The Judge can't deliver

**FILM REVIEW**

**The Judge**

**WRITTEN BY** Nick Schick, Bill Dubuque, David Dobkin

**DIRECTED BY** David Dobkin

**STARRING** Robert Downey Jr., Robert Duvall, Vera Farmiga, Now Playing

When you see the acting talents of Robert Downey Jr. and Robert Duvall in any movie, you expect greatness. Indeed, The Judge presents its viewers with an effort at checking every single box it can to get into the good books of the Academies. It is the father-son relationshipチェック. Smothering of legal drama. Check. Death, love, family, aside and moral gray areas Check, check, check and check. Message? Never to be found.

The Judge is a missed opportunity, a great cast hampered by a script and especially to the actors that are ball bent on throwing every archetype in the filmmaking book at the audience to see if they call it.

Let us begin with the cast, star studed as it is. In essence, Downey is what we expect him to be. Duvall's father figure is not quite convincing. Duvall portrays Downey's ex-school high school sweetheart, by all accounts an independent businesswoman, you guessed it. Falls for Hank straight away after his arrival. The love/hate spot in the archetypal grocery list of characters is Hank's older brother Glen, played by Vincent D'Onofrio. A once-promising baseball player, any hope of making it out of small-town Indiana was dashed when he injured his hand in a car accident piloted by an impaired Hank. Still, his performance is what I'm going to give this film since the rest of the cast, by a cookie cutter script with little room for its players to do their best work.

Poor direction is further apparent in the film itself. An ever-present pastel palette and nonsensical overuse of soft-focus are compounded with the disarming score direction to create a film which doesn't feel like what it's trying to be. I have no idea what inspired the constant use of a backing orchestra that's a bit too somber for this particular drama — perhaps the director's lack of faith in his script or simple, sloppy production. Then again, though it is too much to expect the creative genius behind such think pieces as directing Crashers and A Family Thing. Up to utilize subtlety or, god forbid, silence in any of his movies. The film is a sensory overload which leaves its viewers unsure how to think of it, and the blame for this lies with the directing and production teams.

The entire film is a mass of confused messages and archetypal characters. The hot-shot lawyer, the estranged father, the brothers stuck in the small town, the ex-girlfriend who goes right back to the man who abandoned her — the whole dialogue goes on and on. And when the action isn't pulling from a bank of forced humor and non-intelligent dialogue, they leave the viewer wondering what the film is trying to be. A legal drama wrapped up in a confounding narrative and drizzled with romance is what the audience is presented with, but none of these elements even take centre stage; this hampers the overall presentation and message of the film.

The Judge was a movie that seemed to begin to be enjoyed, and that audiences had been widely anticipating. However, sloppy performances, a script devoid of nice language or originality left viewers disappointed that the skills of such an extraordinary cast were wasted on it.

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**DAT APP**

**BY** Molly Dohill

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**Battle Cats**

**OS** Free

**PLATORM** iPhone, Android

When you mix cats, would -doctor, and a fantasy game play you get a highly addictive game and that's as well as it is challenging.

Battle Cats starts players off in Korea with only a basic cat, facing off against a small army of puppies. As players make their way around the globe, enemies grow more threatening, becoming much larger animals which all possess unique strengths and weaknesses. You slowly push enemies back, working your way towards the enemies you face, which must be destroyed to win.

A great thing about this game is that it's challenging enough that players cannot breeze through levels effortlessly. There will be many occasions where players will have to go back and gain the upgrades necessary to complete a newer level. It requires real strategy and planning, which is what makes it worthwhile. Although better management is sometimes a perfectly viable strategy, often it takes patience and skill to win. This is rewarded with a hefty mount of XP which can be spent on upgrades and new cats. Tank cat, fish cat and lion are just a sample of the up to nine “basic” cats that are available. This game does have a purchase in-game currency, which can be used to buy new varieties of cats but they are completely unnecessary to complete the game.

This cat-centric game has a sense of humor about itself. The simple battle system is highly gratifying, making this game extremely hard to put down.

**Dat App** is a semi-regular feature that highlights the best apps available.

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**CUTTHROAT WEST COAST ALE**

**BREWERY** Tree Brewing Co.

**AVAILABLE AT** Sherborne Liquor Superstore (M. Albert Twal)

Tree Brewing Co. has crafted a fun beer in the Cutthroat West Coast Ale. This WCA combines five different types of hops and five different types of malt to build a friendly India Pale Ale-like experience.

To the nose you get a floral, spicy, almost herbal smell which does very little to the eyes. One wonders if this is everyone's drinking bin, which does very little to what I think if you took a light, summery brew and added an IPA flair. This has a medium body before resembling what your grandfather's stout, or your frat bro's Budweiser—usually lends to an exciting drinking experience.

For a green lipped trout before going out on this town, this can be a solid meal. Kelowna-based Tree Brewing Co. has a winner on their hands. With midterms in full swing and the chilling weather ramping up, it's time to appreciate the little victories before fall winds are in place, snow and sadness. If you like a hoppy drink, but are not quite in the mood for one that will punch you in the face, then the Cutthroat West Coast Ale will treat you like the beautiful flower that you want to be, not the one that is dead in your flower pots.

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**FRAZEY FORD**

**NETWORK RECORDS**

**http://www.frazeyford.com/**

**MAGGIE SCHMIDT**

After four years, Frazey Ford is back with her sophomore album, Indian Ocean. With a new album comes a new sound for Ford. The byproducts of Obidiah (2010) have been replaced by this small group of brass horns. Luckily, Ford’s enchanting voice has not changed, and Indian Ocean is another fantastic display of her talent.

"September Fields" is the album’s first single, which opens Indian Ocean with a light beat that fuses influences from folk, country and pop music. It’s a catchy song, with powerful violin and snaky brass, yet it seems out of place on an American album due largely to the pop-influenced guitar. This is immediately contrasted by "Indian Ocean," which utilizes horns, organ, and an R&B beat to create a soul ballad. "Done" seems to achieve what it set out to do in "September Fields." It’s a saucy and upbeat take on traditional Americana music. It is arguably the best track on the album, with the perfect balance of vocals, horns, and guitar.

Like most albums that channel American roots and soul, there is a handful of songs that are ideal for romantic escapes. "You Got Religion" and "Season of the Sun" keep a funky and soulful beat, making them some of the most sensual songs on Indian Ocean. "Weather Patterns" plays Ford’s voice against a chorus of horns, which creates a complex wall of sound. "Indian Ocean," after features and conclusions, maintains its simplicity without seeming too repetitive.

Frazey Ford is a thought leader who listens, and her music, while sometimes a little dissonant, says something about the world and the music industry. The record is simple but meaningful, and is the perfect addition for anybody looking for gravy bass instruments.