

“Atomic Blonde”

By Helen Lutz

When something goes wrong in your life, just yell “Plot Twist” and move on. That could easily be the mantra for MI6 agent Lorraine Broughton, aka Charlize Theron, in the new spy action/adventure feature “Atomic Blonde.” James Bond always the suave and debonair type, Lorraine remains icy cold, beautiful and deadly. It’s amazing to see what she can do with a high heel or a key if cornered and provoked.



There’s trouble brewing in the world in 1989. The Berlin wall is about to come down and in the clandestine world it appears that a list has been stolen. It is a very valuable list containing the names of all sorts of undercover operatives and has been hidden inside a wrist watch. As the film opens we watch as a man runs for his life – in his robe and undies no less. Unfortunately he meets a gruesome and untimely end. The Russian KGB catching up to the runner, an undercover MI6 agent, takes a watch from his wrist. Yes sir, it contains the coveted world-wide list of undercover agents. “Plot Twist!” the movie would be over if he just turned it over to the KGB, but...

Lorraine is assigned to locate and retrieve the list. “Atomic Blonde” takes us through her story as she relates it to her supervisor Eric Gray (Toby Jones) and CIA big wig Emmett Kurzfeld (John Goodman). She is less than delighted about the de-briefing and even less happy as she tells the unnecessary problems encountered and lives lost due to their misplaced sense of secrecy.

Undercover in Berlin, Lorraine is immediately exposed and forced to defend herself against deadly KGB operatives who grab her at the airport. Her Berlin inside contact, David Percival (James McAvoy) does manage to help her overcome her captors, but not without a great action scene involving a high heel, smashed up cars and a very blocked tunnel . While Lorraine must traverse the tense Berlin Wall gates, treachery constantly surrounds her. It seems as though her adversaries are always one step ahead. The statement “Trust no one” were wise words given to her before leaving on the assignment which constantly takes on a new meaning.

Theron puts it all on the line from icy baths, to packing/taking a punch, to making the romantic acquaintance of the French operative Delphine Lasalle (Sofia Boutella). Director Taylor Sheridan brings Lorraine to life in various shades of black and white to include her garters and other unmentionables where her wire is conveniently hidden. Without fail, had Lorraine known the trouble she was walking into – she would have “worn something different.” The fight scenes redefine gruesome and at times go on a bit too long. Obviously Sheridan and Theron recognize this as they become humorous the longer they last.

“Atomic Blonde” offers action, adventure and intrigue, but the story gets convoluted and hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys from the good guys from the bad guys. Every time we think we’ve figured something out, the plot twists like a Kansas tornado and we have to start thinking all over again. Just who is the mysterious traitor – code name Satchel? On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Atomic Blonde” ... TWO 1/2 Harts. Lots of action with and without clothing; did I mention that it’s a strong ‘R’ rating?