

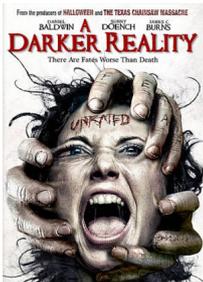
“A DARKER REALITY” (DVD Review)

Written by Mister Smith

Wednesday, 25 January 2012 10:16



The reality is that we've seen this all before: Killer's monologues that take a shot at being philosophical. The far-too-pretty criminal forensic profiler new to the case. The gruff, seasoned cop who hates the idea of having to work alongside anyone, though it may help save the victims. The convicted murderer who helps the detective on the case by offering clues in self-indulgent rants. The clichés are all here in A DARKER REALITY, now on DVD from Phase 4 Films.



The plot revolves around Agent Alex Belasco's (James C. Burns) struggle with the elusive "Ghost" (Daniel Baldwin), a by-the-numbers menace who captures girls, tortures them then kills the captives once they've lost their entertainment value. With the body count showing no signs of slowing down, Agent Belasco has to swallow his pride and partner up with Dr. Jesse Mecalfe (Sunny Doench), who has become a pseudoc celebrity due to her success overseeing forensic evidence. Having come up short, our heroes take any help they can get. Dr. Mecalfe pursues possible clues from the only survivor of the Ghost's antics, while Belasco continues to catch up with an ol' child-molesting buddy of his who seems to have an on-line relationship with the Ghost, despite being locked up.

The movie doesn't reinvent the serial-killer/cop genre, nor does it try to. Instead, it comes off as a love letter to such films as THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS and COPYCAT. The biggest

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difference is that instead of focusing the detective’s struggle, director Chris Kazmier and writer Sxv’leithan Essex (!) decided to take us on a tour of the murderer’s dark world. A little more than half of the movie’s running time is spent watching our villain torment his captives, be it mentally or physically, or having the girls recollect the horrible moments of their time spent with the Ghost and his mentally handicapped brother Newt.

Looking past the budget restrictions, the movie also suffers from lazy writing and directing. It’s always hard to care for unlikable characters, and 90 minutes of creepy ambient sound is not the key to creating a terrifying atmosphere. Despite the creative flaws and stereotypes, the movie does have some things going for it: Certain moments are harsh and genuinely get under your skin, plus there are surprisingly fun performances by Heather Howe, Jonathan Oldham (as the Lecter-esque villain Quail), and Baldwin, turning it up and leaving it all out there as the Ghost. Much like the movie with original thrills, the disc’s special features are almost nonexistent, consisting solely of the trailer and some dull deleted scenes (deservingly so). While A DARKER REALITY isn’t a terrible movie by any means, one can’t help thinking 20 minutes in that they’d have a better time watching one of the films that inspired it.

MOVIE: 🤯🤯🤯🤯

DVD PACKAGE: 🤯🤯🤯🤯