

## Review: Waiting... (2005)

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WAITING... (2005)

by Bill Clark

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RATING (Fresh or Rotten): B- (Fresh)

URL: [http://www.fromthebalcony.com/reviews/2005/05\\_waiting.htm](http://www.fromthebalcony.com/reviews/2005/05_waiting.htm)

QUOTE: "I fear this film may be too true to life for comfort."

I've never worked in a restaurant. The notion of handling food, dealing with rude customers, and catching a glimpse of what goes on behind-the-scenes simply sounds like a living hell to me. I opted to work in two video stores, as one might expect, and while I've dealt with my fair share of disgusted customers, nothing compares to what goes on in *Waiting*. I fear this film may be too true to life for comfort.

Virtually the entire film takes place inside Shenanigan's (a jab at Bennigan's, if you ask me). The staff is very diverse and combines to make for what many would call a hazardous work environment. Monty (Reynolds) is a twenty-something who is perfectly happy going nowhere in life. He enjoys his freewheeling lifestyle of trying to seduce virtually every female on staff, even the minors. Dean (Long) has bigger aspirations and is constantly plagued by the news that one of his old classmates has graduated college and is hitting the big time. Serena (Faris) is that girl on the team who seems to have a tie to every other mail in some way or another, including Monty. Back in the kitchen we have Raddimus (Guzman), who is exactly the kind of person who you don't want touching your food under any circumstances. He abides to the "five second rule" if the food hits the ground. We also have the philosophical Bishop (McBride), Dan the boss (Koechner), Nick (Andy Milonakis), the punk who can't even do his job of bussing tables, and Mitch (John Francis Daley), the new guy who is in for a horrific day.

*Waiting* is about as crude as they come on the surface. The language is graphic, rude, and obscene. In other words, it comes across as fairly

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true to life. Parents nationwide may be in denial about it, but I'm sad to report that this is how many of the youth today talk and act. What *Waiting* does well, in the midst of the obscenities, is accurately play out real-life issues. Dean's quandary with an ex-classmate who is becoming a success out of college resonates well without feeling overplayed. The relationship issues between Monty and Serena, while hilarious, also may ring true for many. On top of that, I can't help but think that the hijinks on display behind the counter have a semblance of truth. You'll think twice about sending that steak back next time. Banish the thoughts!

Writer/Director Rob McKittrick does an admirable job of juggling all the characters and subplots. This film is loaded with dialogue and action, and McKittrick divvies up the time nicely. Whether the film is based on personal experience or exaggerated thoughts (or are they?) is not for me to say, but he is very in tune with today's rebellious youth.

Ryan Reynolds is back in Van Wilder mode where he belongs after the disastrous remake of *The Amityville Horror*. His signature dry humor and "who cares?" mentality is on full display, and it seems familiar in a welcome fashion. It is, however, the supporting cast that brings the film up a few notches. Luis Guzman is flat-out hilarious as Raddimus and David Koechner portrays the most stereotypical store manager there is. Also keep an eye out for comic Dane Cook behind the counter.

*Waiting* is not anything groundbreaking or revelatory, but it may just be what the doctor ordered as we enter the heavy-handed Oscar season. Make no mistake about it: this film is supremely obscene and should please the college crowd as a result. I have a feeling that it will reach cult classic status down the line, and probably reside next to your well-worn copy of *Van Wilder*.

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