

Name film: **Finding Chi**
Director: **Alexander Johnson**
Writer: **Alexander Johnson**
Producer: **Let Me Translate Productions**
Starring: **Ramon Thomas, Jessica Williams, Shawn Daniels**
Country: **USA**
Time: **20 minutes**

Great idea, mediocre acting and bad sound design. This might come off as harsh criticism, but it's not. It's just a statement, that with some budget, this film would be much better.

Story is really tight, we have our main protagonist, Von, is defeated because of his scoliosis. His enemy Morana, is now a champion. Von is struggling since his defeat and is trying to provide for his daughter. She's in hospital and in need of immediate Surgical procedure. With help of his friend, Titus, Von gets in shape and saves his daughter from dying by winning the fight against Morana.

Characters aren't bad, but they feel underdeveloped. Something is missing there. In the end of the film we get the information, that Von has lost someone thanks to fighting, but we only see his daughter in the hospital. Some kind of a scene, where he grieves or holds picture of that one person would build much more interesting character.

Morana was a mystery to me. How come she wins, but also cheats? Does she always go for a "kill"? Some time developing her character would help.

Titus was the most interesting character, he is kind, loving, helpful, but why? Are they long-time friends? Did they start a business together? Did Titus train him before?

Also this film was trying to be urgent, like ticking clock, but it didn't come through. The phone call from the hospital was urgent, it wasn't that they had time. They needed required thing immediately, not after he wins his last match.

Acting wasn't that good nor too bad. It was mediocre. I think the best played character was Titus. Ramon Thomas wasn't convincing at all. His expression was the same throughout the whole film. His eyes never showing any emotion.

Costumes were kept basic, but it would be a welcome breeze of fresh air, if on the tournament they would have proper outfits.

Fight choreography was good, but camerawork around it wasn't. The editor was trying to hide most of the things, but still the audience will see pulled back punches, stuff, that never lands...

Camerawork was kept basic, mostly handheld, to give the film a forward going momentum. But the main issue was colour. It lacked colour so much, like it was shot and edited on flat profile of the camera. It lacked saturation, contrast.

The sound. The sound design was a bit lacking. Wasn't bad, but when you hit someone, first sound is the cloth then the punch itself...whoosh-punch. Also in one scene there is part with bad audio. It is distracting.

Overall, Idea that is aspiring, but lands on the no budget. I think, i this was shot, even with modest budget of 5000\$, it would be much better. Like this it's a great example, that you can do a short with no budget, but it will show.

7/10

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