

# NEW YORK **DAILY NEWS**

## MOVIE REVIEWS

### 'Mini' classic with evil twists

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**'Mini's First Time.'** Black comedy about a teenage vixen who cons her stepfather into helping her kill her mother. With Nikki Reed, Alec Baldwin, Carrie-Anne Moss. Writer-director: Nick Guthe. (1:31) R: Strong sexual content, language, drug use and a scene of violence. At AMC 25, Loews Village 7.



**Teen (Nikki Reed) makes a nasty deal with her stepfather (Alec Baldwin).**

'You're a sick little twist,' someone says to the heroine of first-time writer-director Nick Guthe's "Mini's First Time," and audience members - like this rapt reviewer - are challenged not to feel like sick little twists for enjoying the movie.

This is a pitch-black sendup of a classic femme fatale, a teenage version of the husband-killers in "Double Indemnity" and "The Postman Always Rings Twice," without the saving grace of passion.

Mini has black-widow venom for blood and the conniving mind of a master criminal. It's hard to imagine a real person being either this evil or this clever at 17, and it is silly to suggest - as the filmmaker has - that "Mini" is a cautionary tale for would-be abusive parents.

She is strictly a cartoon villain, Cruella De Vil in a miniskirt channeling Lolita's evil twin.

When we first see her, Mini (Nikki Reed from TV's "The O.C.") is giving her high school's valedictorian speech, acknowledging that she is the first C student ever chosen for the honor. Her voice then assumes the role of the narrator as the film explains how it came about.

Hint: Several deaths are involved.

Yes, there is parental neglect. Mini's mother, Diane (Carrie-Anne Moss), a former actress who conceived her on a casting couch, is a cokehead and drunk who openly sleeps around, despite her marriage to handsome and wealthy PR executive Martin (Alec Baldwin).

But Mini is her own person with her own goal, which is to stuff as many "firsts" into her life as possible. The first that starts this story is her moonlighting gig for an escort service, which sends her to a motel-room client who turns out to be ... Martin!

She spots her stepdad before he sees her, and does her job in the dark before confronting him with the shocking news. He gulps hard for a few days, then lets Mini seduce him completely. When she suggests that he help her kill her mom, he balks, but Mini will get her way.

The 18-year-old Reed, who used her own rebellious adolescence as fodder for the script she co-wrote for Catherine Hardwick's "Thirteen," is as convincing as a femme-fatale caricature can be, and Baldwin hasn't been as much fun to watch in years.

Jeff Goldblum brings his deadpan wit to the role of the nosy next-door neighbor who may get in Mini's way, and Luke Wilson is terrific as the detective who doesn't quite buy the suicide theory of her mother's death.

"Mini" has a cleverly devious wrap-around ending, but you have been warned: It's twisted.