

NO RETREAT NO SURRENDER 3 (1990):

Producer: Ng See Yuen

Director: Lucas Lowe

Co-Producer/Writer: Keith W. Strandberg

Cast: Keith Vitali, Loren Avedon

Locations: Tampa Bay Area, Florida

Original Title: Blood Brothers

Review courtesy of www.kungfucinema.com

"Producer Ng See-Yuen reunites with screenwriter Keith W. Strandberg and tae kwon do expert Loren Avedon in this tale that takes a page from Ng's first film with Seasonal Film Corporation, THE SECRET RIVALS."

To complete his U.S.-Hong Kong crossover trilogy, launching Jean-Claude Van Damme in 1985 and Loren Avedon in 1987, producer Ng See-Yuen reunites with screenwriter Keith W. Strandberg and tae kwon do expert Loren Avedon in this tale that takes a page from Ng's first film with Seasonal Film Corporation, THE SECRET RIVALS. Only instead of North and South styles as the "rivals", we have two brothers whose political views gets the best of them until the death of their father brings them together.

C.I.A. agent Casey Alexander (Keith Vitali) has a reputation as being one of the most respected agents in the company. Martial arts instructor Will Alexander (Loren Avedon), Casey's brother, doesn't believe in the entire federal agent shtick and as a result, the two brothers have a serious falling out that starts out at a hunting trip and culminates at the 65th birthday party of their retired agent father John (Joseph Campanella).

When John becomes the target of Colombian terrorist Antonio "Franco" Franconi (Rion Hunter), the result of a job in which Franco's son was killed, John is brutally beaten and then ultimately killed by Franco. When the brothers discover their father, both Will and Casey plan to find Franco. However, they go about it in separate ways.

The brothers learn that Franco has set up base in Florida. On the one hand, Casey relies on the help of former flame Maria (Wanda Acuna), who has ties to Franco's organization. On the other, Will decides to infiltrate Franco's gang by gathering his old karate buddies and setting up a fight at a local bar. A test of skills gets Will to join the gang. When Will's first mission is to kill Casey, the brothers finally get over their differences and hatch a plan to stop Franco once and for all, especially when Franco hatches a new devious plan: to assassinate the President of the United States.

The first film in the series was a test of honor and the second involved the rigors of war. The third time is somewhat of a modern day take on the classic 1976

kung fu film THE SECRET RIVALS. Instead of John Liu and Wang Tao playing the Northern Kick and Southern Fist, we have Loren Avedon as a martial arts instructor and Keith Vitali as a C.I.A. agent whose views stand very strong. The sibling rivalry of the brothers in the film play an intricate role throughout the course of the film. They may have their issues, but it takes the death of a loved one to ultimately bring them together and kick some major butt in the process. Rion Hunter appears very menacing as Franco. Complete with white hair and accent, he seems to play the perfect bad guy for the film. He even has some martial arts skills himself as well as use darts as a weapon. Despite some doubling for the big fight sequence in the end, he plays it off very nicely. Franco's number one henchman, played by Florida-based ninjitsu expert Mark Russo, Russo stands out as an incredible martial arts fighter, going toe-to-toe with Loren Avedon in the "test" fight scene.

This time around, the action choreographing duties are handed over to Tony Leung Siu-Hung, who is a 1970's kung fu film star and the younger brother of 70's kung fu superstar Bruce Leung Siu-Lung, who made a huge comeback in 2004's KUNG FU HUSTLE, starring Stephen Chow. Compared to the first two films, Leung relied more on undercranking in some sequences. However, they do stand out and with very little double, Avedon and Vitali are able to show their trademark skills. Both actors have had their share of Hong Kong-style action, with Avedon working with Corey Yuen in NO RETREAT, NO SURRENDER II: RAGING THUNDER, while Vitali had worked with Jackie Chan, Sammo Hung, and Yuen Biao in the 1984 hit film WHEELS ON MEALS.

If you will notice in the film, Vitali's character is wearing a cast for most of the movie. It was written in after an accident occurred. According to screenwriter Keith Strandberg, Loren Avedon and Keith were showing their martial arts skills for action choreographer Leung. When Avedon did a double back jump kick, Leung asked Vitali if he could do the same move. Vitali thought he could, but ended up breaking his wrist when he fell. This all happened the day before shooting began, so Strandberg wrote it in. The setup was perfect and as a result, Keith looks great in his fight scenes.

Both Avedon and Vitali would go on to work with Tony Leung Siu-Hung again. Leung would choreograph what many call Avedon's best film, KING OF THE KICKBOXERS (1990), while Vitali would work with Leung on Seasonal's final two U.S. crossover films, SUPERFIGHTS (1995) and BLOODMOON (1997).

The U.S. cut, released in 1991 by Imperial Entertainment, cuts only about three minutes from the original cut. The cuts including some dialogue between Will and his father on the phone as well as all footage of President George H.W. Bush, who is the prime target for arch-villain Franco.

In any picture, NO RETREAT, NO SURRENDER III: BLOOD BROTHERS is a step up from the previous two sequels. This occurs not only with the story that looks to be influenced from a classic kung fu film, but the action is kicked up a major notch. Martial arts film fans will not want to miss this film, and to think, you don't even have to watch any of the first two as this is an in-name sequel.