

## Amy Schumer, Goldie Hawn Bring Hilarity to 'Snatched'

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- [20th Century Fox](#) [2]
- [Amy Schumer](#) [3]
- [Colombia](#) [4]
- [Ecuador](#) [5]
- [Goldie Hawn](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [ike barinholtz](#) [8]
- [Joan Cusack](#) [9]
- [Jonathan Levine](#) [10]
- [Katie Dippold](#) [11]
- [Movie Review](#) [12]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [13]
- [Paul Feig](#) [14]
- [Snatched](#) [15]
- [South America](#) [16]
- [Wanda Sykes](#) [17]



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – This is the Amy Schumer-in-the-movies we've all been waiting for... the brash zing factory who has a bit of insecurity behind her adventurous and licentious ways. Schumer teams with Goldie Hawn in a mother and daughter laugh factory called "Snatched."

There are two names on this production team which immediately give this film some comedy credibility – screenwriter Katie Dippold and executive producer Paul Feig. This was the writer/director team which created another great female buddy comedy, "The Heat." Like that movie, "Snatched" uses real life (and familiar) action scenarios and has a funny lady riff on them. To top it off, Amy Schumer's character has a penchant for murdering people, which gets incredibly darker as the story goes on. This is the summer comedy that has a perfect opening on Mother's Day weekend, especially if Mom likes to laugh.

Emily (Schumer) is hitting a severe life rut. She is fired from her retail job and is financially stressed. However, she still has her getaway trip to Ecuador planned with her rocker boyfriend Michael (Randall Park, in a funny cameo). But when they meet to finalize the plans, Michael drops a bombshell... he's breaking up with her.



Amy Schumer and Goldie Hawn of 'Snatched'



Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

This throws our heroine into a tailspin, which can hopefully be cured by spending a few days with her cat-loving mother Linda (Goldie Hawn) and her brother Jeffrey (Ike Barinholtz), who has a fear of leaving the house. Emily can't find anyone to go with her on the exotic vacation, so she recruits her mother. The pair successfully land in South America, but an off-the-grid road trip inland becomes the cause for them to be kidnapped. The adventure that Emily has craved is about to begin.

Establishing the Emily character through Schumer was the key to this funhouse. The frustrated and strained relationship she has with her mother generates the buddy comedy jokes that lend themselves throughout the story. Schumer is a marvel carrying the film, practically on her back, as she experiences break-up depression, dance moves, accidental nudity and a talent for killing people (not on purpose, but with comic purpose). This is Schumer where she belongs right now, she was better here than in "Trainwreck."

Goldie Hawn, however, was playing it basically straight. Her character Momma was content to flit around the edges of the adventure. It's almost like Goldie – who established one of the great comedy personas of the 1960s – has lost her touch for that kind of work. Luckily the rest of the laughs were filled in by the team of Wanda Sykes and Joan Cusack, auditioning for their own film. Cusack stole every scene she was in, as a mute ex-special ops mercenary. Also kudos go to relative unknown, Ike Barinholtz, as brother Jeffrey the recluse... he had a sure grip on the funny element of that character.



They Got This: Joan Cusack and Wanda Sykes Help Out in 'Snatched'

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

But much like "The Heat," the plot must be served, and that is the only slight weakness of the film. Screenwriter Dippold upped the ante of the kidnapping, it was a "Midnight Express" style hostage situation mixed with a couple of American first worlders, and the cruelty of it was a bit much (except when Schumer kept murdering people). I applauded the concept, but the execution of such subtlety could have used another turn through the rewrite machine. Regardless, the film is laugh out loud funny.

There is a joyful scene at the end, an epilogue that is a celebration. There is a long shot of Goldie Hawn dancing up a storm, and for a minute there is a glimpse of the kooky "Laugh-In" character that certain generations knew and loved. That is what the bliss of creating art is about... the opportunity to be young again. Happy Mother's Day to all those forever young souls.

*"Snatched" opens everywhere on May 12th. Featuring Amy Schumer, Goldie Hawn, Wanda Sykes, Joan Cusack and Ike Barinholtz. Written by Katie Dippold. Directed by Jonathan Levine. Rated "R"*



[18]

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**Links:**

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- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/20th-century-fox>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/amy-schumer>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/colombia>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ecuador>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/goldie-hawn>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/hollywoodchicagocom-content>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ike-barinholtz>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/joan-cusack>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/jonathan-levine>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/katie-dippold>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>
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- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/paul-feig>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/snatched>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/south-america>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/wanda-sykes>
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- [19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>