

A little dead inside...



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Movie review: Peelers

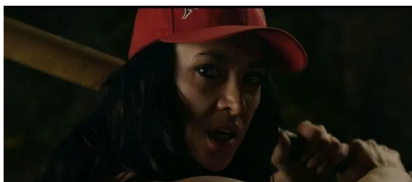
BY TAYLOR OF TERROR - MARCH 19, 2017



Over the past decade or so, there has been a growing genre of films that mimic the most common tropes of zombie movies, while giving itself some other defining characteristic that separates it from the masses (and masses) of undead films saturating the market. The most notable of these films is *28 Days Later*, while also including the remakes of George Romero classics *The Crazies* and *Day of the Dead*. *Peelers* is the latest film to fall into this category.

This, in itself, is neither praise nor condemnation. Like the films listed above, the creatures in *Peelers* are not walking dead but are living people infected in some form or another. In *Peelers*, they are covered in some kind of toxic oil (a thinly veiled homage to *Return of the Living Dead's* Tarman, perhaps?) that turns them into murderous maniacs. They are seemingly mindless – controlled only by their desire to kill – except, instead of like more traditional zombies, they use tools and weapons to kill their victims.

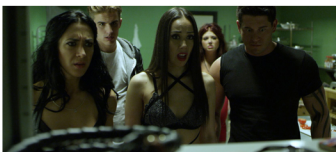
The film's



protagonist is Blue Jean Douglas (played by Wren Walker), a former baseball player who now owns a strip club. Or at least did, as she is selling the venue to move on to greener pastures. Of course, since this is a horror movie, announcing your retirement in the first act is a telltale sign that things are about to get bad in a hurry. For Blue Jean, that trouble comes in the form of a group of coal miners who come in to celebrate after discovering what they thought was crude oil in the mines. As I'm sure you've guessed by now, the oil was something else altogether and now Blue Jean and her employees will have to defend themselves against these monsters.

If you're going into this movie looking for T & A or gore, you won't be left wanting. The film takes place in a strip club so of course there is plenty of skin. The entire first act is basically just a regular night at a titty bar, the opening credits alone should satiate any appetite. Several of the girls have... interesting signature moves. From there, the movie goes into full blown horror mode, with lots of grossness to go around. The oil-soaked creatures are pretty disgusting looking on their own, and the copious amounts of vomit they spew is extra gross. There's also some good death scenes (albeit with some at-times cringe-worthy CGI blood splatters) – the infected don't eat their victims but do stab them, chop off their heads, and other delightfully gruesome things.

The acting in this movie is all pretty convincing, despite the only actor I recognized being *The Good Place's* Manny Jacinto. Some of the characters are a little hammy, with Blue Jean constantly



spouting baseball puns and her son Logan (Madison J. Loos) being the stereotypical "too handsome to follow the rules" type, but the actors own the roles and play them straight and with gusto. Beyond the CGI and the cheesy lines, the other biggest issue I had with this movie was how convenient everything was. Within the first five minutes, a guy brings a chainsaw into a strip club. Why? So the bartender can fix it, of course. Why he didn't take it to this bartender's home, I have no idea, but it's telegraphed right away that this chainsaw is going to come into play later. The way they discover to kill the infected – who, for some inexplicable reason, are impervious to bullets – is also just a little too convenient.

All that said, this movie is well paced, it has some great action and some decent comedy, and is overall pretty damn entertaining. There is plenty to keep you (me, at least) engaged and I was surprised at how quickly it moved. I never found myself bored or waiting for something to happen. Is it going to be put into the same echelon as Romero and Fulci's classics? Probably not. Is it a thought-provoking mind-bender with an important social message? Not to my knowledge. What it is, is a fun zombie infected movie with plenty of the things that make a good horror movie and I would recommend it to anyone who can enjoy a gross, gory romp.

Rating: 6.5/10

