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Articles

puppets that kill

Having taken a look at the first season of Puppets That Kill, I think I can pinpoint the problem.

Oh, I know, that's not the most positive way to start, and, in all fairness, this isn't going to be a bash review or anything, but I do feel more could have been done.

The core premise is simple, take normally cute, cuddly things (a dummy [OK, true, dummies are kinda scary], a teddy bear, a disgustingly cute stuffed doll and a stuffed dog) and make them do uncharacteristic things. Like smoke, curse, have sex, etc. It's a nifty idea and makes for some good chuckles along the way.

Up the ante with a human character for them to interact with who's pretty funny in his own right, and you've got a concept.

Unfortunately, Puppets That Kill never moves past the conceptual level. It runs with the idea that if the idea is funny, then the movie - in this case, TV show - to follow will be as well. But a puppet needs to be more than merely potty mouthed to be funny. There should be clever, snappy writing, or something.

The something could be to take the humor so far over the edge it shocks a laugh out of you, which really seems the direction this was taking before it had a flat and discovered no spare in the trunk.

Oh, to be sure, there is some edgy - and funny, so no one thinks I've got nothing nice to say - stuff to be enjoyed here, but it never really pushes the envelope. In fact, none of it would be funny at all if it wasn't for the fact that it's puppets doing it.

Which brings me back to my point. I know I'm starting to sound like Roger Ebert here (though I think he's a great critic - a lot of the time, anyway) but just the mere concept, the mere snicker-inducing juxtaposition of cute puppet-antisocial behavior, is not enough to carry the show.

Fortunately, the human foil and his charming despite themselves puppet companions are fun to watch. I just wish this could have gone after the belly laughs it had the potential to reap.

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