



Lethal Force (2001) - If ever there were a case of having to have a bad to appreciate the good, "Lethal Force" is it. And honestly, if everything bad were as entertaining as this, the film world wouldn't be in as retched a state as it's been in the last few years.

Taking only the worst elements of everything ranging from 70s blaxploitation flicks – Rudy Ray Moore's infamous *Dolemite* and *The Avenging Disco Godfather* come to mind -- to John Woo-style overdramatic interludes, where actors gaze longingly into each other's eyes over cheesy Hong Kong slow jams, "Lethal Force" is a raucously funny over-the-top confirmation of the stereotypes plaguing bad B-movie grade action films.



Shot -- as director/producer Alvin Ecarma describes it -- "guerilla style" in the gritty streets of D.C., "Lethal Force" has the unmistakable look of a very low budget production, yet still manages to remain entertaining. Suffering from some laughably bad dialogue ("You should have died when he killed you!"), stiff acting and about as generic a plotline as one can find, Ecarma somehow manages to make due with what he's got. From digitally inserting semi-convincing gunfire and not-so-convincing explosions to using the same three masked extras to represent dozens of bad guy cronies, Ecarma pulls out every low budget trick in the book. B-movie auteur Roger Corman would be proud.

Even if you're not a big fan of the B-movie genre "Lethal Force" is still enticing in much the same way as the great *Kentucky Fried Movie* skit "A Fistful of Yen" was. Borrowing from the tried and true formula that mass-produced hundreds of painfully forgettable action flicks of the 70s and 80s, there is a crippled, wheelchair bound bad guy, a kidnapped son, a resident badass hitman, and a friend's betrayal. But thankfully, there are also Swahili-speaking Minnesotites, jerry-curl dripping bad guys and an S&M scene involving a pretty hot asian chick. The film is laced with hilariously bad one-liners ("You're like a broken pencil, POINTLESS."), wild action scenes and a ganked-straight-from-John Woo flashback sequence involving a burning one hundred dollar bill lighting a cigarette played over said Hong Kong slow-jam.

Let's put it this way, every college kid should have a "Lethal Force" in their film library. After showing the film to my friends, we couldn't stop talking about the film — yes, we still find ourselves repeating those cheesy one-liners. Is "Lethal Force" a bad film? Yes. But more importantly, is that a good thing? Hell Yea.

For more on the film and how you can bring it to your town, drop filmmaker Alvin Ecarma a line at the official "Lethal Force" website, www.lethalforcethemovie.com.

--Stephen Wong