

## Film Review: ‘The Numbers Station’ Feels Made by a Computer

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on April 24, 2013 - 9:15am

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CHICAGO – John Cusack’s new spy thriller is so routine, predictable, and dull that they could have called it “By-the-Numbers Station”. Too easy? How about “Paint-by-Numbers Station”? OK, I’ll stop now before @FakeShalit comes after me. “The Numbers Station,” now available On Demand and opening in Chicago this Friday, isn’t an awful film (it’s better than Cusack’s last dud, “The Factory”) but it’s a remarkably boring one. Co-star Malin Akerman does her best to try and add some character but director Kasper Barfoed can’t figure out the tone of this non-action spy movie and Cusack looks visibly bored. If someone had a camera on you while you were watching it, you would look the same way.



Rating: **2.0/5.0**

Casting against type, Cusack plays a CIA Black Ops agent named Emerson Kent. After an innocent bystander witnesses Kent performing a “job” and asks him why he’s doing it, Kent has a crisis of conscience, one that’s amplified by the fact that his partner (Liam Cunningham) then does what he cannot – kills the witness. Kent is shattered enough that he’s basically given the equivalent of a desk job in his unique profession – asked to guard a code operator named Katherine (Malin Akerman). This average citizen works alone at a top-secret CIA “Numbers Station” in the middle of nowhere, delivering codes into a system of espionage that she doesn’t understand or fully comprehend. The numbers mean something to the recipients who have ever-changing ciphers to decode them but nothing to Katherine. She is the operator of the phone system of the spy network.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “The Numbers Station” in our reviews section.](#) [9]

Kent has barely had a chance to consider the likely tedium of his new assignment when he’s called into spy action. The pair is arriving for another day of work in the spy quarry when they realize that the duo that had the shift before them has been compromised. Explosions, gunfire, and the realization that the bad guys have found a way into a reportedly foolproof system and could have essentially destroyed most of the CIA Black Ops operations around the world follow as Kent and Katherine could be the only two people to save the Agency. Who was behind the attack? Will Kent be able to hold up given his recent trauma? Why should we care?



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “The Numbers Station” review.](#) [9]

*“The Numbers Station” stars John Cusack, Malin Akerman, and Liam Cunningham. It was written by F. Scott Frazier and directed by Kasper Barfoed. It is available On Demand and will be released in Chicago on April 26, 2013.*



The Numbers Station  
Photo credit: A24

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