

= Saving Private Brian =

" Saving Private Brian " is the fourth episode of season five of Family Guy , an episode produced for Season 4 . The episode originally broadcast on November 5 , 2006 . The episode follows Stewie and Brian after they unintentionally join the United States Army , and end up leaving to serve in Iraq , only to return home when the war ends . Meanwhile , Chris joins a heavy metal band , and develops an anti @-@ social attitude , which requires Marilyn Manson to intervene .

The episode was written by Cherry Chevapravatdumrong and directed by Cyndi Tang . It received mostly positive reviews from critics for its storyline and many cultural references . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 8 @.@ 45 million homes in its original airing . The episode featured guest performances by Gary Cole , Louis Gossett , Jr . , Juanita Jennings , Phil LaMarr , Samm Levine , Rachael MacFarlane , Denis Martel , Enn Reitel , Stacey Scowley , Fred Tatasciore and Wally Wingert , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series .

= = Plot = =

A U.S. Army recruitment officer comes to the high school to hold an assembly and entices the students with a glamorized , deceptive video presentation , which impresses every one including Chris . Chris returns home and tells the family during dinner that he wants to enlist , but Lois attempts to dissuade him , for the military is not a place for him . The next day , while driving Stewie to Gymboree Play & Music for parachute day , Brian decides to take a detour to the recruitment office to scold the recruiting officer for trying to trick Chris through devious means . The two arrive at the office but the wait is long ; when Brian goes to top @-@ up the parking meter Stewie walks into the office . Stewie ends up enlisting in the Army and signs Brian up as well when told there " is a \$ 100 bonus for signing up a buddy . " Brian returns and is shocked . Brian and Stewie begin basic training , but Brian becomes stressed from the discipline and decides one night to leave . Stewie wakes up and finds Brian packing his suitcase , but he manages to talk him out of leaving , insisting that he had never finished anything significant in his life and that the Army will provide him the discipline . With this , Brian decides to stay . After they complete their training , Stewie and Brian are deployed to Iraq . Meantime , the two are patrolling the streets of a village , commenting on the " good situation so far " ; however , after the pair get caught up in a terrorist attack , they become dissuaded and decide to find a way to get out of the Army . They first attempt to be discharged by pretending to be homosexual (only to discover that one of their superiors is gay) . As a last resort , they attempt to get " Wounded in Action " by shooting each other in the foot ; they do this only to find out that the Army now takes anyone no matter what , going so far as to allow two corpses to guard the ammunition . They are then told that democracy has kicked in and the war is over , thus meaning all the soldiers can return to the United States .

Meanwhile , to distract Chris from the Army , Peter takes him to look at extracurricular activities at his school , where he is accepted into a heavy metal band . Chris develops a rebellious and rude attitude after joining the band , and he significantly changes his appearance . Peter and Lois , worried about his behavior , search his room to find the cause of his behavioral change ; Lois becomes convinced it is a result of listening to the violent lyrics from his music . In addition , they find a poster shrine to Marilyn Manson in his closet , and become convinced that his music corrupted their son . They decide to track down Manson and find him at the Grammys Music Awards . When they find Manson , Peter punches him in the face and Lois accuses him for destroying their son with his songs . Manson , played by writer Tom Devanney , laughing at " this old thing again " , offers to help them with Chris . Manson returns to the Griffin house with Peter and Lois , where he tells Chris and his bandmates that it is important to respect and obey their parents , and in addition to mending the tension between them , Manson ends the episode by giving Peter some more parental advice : Peter and Chris should start fishing .

= = Production = =

The scene in which recruitment officers enter public schools in an attempt to recruit children is based on real life , as the Army has often sent recruiters to high schools for seniors . More recently they have started with the younger grades even though there is a minimum age for enlistment . The show also featured the last (living) appearance of Johnny and Vern , the vaudeville performers ; Stewie shoots them because , as MacFarlane comments , " people were getting sick of them " , with David Goodman adding that " the show was relying on them too much " . The duo return in " Back to the Woods " , with Vern as a ghost and Johnny in Hell .

Upon the receiving of the news that democracy has come to Iraq , one scene shows a man having a knife held to his throat , which caused some controversy after the episode was broadcast . Stewie also knowingly breaks the fourth wall in the episode , by speaking in a manner as if he were talking to the audience . In one scene , Stewie mentions the time " Peter went after that hockey coach " (making a veiled reference to " Hockey Dad " Thomas Junta) , in the expectation of a cutaway gag . However , nothing happens , and Stewie comments , " Oh , no clip ? Thought we had a clip " . This scene was described as being a one off .

In addition to the regular cast , actor Gary Cole , actor Louis Gossett , Jr . , actress Juanita Jennings , voice actor Phil LaMarr , actor Samm Levine , voice actress Rachael MacFarlane , actor Denis Martel , voice actor Enn Reitel , actress Stacey Scowley , voice actor Fred Tatasciore and voice actor Wally Wingert guest starred in the episode . Recurring guest voice actors Alex Breckenridge , Chris Cox , writer Tom Devanney , actor Ralph Garman , writer Danny Smith , writer Alec Sulkin and writer John Viener made minor appearances . Actor Adam West also has a guest appearance in the episode .

= = Cultural references = =

The title is a pun on Steven Spielberg 's hit war film Saving Private Ryan . Several scenes from the Army training contained real @-@ life references ; when the recruits are marching , they begin to sing and dance ; this is a reference to West Side Story . Additionally , the song playing during the recruitment video bears a close resemblance to the Def Leppard song " Pour Some Sugar On Me " . When Peter visits a psychiatrist , the psychiatrist is Dr. Katz (from Comedy Central) . The training is similar to that in the film Full Metal Jacket , also spoofing the scene when the Sergeant found contraband food . The Sergeant punishes Brian by informing him that he will have to listen to singles from Chris Gaines ' album : this entire scene was based on a sketch from Saturday Night Live approximately 10 years ago . Peter references actor Gregory Peck and his " kids " with a cutaway gag featuring four Pecks in a car . Brian shown performing numerous different tasks to complete his army training is a reference to An Officer and a Gentleman , with the music playing in the background from Stripes . The lyrics Lois reads from the Wu @-@ Tang Clan album is from the song " Bring Da Ruckus " , the first track from their album Enter the Wu @-@ Tang (36 Chambers) . The scene where Marilyn Manson tells Chris about nutrition is a reference to an episode of Clone High , where Manson leads a musical scene about the importance of the food pyramid . The sign outside of the building where the Grammys are being held says " Welcome to the Grammys (Not You , Fred Durst) " , a reference to the lead singer of Limp Bizkit . Stewie misunderstands the location of their deployment to be " Fraggile Ir @-@ Rock " , rather than Iraq , referring to the TV show Fraggile Rock . The scene where Zinedine Zidane headbutts an old lady while delivering her a birthday cake is based on the incident that happened in the 2006 FIFA World Cup final , when Zidane headbutted Marco Materazzi . When Brian is frustrated with the recruits recommending Chris to join the Army , Stewie says that 10 % of his high school class is off to fight another battle . After hearing Stewie , Brian says that he was plagiarizing from The Onion , since Brian read about the war in Iraq in The Onion . During the obstacle course , Brian rides a unicycle , solves a Rubik 's Cube , plays Perfection , finds Waldo , offers a couple eating a salad at a dinner table some fresh pepper , and consoles a woman who was just dumped by her boyfriend .

= = Reception = =

In a significant decrease from the previous week , the episode was viewed in 8 @. @ 45 million homes in its original airing , according to Nielsen ratings . The episode also acquired a 3 @. @ 0 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , slightly being edged out by The Simpsons , while still winning over series creator Seth MacFarlane 's second show American Dad ! .

IGN commented that the portrayal of " service in the military is a hilarious satire of the current state of our military in Iraq " . Iverson was also impressed with the episode 's random flashback gags , commenting that " normally they are only groan @-@ worthy " , receiving a final rating of 9 / 10 . Brett Love of TV Squad noted that " The Full Metal Jacket / Stripes angle for Stewie and Brian was great , right down to the Stripes music during the obstacle course . And Louis Gossett , Jr. as Sergeant Angryman is a nice bit of casting " .