

BUSTA'S MOVIE REVIEW

Did 'Bad Boys for Life' leave us wanting 4?

BY BUSTA BROWN

A bus full of passengers is driving toward a blue a Porsche. "Bus! Bus! Bus!" screamed the passenger. My two sons and I are about to witness a head-on collision, barely at arm's length. My heart is pumping as fast as the Porsche is moving, which has to be well over 30 miles over the speed limit, down an extremely busy city street in Miami, Florida. The driver of the Porsche barely misses the bus and, unfazed, quickly opens the door and hits a fire hydrant. He is startled, yet unconcerned about the damaged door on the slick Porsche. Two men walk up to a warehouse and then the driver kicks down the door. Looking through the window, you see him taunting and interrogating a very tall and extremely large male inside the warehouse.

That's when the non-stop, sitting-on-the-edge-of-your-seat action begins.

Will Smith and Martin Lawrence reprise their roles as detectives Mike Lowery and Marcus Burnett in "Bad Boys for Life." The film hit theaters by storm on Jan. 18 and the streets have been talking ever since. Smith and Lawrence bring their A-game to the action-packed thriller that debuted at number 1. And as of this past weekend, it's holding strong at number 5, grossing nearly \$200 million in the U.S. alone. As my mother, Deborah Jean Brown, would say, "That's



big money right there." In this action-packed film, there are all the bells and whistles of guns, knives slinging, martial arts, fast cars, helicopter and car explosions, and even some witchcraft. We'll get into that later.

Will Smith (Mike Lowery) is still up to his play-

boy antics, well dressed and seemingly bitter. Moviegoers find out why near the end. Martin Lawrence (Marcus Burnett) is a bit more laid back, but he still brings the big laughs. One of my favorite scenes is when Marcus tells Mike he wants out of the fast life as a detective, "I'm done.

I'm retiring." "Here we go again," Mike replies. Marcus gives his partner of 17 years a look of frustration and then replies, "Do you want your legacy to be muscle shirts and body counts? I'm retiring." Mike gets upset, "What happened to bad boys for life?"

I loved that scene for multiple reasons. I'm at that family man point in my life, so I truly enjoyed Lawrence's family man flow. I could also relate to his busy lifestyle, yet he made time for his grandchild, and loved that he was afraid to make decisions without his wife's approval. I think that's most married men over 50. The other reason I loved that scene: after Mike asked Marcus, "What happened to bad boys for life?" the audience was on edge. We knew that some serious drama between the two bad boys was about to get crazier than reality TV. We were wrong - it got even crazier than I imagined, and I have a wild imagination.

Burnett did retire, and he became every male retiree that I know. His journey was hilarious. Lots of failed home improvement projects, sitting around in his robe and boxer underwear, watching TV and driving his wife crazy. It was nice to see veteran actress Theresa Randle back as Mrs. Burnett, and she looked great. After Marcus went into retirement, he also promised God that he was done with violence. Then this conversation happens: "In these streets, I never trusted anybody but you. I'm asking, man, bad boys," said Mike. His buddy asked, "One last time?" Mike becomes very emotional and then replies, "One last time."

That one last time was nearly three hours of the wildest, mysterious, head

spinning, edge-of-your-seat, nail-biting, roller coaster ride ever. The audience was laughing out loud, screaming, jumping, and air braking during the high-speed car chases.

Does Marcus eventually break his "no more violence" promise to God? This was more than your normal Mexican drug cartel thriller; it also had a wicked romantic twist and an unexpected family tie that leads this dynamic duo to Mexico City. If you haven't seen it yet, the reunion in Mexico City will leave your jaw hanging. Does Mike Lowery finally find true love? The fight scenes were epic, reminiscent of Danny Glover's and Mel Gibson's fight scene with Jet Li in "Lethal Weapon 4."

Smith and Lawrence both looked great in the movie, but Martin didn't have the same physical agility as Smith. Both were fantastic in their own right. "Bad Boys for Life" is a cinematic thriller at its best, yet it managed to add that warm human touch that makes it a great date night or even a family night out for parents with older high schoolers. The cast, directing and writing were near perfection. But, if I'm going to be a true up-and-coming film critic, I must be transparent about the down side to this film. So, here it is ... It ended. It was over and I wanted another three hours. Bad Boys, you left us wanting more; so, give us 4.



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