

Film Review: Street Fight of ‘End of Watch’ Adds in Deep Emotion

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 21, 2012 - 7:36am

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CHICAGO – In the genre known as the cop movie, there are expectations. There will be street evil, informants, ride-alongs and camaraderie. What is surprising and welcome in “End of Watch” is how it takes all those elements and expands them with an emotional link between the cop partners, portrayed by Jake Gyllenhaal and Michael Peña .



They are soldiers in a war, the “thin blue line” between the anarchy of South Central Los Angeles and the rest of the world expecting protection from that anarchy. Writer/Director David Ayer uses a point-of-view style with new camera technology that puts the viewer inside the squad room, running on the street and with an in-the-police-car eye in pursuit of the criminals. It is gritty, adventurous and incident oriented, more so than many of the so-called action movies. The authenticity and the probability of the film’s action – combined with the emotional content of two cops and their families looking out for each other – create an atmosphere that feels like highly dramatic realism.

Officers Taylor (Jake Gyllenhaal) and Zavala (Michael Peña) are loyal police partners who recklessly protect the harsh streets of South Central Los Angeles. They are brothers in this recklessness, sticking their necks often beyond the call. Zavala is a soon-to-be-father and Taylor is a single, over-educated man in blue who begins a street documentary as a college project. Strapping on cameras, as well as the arsenal necessary to survive, the two cops work the beat.

Two events change their lives starkly. A seemingly normal domestic call turns into something more, and both a Mexican drug cartel and Homeland Security put the duo into their radars. Eventually a hit is ordered by the cartel against the officers – unbeknownst to them – and their penchant for follow-up is now a game changer. When Taylor starts getting serious with his new girlfriend Janet (Anna Kendrick), suddenly the street fight takes on a more personal tone.

“End of Watch” opens everywhere on September 21st. Featuring Michael Peña, Jake Gyllenhaal, Anna Kendrick, America Ferrera, Natalie Martinez and Frank Grillo. Written and directed by David Ayer. Rated “R”

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On Patrol: Taylor (Jake Gyllenhaal) and Zavala (Michael Peña) in 'End of Watch'
Photo credit: Open Roads Films



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