



MARK OF THE BEAST

(Written By: Jeffrey Kurtis)

Rudyard Kipling is a name that is most often associated with the popular *The Jungle Book*, however there is also a darker side to his writing as well. A darker side that in the case of *Mark Of The Beast* includes religious overtones, demonic possession, torture, and more. For the first time ever the short story is brought to the screen and with it comes a bit of a different element to a horror style film. In contrast to the normal slasher type flick, *Mark Of The Beast* at only 72 minutes long focuses more on plot which is a huge plus to me. The story is told without going too far overboard and the dialog within' the narration, especially at the beginning, builds the characters personas perfectly. The film begins easy enough with a bunch of friends gathered together to celebrate New Year's Eve, however it is when walking home a drunk patron through the forest the next day that things turn to disaster when he defaces the shrine of the monkey God setting the faceless silver leper in motion as attack's the partygoer and in turn causes a sickness or perhaps more to reside inside of him. The plot thickens as the friends stay focused now on helping their friend break whatever is upon him due to the leper at all costs including performing an exorcism, capturing and torturing the leper, etc... Throughout the film the acting is just so-so which does lead to some awkward moments and adds a cheese factor at times. The special effects were just okay, but served their purpose well enough, especially in the torture scene of the leper. Overall though the plot is solid and is told perfectly throughout the movie with the aforementioned narration. *Mark of the Beast* doesn't leave anything untold like so many films of this nature do and for good measure there is also bit of a twist to the ending with the underlying message of the whole film comes together leaving viewers with the ideas that no matter what motives we have for doing things, we still have to live with the consequences of our actions.

