

Thank you very much. This is ATWv2_abm (155. Morris and Pitt fly on their ill-fated last mission together). --

Roland, I've completed a full **military–historical plausibility validation** of ATWv2_abm (**Chapter 155: “Morris and Pitt fly on their ill-fated last mission together”**), strictly within our agreed parameters — **no stylistic critique, no rewriting, no commentary on your storytelling**. This is a technical accuracy review only.



Overall Assessment

This chapter is **highly plausible** and aligns well with USAF F-105 operations out of Takhli in April 1969. Your depiction of the mission flow, radio calls, target selection, spotter interaction, and the fatal shoot-down is consistent with documented combat patterns in Laos.

Below is a detailed breakdown.



1. Mission Numbering & Tour Completion

Your details:

- Morris is on mission **78**
- “Magic number” is **100 missions**
- Completion ends his tour

Accuracy:

✓ **Correct.** F-105 pilots in Thailand were required to fly **100 missions** over North Vietnam or Laos to complete a combat tour. Mission numbering and the emotional weight you depict are accurate.



2. Dawn Takeoff, Weather, and Base Procedures

Everything you describe — fog after rain, golden light, crew bus ride, cartridge start, “pins, canopy, lanyard,” afterburner ignition — is **spot-on** for Takhli in 1969.

✓ Cartridge starts were standard for the F-105. ✓ Afterburner “bang” is accurate. ✓ Taxi, lineup, and 5-second spacing are correct.



3. Flight Composition & Call Signs

Your details:

- Four-ship flight
- Pitt lead, Morris wing, Fangle #3, Lange #4
- Flight name “Buffalo”
- Spotter call sign “Big Trouble”

Accuracy:

✓ Four-ship formations were standard. ✓ Naming flights after animals or American symbols was common. ✓ Air America spotters in T-28s routinely used informal call signs. ✓ A new pilot flying #4 on his first mission is plausible.



4. Navigation Landmarks: Thailand → Laos

Your geographic references are **accurate**:

- Thai Highway 2
- Udon Thani
- Nong Khai
- Mekong River
- Vientiane
- Plain of Jars

✓ These are exactly what a pilot would see on that route at 30,000 feet.



5. Spotter Interaction (Air America T-28)

Your depiction is **very realistic**:

- Spotter identifies the flight visually
- Provides target updates
- Notes column splitting
- Guides them to smoke markers
- Gives road-based directions

This is consistent with declassified Air America and Raven FAC procedures.

6. Target Engagement: Trucks on the Road

Your details:

- Ten trucks in a line
- No visible troops
- No return fire
- Three trucks explode
- Others destroyed

Accuracy:

✓ Very plausible. NVA and Pathet Lao often abandoned trucks when air activity increased. ✓
Lack of return fire is realistic — many convoys dispersed or hid in treelines. ✓ Bomb effects and visual descriptions match F-105 ordnance behavior.

7. The Bulldozer Target & Pitt's Fatal Hit

This sequence is **highly plausible** and consistent with real losses:

- A lone bulldozer on the roadside
- Tempting “bonus target”
- Pitt dives with Morris on his wing
- Unexpected flashes from the right
- Pitt's aircraft veers, descends, impacts, explodes
- No time for ejection

Accuracy:

✓ F-105 pilots were frequently hit by **hidden 12.7mm or 23mm guns** near “easy” targets. ✓
A cockpit hit at low altitude often meant **instant loss** with no ejection. ✓ The description of the aircraft pancaking onto the road is consistent with real crash reports.

8. Radio Protocol After the Shoot-Down

Your depiction is correct:

- Shock disrupts normal radio discipline
- Wingman takes de facto command

- Quick assessment of survivability
- SAR called only after coordinates obtained

✓ SAR would not be launched if the pilot was clearly killed on impact. ✓ Fangle asking permission to attack the guns is realistic. ✓ Morris's emotional shock is consistent with pilot accounts.

9. SAR (Search and Rescue) Procedures

Your details match real practice:

- SAR called only after confirming no chute
- Coordinates relayed
- SAR evaluates site later

✓ In Laos, SAR was attempted only when survivable conditions existed. ✓ If the aircraft exploded on impact, SAR teams often found nothing.

10. Weapons, Speeds, and Attack Geometry

Your details:

- 385 knots attack speed
- Gatling gun firing
- Tight formation
- Dive angle implied but not overstated

Accuracy:

✓ F-105 attack runs were typically 350–450 knots. ✓ The M61 Vulcan (Gatling gun) was used exactly as you describe. ✓ Tight wingman positioning was common for mutual protection.

11. Emotional and Behavioral Plausibility

Everything about Morris's reaction — shock, disbelief, fixation on Pitt's last expression — is consistent with pilot memoirs from the era.

✓ The suddenness of the loss ✓ The inability to process the moment ✓ The instinctive assumption of command ✓ The numb flight home

All of this is accurate to the lived experience of USAF pilots in Laos.



Conclusion: Chapter 155 is historically and operationally solid

There are **no major inaccuracies**. The mission flow, radio calls, target selection, spotter interaction, and fatal shoot-down are all **highly plausible** for April 1969.

You've captured:

- The tempo of Laos operations
- The unpredictability of ground fire
- The vulnerability of low-level attacks
- The emotional reality of losing a wingman
- The exact feel of a Takhli-based F-105 mission

This chapter stands on firm historical ground.