The Right Stud

A *Breeder* Review

By: Adam Dombrow

Breeder was **not** a movie that was on my radar: I hadn't seen *any* trailers for the film, I hadn't heard any talk of the film, nothing. I usually attend Mystery Movie Mondays at my local cinema, and I am prone to use my sleuthing skills beforehand to try and figure out what the movie will be. I figured "it's a horror movie coming out the week of Halloween or immediately after", so that narrowed it down to basically two movies: *Breeder* or *Victorian Psycho*. Expectations were low, but I was happy that it ended up being *Breeder* (sorry *Victorian Psycho*).

By the end of the movie, I was *really* happy it was *Breeder*, because it turned out to be a *really* fun time!

Now, I will preface this review by saying that I don't think *Breeder* is going to go down as "the scariest movie of the year" or anything like that - it's really not scary at all. I feel like the best comparison I can make for *Breeder* is the original *Don't Breathe*; *Breeder* is similarly *unnerving*, wickedly funny (if you have a twisted sense of humor like me), and it is one of those unconventional little stories that just ends up *working*.

I would be remiss if I started any place *other* than by talking about the **fantastic** performance provided by Dot-Marie Jones as Patti "Chief" Cole. Patti is like the perfect marriage between Stephen Lang's Norman "The Blind Man" Nordstrom (from *Don't Breathe*) and the virtually incomparable Kathy Bates' Annie Wilkes (*Misery*; don't even come at me with the "well what about Mia Goth in *Pearl*" because nah). Jones' performance is so freakin' good!

She ***completely dominates*** every single scene she is in! Jones flips from psychotic to rational to humorous back into psychotic at the drop of a hat, and casts this larger-than-life shadow over the entire film - in scenes where she isn't there, you are really just on the edge of your seat waiting for her to return! Daniel Doheny's Russell and Maddie Phillips' Ainsley are both good as well, but really this is the Dot-Marie Jones show the entire way!

Aside from Jones' performance, the one thing I most liked about *Breeder* was its whip-smart writing. Writer/Director Alex Goyette's script leads the audience *exactly* where he wants them to go, and then acts accordingly. The scenes in *Breeder* have this wonderful self-awareness that I feel often gets lost in the horror genre; you could be thinking to yourself "that's dumb if it plays out the way these things *usually* do", then the movie throws a curveball your way, and playfully rubs its tricking you in your face! The dark humor hits pretty often as well - numerous times throughout my viewing there were outbursts of laughter in my theater, and for a black comedy horror film that's *exactly* what you want!

While I am not going to *insist* that you go out to a theater to see *Breeder* (in all honesty, it probably works just as well watching it at home with the lights off), it is a really fun time, and a great little popcorn horror movie that is perfect for a palate cleanser to round out your spooky season viewings!

***SPOILER WARNING**: on the next page I will discuss the ending of *Breeder*, so only read on if you have seen the movie or do not plan to see it, but want to hear more about my thoughts!!!!!

Building upon my discussing how great the writing of *Breeder* was, I have to say I was **giddy** at the end when the bad guy wins! There are some horror movies where the bad guy winning kind of doesn't make sense, or makes the ending a big let down, but here I felt like it was completely warranted! Russell shows his true colors a few times throughout the early course of the film when ***he doesn't just straight up take off***! It's one of those examples of <u>good</u> horror writing that makes you feel like "well that serves you right" when a character gets their comeuppance, and despite Russell surviving the ordeal, the closing shot really encapsulates how he understands his own depravity and the weight that comes with one's forfeiture of morality. It was a truly fitting end, and I really hope Goyette takes the W and moves on - we don't need any sequels or anything to *Breeder*!