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## Law Abiding Citizen - Film Review by Lisa Miller

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Hollywood, California - Law Abiding Citizen - Film Review by Lisa Miller (2009) Directed by F. Gary Gray, Starring Jamie Foxx, Gerard Butler, Bruce McGill, Leslie Bibb, Colm Meaney, Viola Davis, Regina Hall, Michael Irby - Overture Films/Rated R/Thriller/108 minutes.

The preposterous movie, "Law Abiding Citizen," bills itself as a thriller, a category it qualifies for if you count sadistic murders as thrilling. Serving as a motive for these killings is an imperfect judicial system that happens to have disappointed the wrong guy.

Gerard Butler, an actor blessed with the physique of an ox and face of chipmunk, portrays Clyde Shelton, a man seemingly broken after watching a pair of home invaders rape and kill his wife and young daughter. Against Shelton's wishes and in an effort to maintain his 96% conviction rate, Assistant District Attorney Nick Rice (Jamie Foxx) makes a deal giving one perpetrator a short prison sentence in exchange for testifying against the other perpetrator.

Rice, smug in the belief he has satisfied his oath of office while simultaneously serving his own interest, doesn't know that Shelton possesses the rage, skills and long fuse necessary to punish Rice and everyone else connected with the deal.

Fast forward 10 years to the botched execution of the killer sent to death row by Rice's deal. The ADA is annoyed that someone has circumvented the system. Since Shelton is the prime suspect, Rice's assistant Sarah (Leslie Bibb) is looking into Shelton's background when the second killer, freed by Rice's deal, is found horrifically murdered in a warehouse owned by Shelton.

Though Shelton sets up and carries out this killing in person and onscreen, we learn that he is a wealthy government contractor who has made his money by designing devices to carry out assassinations from afar. This becomes an important plot point when Shelton, arrested and incarcerated, continues his killing spree from behind bars. Shelton promises Rice that his retribution against what he believes is corrupt deal-making, is "gonna be Biblical." In carrying out the threat, the film leaves no one alive that we care about. Whether or not Rice learns the lesson Shelton intends to teach him, both the legal system and the world would be better places without either of these men mucking around in them, and the movies would better off without pointless revenge fantasies that make little effort to entertain us.