

## Elizabeth Banks Teeters With the 'Man on a Ledge'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 27, 2012 - 5:21pm

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Rating: **3.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – New York City. Mid-day. A man steps outside the window on the edge of the Roosevelt Hotel. Is he jumping? That's the question that street level onlookers and moviegoers want answered from Sam Worthington, Elizabeth Banks, Jamie Bell and Ed Harris in "Man on a Ledge"

This trifle of an action film does have some mojo going for it. It's played a bit tongue-in-cheek, with the wry Banks filling the role as the hard-drinking New York Police suicide negotiator. The tension in this film is wholly exaggerated, to a point where it teeters on the brink of parody. All the ensemble cast has their game faces on, however, as the somewhat overly complex plot unravels.

Sam Worthington is Nick Cassidy, introduced as a cop-turned-thief doing hard time at Sing-Sing. His brother Joey (Jamie Bell) is embarrassed that Nick has sullied the family name, but does manage to get Nick a temporary furlong from the joint to attend his father's funeral. Also attending are is the convict's old police partner Mike Ackerman (Anthony Mackie) and Joey's girlfriend, Angie (Génesis Rodríguez). Nick is able to distract his handlers enough to make a spectacular escape from the graveyard. The manhunt to retrieve him is on, led by his ex-partner.



Sam Worthington with Elizabeth Banks in 'Man on a Ledge'  
*Photo credit: Myles Aronowitz for Summit Entertainment*

The next time Nick makes an appearance is on the ledge of the Roosevelt Hotel in Midtown Manhattan. The chaos surrounding the event is almost instantaneous, as onlookers encourage Nick to jump, even as he insists he will talk only to police suicide negotiator Lydia Mercer

(Elizabeth Banks). The show on the ledge is a deception, however. Nick is out to clear his name and get revenge on David Englander (Ed Harris), the rich dude who sent him up the river. While Nick distracts the New York City police department, the brother/girlfriend combination of Joey and Angie are breaking into Englander's supposedly impenetrable safe deep in the building next door.

Besides being the most elaborate scheme ever to clear a name – why doesn't Nick just hire a good lawyer – the "Man on the Ledge" goes to great lengths to keep up the suspense on both the ledge and the break-in. Nick's desire to have Bank's character as his talking partner becomes all part of what is going on in the building next door, within the plan's utter complexity. And it's a good thing that girlfriend Angie obviously works out, because otherwise she'd never get into the skintight cat suit that allows her to crawl through duct work.

That's what happening in this film, two simultaneous stories, each feeding less and less off each other. Worthington is game for this type of role, he does a decent job of trying to hold it all together, it just is so absurd once it's figured out, that if I were part of the planning committee, I would have just paid off some dirty cops to burn some records. Elizabeth Banks is her usual I'm-in-on-the-joke self, showing off the "million dollar a picture" smile and slightly winking to the camera as the suicide negotiator.

There is an element of the 99 versus the one percent as represented by the rich man played by Ed Harris, but again he's so mean and spiteful there is not one person in the or outside the film that wants him to succeed (maybe his administrative staff). He would have been better off not harassing Nick and writing off whatever he supposedly stole as part of some off-shore money laundering. This is a set-up that truly could have spared the time, effort and emergency vehicles involved just with a little outside-the-box tax and legal maneuverings.



Baby, He's Rich Man: Ed Harris (David Englander) in 'Man on a Ledge'  
Photo credit: Myles Aronowitz for Summit Entertainment

In as much, though, as the audacious plan seemed unnecessary, it did provide an exaggeration that at times was entertaining. At least it had the cat-suited Angie slinking around, because pink underwear is best when breaking and entering. That spanking of convention, as well as Bank's presence and the oiliness of Ed Harris, was enough of a diversion to keep the story rolling along. It's funny that in cinematic fiction the good guy is the one that generally wins, while the opposite is true in real life, at least when money is involved.

"Man on the Ledge" is what movies are for, a 102 minute diversion rooting for a guy who was wrongly accused, who still had the wherewithal to get the right plan together at the right time, all while entertaining New York City and the audience in the dark on a 14-inch stage.

"Man on a Ledge" opens everywhere on January 27th. Featuring Sam Worthington, Elizabeth Banks, Jamie Bell, Anthony Mackie, Ed Harris, Edward Burns, Kyra Sedgwick and Génesis Rodríguez. Screenplay by Pablo Fenjves, directed by Asger Leth. Rated "PG-13." [Click here](#) [14] to read the HollywoodChicago.com interview with Sam Worthington of "Man on a Ledge."



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