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Title
RONIN

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Analyst

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Elements

LOG LINE A group of international mercenaries is brought together by an unknown leader in order to retrieve an attache case worth billions.

COMMENT SUMMARY Decent characters and action sequences, but the plotting is not intriguing enough and nothing is superlative enough to warrant making this movie. A decent variation on an old theme.

SHORT SYNOPSIS A group of international mercenaries are brought together. They are without ties, similar to the feudal Japanese term, "Ronin," for an ex-Samurai warrior whose master has been killed. Calm, ex-CIA trained weapons specialist SAM is a natural leader, but French VINCENT is also, and this is his home country. There is a mutual respect they share--for now. Ugly American LARRY mouths off in a French bar. He's an expert driver with a motor mouth that doesn't know when to quit. When he starts to degrade soccer at a French soccer bar, only the presence of the feared Vincent saves him. The trio meet Eastern European, ex-KGB GREGOR, explosives expert/techie and sociopath SWEDE, whose main asset is his huge size and tiny brain. No one knows anything, only that they have been brought together, but by whom? Enter beautiful ex-IRA DEIRDRE. One notch above them on the food chain, she knows the first step: Vincent chooses Sam to accompany him to meet French FRANCOIS, who double-crosses Vincent. Sam saves Vincent's life and Vincent is indebted. They bring the envelope they acquired to Deirdre; it contains the plans, which they go over. Deirdre and Sam have sex. Gregor and Swede privately plot to doublecross the team. The following day they execute the pickup to perfection: Larry runs the target car off the road and following the shootout Swede severs a hand in order to get an attache case handcuffed to it. Swede shoots Larry but then is himself doublecrossed by Gregor, who kills Swede and escapes with the case. Sam doctors Larry. Gregor kills his DAPPER CONTACT and phones his boss. Sam, Vincent, Deirdre and Larry trace the call and trail him to Aix where he meets EDVARD. Sam gets the drop on Gregor while Deirdre and Vincent get the drop on Edvard and his GUNMEN. Edvard identifies Sam as a Metropole cop but Deirdre's secret partner, hyper SEAMUS REILLY kills Larry at the wheel of the getaway car and wounds Sam. Sam saves Vincent a second time and Vincent kills Edvard. Unable to go the real cops, Sam is brought to Vincent's contact, JEAN PIERRE, who helps patch Sam. Gregor is captured by Deirdre and Seamus but doesn't have the case, which he mailed to himself in Paris. Sam and Vincent pay African American TONY, information broker, to learn where to find Seamus; they head for Paris. Sam and Vincent spy on Seamus, who accompanies Gregor to the Post Office for the case. Sam gets the drop on Deirdre, but can't pull the trigger. She

CHECK ONE:

PREMISE

STORY LINE

STRUCTURE

CHARACTERIZATION

DIALOGUE

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
		X	
		X	
		X	
	X.....X		
	X.....X		

(MORE)

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SYNOPSIS CONTINUED:

escapes, is joined by Seamus and Gregor, who escape from Sam and Vincent after a car crash. Gregor takes the case to his contact, Russian mobster MIKHI, who turns out to be Seamus and Deirdre's partners. Vincent and Sam attack, along with CIA agent JACK (Sam's old friend). Gregor slashes Mikhi. Vincent shoots 4 GUNMEN but is saved a third time by Sam, who himself is saved when Vincent jumps in front of bullet. Deirdre turns on Seamus and kills him, instead of Sam. Vincent kills Jack; Sam shoots the case off Gregor's hand, but the case, which was booby-trapped by Gregor, detonates. Deirdre manages to save what is inside--a priceless disk containing the secret numbers of dozens of numbered accounts. Deirdre, Sam and a recuperated Vincent retire on the billions.

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COMMENTS: This is a slightly better-than-average action piece, aided by slightly better-than-average characters. The plotting slips off somewhat and boils down to a single heist/shootout sequence, followed by a series of chase and escape scenes. The action is slightly better-than-average, as well, making the piece competent in the area where it most needs to be competent. However, nothing approaches the extraordinary level and there is no reason to make this movie. At best it can be seen as a decent variation on an old theme. We've seen these mission movies too many times before: They all begin the same, with a few quick vignettes to capture the individual characterizations of the team. Next, comes the mission itself--which in this case is a simple action sequence, filled with high speed car chase, shootouts, etc. Throw in a few double-crosses and a few more chases following the mission and the plotting is complete. The writer tries to draw out our curiosity by withholding crucial information but after a while we need to know who is who. The answers are left vague but the writer throws up a smokescreen in order to cloud over everything. He patterns the plot with various crosses and double-crosses. The final partnership is between Gregor's boss Mikhi and the Irish (Deirdre and Seamus) but that gets turned around when Deirdre shifts allegiances, having fallen in love with Sam (who is apparently CIA after all, rather than Metropole cop). The various double-crosses are handled well but they are not enough to sustain interest since there is no great surprise in any of them--e.g. THE USUAL SUSPECTS.

SUBMISSION and WRITING: NOT RECOMMENDED

--A.E.