

# Captives

A subtle thriller

**THE CLEARING:** Produced and directed by Pieter Jan Brugge. Written by Justin Haythe, based on a story by Brugge and Haythe. Producers, Palmer West, Jonah Smith. Executive producer, Karen Tenkhoff. Cinematography, Denis Lenoir. Production design, Chris Gorak. Editor, Kevin Trent. Costumes, Florence-Isabelle Megginson. Music, Craig Armstrong. Starring Robert Redford, Helen Mirren and Willem Dafoe. With Alessandro Nivola, Matt Craven, Melissa Sagemiller. Fox Searchlight Pictures, 2004. R. 91 minutes.

If you enjoy Hollywood-type abduction thrillers, with wisecracking cops, late night car chases, eerie telephone calls, unrelenting violence and explosive emotional displays, look elsewhere. *The Clearing's* more European sensibilities feature the best performances in years by both Robert Redford and Willem Dafoe, while Helen Mirren reveals the subdued but strong feelings of a complicated woman under unaccustomed stress.

With its measured pacing, the film's effect comes from its characters, each of whom must change, not from genre conventions. Wealthy Pittsburg businessman Wayne Hayes (Redford) is kidnapped on a sun-washed day, scant minutes after leaving his cool wife at home by the pool. At the end of his long driveway, Wayne is addressed by a man on foot, Arnold Mack (Dafoe). Arnold represents himself as a former co-worker, and although Wayne does-

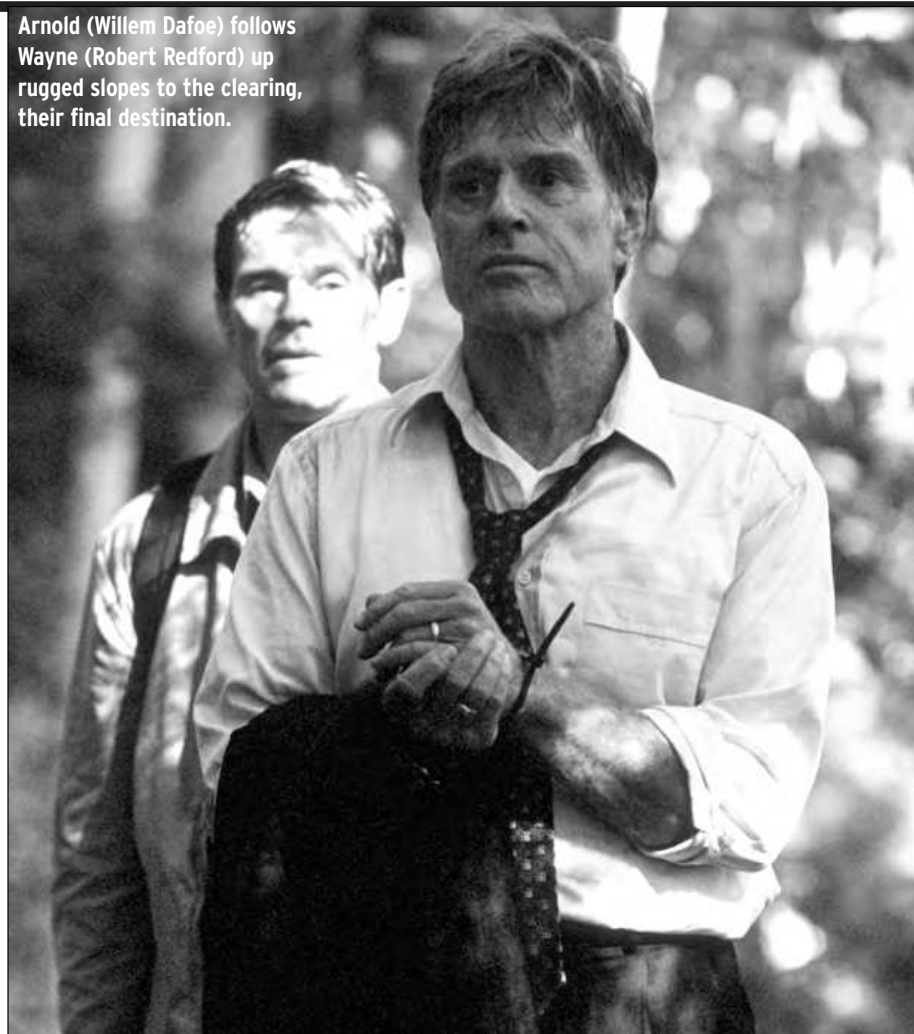
n't exactly remember him, he lets Mack talk to him. Arnold climbs in the car, where he pulls a loaded gun. Meanwhile, Eileen Hayes (Mirren) takes a dip in the pool, goes dress shopping and makes plans for expected guests. When Wayne doesn't come home by dinner, Eileen fears the worst: He's left her for another woman.

The two stories are told in tandem, but the time frame is warped. *The Clearing* works precisely because time is so central to the unfolding drama yet is curiously skewed in the story's telling. Not as angular nor abrupt as the switches between characters and time in Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Twenty-One Grams*, certain asynchronous events baffle the viewer. On later reflection, I liked that addled moment when things didn't add up before I was pulled back into the elegantly fractured narrative again.

I haven't stopped thinking about the depth of connection between the two men, almost as if pure destiny brought them together on this one perilous day, and they played their assigned roles flawlessly, like a many-layered Greek tragedy. A scene that turns physically violent haunts me for its near-perfect psychological orchestration. Nothing else could have come from these two characters.

With the loud clashing of arms from *King Arthur* still ringing in my ears, I welcomed the solitude and absence of cultural intrusion in this film's most potent scenes in the woods. I highly recommend *The*

Arnold (Willem Dafoe) follows Wayne (Robert Redford) up rugged slopes to the clearing, their final destination.



*Clearing* to those among us who relish a minimalist approach to the difficult human situations exposed here. For everyone else,

there are television reality shows. Or soaps. Opens this Friday at the Bijou. See it soon and tell your friends. **EW**

## movie clips

**OPENING OR RETURNING: Archaeology Film Festival:** Showing 19 juried films selected from 55 entries through July 17 at the McDonald Theatre, including *Iraq's Lost Treasure*, *Sastun: My Apprenticeship with a Maya Healer*, and *Kurtal: Snake Spirit* **Online archives.**

**Cinderella Story, A:** Teen romance comedy stars Hilary Duff, Jennifer Coolidge, Chad Michael Murray and Regina King. Mark Rosman directs. PG. Cinema World. Cinema mark.

**Clearing, The:** First-time director Pieter Jan Brugge takes a minimalist approach to the difficult human situation three fallible people find themselves in. Stars Robert Redford and Helen Mirren as a successful couple and Willem Dafoe as the kidnapper who changes their lives. Highly recommended. R. Bijou. **See review this issue.**

**Dead or Alive:** Explicitly violent, Takashi Miike's parody of Japanese gangster movies embraces black humor. NR. Adults only. LateNite Bijou.

**I, Robot:** Alex Proyas (*Dark City*, *The Crow*) directs Will Smith as a police detective investigating a crime thought to be perpetrated by a robot. Also stars Bruce Greenwood, James Cromwell, Chi McBride and Bridget Moynahan. Based on Isaac Asimov's classic sci-fi stories. PG-13. Cinema mark. Cinema World.

**Last Man Standing: Politics Texas Style:** Filmmaker Paul Stekler looks at a pair of lively 2002 Texas elections: the race for governor and a state rep. Bush strategist Karl Rove, former Gov. Ann Richards, Molly Ivins and Clinton appointees Henry Cisneros and Paul Begala shed light on the state's changing political landscape. A 2004 Election Issue Special. On "POV" at 11 pm on 7/20 on OPB, but check listings to be sure.

**Mayor of Sunset Strip:** George Hickenlooper's profile of Rodney Bingenheimer, formerly an LA nightclub owner and influential deejay. As a self-made social icon, B. made friends with celebrities

such as David Bowie, Mick Jagger, Cher, Sonny Bono, Courtney Love, Brian Wilson, Alice Cooper, Neil Young, Joey Ramone, the Monkees, Debbie Harry, Jerry Lee Lewis, the Four Seasons and the Doors. NR. LateNite Bijou. **Thirteen Going On 30:** Jennifer Garner goes to bed 13, wishing she were older. Wakes up 17 years later, and she is. Directed by Gary Winnick, also stars the always excellent Mark Ruffalo, Andy Serkis and Kathy Baker. PG-13. Movies 12. High recommendations. **Online archives.**

**Films open the Friday following EW publication date unless otherwise noted. See archived reviews at [www.eugeneweekly.com](http://www.eugeneweekly.com)**

**CONTINUING: Anchorman:** Subtitled "The Legend of Ron Burgundy," this comedy stars Will Ferrell as an unctuous, untalented newscaster who's a legend only in his own mind. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinema mark.

**Chronicles of Riddick, The:** Riddick (Vin Diesel) ends up on a multicultural planet invaded by a despot planning to subjugate everyone with his non-human warriors, the Necromongers. (Named for a bad rock band?) Also stars Thandie Newton, Alexa Davalos, Colm Feore, Linus Roache and Judi Dench. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Day After Tomorrow, The:** Directed by Roland Emmerich, starring Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal, Emmy Rossum, Sela Ward. A climatologist (Quaid) tries to figure out a way to save the world from abrupt global warming. He must get to his son (Gyllenhaal) in New York, which is being taken over by a new ice age. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Dodgeball:** A True Underdog Story: Can social rejects save their small local gym from gentrification? Only director Rawson Thurber and his stars Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn, Christine Taylor and Rip Torn know for sure. PG-13. Cinema mark.

**Ella Enchanted:** Anne Hathaway is a perfectly obedient girl. She does what she's told, literally. Based on Newberry-winning novel. PG. Movies 12.

**Fahrenheit 9/11:** Winner of the Palme d'Or at Cannes 2004, Michael Moore's nonfiction film is more restrained than his later films and better for it. The film is respectful, moving and informative, as well as opinionated and occasionally heavy handed. Don't miss. Highest recommendations. R. Bijou. Cinema mark. **Online archives.**

**Garfield, The Movie:** The poster promises "frisky business" as Garfield, the smarty pants kitty, makes his film debut. PG. Movies 12.

**Harry Potter & the Prisoner of Azkaban:** Alfonso Cuarón directs the third film based on the series by J.K. Rowling. Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), Ron (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson), now teenagers, return to Hogwarts, where they face their darkest fears. The very best so far. Highly recommended. PG. Cinema mark. Cinema World. **Online archives.**

**Hellboy:** Based on Mike Mignola's Dark Horse Comics series, this supernatural action adventure stars Ron Perlman, John Hut, Selma Blain and Doug Jones and is directed by Guillermo del Toro. Highly entertaining, sweet film. See it. Movies 12. PG-13. **Online archives.**

**Hidalgo:** Based on autobiography of distance rider Frank T. Hopkins, played by Viggo Mortensen, this epic action-adventure takes place during a 3,000 mile survival race across the Arabian Desert in 1890. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Home on the Range:** Disney animated film features voices by Roseanne Barr, Judi Dench, Jennifer Tilly, Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Steve Buscemi, Carole Cook and Governor Ann Richards., while singing comes from k.d. lang, Bonnie Raitt, Tim McGraw and The Beau Sisters. PG. Movies 12.

**Kill Bill Vol. 2:** The Bride (Uma Thurman) pursues her next foes,

Budd (Michael Madsen), Ellie Driver (Daryl Hannah) and finally, Bill (David Carradine). Bloody. Quentin Tarantino's epic shows he makes movies that move and characters who kill, but to what end, besides his own self-gratification? R. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**King Arthur:** Excellent cast includes Clive Owen, Keira Knightley, Stellan Skarsgard, Stephen Dillane, Ray Winstone, Ioan Gruffudd. Directed by Antoine Fuqua and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, this revisionist history, action adventure is not your great-great grandpa's Arthurian tales. PG-13. Cinema mark. Cinema World. **See review this issue.**

**Mean Girls:** Lindsay Lohan plays a high-school student raised by zoologist parents in the African bush, who falls for a popular girl's ex-boyfriend. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Notebook, The:** Nick Cassavetes directs Gena Rowlands and James Garner, Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams in the screen adaptation of Nicholas Sparks's best-selling romantic novel. With Sam Shepard and Joan Allen. Deserves to be seen for its depiction of real first love, with a great performance by

McAdams. Recommended. PG-13. Cinema mark. Cinema World. **Online archives.**

**Scooby Doo 2 Monsters Unleashed:** Some scary action, rude humor and language. PG. Movies 12.

**Shrek 2:** Mike Myers returns as Shrek, Cameron Diaz is his new wife, Princess Fiona, and Eddie Murphy's his sidekick, Donkey. Now the newlyweds face Queen Lillian (Julie Andrews) and King Harold (John Cleese). Fairy godmother (Jennifer Saunders), Prince Charming (Rupert Everett) and the ferocious Puss in Boots (Antonio Banderas). So-so sequel. Cinema mark. **Online archives.**

**Sleepover:** Teen comedy adventure pits two rival groups of girls against each other in an all-night scavenger hunt. PG. Cinema mark.

**Spider Man 2:** Peter Parker aka Spidey (Tobey Maguire) returns as a college student by day who still loves Kirsten Dunst and a superhero when needed against his new nemesis, Otto Octavius (Alfred Molina). Sam Raimi directs. Looks great! PG-13. Cinema World. Cinema mark. **Online archives.**

**Terminal:** Steven Spielberg directs Tom Hanks as a tourist

who has to live at Kennedy airport because his homeland disappeared in a civil war, so his passport is no good. He falls in love with Catherine Zeta-Jones, whose comic talent is wasted in a dumb-dame role, while Hanks only works part-time. Too long and too cute. PG-13. Cinema mark. Cinema World. **Online archives.**

**Two Brothers:** Jean-Jacques Annaud (*The Bear*) directs this adventure story about the power of friendship between twin tiger cubs. Stars Guy Pearce, Jean-Claude Dreyfus and Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu. PG. Movies 12.

**Van Helsing:** Monster killer Van Helsing (Hugh Jackman) teams up with Kate Beckinsale in Transylvania to bring down Count Dracula (Richard Roxburgh). PG-13. Movies 12..

**White Chicks:** Comedy about FBI agents who go undercover as high school debutantes to investigate a kidnapping ring. Stars director Keenen Ivory Wayans, Shawn and Marlon Wayans. PG-13. Cinema mark. Bijou Art Cinemas (686-2458) Cinema World 8 (342-6536) Cinema mark 17 (746-5202) Movies 12 (741-1231)

## video clips

### New Releases on Video

Releases subject to change. Available the Tuesday following date of EW publication, sometimes sooner. See archived movie reviews at [www.eugeneweekly.com](http://www.eugeneweekly.com)

**Human Stain, The:** Based on Philip Roth's widely acclaimed novel by the same name, the film never played locally. The mis-casting and Robert Benton's poor direction were its failures. Coleman Silk (Anthony Hopkins) has successfully passed for white and Jewish for so many years, he seems to have forgotten his African-American birth family. Faunia Farley (Nicole Kidman), an illiterate house cleaner and farmhand is Coleman's unlikely lover. R.

**Port of Shadows:** (France, 1938) Directed by Marcel Carne (*L'Enfants du Paradis*), film stars Jean Gabin, Michel Simon, Michele Morgan, Pierre Brasseur. DVD extras include interviews with Carne, co-writer Jacques Prevert, Gabin and Morgan.

**Stage and Spectacle: Three Films by Jean Renoir:** DVD collection includes *The Golden Coach* (1953), *French Cancan* (1955) and *Elena and Her Men* (1956). Extras include movie intros by Renoir; video intros by Martin Scorsese and Peter Bogdanovich; a BBC documentary on Renoir; a three-part interview with Renoir by Jacques Rivette. From The Criterion Collection.

**Starsky & Hutch:** Ben Stiller is uptight Starsky, while Owen Wilson is laid back Ken "Hutch" Hutchinson in this remake of TV's undercover crime-fighters. With Vince Vaughn, Snoop Dogg, Juliette Lewis. PG-13.

**Next Week: The Devil's Backbone Special Edition, Goodbye Lenin, Hellboy, Pennies from Heaven (1981), Pennies from Heaven (1995), Story of Women and The Whole Ten Yards.**