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Crueldade Mortal

(Deadly Cruelty) *VARUITY*
(BRAZILIAN-COLOR) *2/2/77*

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New Delhi, Jan. 25.

Embrafilme release of SNCRO, Embrafilme, Sincrogne production. Features entire cast. Written and directed by Luis Paulino Dos Santos. Camera (Eastmancolor), Helio Silva; editor, Joao De Mello. Reviewed at New Delhi Film Fest, Jan. 14, '77. Running time, 90 MINS.

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Though based on a true incident of man's monstrous inhumanity to man, and also using psychological and even parable-like sidelights, pic lacks the grace, insights and characterization to imbue this with pity or terror.

Solidly-made, it looms mainly for lingo and possible payoff on its theme. An old man, who has left his home and settled in a little town, is treated by everybody as mad. He does try to get into homes due to his loneliness and courts a puritanical bible spouting widow.

The people are poor and their possible wrath at their condition, their personal hangups erupt when the old man watches a wife take an outdoor shower and she has her husband, a cuckolded bitter man and her pompous father chase him insisting he tried to burgle the house.

Others get into it and hunt down the old man and begin to beat him, tie him to a post and finally beat him to death as nobody intervenes. That is, a couple of people do but then go their way.

The acting is acceptable but the types are too familiar and finally become stereotypes. However it is well meaning but just lacks the talent to make it powerful. The violence is not overdone. —Mosk.