

# Red Notice makes for a serviceable popcorn movie

BY T.J REID

For the Keizertimes

There once was a young algorithm named Albert who lived in the magical land of Tinseltown. Albert the algorithm had but one dream in his life, a dream that he held close and cherished even when the other algorithms belittled and mocked him: To one day write a movie script based on an EW "Top 10 Hottest Stars in Hollywood" list that he had found in the checkout aisle of his local Rite Aid. The studios Albert approached sneered and snickered at him, until one day his worth was seen at last by a benevolent streaming giant who offered him \$200 million to make his dream come true at last.

This is not the story behind Netflix's *Red Notice*, but it very well could have been.

Ryan Reynolds stars as an art thief guy who wants to steal some golden egg thing. Dwayne Johnson also stars as an FBI man who wants to stop Ryan Reynolds from stealing the golden egg thing. They eventually have to team up against Gal Gadot, who also stars as a different thief who also wants to steal the golden egg thing. Banter and action ensue.

One of the problems is that none of these three actors is particularly well known for their actual acting. Do I like all three of them? Yes. Do they all ooze charisma and charm at obscenely high levels? Also yes. But when the biggest selling point of your movie is "Ryan Reynolds acts like Ryan Reynolds in the direction of Dwayne Johnson who acts like Dwayne Johnson while Gal Gadot looks attractive in a red dress," you might have a problem. At no point does it ever feel like you are



watching actual characters in *Red Notice*, which in turn reminds you that you are watching what is essentially the brainstorming sessions of cynical Netflix executives who, like Albert, only have one goal: to drum up some extra views and subscribers by utilizing elements that have worked well in the past.

Acting isn't everything, of course, and the other parts of *Red Notice* are serviceable enough. The plot really is as dumb

and silly as I described above, but not really any more so than any other dumb and silly action movies that you watch with your brain turned off and your hand in a popcorn bucket (you know the ones... they are written by Albert's friends). The action ranges from decent to pretty cool, if nothing special (the climatic underground chase scene is the clear standout), and the Ryan Reynolds-delivered quips land a good 70% of the time (although the

other 30% might make you cringe with their forced crassness and general immaturity). There are certainly worse buddy/action movies out there, but there are also a good deal of better ones. Life being finite and all, you would probably be better off searching for one of the latter.

Or you can watch *Red Notice* on Netflix and support Albert the algorithm's career. Do it for him. For Albert.

*Red Notice* is now available on Netflix.

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