

Take the Title Advice in ‘Jack Reacher: Never Go Back’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on October 22, 2016 - 4:24pm

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Rating: **1.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – The title of Tom Cruise’s second Jack Reacher adventure has almost prophetic ring to it – but we all would have been better off if the writers, and director and star of Jack Reacher: Never Go Back” had heeded the advice. This film seems more like one of those bargain-bin-just-barely-released thrillers than a major studio action movie.

In his “Mission Impossible” films we’ve come to expect crazy stunts and relentless intensity from Cruise as he runs all over the world. In “Jack Reacher 2,” Tom Cruise brings his steely intensity, but there’s not much else. Instead, we get a cruddy and cheap looking series of modest chase scenes through tax-friendly shooting locations. The first half hour or so is comprised almost entirely of a scenic tour of seedy motels and cheap diners, as the title character hitchhikes among the amber waves of grain of the good ol U.S.A.



Tom Cruise in ‘Jack Reacher: Never Go Back’

Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

Jack Reacher (Tom Cruise) is a former Army Major gone rogue, breaking bones and pursuing bad guys. To switch things up, director Ed Zwick – with co-writers Marshall Herskovitz and Richard Wenk – fall back on the lazy screenwriters bag of tricks, and saddle the lone wolf with a teenager (Danika Yarosh) instead. After he breaks from jail a female army major (Cobie Smulders), wrongfully accused of treason, Reacher

finds out about a young girl who may or may not be his teenage daughter. Soon all three of them are on the run from a team of dirty government military contractors involved in gun running and other nefarious pursuits.

This seems like a movie Tom Cruise did to fill the time between more inspiring projects. The villains here are forgettable, the plot is by the numbers and he doesn't even much of a supporting cast to work with – aside from Cobie Smulders. But even she is given relatively little to do, and the pair have zero chemistry. The film wants to have it both ways with her...to show she's tough, so she gets to strangle a guy with a garden hose, for example. But she still has to have Tom Cruise save her, and she also has to walk around in just a bra.



Colbie Smulders in 'Jack Reacher: Never Go Back'

Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

The film lacks any of the showy set pieces we've come to expect from a Tom Cruise action movie. Director Zwick telegraphs the fight scenes so everyone will clearly know who's hitting who, but everyone in the theater can see the punches coming a mile away. And apart from a reasonably competent chase through New Orleans French Quarter, none of the scenes or the story have an ounce of pizzazz. It's a pointless and unnecessary sequel to a movie that people only hazily remember, if at all.

"Jack Reacher: Never Go Back" opened everywhere on October 21st. Featuring Tom Cruise, Cobie Smulders, Aldis Hodge, Robert Knepper, Danika Yarosh, Holt McCallany and Patrick Heusinger. Screenplay by Marshall Herskovitz and Richard Wenk. Directed by Ed Zwick. Rated "PG-13"



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By [SPIKE WALTERS](#) [19]

Contributor

HollywoodChicago.com

spike@hollywoodchicago.com [18]

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