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Case Number 24463: Small Claims Court



### A Day of Violence

[MVD Visual](#) // 2010 // 94 Minutes // Not Rated  
Reviewed by Appellate Judge Tom Becker // September 7th, 2012

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Scales of Justice

Judgment: 60

Perp Profile

- Studio: [MVD Visual](#)
- Video Formats:**
- 1.85:1 Anamorphic
- Audio Formats:**
- Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo (English)
- Subtitles:**
- None
- Running Time:** 94 Minutes  
**Release Year:** 2010  
**MPAA Rating:** Not Rated
- Genres:**
- [Action](#)
  - [Crime](#)
  - [Exploitation](#)
  - [Independent](#)
  - [Thriller](#)

All Rise...

Appellate Judge Tom Becker became violent after a day without brownies.

The Charge

Redemption comes at a price.

The Case

I've read that Darren Ward, the director of **A Day of Violence**, counts the Eurocrime thrillers of the '70s as his influences. His production company, in fact, is called Giallo Films. **A Day of Violence** is certainly as violent as anything that hit the grindhouse circuit 30-some years ago, and thanks to some pretty well-rendered effects, about 10 times as gruesome. But beyond the copious and craven gore, is it any good?

Set in England, we get the story of Mitchell (Nick Rendell), a low-level debt collector. When he tries to hit up scuzzy Hopper (Giovanni Lombardo Radice) for some money owed, he finds that the low life has socked away \$163,100,000. Mitchell pockets the windfall and kills Hopper, and then tells his low-level boss that he found Hopper dead but couldn't find any money.

Later that day, Mitchell's friend Smithy (Steve Humphries) comes by to announce that Mitchell has been hired as an enforcer by Boswell (Victor D. Thorn), a higher-level hoodlum. They meet with Boswell, but the good times are cut short when Boswell's goons tie Smithy up and torture and kill him—it seems Smithy's been skimming, and Boswell doesn't like that at all.

After Smithy's prolonged and gruesome demise, Boswell sends Mitchell, along with co-goan Chisel (Christopher Fosh, [The Wicker Tree](#)), on an assignment: to collect \$163,100,000 from Hopper! That's right, Mitchell wasn't ripping off a low-level guy, he was ripping off a high-level guy who's now his boss.

Will Mitchell be able to keep his secret—and the dirty lucre—or will Boswell and his band of merry sadists figure things out and turn our boy into pet food?

Well, you shouldn't be surprised to discover that the answer is bad news for Mitchell; the film opens with him on a slab and narrating from beyond the grave, and the DVD box art features a picture of our non-hero strung up and bloodied.

Unfortunately, "strung up and bloodied" is a pretty apt descriptor for the film. Outside of some stomach-churning violence, there's not a whole lot that's fresh or interesting here. The whole ripping-off-the-boss business is a staple of the crime genre, and what distinguishes it a bit here is that Mitchell isn't actually working for that boss when he does the ripping off; however, that's cleared up quickly and clumsily straight away. There's minimal tension concerning how he'll be discovered, a situation that is also dealt with clumsily (though the set up for his downfall is cleverer than the way Ward gives us the actual discovery). There's some business at the end that offers up an explanation as to why Mitchell is so adamant about keeping the money, and I suppose that this is there to give the film some emotional resonance, but since it involves characters we really don't know, it just doesn't work.

What we mainly take away from all this is the absolutely horrifying violence. The Eurocrime films of the '70s were noted for their violence, but for the most part, those scenes were quick and brutal, often featuring an elaborate chase and lots of gunplay. The violence here is certainly brutal, but it's anything but quick. Ward gives us long, drawn-out torture sequences that are, frankly, nauseating. Watching a man being castrated with garden shears, a woman having her teeth slowly knocked out with a screwdriver, or someone having his face beaten to a pulp might be the sort of things that would give the film some buzz, but these are ugly, unpleasant scenes. They don't contain the silly, visceral thrills of the '70s-era gangster—or even giallo—films; they're just hard to watch and a little depressing.

Distinguishing Marks

- Deleted/Extended Scenes
- Featurettes
- Interview

Accomplices

- [IMDb](#)
- [Giallo Films](#)



character is just a lot of lumbago from one unpleasant scene to the next before reaching its overreachingly ironic conclusion. al, the film lacks style; like its central

In a huge nod to the old Eurotrash films, Ward has cast Giovanni Lombardo Radice as a weirdo/victim. You saw him mutilated in [Cannibal Ferox](#)! Drilled in [City of the Living Dead](#)! Eviscerated in [House on the Edge of the Park](#)! Now, an older but decidedly not wiser Radice gets his throat cut in graphic style in the opening minutes of **A Day of Violence**! While Radice's screen time might be minimal, his presence is clearly appreciated. He is all over the supplements; in fact, he gets more time in the supplemental material than he does in the movie. These supplements include an interview with Radice; a "making of" that features extensive footage of Radice; a few seconds of Radice having a cast made for his exit scene; and deleted and extended scenes.

The Verdict

I was hoping **A Day of Violence** would rival my current favorite low-budget British crime thriller, [Ten Dead Men](#). Unfortunately, Ward's ode to gore doesn't compare to that terrific indie. Unmemorable except for the extensive gore is an ultimately unsatisfying experience.

Guilty.

Give us your feedback!

Did we give **A Day of Violence** a fair trial? [yes](#) / [no](#)

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