

DARK HEART

Street 6/24

MTI, Drama, \$24.95 DVD, 'R' for language, violence and some sexuality.

Stars Greg Joelson, R.D. Call, Darcy Halsey, Brian Howe, William Dennis Hurley, Huntley Ritter, Sam Scarber, Mageina Tovah, Larry Weissman.

Angry mill workers, an Iraqi war veteran and a possible fortune come together in writer-director Kevin Lewis's *Dark Heart*, a small-town thriller in the mold of *The Lookout* and *A Simple Plan* but with none of those movies' moody attributes.

Matt Taylor (Joelson) returns to his dying hometown for the first time in years after a tour in Baghdad. Taylor sees his sister (Tovah of *Spider-Man 2* and *3*) and then swaps war stories over beers with an old friend (Howe of *The Pursuit of Happyness*), one of whom describes how his outfit found millions of U.S. dollars.

This apocryphal story catches the attention of four soon-to-be-fired mill workers, led by Vietnam vet Finn (*Call of Into the Wild*). The quartet apprehends Taylor, taking him to a remote cabin in the hopes of getting him to confess where the money is.

Director Lewis (*The Third Nail*) certainly has the qualities in place for a good old-fashioned film noir — lots of rain, bad guys with scars (both physical and emotional), and a tortured anti-hero — but the finished product is inconsistent. Lewis's script consists of loads of poorly written macho posturing, which provides no insight into Taylor or Finn's mindset.

Lewis also tries to politicize the proceedings and then make it into a payback flick. Ultimately, Lewis' lack of commitment to one style makes for rough viewing.

— Pete Croatto

