

Land of Bad is a 2024 American war film directed by William Eubank, who co-wrote the script with David Frigerio. The film stars Liam Hemsworth, Russell Crowe, Luke Hemsworth, Ricky Whittle, and Milo Ventimiglia. *Land of Bad* was released theatrically on February 16, 2024. It grossed \$6.5 million dollars with a US\$18.7 million budget.

Plot

Captain Eddie "Reaper" Grimm, a US Air Force drone pilot, supported by Staff Sergeant Nia Branson, provides air support from a Reaper to a US Army Delta Force team sent to rescue a CIA spy in the southern Philippines.^[6] After a firefight breaks out against the Abu Sayyaf, Sergeant JJ "Playboy" Kinney – a young Air Force TACP officer attached to the drone team as its JTAC – is seemingly the only survivor and is directed to an extraction point, relying only on the Reaper's remote air support.

Once Kinney arrives, he is intercepted by the Abu Sayyaf, depleting the ammunition of Grimm's drone (consisting of AGM-114 Hellfire and BLU-118 rockets) and forcing the endangered extraction helicopter to leave. Trying to reach another extraction point, Kinney falls down a hill and loses his rifle, runs out of ammunition for his pistol, and then gets captured. One of his squad mates, Master Sergeant John "Sugar" Sweet, turns out to be alive and rescues Kinney, while telling him Sergeant Bishop was taken prisoner in Abu Sayyaf's base in a series of caves, at their initial mission location. Using Sweet's radio, Kinney contacts Grimm, who schedules three bombings to hit the base, each 15 minutes apart, before Grimm and Branson are forced by their superiors to take a leave for having exceeded their shift. Kinney and Sweet raid one of Sayyaf's facilities before being captured and taken to their prison.

Sweet is executed right as the first superficial bombing hits, and Kinney is taken to be tortured, where the rebel leader does not believe his warning about the upcoming bombings. When the bombs hit, Kinney survives due to having been dunked in a water tub, while his captors are caught in the flames. Kinney grabs a machete and kills the surviving leader, taking his satellite phone and calling Nellis Air Force Base for Grimm to call off

Land of Bad



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	<u>William Eubank</u>
Written by	<u>David Frigerio</u> <div>William Eubank</div>
Produced by	David Frigerio <div>William Eubank</div> <div>Michael Jefferson</div> <div>Adam Beasley</div> <div>Nathan Klingher</div> <div>Ryan Winterstern</div> <div>Arianne Fraser</div> <div><u>Petr Ják</u></div> <div>Mark Fasano</div>
Starring	<u>Liam Hemsworth</u> <div><u>Russell Crowe</u></div> <div><u>Luke Hemsworth</u></div> <div><u>Ricky Whittle</u></div> <div><u>Milo Ventimiglia</u></div>
Cinematography	Agustin Claramunt
Edited by	Todd E. Miller

the third bombing, before the battery runs out. The base crew, distracted by a March Madness game, dismisses Kinney's call and redirects him to Grimm's private phone. Grimm does not answer, being in a call with his very pregnant wife while grocery shopping, so Kinney leaves a voice mail, and leaves seeking the other prisoners. Returning to Bishop and searching for a way out, they also find the CIA operative, whom Grimm and Branson had been lied to that he was found elsewhere by another agency's operation. At the grocery store checkout, Grimm hears Kinney's voicemail and immediately leaves, trying to call Nellis while driving to the base. As no one answers, Grimm is forced to rush to the control room and order the pilot to abort the bombing, right as it flies in front of Kinney, Bishop, and the CIA agent reaching the cave's entrance. As the soldiers are finally extracted in the Philippines, Grimm complains to the rest of the base crew and his superiors that three men nearly died because they were too distracted to hear their calls, despite being repeatedly asked to pay attention to the phone because of his pregnant wife, and he smashes the break room's main television in anger. Afterwards he convenes with Branson in a hangar, where she asks him to walk her down the aisle in her wedding, and he agrees and leads her in a dance.

Music by	<u>Brandon Roberts</u>
Production companies	R.U. Robot Studios Highland Film Group Volition Media Partners Broken Open Pictures
Distributed by	The Avenue <u>Variance Films</u> ^[1]
Release date	February 16, 2024
Running time	114 minutes ^[2]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	US\$18.7 million ^[3]
Box office	US\$6.5 million ^{[4][5]}

Cast

- Liam Hemsworth as Sergeant JJ Kinney
- Russell Crowe as Captain Eddie Grimm "Reaper"
- Luke Hemsworth as Sergeant Abell
- Ricky Whittle as Sergeant Bishop
- Milo Ventimiglia as Master Sergeant John "Sugar" Sweet
- Chika Ikogwe as Staff Sergeant Nia Branson
- Daniel MacPherson as Colonel Duz Packett
- Robert Rabiah as Saeed Hashimi, leader of the Abu Sayyaf rebels
- Jack Finsterer as Victor Petrov
- Lincoln Lewis as a young airman
- Gunner Wright as Hornet #1
- George Burgess as Private Cooper

Production

The film, originally titled *JTAC*, was written by David Frigerio and William Eubank in 2012 and in 2013 at Satellite Coffee coffee shops in Albuquerque during production of their film *The Signal*.^{[7][8]} Shortly after writing the script, Eubank and Frigerio shadowed real-life JTACs for two weeks at Fort Irwin National Training Center; their immersion in the world of forward air control was extensive with the two radioing in "nine lines" (close air support briefings) to F-35 pilots overhead during exercises.^[9] The cast project, with Eubank also directing, was first announced at the 2022 Cannes Film Market, with Russell Crowe and Liam

Hemsworth as the first cast members attached to the film.^[10] In September 2022, additional casting announcements added Milo Ventimiglia, Luke Hemsworth, Ricky Whittle, Daniel MacPherson, Chika Ikogwe,^[11] and Robert Rabiah.^[12] George Burgess was brought to the cast by Crowe.^[13]

Principal photography began in September 2022, running through November 2022 in the Gold Coast, Queensland.^{[14][15]} The production took advantage of location incentives offered by the Australian government, bringing roughly 270 jobs to its local film industry.^[14]

During production, Signature Entertainment purchased the distribution rights for UK and Ireland, France and Scandinavia,^[16] with distribution in the United States handled by The Avenue.^[17]

Release

Land of Bad was released in the United States on February 16, 2024.^[17]

Reception

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 64% of 61 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.1/10. The website's consensus reads: "Thanks to some exciting set pieces and a smartly assembled cast, *Land of Bad* stands as a solid survival thriller in spite of an overall reliance on genre formula."^[18] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 57 out of 100, based on 10 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[19]

Simon Abrams of RogerEbert.com gave the film two out of four stars and wrote, "*Land of Bad* may sell itself as a post-Black Hawk Down rescue mission thriller, but it's too often a baggy dramatized lecture about what's really wrong with the American military and modern warfare."^[20]

In a positive review, Nick Schager of The Daily Beast wrote, "The film trades in aggro bluster and bombast that's so pure, undiluted, and unsubtle that it verges on—and sometimes tips over into—comedy. Nonetheless, beneath its puffed chest lurks earnest affection for the men and women who risk their lives for their country and, more importantly, for each other, and that goes some way toward helping it earn its climactic feel-good pathos."^[21]

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External links

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