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## **Report Information from ProQuest**

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## **MOVIE REVIEWS; Don't mess with the man; In 'Unknown,' Liam Neeson's character takes on the world to regain his identity. The world is warned.**

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**Resumen:** [...] "Unknown" is best viewed as a kind of "son of 'Taken,'" the 2009 film that starred Neeson as a relentless berserker who terrorized all of France looking for his kidnapped daughter, a picture that surprised everyone by grossing \$145 million despite opening in the traditionally fallow first quarter of the year.

**Texto completo:** "Unknown" is a nifty international thriller of the "what if?" variety. What if you came out of a coma after a car accident to find that no one knew you? Or, even worse, that someone had pilfered your identity, and everyone you thought you knew, especially your wife, insisted that that other person was you. Now an ordinary individual might have trouble in that situation, but "Unknown" doesn't have anyone average as the beleaguered biologist Martin Harris -- it has Liam Neeson, the star of "Taken" and one of the most naturally forceful actors on the contemporary scene.

In fact, "Unknown" is best viewed as a kind of "son of 'Taken,'" the 2009 film that starred Neeson as a relentless berserker who terrorized all of France looking for his kidnapped daughter, a picture that surprised everyone by grossing \$145 million despite opening in the traditionally fallow first quarter of the year.

Once that happened, every Hollywood studio must have scoured the Earth in search of a similar story that would allow Neeson to once again lose his temper and take on the world. With "Unknown," Warner Bros. has done more than win the competition, it's come up with a better film than "Taken" ever was.

Set in Berlin, based on a novel by French author Didier van Cauwelaert, directed by Spanish helmer Jaume Collet-Serra and co-written by Americans Oliver Butcher & Stephen Cornwell, "Unknown" is very much in the tradition of smooth Continental entertainments that expertly deliver on audience expectations.

Doling out tension in prescribed doses as it demands suspension of disbelief, "Unknown" is consistently albeit genteelly thrilling, a pleasantly implausible item that employs the holy trinity of action elements: explosions, hand-to-hand combat and car chases where tires squeal like there is no tomorrow.

What sets "Unknown" apart is the strength of its cast, which besides Neeson includes Diane Kruger, January Jones, Aidan Quinn, Bruno Ganz and Frank Langella. They in turn were likely attracted by the shrewd nature of the intriguing plot twists that eventually fill us in on what's going on.

We first meet Harris on the plane flying him and wife Elizabeth (Jones) to Berlin for a global technology summit where he's scheduled to give an important presentation. It's all so tranquil it might be a commercial for Singapore Airlines, but we know better. This is Liam Neeson, after all, and his characters never have a nice day.

Sure enough, Harris leaves his briefcase behind at the Berlin airport, and the taxi taking him back to recover it gets into a horrendous wreck. Harris comes out of his coma four days later, horrified to learn that no one, not even his wife, has been asking for him. He's warned "there are no rules for severe traumas like this one," but he insists on leaving anyway and his doctor (possibly having seen "Taken") knows better than to stand in his way.

Worse news, however, awaits him at that conference. Not only does his wife deny him like Peter denying Jesus, she presents him to another man (Quinn) who confidently insists he is the real Martin Harris. "What's going on, Liz?" Harris plaintively moans. "It's me, Martin, your husband." No response.

Our guy may be down ("I don't know who this man is, but he has taken everything from me," he wails about the impostor), but he is far from out. Determined as only Neeson's characters can be determined, he prowls Berlin like a lone wolf on a mission to find out what the heck is going on.

Though he likely could have, Harris doesn't do this on his own. He gets help from Gina, the mysterious taxi

driver whose accident started things off (a strong and determined Kruger), as well as from Ernst Jurgen (a delicate Ganz), a quirky, methodical private detective who used to be a key operative in the Stasi, the East German secret police.

But most of all the job gets done because the big galoot simply won't be denied. As "Taken" demonstrated, it may be a given that the road will be twisty and long, but those who bet against this man always live (and sometimes die) to regret it.

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kenneth.turan@latimes.com

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'Unknown'

MPAA rating: PG-13 for some intense sequences of violence and action, and brief sexual content

Running time: 1 hour,

46 minutes

Playing: In general release

Credit: MOVIE CRITIC

#### **Illustration**

Caption: PHOTO: BERLIN STORY: Bruno Ganz, right, plays a methodical private detective who comes to the aid of Liam Neeson's character in "Unknown." Diane Kruger costars.; PHOTOGRAPHER:Warner Bros.

Pictures; PHOTO: ON THE RUN: Harried biologist Martin Harris (Liam Neeson) is aided by a mysterious cab driver (Diane Kruger).; PHOTOGRAPHER:Jay Maidment Warner Bros. Pictures

**Materia:** Motion pictures -- Unknown;

**Personas:** Neeson, Liam

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