

= Doomsday ( 2008 film ) =

Doomsday is a 2008 English @-@ language science fiction action film written and directed by Neil Marshall . The film takes place in the future in Scotland , which has been quarantined because of a deadly virus . When the virus is found in London , political leaders send a team led by Major Eden Sinclair ( Rhona Mitra ) to Scotland to find a possible cure . Sinclair 's team runs into two types of survivors : marauders and medieval knights . Doomsday was conceived by Marshall based on the idea of futuristic soldiers facing medieval knights . In producing the film , he drew inspiration from various movies , including Mad Max , Escape from New York and 28 Days Later .

Marshall had a budget three times the size of his previous two films , The Descent and Dog Soldiers , and the director filmed the larger @-@ scale Doomsday in Scotland and South Africa . The film was released on 14 March 2008 in the United States and Canada and in the United Kingdom on 9 May 2008 . Doomsday did not perform well at the box office , and critics gave the film mixed reviews .

= = Plot = =

In 2008 , an unknown killer virus , dubbed " The Reaper Virus " infected Scotland . Unable to contain the outbreak or cure the infected , The UK government built a massive 60 @-@ foot wall that isolated Scotland from the rest of Britain . The quarantine was deemed a success ; however , the extreme method employed by the government destroyed diplomatic and economic relations between the UK and the rest of the world . This led to massive unemployment , civil unrest and extreme economic turmoil , causing the UK to collapse into a dystopia .

In 2035 , 27 years after the quarantine , during a raid , police discover several people infected with Reaper Virus . The Prime Minister John Hatcher shares with domestic security chief Captain Nelson satellite footage of survivors in Scotland . Believing a cure may exist , Hatcher orders Nelson to send a team into Scotland to find medical researcher Dr. Kane , who was working on a cure when Scotland was quarantined . Nelson chooses Major Eden Sinclair to lead the team .

Sinclair 's team crosses the wall and goes to Glasgow , Dr. Kane 's last known location . In Glasgow , while searching the local hospital for survivors , Sinclair and her team are ambushed by a group of marauders . Sgt. Norton and Dr. Stirling manage to escape , while the team suffers heavy casualties . Sinclair and Dr. Talbot are captured by what turns out to be a huge gang of brutal cannibals . Sinclair is interrogated by the gang 's leader , Sol , who plans to use her as leverage to cross the wall and leave Scotland . He leaves and joins the rest of the gang , who grill Dr. Talbot and eat him . With the help of Cally , another prisoner , Sinclair escapes and kills Viper , Sol 's lover . After meeting with Norton and Stirling , they escape on a train . Cally reveals that she and Sol are Kane 's children . Unsatisfied with Kane 's rule , Sol left to create his own army .

Meanwhile , Hatcher plans secretly to isolate the central London area because of the infection . However , an infected man breaks into his office and tries to kill him . Nelson shoots and kills the man , but his blood splatters on Hatcher . Michael Canaris , Hatcher 's right hand man , quarantines him and takes his place as de facto Prime Minister . Hatcher later commits suicide .

After leaving the train , Sinclair 's group are arrested by soldiers armed with archaic weapons and armor . They are taken to a medieval castle and imprisoned . Their leader , Marcus Kane , tells Sinclair the truth : there is no cure , only people with a natural immunity . Originally a medical researcher , he was devastated when his family was left behind during the quarantine . After losing his wife , Kane became a twisted , sadistic leader . He sentences Sinclair and her group to death , pitting Sinclair against Telamon , his executioner , in a small fighting ground to entertain his followers . Sinclair subdues and kills Telamon . During the duel , the rest of the group escapes , retrieves their equipment and rescue Sinclair .

Sinclair , Norton , Stirling and Cally escape to a fallout shelter entrance on horseback . They locate an underground facility in the forest and find an intact 2007 Bentley Continental GT , which they fuel up . Kane 's medieval knights arrive and kill Norton . Sinclair and the others drive the Bentley back to the quarantine wall . On the way , they are intercepted by Sol 's gang , who seeks to avenge

Viper 's death . After a high @-@ speed chase , Sol and many of his men are killed and Sinclair 's group escape .

The car is tracked down by a government gunship . Canaris arrives and reveals he will let the virus continue as a form of population control and profit . Cally 's blood is to be used as a vaccine for the virus . Calley and Stirling board the gunship , while Sinclair chooses to stay behind . Nelson flies into the quarantine zone to speak with Sinclair and she gives him a recording of the conversation , the evidence to bring down Canaris . The recording is later broadcast to the rest of the country . Sinclair retrieves Sol 's head and returns to his gang . Looking at the head , they cheer , accepting Sinclair as their new leader .

= = Cast = =

Rhona Mitra as Major Eden Sinclair of the Department of Domestic Security , selected to lead a team to find a cure . The heroine was inspired by the character Snake Plissken . Mitra worked out and fight trained for eleven weeks for the film . Marshall described Mitra 's character as a soldier who has been rendered cold from her military indoctrination and her journey to find the cure for the virus is one of redemption . The character was originally written to have " funny " lines , but the director scaled back on the humor to depict Sinclair as more " hardcore " .

Bob Hoskins as Bill Nelson , Eden Sinclair 's boss . Marshall sought to have Hoskins emulate his " bulldog " role from the 1980 film The Long Good Friday .

Malcolm McDowell as Marcus Kane , a former scientist who now lives as a feudal lord in an abandoned castle , having medieval army under his command and controlling parts of the country . McDowell described his character as a King Lear . According to Marshall , Kane is based on Kurtz from Joseph Conrad 's Heart of Darkness . The director originally sought to bring Sean Connery out of retirement to play Kane but was unsuccessful .

Alexander Siddig as Prime Minister John Hatcher . Marshall originally wrote Hatcher as a sympathetic character misguided by Canaris , but revised the character to be more like Canaris in embracing political manipulation .

David O 'Hara as Michael Canaris , a senior official within the British government whose position is never stated , who acts as Hatcher 's puppeteer . Canaris was depicted to have a fascist background , speaking lines that paralleled Adolf Hitler 's mindset of cleansing .

Craig Conway as Sol , Kane 's son and the leader of the marauders . He has a biohazard sign tattooed on his back and a large scar across his chest . Even though he is Kane 's son , he distanced himself from him and formed his own army . He was a young child in the original 2008 quarantine .

Lee @-@ Anne Liebenberg as Viper , the wild woman who is Sol 's lover and his second @-@ in @-@ command .

Also cast as part of Eden Sinclair 's team were Adrian Lester as Sergeant Norton , Chris Robson as Miller , and Leslie Simpson as Carpenter . The names Miller and Carpenter were nods to directors George Miller and John Carpenter , whose films influenced Marshall 's Doomsday . Sean Pertwee and Darren Morfitt portrayed the team 's medical scientists , Dr Talbot and Dr Stirling , respectively . MyAnna Buring portrayed Kane 's daughter Cally . Emma Cleasby played Eden 's mother at the start of the film .

= = Production = =

= = = Conception = = =

Director Neil Marshall lived near the ruins of Hadrian 's Wall , a Roman fortification built to defend England against Scotland 's tribes . The director fantasised about what conditions would cause the Wall to be rebuilt and imagined a lethal virus would work . Marshall had also visualised a mixture of medieval and futuristic elements : " I had this vision of these futuristic soldiers with high @-@ tech

weaponry and body armour and helmets ? clearly from the future ? facing a medieval knight on horseback . " The director favoured the English / Scottish border as the location for a rebuilt wall , finding the location more plausible than a lengthy boundary between the United States and Canada . Additionally , Scotland is the home to multiple castles , which fit Marshall 's medieval aspect .

The lethal virus in Domsday differs from contemporary films like 28 Days Later and 28 Weeks Later by being an authentic plague that actually devastates the population , instead of infecting people so they become aggressive cannibals or zombies . Marshall intended the virus as the backdrop to the story , having survivors scavenge for themselves and set up a primitive society . The director drew from tribal history around the world to design the society . Though the survivors are depicted as brutal , Marshall sought to have " shades of gray " by characterising some people in England as selfishly manipulative .

The director intended Domsday as a tribute to post @-@ apocalyptic films from the 1970s and 1980s , explaining , " Right from the start , I wanted my film to be an homage to these sorts of movies , and deliberately so . I wanted to make a movie for a new generation of audience that hadn 't seen those movies in the cinema ? hadn 't seen them at all maybe ? and to give them the same thrill that I got from watching them . But kind of contemporise it , pump up the action and the blood and guts . " Cinematic influences on Domsday include :

Mad Max ( 1979 ) , The Road Warrior ( 1981 ) , and Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome ( 1985 ) : Marshall drew inspiration from the punk style of the films and also shaped Rhona Mitra 's character after Max Rockatansky as a police officer with a history .

Escape from New York ( 1981 ) : The director drew from the concepts of gang warfare and the experience of being walled @-@ in . Rhona Mitra 's character has an eye patch like Snake Plissken ( the eye patch is not in the last part of the film ) , though the director sought to create a plot point for the eye of Mitra 's character to reinforce its inclusion .

Excalibur ( 1981 ) : Marshall enjoyed John Boorman 's artistry in the film and sought to include its medieval aspects in Domsday .

The Warriors ( 1979 ) : The director enjoyed the tough and violent films of Walter Hill , including the " visual style of the gang warfare " .

No Blade of Grass ( 1970 ) : Marshall perceived the film as a predecessor to 28 Days Later and 28 Weeks Later , though he sought to make Domsday less straight @-@ faced .

The Omega Man ( 1971 ) : The director was inspired by the " empty city " notion of the film and drew upon its dark and gritty nature .

A Boy and His Dog ( 1974 ) : Marshall created a homage to the 1974 film 's ending by including a scene of a human being cooked in Domsday .

Waterworld ( 1995 ) : The director enjoyed the gritty atmosphere and how people scavenge to survive and adapt in their new world .

Gladiator ( 2000 ) : Like in Gladiator , Marshall sought to put Mitra 's character through a trial by combat .

Children of Men ( 2006 ) : With the film coming out during the development of Domsday , the director realised the similarity of the premises and sought to make his film " more bloody and more fun " .

Marshall also cited Metalstorm ( 1983 ) , Zulu ( 1964 ) , and works of director Terry Gilliam like The Fisher King ( 1991 ) as influences in producing Domsday . Marshall acknowledged that his creation is " so outrageous you 've got to laugh " . He reflected , " I do think it 's going to divide audiences ... I just want them to be thrilled and enthralled . I want them to be overwhelmed by the imagery they 've seen . And go back and see it again . "

= = = Filming = = =

Rogue Pictures signed Marshall to direct Domsday in October 2005 , and in November 2006 , actress Rhona Mitra was signed to star in Domsday as the leader of the elite team . Production was budgeted at £ 17 million , an amount that was triple the combined total of Marshall 's previous two films , Dog Soldiers ( 2002 ) and The Descent ( 2005 ) . The increase in scale was a challenge

to the director , who had been accustomed to small casts and limited locations . Marshall described the broader experience : " There 's fifty or more speaking parts ; I 'm dealing with thousands of extras , logistical action sequences , explosions , car chases ? the works . "

Production began in February 2007 in South Africa , where the majority of filming took place . South Africa was chosen as a primary filming location for economic reasons , costing a third of estimated production in the United Kingdom . Shooting in South Africa lasted 56 days out of 66 days , with the remaining ten taking place in Scotland . Marshall said of South Africa 's appeal , " The landscape , the rock formations , I thought it was about as close to Scotland as you 're likely to get , outside of Ireland or Wales . " In Scotland , secondary filming took place in the city of Glasgow , including Haghill in the city 's East End , and at Blackness Castle in West Lothian , the latter chosen when filmmakers were unable to shoot at Doune Castle . The entire shoot , involving thousands of extras , included a series of complex fight scenes and pyrotechnical displays . The director sought to minimise the use of computer @-@ generated elements in Doomsday , preferring to subscribe to " old @-@ school filmmaking " . In the course of production , several sequences were dropped due to budgetary concerns , including a scene in which helicopter gunships attacked a medieval castle .

A massive car chase scene was filmed for Doomsday , described by Marshall to be one part Mad Max , one part Bullitt ( 1968 ) , and one part " something else entirely different " . Marshall had seen the Aston Martin DBS V12 used in the James Bond film Casino Royale ( 2006 ) and sought to implement a similarly " sexy " car . Since the car company did not do product placement , the filmmakers purchased three new Bentley Continental GTs for US \$ 150 @,@ 000 each . The film also contains the director 's trademark gore and violence from previous films , including a scene where a character is cooked alive and eaten . The production was designed by Simon Bowles who had worked previously with Marshall on " Dog Soldiers " and " The Descent " . Paul Hyett , the prosthetic make @-@ up designer who worked on The Descent , contributed to the production , researching diseases including sexually transmitted diseases to design the make @-@ up for victims of the Reaper virus .

= = = Visual effects = = =

The visual effects for Doomsday stemmed from the 1980s stunt @-@ based films , involving approximately 275 visual effects shots . While filmmakers did not seek innovative visual effects , they worked with budget restrictions by creating set extensions . With most shots taking place in daylight , the extensions involved matte paint and 2D and 3D solutions . The visual effects crew visited Scotland to take reference photos so scenes that were filmed in Cape Town , South Africa could instead have Scottish backgrounds . Several challenges for the visual effects crew included the illustration of cow overpopulation in line with a decimated human population and the convincing creation of the rebuilt Hadrian Wall in different lights and from different distances . The most challenging visual effects shot in Doomsday was the close @-@ up in which a main character is burned alive . The shot required multiple enhancements and implementations of burning wardrobe , burning pigskin , and smoke and fire elements to look authentic .

Neil Marshall 's car chase sequence also involved the use of visual effects . A scene in which the Bentley crashes through a bus was intended to implement pyrotechnics , but fire marshals in the South African nature reserve , the filming location for the scene , forbade their use due to dry conditions . A miniature mock @-@ up was created and visual effects were applied so the filming of the mock @-@ up would overlay the filming of the actual scene without pyrotechnics . Other visual effects that were created were the Thames flood plain and a remote Scottish castle . A popular effect with the visual effects crew was the " rabbit explosion " scene , depicting a rabbit being shot by guns on automatic sensors . The crew sought to expand the singular shot , but Neil Marshall sought to focus on one shot to emphasize its comic nature and avoid drawing unnecessary sympathy from audiences .

= = = Music = = =

Marshall originally intended to include 1980s synth music in his film , but he found it difficult to combine the music with the intense action . Instead , composer Tyler Bates composed a score using heavy orchestra music . The film also included songs from the bands Adam and the Ants , Fine Young Cannibals , Siouxsie and the Banshees , Frankie Goes to Hollywood , and Kasabian . The song " Two Tribes " by Frankie Goes to Hollywood was the only song to remain in the film from the first draft of the screenplay . " Spellbound " by Siouxsie and the Banshees was a favorite song of the director , who sought to include it . Marshall also hoped to include the song " Into the Light " by the Banshees , but it was left out due to the producer disliking it and the cost being too high to license it .

= = Release = =

= = = Theatrical run = = =

For its theatrical run , the film was originally intended to be distributed by Focus Features under Rogue Pictures , but the company transferred Doomsday among other films to Universal Pictures for larger @-@ scale distribution and marketing beginning in 2008 . Doomsday was commercially released on 14 March 2008 in the United States and Canada in 1 @, @ 936 theatres , grossing US \$ 4 @, @ 926 @, @ 565 in its opening weekend and ranking seventh in the box office , which Box Office Mojo reported as a " failed " opening . Its theatrical run in the United States and Canada lasted 28 days , ending on 10 April 2008 , having grossed US \$ 11 @, @ 008 @, @ 770 . The film opened in the United Kingdom , Republic of Ireland , and Malta on 9 May 2008 , grossing a total of US \$ 2 @, @ 027 @, @ 749 in its entire run . The film 's performance in the UK was considered a " disappointing run " . The film premiered in Italy in August 2008 , grossing an overall US \$ 500 @, @ 000 . Worldwide , Doomsday has grossed US \$ 22 @, @ 211 @, @ 426 .

= = = Critical response = = =

Doomsday was not screened for critics in advance of its commercial opening in cinemas . The film received mixed reviews from critics . Rotten Tomatoes reported that 50 % of critics gave the film positive write @-@ ups , based on a sample of 68 , with an average score of 5 @. @ 2 / 10 . The website 's consensus reads , " Doomsday is a pale imitation of previous futuristic thrillers , minus the cohesive narrative and charismatic leads . " At Metacritic , which assigns a normalized rating out of 100 to reviews from mainstream critics , the film has received an average score of 51 , based on 14 reviews .

Alison Rowat of The Herald perceived Doomsday as " decidedly everyday " for a thriller , with Marshall 's script having too many unanswered questions and characters not fully developed despite a decent cast . Rowat said , " In his previous films , Marshall made something out of nothing . Here he does the opposite " . The critic acknowledged the attempted homages and the B @-@ movie approach but thought that " there has to be something more " . Steve Pratt of The Northern Echo weighed in , " As a writer , Marshall leaves gaping holes in the plot while as a director he knows how to extract maximum punch from car chases , beatings and fights without stinting on the gore as body parts are lopped off with alarming frequency and bodies squashed to a bloody pulp . " Philip Key of the Liverpool Daily Post described the film , " Doomsday is a badly thought @-@ out science fiction saga which leaves more questions than answers . "

Alonso Duralde of MSNBC described Doomsday : " It 's ridiculous , derivative , confusingly edited and laden with gore , but it 's the kind of over @-@ the @-@ top grindhouse epic that wears down your defenses and eventually makes you just go with it . " Duralde believed that Mitra 's character would have qualified as a " memorable fierce chick " if the film was not so silly . David Hiltbrand of The Philadelphia Inquirer rated Doomsday at 2 @. @ 5 out of 4 stars and thought that the film was better paced than most fantasy @-@ action films , patiently building up its action scenes to the major " fireworks " where other films would normally be exhausted early on .

Reviewer James Berardinelli found the production of Doomsday to be a mess , complaining , " The action sequences might be more tense if they weren 't obfuscated by rapid @-@ fire editing , and the backstory is muddled and not all that interesting . " Berardinelli also believed the attempted development of parallel storylines to be too much for the film , weakening the eventual payoff . Dennis Harvey of Variety said Neil Marshall 's " flair for visceral action " made up for Doomsday 's lack of originality and that the film barely had a dull moment . He added , " There 's no question that Doomsday does what it does with vigor , high technical prowess and just enough humor to avoid turning ridiculous . " Harvey considered the conclusion relatively weak , and found the quality of the acting satisfactory for the genre , while reserving praise for the " stellar " work of the stunt personnel . Peter Hartlaub of the San Francisco Chronicle also praised the film 's stunts , noting that it was reminiscent of " the beauty of the exploitation film era " . Hartlaub said of the effect , " Hire a couple of great stuntmen and a halfway sober cinematographer , and you didn 't even need a screenwriter . "

Matt Zoller Seitz of The New York Times saw Rhona Mitra 's character as a mere impersonation of Snake Plissken and considered the film 's major supporting characters to be " lifeless " . Seitz described his discontent over the lack of innovation in the director 's attempted homages of older films : " Doomsday is frenetic , loud , wildly imprecise and so derivative that it doesn 't so much seem to reference its antecedents as try on their famous images like a child playing dress @-@ up . "

= = = Scottish response = = =

Scotland 's tourism agency VisitScotland welcomed Doomsday , hoping that the film would attract tourism by marketing Scotland to the rest of the world . The country 's national body for film and television , Scottish Screen , had contributed £ 300 @, @ 000 to the production of Doomsday , which provided economic benefits for the cast and crew who dwelt in Scotland . A spokesperson from Scottish Screen anticipated , " It 's likely to also attract a big audience who will see the extent to which Scotland can provide a flexible and diverse backdrop to all genres of film . "

In contrast , several parties have expressed concern that Doomsday presents negativity in England 's latent view of Scotland based on their history . Angus MacNeil , member of the Scottish National Party , said of the film 's impact : " The complimentary part is that people are thinking about Scotland as we are moving more and more towards independence . But the film depicts a country that is still the plaything of London . It is decisions made in London that has led to it becoming a quarantine zone . "

Doomsday was not nominated nor considered as a possible contender at the BAFTA Scotland awards despite being one of the largest productions in Scotland in recent memory ; £ 2 million was spent on local services . Director Neil Marshall applied for membership with the organisation to add " fresh blood " , but Doomsday was not mentioned during jury deliberations . According to a spokesperson from the organisation , the film was not formally submitted for consideration , and no one directly invited the filmmakers to discuss a possible entry . Several of BAFTA Scotland 's jury members believed that the criteria and procedures for a Scottish film were unclear and could have been more formalised .

= = = Haunted house = = =

Doomsday was used as inspiration in building a haunted house for Halloween Horror Nights in Orlando .

= = = Home media = = =

Doomsday was the first Blu @-@ ray title released by Universal Pictures after the studio 's initial support of the now @-@ folded HD DVD format . The unrated version was released on DVD and Blu @-@ ray on 29 July 2008 in the United States , containing an audio commentary and bonus

materials covering the film 's post @-@ apocalyptic scenario , visual effects , and destructive vehicles and weapons . IGN assessed the unrated DVD 's video quality , writing , " For the most part , it 's a crisp disc that 's leaps above standard def . " The audio quality was considered up to par with the film 's loud scenes , though IGN found volume irregularity between the loud scenes and the quiet scenes . IGN called the commentary " a pretty straight @-@ up behind @-@ the @-@ scenes take on the movie and a bit over @-@ congratulatory " . It found the " most fascinating " featurette to be about visual effects , while deeming the other featurettes skippable .