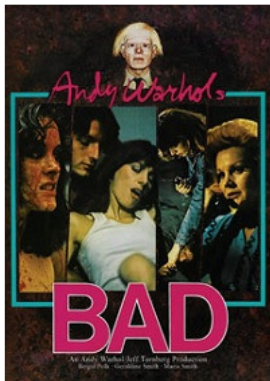




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Andy Warhol's Bad

REVIEWED BY: Kami Posted on 06/04/2012



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I have to admit I wasn't expecting to enjoy this film half as much as I did. Having Warhol's name on it might be good for the publicity but I wonder if it does scare some people away who are expecting this to be, well... bad! It's their loss. Starring former starlet/hottie Carrol Baker as Hazel Aiken, a beautician who runs a low rent hit service on the side, this low budget, low rent flick is a beautiful slice of the shitty side of life in New York in the 70s.

Forget the glamour of [The Godfather](#) or [The Sopranos](#) though, this is a gritty, dirty world of shitty jobs, desperate people, beaten down and sleazy, there are no stylish "hits" instead it's the fat, bitter woman who wants her neighbour's dog killed, the mother who wants her autistic kid put down, revenge jobs and paybacks, nothing romantic or glamorous at all about these people. Instead Johnson has given us New York's underclass, the poverty, the unhappy families, the undercurrent of racism, sexism, class struggle and survival hovering above all of our combatants.

There's L.T. (Perry King) a hustling petty thief who weasels his way into Hazel's house waiting to do a hit, conning everyone along the way, Hazel's daughter in law Mary (Susan Tyrell in beautiful form, does this woman ever put in a bad performance?) looking sad and beaten as she nurses her baby and watches in horror at the amoral going ons, the sister act of Glenda and Marsha (played by sisters Geraldine and Maria Smith) like a vicious comedy version of Laverne & Shirley with no morals or concerns at all, the crooked cop doing a bad Shaft impersonation, the beaten down women who can't cope anymore with kids or family or husbands, the drunken men, the browbeaten Mr. Aiken, the hot blonde Marilyn clone and standing over them all there is Hazel Aiken, working on facial hair and beauty treatments in between phone calls, juggling the hits with her salon business, trying to maintain decency and morals while assigning baby killers and placating her crooked cop accomplice.

Of course things don't run smoothly at all, jobs don't get done, the cop gets greedy, it all starts to fall apart, L.T. turns out to be all bluster and the pressure of maintaining standards becomes too much it seems for all of them.

At times this feels like a one room stage play, set in Hazel's house where she runs the beautician's shop, the phone in the kitchen is their contact with their jobs, the girls coming and going to discuss the hits, pay their rent, hand over Hazel's slice of the pie, Mary sitting forlornly in the corner watching on in horror but that feeling, that bland suburban setting, plays to the film's strengths.

This isn't an action movie this is a movie about the people, the worn out, tired, beat people who live in the slums, the apartments stacked on top of each other, the neighbours too close for comfort, it's the economics of survival, the day to day grind and trivial hate building up. The woman who wants a dog killed is a regular customer and you have to wonder what other trivial and shitty jobs she's asked Hazel to do for her, who else has pissed her off enough that she'll pay for revenge. Then there's the woman who wants her autistic boy killed, middle class and young, she just wants more for her husband and herself, just wants her life back. Are they all amoral, evil, vicious or are they just lost, beat, drowning and just trying to find their way back to the surface?

COMING SOON TO DVD



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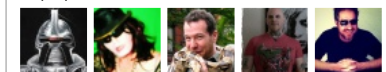
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That's the beauty of this film, sure it's exploitative, sure it's low budget and cheap, sure there's some (wonderfully) twisted humour but ultimately this film is showing us the working class streets, the beat-down people of New York, the soft white underbelly of American society as it was then and let's be honest, as it still is now. Cheezy Flicks have probably ruined their reputation with this film, it's just too damn good! What a problem to have.

As for the special features there's a trailer for *The Headless Ghost* and an *Intermission* - old drive in ads to get you in the mood!

DISC DETAILS:

DIRECTOR(S): Jed Johnson | COUNTRY: USA | YEAR 1977 | DISTRIBUTOR(S): Cheezy Flicks | RUNNING TIME: 105 minutes | ASPECT RATIO: 4:3 | REGION: All / NTSC | DISCS: 1

EXTRAS:

- Trailers
- Intermission

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