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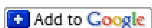
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Zombie Undead

[MVD Entertainment Group](#) // Unrated // July 24, 2012

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Review by [Jeremy Biltz](#) | posted August 30, 2012 | [E-mail the Author](#)

The Movie:

Zombie movies are dime a gross these days, and smart filmmakers try to find a unique angle or fresh take to make the mostly tired genre interesting and fun. Unfortunately, the producers of British indie *Zombie Undead* present little new material, though they do show a few flashes of near brilliance.

The body of the film takes place almost entirely in a hospital. Some sort of terrorist attack, using a backpack bomb, releases radiation or a gas or something that causes people to bleed out, die and rise again as zombies, though the actual word is never spoken in the film. Sarah (Ruth King) serves as the protagonist. She rushes her father to the hospital with Steve (Barry Thomas), an EMT, but she faints when her father collapses to the hospital floor and begins coughing up blood. When she awakes in a side room, the hospital has already been overrun by the undead.

She is determined to find her father, and sets off to search for him, soon teaming up with Jay (Kris Tearse, who also wrote the screenplay) who is looking for his younger brother. Before long, they meet back up with Steve, and encounter several other people, all desperate to escape the hospital, which is difficult enough with the zombies even without having to look around every floor searching for various relatives. The descent down the floors of the building actually has a few genuinely creepy moments, eerie, disturbing setups and periods of real tension. Alas, such moments pass quickly, and the tension is allowed to drain mere seconds after building up. After a smaller group escapes the hospital, there are a couple more startling moments as well. (Startling in a good, "I can't believe that just happened" way.)

But these scattered moments of terror or creepiness or surprise are much too erratic and fleeting to come close to saving the film. Overall, it's a muddle. Awkward characterizations frame stilted dialogue that sets off a meandering and incoherent plot. The line "Like HIV, only worse" is uttered at one point, in reference to the zombie infection. The pace is slow and spurt. There are a lot of long, drawn out scenes of people talking. The performances are fair to decent, but the actors are not given a lot to work with, and are often asked to act in ways that normal humans wouldn't. The blood and gore effects are actually quite good, though, with the obligatory zombie film gut munching pulled off with skill.

Zombie Undead has the feel of being thrown together: a script that could have used several more drafts, props and locations grabbed up wherever they could be found (though the hospital location is nicely done and convincing), actors who haven't perhaps mastered the craft, or were given poorly thought out characters to portray. But most of all, it lacked the verve and panache that often saves low budget films from obscurity and failure. Viewers can forgive a haphazard story and cobbled together sets and even bad effects and performances if they can see the zeal and exuberance of the filmmakers spilling over into everything. But there's no sense of joy in this film, more of doing a chore, and not well at that. It does have some very cool moments, but those are not nearly enough. At best, rent it.

The DVD

Video:

The video is 1.78:1 widescreen, and has a few issues. The film is intentionally shot in a jerky, stylized way, with bright light often washing colors out. However, there is some grain and a bit of murk, and at least two instances where lens dirt shows up. The colors are often bland and dim, but this is probably a stylistic choice.

Sound:

Audio is Dolby digital 2 channel, and it works well enough. The dialogue can be a little difficult to make out at times, but no hiss or other problem can be heard. No subtitles or alternate language tracks are included.

Extras:

There are no extras of any kind included with the disc, and that's too bad, since commentaries or featurettes can often reveal the passion of the filmmakers, and the reasons behind decisions they make that seem silly or unnecessary to outside observers.

Final Thoughts:

Zombie Undead is a low budget film that fails to rise above its meager origins. While there are a number of very cool moments, and quite good effects, these are not enough to compensate for a meandering, tepid script and erratic sense of fear at best. The viewer is rarely afraid, and then not for long, and hardly laughs. What else is there to a horror movie?

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