



Review

Angel Force (1990)

Genre: Action, Girls With Guns
Studio: Hatrtract Films, Ying Feng Film, Chun Wah & TV
Director: Wah Sam
Producer: Chin Kei, Chin Chang Lung, Kwok Nan Hung
Cinematography: Cho On Sun Origin: Hong Kong
Length: 95 min
Action Dir: Yuen Bun
Writer: Lee Chung Lai
Rated: NR - strong violence, some sexuality & nudity, moderate profanity
Cast: Moon Lee (Mone), Wilson Lam Chun Yin (Lin Chen Fei), Shing Fui On (Thug), Fujimi Nadehi, Hugo Ng Toi Yung (Little Vietnam), Lung Fong (Lon), Johnny Wang Lung Wei (Poison Owl)
Synopsis: Moon Lee and Wilson Lam are cops who recruit mercenaries and head into the jungles of Thailand for a rescue operation, but return to find that someone in the force is trying to kill them.

<u>Distributor</u>	<u>Format</u>	<u>Aspect Ratio</u>	<u>Languages</u>
World Video/CAV	DVD, Region 0, NTSC	Full Screen	English (dubbed)

Video 	Audio 	Extras 	Final Score 
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This print has a fair amount of film degradation with washed out colors and scratches. It's also misaligned and displays black borders on three sides of the screen. The good news is that the chapter hiccups that plagued past DVD's from World are not present. The English dubbed audio is in mono and features bad voice acting. Cantonese and Mandarin audio tracks are included, but there are no subtitles. The menu layout is ugly and poorly executed. Extras include a number of cheaply produced trailers for other World Video releases, basic film info, and filmographies of Yuen Bun, Moon Lee, and Wilson Lam.

A mix of quality martial arts and campy jungle warfare dominate this plain actioner starring the talented Moon Lee.

Angel Force was released near the end of the popular "girls with guns" era of Hong Kong film that began with Corey Yuen Kwai's excellent Yes, Madam (1985). This same genre died a slow death in the hands of second-rate filmmakers in the early '90's, but not before spawning dozens of action flicks featuring kick-butt females, the best of which starred the likes of Michelle Yeoh and Cynthia Rothrock. Moon Lee is certainly no slouch in comparison having hit the big time after co-starring opposite Jackie Chan in The Protector (1985). Lee's starring role in Angel (1987) sparked a series of sequels and "Angel" spin-offs meant to exploit the initial film's success. She was one tough doll with a baby face who proved even towards the end of her career that she was capable of giving the men a run for their money.

The film takes it's cue from previous modern HK films, including Sammo Hung's superior jungle war film, Eastern Condors. Lee plays a bubbly, but lethal detective who tags along

with Wilson Lam on a mission to rescue a hostage held by a criminal named Poison Owl. Lam handpicks a team of shady characters as mercenaries and off they go to Thailand. But before they even get their camouflage on, the team is ambushed in the streets and Lam is shot. Their police captain puts Lee in charge and she leads them towards the villain's hideout with guns blazing. Having accomplished the mission, the surviving team returns home and Lee begins a search for the people responsible for Lee's wounds.

The martial arts action is well done with Lee highlighted in several tightly choreographed scenes. The opening fight and a chase that follows the ambush are the best scenes. Lee moves with impressive speed and pulls off some great maneuvers against multiple opponents. Her leaping kicks are the most stunning. In contrast, the jungle fighting complete with M-60's and exploding grenades is sloppy and reflects the Rambo-era style of excess and recklessness, but only on a smaller budget. Soldiers fire from the hip and all of them fail to hit the heroes. Then Poison Owl starts blasting with his M-60 and single-handedly wipes out half of the team. In the middle of this action is an odd and unsavory moment where Hugo Ng gets battle-crazed and attempts to take advantage of a captured female enemy combatant, right before Lee shows up to make sure that he keeps his pants on. The last 25 minutes or so reverts back to more sporadic kung fu and gunplay in an urban setting.

It would be almost comical if it weren't so painful to listen to stock smooth jazz played through the whole film, even these action scenes. Aspiring action filmmakers, take a note. Porn soundtracks and action films do not mix. Let this film be a lesson.

Aside from a slow start, Angel Force moves along at a fair clip and features mildly diverting action, but nothing outstanding. Moon Lee is the main real reason to bother with this film. Her co-stars are all forgettable and the plot is uninspired. Even Lee delivers a weak acting performance with lame dialogue. But when she's knocking the stuffing out of thugs, Moon Lee is indeed a "force" to be reckoned with.

- Mark Pollard