

Film Review: Uninspired ‘R.I.P.D.’ is a Reminder of Better Movies

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 19, 2013 - 10:12pm

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CHICAGO – Did everyone see “Men in Black”? Or the film’s two sequels? They you saw “R.I.P.D.,” which unfortunately for the production team has “rip” in the title, because the film is a lazy rewrite and rip-off of “MiB.” Jeff Bridges and Ryan Reynolds are the protectors assigned in this one.



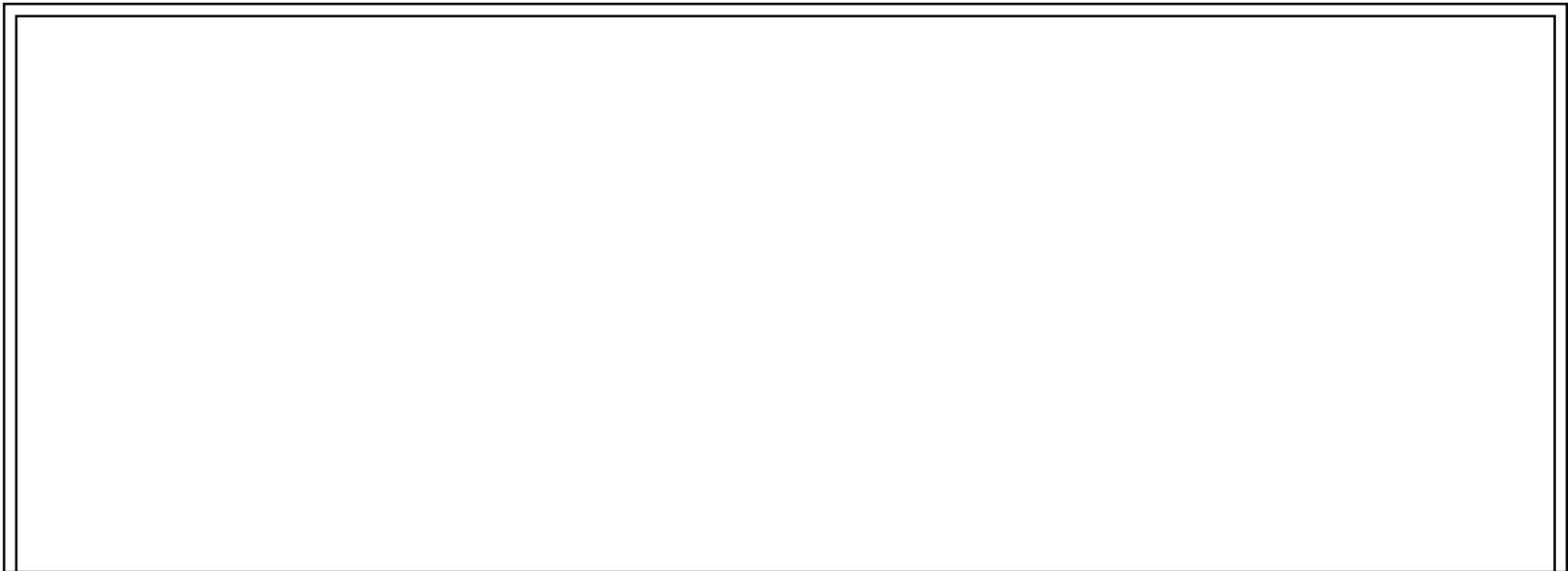
The pitch had to go something like this. Picture “Men in Black” except instead of aliens the heroes are chasing lost dead souls. And by-the-way, the heroes are also dead, instead of being men in black. No, the pitchmen weren’t thrown out of the studio office, they green-lighted this 130 million dollar exercise in unoriginality, based on a source comic book. There are ultra special effects here, as it’s poured on like so much syrup on pancakes. Enough of the product makes the dish better, too much makes it cloying. “R.I.P.D” has its moments – truly – when it tries to be itself, as in any scene that the fabulous Mary-Louise Parker inhabits, but then it’s back to creatures straight out of the “Men in Black” factory, so much so that we wonder if the same team is responsible for the monster design in both films.

Ryan Reynolds is Nick, a Boston cop famous for his flamboyant drug busts (hasn’t the war on drugs gained a futility in popular culture yet?). He has also teamed up with his partner Hayes (Kevin Bacon) to skim some gold pieces from a recent bust. His guilt about this catches up with him, given his devotion to his wife Julia (Stephanie Szostak), and he tries to get out of the corruption. This leads to his death, as his loose lips sink the ship.

Instead of going to heaven or Judgement City, Nick is arisen to the Rest In Peace Department (R.I.P.D.), an afterlife policing agency that is responsible for picking up lost souls that don’t make to their final reward or punishment. He is given a cop partner named Roy (Jeff Bridges), an irascible cuss who was a lawman in the 1800s (he sports Buffalo Bill-type facial hair). Naturally, as new police partners in movies, they hate each other before they love each other. Can Nick right the wrongs that had led to his demise?

“R.I.P.D.” opens everywhere on July 19th in 3D and regular screenings. See local listings for 3D theaters and show times. Featuring Jeff Bridges, Ryan Reynolds, Mary-Louise Parker, Kevin Bacon, Stephanie Szostak, James Hong and Marisa Miller. Screenplay by Phil Hay and Matt Manfredi. Directed by Robert Schwentke. Rated “PG-13”

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A Gun That's Happy to Be Seen: Nick (Ryan Reynolds) in 'R.I.P.D.'
Photo credit: Universal Pictures



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