

# Mortdecai (2014)

Rated PG-13. Running time: 1 hour 47 min.

Our content ratings (0-10): Violence 4; Language 2; Sex/Nudity 2.

Our star rating (1-5): 3.5

*Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools suffers harm.*

*Proverbs 13:20*

If you like British P.D. Wodehouse's whacky novels about the uppercrust but bumbling Bertie Wooster and his far brainier manservant Jeeves, you might like this comedy set in England's version of the 1%. Director David Koepf and scriptwriter Eric Aronson have made an interesting adaptation of Kyril Bonfiglioli's 1973 novel *Don't Point That Thing at Me*, but I suspect this will be considered a minor film in the oeuvre's of stars Johnny Depp and Gwyneth Paltrow who play Lord Charlie Mortdecai and wife Johanna. The latter is the brainier of the two, with Mortdecai playing the eccentric, nonflappable nobleman currently obsessed with his curly mustache.

An art dealer with questionable morals, he is faced with financial ruin because of unpaid back taxes, so he accepts a proposal from British Secret Service officer Alistair Martland (Ewan McGregor) to help trace down a missing Goya painting, stolen after the restorer was shot in the back while working on it. Mortdecai is accompanied, and often saved from calamity, by his too loyal manservant Jock (Paul Bettany), who unlike Jeeves is also expert in martial arts and shooting. He is also being pursued by a Chinese gangster named Fang who wants to chop off a finger or two because Mortdecai cheated him in a deal.

A good part of the humor is the running gag in which Mortdecai accidentally shoots Jock—four times that I can recall. Both master and servant take each wound in stride, as in this case during a hunt for pheasants:

(Mortdecai's gun goes off, hitting Jock. "I Believe I just shot Jock. "

Shooting Party Guest: "An excellent shot sir!"

As he walks away, Mortdecai calls out, "Man Down."

The search for the Goya, on the back of which Herman Goering had written the numbers of secret accounts where millions of pounds of Nazi gold was hidden, takes our heroes to Moscow and Los Angeles, as well as around London. In L.A. Johanna shows up, catching her husband in a compromising position at a billionaire's party. Nothing very meaningful in this film, so don't look for any discussion questions. This is a film just for fun.

No discussion questions for this fun but silly film.