

# *“The Hitman’s Bodyguard”*

By Helen Lutz

When I first heard the title of this film I thought – What? How ridiculous, why would a hitman ever require the services of a bodyguard? The President needs a bodyguard. Movie stars often have a bodyguard. Many times CEO’s of large corporations may find the need for a bodyguard as well as the meek and mild jeweler carrying a briefcase full of precious gems; but for a hitman, an assassin – really, come on! So why is it that about two hours after the beginning of the screening of Samuel L. Jackson’s and Ryan Reynolds’s new movie “The Hitman’s Bodyguard” did I leave the theater all smiles?



“The Hitman’s Bodyguard” begins with a flashback. Michael Bryce (Reynolds) starts his day in his perfect world with his perfect suit, wearing his perfect tie, drinking his perfect coffee, kissing his perfect girlfriend goodbye and getting into his perfect car. Bryce, a former CIA agent, has cashed in for the big bucks running a Triple A-Rated protection company for corporate clients who feel their lives might be in a bit of danger. Every movement, carefully planned, results in a beautifully choreographed security team providing the highest and most effective protection for his important clients. Progressing like clockwork, his Japanese executive boards his private plane, ready for takeoff, gives Bryce a nod and a wave and has his brains blown all over the cabin by one mysterious rifle shot out of nowhere.

Move forward two years and Michael Bryce finds himself protecting a much lower class of clientele. No more fancy home, car, girlfriend or even coffee ... and we’ll never think of an empty drink bottle in quite the same way again. He has truly hit bottom; mistakes in his profession are not easily forgiven or forgotten.

Meanwhile the World Court at The Hague is trying a monstrous dictator Vladislav Dukhovich (Gary Oldman) for heinous crimes against his people. The man is evil incarnate and very good at not leaving much evidence or witnesses behind. The clock is ticking. The prosecution has but one more witness, the notorious hitman Darius Kincaid (Jackson) currently incarcerated in a London prison. Using their most highly trained officers, Interpol takes on the challenge of transporting Kincaid to The Hague for the trial. Special Agent Amelia Roussel (Elodie Yung) leads the team as they begin their journey. Unfortunately for her, Dukhovich has other ideas and a whole bunch of highly skilled thugs with orders to kill Kincaid. What could possibly go wrong?

For the next eighty minutes or so we watch tremendous shoot outs and car chases. Amelia and Kincaid are able to avoid the first attack reaching a safe house, but what comes next? Who can be trusted? Amelia places a call to an old ‘friend’ asking for help. That ‘friend’ is none other than Michael Bryce and Amelia is none other than his old girlfriend. She needs his help protecting Kincaid and delivering him to The Hague in time to testify in spite of the fact that Bryce and Kincaid are mortal enemies.

“The Hitman’s Bodyguard” provides a fun storyline, nonstop action and humorous banter throughout. We get to a point when we wonder just who is the true good guy. Has this type of movie been made before? – Most definitely. Is it predictable? – Sure is. But the repartee between Jackson and Reynolds is worth the price of admission. When you throw Salma Hayek into the mix as Kincaid’s jailed wife, it’s hard to stop laughing. Yes, the language does get to be rather raunchy, but funny. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats ... I give “The Hitman’s Bodyguard” THREE HARTS. It’s a fun night out for a dinner and movie date.