

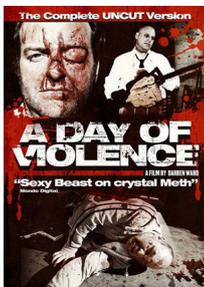
“A DAY OF VIOLENCE” (DVD Review)

Written by Chris Alexander
Sunday, 08 August 2010 10:06



Sex and violence. Why do we culturally gravitate toward entertainments that exploit these two facets of the human id? If I could properly explain that, then the mysteries of the human condition would be no more, and FANGORIA might be out of business. It's just how we're wired, that primal voyeuristic need to channel aggression and lust through entertainment...and writer/director Darren Ward knows this. For sex and violence are the chief reasons why Ward's new film A DAY OF VIOLENCE (now out on British DVD) exists.

The film is a wallow in balls-out (literally) British bloodshed that sports enough nudity to fill ten Shannon Tweed flicks and enough violence to make even the toughest tummy turn. It follows the exploitative exploits of a studly gangster named Mitchell who steals \$100,000 from the wrong lowlifes and runs for the hills, resulting in the carnage-filled day (well, actually, it's more like a year and change) that the meat-and-potatoes title promises.



The dramatic problem with the picture is that because the film is narrated by a very dead Mitchell, we know how the story ends, so the rest is just suffering through his—and many other characters'—seemingly endless acts of brutality. Ward has obviously thrilled to Guy Ritchie's early work, and the film has the same flip tone and skittery editing that marks those much-imitated works, though lead actor Nicky Katt ain't much of an actor; watching him chew the scenery in an attempt to hit all the Ritchie-gangster notes is woeful. Plus, seeing him naked during the opening softcore sex scene is the ultimate in silly, unpleasant gratuitousness.

But the entire film is gratuitous; that's the point. It's as much a modern crime-caper-style wank as it is '70s-esque grindhouse gore buffet (hell, even Italian horror whipping boy Giovanni Lombardo Radice a.k.a. John Morghen shows up to the party) and man alive, is it super, ultra, mad-crazy violent. The FX are fantastic, and so much fluid is spilled that I had to take a shower

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afterwards. Every time a performance starts to grate, or a line of dialogue makes you cringe, something sharp tears into something soft and things get hyper-red.

On its chosen level, A DAY OF VIOLENCE (which comes with a making-of featurette on its Brit disc) is a rousing, sickening success. Anyone needing more meat on their movie bones will be left holding the bloody bag.



{comments on}