



New this week on DVD from [MVD Visual!](#)

MARA (2012)

Directed by Åke Gustafsson, Fredrik Hedberg, Jacob Kondrup
Written by Åke Gustafsson, Fredrik Hedberg, Pidde Andersson, Jacob Kondrup
Starring Angelica Jansson, Emelie Frantz-Nilsson, Phillip Hansell, PEO Möller, Cecilia Samuelsson, Martin Brandt, Mia Möller [Find out more about this film here](#) and on [Facebook here](#) -reviewed by [Ambush Bug](#)

This Swedish thriller set up as a CABIN IN THE WOODS style film turns out to be more akin two THE SILENT HOUSE without the handheld, real time stuff. Still, trots the fact det's derivative, there's a lot to take notice of in MARA.

Now, let's state the obvious. The lead actress, Angelica Jansson, is ridiculously good looking. If you're looking for actors who look like real life people, this one is not as Jansson plays a woman haunted by her past, but I had a hard time getting past her supermodel good looks to see a lot of humanity there. Maybe it's because it was also subtitled, but seeing this blonde beauty and reading her lines along the bottom of the page really made it hard to be concerned about her simply because she is unlike any person I'd think would be caught dead in a cabin in the woods. This is also the case because most of her co-stars pale in comparison in terms of beauty.



But despite all of that, the backstory involving Jansson's character growing up with an insane mother who stabbed her father 57 times with a butcher knife is a compelling one and, for the most part, well paced throughout the movie as it is structured with Jansson telling her story to a police detective trying to piece together what occurred the night before as she was found wandering in the woods covered in blood and holding a butcher knife. A late twist in the story inches this film up a notch in my book, as it totally took me by surprise.

In the end, this possible descent into madness/possible slasher film/possible ghost story proved to be mysterious and enigmatic enough to earn my recommendation. Sure the lead is gorgeous and hard to relate to, but so are most Hollywood films (which is the reason why old school slashers still rock the most, since the victims felt more like people you'd meet next door and on the street instead of leaping out of magazine and WB shows, but that's a different argument for a different day), but with some clever story decisions and some nice mood set in an angular house in the middle of the woods, MARA turned out to something pretty unique.