

DVD Review: Big Bad Mama

Written by The Projectionist

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I'll be honest right up front, [Angie Dickinson](#) help me pull myself through puberty. I never missed an episode of "Policewoman", I was afraid I'd miss an episode that called for her to infiltrate a strip club, or a brothel. Usually she just ended up talking into the mic hidden in her bra, but when you're 14 years old in the pre-internet 70s, you take what you can get.

"Big Bad Mama" was a cinematic landmark to me when I saw it at our local drive-in, so I couldn't wait to see how it would hold up to my now 50 year old movie tastes.

The movie is a Roger Corman production, so you know it's low budget all the way. It stars the delectable Ms. Dickinson, [Tom Skerritt](#), & [William Shatner](#). Skerritt must have either written, produced or directed the movie, or maybe Roger Corman just really likes him, as he winds up bedding every hot female character in the movie. Mama, the two borderline jail bait daughters ([Susan Sennett](#) and [Robbie Lee](#)), even the female hostage they kidnap late in the film all succumb to Skerritt's charms.

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The Plot

The setting is the depression, Wilma McClatchie (Mama) and the girls are headed to her youngest daughter's wedding. The bride looks to be about 14, and acts like she's 8. Just my opinion, but if you still carry a baby doll around with you maybe you're not quite ready for matrimony.

At the wedding when the preacher asks if anyone objects, all hell breaks loose when Mama speaks up. Mama and the girls make a getaway from the confusion in "Uncle" Barney's moonshine runnin' car. Barney is shot by a Fed, (One of the feds is played by the always lovely and entertaining [Dick Miller](#), a staple of quite a few Corman productions.) who's been on his tail, and Mama and the girls take over Barney's Moonshine business. Things don't work out for them though, as various short scenes show, culminating in a delivery to the Sheriff's son. He puts the move on Polly (Robbie Lee), the youngest daughter, but they're interrupted by the Sheriff. He arrests Polly for selling bootleg whiskey, Mama pays a bribe to spring her, using the money made from the moonshining. She decides there are better ways to make a buck.

While Wilma tries to make a few bucks waitressing, the girls audition to be strippers and are hired. During their striptease performance, Wilma springs thru the doors, grabs them off the stage and grabs all of the money in the collection box. Pulling a gun on the men there, she and the girls make off with the money. (*Note to self, Robbie Lee was a bouncy little thing, I need to review more of her movies...*)

While in a bank trying to cash a bad check, Wilma and the girls meet bank robber Fred Diller (Skerritt), who is in the process of robbing the bank. In the excitement Wilma grabs the money and makes a run for it. Diller grabs onto their car when they fly by, and the group makes a getaway via gunshots and car crashes. The group become uneasy partners in crime.

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