



A college student must relive the day of her murder in a loop that will end only when she discovers her killer's identity.

# HAPPY DEATH DAY

The movie succeeds in resurrect the formula of horror movies with a touch of comedy...

**RELEASED:** October 13, 2017

**DIRECTOR:** Christopher B. Landon

**CAST:** Jessica Rothe, Israel Broussard, Ruby Modine, Charles Aitken

**RUNNING TIME:** 96 min

**PLOT:** After a night of partying and drinking, a young college student, Tree Gelbman (Jessica Rothe), wakes up on her birthday with a hangover in an unknown dorm. As Tree goes about her day, everything normal until her brutal murder by a masked man. For her surprise she wakes up again and again in the same day, but every time closer to discover who is her horrifying killer...

**Showing a person stuck in time,** reliving the same 24 hours day after day is not exactly something unknown of the movies, it has been seen in the war drama 'Edge of Tomorrow' and in many others succeed movies. The same happens with young desperate girls fleeing from an implacable killer. The merit of the Happy Death Day is to be

able to mix both without the arrogance to take more seriously than necessary, thus delivering an essentially fun horror movie – even with the 'clichés' - the kind that has become rare since the end of late 1990s.

In the new film directed by Christopher Landon, a young college student named Tree (Jessica Rothe) dies in a frightening and wakes up again the morning of the day she died. At first, she thinks she is living a great déjà-vu, but soon realizes that things are more serious, embarking on a journey to discover the identity of the murderer and thus be able to break free of this stream of repetitions.

Although the plot does not require much intellectual effort to be understood, the script uses well enough artifice to distract the viewer from the focus and to generate the sensation of element surprise. Without much effort, Happy Death Day do a good job in this regard.

Landon has experience in reviving

horror film scenarios - he did the same thing by working on Paranormal Activity franchise. There is also merit from the producer Jason Blum, founder of Blumhouse Productions, who notably is willing to bet on trials in the genre of films.

One trend that has become the rule in recent years is that to make humor in horror films one must appeal to bizarre situations, for example grace must come from litter of blood squirting, guts jumping out of bodies and gore situations that test the stomach of those who are watching. Happy Death Day escapes from this type of common place, investing much more in exaggerated sound design and clichés based on lighting techniques to give fun to spectators.

The comedy also comes much from Tree's redemptive dynamics, which begins the feature being something close to Regina George's 'Mean Girls' and became a better person with adversity, role that fit well for an unknown actress who gave life to the protagonist.

Of course, a few things could have gotten a better finish. For example,

there is a moment when the protagonist discovers that somehow the successive deaths affect her health. This ends up getting a bit lost in the plot, since at a given time the information sounds like something important and then seems to be completely ignored – the only function of this is to show to Tree that, contrary to what she thought, she does not have much time to solve her situation. Another thing that is poorly worked out is that the film does not allow introducing an element that justifies the young woman's entry into this cycle of repetitions, leaving the unusual event as a work of chance.

In general, the movie expresses well this wave of films that mix comedy and terror, making the viewer laugh as he feels the suspense of waiting to know what the next scene will be. With an end that surprises, Happy Death Day is not one of those films in which the end destroys the whole plot.

## VEREDICT

More of the same, but with a differential.

★★★★★☆☆☆☆ 7,8

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