Twitter Thread by Joy Karmaker

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It’s the tried-and-true formula of one last job/heist/assignment. A longtime bad guy leaves the life of crime in pursuit of peace and quiet, but naturally gets dragged back to his old haunts and habits to settle a final score.



But “John Wick” breathes exhilarating life into this tired premise, thanks to some dazzling action choreography, stylish visuals and–most importantly–a vintage anti-hero performance from Keanu Reeves.

Toward the end of the film, a menacing Russian mobster remarks that the veteran hit man John Wick looks very much like the John Wick of old. Keanu Reeves looks very much like the Keanu Reeves of old, as well.

Elegantly handsome and athletically lean, he looks fantastic at 50 and is comfortably, securely back in action-star mode.

Not that he’s been gone that long or deviated that much from his persona but this later stage. Neeson’s recent resurgence in movies like Taken,The Grey and Non-Stop.

After all these years, though, he's still quintessentially Keanu. He radiates a Zen-like calm which makes him simultaneously elusive and irresistible, especially in the face of great mayhem. There's still a boyish quality to his face but it belies the wisdom of his years.



He's smarter than he looks but he's in no great hurry to go out of his way to prove it to you–at least, not on screen. He just … is.

A character like John Wick is right in Reeves' wheelhouse because it allows him to be coolly, almost mythically confident, yet deliver an amusing, deadpan one-liner with detached precision.



This is when traces of the playful characters of his youth–Ted Logan and Johnny Utah–take a moment to surface.But when the time comes–and it comes often in John Wick he can deliver with a graceful yet powerful physicality.

Soon after the death of his wife (Bridget Moynahan)–the woman whose love inspired him to retire from his life as an expert assassin–Wick receives an unwelcome visit to his minimalist, modern mansion in the middle of the night.

Russian bad guys have come to steal his prized 1969 Mustang and they kill his dog in the process.

The latter act is horrifying in itself what’s even worse is that the adorable beagle puppy, Daisy, was a posthumous gift to John from his dying wife, who knew he’d need someone else to love.



New York City of the here and now, but Wick, his fellow assassins and other sundry nefarious sorts occupy their own parallel version of it, with its own peculiar rules which almost seem quaint.

They have their own currency gold coins reminiscent of pirates doubloons, which can be used for goods and services or just as thanks for a favor.

a sort of safe zone where protocol dictates that peace prevails, and where killing is cause for dismissal. The courtliness of it all provides an amusing and welcome contrast to the non-stop carnage.
You can check out any time you'd like, it seems, but you can never leave.



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