

‘The Commuter’ is a Fun, Butt-Kicking Good Time

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 12, 2018 - 10:21am

- [CGI](#) [2]
- [Elizabeth McGovern](#) [3]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [4]
- [Jaume Collet-Serra](#) [5]
- [Liam Neeson](#) [6]
- [Lionsgate](#) [7]
- [Movie Review](#) [8]
- [Non-Stop](#) [9]
- [Patrick Wilson](#) [10]
- [Sam Neill](#) [11]
- [Spike Walters](#) [12]
- [Taken](#) [13]
- [The Commuter](#) [14]
- [Train](#) [15]
- [Vera Farmiga](#) [16]



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Sometimes you’re just in the mood for a good old Liam Neeson ass-kicker... and “The Commuter” fits that bill. It asks, damn near requires, you to leave your brain safely at the station, but it moves too fast that you don’t have much time to think about it. It’s ludicrous, dumb and fun entertainment for January.

Neeson is an ex-cop this time, now selling life insurance to try to put his kid through college. But he’s just lost his job, and after putting away enough liquid courage he boards his usual train home to tell his wife. He’s accosted by a pretty and well dressed woman (Vera Farmiga) who offers him a proposition. Find a passenger on the train, and he’ll get 100 thousand dollars in cash. Otherwise, all bets are off and his wife and son might not live through his commute home. So Neeson once again uses his particular set of skills to fight baddies, and find a mystery passenger, all in the confines of a commuter train.



Liam Neeson in ‘The Commuter’

Photo credit: Lionsgate

Since the “Taken” series turned Neeson into a late blooming badass, his most entertaining films have been made with frequent collaborator

director Jaume Collett-Serra. The two made the entertainingly trashy "Non-Stop" which took place almost entirely on a red eye flight. And Collet-Serra gives his camera a work out in the confined spaces of the commuter train in this outing. There are nice montages that even make train tickets into an object of mystery. And Collet-Serra has a talent for making even hokey CGI aided effects seem enjoyably hokey.

It's worth noting the plot makes little to no sense, but Collet-Serra does things with such entertaining style that I enjoyed it anyway. He's finds ways to make fist fights involving train axles pop and crackle. And if he has to sacrifice believability while asking his six-foot-four actor to hide under a train, then find his way back topside, while all the while the train is in motion... then so be it.

This isn't so much a thriller as an entertaining ass-kicking machine, as Neeson goes up and down the train trying to narrow the possibilities, growling into a cell phone. Even the fiery climax where the train literally jumps the tracks can't diminish the enjoyment – although the sight of Neeson flying from one derailing car, and grabbing another in mid air, is almost too dumb not to talk about.



Vera Farmiga and Liam Neeson in 'The Commuter'

Photo credit: Lionsgate

This is a proud B-movie that is pure popcorn fun. Audiences have seen Neeson's particular set of skills before, but when they are as entertaining as they are here, I didn't seem to mind.

"The Commuter" opens everywhere January 12th. Featuring Liam Neeson, Vera Farmiga, Elizabeth McGovern, Patrick Wilson and Sam Neill. Written by Byron Willinger, Philip de Blasi and Ryan Engle. Directed by Jaume Collet-Serra. Rated "PG-13"



[17]

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- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/taken>
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