

B-B-B-Benny (sans the Jets) and Joon

by Hollywood Rob

Who would've ever thought that pretty-boy Johnny Depp would be someone who made me look forward to going to the movies? Well, now he is.

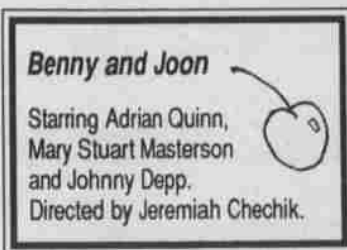
Depp, if you'll recall, was the seemingly terrible acting bad-boy from "21 Jump Street" who spent his last few years on the show bitching that he wanted out. I thought it was just pretentiousness from a guy who's ego had gone on an "I'm out-of-touch-with-reality" bus ride.

After he chose *Edward Scissorhands* as one of his movie projects I thought, "Even if he isn't the greatest

actor in the world, he certainly is surrounding himself with talented people and solid projects."

Now I can actually accept the fact that I like Depp, which made *Benny and Joon* a highly enjoyable trip to the movies. It's no *Edward Scissorhands*—that kind of movie only comes along once in a blue moon—it will, however, suffice for a much needed detour off the road of normality.

Aidan Quinn plays Benny, an auto mechanic who's second job is taking care of



his mentally ill sister Joon (Mary Stuart Masterson). She is the only one he has outside of work and a few friends he plays cards with. Quinn is the main character in the movie and that's really too bad because his is the least interesting character. He's just too damn conservative.

Joon is seemingly normal most of the time. But she has her oddities and she becomes down right ornery when she doesn't get her way. On top of all of this Joon has highly developed artistic skills,

spending much of her time painting. Masterson has the best written part in the movie.

Benny has hired a myriad of housekeepers who's employment ends in the same way each and every time—retirement as they can't deal with Joon's antics. Joon starts fires, disappears at the drop of a hat, and worst of all throws monstrous temper tantrums.

Benny is forced to either stay home or drag Joon along with him so one of his friends eventually has to coax him out of the house to his regular card game. This persuasion comes with the insistence that bringing Joon along is fine.

At the card game, while Benny is out of the room, Joon joins in the card game where the stakes go higher and higher until finally one of the guy's cousins is in the pot. Then Joon loses. An argument ensues between Benny and his friend but it ends up with Benny taking the cousin home.

The cousin is, of course, Depp, an illiterate twenty-

something with a love for silent movies. He impersonates Chaplin and Buster Keaton-style physical comedy at every turn and looks the vagabond type as well. It's too bad they give Depp such a short shrift on screen time. Trimming Quinn's part and expanding on Depp's might have given the movie some much needed background and depth.

Depp also turns out to be the best housekeeper/babysitter Benny has ever had and the family of two and he become fast friends. From here it only takes a short time for the unspeakable to happen. Masterson and Depp, predictably, fall in love.

The syrupy-sweetness of their affair may be a bit too much for viewers who are used to seeing the characters get down in bed, but it's really not the nature of the characters.

And here we are folks at the essential conflict of the piece. Benny can't accept their feelings for each other. He throws Depp out. She goes crazy and that's all I better tell.

Benny and Joon is better than most anything that is out right now. To put it simply, *Benny and Joon* is good, but not great.

Sunday April 25

8:30 p.m.


Outside of Wriight 103




Ratings Scale

8


•The Goods•
Smooth and Satisfying like a 40 of 8 Ball




•Solid Flick•
Cherry, like a '76 Econoline



•Tame•
Have a Day



•Cheesy•
Like Fromage



Monsieur La Trine says, "What a piece of sheet!"

FROM THE LAYOUT STAFFER OF YOUR CHOICE YOU MAY RECEIVE ONE (1) SWIFT KICK IN THE SHORTS



Don't forget the movie poster raffle!