was the idea, at least. That was the Ty Betteridge way of doing things. As you can see, the Compound is not always so delicate. Infinity divided by however many subjects' wellbeing is still infinity, I suppose.

MICHAEL: I wouldn't be here if you believed what you're saying. You never would have extended your kindness to me. Blue never would have set me free. I'd be in the dead pile with the other 'subjects.'

TY: I had an emotional moment in the middle of the process. How the sausage gets made is quite unsightly. I acted emotionally and though it has had its consequences, I can't say that I regret it. It's the only reason that both of us are still alive.

MICHAEL: Consider me grateful, I guess.

TY: And I intend to do better than merely keeping us alive. I have a plan. We might be down on our luck, but we are not out of allies just yet. There are a pair of unlikely allies waiting for us, powerful ones, if we could only retrieve them. The bad news is that those allies are hidden away in the Compound that I just escaped from. The good news is that I have the toughest damn cowboy in the whole wide west with me to bust down the door and go in all guns blazing.

MICHAEL: Who do you mean? Felix? Felix and who? You can't mean Kasimierez?

TY: *[Chuckles.]* No, no, no, of course not. Ryan and CANNONBALL. They're still being held by the Compound in a sort of suspended animation. The whole process is complicated, but the long and short of it is: Ryan and CANNONBALL do not exist right now in this time, per se. But they were preserved in such a way that they can be brought to this time completely intact and without missing a beat. It would be like they were never gone. We would essentially be bringing them out of standby.

MICHAEL: Do you hear yourself, Ty Betteridge? Ryan and CANNONBALL? What are Ryan and CANNONBALL gonna do to help us?

TY: They have unfettered access to the most sophisticated system in the world through Flinch and they have the experience to use it. They have archives and failsafes and all sorts of preventative measures going deep into the past, only some of which needed to be disabled in order for the Compound to put them in their current state. They have everything that we need in order to return things to normal.

MICHAEL: The problem is, why would Ryan and CANNONBALL decide to help us?

TY: In return, we break them out. We offer them freedom. Life. They aren't really *alive* in there. It's more like their life can be activated again when necessary. I think that they would be eager to cooperate, given their current predicament. And we would go to painstaking lengths to ensure that they would end up right back in the Compound if they chose to doublecross us.

MICHAEL: Ty! Ty, I... I'm vetoin' this. I don't trust 'em. Not one bit.

TY: Well! If you have any plans that you feel would be superior, we can pursue them instead... So? Do you?

MICHAEL: *[Pause then sighs.]* No, Ty. I don't.

TY: Then we shall pursue this plan as far as we can take it. I can get us in. I know the layout of the Compound, who will be there, where, and when. We will have plenty of hiding space in the now-empty Ty Betteridge/Mike Walters departments. I know the protocol for retrieving assets like Ryan and CANNONBALL and when we might be able to do so without getting caught. It's not as dangerous a plan as it might sound. Sly and the Mikes successfully broke a Michael out of the Compound once and that was much dicier than our plan. I am optimistic.

MICHAEL: Fine. You can be optimistic for the both of us. What happens if we fail?

TY: *[Cowboy voice.]* Then it was nice knowin' ya, partner. *[Pause, then normal voice.]* Do you want one of my chicken nuggets?

[Scene transition.]

MICHAEL: Alright, we're goin' in. We ain't supposed to be here, so keep the volume down. Got it? I can't believe you talked to Boris.

[They enter the apartment while Ty talks.]

TY: What was I supposed to do, Michael? He saw us in the hall and waved to us. He seems like a nice fellow. Prickly. I see why you two get along so well. And that dog of his is adorable! *[In a baby voice.]* Yes! Such a good boy! *[Normal voice.]* You said that the Michael that was here had been erased, did you not? I'm surprised that Boris remembers you. The Hunters must have made some crucial errors in that regard. And Boris didn't question that you're a cowboy now.

How odd. Hmm. Maybe you have someone looking out for you. Frankly, I'm not surprised that Bruno remembered, though. There's something about animals. They aren't usually accounted for in corrections like that.

MICHAEL: Hush up.

TY *[whispering]*: Right. What, uh, are we looking for, exactly?

MICHAEL: Couple things. This, first off. Now I got both Calculators. Can't have the Mikes pullin' fast ones on us. The Mikes from this iteration think that this'n is preferable to the last one. Leavin' 'em a Calculator will only cause us trouble. Other thing's in Mike's bedroom, come on.

[A door opens and shuts.]

TY: So, uh, this is where the magic happens, eh? How sensual.

MICHAEL: Shut up. This is Mike's bedroom, not mine. Ain't even the Michael's that lived here. He was erased, which is a cryin' shame because he would have a better version of what I'm looking for. It's gotta be around here somewhere...

TY: The Mike from this iteration has cowboy boots in his closet?

MICHAEL: I don't know nothing about that.

MICHAEL: Oh, yup. Here it is. Close enough, anyway.

TY: A day planner?

MICHAEL: Yessir. If it was Michael, you'd have a journal with all kinds of detailed notes about what was happening and what he was doing, but Mike hasn't learned to keep a journal to keep his memories straight yet. But it looks like he has been keeping track of what's going on, so we can use that to figure out what him and Mikey have been doing for the Hunters. There could be something that we can use there. Might be useful, might not be. *[Distant time travel noise.]* It's just a bonus. Important thing is that we got both the Calculators now.

[Sounds of Mike and Mikey groaning, from the end of Episode 105. They can heard talking distantly, in the other room, through the remaining scene. For the breakdown of what they say, please see the Episode 105 transcript, beginning with the below Mikey line.]

MICHAEL: Shit, don't say nothin'.

MIKEY *[in the other room, sobbing]*: I hate time travel.

MICHAEL: Fuck. Fuck! That's Mike and Mikey. We gotta go.

TY: Lead the way, Michael. I think I saw a fire escape on the way in, but they might be between us and it.

MICHAEL: No, fuck that, we're using the Calculator.

TY: With all due respect, Michael, I would prefer to keep my organs in the meticulous order in which they are currently arranged. Calculator travel is suboptimal for that arrangement.

MICHAEL: How'd you think we'd be gettin' around? You're gonna have to get used to it, pilgrim. This is the best we got.

TY: Where would you even send us with that thing?

MICHAEL: Well, I don't got a lot of coordinates memorized, so we're goin' with the one I got. And you got until I finish punchin' 'em in to figure if you wanna come with or stay behind and stick it out with the Mikes. *[Long pause.]* Which is it, Ty?

TY: I'm coming! Of course I'm coming! Just... oh, do it quick. Before I can think about what those things do when they malfunction.

MICHAEL: Simmer down, pilgrim. Initiating transport in three... two... one...

[Ty audibly braces himself. Time travel noise. Ty and Michael both groan in discomfort upon arrival.]

MICHAEL: You got all your organs?

TY: Uh, where is this? I thought that you were taking us to the Outpost Tavern. Back to good ol' Texas.

MICHAEL: We ain't nobody to the folks at the Outpost right now. Welcome to mission control, buckaroo.

TY: That's... quite a wall of firearms you've acquired. Did you put all of this together since the correction? That's impressive.

MICHAEL: Nah, they ain't mine. I bought this place off the family of a fella named Sylvester August Baxter, recently deceased. His parents didn't know what to do with the place, so I offered to take it off of their hands, critters and all. This here's an underground safe room. No one knew about it, 'cept for me and Sly, so they didn't clear it out when they sold it. The Hunters don't know about it either, and they ain't exactly staking the place out now that Sly's... gone. We're safe here. And the weapons are all ours for the taking. Pistols, rifles, shotguns, body

armor, a couple grenades. A few things that ain't exactly legal. And we got the trusty Yamaha VMAX sittin' in the garage. That cost me extra. Anything we can use to get our Badger back.

TY: The raw firepower approach has worked before. I believe that it was Sly's armory that Mikey's Base used to break Michael out of the Compound.

MICHAEL: Here's hopin' it works again. You know your way around a weapon, Ty?

TY: But of course. Firearms training was part of my O.V.E.R. requirements *and* my Compound requirements. Though you might find me a bit rusty. I'm not sure that I know my way around a rifle anymore.

MICHAEL: That won't do, pard. We need you to become a sharpshooter ASAP. There's a range set up in the backyard. I'll get ya set up.

TY: Sounds good to me, partner.

MICHAEL: Today we take stock of our supplies and we train. Tomorrow we rustle us up a posse, if'n I can find one. I got some folks in mind. We'll get 'em on our side or get 'em out of the way. And tonight, we feast. I make a mean baked rigatoni. Family recipe.

[Closing theme plays.]

CREDITS: This has been WOE.BEGONE. The voice of Ty Betteridge was David Ault. If you want to hear more from David, check out *Shadows at the Door*, or go to davidault.co.uk. The voice of Felix will be Ben Rowe. I like how Ben's parts are always after the credits and so I'm crediting him before he appears. Which feels thematically appropriate for a time travel show. Thanks for playing.

FELIX: I'm not sure if I mentioned it before, but my new friend is from America. And I've definitely not mentioned that he is really into cowboy movies. Now until this week, I had only ever seen two cowboy films before. When I was six, I saw *An American Tail Two: Fievel Goes West* and then a few years later, I saw *Back to the Future Three*. Both absolute masterpieces in their way. And clearly superior to their predecessors. And I remembered, when I shared my iPod with him, my friend was really excited to listen to all of my music. So I thought it'd be nice to return the favor and maybe try one of his westerns.

I asked him about which one to watch and he told me all his favorite films and directors. But I honestly can't remember them. So I decided to look online, the top list of the greatest 50 western movies ever made ever. And got stuck. You see, if I watched the *best* cowboy movie ever, the number one, all other cowboy movies would be terrible in comparison afterwards. So I can't watch that. And if I choose something too far down, say number 50, then it would probably be awful, as there can't be that many westerns anyway. So watching a rubbish one would be a complete waste of time. And then I wouldn't really have anything to talk to him about.

So, top 10, but not too near the top. I settled for number eight. *Rio Bravo*. I looked it up and immediately got excited. You see, before he died, my dad's favorite ever singer was Dean Martin. You know, the rat pack guy with Sinatra. My dad told stories of being on national service with the Air Force in the 1950s and listening to Deano, as he used to call him, on the radio in his barracks. And guess what? Dean Martin was one of the main actors in this film. A complete stroke of luck! And I quite enjoyed it. I mean, *[Sighs.]* there's some pretty cringey stuff, looking back. But it wasn't too bad overall.

My favorite bit was right towards the end. Our heroes know they're under the cosh. The baddies are coming for them. They're waiting quietly, patiently in the sheriff's office. Right next to the jail. They know that, in an hour or two, they could be killed. But they're calm. And then, from nowhere, Dean Martin, half asleep on a bed in the corner, begins a song, called *My Rifle, My Pony and Me*. A sort of wistful song of memory but looking forward to what may be coming round the bend. Hopeful, not entirely joyful, thinking about everything they have to fight for, but everything they may also lose. And simultaneously distracting themselves from what they're about to face. Since I saw the film, I must have listened to the song fifty times since. I've probably listened to the song *too* many times.

The song is the... calm before the storm. Before they face... what may be the end. You see, tomorrow, I have to drive to England. I have to get to my mother before the newspapers publish the photos from Wales. I can't take company transport all the way. I can't have my boss know where I'm going. I'm going to get the firm to drop me as far as Paris and I've told them that I'm going to go to Disneyland for a day's holiday. But then I'm going to rent a car, drive across France, get a ferry to Dover, and then home. I should get to my mother just as she's making her morning cup of tea. But I have to wait. I can't go yet. Like the cowboys in *Rio Bravo*, I can't escape the consequences of my decisions.

But first, and most importantly, a good night's sleep. *[Sighs.]* So, I guess, like Deano... *[Singing.]* It's time for a cowboy to dream! *[Normal voice.]* Good night.

[Brief start of closing theme.]

BLOOPER (TY): *[Singing.]* Outlaw Ty! Hiding out and sc— *[Laughs.]*

[Brief start of closing theme.]

BLOOPER (TY): That's not funny, Michael. They were waking their— *[Sighs.]* They were making their way toward Neutralization when I escaped. I was more than a bit unnerved. And peeved! They spelled 'Neutralization' with a zed and not with an 's!' Americans!

[Brief start of closing theme.]

BLOOPER (TY): *[Verbally playing music, as if playing drums and a horn instrument.]*

[Brief start of closing theme.]

BLOOPER (TY): Baked rigatoni fam— Hang on, in a previous episode, I'm sure Mike and Mikey questioned whether you had a family that was able to pass on that kind of recipe. Would you like to, uh, talk about that now? *[Pause.]* Oh, fine! Fine! No, you don't need to point that thing at me, nope!

[Brief start of closing theme.]

[[The Ballad Of Outlaw Ty](#) plays.]

*Outlaw Ty, outlaw Ty
Hiding out and scraping by
Outlaw Ty, outlaw Ty
I hope he finds a home
Before the road gets cold
Outlaw Ty*

*Too complicated for his good
A stranger to himself
I'm worried he won't settle down
The wanderin' will eat away at your health
So settle down, Ty, settle down
Cause the outlaw life
Ain't a life in itself
Oh, settle down, Ty, settle down
You better watch your step
Cause it will drag you to hell*

*Outlaw Ty, outlaw Ty
Hiding out and scraping by
Outlaw Ty, outlaw Ty
I hope he finds a home
Before the road gets cold
But I can feel it in my bones
You haven't got too long
Outlaw Ty*

[END Episode 106.]