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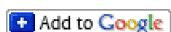
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Night Of The Tentacles

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Review by [Jeremy Biltz](#) | posted February 18, 2013 | [E-mail the Author](#)

The Movie:

At title like *Night of the Tentacles* brings along with it some expectations. There's an implication of a Corman-esque experience to come, with perhaps some blood, breasts and gore to be served up. The film delivers on most of these expectations, but can't quite bring us as tight and effective of a movie as it wants to be.

Dave (Brandon Salkil) is a freelance graphic artist specializing in erotic horror art, and is something of a loser. He pads around his apartment in pajamas, arguing about the appropriate way to represent alien semen, and for entertainment waits for his pregnant downstairs neighbor Esther (Nicole Gerity) to come home so that he can masturbate while lying on the floor listening to her loudly do the same through the paper thin partitions that plague his domicile. But his life is about to get interesting. A congenital condition causes him to have a heart attack. He needs a transplant, but with no insurance and little money, it looks like his life is coming to an end. That is, until the devil pays a visit and offers to provide Dave with a new heart in exchange for his soul.

One doesn't have to be a horror movie fan to know that this probably won't turn out well. But Dave is desperate, and he agrees to the deal. The devil pulls out the malfunctioning ticker, and gives Dave his new heart, which is in a wooden chest on the table. And it talks. And it needs to be fed living flesh, preferably human, to survive. And if it dies, so does Dave. This is complicated more by Dave's developing feelings for Esther, who comes by to give Dave some get well cookies, and perhaps shows a little romantic interest in her smitten neighbor, and agrees to come up to watch movies soon. Now, Dave's a loser, but he's not naturally homicidal, so it takes some convincing. And Delilah (Jackie McKown), the unpleasant lady upstairs, makes it a lot easier when she threatens to kill his dog. The first kill is the hardest, they say, but that doesn't seem to help Dave. He becomes more and more conflicted, and more in love with Esther, with every passing moment. Things progress apace until the shocking climax.

Night of the Tentacles is something of an odd film. It eschews any real effort at tension or the buildup of fear. It also shies away from lots of action. It wants to focus more on gore (which is actually fairly limited), nudity (also not as much as one might expect) and humor, which sometimes works, but is definitely on a sixth grade level. If you're a fan of bathroom humor, sex humor (and nothing very sophisticated) and generally being grossed out, this will please you. There are also a lot of talky, character scenes, and the film does make an effort to shape its characters into moderately realistic people, though not terribly interesting ones as it turns out. *Night of the Tentacles* has elements of an engaging film, but doesn't actually engage us, except at the level of toilet humor, and this isn't enough. There are some pretty decent performances, though no astoundingly good ones, some fun gore (though the demon heart creature at the end is very, very goofy looking) and some humor. But otherwise, it's a letdown. Rent it.

The DVD

Video:

The video is 1.78:1 widescreen, and looks decent, though there are some issues. The image is often a bit muddy, and there is mild aliasing throughout. This is clearly a lower budget film, and the transfer shows it.

Sound:

Audio is Dolby digital 2 channel, and sounds pretty good. The dialogue is always

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audible, and no hiss or other problem can be heard. No subtitles are included, which is a bit frustrating at times, and no alternate language track is available.

Extras:

There are a few extras included. They are:

Also Available

Here is a trailer for [The Puppet Monster Massacre](#) and a red band trailer *Zombie A-Hole*.


Director Commentary

Dustin Mills, director, writer, effects technician and bit actor, does the commentary here, and he does make it fairly interesting. He shares set anecdotes, how he cast the various actors (most were friends, but Jackie McKown who plays Delilah was cast via Craigslist), the difficulty of filming masturbation scenes and various other tidbits. For instance, the title was originally *Heart Attack*, but was changed for marketing reasons. This is pretty interesting, and a good insight into very low budget filmmaking.

Final Thoughts:

Night of the Tentacles is a moderately successful film, particularly given its low budget, but it's no standout. Its main attractions are gutter humor and fleeting nudity. These simply aren't enough to sustain a truly effective movie, but it may appeal to connoisseurs of the more base horror comedy genre. Everyone else probably won't enjoy it.

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