

Sunshine Cleaning

This new release is a conventional comedy-drama wherein the two dead-end, Larkowski sisters hit upon the idea of starting a business cleaning up crime scenes in Albuquerque. The story is thin but the two leads work hard.

Rose (Amy Adams) is a single mom who desires a private school in which to place her troubled son and, thus, needs more dough than her current cleaning job provides. Her sister Norah (Emily Blunt), a semi-punk layabout, needs to do something, anything with her barren life, but can't seem to get on with it. Their dad Joe (Alan Arkin) is no help, being an inept purveyor of get-rich-quick schemes that never pan out. The girls' potential way out comes when Rose has the bright idea to set themselves up as "Sunshine Cleaning," specializing in the clear-up at crime scenes.

Their job, and much of the film's comedy, is supposed to derive from their own version of "doing the nasty," i.e., cleaning up the grim messes that people leave behind. The film also flirts with class envy as Rose measures herself, and her lowly jobs, against her more successful schoolmates.

Sunshine has some nice moments, but also is wanting (e.g., in Arkin's warmed-over old geezer role, stolen out of *Little Miss Sunshine* and others). What works best is the bond between Adams—a buoyant actress in whatever she does—and the morose Blunt, both believable in their roles and quite believable as sisters.

(Rated "R", 102 mins.)

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