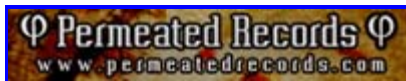


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Articles

monster dog

After a yawn-inducing setup and a dreadfully awful (and entertainingly so) bit of dated, new wave whimsy (a music video since this stars Alice Cooper and naturally his character is a rock star), Monster Dog actually becomes strangely enticing.

It has a way of meandering and never seeming to get to the full fledge threat promised by the plot, yet this permanent detour the screenplay seems to take, coupled with a weird sense of stylishness that sits oddly yet homogenously with the a script that, on its own, is rather tepid, brings at least a mild sense of fascination to the film. Not to mention the fact that about halfway through I strongly suspected this was a European film. The dubbing is actually pretty well done (if that's what it is, I'm not sure ... the credit names look Italian or something, though) and I might never have noticed except Alice doesn't sound like himself.

At any rate, Cooper's heading back to his parents old estate - a mansion, no less - that he hasn't seen in years. He and his band are going to shoot a music video. Naturally, evil awaits, this time in the form of a bunch of bad dogs that seem to be running amok and eating people, which is never a good thing.

At one point, when the group isn't even quite to the mansion yet and things are already threatening to go seriously south, Alice and a band chick get a quick look at the freaky monster dog. The effect is quickly shown, should be hokey, but is actually kinda freakin' cool.

But whatever, on to the castle (after an encounter with the sheriff who spouts dire warnings and reminds Cooper that people still remember the stories about his father), where the story resolutely refuses to go the direction you're expecting. Rather than what seemed to be the inevitable (i.e. Cooper's curse taking over and he turning into weredog that starts eating its friends), the tale sidesteps into a prolonged and

pretty interesting sequence with a bunch of rednecky locals holding Alice's friends hostage and he and the bumpkins playing cat and mouse on the roof. There's a particularly effective moment involving the wrong person being at the door; you'll know it when you see it.

After the redneck threat is dealt with, the dwindling band has to confront the dogs themselves and the viewer is treated to a trite but oddly enjoyable bit of naughty dogs chowing on folks. Even the low-fi blood adds to the film's effect.

And there's still two more groovy sequences to go. After all but Alice and the only other survivor (naturally, I don't think spoilers are a real big deal here, peeps) are left, she discovers him downstairs, surrounded by the strangely calm dogs. She must walk through them to get to him. It's a creepy bit.

Strangely, the movie saves its transformation sequence - its sole transformation sequence - for the somewhat anticlimactic climax of the film. Again, the effects are low-tech but cool to gawk at anyway.

Like I said, I haven't confirmed this is a foreign film but I strongly suspect it. That would account for the weirdness of the proceedings.

At any rate, this film belongs on the list of freak flicks whose sheer oddity make it a cult movie worth checking out ... once, anyway.

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