

## Ramshackle, Rickety 'Taken 3' is Far Too Predictable

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 9, 2015 - 3:16pm

- [20th Century Fox](#) [2]
- [Dougray Scott](#) [3]
- [Famke Janssen](#) [4]
- [Forest Whitaker](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Jonny Weston](#) [7]
- [Liam Neeson](#) [8]
- [Luc Besson](#) [9]
- [Maggie Grace](#) [10]
- [Movie Review](#) [11]
- [Olivier Megaton](#) [12]
- [Robert Mark Kamen](#) [13]
- [Sam Spruell](#) [14]
- [Spike Walters](#) [15]
- [Taken](#) [16]
- [Taken 3](#) [17]



Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – “Taken 3” is more a brand extension than a movie. Seven years after “Taken” turned Liam Neeson into an unlikely action star, “Taken 3” shows this series has completely run out of gas. The novelty of the hulking Oscar-nominee beating bad guys to a pulp wore off a long time ago, and “Taken 3” puts Neeson through the most pedestrian set of paces yet. It says something when the operative word of his first scene is “predictable.” Neeson only says it a half dozen times.

The plots of all three “Taken” movies are ludicrous, but just to give you some bearings lets go over this one anyway. This time after about 20 minutes of clumsy foreshadowing while we watch Neeson’s Bryan Mills spin his wheels waiting for something to happen, Neeson’s ex-wife (Famke Janssen) is found dead in his apartment, and he’s framed for the murder. After a little fisticuffs with the cops who come to arrest him he escapes into the Los Angeles underground.



Liam Neeson in 'Taken 3'

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

He’s tracking down who really killed his wife while the LAPD (headed up by Forest Whitaker) are tracking him. And for a man wanted for

murder, he doesn't do a very good job of staying out of sight. He sneaks into the morgue to snip hair from his dead ex-wife's body and he regularly calls well known associates, along with his daughter – the one person cops would be all over like a bum on a bologna sandwich from the get-go.

Even Neeson seems bored with his badass antics by now. His sneer is on autopilot, plus screenwriter and French schlockmeister Luc Besson can't even summon up the energy to give him anything inventive or interesting to do.

While Neeson does crash a Porsche into a plane as its taking off, and drive a car down an elevator shaft, his activities not involving expensive motorized vehicles are nothing you haven't seen a hundred times before. As for Whitaker, he seems to be in a different universe entirely. He acts like he's the quirky detective star of a CBS cop show, snapping rubber bands and carrying around chess pieces while he tries to figure out Mills' next move.



Forest Whitaker in 'Taken 3'  
Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

The "Taken" movies have always aspired to be popcorn movies in the dumbest sense. They're B-movie blockbusters that rely on Neeson's hulking size and Oscar pedigree to lend them some class and allow them to redefine the limits of credibility.

But even at 62 years old, Neeson still retains his particular set of skills, and in the end "Taken 3" doesn't put them to particularly good use. It often looks and feels like a quickie sequel meant to grind out one more installment before a series conks out entirely. This jalopy of an action vehicle should head straight to the scrap yard.

*"Taken 3" opens everywhere on January 9th. Featuring Liam Neeson, Famke Janssen, Maggie Grace, Forest Whitaker, Dougray Scott, Jonny Weston and Sam Spruell. Written by Luc Besson and Robert Mark Kamen. Directed by Oliver Megatron. Rated "PG-13"*



[18]

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