

Blu-Ray Review: 'Eagle Eye' Makes Modern Paranoia Ridiculous

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 30, 2008 - 12:20pm

- [Anthony Mackie](#) [2]
- [Billy Bob Thornton](#) [3]
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [4]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [5]
- [D.J. Caruso](#) [6]
- [DreamWorks](#) [7]
- [DVD & Blu-Ray Review](#) [8]
- [Eagle Eye](#) [9]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [10]
- [Michael Chiklis](#) [11]
- [Michelle Monaghan](#) [12]
- [Rosario Dawson](#) [13]
- [Shia LaBeouf](#) [14]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [15]

CHICAGO – “Eagle Eye,” the second collaboration between new star Shia LaBeouf and director D.J. Caruso after the surprise success of “Disturbia,” isn’t nearly as successful a diversion, stretching the very concept of suspension of disbelief to the breaking point.

The Blu-Ray release matches the success of the film with solid video and audio and an entertaining set of special features, but the movie itself brings the entire package down.

With “Eagle Eye,” writers John Glenn & Travis Adam Wright and Hilary Seitz and Dan McDermott (it took four people to write this thing?) attempt to turn modern-day paranoia about the intrusive nature of technology into an action adventure a la “Die Hard”. The set-up isn’t bad, but the film quickly dissolves into a barrage of unbelievable, unrealistic, and unenjoyable action sequences fueled by increasingly ridiculous plot twists.



Shia LaBeouf stars as Jerry Shaw, a drop-out from Stanford who gets caught in an international crisis after his twin brother Ethan, an Air Force star, passes away in a car accident. Jerry goes to the funeral and comes home to a complete nightmare. His bank account, usually too empty to buy a latte, has three-quarters of a million dollars in it, and his apartment is full of terrorist supplies, which, apparently, can easily be shipped via DHL.

The money and the bomb-making equipment make Jerry a target of the government (including agents played by Rosario Dawson and Billy Bob Thornton), but Shaw keeps getting phone calls that keep him one step ahead of the people trying to get to him. Meanwhile, Rachel Holloman (the lovely but miscast Michelle Monaghan) gets a similarly omniscient call that tells her that her son will die if she doesn’t do as

she's told.



The idea is that Jerry and Rachel are pawns in an elaborate plot fueled by our civilization's increasing reliance on items that come with a certain lack of privacy. It's not the concept that fails "Eagle Eye," it's the development of it.

The problem with "Eagle Eye" is that it's played with a completely straight face. Half of the charm of the "Die Hard" movies, especially the last one, is in Bruce Willis' winking performance. He's knows it's ridiculously over-the-top. "Eagle Eye" feels like LaBeouf and Caruso think this is a cautionary tale. If the filmmaker and cast had put their tongues even slightly in their cheeks, "Eagle Eye" might have worked as escapist entertainment.

So, as the film seems to continuously top itself with more and more ridiculous, nonsensical plot twists, it's far too easy to be eye-rolling instead of sitting on the edge of your seat. When the power on the other end of the phone starts to manipulate the system well beyond reason - my favorite being when it cannot only break a power line but snap it into a running individual - the suspension of disbelief collapses.

The film may be a mess but the Blu-Ray release is satisfactory. On Blu-Ray, the presentation of "Eagle Eye" is neither remarkable nor below par. The video in 1080p High Definition is the highlight. DreamWorks has become one of the leaders in HD transfers. And the audio in English 5.1 Dolby TrueHD is better than average.

As for the special features, renters and buyers of "Eagle Eye" might be disappointed by the lack of a commentary and the featurettes are a little perfunctory. It's also disappointing to not have any picture-in-picture capability. It's a movie about technology. Shouldn't the presentation of the special features feel more than average?

"Eagle Eye" includes, all in HD, deleted scenes, "Asymmetrical Warfare: The Making of Eagle Eye," "Eagle Eye on Location: Washington, DC," "Is My Cell Phone Spying on Me?," "Shall We Play a Game?," a gag reel, "Road Trip: On Location with the Cast and Crew," a photo gallery and the theatrical trailer.

'Eagle Eye' is released by DreamWorks Home Video and stars Shia LaBeouf, Michelle Monaghan, Billy Bob Thornton, Rosario Dawson, Michael Chiklis, and Anthony Mackie, and was written by John Glenn & Travis Adam Wright and Hilary Seitz and Dan McDermott and directed by D.J. Caruso. It was released on December 28th, 2008.



[16]

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[9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/eagle-eye>
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