

## Tracy Morgan and Bruce Willis co-star in mismatched cops comedy

Written by Kam Williams

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Some of the funniest cop comedies ever made have revolved around a pair of mismatched partners. Such memorable, madcap adventures as *Rush Hour* and *Bad Boys* immediately coming to mind in this regard. But the genre has suffered its share of misfirings, too, and unfortunately the readily-forgettable *Cop Out* falls in that category.

Directed by Kevin Smith, the film stars Bruce Willis and Tracy Morgan as NYPD detectives, with the former playing a wily veteran in contrast to the latter's more mercurial, trash-talking village idiot. We learn that despite seemingly incompatible personas, Jimmy Monroe (Willis) and Paul Hodges (Morgan) have somehow been sharing the same police cruiser for nine years.

Set in Brooklyn, the arc of this uneven offering retraces the trademark, unlikely-buddy blueprint wherein the protagonists are called on the carpet back at the precinct following a badly botched stakeout. In this case, the incident cost an informant his life. And because Paul's flamboyant antics during the operation ended up on Youtube, their hard-boiled boss (Sean Cullen) not only strips them of their badges and guns, but suspends them both without pay as well.

This development is very daunting to Jimmy, who sorely needs his salary to pay for his daughter Ava's (Michelle Trachtenberg) impending \$48,000 wedding. With no cash coming in, the desperate dad decides to sell his most prized possession, an Andy Pafko baseball card from 1952. However, the priceless collector's item is subsequently stolen from him during the robbery of a sports memorabilia store.

Not to worry. His partner Paul has real guns and fake badges ready for an emergency like this. Going rogue, they give chase and eventually arrest a street hustler (Seann William Scott) who, in turn, fingers Poh Boy (Guillermo Diaz), a rabid baseball fan. Still, retrieving Jimmy's pilfered card proves easier said than done, since Poh Boy also happens to be the maniacal patriarch of a Mexican drug cartel.

What ensues is an infantile combination of the sort of crudity, carnage and crass sexual humor we've all come to anticipate from a bottom-feeder like Kevin Smith. Thus, his diehard fans are apt to be satisfied by the gratuitous indulgence in the prurient, the profane and potty humor, while others are likely to be left scratching your head and asking, "Is that it?"

You know you're in trouble when a film's funniest moments come courtesy of a tertiary

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character's knock-knock joke and that echolocation prank from grammar school where you repeat everything somebody else says. Meanwhile, lead actors Willis and Morgan simply fail to exhibit the basic camaraderie critical to conveying that authentic sense of chemistry fundamental to a buddy vehicle. And if they ain't feeling it, it's not fair to expect the audience to either.

Silent Bob strikes out!

### **Fair (1.5 stars)**

Rated R for pervasive profanity, sexual references, violence and brief sexuality.

Running time: 110 Minutes

Distributor: Warner Brothers

To see a trailer for Cop Out, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17jr2D3mzps>