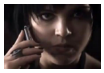

Most horror flicks about the Internet—FEARDOTCOM, iMURDERS, etc.—warrant a click of the “Ignore” button. Hollywood’s newest take on the digitally demonic, KILL KATIE MALONE, starring Dean Cain of LOIS & CLARK infamy, can definitely be marked as straight-to-DVD spam.

The movie (out on disc from Phase 4 Films) tells the story of close-knit college friends Ginger (Masiela Lusha), Jim (Stephen Colletti) and Dixie (Jonathan “Lil J” McDaniel), who pool their money to bid for a ghost on “YouBay.” They win and are sent a mysterious black box by the previous owner (Cain), who’s all too eager to get rid of the thing. Once they open it, of course, strange things start happening, and soon the students’ “enemies”—teachers, jealous boyfriends, annoying roommates—are killed off one by one in increasingly cheesy, poorly CG’d fashion by the ghost of Katie Malone. When they try to get rid of her, the spirit (surprise, surprise) sets her sights on them.

Turns out, Katie was a little girl who was sold into slavery and murdered; all she ever wanted was a clan of her own, so when her new “family” rejects her—the point that they’re a family is driven into the ground by Jim, who constantly refers to the trio as such—relations quickly turn from Casper to Krueger. Not to worry, though: the other bidder (a Goth chick, naturally) offers a black-mascaraed-eye-rolling solution: sell the ghost again on-line.

If any of this sounds ridiculous in the reading, it plays that way on screen as well. KILL KATIE MALONE is well-acted, but the script is plodding and dull (you know a film’s in trouble when the son of the Hulkster himself, Nick Hogan, plays the most entertaining character). More unforgiveable is the lack of bloodletting, especially when more than a few scenes, particularly one involving a paper cutter, have so much potential. Director Carlos Ramos Jr. cuts away right before anything happens, leading one to wonder what merited the movie’s R rating when there isn’t any gore or nudity (guess it was the foul language). In that case, why not just go for a PG-13 rating (the kiss of death for Fango readers) and call it a day?

The disc is bare-bones, including the trailer only. With iPhones, eBay and domain-name horror films already in the can, is some Hollywood producer just one click away from a criminally possessed Roku slasher? From the looks of what KILL KATIE MALONE is selling, no one’s gonna be bidding anytime soon.