

Eye on Entertainment

Movie Review: The American

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The only good things I have to say about *The American* are the appealing scenery and the thoughtful cinematography. The story takes place in the countryside of Italy. It stars George Clooney as an American hiding and working in Italy. That's basically it. I found the film to be un-engaging and uninteresting.

The American is about Jack (George Clooney) an assassin on his last assignment. He claims to be a photographer, but is actually crafting a gun for a fellow assassin Mathilde (Thekla Reuten). While on his assignment, he befriends a priest (Paolo Bonacelli) and falls in love with a prostitute Clara (Violante Placido). That's the basic story; there are several plotlines that the story never follows through with. The priest has a son who is a car mechanic, despite his vows of celibacy. That's about it for that particular storyline. Jack is also

known as Mr. Butterfly. There are several butterfly connections to him: he has a butterfly tattoo, he reads a book about butterflies in one scene, and there is a corny CGI butterfly in the film. It felt like it was supposed to be symbolic, but nothing in particular comes to mind. I think that's the biggest problem with the entire film, it's supposed to be something that it is not.

The American is listed as a drama/thriller and arguably a character study. Those are all three genres that I enjoy, and it missed the mark on all of them. There is nothing suspenseful or thrilling about the film, the buildup tended to be tedious and drawn out. There is little dialogue spoken throughout the course of the film. There are also few action scenes. The lead character Jack is so emotionally distant that the viewer never figures out who he is, other than the fact that he's an American, as it

is stated too many times by different characters throughout the film. Who he works for and why is never revealed. The other major characters are no better. Clara is a "prostitute with a heart of gold" and Mathilde is a conspicuously dressed assassin. Bad acting was not the problem. Given the material, the performances were very good. However, only so much can be done with those characters and the small amount of often cliché dialogue. As a viewer, I never felt an emotional connection to any of the characters. The film goes beyond subtlety and made me feel completely disconnected.

The scenery and the camera work are really the best parts. The story feels better suited to a novel (and it is based on one) and does not make a particularly enjoyable film.

Aries: This is a big week, with both Venus and Jupiter changing signs, which creates a huge energy shift that defuses a lot of pressure and for you, brings a new sense of calm. It's on Thursday that Jupiter, planet of luck retrogrades back out of your sign, putting your Jupiter return on hold until he returns in January. This takes Jupiter out of opposition with your relationship sector, just as Venus herself leaves on Thursday. This is the first time that Jupiter has returned to your sign and then retrograded back out in 60 years, giving you a chance to step back and spend more time at the drawing board, before fully committing to the future.

Taurus: Even though work pressures had already begun to ease, this is the week when they are likely to defuse even further, giving you a chance to create more balance in your life. It's on Thursday that Venus moves out of your work sector and into your relationship sector and that Jupiter moves out of a more reflective part of your chart and back into a much more social area of your chart. If life's stresses have had you focused on your own game and on keeping your head above water, this brings a much lighter mood into place. If life has been all work and no play, that's about to change.

Gemini: There is a major and I mean major turnaround on the professional front this week with Jupiter, planet of luck making his first double dip visit to your career sector in 60 years and moving into alignment with Uranus on his return on Thursday, for the first time since 1334. In what is a stroke of divine timing, on the same day that Jupiter returns to your career sector Venus moves into your work sector, where over the next 4 months she'll bring some of the best work opportunities she's created since 2002. When the tide turns it really turns, yet as dramatic as the professional shift is this week, you're going to find it easier than you realize to maintain a work/life balance and a balance between work and play. That may not have been the case in the past.

Cancer: If life has been all work and no play and you've been chasing your tail for too long, you may finally get a break this week, but not until the end of the week. In the meantime refuse to make life more complicated than it needs to, know that the key to not just keeping your cool but staying on top of your game is balance. It's in Jupiter's last few days in your career sector and Venus' last few days in your home and family sector, before they both shift focus on Thursday that you're finally able to obtain the right work/life balance.

Leo: You're on the brink of a real turnaround on both the work and income fronts, with a New Moon in your income sector on Wednesday likely to give things a push start, though don't expect too much momentum until next week. Venus' move into your home and family sector on Thursday opens the door to some extremely opportune months, with some good things happening on the home front between now and January. This is also a good week for communications, especially on the relationship front. If you're going to take some time off make it earlier in the week.

Virgo: There is a lot of financial urgency in the first half

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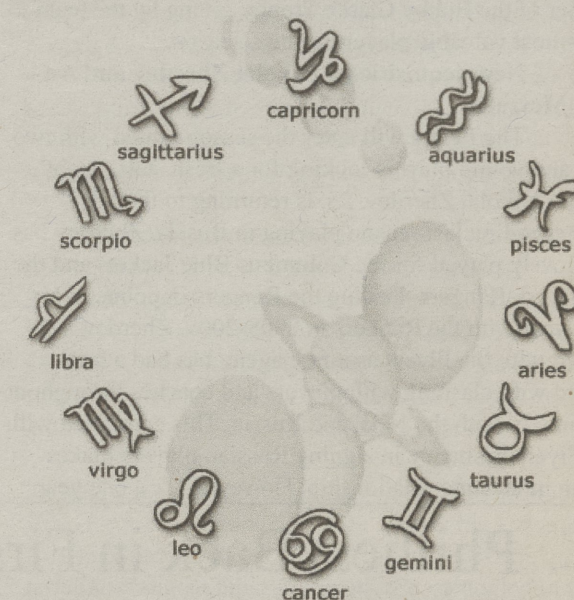
of the week as Jupiter and Venus, the planets of luck and money, get ready to leave your financial and income sectors on Thursday. Over the last few weeks they've been in opposition, creating some financial pressures and challenges, yet within the space of 24 hours they'll move into a position where they're actively supporting each other. It's Venus' move into your communication sector on the same day that Jupiter returns to your relationship sector that changes the focus dramatically, while still allowing you to retain your financial edge, especially on the income front.

Libra: There is going to be a dramatic shift in focus this week that is going to go a long way towards relieving any pressure you've been under, while at the same time opening new doors, especially on the work and income fronts. It's on Thursday that there is a real shift, just as you're likely to be experiencing an internal shifting in attitude as well. It's then that Jupiter, planet of luck moves out of your relationship sector and retrogrades back into your work sector, on the same day that Venus begins her most important visit to your income sector since 2002. With Jupiter no longer in opposition, this is going to see any personal or relationship pressure ease, at the same time that things start falling into place on the job and income fronts.

Scorpio: While the week begins with a very professional focus, with Jupiter in his final days in your work sector and the Moon in your career sector, 2 weeks after the Sun left, there will be a dramatic shift come Thursday. This makes it important to front load your week as far as your professional objectives are concerned, because if you put things off until later in the week you'll have missed the boat. Put as much effort into gaining the right job momentum early in the week, knowing that once Jupiter leaves your work sector on Thursday that this is the momentum that you'll be able to maintain. It's on Thursday that a more playful mood kicks in, as Jupiter returns to your romantic and creative sector and Venus returns to your sign.

Sagittarius: You're reaching a number of different crossroads at the same time, for just as you approach a turnaround on the career and income fronts, old doors start to reopen on the home front and Venus begins the process of winding down your current Venus cycle. While things are still poised on the career and income fronts, with Mercury and Pluto in retrograde motion until early next week and coming to a standstill, a New Moon in your career sector on Wednesday will get the ball rolling. In the past having things moving on the career and home fronts at the same time would have created a problem but not this time around, for you're in a much better position to find the right work/life balance. There are some real second chances on the career, income, home and romantic fronts.

Capricorn: A very overwhelming professional focus



starts to ease back this week, with Venus' departure from your career sector on Thursday. This happens on the same day that Jupiter retrogrades back out of your home and family sector, opposing sign to your career sector, officially bringing to an end a very challenging period. It was the conflict between your home and career sectors that created so much pressure in recent weeks, yet it's managed to give you a much better work/life balance and raise the bar on the professional front. Meanwhile Venus' shift into a social part of your chart on Thursday, may finally give you a chance to let your hair down and focus more on your personal life, which may have suffered of late.

Aquarius: It's a New Moon in your financial sector on Wednesday, just a day before Jupiter returns to your income sector that is finally able to get the ball rolling, even though the real financial momentum won't come until next week. With your financial and income sectors active again this may trigger old financial warning systems, but this time around the financial challenges of the past are nowhere to be seen. It's Venus' return to your career sector on Thursday that gives a very lucky turnaround on the income front the right vehicle at the right time. The theme that is running throughout the week is one of adventure, with a sense of just how many options you have.

Pisces: This is a week when the seemingly impossible happens, with a Jupiter return that by all indicators had come to an end, with the planet of luck having left your sign last June, back on again. It's on Thursday that Jupiter, planet of luck, not only returns to your sign but aligns with Uranus, planet of surprise and synchronicity. Considering that the last time that Jupiter made a double dip visit to your sign was in 1950 and the last time that Jupiter and Uranus aligned in your sign was during the Dark Ages, in 1334, then this really is your lucky week. Life's wheel of fortune rarely swings back the same way twice but this time it has. Bear in mind that no advantage is a good one unless it's used. This opens the door to second chances and this time you can't afford to say 'no'.