

Edinburgh Festival Fringe

REVIEW – Wingman ****

As Wingman opens, Richard Marsh is not in a good place. Richard Marsh, writer and cast-member of Wingman, and a Fringe First recipient and BBC Audio Drama award-winner, has filled Pleasance 10 on his return to the Fringe. But Richard Marsh the character isn't doing so well.

Rich's mum is dying, and his jerk dad, Len, left him 20 years ago with nothing except a dread that the son will repeat the sins of the father. Then Rich is told that mum's dying wish is that he and Len scatter her ashes together in the Lake District.

Happily, what transpires is much more than an odd couple road trip. Rich and Len end up negotiating a series of surprising wrong turnings and getting hopelessly lost. And although they don't get very far, by the end of Wingman they've some a long way.

Marsh and Jerome Wright as Len are engaging actors who allow us to warm to Rich and Len even as they reveal their failings and weaknesses. One supposes that preparing for a Fringe run in a play that demands so much of its two-man cast engenders a relationship not unlike that of a dysfunctional family. The sections of the script that are cleverly constructed in verse can distract from the kitchen sink drama of Wingman, but they are used to good comic effect and pay back in spades as the basis of the emotional punch at the end of the show.

Justin Audibert's simple direction moves us with the minimum of fuss from hospital to crematorium to flat to park. Marsh uses his scripting to allow himself to introduce the quirky characters of mum and Brigitte, a sexy Welsh badger of a woman, in a few strokes. As disaster and redemption duel in

the midst of a script leavened by humour that is by turns bawdy, aural, visual and linguistic, the audience are gripped to find out whether Rich and Len can do mum proud, despite themselves.

Find out for yourself at Pleasance 10 at the Pleasance Dome (Venue 23), 2:10pm, Aug 5-11 and 13-25.

Submitted by [Ricky Brown](#)

