

Fango Flashback: "MOTHER'S DAY"

Written by Jorge Solis
Sunday, 23 May 2010 10:21



With a Darren Lynn Bousman-directed remake on the way, the time is right for a look back at the 1980 exploitation classic *MOTHER'S DAY*. The film follows three women whose lives are drastically changed forever when they are kidnapped by a sadistic family.

Trina (Nancy Hendrickson), Jackie (Deborah Luce) and Abbey (Tiana Pierce) have been best friends since college. After graduation, they set aside time for their annual camping trip. This is a chance for them to get away from the hectic city—which is full of quirky characters—and relax in the woods while rehashing fun memories. The three are at a turning point in their lives, wondering if they should reunite the following year. Little do they know, they are being shadowed by two inbred hillbilly brothers.



The menacing siblings, Ike (Holden McGuire) and Addley (Billy Ray McQuade), kidnap the three pals and take them back to their junk-strewn house in the woods. Waiting for her children at home is Mother, played with diabolical glee by Rose Ross. Mother genuinely loves her two sons very much, guides them in proper manners—and trains them to be well-built, vicious killers. Ike and Addley will do whatever their mentally unstable parent orders, no questions asked. None of the hostages are safe from the insane matriarch and her deranged sons.

So many things are just plain wrong with this movie. Continuity doesn't match during scenes; the over-the-top acting is distracting at times; and one of the supporting players is way too old to be portraying a 20something college student. But this is what happens when a filmmaker has a \$115,000 budget; you have to make the most with what little you have.

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And despite his financing limitations, director/co-writer Charles Kaufman (brother of Lloyd, whose Troma company released MOTHER'S DAY on DVD) manages to deliver thrilling suspense when the three captives escape from their torture chamber. A deadly cat-and-mouse game commences between the escapees and the pursuers, and the off-kilter camera angles and rapid-fire editing provoke an unstable ambiance of frights and dread.

This film unabashedly straddles the line between trash and art. The frank portrayal of rape and murder comes off as disturbing and cringe-inducing, and feminist groups have vilified it for its depiction of women. Others, though, have argued that this is brilliant satire. MOTHER'S DAY revels in lunacy and depravity, combining its extreme violence with absurd comedy. This writer eagerly awaits seeing how the update comes off in Bousman's capable hands, with a more experienced cast and bigger budget.

{jcomments on}