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Thankskilling (2009)


MVD Entertainment Group
DVD Released: 11/22/2011

All Ratings out of 

Movie: 

Video:  1/2

Audio:  1/2

Extras: 

Review by Mike Long, Posted on 11/11/2011

I'm not going to lie to you, I've reviewed some wacky movies over the years. Sometimes when I write the synopses for these movies, I feel like a fool and I'm convinced that someone will accuse me of making the whole thing up. Often the line between creativity and insanity is crossed in movies, and I always seem to be the one who writes about these movies. Well, everything that I thought I knew about crazy movies went out the window with **Thankskilling**, a movie which is too wacky for its own good.

As **Thankskilling** opens, we meet five college students, Johnny (Lance Predmore), Kristen (Lindsey Anderson), Ali (Natasha Cordova), Billy (Aaron Ringhiser-Carlson), and Darren (Ryan E. Francis), who are going home for Thanksgiving break. Meanwhile, Oscar's (General Bastard) hunting dog pees on a very small totem pole, and this awakens an evil turkey. The turkey (who is called "Turkie" on the DVD box) kills the dog and then skulks off. Meanwhile, Johnny's jeep breaks down and the group decides to camp out for the night and Kristen is attacked by the turkey, but she escapes. The group then makes their way home, not knowing that the turkey is following them. Once they realize that a killer turkey really is after them, Darren tries to find a

way to stop the homicidal fowl.

Despite the fact that it was pre-dated by Bob Clark's [Black Christmas](#), John Carpenter's [Halloween](#) not only ignited the slasher movie craze, but it created a slew of imitators who focused on specific dates on the calendar. Along with [Friday the 13th](#) we got [My Bloody Valentine](#), [New Year's Evil](#), [Graduation Day](#), [April Fool's Day](#), and a variety of Christmas movies. However, no one ever tackled a Thanksgiving horror movie, save for a fake trailer in [Grindhouse](#). **Thankskilling** looks to fill that void, not with a psychopathic killer, but with a vengeful turkey. And instead of a straight-ahead horror movie, we get something very different.

College students Jordan Downey and Kevin Stewart made **Thankskilling** between their junior and senior years, and the movie certainly looks and feels like a student project. (I'm not sure if this was made for a class or not.) The locations are all clearly people's houses (and someone with a country flair). The acting is often very awkward and at times, it sounds as if the actors are making up their dialogue. The turkey puppet actually isn't bad for a low-budget movie...but it's still pretty bad. It doesn't move very much, save for the hand working its mouth.

These issues aside, **Thankskilling** attempts to get by on weird aplomb. The central joke here is that the turkey is not only homicidal, but he is very "fowl-mouthed" and curses constantly. Some of his lines are soft of funny, but most are too corny for their own good. The movie is at its funniest, when it get really weird. One of the turkey's murders result in what is a reference to either **Texas Chainsaw Massacre** or **The Silence of the Lambs**. This scene doesn't make any logical sense, but it's funny. The other big laugh/jaw-dropping moment comes when one character sings a ballad to another. So, obviously, Downey and Stewart put some work into this movie. However, **Thankskilling**'s problem is that it doesn't go far enough. In many ways, the movie is too tame given the material. Yes, there is some gore here and the turkey loves his profanity, but a movie like this should truly go for broke. It's as if the movie is torn between being a true comedy and a gore parody and thus, it fails to be either.

If your a fan of the kind of goofy, non-sensical movies which Troma loves to crank out, then you'll probably find something to like about **Thankskilling**. I laughed a few times, but I kept waiting for the movie to truly go off the rails, but it never did. This movie walks right up to the envelope, but it never pushes it, and afterwards, I didn't crave any leftovers.

Thankskilling may feature the first turkey rape scene ever seen in a movie, but I can't be completely sure about that, on Blu-ray Disc courtesy of MVD Entertainment Group. The movie has been letterboxed at 1.78:1 and the transfer has been enhanced for 16 x 9 TVs. The movie was shot on HD video equipment and it looks pretty good. The image is sharp and clear, showing basically no grain and no defects from the source material. The colors look good and natural. The image is a bit dark in some of the nighttime scenes, as if there isn't enough light. The level of detail is good, actually too good at times, as it shows how inanimate the turkey is. The DVD carries a Dolby 2.0 audio track which provides clear dialogue and sound effects. For a low-budget movie like this, we get a pretty good mix here, as the stereo and surround sound effects aren't abundant, but they sound very good at times. They are detailed and show good separation, and the music sounds fine.

The **Thankskilling** DVD contains only a few extras. We begin with an AUDIO COMMENTARY from Co-Writer/Director Jordan Downey and Co-Writer Kevin Stewart. The 6-minute BLOOPER REEL doesn't contain as many puppet flubs as one would have expected...although there are a few. "Fan-Made Art" (1 minute) is a gallery of **Thankskilling** inspired pictures (and cakes) made by fans of the movie. "Fan-Made Song" is a song done by a band called The Lurking Terror, which sounds like The Misfits meets Nerf Herder.

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