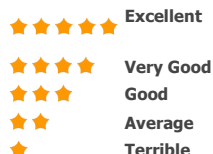




### Star Ratings



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#### Was Knight and Day really that bad?

- ☐ Yes. Tom Cruise sucks.  
☐ I loved it. But now I feel a bit dirty.  
☐ What does the title mean again?

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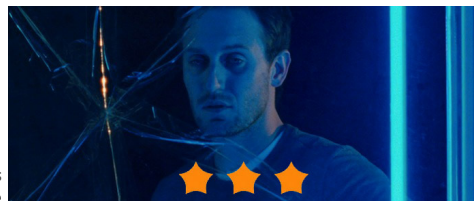
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## The Collector

Written by Ivan Radford

Wednesday, 23 June 2010 08:23

Director: Marcus Dunstan  
 Cast: Josh Stewart, Juan Fernandez, Michael Reilly Burke,  
 Andrea Roth, Karley Scott Collins  
 Certificate: 18  
[Trailer](#)



Having written Saw VI, V and VI, Marcus Dunstan has lost none of his taste for gruesome bloody torture, invariably followed by gruesome bloody death. His directorial debut sees a man trying to escape from a locked house, full of fatal booby traps. It's like Home Alone reinvented as torture porn, but not entirely in a bad way.

Dunstan's track record isn't great, but he really knows how to hammer home horror. His tactic isn't to keep things off screen or use music to subtle effect, it's all about shoving the gore right in your face. Every dripping dribbling oozy last drop. And so the unsubtle experience begins, with an opening credits sequence right out of GCSE film school (big words and shouty music). Then we meet ex-con and builder Arkin (Stewart), and things become rather likeable.

You see, Arkin has a daughter, and a girlfriend. And they're in trouble with some loan sharks. So Arkin has no choice but to break into the house he's working on and steal the family's jewels to save his girlfriend's neck. But enough about that irrelevant backstory, Arkin is mid-heist when he realises that Michael (Reilly Burke) and Victoria (Roth) have fallen prey to the titular crazed sadist (Fernandez) and his sick plans. Will Arkin fight for his life? Sure. But he'll also go all paternal and try and save Michael and Victoria's young daughter, Hannah (Scott Collins), who's also in the building.

So that's OK then. Arkin's a nice guy. And Hannah's an innocent girl who deserves not to die. So far, so morally simple. Then the traps start clapping shut all over the place. Chandeliers carrying knives, carpets covered in superglue, windows laced with guillotines - it's one hell of a fun house the nameless bogeyman has set up undetected in an implausibly short time period.

But once the bodily fluids start flying, you get distracted from the ridiculous plot holes and start focusing more on the cat-and-mouse game that unfolds. As Arkin creeps over creaky floorboards, the camera flying across rooms and through walls, Dunstan's dynamic direction makes for a terrifyingly tense (and mostly silent) middle section. The ending is mildly unsatisfying (the moral structure that's built up is rapidly dismantled), but it comes quick and fast, never letting the pace lag to anything lower than mental.

The result is a nasty, unsettling and frankly depraved piece of cinema - it's like a more adult version of David Fincher's Panic Room. It's disturbing to watch, but The Collector is undeniably riveting stuff. You can't look away even when you want to. And you do want to. Frequently. But if you can get past that squeamish barrier in your head, then you'll find a surprisingly engaging and - yes - enjoyable movie.

### VERDICT

A grizzly 90 minutes of grimly executed gore. The Collector is horrible, but highly gripping.

### Your rating

( 1 Vote )

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