



FILM REVIEWS

Dusk for a Hitman (Crespuscule por un tueur) (Canada, 2024)



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Saban Films presents a Les Productions Megafun production. Directed by Raymond St-Jean. Produced by Paul Cadieux, Louis Laverdière, and Michel Ouellette. Written by Martin Girard and Raymond St-Jean. Cinematography by Jean-François Lord. Edited by Philippe Ralet.

Stars Éric Bruneau, Benoît Gouin, Rose-Marie Perreault, Sylvain Marcel, Simon Landry-Desy, Jaokim Robillard, Hugues Frenette, Aleander Castonguay, Jean Petitclerc, Martin Tremblay, and Christophe Lavac.

The true story of Canada's most famous hitman comes to life with an excellent performance from Éric Bruneau in this film from director Raymond St-Jean.

Donald Lavoie is the number one hitman for the Dubois Gang, Canada's most notorious gangster outfit. Working for Claude Dubois, Donald has things going for him with wife Francine and daughter Sophie. While his wife is uncomfortable with what her husband is doing, she knows of his loyalty to Claude, having been his father figure for many years. However, one event is getting ready to shake things up.

Assigned to take out a man named Pelletier, Donald and his partner make the hit but there are complications. When the news of the murders hit television, Claude is not happy. Despite Donald offering to hide out and having to shoot his partner for being too loud, Claude has reservations. This leads to Donald eventually learning he is going to be the next target. A confrontation leads to an attempt that makes Donald now getting offered a chance to live a life of redemption.

One can think of this film as a Canadian Goodfellas, as it has a similar premise: a man is welcomed as a gangster, forced to eventually become an informant due to a situation that threatens his life, and end up in the Witness Protection Program. Where Henry Hill did it in New York, the real-life Donald Lavoie was in a similar situation in Canada in the early 1980s. Raymond St-Jean did his research about Lavoie (not with the man himself as since entering the program, lives a quiet life with a new identity to this day) through people who knew him.

Éric Bruneau spent two years learning Donald's mannerisms and has an uncanny resemblance to the man himself. This all leads to an energetic performance from the Canadian-born actor. He brings in the charm when it comes to his relationship with his wife, Francine, played by an emotional Rose-Marie Perreault. When it comes to his relationship with boss/father figure Claude, played by an energetic Benoît Gouin, the loyalty is there, even when Donald is forced to shoot his partner after news of the double murder hits and the partner demands more money. Bruneau deserves an accolade for his role in the film.

Sylvain Marcel is excellent in the role of Roger Burns, a federal agent who becomes the catalyst for Donald to get an "offer he may not be able to refuse" when he learns Claude based on him to be targeted. There is an excellent scene where, based on the actual story of Lavoie, has him hiding out by going down a laundry chute and waiting patiently for Dubois' men to leave. This is the pivotal scene that leads to his life-changing event. The events lead to a 1983 CBC interview with the hitman himself, which is reenacted by Bruneau in a mid-credit scene, which further shows the actor's amazing performance.

Dusk for a Hitman is an amazing portrayal of real-life hitman forced in a life-changing situation. Éric Bruneau gives off an amazing performance in the lead role and deserves an accolade.



The film will be released on Demand and Digital on April 19

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