

‘Bad Boys for Life’ Are Just Too Old For This

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on January 17, 2020 - 10:32am

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Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – “Bad Boys For Life” shows that maybe Will Smith isn’t too old for this kind of sh*t, but Martin Lawrence certainly is. This third installment comes 17 years after “Bad Boys II,” and 25 years after the original film unleashed director Michael Bay on an unsuspecting public. It aims to be just as bombastic as its predecessors, but without Michael Bay behind the lens and a lot more jokes about middle age, creaking bones and dying beards.

The opening car chase sets the tone to come, with Bad Boy cops Mike (Smith) and Marcus (Lawrence) racing through the streets of Miami, endangering countless lives, and breaking dozens if not hundreds of laws ... but not in the pursuit of drug dealers or other nefarious underworld types ... they are instead heading to the hospital to witness the birth of Marcus’s first grandbaby, while the new grandpappy manages to dent up the Porsche while opening the door into a fire hydrant.



Boys Are Back: Will Smith and Martin Lawrence in ‘Bad Boys for Life’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

The story involves an old flame of Mike’s, a witchy woman Mexican drug kingpin (Kate del Castillo) with a vendetta against the cop for

breaking up her family and sending her to prison during his first case after the police academy. So she dispatches her son (Jacob Scipio) to hunt down everyone involved in the case. After Mike is mortally wounded in an assassination attempt, he goes to Marcus with a plea for vengeance. "He put holes in me!" Mike says. "And you're filling em with hate" Marcus responds. And surprisingly this ISN'T played for laughs.

For a Bad Boys movie whose only appealing quality is its commitment to excess, the script makes a baffling miscalculation in trying to invest some introspection and perspective to this assembly line buddy team. Who besides Martin Lawrence's accountant has any kind of emotional connection to these characters? The plot is full of emotional revelations that even the movie acknowledges would be better off In a telenovela.

But the two stars have an easy chemistry together. Marcus is ready to head off into the sunset and curl up in his La-Z-Boy in retirement, but Mike still has the need to stay in the game. The two bicker and trade quips about getting older as they dodge gunfire, and race around the city and the camera swoops around expensive sports cars, South Beach, and drug store chains decked out in unmistakable neon signs.

While Michael Bay does turn up on camera in a small cameo as a wedding MC (where the camera is in a constant whirl of motion circling him as a sort of taciturn acknowledgement of his hyperkinetic style), the directing duties are handled by a couple of Moroccan born Belgians – Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah – who do their best to ape Bay's style, but don't really come up with much in the way of memorable action. At times their scenes resemble a Mad-Libs Michael Bay action movie ... inserting various tanker trucks carrying wildly improbable cargo, a helicopter and bikers armed with machine guns doing wheelies into a chase ... and let it play out.



Kate Del Castillo Confronts Will Smith in 'Bad Boys for Life'

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

Will Smith still has his movie star charisma, and Martin Lawrence manages to still get most of the scripts best quips, but he's also noticeably slower, and rounder than he used to be. His fight scenes were perilously close to latter day Steven Seagal territory. "Bad Boys For Life" isn't entirely unwatchable ... but it's pointless and unnecessary, and just barely this side of embarrassing. We can only hope they meant it when they said this was "one last time," but wouldn't you know it – the movie leaves the door open for more.

"Bad Boys for Life" opens everywhere on January 17th. Featuring Will Smith, Martin Lawrence, Vanessa Hudgens, Kate Del Castillo, Jacob Scipio and Joe Pantoliano. Screenplay by Chris Bremner, Peter Craig and Joe Carnahan. Directed by Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah. Rated "R"



[17]

By [SPIKE WALTERS](#) [18]

Contributor

HollywoodChicago.com

spike@hollywoodchicago.com [17]

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