

What a Difference: Snitch & A Good Day to Die Hard (2013)

Snitch

Rated PG-13. Our ratings: V 6-; L -6; S/N -1. Running time: 1 hour 55 min.

*Give ear to my prayer, O God;
do not hide yourself from my supplication.
Attend to me, and answer me;
I am troubled in my complaint.
I am distraught by the noise of the enemy,
because of the clamour of the wicked.
For they bring* trouble upon me,
and in anger they cherish enmity against me.
Psalm 55:1-3*

*So he told them this parable: 'Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost."
Luke 15:3-6*

Because it stars action hero What a Difference: Snitch & A Dwayne Johnson I was surprised Good Day to Die Hard at how good this film turned out to be (well, fairly good). Perhaps because it was "inspired by true events," the heroics are much more believable, the climactic chase scene involving Mexican drug

cartel gangsters and Johnson's character driving an 18-wheel truck. This is as exciting as anything in the Die Hard movies.

Johnson plays John Matthews, an ordinary guy running a truck transport company who springs to the aid of the son he feels guilty of neglecting in his former marriage. When the high schooler is wrongfully accused of drug dealing and threatened with a ten year prison sentence, John makes a deal with the US attorney (Susan Sarandon) to help locate and catch the criminals selling drugs in the area.

The new drug laws not only include a long mandatory prison sentence for even the first offence, but also offer the prisoner a chance to reduce his sentence if he snitches on another dealer. This is what had happened to Jason (Rafi Gavron), the boy foolishly accepting deliverance of the package of illicit pills sent by his supposed best friend. As soon as he removes the bag of pills he sees the flashing red light of the tracking device implanted by the DEA. He tries to run away but the agents banging at his front door chase him down. US Attorney Joanne Keeghan (Susan Sarandon) says she cannot help when John first approaches her, especially since Jason refuses to lie about any of his friends dealing in drugs. Admiring the boy for his integrity, John studies the law and discovers that if he aides in apprehending local drug trackers, this might get his son a reduced sentence. Reluctant at first because she doubts his ability to carry off such a venture, she is finally convinced, reluctantly accepting his offer.

There are no bone-crunching fights, just some suspenseful close call scenes hen he almost browbeats an ex-con employee trying to go straight to hook him up with a local distributor. The wild chase at the end makes this a good action tale, but it is more of a moving father-son tale—perhaps for some a parable similar to the one that Jesus told about the lost

sheep, in that this is a father going to great, and dangerous, lengths for the sake of his son.

A Good Day to Die Hard

Rated PG-13. Our ratings: V 6-; L -6; S/N -1. Running time: 1 hour 50 min.

Repay them according to their work, and according to the evil of their deeds; repay them according to the work of their hands; render them their due reward.

Psalms 28:4

Now we come to the film that is even less believable than *Bullet to the Head*, the umpteenth, or so it seems, addition to the *Die Hard* franchise starring, of course, Bruce Willis as former cop John McClane. The Rotten Tomatoes Tomatometer, designed to show how a film rates with the critics and with audiences, reports that their group of over 50 critics gave it a 16% favorable rating, and the audiences' 82%. Each new film in the *Die Hard* franchise (as well as *Mission Impossible*, etc.) requires the filmmakers to come up with more unbelievable stunts and CGI-aided action than the previous film. This time the heroes and villains are in Moscow where, in three different monster trucks, they smash their way through the crowded streets of Moscow, destroying cars that must add up to at least a week's output of the auto factory lucky enough to have been chosen by the filmmakers.

The plot has Bruce's estranged on-screen son Jack (Jai Courtney), a CIA agent, and a Russian prisoner named Konarov (Sebastian Koch) that Jack has been sent to rescue, eventually winds up in Chernobyl. If you like big orange explosions, you'll appreciate the fiery climax involving a large RV dangling out the back of an attack helicopter and our hero falling a half dozen stories through a factory window—and suffering just a few bruises. And yes, the goons, all armed with assault weapons, can't hit anyone—and they always aim

high, so that our heroes crouching behind a bar are unscathed. (And I didn't even mention the gunner in the helicopter who has some very BIG guns ablazing! (But even he has to obey the laws of the genre.)