

## ENTERTAINMENT

## Weatherman pens new book about fatherhood

NEW YORK (AP)—Few things seem to cloud Al Roker's sunny mood. But last November the jovial weathercaster was feeling a bit sad.

His daughter Leila was marking another birthday; his little girl was growing up.

Leila had turned 1.

Any viewer watching Roker on NBC's "Today" can tell that the portly prophet loves his job. He's also nuts for his wife of five years, ABC News correspondent Deborah Roberts.

But when it comes to Leila and her big sister, Courtney — well, in Roker's heavens, they hung the moon.

For evidence, read Roker's memoir "Don't Make Me Stop This Car! (Adventures in Fatherhood)," which arrives in stores just in time for Father's Day (more than coincidence?).

It is full of feelings and observations that will ring true for most any parent. Or anybody who had one.

In his book, Roker tells of the nail-biting time he shared with his former wife Alice in adopting Courtney, now 13.

He recounts the not-just-making-whoopee campaign he and Deborah waged to



AL ROKER

become pregnant (sperm-challenged Roker could lay claim to a scant "11 million guys trying to get to the deep end of the pool").

Roker recalls his happy childhood in Queens.

He had five younger siblings, three of them adopted, and a "really good guy" dad (Al, Sr.) who put in back-to-back shifts driving a city bus, yet still made time for each youngster.

At 46, he ponders the difference between being a kid in his day and now, and the difference between his dual roles as dad of a teen and a toddler.

And he marvels at the law of nature dictating that all of us, as parents, turn into our own parents.

He recounts being at the

wheel on a family outing when Courtney and her cousins made a little too much racket from the backseat. He was helpless.

"Those six little words came out involuntarily, the ones that I had heard my father use with us some 30 years ago: DON'T MAKE ME STOP THIS CAR!"

During a recent chat with a reporter, Roker insists he didn't set out to write a book on parenting, or anything. "But I had always kept a journal. And I write the daily journal for my Web site."

From a tiny acorn the mighty oak grows, especially with a publisher's deadline bearing down.

Roker found himself pounding out the pages, while Deborah, sneaking peaks, gave him regular feedback: "You can't put THAT in the book!"

He laughs understandingly.

"I took a lot of stuff out. She was still a little uncomfortable. But I convinced her: I think this book is a good thing. If nothing else, it'll help people."

Among other things, Roker drives home the prin-

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## 'Gone in 60 Seconds' hopefully gone from theaters in 60 seconds

Kam Williams

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Chrome-domed Delroy Lindo's lucky streak is officially over. The peripatetic actor has been popping up in hit after hit, most recently "Romeo Must Die" and "The Cider House Rules."

His chiseled features and an intense glare which melts so magically into a warm smile have made him the choice of many a casting director.

But his talents and those of three Oscar-winners are frittered away on this somnolent remake of a 1974 stunt movie.

There's just no explaining how the skills of Nicholas Cage (won for Leaving Las Vegas), Angelina Jolie (won for Girl, Interrupted) and Robert Duvall (won for Tender Mercies) could be so inappropriately squandered. Also among the suckered in are such noted character actors as Giovanni Ribisi (Boiler Room and Saving Private Ryan), Will Patton (Entrapment and No Way Out) and Scott Caan (Black & White and Varsity Blues).

Therefore, director Dominic Sena (Kalifornia) cannot blame the fiasco on his impressive talent roster.

I only wish somebody would hold Sena down and tickle him until he told us the real reason why he's selling the public such a lemon. It's just vile.

The preposterous storyline reads as follows: retired car thief Memphis Raines (Mr. Cage) has a kid brother Kip (Mr. Ribisi) who owes the Mafia \$10,000.

Memphis shows up with the cash to pay off the debt, but the mob now insists that Memphis steal a specific list of 50 pricey sports cars and vintage automobiles in a day if he wants to save his brother's life.

The list, easily totaling millions of dollars in value, includes Aston Martins, Porsches, Mercedes, Lamborghinis, Ferraris,

Delroy Lindo's talents and those of three Oscar-winners are frittered away on this somnolent remake of a 1974 stunt movie.

Rolls-Royces, Jaguars and even a HumVee.

Instead of immediately informing the authorities of the loansharking, kidnapping and blackmail, Memphis decides instead to take on the challenge. So, he abandons his legit business and agrees to steal about \$5,000,000 in cars to pay off a \$10,000 loan.

He begins assembling a crack team for the improbable mission, coaxing the wizened Otto (Mr. Duvall) out of retirement and seducing the collagen-lipped Sway (Ms. Jolie) into a life of crime.

Also aboard are the stock he-man, the trash-talking brother, the techno-whiz and the crazed maniac.

Detective Castelbeck (Mr. Lindo), on stakeout, senses larceny in the air. And he doesn't have to wait long for confirmation because director Sena doesn't like to waste any time creating tension.

Then, once the grand theft auto starts, the asinine, incessant action never stops, as if the film is intended for eight year-olds with Attention Deficit Disorder. That's when my wife informed me, "I'm not sitting through this."

Car crash after car crash after car crash. Why is Dominick Sena wasting his time directing, when he could be a public address announcer at a Demolition Derby?

You should be grateful I saw this one so you won't even have to consider it (unless you're a subscriber to Road & Track or Car & Driver). Peel-out bad.

Poor (Zero stars). Rated PG-13 for mild profanity, gratuitous car crashes, explosions and violence.

### Cuba Gooding Jr. buys L.A. house

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Cuba Gooding Jr. is showing real estate agents the money.

The Oscar-winning actor purchased a 3,500-square-foot Pacific Palisades home for nearly \$3.5 million and plans to remodel it, the *Los Angeles Times* reported Sunday, citing real estate sources.

The home, built in the early 1940s,

includes a pool, spa and guest house and sits on nearly an acre of property with a view of nearby canyons.

Gooding, 32, won a best supporting actor Academy Award in 1997 for "Jerry Maguire," in which he played a football star whose catch phrase was "Show me the money!"

### Bobby Brown sentenced to 75 days in jail

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—A judge has sentenced Bobby Brown to 75 days in jail for violating his probation for a drunken driving conviction.

"I just want to continue on with my sobriety and get back home to my family," the singer told reporters after Monday's sentence. "It's been really tough."

A prosecutor agreed to drop the most serious charge against Brown, that he failed a drug test by testing positive for cocaine.

Brown agreed to plead guilty to refusing to take a second drug test and failing to return from a trip to Beverly Hills, Calif., on time.



BOBBY BROWN

Brown has been in custody since May 10. He will remain in Broward County Jail until July 8.

Brown spent five days in jail in 1998 and was placed on probation for one year after he was convicted of

drunken driving and causing an accident on Aug. 17, 1996.

A warrant was issued for Brown's arrest last June, after his probation officer said he tested positive for cocaine in a urine test.

Bruce Lyons, Brown's attorney, said Brown and wife Whitney Houston should be able to spend their July 18 wedding anniversary - their eighth — together.

The superstar singer has been absent from her husband's court proceedings, but Lyons said she has visited him since his arrest.

"She wants to help him, not hurt him. If she showed up today it would have been a major zoo," Lyons said.

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