

## Movie Review:

# A critical approach to 'The November Man'

By Michael Heiskell  
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You know it's a bad sign when in the midst of the climax of your movie, when people are supposed to be watching explosions, car chases, and gun-slinging, they are checking their watches. Unfortunately, "The November Man" leans on every conceivable spy cliché in the books, but fails to bring anything new to its genre.

Based on the novel "There Are No Spies," by Bill Granger, "The November Man" is about Peter Devereaux, played by Pierce Brosnan, a retired C.I.A agent who is called back into service to remove a Russian operative that has vital information that could expose the corruption of the soon to be Russian president, Arkady Federov (Lazar Ristovski). However, when his extraction leads to the death of the operative, Peter is thrown into a world of corruption and betrayal. To top it off, he is being hunted by David Mason (Luke Bracey), a C.I.A agent that he mentored.

To be inspired by past genre films and adapt to their success is understandable. However, The November Man leans too heavily on the past successes of the genre and doesn't attempt to

bring anything new to the genre itself. The script is messy; the story is convoluted. Brosnan and Bracey give it their all, but even actors of their caliber couldn't fix a messy script.

One of the worst things about this movie is Pierce Brosnan's character, Devereaux. Incredibly inconsistent, his actions were wildly sporadic and didn't give the audience a stable sense of character. A good character doesn't have to be predictable, but if they are inconsistent and sporadic that should be established early in the film. The constant level of inconsistency that is found in Devereaux doesn't give the impression of a mysterious wild card character; it gives the impression of a bad script.

The script is as messy as they come. Filled with hopeful one-liners and cheesy quotes, the writing fell completely flat. It was as if they were expecting every other quote to be the next great line on t-shirts and bumper stickers, but none of them stuck whatsoever.

While this certainly isn't the worst spy thriller to hit the theaters, it is one of the least entertaining in recent memory. I would give it a 2 ½ stars out of 5, if only for the performances of the actors trying to save the admittedly sorry script.



## Netflix: What you haven't seen — 'In Bruges'

By Michael Heiskell  
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Pairing high stakes drama with hilarious dark comedy, bolstered by superb acting and gorgeous cinematography, "In Bruges" is a beautifully sad tale of desperation and regret.

The story of two assassins who are sent to Bruges supposedly to relax after a hit went terribly wrong, the movie centers around Colin Farrell's character "Ray." During the hit, Ray accidentally shoots and kills a little boy and as a result is absolutely wrecked with guilt. Unsure of why they were sent to Bruges, Ray and Ken, played by Brendan Gleeson, tentatively await orders of what to do next as they meander through the ancient town. But things change completely when Ken receives an order that he doesn't know if he can actually carry: an order that changes everything.

There is so much that adds to the overall good quality of this film; the breathtaking cinematography, the haunting score, and the acting, which is heartbreaking. Farrell and Gleeson do a wonderful job and they play off of each other very well. Farrell, who is famous for his up and down career with notorious flops such as "Alexander" and "American Outlaws," is seen at his best here as the rude, arrogant, but generally good hearted hit-man, Ray. The cinematography also works especially well, setting the tone of the film with long shadows off of ancient buildings. It provides a sense of things closing around you that builds the suspense as the stakes are raised. The overall setting and the accompaniment overlays so well with the script that it just gives a sense of completeness that isn't found in a lot of films these days.

"In Bruges" is a passionate, heartbreaking, and often hilarious dark comedy. The story and music build slowly but goes off in an exciting and climactic final act that will leave you breathless, making it a definite must-watch.

