

In the Line of Fire (1993)

Frank Horrigan and Al D'Andrea meet with members of a counterfeiting group at a marina. The group's leader, Mendoza, tells Horrigan that he has identified D'Andrea as a United States Secret Service agent, and forces him to prove his loyalty by putting a gun to D'Andrea's head and pulling the trigger. Horrigan shoots Mendoza's men, identifies himself as an agent, and arrests the counterfeiter.

Horrigan investigates a complaint about an apartment's absent tenant. He finds a collage of photographs and newspaper articles on famous assassinations, a model building magazine, and a *Time* cover with the President's head circled. When Horrigan and his partner return with a search warrant only one photograph remains, which shows a much younger Horrigan standing behind John F. Kennedy in Dallas in 1963. He is the only remaining active agent who was guarding the President that day, but guilt over his failure to react quickly enough to the first shot in Dallas to take the next one in Kennedy's place caused Horrigan to drink excessively and his family to leave.

Horrigan receives a phone call from the tenant, who calls himself "Booth". He tells Horrigan that like John Wilkes Booth and Lee Harvey Oswald he plans to kill the President, who is running for reelection and is making many public appearances around the country. Horrigan asks to return to the Presidential Protective Detail despite his age, where he begins a relationship with fellow agent Lilly Raines.

Booth continues to call Horrigan as part of his "game", even though he is well-aware that his calls are tapped and traced. He mocks the agent's failure to protect Kennedy, but calls him a "friend". Booth escapes Horrigan and D'Andrea after one such call from Lafayette Park, but leaves fingerprints. The FBI matches the print, but the identity is classified so the bureau cannot disclose it to the Secret Service; it does, however, notify the CIA.

At a campaign event in Chicago Booth pops a decorative balloon which Horrigan, who has the flu, mistakes for a gunshot. Due to the error he leaves the protective detail but remains in charge of the Booth case. Horrigan and D'Andrea learn from the CIA that Booth is Mitch Leary, a former operative (a "wetboy") who has suffered a mental breakdown and is now a "predator". Leary, who has already killed several people as he prepares for the assassination, uses his modelmaking skills to build a composite zip gun to evade metal detectors and hides the bullets and springs in a keyring.

D'Andrea confides to Horrigan that he is going to retire immediately because of nightmares about the Mendoza incident, but Horrigan is able to dissuade him. After Leary taunts Horrigan about the President facing danger in California, the assassin kills D'Andrea after the two agents chase him across Washington rooftops. Horrigan asks Raines to reassign him to the protective detail as the President visits Los Angeles, but a television crew films him mistaking a bellboy at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel for a security threat, and he must again leave the detail.

Horrigan connects Leary to a bank employee's murder and learns that Leary, who has made a large campaign contribution, is among the guests of a campaign dinner at the hotel. He sees the President approach the assassin and jumps in front of his bullet. As the Secret Service quickly removes the President, Leary uses Horrigan—who is wearing a bulletproof vest—as a hostage to escape to the hotel's external elevator. The agent uses his earpiece to tell Raines and sharpshooters where to aim; although they miss Leary, Horrigan defeats him. The assassin chooses to fall to his death from the elevator.

Horrigan, now a hero, retires as his fame no longer lets him do his job. He and Raines find a farewell message from Leary on Horrigan's answering machine. Horrigan and Raines leave the house and visit the Lincoln Memorial.

Cast

- Clint Eastwood as Agent Frank Horrigan

- John Malkovich as Mitch Leary
- Rene Russo as Lilly Raines
- Dylan McDermott as Al D'Andrea
- Gary Cole as Bill Watts
- Fred Dalton Thompson as Harry Sargent
- John Mahoney as Secret Service Director Sam Campagna
- Gregory Alan Williams as Matt Wilder
- Jim Curley as the President of the United States (codenamed "Traveler")
- Sally Hughes as the First Lady of the United States
- Tobin Bell as Mendoza
- Clyde Kusatsu as FBI agent Jack Okura
- Steve Hytner as FBI agent Tony Carducci
- Patrika Darbo as Pam Magnus
- John Heard as Prof. Riger
- Joshua Malina as Secret Service agent Chavez

Memorable quotes (with notes on difficult vocabulary)

Leary: The irony is so thick you could choke on it.

Horrigan: There's no fuckin' irony, Mitch.

Leary: Think, Frank. Think. The same government that trained me to kill trained you to protect. Yet now you want to kill me while up on that roof I protected you. They're gonna write books about us, Frank.

thick = (letteral. 'denso') qui: tale e tanto; **to choke** = soffocare, strozzarsi

Sam Campagna: Frank, The President sent his limo for you.

Lilly Raines: Well, that's the least he could do.

Frank Horrigan: Good, I love public transportation.

limo = abbreviazione di *limousine*

[Leary makes the first of a series of taunting phone calls]

Frank Horrigan: McCrawley?

Mitch Leary: Why not call me Booth?

Frank Horrigan: Why not Oswald?

Mitch Leary: Because Booth had flair, panache - a leap to the stage after he shot Lincoln.

flair/panache = (qui) grande stile/personalità

Lilly Raines: What makes you think he'll call again?

Frank Horrigan: Oh, he'll call again. He's got, uh, "panache."

Lilly Raines: Panache?

Frank Horrigan: Yeah, it means flamboyance.

Lilly Raines: Mm, I know what it means.

Frank Horrigan: Really? I had to look it up.

flamboyance = (qui) grande stile/personalità

Mitch Leary: What did happen to you that day? Only one agent reacted to the gunfire, and you were closer to Kennedy than he was. You must have looked up at the window of the Texas Book Depository, but you didn't react. Late at night, when the demons come, do you see the rifle coming out of that window, or do you see Kennedy's head being blown apart? If you'd reacted to that first shot, could you have gotten there in time to stop the big bullet? And if you had - that could've been your head being blown apart. Do you wish you'd succeeded, Frank? Or is life too precious?

when the demons come = (fig.) quando gli incubi si fanno strada

Frank Horrigan: I've never worked with a female agent before. How many are there?

Lilly Raines: About 125.

Frank Horrigan: Mm. Pure window dressing.

Lilly Raines: Excuse me?

Frank Horrigan: Window dressing. About 125 out of a little over 2,000. They have you all around so that the President can look good to his feminist voters.

Lilly Raines: Do you make an effort to be obnoxious, or is it a gift?

Frank Horrigan: It's a gift. Let's face it, half the things we do are window dressing. Take running alongside that limousine: it'd take an anti-tank missile to put a dent in that damn thing. There we are, out for show, trying to make the President look more presidential.

window-dressing = (letteral. 'allestimento di vetrine') fig. presentazione che serve a impressionare/fare buona impressione; **dent** = ammaccatura

Frank Horrigan: So you had an affair with an agent, and it came out badly.

Lilly Raines: He wasn't an agent.

Frank Horrigan: But he left you because you wouldn't quit your job. You were broken-hearted.

Lilly Raines: I left him, Frank, because I wouldn't quit my job for him. And it did break my heart.

Frank Horrigan: You vowed never again to ever let a man come between you and your career.

Lilly Raines: No...

Frank Horrigan: Except... now you're in love with me, and it screws your little head up.

Lilly Raines: Frank, blow your nose. Here.

Frank Horrigan: Sorry. What were to happen if I, uh, gave up my job for you?

Lilly Raines: Why would you do that?

Frank Horrigan: Well, maybe I vowed to never again let my career come between me and a woman.

to come out badly = andare a finire male; **to quit** = lasciare, abbandonare; **to vow** = (letteral. Far voto di) giurare a se stessi; **to screw one's head up** = confondere le idee a qc.

Mitch Leary: Watching the President, I - I couldn't help wondering why a man like you would risk his life to save a man like that. You have such a strange job - I can't decide if it's heroic or absurd.

Frank Horrigan: Now, why would a man like you want to risk his life to kill a man like that?

Mitch Leary: Don't you have a psychological profile on me yet?

Frank Horrigan: I don't put a lot of stock in them.

Mitch Leary: Nor do I. A man's actions don't equal the sum of his psychological parts. Doesn't work that way.

Frank Horrigan: Just how does it work?

Mitch Leary: It doesn't work, Frank. God doesn't punish the wicked and reward the righteous. Everyone dies. Some die because they deserve to; others die simply because they come from Minneapolis. It's random and it's meaningless.

Frank Horrigan: Well, if none of this means anything... why kill the President?

Mitch Leary: To punctuate the dreariness.

To put stock on sth = attribuire grande importanza a qc; **the righteous** = i giusti/buoni; **dreariness** = noia

Frank Horrigan: What do you know about the guy?

Walter Wickland: Well, d'you see this wheelchair? Mitch bought it for me. Cost over \$1,000. See this?
[holds up gun]

Al D'Andrea: Whoa, whoa, take it easy now...

Walter Wickland: This is in case he ever comes back.

Frank Horrigan: I know who you are - Leary.

Mitch Leary: I'm glad, Frank. Friends should be able to call each other by name.

Frank Horrigan: We're not friends.

Mitch Leary: Sure we are.

Frank Horrigan: I've seen what you do to friends.

Mitch Leary: What's that supposed to mean?

Frank Horrigan: You slit your friend's throat.

Mitch Leary: You talked to Coppinger, Frank?

Frank Horrigan: Yeah, that's right.

Mitch Leary: Did you delouse? The man's a professional liar.

Frank Horrigan: I saw the photos.

Mitch Leary: No, you saw what he wanted you to see, Frank.

Frank Horrigan: I saw a picture of, uh, your friend lying on the floor with his throat cut.

Mitch Leary: What you didn't see, Frank, what you couldn't possibly know, is: they sent my best friend - my comrade in arms - to my home to kill me!

to take sth easy = stare calmo, non prendersela; **to slit** = squarciare; **comrade in arms** = compagno d'armi

[Frank watches Lilly leave from the Lincoln Memorial]

Frank Horrigan: If she looks back, it means she's interested. Come on, give me a look back now. Just give me that smug expression and be on your way.

[Lilly looks back]

Frank Horrigan: Well, Abe? Damn... wish I could have been there for you, pal.

smug = dall'aria soddisfatta

[in the elevator]

Frank Horrigan: Ok, now what?

Mitch Leary: Do you believe in the nobility of suicide?

Frank Horrigan: No. But if you wanna blow your goddamn head off, go ahead, be my guest.

Mitch Leary: Nicely put, Frank, but I don't want to leave this miserable world alone.

to blow one's head off = farsi saltare il cervello

Mendoza: What do you think I ought to do here, Frank?

Frank Horrigan: Make sure the body doesn't wash up on shore.

Mendoza: I want you to pop him for me, ok? See I think maybe you're with him.

Frank Horrigan: Look, you came to me remember?

Mendoza: So pop him, show me I'm an asshole.

Frank Horrigan: I'm just a business man.

Mendoza: So pop him. And let's do some business.

to wash up = (qui) rispuntare fuori; **to pop** = (qui) liberarsi

Horrigan: [after someone called the paramedics] Okay, who's the joker?

Lilly Raines: It may not have been a joke, you were looking kind of peaked out there.

Horrigan: Well, when I find out who it was, I'm gonna pay him back in spades.

Lilly Raines: What makes you think it was a *him*?

[walks away]

peaked = pallid e smunto

White House Chief of Staff Harry Sargent: [Frank is arguing with the Chief of Staff] This is just a big joke to you, Horrigan?

Horrigan: No, YOU'RE a joke to me, Harry! You have no idea what we do around here!

White House Chief of Staff Harry Sargent: By God, if you call me Harry once more, you'll be busting counterfeiters in Alaska!

to bust = (detto della polizia) catturare; **counterfeiter** = falsario

Lilly Raines: Well, time flies when you're being annoyed.

you're being annoyed = quando qualcuno ti dà fastidio

[second phone call]

Leary: I was worried about you with the motorcade today. You looked like you were going to faint. You really should get into shape for that type of job.

[about 15 minutes later into the film when the Secret Service is looking through the park]

Leary: [sees Frank exhausted through binoculars and mutters] I told you to get into shape.

to get into shape = rimettersi in sesto (fisicamente)

[after saving the president]

Reporter at Dulles Intl. Airport: Why are you retiring from the Secret Service?

Horrigan: Well, because I hate desk work and I'm too old to go running along the limousines, and thanks to you people plastering my picture up everywhere I'm no good for undercover work.

to plaster = (qui) tappezzare di manifesti

[Leary's final words on Frank's answering machine]

Mitch Leary: Hello, Frank. By the time you hear this, it'll be over. The President is most likely dead, and so am I. I wonder, Frank, did you kill me? Who won our game? Not that it really matters, for among friends like you and me, it's not whether you win or lose but how you play the game, and now the game is done and it's time to get on with your life. But I worry, Frank, that you have no life to get on with. You're a good man, and good men like you and me are destined to walk a lonely road. Goodbye, and good luck.

to walk a lonely road = (letteral. percorrere una strada solitaria) fig. essere soli

Fonti:

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0107206/?ref=sr_1

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_Line_of_Fire