

MOVIE CITY NEWS
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Made in 1995 and just surfacing now, "The Dark Dealer" is a thorough mess in which Satan gives several miscreants an opportunity to save their souls by taking him on in a game of poker or blackjack. The cobbled-together feel derives from the decision to take two short films and wrap connecting tissue to them to create a feature-length picture. Unfortunately, the sum of its parts is of far less value than the original shorts. One of them expands on the myth of a bluesman whose devilishly good material is stolen 30 years after his uncelebrated death by a white lawyer and sold as if he'd written it. That sin tarnishes everyone records the songs. The other segments aren't nearly as coherent as "Blues in the Night," but, given the budget, it's fortunate that "Dark Dealer" was completed, at all.

– Gary Dretzka

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