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NIGHT OF THE TENTACLES (2012)

Published by David Carter on 2013/2/25 (58 reads)

Directed by Dustin Mills Review by David Carter

Released by MVD Visual Running Time: 90 minutes Rating: Not Rated Color format: Color

Audio/Subtitles: 2.0 Stereo English

Region Code: 1, NTSC Aspect Ratio: Widescreen 16:9 Enhanced: Yes Special Features: None Trailer Online: Yes



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Short Version: Micro budget splat-rom-com

The German folktale of Faust has been the subject of a wide range of media, from opera to the Simpsons. The story involves a man who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for something only to learn a harsh lesson about ambition. Or greed or lust, too, depending on which version you choose. Each version of the tale puts a unique spin on it, changing both to fit the mores of the day and artist's particular vision. One young filmmaker with a Faustian vision of his own is Dustin Mills, whose NIGHT OF THE TENTACLES is now available on DVD courtesy of MVD Visual.

Dave is a twenty-something loser on the fast track to nowhere. He gets no pleasure from his job as an "erotic" artist for digital UFO porn and, furthermore, it keeps him locked in his dingy apartment all day. His only respite is walking his small dog and the brief glimpses it affords him of his new downstairs neighbor, Ester. Dave's horrible life is breaking his heart and one night it literally breaks it as his dismal lifestyle causes him to have a heart attack



Dave survives but he's left with a mountain of medical bills and the sad realization that he's at the bottom of a very long list for a heart transplant. The devil himself appears to him at his lowest moment and makes him an offer: a new heart, no strings attached. Well, some strings attached. Dave simply has to keep his new heart alive by feeding it twice weekly. Not a bad deal except that his new heart talks, lives in a box, and only eats people. Now the milquetoast Dave is forced to become a serial killer or die, and he's having a particularly hard time balancing his killing duties and his burgeoning relationship with Ester.

NIGHT OF THE TENTACLES is a funny horror-comedy that makes the most out its limited budget. Most of the film's gore effects are computer-generated, giving the film a slick quality but one that's not hokey or out of place. While not LORD OF THE RINGS caliber, these effects are surprisingly good and loads better than those on display in the average SyFy made-for-TV-movie. The film is primarily a comedy, though, and the melding of the Faust legend with LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS gives Mills ample room for humor.

TENTACLES' low-budget origins means not to expect Blu Ray quality visuals, but MVD's disc won't disappoint you either. All in all, a good effort from Dustin Mills. The film is hampered somewhat by some pacing issues, but viewers who like offbeat comedy with their horror will find a lot to like here. Trailers for Mills other works including the intriguingly titled ZOMBIE A-HOLE - also appear on the disc.

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