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

The Movie:

Zombies and vampires get all of the horror movie love these days, but one mustn't forget that witches are also a fertile spring from which to draw scary movies from. (For further research, c.f. [Horror Hotel](#), [House of the Devil](#), [Suspiria](#), etc.) The producers of *The Scar Crow* didn't forget, and they serve up a moderately effective thriller in the process.

So, here's the setup. After their mother is executed for the crime of witchcraft, three British sisters Vanessa, Prim and Proper (Marysia Kay, Anna Tolpott and Gabrielle Douglas) are nearly defenseless against the amorous advances of their lecherous father (Andrew Bolton). When dad goes too far in trying to rape the virginal Prim, older sis Vanessa stabs him in the eye, fatally wounding him. They hang him up as a scarecrow to cover the crime, but he doesn't die until he curses the three sisters to remain forever on the farm. They try for several hundred years to escape, repeatedly burying their father's corpse in an attempt to put his spirit at rest so they can leave. Finally, in desperation they perform a resurrection ritual so they can ask dad how to lift the curse. Turns out, only the souls of five victims to replace the five family members (including mom) can free them from their doom.

Enter four work friends on a team building exercise in the wilds of England. Daz, Tonk, Joe and Nigel (Kevyn Connett, Tim Major, Michael Walker and Darren McIlroy) are dropped off in a remote location, and are supposed to rough it back to their base camp. However, they've smuggled along a cell phone, and would much rather snag a ride with a buddy and spend the week drinking and carousing instead, and when they stumble across the three witchy sisters, they think things are looking very bright. Of course, they ignore the locals and their warnings to avoid the farm because of the curse, etc. All they see are three lovely young women who seem quite welcoming.

In short order, the mutilation and murder begin, including manual castration, decapitation, dismemberment, and disembowelment from underneath a bed, all pulled off pretty well considering the obviously meager budget. That goes for the film as a whole as well, pretty good, despite constraints. The acting is better than decent, though not spectacular. The writing is fair. There is some spotty tension developed, and a couple of good jump scares. But it just seems that nothing hangs together. *The Scar Crow* doesn't work as a unified film. The mechanism by which the curse works is never entirely clear. How the eponymous scar crow is able to kill people off the farm when presumably he's trapped on it isn't explained. The point of it all is ultimately unclear. The flashbacks within flashbacks structure doesn't help either. In short, it's a bit of a muddle.

However, as noted there are a number of positive points, and the film does work at times, if unevenly. As such, horror fans who choose to check it out won't be entirely disappointed. Rent it.

The DVD

Video:

The video is 1.78:1 widescreen, and does look good, but with a few issues. There is mild grain throughout, and some murkiness that renders some scenes darker than is strictly useful. The colors are generally muted, but this works with the subject matter.

Sound:

Audio is Dolby digital 2 channel, and works well enough. The dialogue is always audible, and no hiss or other problem can be detected. No subtitles are included, nor is an alternate language track.

Extras:

Just a couple of extras: a better than decent trailer, and a making of featurette that runs to about eleven and a half minutes. It's fairly interesting, with interviews with co-writer / director Pete Benson and others of the crew and lots of behind the scenes footage.

Final Thoughts:

The Scar Crow isn't perfect, but it's much better than a lot of the tripe that passes for low

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budget horror these days. There are good scares, fun effects, better than decent acting, and a story that works much of the time. It doesn't all come together in the end, but is probably worth at least one viewing.

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