

Looper Movie Review

{This is a test essay for a movie database system that I never got around to making... and actually, haven't thought about making for some time now.}

Looper is a good movie. The only problem is that it sucks. I know it sounds like a contradiction but it's really not. Overall, *Looper* is a good movie. Plot wise, it sucks. This in a nutshell is what is wrong with most rating systems. They look at the movie as a whole. (For *Looper*, I'd give it a 4 out of 5). But to really understand *Looper* (or any movie), it really needs to be deconstructed. So, let's deconstruct it.

Leading Man: Bruce Willis. In truth, he's probably a supporting actor in *Looper*; but you know what, I consider him the star, so in my book (or database, as the case may be), he gets the leading man nod. And he doesn't suck in this, he doesn't do anything wrong. But mostly what he does is shoot a gun, which he does quite adequately, but that's about it. As a role, it's a nothing, a paycheck. He doesn't phone it in, but no one is ever going to say this was his best work. So out of 5 (all of these scales are out of 5), I'd give him a 3, the role just doesn't deserve more.

Leading Lady: Who Knows? I don't. Nor do I care to look it up. So, I'm probably being generous calling it a 2.

Supporting Man: I think I might recognize this guy, but I don't know his name. He does a good job, considering the limitations of the material. And the story is really about him. So, why not? I mean, if I'm going to dis the ladies, I might as well make it up by giving him (whoever he is) a 4.

Supporting Lady: Once again, who knows? Who cares? Nothing to complain about. But then again, nothing to fantasize about, which means, a solid 2.

Sex Scenes: No. None. Nada. In fact, our lead males show their sensitive side by NOT having a sex scene. One snuggled with his wife, the other paid a hooker for her friendship. That's a 1 folks.

Titillation (and Bar Scenes): I'll probably have to come up with a better name for this in the long run, but some of the action takes place in a strip joint, it's where our hero likes to hang out (not Bruce, the other hero); and also, where the mafia gang he belongs to operates out of. So, there's plenty of potential there. Unfortunately, someone forgot to tell the film crew why guys frequent sex clubs. (Hint: it's not to get drunk.) This gets a 1. There are tits, there is a strip club, but it is perfunctory.

Mayhem (death and destruction): This is pretty good, it's totally meaningless (it's random, arbitrary, and basically stupid -- it happens because it happens, deal with it). But that said, plenty of guys get shot point blank in the chest with shotguns. So many in fact, it's almost a montage of mayhem -- and pretty grim, at that. But when it comes time to kill the six year old kid, the shot echoes off screen. Quite frankly, I would have liked to see the little puked take it in the face, down and dirty, like a man. Seriously, the movie is so brutal that not shooting the kid in the face is almost gratuitously lame. So basically, they had their chance and blew it. It would be a solid 5, but I have to dock them a point for offing the kid off screen, and that leaves us with a 4.

Costuming (Design, Ambience): The future looks like a lot like a back lot in Hollywood to me. Actually, what it looks like is an industrial area that's empty. Extras cost money. So in this budget saving future, there are blessed few crowd scenes or extras. And the lack shows. I noticed it. I mean, seriously, *Looper* features professional Loopers (that is their job title), and the non-Bruce guy wears a tie. See, it's like a loop around his neck. It's symbolic. It's deep. Sent shivers down my spine. So much so, it pains me, just pains me to give the movie a 1 for costuming and such.

Dialogue (Yippie-Ki-Yay, anyone?): No. Or at least, it flashed right on by without slowing down or me noticing if it was there. Nothing witty. Nothing remarkable. (I'm stretching to remark on it this much.) It just was not part of the film. So, it's a solid 1.

Editing/Cinematography: *Looper* is a solid, big budget (so I assume), Hollywood production. But nothing stands out in the way of cinematography for the good or bad. And that is, like (exactly like), a textbook example of what a 3 means to me.

Plot (story, script): I fancy myself a writer. This is one of the most important parts of a movie to me. So, when I say *Looper* sucks, I'm mostly talking about the plot. And the plot of *Looper* sucks. It's not thought out. It's not consistent. It's not clever or thought provoking. It could have been. The ideas are there, sort of, if you look for them, but they're not presented well. Oddly, the whole thing might have made a lot more sense (to me) if instead of a time machine, we were dealing with a machine that launched folks into alternate universes. And some of those alternate universes are interesting and thought provoking, but the fact that I want to change a Time Machine into an Dimension Door sort of proves (to me once again) that as a whole *Looper* just doesn't make that much sense, which is basically a crime, considering the big appeal for this type of movie is for the audience to try and figure out what's going on. But the counter argument is to say that you've figured out the puzzle and I'm either too lazy or stupid to figure it out myself and that's why it makes no sense to me. Or maybe (just maybe), to solve this particular puzzle a whole lot of glue and masking tape is required, because the pieces just don't fit. The plot gets a 2. And I'm being generous.

Overall: Amazingly, I'm going to give it a 4. Yeah, sure it doesn't work as a whole, but some of the parts are fun. I watched it from beginning to end without hitting the fast-forward once (in some ways, that alone makes this movie a rarity). And it got under my skin enough to want to vent some of my feeling of, I don't know, dissatisfaction. When folks

like me decide to become writers or look at the world around them and say, 'I can do that.' A movie like *Looper* is usually what they have in mind. So, hey. If you liked it, thought it was all that, well, that just means there's hope for me yet. I've got plenty of *Schlock* like this ready to go. And if this is the market, I think I might just be able to lower my standards enough to hit the mark.

{So, that's the long version. If I ever get my movie database up and running (so I can rant and rave about these things ever more efficiently), I plan to design it so that something like the following would constitute the full review.}

In *Looper* they claim time travel will be invented in the non-too-distant future, but what really happens is that the plot jumps from one alternate reality to another without much rhyme or reason. It's a fun enough ride. But so laden with holes, in ten years, no one will remember this movie was ever made. (4)

Leading Man: Bruce Willis is an *amazing* shot! Seriously, so good, they don't even have to show how he killed that last guy. Truly, amazing!
(3)

Leading Lady: Who? What? Where? When? (2)

Supporting Man: Going to have to learn his name someday, but not today. (4)

Supporting Lady: Strippers with a heart of gold? Not really my type.
(2)

Sex Scenes: There is so much death in the world. Can't we just cuddle?
(1)

Titillation (and Bar Scenes): I've never been so uninterested in sex workers in all my life. (1)

Mayhem (death and destruction): Multiple assassinations at point blank range, but the camera looks away when the time comes for the kid to get whacked. (4)

Costuming (Design, Ambience): The future looks surprisingly like an abandoned light industrial area that's been rented for the day. (1)

Dialogue (Yippie-Ki-Yay, anyone?): Nothing remarkable. (1)

Editing/Cinematography: the services of professionals were utilized. (3)

Plot (story, script): Time travel doesn't work this way. Fiction, however, does. (2)

Overall: Good enough, I had hope till the end. Bad enough, I should have known better. (4)

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