

Five Minutes to Live

Five Minutes to Live is a 1961 American neo-noir film^[1] crime film. It was re-titled *Door-to-Door Maniac* for an American International Pictures re-release in 1966. The film stars Johnny Cash and Cay Forrester, who wrote the screenplay and whose husband, Ludlow Flower, produced.^[2]

Five Minutes to Live was one of only two theatrical film roles Cash performed on-screen in his career (*A Gunfight*, ten years later, was the other); he would appear in several made-for-television films and do some voice-over work in film later in his career.

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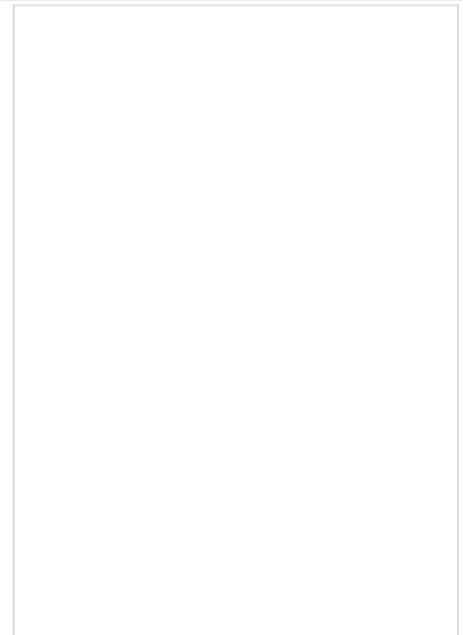
Plot

Fred sits in a dark room, detailing his most recent bank robbery. He talks about how he teamed up with hardened criminal Johnny Cabot to execute his plan.

Cabot is about to take the wife of the bank's vice president hostage. He holds her until he receives a call from Fred, informing him that they have the ransom money. Cabot watches the Wilson house as the husband leaves for work, and their son heads off to school. Posing as a door-to-door guitar instructor, Cabot talks his way into the house, and takes Nancy Wilson hostage.

At the bank, Fred enters vice president Ken Wilson's office, and hands him a check for \$70,000, informing Wilson that he will withdraw the funds to cover the ransom or his wife will die. He

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Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Bill Karn
Produced by	James Ellsworth Ludlow Flower
Screenplay by	Cay Forrester
Story by	Palmer Thompson
Starring	Johnny Cash Donald Woods Cay Forrester Pamela Mason Vic Tayback
Cinematography	Carl E. Guthrie
Edited by	Donald Nosseck
Production company	Somera Productions- Flower Film Productions
Distributed by	Sutton Pictures
Release date	December 7, 1961 (United States)
Running time	80 minutes
Country	United States

tells Wilson to call home for proof that Nancy is being held hostage, then informs him that if he does not call Cabot back in five minutes, Mrs. Wilson will die.

Language	English
Budget	\$300,000
Box office	\$5,655,000

Wilson surprisingly responds that he has been planning to leave his wife anyway, and runs off to Las Vegas with his mistress, Ellen. He tells Fred that he will be doing him a favor by killing his wife. Fred does not believe that Wilson will let his wife die. He is proven correct, as time ticks by, when Wilson finally cracks and agrees to pay the ransom.

Fred calls Cabot, and starts the clock over again. After the five minutes have passed, Fred works on Wilson to hurry. Meanwhile, at the Wilson house, Cabot is enjoying terrorizing his hostage. He begins forcing her to listen to his songs about her impending demise, shooting at her and making sexual advances toward her. Back at the bank, Fred has been taken down by the police, who arrived after someone tripped the silent alarm. As a result, Cabot starts to become nervous, having not received his expected call from Fred. Suddenly, Little Bobby comes in, home for lunch.

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The police arrive outside the house. In a panic, Cabot grabs Bobby and runs for it, running right into police gunfire. Bobby pretends as though he has been shot in order to encourage Cabot to put him down. After apparently being very upset by the accidental shooting of the young boy, Cabot fires back, and is killed by police. Nancy runs outside to find her son, still alive and well. The film ends with Fred finishing his story to the police, then Mr. Wilson driving to Las Vegas, but with his wife, not his mistress.

Cast

- [Johnny Cash](#) as Johnny Cabot
- [Donald Woods](#) as Ken Wilson
- [Cay Forrester](#) as Nancy Wilson
- [Pamela Mason](#) as Ellen Harcourt
- [Vic Tayback](#) as Fred Dorella
- [Ron Howard](#) as Bobby Wilson (credited as Ronnie Howard)
- [Merle Travis](#) as Max
- [Midge Ware](#) as Doris Johnson
- [Norma Varden](#) as Priscilla Auerbach

Reception

Critical

The movie holds a 50% score on [Rotten Tomatoes](#) based on 4 critical reviews, citing a mixed rating. It has since become a [cult classic](#).

Soundtrack

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Written and sung by Johnny Cash

Solo Guitar by Merle Travis

Remake

A proposed remake of the film to be directed by Jan de Bont was announced in 2012.^[3]

See also

- List of films featuring home invasions
- List of films in the public domain in the United States

References

1. Silver, Alain; Ward, Elizabeth; Ursini, James; Porfirio, Robert (2010). *Film Noir: The Encyclopaedia*. Overlook Duckworth (New York). ISBN 978-1-59020-144-2.
2. *Five Minutes To Live* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0054817/>) on IMDb.
3. Jeremy Kay (20 January 2012). "Jan De Bont to remake crime drama Five Minutes To Live" (<http://www.screendaily.com/news/production/jan-de-bont-to-remake-crime-drama-five-minutes-to-live/5036765.article>). *Screen*.

External links

- *Five Minutes To Live* (<https://catalog.afi.com/Catalog/moviedetails/21484>) at the American Film Institute Catalog
- *Five Minutes To Live* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0054817/>) on IMDb
- *Five Minutes To Live* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nbRIZnlobak>) on YouTube
- *Five Minutes To Live* (<https://www.allmovie.com/movie/v17683>) at AllMovie
- *Five Minutes to Live* (https://archive.org/details/Five_Minutes_To_Live.avi) is available for free download at the Internet Archive

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