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'Scream VI' Nicely Slashes Its Horror Conventions With Fresh Bloody Thrills

written by Toan Le • 1 year ago



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With the recent surprise success of "Scream" (2022), the franchise continues to thrive on its nostalgic factors with many new elements in "Scream VI." Truly, it puts another exciting coat of paint on a cult classic.

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"Scream VI" is a bloody thrill ride that will keep audiences entertained.
Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

The film continues with the four survivors attending college in New York City after the 2021 Ghostface massacre in Woodsboro. Sam (Melissa Barrera) and Tara (Jenna Ortega) Carpenter relocated to the Big Apple, still dealing with the trauma and loss of their friends. Surviving Woodsboro with them are the Meeks-Martin siblings, Mindy (Jasmin Savoy Brown) and Chad (Mason Gooding).

Soon, their horrific past catches up with them when Ghostface returns with an aggressive rampage, roping in both Gale Weathers (Courteney Cox) and Kirby Reed (Hayden Panettiere) – survivors of previous murders by Ghostface. With the help of Detective Wayne Bailey (Dermot Mulroney), the core survivors ultimately decide to end Ghostface’s terror once and for all.



The core survivors decide to take down the infamous Ghostface once and for all.
Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

With the story taking place in a new setting, the franchise neatly brings in a fresh change of atmosphere where the stakes are grander and riskier. The story does a great job of keeping a blood-rushing pace, so everything seems more like an adrenaline rush, which is what a good slasher film should be able to do. The kills and gore are more vivid and entertaining this time around. Some of the chase sequences are also more fun and creative.

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Part of the acting is overly dramatic, but it contributes to the “Scream” franchise’s overall identity. The twists and breadcrumbs instilled in the film are nicely executed. Some puzzle pieces are highly creative and niche; however, they can be cumbersome at some points.

Along with the main narrative, the film does pay homage to its roots with props from all the previous installments. There is a side storyline that acts as a really nice motif to “Scream 2” (1997) even though it does give off a cheesy feeling. With that being said, the whole setting (with three of four survivors attending college) follows the exact same timeline as the second installment in the franchise, just in a different city. It is a recycled plot with newly added elements. It serves as a nice meta-joke when it is referenced by the slasher expert, Mindy.

Humor also plays a role in the film. It is very subtle and quick, acting as a relief for moviegoers between kills, even though some are misses. There is a snappy little joke that points out the recent trope of today’s movies at the very end.

With the return of “legacy characters,” the film does avoid the continuous tropes that are present in “Scream” (2022). Kirby’s involvement in the whole story adds many interesting puzzle pieces regarding who Ghostface is. The return of Gale still retains that pleasant ongoing element of the past as she represents a true legacy to the original and the future installments.



Kirby Reed’s (Hayden Panettiere) return to the franchise brings a wonderful layer of nostalgia. Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

An appreciated aspect the film delivers is the intention and intelligence its characters possess. The film does a great job of flipping the norms of the past where many characters are in dire need of rescue rather than fighting back.

Where the movie falters, however, is its logic in how things are concluded. There are many times when the actions raise some confusion. The twists are as entertaining as they appear, but the pay-offs still feel a bit wobbly and short-circuit, and sometimes clues seem vaguely connected. Plus, some of the characters’ endings raise the question of how it’s even possible, but knowing the franchise, the filmmakers are aiming for a nostalgic effect, which to some, might seem cheap.

Still, the film is super entertaining with many action sequences that keep most viewers on the edge of their seats. It encapsulates the feel and energy of the original with fresh takes on the genre and characters. The change of atmosphere does help the movie to venture outside of the franchise’s scope, constructing new, exciting elements for future installments. Yes, its narrative and logic need to be fleshed out and re-examined, but the film still delivers a satisfying experience. “Scream VI” might not be the best in the franchise, but with many blood-pumping action set pieces and entertaining conclusions, it surely is a killer good time.

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