

= The Quick and the Dead ( 1995 film ) =

The Quick and the Dead is a 1995 American western film directed by Sam Raimi , and starring Sharon Stone , Gene Hackman , Russell Crowe and Leonardo DiCaprio . The screenplay was written by Simon Moore but includes contributions from Joss Whedon . The story focuses on " The Lady " ( Stone ) , a gunfighter who rides into the frontier town of Redemption , controlled by John Herod ( Hackman ) . The Lady joins a deadly dueling competition in an attempt to exact revenge for her father 's death .

Simon Moore 's script was purchased by Sony Pictures Entertainment in May 1993 , and actress Sharon Stone signed on as both star and co @-@ producer . Development was fast tracked after director Sam Raimi 's hiring , and principal photography began in Old Tucson Studios in Arizona on November 21 , 1993 . The film was distributed by TriStar Pictures and was released in the US on February 10 , 1995 to a dismal box office performance , receiving lukewarm reviews from critics .

This was Russell Crowe 's American film debut . This was Woody Strode 's final performance ( the film is dedicated to him ) , as well as the last theatrical release of Roberts Blossom who died in 2011 . The phrase " the quick and the dead " is from the Book of Common Prayer and its version of the Apostles ' Creed , describing the final judgement . The plot of this film bears no resemblance to that of the 1987 film of the same name , which was based on a western novel by Louis L 'Amour .

= = Plot = =

An unnamed gunslinger referred to as The Lady enters the Old West town of Redemption circa 1881 , where she enters a single elimination gunfighting contest held by Redemption 's ruthless mayor and former outlaw John Herod . While there she meets Cort , a former Herod henchman turned preacher whom Herod has captured and forced to enter the contest . During her first night in town , The Lady saves Cort 's life by shooting the rope Herod 's men had hung Cort from . She also meets " The Kid , " a brash young man who runs the general store and who hopes to impress Herod . The Kid believes Herod is his father and that he can earn his father 's respect by entering and winning the contest .

In the first round of duels The Kid defeats a Swedish quick @-@ draw champion while Herod kills a braggart named Ace Hanlon , who had taken credit for some of Herod 's own accomplishments . The Lady defeats an enemy she had previously left shackled to a wagon . Cort , who has renounced violence and doesn 't have a weapon , is taken to the general store . Herod buys Cort a gun and decrees that Cort can only have one bullet at a time so that he doesn 't shoot his way out of town . Despite telling everyone he wouldn 't fight , Cort winds up drawing his gun and winning his first round fight . During a rainstorm Herod meets with Clay Cantrell , a professional gunfighter hired by the townspeople to kill Herod . Before they duel , Herod changes the rules and proclaims that all contests are now to the death . After killing Cantrell , Herod angrily addresses the townspeople and informs them that he will continue to raise his taxes on them until they understand that he is in charge of everything . During a rainstorm that evening The Lady faces off with and kills Eugene Dred after Dred rapes a young girl at the saloon .

The next day , Cort is slated to fight Spotted Horse , a Native American who claims he cannot be killed by bullets . The Lady , still upset over killing Dred the night before , saddles up and rides out of town before Cort 's fight . Cort narrowly beats Spotted Horse after having to beg for a second bullet . The Lady is found at a nearby cemetery by Doc Wallace , who tells her that he recognizes her and knows why she is there . During flashbacks , we learn that The Lady 's father used to be the Marshal in Redemption and was strung up by Herod 's men . Herod gave the young girl a pistol and three shots to try and break the rope her father was hanging from , but she accidentally kills him instead . Doc Wallace tells her that Herod 's men dug up her father 's body and burned it . He hands The Lady her father 's old badge and begs her to come back and help rid the town of Herod .

The Lady rides back to town and directly challenges Herod , but is sickened to hear that he 's already accepted a fight against The Kid . The Lady and Cort are the only other fighters left and are ordered by Herod to face off . They both proclaim they won 't fight each other , but Herod tells them

he will have them gunned down by his men if they refuse . Herod takes The Kid aside and asks him to withdraw from the contest , telling him his time will come . The Kid refuses and they fight , with The Kid wounding Herod in the neck while Herod delivers a fatal bullet to The Kid . The Lady and Cort then face each other , but both refuse to draw their weapons . Herod begins a countdown from ten , declaring that if neither draws by the time he gets to zero he will have them both killed . Cort begs The Lady to kill him but she still refuses , when Herod reaches one Cort draws and fires . Doc Wallace declares The Lady dead , and Cort angrily storms up to Herod and demands they fight immediately . Herod refuses , telling Cort they will meet at dawn . Later that night , one of Herod 's men named Ratsy chains Cort to a table and beats him severely before smashing Cort 's gunfighting hand and breaking it .

The next morning , Herod sees Cort 's busted hand and orders Ratsy to leave town . He offers to face Cort left @-@ handed , which Cort accepts . Herod kills Ratsy with a rifle and then squares off to fight Cort . At the moment Herod draws , several buildings explode on the street . Herod 's house and the clock tower are also blown up , and through the smoke and flames The Lady walks back into town . Cort tells Herod that from now all on fights in town will be fair , and proceeds to kill Herod 's men who were stationed around town . The Lady and Herod face off , and she finally reveals to him who she is when she throws her father 's old badge at Herod 's feet . They draw on each other , Herod shoots The Lady in the arm and she fires a shot though Herod 's chest . Herod raises his gun to fire again before being dispatched by a bullet to the eye .

The wounded Lady throws her father 's badge to Cort and names him as the new Marshal before saddling up and riding out of the town .

= = Cast = =

Sharon Stone as Ellen ( " The Lady " )  
Gene Hackman as John Herod  
Russell Crowe as Cort  
Leonardo DiCaprio as Fee " The Kid " Herod  
Pat Hingle as Horace  
Kevin Conway as Eugene Dred  
Keith David as Sgt. Clay Cantrell  
Lance Henriksen as Ace Hanlon  
Mark Boone Junior as Scars  
Tobin Bell as Dog Kelly  
Raynor Scheine as Ratsy  
Olivia Burnette as Katie  
Roberts Blossom as Doc Wallace  
Gary Sinise as The Marshal  
Sven @-@ Ole Thorsen as Swede Gutzon  
Scott Spiegel as Gold Teeth Ma  
Woody Strode as Charlie Moonlight  
Jonathon Gill as Spotted Horse  
Lennie Loftin as Flat Nose Foy  
Josef Rainer as Virgil Sparks  
Stacy Linn Ramsower as Young Ellen

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

Writer Simon Moore finished his spec script for The Quick and the Dead in late 1992 , writing it as a homage to the Spaghetti Westerns of Sergio Leone , particularly the Dollars Trilogy starring Clint

Eastwood . The writer decided the lead character should be a female . " When you introduce women into that kind of world , something very interesting happens and you have an interesting dynamic straight away , " Moore commented . The names of the lead villain ( Herod ) and the town ( Redemption ) were intentional allusions to the Bible . Moore considered directing his own script as an independent film and shooting The Quick and the Dead on a \$ 3 ? 4 million budget in either Spain or Italy .

Sony Pictures Entertainment purchased Moore 's script in May 1993 and approached Sharon Stone to star in the lead role in July 1993 . Because Stone also signed on as co @-@ producer , she had approval over the choice of director . Sam Raimi was hired to direct because Stone was impressed with his work on Army of Darkness ( 1992 ) . The actress told the producers that if Raimi did not direct the film , she would not star in it . Although she had mixed emotions on Raimi 's previous work , she believed that the director still had yet to showcase his talents , feeling that The Quick and the Dead would be a perfect opportunity to " stretch the limits of his technical and creative ability . " Moore was also enthusiastic over Raimi 's hiring , based on his previous work with the Evil Dead film series .

When Sony began fast tracking development The Quick and the Dead , the studio commissioned a series of rewrites from Moore . The writer was eventually dismissed and replaced with John Sayles , who , according to Moore , took Sony 's orders of " making more of an American Old West film " . Moore was rehired with filming to begin in three weeks because Sayles ' script was approaching a 2 @.@ 5 hour runtime . When rewriting the shooting script , Moore simply omitted Sayles ' work without Sony noticing . A week before shooting , Sony considered the script good so that Moore described the rewrites " a completely fucking pointless exercise " .

= = = Filming = = =

Russell Crowe originally auditioned for a different role in the film before Sharon Stone asked that the actor try for the lead male role . " When I saw Romper Stomper ( 1992 ) , I thought Russell was not only charismatic , attractive and talented but also fearless , " Stone reasoned . " And I find fearlessness very attractive . I was convinced I wouldn 't scare him . " Raimi found Crowe to be " bold and challenging . He reminds me of what we imagine the American cowboy to have been like . " On working with Raimi , Crowe later described the director as " sort of like the fourth Stooge " .

Sony Pictures was dubious over Stone 's choice of Crowe because he was not a famous actor in the mid @-@ 1990s . To cast Gene Hackman in the role of Herod , TriStar Pictures changed the shooting location from Durango , Mexico to Tucson , Arizona . Sam Rockwell auditioned for The Kid , a role which ended up going to Leonardo DiCaprio . Sony was also dubious over DiCaprio 's casting . As a result , Stone decided to pay for the actor 's salary herself .

Filming was originally set to begin in October 1993 , but was delayed because Crowe was busy on another film in Australia . Principal photography for The Quick and the Dead lasted from November 21 , 1993 to February 27 , 1994 . Locations included Old Tucson Studios in Arizona and Mescal , 40 miles southeast of Tucson . Production was briefly halted at times over weather problems . Thell Reed , who was hired as the gun coach and weapons master , worked with the cast through over three months of training . To age Cort 's Colt 1851 Navy Revolver and the other guns used , Reed experimented with simple measures . " I took them out by my swimming pool and dipped them in chlorine water to let them rust , " he explained . " They looked rusty and old , but were brand new guns . " Such detail , including the nickel plating and ivory handles on Ellen 's Colt Peacemakers , was accurate to the time period .

The town of Redemption was designed by Patrizia von Brandenstein , known for her work on Amadeus ( 1984 ) and The Untouchables ( 1987 ) . Raimi 's first choice as the visual effects supervisor was William Mesa , his collaborator on Darkman ( 1991 ) and Army of Darkness ( 1993 ) . Instead , Sony chose The Computer Film Company to create the VFX sequences . Pick @-@ up scenes took place through November - December 1994 . This included an extended duel between Sharon Stone and Gene Hackman .

Stone had a love scene removed from the final cut of The Quick and the Dead before the film 's

release in the United States . The actress / co @-@ producer thought the scene did not fit in with the picture 's established reality . It was restored for the home cinema releases of the film .

= = = Soundtrack = = =

The original motion picture soundtrack for The Quick and the Dead , was released by the Varèse Sarabande music label on February 14 , 1995 . The score for the film was composed and conducted by Alan Silvestri and mixed by Dennis Sands . Kenneth Karman and Thomas Drescher edited the film 's music .

= = Release = =

= = = Box office = = =

The Quick and the Dead was released in the U.S. on February 10 , 1995 in 2 @,@ 158 theaters , earning \$ 6 @,@ 515 @,@ 861 in its opening weekend . The film eventually grossed \$ 18 @,@ 636 @,@ 537 in revenue and was declared to be a box office bomb . However , writer Simon Moore acknowledged that the film performed modestly in Europe .

The Quick and the Dead 's dismal box office performance can be attributed to competition from Billy Madison , The Brady Bunch Movie , Just Cause and Heavyweights . Director Sam Raimi later blamed himself and his visual style for the film 's failure . " I was very confused after I made that movie . For a number of years I thought , I 'm like a dinosaur . I couldn 't change with the material . " TriStar Pictures also showed The Quick and the Dead as an " out @-@ of @-@ competition " film at the May 1995 Cannes Film Festival . Additionally , Stone was nominated for the Saturn Award for Best Actress , but lost to Angela Bassett in Strange Days . A novelization written by Jack Curtis was published by HarperCollins in September 1995 . The Region 1 DVD release came in September 1998 .

= = = Critical reception = = =

The Quick and the Dead received mixed reviews from film critics . Based on 41 reviews , Rotten Tomatoes gives the film a score of 56 % , with an average rating of 5 @.@ 9 / 10 . Metacritic calculated an average score of 49 / 100 , based on 21 reviews .

Janet Maslin of The New York Times praised Stone 's performance and Raimi 's directing . " Stone 's presence nicely underscores the genre @-@ bending tactics of Raimi , the cult filmmaker now doing his best to reinvent the B movie in a spirit of self @-@ referential glee . " Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times criticized the film for being overtly cliché , but praised Raimi 's direction and Dante Spinotti 's cinematography . Critic and Raimi biographer Bill Warren wrote that the film " is a very conscious ( though not self @-@ conscious ) attempt to recreate some of the themes , style and appeal of Sergio Leone 's majestically operatic Spaghetti Westerns of the 1960s , especially the Man with No Name trilogy that starred Clint Eastwood . It 's brisker , more romantic and somehow more American than Leone 's movies . "

Jonathan Rosenbaum of the Chicago Reader observed that " Raimi tries to do a Sergio Leone , and though The Quick and the Dead is highly enjoyable in spots , it doesn 't come across as very convincing , perhaps because nothing can turn Sharon Stone into Charles Bronson . " Peter Travers of Rolling Stone felt that " The Quick and the Dead plays like a crazed compilation of highlights from famous westerns . Raimi finds the right look but misses the heartbeat . You leave the film dazed instead of dazzled , as if an expert marksman had drawn his gun only to shoot himself in the foot . "