

'Ready or Not' goes to the extreme and dispenses the gruesome goods

Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
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Rating: «««« out of «««««

Running Time: 95 minutes

Rich people are awful. This is the assertion made by the film *Ready or Not*, and based upon the events depicted, it's a pretty accurate portrait. It's a gory, over-the-top horror effort with its tongue planted firmly in cheek that is reminiscent of titles like 2011's

You're Next

. Just like the previous movie, the feature attempts to mix thrills, laughs and buckets of blood in equal measure. Thankfully, much of it works and the end result is an amusing little genre flick.

Grace (Samara Weaving) is a young woman excited and anxious on her wedding day. She's marrying a nice guy named Alex Le Domas (Mark O'Brien) but finds most of his immediate family intimidating. In fact, they're incredibly wealthy game manufacturers who seem excessively eccentric. After the ceremony, Grace is informed that she must participate in a ritual that has been tradition for several generations in order to be officially welcomed into the clan. Hoping to please the in-laws, she agrees to play a randomly selected game with them. Unfortunately, it doesn't end up being checkers. In fact, the game chosen is something far more dangerous and horrific.

Much of the film is set in and around the tightly locked up family mansion as the plucky heroine tries to survive numerous attacks and escape her pursuers, while learning important information about the family that details both how they came to be prosperous and the reasons for their bizarre behavior. It also, as the upset and conflicted groom remarks, makes clear why he never told her about his family history. Only those desperate enough for riches would ever agree to these kinds of terms.

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What follows is a series of nasty confrontations revealing the family’s moral callousness and willingness to do anything to maintain their power and affluence - which of course, the terms of marrying into the Le Domas unit ultimately attract. Parents Tony (Henry Czerny) and Becky (Andie MacDowell) seem to be relishing their roles, veering between malevolence and utter panic as the night progresses. In truth, while everything about the picture is less-than-subtle, most of the family members are hilarious in their incompetence and willingness to engage in the worst of human behavior to keep their social standing. The servants are equally guilty, mindlessly following the orders of their wealthy employers as they hunt for their target.

The premise also allows for some mystery as Grace approaches and seeks help from various family members, including brother-in-law Daniel (Adam Brody), some of whom express disdain for their family and a lack of enthusiasm for the task at hand. It lends some uncertainty to the proceedings. This story also adds some additional mystery in the form of its potential supernatural elements and whether or not they are real.

This is also a well-shot movie that develops tension early on and maintains it through constant action. Horror fans will likely be amused by all the violent and overstated ends met by various characters. There are some really exaggerated moments in the film that leave the affable Grace covered in blood by the close. It’s hardly high art, but *Ready or Not* does offer a little more than the traditional horror picture with its entertaining premise and willingness to go to any extreme to dispense the gruesome goods. And ultimately, you’ll laugh as much as you’ll wince during this grisly and fun concoction.

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