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Classic Movies From the Dream Factory, Vol. 2 - Coming in July



NEITHER THE SEA NOR THE SAND - A Love Story

From Beyond the Grave



Neither the Sea nor the Sand (1972) is an interesting hybrid, kind of a Harlequin romance/zombie picture. A woman from a troubled marriage (Susan Hampshire) shows up on the sleepy Isle of Jersey and meets a brooding lighthouse keeper (Michael Petrovich), with whom she strikes up a fast affair. The two are romping along the Scottish shore when he mysteriously falls down dead. But the affair is not over! Hugh comes back, traipsing in good undead fashion around their rented love nest until Anna invites him in, without seeming very surprised. Only slightly more brooding in death, Hugh doesn't initially seem worse for the wear, except that he talks a bit less and uses telepathy. Is it all in Anna's head? Or is Hugh determined to stick around as long as she'll have him? As a corpse, the restrained Petrovich really shines, his solemn woodenness well-suited to the part of the reanimated. And he somehow maintains a certain charm!

All that said, the movie actually works in an odd way: the zombie theme isn't much harder to buy than the intense chemistry between these two. They make such a strange pair that one can easily believe they might carry on even with one of them half in the grave. Even before Hugh's death, the Harlequin/zombie theme plays out in the awkward love-making scenes, precursors of the necrophilia to come?

Ultimately, as in all the best back-from-the-grave stories, we learn that "sometimes dead is better." Anna begins to regret her pleas for Hugh to return to her. He is no fun to drink with and starts to smell. But if there is such a thing as a touching zombie film, this is it. The creeping horror as our unfortunate heroine realizes the love of her life really is dead and putrefying before her (though he still wants to cuddle) is surprisingly real. But she's made a pact and struggles with her sanity as she figures out how to cope with it. Though it's easy to poke fun at some of the film's low production values and odd performances, **Neither the Sea nor the Sand** is worth a watch - a little '70s gothic time capsule with some genuinely chilly moments.

For more information about **Neither the Sea Nor the Sand**, visit Image Entertainment. To order **Neither the Sea Nor the Sand**, go to TCM Shopping.

by Emily Soares

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