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Film Review: Captive Files I

SPOILER ALERT: In Depth Review with Some Story Elements Revealed



By [Jesse Schmitt](#), published May 12, 2008

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Rating: 4.3 of 5

I'm left with a feeling of unease at the role of women in Japanese society after viewing the recent release "Captive Files I." It's not that I was somehow unsatisfied with the arc of the story or with the end result, per se. No it was something a little bit more than that; there was a noticeable unsettledness at the end of this movie which spoke largely to the cultural dissonance going on and left this American audience member feeling a bit woozy. Which may have been the point.

Captive Files I is the first in what looks to be a series. I wonder if this series features many of the same players with different "captive" issues or if it is more of a series of stories all with thematic similarities? In either event the cat and mouse dynamic is hyper-realized in this piece as it is the story of one deranged older man and his chase, subsequent capture, and literal breaking down of a beautiful stranger.

This story has many grander themes including the dissonance many of us feel from each other and even the dissonance in our own lives: at our rote jobs which end up becoming careers we'd never imagined ourselves in, at the loneliness we experience, and at our duplicity in fooling ourselves into believing we know what others want. There is even the idea that the life we have created for ourselves is what we want. Captive Files I is also about the have's and the have not's and how one on the brink postal worker gets heaved over the edge by a beautiful young girl who has done no wrong other than her mere existence as a free spirit.

Just to orient the reader, this is foreign film with subtitles and two principal players who make up most all of the action. There is the deranged mailman and there is Madoka, the innocent beauty. He meets her on his postal route and can't shake her uncommitted willingness to live! It's to an end which ultimately drives him mad and he is then led to his own undoing. However this happens not before doing an unheralded amount of harm to this innocent and indelibly leaving his mark.

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