American Assassin Review

* After his fiancée is killed by a group of Islamic terrorists on their beach vacation, Mitch Rapp throws himself into the world of counter-terrorism.
* Starring Dylan O’Brien, Michael Keaton, Sanaa Lathan.

If you’re the kind of guy that enjoys zoning out and watching your friends little brother play Counter-strike, or Metal Gear, pretending he’s a next level badass because he can manage to locate the X button, then boy do I have a movie for you!

I can’t really explain the beats on this one, and I’ll bet neither can the writers. It took 5 separate screenwriters to Frankenstein this one together out of, I’m guessing, old spec scripts that Steven Seagal turned down and Gerard Butler was too busy to do. All you really need to know here is: A dude gets shafted by a group of generic terrorists and less than a year later, through sheer rage, he’s this country’s best shot at taking down the next terrorist threat. The rest of the details are pretty much just a series of bland zigs and zags on the paint by numbers path to the obvious conclusion.

I knew I was screwed the first time the term “weapons grade plutonium” came up. And, I’ll bet, so did the guy two rows in front of me. I can’t speak for the dude in the second row, though. that son of a bitch walked out leaving us high and dry after his snacks ran out. I guess the sentiment “no man left behind” doesn’t extend to the brotherhood of the audience.

For a movie about infiltrating and “eliminating” Muslim anti-American groups, I must say, I was extremely relieved and grateful when I discovered the main antagonist was an American white terrorist. I spent the first act of this film shamelessly trying to figure out how I was going to cover my own ass while traversing that eggshell walk of a topic. So, my compliments to writer #4(?) for coming up with that get-out-of-jail-free card. Another high point for me was Michael Keaton who played the stars tough as nails, ex-SEAL mentor. Though god only knows how Keaton managed to fenagle this role away from Kevin Costner. He damn well knows these parts are guaranteed to Mr. Costner this decade.

This movie is like a pizza Lunchable. It wasn’t awful, but only because it managed to stack the same old pre-packaged, sectioned off ingredients together in basically the right order. Consume this one, if you must. But don’t expect any real sustenance or nutritional value.

PERSCRIPTION:

For better movies about killing for revenge: *The Professional, Kill Bill, John Wick, Lucky Number Slevin, Old Boy, The Crow, Braveheart*

For better movies about killing bad guys for the government: *The Jackal, Shooter, Wanted, True Lies, Jason Bourne, Casino Royale, Mission Impossible, Inglorious Basterds*