

THE BLACK LIST

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Evaluation

Overall	Premise	Plot	Character	Dialogue	Setting
2	1	2	2	2	3
Era	Present Day				
Locations	Tijuana, Mexico				
Budget	Medium				
Genre	Horror, Slashers & Psychos, Mystery & Suspense, Crime Thriller				
Logline	A bus full of tourists shoots down to Tijuana for various less-than-admirable purpose, only to become the prey of vicious locals.				
Pages	75				

Strengths

The script itself is professionally written, the formatting is superb, and the balance of blocking and white space is commendable, it's a great LOOKING script, the pages turn easily due to this well-executed formatting. The setting of the story is also well described and atmospheric. Ultimately, the script plays somewhere between JUDGEMENT NIGHT and the SAW franchise, but even more extreme than that, and with a taste-level somewhere below the CRANK series of movies.

Weaknesses

This is Rob Zombie territory, only more problematic and insensitive than anything he's ever even imagined doing. The savage opening, although obviously played for shock, comes off as aggressively misogynistic & exceedingly ugly. The main white tourist characters are thin, shallow, and utterly unlikable throughout, which leaves nothing to hold onto. In fact the character given the most depth and empathy is Ricardo, the crazed bus driving serial killer who butchers a woman while having sex with her for seemingly no reason. Also killing the serial killer so early in the plot feels very strange, as it beheads the tension in a major way, before the narrative then shifts again and basically states explicitly that the serial killer wasn't the monster at all, but that Mexico itself is the monster and these exceedingly surface-deep tourists - who've shown no respect to the country, its culture, themselves, or each other, and are in fact in the country to merely exploit it - are Mexico's only prey, because they're white (?) American (?) and in fact victims worthy of an audience's sympathy. The script is filled with tired cultural stereotypes horrendous visuals, from endless rape to botched plastic surgery. All in all, it feels completely unengenuine and xenophobic, like a cheap 70s-80s horror film in all the wrong ways and none of the good.

Prospects

Not sure 2019 is the best time to create a horror film where Mexico and its people are in essence the monster of the piece. The jingoistic undertones are blatant, tasteless, and surely will not go over well regardless of who the imagined audience is: it's too over-the-top to be boomer propaganda; too horrendous to appeal to the ring-wing religious base; too irresponsible and preachy to simply be sadistic entertainment for the gore crowd; and all in all just way too problematic for anyone else. In the end it plays like fear porn for middle America.