

Freaky Villains is Where 'Suicide Squad' Works Best

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on August 3, 2016 - 4:44pm

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Rating: **3.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – DC Entertainment, feeling the heat from Marvel Studios and the tepid response from “Batman v Superman,” comes back stronger with “Suicide Squad,” an overblown yet psychological comic book film about sociopathic villains who somehow have to save the world.

The premise and villains are what makes it savory, the action sequences and problem-to-solve are what make it overwrought. The highlights in the film are anything not having to do with the standard issue comic book plot, and more with spending time with the squad itself. The interpretations of The Joker and Harley Quinn, in addition to the lesser known villains such as Deadshot and Killer Croc, put enough weirdness in the film to keep it interesting in parts. This is definitely not Shakespeare, nor close to the best of what Marvel Studios offers, but it's a decent enough popcorn movie for summertime escape.

Amanda Waller (Viola Davis) is an ambitious politician looking to make her mark in government, and sees an opportunity post the chaos depicted in “Batman v Superman.” She wants to have a plan against “meta-humans” like Superman, in case this type of force goes rogue, and concocts one by proposing the recruitment of a “squad” of super villains.



The Cast Takes a Class Picture in 'Suicide Squad'

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

They include the deeply psychotic Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie), the expert assassin Deadshot (Will Smith), the fiery El Diablo (Jay Hernandez), the bizarre Killer Croc (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje) and the flipped-out Boomerang (Jai Courtney). Together, they are led by Army Special Ops Rick Flag (Joel Kinnaman) and must stop an ancient force known as Enchantress (Cara Delevingne). All the while, The Joker (Jared Leto) monitors the activities.

Already, with the simpler explanations and more direct confrontations, "Suicide Squad" has it over its "Batman v Superman" predecessor. The introduction of the squad was handled crisply and quickly, through the filter of the wild-eyed Amanda Waller, portrayed by Viola Davis as a maniacal power broker. The establishment of Enchantress came with a side dish of agony, and involved Rick Flag. And although the mission kept oddly re-starting along the way, the story lines on the characters snapped the film back when it needed to.

Among the chaos of destruction and gunfire, the main performers rose through the fog to create some conflicts in their characters. Will Smith as Deadshot is at his Will "Smith-iest" as he portrays the assassin as cold-hearted, until confronted with a lost daughter. Margot Robbie is a reminder of the old Ginger Rogers rule (all her dancing was done "backward and in high heels"), because she had to be a crazy-ass villain in what best could be described as fishnets and bikini briefs. She was having fun, and brought the film along for the ride.

Jared Leto joins the cinema ranks of persons portraying "The Joker" – along with Cesar Romero, Jack Nicholson and Heath Ledger – and gives the grand opera villain a nice twisted air, less over-the-top and more creepy. It's always fascinating that The Joker always seems to have enough firepower and goons, because it's fairly elaborate in this outing. Harley Quinn and The J-man are an item, and feed bizarrely off one another in his limited screen time. Where he figures in the next DC universe installment is anybody's guess.



Make 'Em Laugh: The Joker (Jared Leto) in 'Suicide Squad'

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

The scenario and direction was from David Ayer, who may have been more interested in the thought processes of his villains than the action sequences. One of the firefights – there was way too much gun fetish in this film – is a reminder of Ayer's "End of Watch," where a police ambush takes place. There is the same relentless firing of weapons, and empty shells dropping on the pavement – which was casually comic book in "Suicide Squad," and ironically sobering in the other film. The story was also boiler plate, even for a comic book film, and kept shifting to throw in more action.

But mostly this genre is the movie equivalent of riding a roller coaster at an amusement park. It's going to go through all kinds of contortions that don't make sense, in an effort to produce a thrill. When a rogue squad of ne'er do wells is set up for either success or death, here comes the upside down loop.

"Suicide Squad" opens everywhere on August 5th. Featuring Will Smith, Margot Robbie, Jared Leto, Common, Jai Courtney, Jay Hernandez, Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje, Cara Delvingine, Viola Davis and Joel Kinnaman. Written and directed by David Ayer. Rated "PG-13"



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