



Jennifer Garner's Riley North is a working mom with a loving family. She and her husband are working class but are not struggling with any specific financial issues which is why when he considers being a getaway driver in a robbery attempt, it is a bit of head scratcher. When the cartel hears of his involvement they decide to make an example of him and gun down the entire family. Riley awakens from a coma to find the justice system shielding the murderers from consequence. When they attempt to institutionalize her, she escapes with goal of exacting her own brand of mom justice.

While it is refreshing to have a woman in the lead in this [Taken](#) [1]-esque (directed by the same [Pierre Morel](#) [2]), brutal action drama there isn't much to sink your teeth into. Her motives are clear, but the characterization is paper thin. Scenes that the audience should witness, Riley training to become a combat fighter, learning how to use guns, what her plans are, are spoken of rather than shown.

There are only two truly satisfying scenes featuring those who wronged her. Other characters you think she'll go after are dispensed with rather quickly for new targets that were less directly involved in the murders and were previously unknown to the audience. It seems the film is hoping you'll empathize and sympathize with Riley based on her loss alone and skips investing in her journey to empowerment in favor of head shots.

Garner is putting in the work and it shows. She is believable, likable, looks formidable and will definitely remind fans of her [Alias](#) [3] days. She is quippy, but not annoying. However, nothing about the action stands out. While she does use her environment and perceptions of womanhood to her advantage, these aren't given the room to breathe. Besides, watching as white woman kills a bunch of brown people while also being considered the Angel of Skid Row left a bad taste in my mouth. Anyone have any gum?

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