

Exhumed

USA 2011

produced by

Ted Marr, Kristin Kayala for Scorpio Film Releasing

directed by Richard Griffin

starring Debbie Rochon, Sarah Nicklin, Michael Reed, Michael Thurber, Evalena Marie, Rich Tretheway, Jonathan Thomson, Nathaniel Sylva, Jocelyn Padilla
written by Guy Benoit, music by Mark Cutler, Alec K. Redfearn, special makeup effects by Jordan Pacheco, Eric Rodrigues

review by

Mike Haberfelner

College student Chris (Michael Reed) is tired of dorm life, so he takes a room at a boarding house ... which shows both promise - two pretty girls his age, Laura (Sarah Nicklin) and Rocki (Evalena Marie), who seem to be happy about the new arrival - and challenges - the eccentric governess (Debbie Rochon) who hates him and her weird butler (Michael Thurber), who just seems to be scheming for the scheming's sake. For some reason, none of these people seem to ever leave the house ... but no matter, it's only for a few weeks before summer holidays, and hey, Laura seems to be more than a little interested in Chris - much to the dismay of the governess mind you, but what can she do really, Chris and Laura are both old enough to decide for themselves?

Well, for example, she can push Chris down a flight of stairs to his death - which she does, too. Immediately thereafter, she pretends to be all in tears, but nobody in the house believes her for a minute - still, nobody calls the police, either, instead the butler embalms the body, and when Laura shortly thereafter steals the body to use him as her, errr, bedpal, nobody seems to be all that bothered. There's just one boarder (Rich Tretheway) who wants to get out of the house after all of this, but the governess is pretty with a knife.

By now it's bloody obvious there's something very wrong with this boarding house, and it's even worse than just a bunch of psychos living together, but things come to a head when Rocki invites a guy for her and Laura to party with ... and the governess and the butler don't like it one bit - and they're armed ...

If vintage horror pulps and psychological thrillers of old (anything from 1940's film noir to 1960's *Hammers* suspense movies) are your thing, and you like your stories absurd and even slightly on the perverted side (though the perversion's in the mind rather than on screen), this is a must-see, a wonderful dark comedy that always favours the macabre over the obvious punchline, that presents one with a wholly original story made up from story elements that might be genre mainstays that nevertheless develop a dynamic of their own, and fleshed out eccentric characters aplenty. Now add to this a great cast - Sarah Nicklin and the always dependable Debbie Rochon bouncing off one another perfectly, and Michael Thurber is enjoyably creepy, and great direction and camerawork that intentionally rely more on thrillers of old (including black and white imagery) than recent shockers, and you've got yourself a pretty good film.

Absolutely recommended!

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