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DVD review

It Happened At Nightmare Inn flirted with being one of those terrible European horror films that is shallowly psychological but uneventful and dull in its execution of the horror. That is to say, it has a similar feel to films like that I've seen.

But despite the fact that it is, indeed, shallowly psychological and rather lackadaisical in presenting its murders, something about it gets you interested in the second half. And it's kind of tricky too.

You know right off the bat that these two old bitchy sisters who run this inn are up to no good. I mean, they're hacking up chunks of meat in their kitchen when first we meet them. The movie is rather vague, in the end, on whether or not what that implies is going on is, in fact, going on, but nevermind. A little mystery never hurt anybody.

Regardless of what, exactly, happens to the bodies when all is said and done is kind of irrelevant. What matters is that there are, in fact, bodies. And they're lovely bodies - up until they get killed.

The prudes that run this inn, see, have old-fashioned views on morality. Dress too sexy while staying at their joint and you're apt to get a sharp blade in your back (though we don't really get to see penetration - think of it as a softcore version of psycho killer murdering).

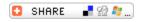
Too bad for these daft bitches they have a couple things working against them keeping this gig going. (A) They fight too much and you kind of have to have solidarity to maintain when you're offing sluts (or perceived sluts) in a wee European village (or any wee village, really). (B) They retread the same tired cover story every time a girl ends up missing.

So when our heroine wonders why her sister - whom she was supposed to meet at the inn (which, I assume, isn't actually named Nightmare Inn anywhere but in the movie's title) - has just up and checked the fuck out without so much as a by your leave (no forwarding address, message, nada), and then wonders further why another girl at the inn just up and checks the fuck out, it's no wonder (ha) she gets suspicious and asks the next girl - who has the gall to be an unwed mother with a baby in tow (shameless hussy) - to let her know before she checks out.

Of course, that girl does not and our heroine, suspicious and tired of the prudish bitches in charge, checks the fuck out herself. But she's the kind of nosy heroine that isn't content to leave a mystery be, so she pokes around to find out what's up.

Too bad she didn't know the innkeepers made a booboo that would bring the village down on their heads or she could have saved herself the trouble of going back into the lion's den, boyfriend in tow, to unearth their secrets. Or maybe her digging around down in the basement accidentally set up the unintentional revelation that something nasty was afoot at the inn. Well, not a foot. An eye, actually. (That garners one of two genuine horror shock sequences, not counting the no-penetration, oh-my-god-that-girl-just-got-killed-by-that-prudish-bitch murders. The other entails a climactic basement discovery.)

Anyhoo, this is still not a great movie, but it's kind of interesting and sort of semi-original in its not so original overall premise. It's an out of the way little European psychothriller with mood and enough decent moments in the second half (and some leggy ladies, though they never get nekkid) to be worth a look-see by fans of 70s vintage Euro B-films.



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Upchuck Undergrind listens to a little bit of a lot of things - just note the eclecticism of his reviews. He also reads voraciously and loves movies. He is a very open-minded Episcopalian (and student of Buddhism and Hinduism) who thinks Slayer is one of the greatest metal bands. Ever. In addition to his work with Corazine - for which he has written since its inception (he is a Fishcomcollective veteran) - he also writes for DJFix.com.

Read more about Upchuck Undergrind

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