RACE DAY | Written by Michael Paisley | Genre: Action Thriller | Recommendation: *PASS*

Logline: When five bombs threaten the Indianapolis 500, a former explosives expert with PTSD must uncover the perpetrators before hundreds of thousands of spectators are killed.

Synopsis: Jack Keller, a former ATF explosives expert struggling with PTSD and an estranged relationship with his daughter Becca, discovers a bomb beneath the Indianapolis Motor Speedway during the Indy 500. The attackers threaten to detonate five explosives if the race is stopped or spectators are evacuated, demanding the release of one hundred prisoners before the final lap. Jack reluctantly assists FBI agent Samantha Kline and an explosives disposal team in locating the devices, hoping to protect Becca, who is attending the race.

As Jack disarms the bombs, evidence implicates him in the attack, leading to his detention. He eventually discovers that the bomb squad members are impostors using the threat as a distraction to rob the Speedway's cash rooms. Jack escapes custody and relocates the final explosive before it detonates, preventing mass casualties. He and Samantha pursue the thieves, ultimately apprehending them. Samantha later uncovers the involvement of Speedway chairman Doug Zimmerman, while Jack begins repairing his relationship with Becca.

Comments: *Race Day* has a compelling premise that makes effective use of its setting. The Indy 500 provides a natural deadline, and the sheer number of spectators makes the consequences of failure immediately apparent. Jack is also a promising protagonist whose greatest professional strength is inseparable from the trauma that damaged his family life. One particularly effective scene occurs when Becca dismisses his warning about the bombs as another paranoid episode. Her reaction feels justified by their history, making their conflict more convincing than a conventional parent-child disagreement.

The screenplay's primary weakness lies in the execution of its central heist. The criminals go to extraordinary lengths to steal an unspecified amount of concession revenue, yet the script never establishes why the potential reward warrants such an elaborate and dangerous operation. Their ability to impersonate an authorized bomb squad also strains credibility, particularly when a single phone call to Jack's former colleague exposes their deception. The authorities' failure to verify the team's credentials is difficult to reconcile with the extensive security established earlier.

Structurally, the final-lap explosion feels like the story's natural climax, but the subsequent pursuit extends the action well beyond the resolution of the central threat. The additional reveal of Doug Zimmerman's involvement is similarly underdeveloped, relying on evidence introduced near the conclusion rather than clues that meaningfully build throughout the screenplay.

Jack's reconciliation with Becca also feels premature. Her resentment stems from years of emotional absence, yet their relationship improves primarily because he saves her life. His heroism does not fully address the behavior she confronted him about earlier, and their final exchange leaves that conflict largely unexplored.

PASS. The screenplay’s central conspiracy requires stronger motivation and more credible execution. A more focused final act and a resolution that directly addresses Jack's personal shortcomings would strengthen the material considerably.