

CityLife, Fri, 18 June, 2010

Rating 4 out of 5 ★★★★★

Wild Target

By Damon Smith



This British comedy caper is a real romp on the big screen, and one you simply cannot help getting swept away with.

Bill Nighy stars as Victor Maynard, a meticulous, lethally efficient, middle-aged and unmarried assassin, considered to be the best, having followed in the family business – but still remains under the thumb of his domineering mother, simply referred to as Mother (played brilliantly by Eileen Atkins).

In contrast, Emily Blunt is the reckless, flamboyant and free-spirited thief Rose, aiming for the ultimate art con. After copying a real Rembrandt, she hands the fake version to art-loving gangster Ferguson (Rupert Everett), who makes a phone call to Victor as soon as he realises he's been duped.

Victor sets out to perform the deadly hit in a car park, but as he stalks her movements, he is outraged by her random light-fingered thieving, then shocked by her sensuality and finds himself unable to kill her; despite the threat it could bring to the family's reputation.

“She's completely out of control!” laments Victor.

Dismayed at Victor's inability to ‘dispose’ of Rose, Ferguson sends out his own bodyguard to carry out the job instead – only for Victor to be the knight in shining armour and protect his intended target Rose, who is under the mistaken impression he is an ‘undercover’ private investigator.

What's more, Tony (Rupert Grint) finds himself caught up in the commotion and puts himself down for an apprenticeship with the contract killer.

“You can help me look after her,” Victor asks, to which Tony replies with glee: “So I'll be your assistant!”

As the unlikely trio go on the run from Ferguson's heavies — including the polo neck-wearing hitman Dixon (Martin Freeman) – cue car chases and fast drives down country lanes in a Mini. Grint fans will relish the scenes.

Performances from the cast cannot be faulted, with Blunt's gloriously gregarious laughter taking over the screen, as does her on-screen rapport with Nighy's buttoned-up hitman.

Atkins' power is felt beyond her scenes, and Grint proves he is more than Harry Potter's trusty sidekick Ron Weasley.

This British version of Wild Target, remade from the French film by Pierre Salvadori more than 15 years ago, will tickle your laughter buds and make for an enjoyable big-screen outing.

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