

Righteous Kill: A DVD Review

by Alex Anas

Righteous Kill provided what is undoubtedly a historical moment for the film industry. This movie marks the first time in which Robert De Niro and Al Pacino, two actors who have had some of the greatest influence on the film community, are on screen together with major dramatic scenes. Though they have starred in the same movies before, they had little or no interaction (*Godfather: Part II*, *Heat*). This pairing performs brilliantly, deeply satisfying the legions of fans the two have acquired over their hugely successful careers.



Righteous Kill centers on two veteran police officers, Tom “Turk” Cowan (Robert De Niro) and David “Rooster” Fisk (Al Pacino), both deeply disturbed by the fact that a child killer whom they helped arrest was acquitted on all charges. At the same time, they are trying to track down a serial killer vigilante who leaves little poems at the scene of every murder.

The movie is an adventure. There are a lot of “wise-guy” jokes that aren’t forced and work exceptionally well, which is largely due to the fact that De Niro and Pacino have synergistic chemistry. But De Niro and Pacino aren’t the only good actors in this film. Donnie Wahlberg is excellent as a suspicious cop who suspects Turk. And Curtis “50 Cent” Jackson does a very good job portraying the Cocaine Dealer/Club Owner, Spider.

The movie is written very well. It is full of suspense. Adding to the suspense and intrigue is a video of Turk confessing to the crimes which is intertwined throughout the movie.

The real gem of this movie--though-- is seeing De Niro and Pacino on screen together. They are what makes this movie original. They both excel at playing troubled cops, which is something they no doubt draw from their past films. This is a De Niro/Pacino film in every sense. The viewer can only hope that the pair meet again-- sooner rather than later.

GRADING- Three different areas are graded--acting, directing, screenplay—ending with a final, overall rating.

1-3 horrible, should never have been made.

4-5 bad but some good qualities

6-7 pretty good, entertaining

8-9 exceptional

10 fantastic, amazing film

Acting Pacino and De Niro both are excellent and their chemistry makes for a legendary pair. “50 cent” isn’t bad playing the drug dealer “Spider.” It is the acting which stands out as the most exciting feature of this movie. SCORE- 8.5

Directing The directing is done in a way that, while not exceptionally original, gets the job done. It is suspenseful when it’s supposed to be and provides excitement and adds a greater depth to the movie. Intertwining the Confession video with the movie was a ingenious which adds the essential mystery needed in all Cop dramas. SCORE -7.5

Screenplay The highlight of the screenplay is the dialogue which provides numerous opportunities for Pacino and De Niro to flex their acting muscles. Other than that it’s pretty average, but nonetheless well written for it allows Pacino and De Niro to show their chemistry which is a main highlight of the movie. SCORE- 7

Overall While the movie is mostly propelled by the excellent acting, both the Directing and the Screenplay add greater depth and enhance the film. It’s good for anyone who likes a character-driven cop drama. And there is a fair bit of action sprinkled in, in all the right places to. SCORE-7

Rated R

for violence, pervasive language, some sexuality and brief drug use