

Hush - DVD

British horror bites back

by Neil Queen published on 17 July 2009

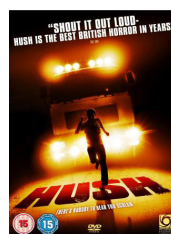
A low-budget horror, saddled with a 15 certificate, a little-known cast and an unknown first-time director - doesn't sound too promising, does it? Mercifully, the sum total is greater than its parts, as Hush proves to be a smart, taut, tense and neatly built chiller.

Driving down a wet M1 in the middle of the night, frustrated writer Zakes (William Ash) and his equally frustrated girlfriend Beth (Christine Bottomley) fight with each other and boredom, as their relationship threatens to fall apart, with Beth struggling to sum up the courage to confess to having an affair.

After being overtaken by a lorry, Zakes is convinced that he's just seen a woman chained up in the back of it and tries to call the police. Egged on by a girlfriend who views him as a waster, Zakes tries to help the woman but to little avail. After a stopover at a service station ends in Beth walking out on him, Zakes tries to win her back - even more so when she goes missing after the arrival of the lorry, Beth becoming another woman caged up by a shady fella with a nice line in hooded jackets.

With all pleas for help coming to either a dead end, arrest or excruciating pain, Zakes must track down the rotter alone, by hook, literally, or crook and try to rescue his girlfriend before anything happens.

Hush is a slick and utterly modern horror, gently echoing the torture porn aesthetic of unexplained, realistic violence and the Japanese way imbuing the mundane with terror - here the numbing twilight world of endless motorways and antiseptic service stations provide an unsettling air, while the couple's rowing sets a blandly discordant tone for what becomes a tense, claustrophobic movie.



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VERDICT

It uses violence sparingly, which heightens the tension, while the decision to stick to first person and not reveal anything about the bad guy or his motives keeps it from clichéd narrative cop-out.

Throw in a faceless cast that lends a vibe of realism, a script that keeps it neat, some sound direction and you have a cult classic in the making.

Stylish and potent, Hush punches above its weight, making it a highly watchable and accessible horror that calmly hits the spot.

Rating: 15

Starring: William Ash, Christine Bottomley.

Directed by: Mark Tonderai

Extras: Trailer, interviews, deleted scenes, featurettes.

At a glance

What is it?

Horror / thriller

Good

The audio track does a cracking track of ramping up the terror, with its animalistic onomatopoeic techno

Bad

It flags slightly in the middle, with the over-reliance on tension reinforcing the 15 certificate

Verdict

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Price £15.99

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10