

For three decades, kids across the world have spent sleepless nights checking under the bed and squinting hard at the darkest corners of both their bedrooms and imaginations. The sigh of relief combined with their fingers loosening the death grip on themed blankets is the subsequent result of no threat found. But the monster that those fearful eyes search for is not your typical boogeyman. No. For near thirty years that monster had a name. And a fedora.

Freddy Krueger was the epitome of nightmares themselves. From the burnt face, the striped red and green sweater, the one-liners and the infamous razor glove, Freddy has stalked not only the minds of young and old but the annals of pop culture history as well.

I am usually never a fan of movie remakes. I have a hard time comprehending that for a few measly bucks you would want to remake a classic instead of churning out an original idea or even reworking a sub-standard movie. There are only a handful of remakes that I enjoy and a whole slew of ones that cause me to roll my eyes. With this in mind, note that I was never expecting a decent effort by any means. What of THIS remake?

Frankly, it's pretty damn good! It follows the basic outline of the original Craven tale and adds a few twists in the process. For instance, this group of kids was actually affected by human Freddy instead of never being personally acquainted with him. In the original, he was seeking revenge on the parents and the town by taking their children away. In this version, he's seeking revenge on the children for telling the truth about his horrible deeds.

I suppose it's some consolation that in the age of completely ripping apart stories to sell them to a new generation, they didn't add any crazy ideas or weird extensions that made the character unappealing or cause the narrative to no longer work.

As far as the cast is concerned, the highlight is Katie Cassidy. Coming off of the surprisingly entertaining "Harper's Island", Cassidy pulls you in and ramps you up early on. Rooney Mara is an accomplished actress in her own right but falls a bit flat overall. While trying to portray Nancy in a new vein, sadly, this course doesn't feed on the traits that made us relate to the character and become invested in the first place. Nancy was the ideal horror heroine with the combination of innocence and fear intertwined with strength and determination. Of course the original cast has now become iconic with Lagenkamp, Corri, Depp and Wyss but the remake does hold it's own with Cassidy and Kyle Gallner.

On a side note, Katie Cassidy does pick some interesting projects and I have been quite ecstatic with her choices so far. I loved the Black Christmas remake (blood and schlock!) and Harper's Island was groovy until the killer was finally revealed.

What about the main man himself? Of course, Robert Englund is THE horror icon. His portrayal of Fred Krueger has not only spawned nightmares in generations of fans but has launched countless sequels and practically created the formula for modern mass merchandising.

And what of Jackie Earle Haley?

All I can say is ... Haley is phenomenal! His version of Freddy plays less on the horror and gore as his predecessor's version had and spirals down a darker and more sinister path of a child molester. Now that in itself is more horrid and sickening.

Haley is sadistic and creepy and you can't shake the feeling of wanting to scald off your skin with boiling water when he appears onscreen. It was hinted in the original series that Freddy was a child molester but they never played up that fact and it and it became more of an after thought that rarely crossed your mind. In this version, Haley dives deep into the true evil that festers inside the rotten heart of Fred Krueger . The

pedophile.

Jackie Earle Haley does not disappoint and with a wit more biting and harsh than campy and comical, he will definitely have you talking long after the credits roll. It takes a minute to adjust to Haley's makeup since we are all conditioned on classic Freddy fare. As the movie progresses, the makeup seems to enhance his performance as a visual confirmation of Krueger's putrid soul. You also realize that this alternate look IS actually a realistic depiction of a burn victim. Kudos to the FX team.

While the original NOES is a far superior film and Robert Englund set the pedestal higher than anyone might dream of reaching, this redux is a neat little flick that deals with such a vile subject matter. Comparing the two films is a mistake akin to apples and oranges so one should try to view this remake on its own merits.

The bottom line is that this is a remake worth seeing. Remember this sentiment because I rarely utter it with today's lexicon of cinema offering up a constant barrage of deficient flicks flossing our brains.

Go check out A Nightmare on Elm Street. You may be compelled to shower. And club a pervert.

