



### BOTTOM LINE:

The lack of originality, even for a remake killed this movie out of the gate (pun intended).

There has been a lot of negativity surrounding remakes (now called "reboots") in Hollywood and the lack of creativity that it shows. Yes, it certainly does show a lack of creativity for coming up with an original basic storyline but, in the case of horror films, I have actually enjoyed the reinterpretations. I grew up with the horror movies of the 80s but, let's face it, they are cheesy and probably only enjoyable on that level or, at the very most, a nostalgic level. Horror movies have progressed and it takes a lot more to impress us these days.

Scary movies are cyclical. In 90s, the "suspense thriller" came back (ie The Sixth Sense and even Blair Witch Project). That bled over a bit into the 00's but now we are back to slasher movies. And, for the most part, they have been pretty decent. From last year's Friday the 13th to Rob Zombie's Halloween (not so much Halloween 2). But, my favorite horror franchise, hands down, has always been A Nightmare On Elm Street so when this remake came along, I was excited (I'm not the type to get "offended", if I were, I just wouldn't watch it). I was hoping that this would be a reboot almost in the way that Halloween and even Batman Begins was. Take the idea of the original, but update it and make it darker, creepier, scarier. That's not exactly what you get with 'A Nightmare On Elm Street'.

**SPOILERS START HERE. IF YOU WANT TO READ A SPOILER-FREE REVIEW, [HEAD ON OVER TO MATT'S \[1\]](#), YOU JUST WON'T GET THAT HERE, I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT HOW.**

The movie starts off with Twilight's Kellan Lutz in the midst of a nightmare and plagued by Jackie Earle Haley's Freddie Krueger. He wakes up in the very diner of his nightmare, obviously sleep deprived (you can tell because he is drinking coffee and his eyes are squinting a little). After a character "setup" scene, Lutz is heaved back into the nightmare and attacked by Freddie (in "real" life, his friend watches as he is attacking himself). The sequence starts off creepy enough but starts to drag on a little bit as this was all essentially a setup scene before the title reveal.

The movie continues to go seemingly slow for a bit, with a few glimpses of Freddie here and there. A few minutes (or several), a character is whipped around a room in a way that is obviously supposed to be scary but was just comical. After a few characters get killed off, you start to wonder who you are supposed to be rooting for; these teenagers that you really don't care about as you get no background or connection to them or the accused pedophile out for revenge?

About 40 minutes in, it finally starts to come out who your heroes of the movie are so you can finally focus your attention on who you are rooting for and why. For most of the movie, it feels like just another sequel to the staling franchise until you finally start to get some background story to Freddie and why these kids are haunted (or hunted, rather) by him. First time feature director Samuel Bayer obviously went back and watched every mainstream horror movie he could think of in recent times as he was sure to hit on every cliché possible; someone is looking out a window just for one of their friends to inexplicably jump into the shot (apparently from a tree or something) and bang on the window right in their face when they aren't in a panic, a girl looks in a mirror, bends down to wash her face, slowly moving up for....nothing to be there!, guy IS in a panic and inexplicably grabs his friend in the most violent way possible...to not panic her and keep her quiet. Bayer couldn't come up with original ideas for an unoriginal story so he basically went to the well and saw what has worked in the past, not thinking that it has all been done so much that there was no shock factor at all.

Another big issue with the film is that, like in the original, the parents are trying to keep a dark secret from their kids. They go through every measure possible to keep this secret from their kids, including hiding or destroying all of their childhood pictures, having a mass coverup throughout the town and, yes, killing Freddie to begin with. The one drawback to this problem is that the main character's mother (Friday Night Light's Connie Britton) holds on to a picture of all the kids that unravels their entire coverup. She holds on to this picture in a very conspicuous OPEN ME folder



hidden very weakly in a dresser. There is no reason that she would hold on to this picture as, though it has her child in it, it would only conjure up BAD memories for anyone that sees it so it was essentially just a weak plot device that could have easily been uncovered by going to a library and looking up old newspapers instead of hidden in plain sight in their mother's dresser.

Haley plays Freddie with creepy charm as his voice is tailor made for this role. The problem is that they tried so hard to recreate Freddie and make sure he didn't look too much like the original, that they hampered Haley's ability to act. There were so many prosthetics on his face that he couldn't move, it was like a mannequin who's mouth moves ever so slightly but everything else stays in place. I'm not even sure if the guy was able to blink. Robert Englund was able to move and contort his face in every way a human normally can, lending a huge creep factor to the role that just wasn't there in this movie. Another issue is that they kept 2 or 3 of Freddie's trademark cheesy lines and puns in the movie but had nothing else that was (purposely) cheesy. They really needed to go all out throwback cheese or remake this thing with balls.

Believe me, I am not a stickler for protecting the "sanctity" of original movies. I enjoy remakes, sometimes more so than the original but it's things like this that really made this movie bomb for me. The lack of originality, even for a remake killed this movie out of the gate (pun intended).

### TRAILER:

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