

Lies a well-acted thrill ride

BY MARTHA WORBOY, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE JULY 11, 2009

Warning to identity thieves everywhere: in the long run, the lies will catch up with you. Just watch *Lies My Mother Told Me*, a Canadian made-for-TV movie based on the true story of a professional con artist.

It's a *Thelma-and-Louise-meets-To-Die-For* vehicle, featuring even more imbalanced characters. And it's a well-acted thrill ride.

Joely Richardson plays Laren Sims, a single mother in Destin, N. C., who escapes jail time for stealing credit cards by running away with her daughter Haylei (Hayden Panettiere). They steal a car and a few identities to get by and end up in Vegas, supporting themselves with fake cheques and more stolen credit cards.

Laren is basically shameless in every way, but especially when it comes to assuming other people's identities. She's a woman who seduces, schemes and cons, but she remains unequivocally devoted to her daughter. (Although it often seems the mother/daughter roles are reversed, with Panettiere's character displaying a maturity formed by a child on the lam).

Eventually, Laren meets and marries wealthy, unassuming lawyer-rancher, Lucas--played by Canada's Colm Feore--and settles down to raise horses with her daughter. And, she promises Haylei, this will be their new beginning, their fresh start.

But these girls are used to a little more action than the country can provide, and Mom has many times over proven her passion for crime. Will they last forking hay and polishing saddles or will they be drawn back into riskier ventures? What would good ol' Lucas do if he found out about his new wife's scarred past?

Things start closing in on Laren, pushing her closer to her greatest crime. This is like watching a longer, more colourful version of one of those A&E true crime shows. (CTV--8p.m.)

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