R2570 RANSOM (USA, 1996)
(Other titles: Kopfgeld; La rancon)

Credits: director, Ron Howard; writers, Richard Price, Alexander Ignon.
Cast: Mel Gibson, Rene Russo, Gary Sinise, Delroy Lindo.
Summary: Action/thriller set in contemporary New York City. Tom Mullen (Gibson) is a Vietnam veteran fighter pilot who has built a successful airline from scratch but is now under investigation for bribing union official. He lives with his wife (Russo) on Central Park, where they take their young son (Nolte) to a science fair. The boy is kidnapped, a ransom note arrives by anonymous e-mail, and the FBI is called even though, as Mullen observes, “The FBI just spent three months trying to bury us.” The kidnappers are masterminded by a crooked police detective (Sinise), and include his girlfriend (Taylor), who once worked for the Mullens and knows the family’s routine. Other members include a computer whiz and a couple of lowlife thugs. The FBI kidnapping expert (Lindo) wants Gibson to pay the ransom. He tries to, but an FBI helicopter interrupts the ransom drop, and Gibson becomes convinced (by the look in a gang member’s eyes) that the kidnappers have no plans to return the child alive. That’s when he devises his daring plan, which horrifies his wife and angers the FBI, to use the money as a reward for information instead of a ransom.

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Black, Jill. “Ransom” Interview 26/11 (Nov 1996), p. 64+
Brennan, Judy. “$35 million paid for ‘Ransom’s’ weekend” Los Angeles times (Nov 11, 1996), Calendar, p. F1+
Clark, Mike. “Gary Sinise siezies the show” USA today (Nov 8, 1996), p. D1+
Nichols, Peter M. “Bugs and Michael work the fast break; Ransom” New York times (Nov 17, 1996), sec. 2, p. 29+.
Schuelke, Claudia. “Kopfgeld” EPD Film 14 (Jan 1997), p. 36.
Stedman, Rus (see under Stackpole, John)
Turan, Kenneth. “A brave heart or a bad idea?” Los Angeles times (Nov 8, 1996), Calendar, p. F1+ [Reprinted in Film review annual 1997]
Uricchio, Marylynn. “Unhappy days; Ron Howard fuels paranoia with the gripping ‘Ransom’” Pittsburgh post-gazette (Nov 8, 1996), p. 5.
Vigoda, Arlene. “‘Ransom’ pays off big” USA today (Nov 12, 1996), p. 1D.
Wilmington, Michael. [Ransom] Chicago tribune (Nov 8, 1996), Friday, p. A.
Wrathall, John. “Ransom” Sight & sound 7 (Feb 1997), p. 54-5. [Reprinted in Film review annual 1997]