

Pick Up & Deliver 795: Spooky Movie Roundup '25, part 2

Transcript

Welcome to pick up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step out for a walk and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around. I'm Brendan Riley.

Well, good afternoon listeners. It's a chilly day here in suburban Chicago. The sun is behind some clouds, but it is shining through and the weather is in the low twenties Fahrenheit, which is probably minus three or minus four or minus five centigrade. If you're a European friend, or if you're anywhere else in the world that uses a sensible weather pattern. I think Fahrenheit is better for people feeling the weather than Celsius is, but that's really the only thing I think Fahrenheit is better for. So I am taking a walk to run a few errands, and I thought while I was doing that, I would talk to you about some stuff. I would record a couple episodes for you.

This will be... I have six episodes left to record for the year, and this is going to be two of them. I was looking back and it's been a month and a half now since October ended, which means it's probably time for me to do the spooky movie roundup. So those of you who aren't movie fans, this one and the next one might be a little disappointing for you, but what I do in October is I try to watch as many spooky movies as I can. I generally don't watch very many spooky movies the rest of the year, and then I watch them all in October this year, I did succeed in watching thirty spooky movies and or TV shows in thirty days, the idea being that the TV shows, uh, if I watch ninety minutes of spooky TV shows, it counts as a movie. Or if I watch a movie, I also backloaded a few, uh, which are in this list here, and I'm not including the TV shows, so I watched some TV. I backloaded some movies in September, just in case. There was a day when I couldn't get a movie watched, which often was the case, but often I'd get like two on a Saturday and then I wouldn't get any on a Tuesday or whatever.

But what I'm going to do is buzz through these. My goal is to talk about each movie for about a minute, give you a little sense of what it is and what I thought of it, whether you want to watch it or not. And then we'll go on to the next. Some of the movies will get more attention, some of them will get not much at all. And this is going to be two episodes.

So this is Brendan's spooky 2025 Spooky Movie Roundup part one. We start on the twentieth of September, which is when I began back loading the movies. I watched two that day and they were twenty eight years later and *Pet Cemetery*.

Now, **28 Years Later**, I really liked it is the third in the Danny Boyle Zombie movie series, although I don't think Danny Boyle. I think Alex Garland did the second one, directed the second one. I think Danny Boyle produced it and then Danny Boyle helmed the third one, and now they have a fourth one coming this year called *The Bone Tower*, which takes place in the same moment as twenty eight years later. It's a prequel to twenty eight Years Later, although it's still sequel to the other two movies. It's so far, it's a really interesting take on the zombie phenomenon, as imagined in the twenty eight years or twenty eight Days Later universe. The zombies aren't really that scary, although there are a couple moments that are pretty creepy. They basically add some characters into the movie just to have some moments where we can see the zombies really doing the zombie thing, because most of the stories about parents and kids and life in a dangerous and hopeless situation. I really liked it. I think it's a movie I'm going to enjoy checking out again sometime. I'm really looking forward to the next one, which looks to be absolutely bananas, so that should be fun. That's twenty eight years later.

I also watched **Pet Cemetery** from nineteen eighty nine. This is a movie I'd heard about a lot but never seen. I will point out some highlights. Boy, the dad was infuriatingly dumb like he already had his kid almost get over, run, get run over once and then he lets him get run over. Infuriating. Anyway, I think the movie's put together pretty well. The end gets absolutely wild in a good way for a horror movie. I really like the presence of Fred Gwynne, who played Herman Munster, and also the judge on *My Cousin Vinny*. He's pretty great and as the sort of Mainer with a Maine accent. So the original *Pet Cemetery* I recommend. I also did not realize it was going to have a ghost giving advice, which is a thing that happens, or a ghost trying to give advice, which the thing that happened and not something I knew was going to be there. I never read the novel, so I was not prepared for what it was going to be, other than the sort of random things I'd heard occasionally.

Next up we have, on the twenty first of September, I watched **Final Destination Bloodlines**. This is the most recent of the Final Destination films, and a pretty good one. I didn't like numbers three or four. I thought Final Destination five was actually pretty good, and then this would be Final Destination six, which I thought was also pretty good. I don't know if I liked it better than five yet, but at least tried to do something different. Add some really wild deaths, and the plot did not go exactly how I thought it would. So those things all together, I thought were pretty, pretty great. I hope that you get to watch it. If you like those movies, it's definitely worth it.

Next up, I watched **Smile 2** on September twenty second. This is the sequel to smile, obviously, and it comes from it has the something mysterious is happening and killing people. And there's a timer formula, which I think of as being the ring. I'm sure that there were movies that did that before the ring, and I will think of some eventually. But the ring is the sort of most prototypical of these, and it follows is another of these. Smile is another of these where something bad is happening and it's coming for you, and you can see that it's coming, but there's nothing you can do about it. I guess sinister is kind of like that too. I thought smile two was fine. I didn't think that it improved on the smile formula really much at all. I'm sure they're making another one because I think it was popular. One of the things I don't like about the smile movies, and I think it happened more in smile two. Is that a key component of what's happening in the movie is that the person who's afflicted with this, whatever it is, is seeing things. And so there are many sequences in the movie where something is not happening, but we think it's happening. And so the character thinks it's happening. So they're seeing it and we're seeing it, and there's no diegetic separation between what's happening and what's not happening. And so eventually it stops kind of being scary because I just assume anything that's scary is happening is a hallucination. It's not really happening. And so the disconnect between what you can tell is happening and what isn't happening for me made it less impactful. So I didn't I didn't enjoy smile to a ton, although I thought it was fine.

Uh, next up we have **It's What's Inside**. This is a twenty twenty four movie I watched on September twenty seventh. This was great. This is barely a horror movie. You might even just call it a thriller. It is. It feels very much like bodies, bodies, bodies. If you watch that movie a couple years ago about a group of sort of rich teens who are hanging out in a house together and things are getting crazy. Uh. This one. The premise is that this guy has a machine. I don't want to give it away. It's really. It's pretty good. It's a great thriller. Really intense. Not really a horror movie, but just on the edge of it. So I don't know if I should be talking about today, but I will. That's called. It's what's inside. Definitely worth a watch.

Finally, the last movie I watched in September that I'm going to talk about here is called **The Ritual**. This was twenty seventeen. This is a really interesting sort of mellow movie at the beginning. It's about a group of guys who go on a hike in memory of a friend who has died, and about their interpersonal relationships as they're going on this hike and the challenges their relationships face. Oh, and they're also being hunted by some sort of prehistoric monster in the forest. It's really. It's pretty good. I don't know if it's really good. It's pretty good. Very good. Intense acting. I don't remember if it is an A24 movie, but it feels like one. It's got that kind of look and feel to it. The stuff that happens at the end is sufficiently delightfully grotesque that it's well worth watching. That's the ritual. I recommend that one. It was fun.

All right, we're into October now, on October second. I watched a movie called **Found Footage: The Making of the Paterson Project**. So y'all know I love a found footage movie. I didn't watch that many of them this year because I'm kind of caught up. There are certainly always more, but this one is actually called Found Footage. And, uh, Paterson is the person who shot that video of Bigfoot in the woods. Uh, the sort of famous one that some people think is fake and some people think is real. But that's the Patterson footage. And so this movie is about a person who is making a fictionalized version of the Paterson documentary. And the whole idea is it's like a horror movie with Bigfoot being shot as a found footage movie. And then because he's a new filmmaker, a French film documentary group is following him on the process of making a low budget, independent found footage movie. And then we are watching the documentary being shot by the French people as something goes terribly, terribly wrong in the movie. So it's a double layer found footage movie that is really very compelling. It's really fun. Um, I mean, it's very it's a mediocre film. It's like it's not very well made. I don't think it's fine, but it's not. It's not going to win any awards. I don't think it's going to go on any best of lists, but I had a good time with it. It's like an ambitious, independent project that works with what it has. So I recommend found footage, the Paterson Project, the making of the Paterson project. That was twenty twenty five.

Next up in the challenge that I do on Board Game Geek, you get assigned a random horror movie, uh, to watch. And the one that I got assigned was **Frankenstein General Hospital** from nineteen eighty eight. This is a very silly horror movie in the style of, uh, Young Frankenstein. In fact, it sort of feels like someone said, let's let's do an updated Young Frankenstein in the late eighties, and we'll do it at a general hospital type hospital. So there's all these characters. There's a bunch of like, really silly stuff. There's a bunch of sexist jokes. Uh, the highlights for me are the guy who plays the Igor character is really funny, and I've seen him before and stuff. I can't remember his name, his name off the top of my head. But he's a character actor you've probably seen before. He's funny. And then there is one thing that's really funny. Whenever they're in the basement where the Frankenstein character is doing Frankenstein stuff, it's all shot in black and white, but when they're upstairs, it's in color. And at one point, one of the characters who has found the basement lab comes up and says, everything's in black and white down there. It's a it's a good joke. Generally, it's not really very funny. It's pretty dumb. I can't recommend watching it. But if you like, if you like a good, bad movie, it's probably in the category of good bad movie. That's Frankenstein. General hospital, nineteen eighty eight.

Next up is **The Wolfman**. Wolfman is a recent horror movie in the guise of rural versus urban horror. There's this guy when he was growing up. His. They lived on this land on the edge of a huge forest. And his father always told him to stay out of the forest and went hunting in the forest, and something bad was in the forest. And then when he's much older, his father has disappeared. So he takes his wife and child, and they go to his father's house on the edge of this big forest, and bad stuff happens, and it's. It's a werewolf story. It's fine. Um, I'm not sure what I, what I would need from werewolf story to make it enjoyable or to really make it sing. I don't know that this gets there, but I had a good time with it. So that's Wolfman twenty twenty five.

Next up on October ninth, I watched **Last Shift** from twenty fourteen. This is a very small budget independent film about a police officer who starts her first job as a police officer and she gets posted to the old police station, which they are closing down, and they tell her to just like, keep an eye on it overnight. Then in the morning there'll be somebody by to close it up or whatever. I didn't like this one very much. It was fine. It had an amusing and interesting premise. Right? The old police station is haunted. But ultimately, I didn't like the way they executed it. I thought it wasn't really very good. And I wouldn't recommend this last shift.

Next I watched on October eleventh. I watched **Beetlejuice, Beetlejuice**. This is from twenty twenty four. Another miss for me. I thought this movie had some potential as an interesting idea, but ultimately I thought that the character of Delia was really dumb. I'm irritated with that. They made her so flaky, although I guess we never got to see her be not flaky. She was already flaky as a child. But, uh, and then the mom, I mean, the mom was amusingly the same as she was before, so that worked. Uh, but ultimately, my problem with it was that. It felt like the filmmakers wanted us to care about Beetlejuice's problems, and they forgot that Beetlejuice is a horrible person that we hate, and he's the villain of the first movie. He's charismatic, sure, but he's evil. And it feels like the movie just completely forgot that he's supposed to be evil. Instead, they want us to think he's like, I don't know. Charmingly, charmingly evil or something. I don't know what we're supposed to think about Beetlejuice, but it doesn't feel like the movie wants us to dislike him. And that's hard when he's evil. So it made the movie not work for me.

Next up we have **This Is the End**. I watched this because there's monsters in it, and it like a monster movie, but it is very silly. It is from the era when Seth Rogen and James Franco and, uh, those guys all could just make movies together. And this is one of those movies where they sort of play themselves in pretty funny ways. I think that if you liked oh, Knocked Up, You probably will. Like this is the end as well. Um, one of the key components of it is that Danny, Danny McBride is a significant character in it. So if you don't like Danny McBride, there's a big chunk of the movie that has him and his humor in it, and I don't particularly find him very funny. So that part is harder to, uh, square the circle. I did enjoy Emma Watson's short role in the movie. That was pretty fun, but overall, overall, it was fine. It's fine.

Uh, next up we have **Candlewood** from twenty twenty five. This is another urban people versus rural people movie. It's sort of the rich people buy a house and move in, and the people in town aren't happy that they moved in. And then it's a psychological thriller with some haunting elements. I thought it was okay. I mean, you could see the ending coming a mile away, and it wasn't interesting enough for them to have the ending be what it was, if I could say that. So not recommended.

Uh, and then finally, **Freaks of Nature** is the last one I'll talk about in this episode. Freaks of nature is a comedy, a horror comedy movie about a town where zombies and vampires and people all live in harmony

together. Only some of them hate the others. Uh, and aliens show up. Uh, it is a weird, weird movie. Uh, there are parts of it that are actually pretty funny. There are significant parts of it that are not funny. There's some humor that feels like it's a decade out of place. Some humour that feels spot on. Willem Dafoe has a surprisingly large part in the movie, which I guess you'd expect Willem Dafoe to have a large part if he's in this movie, but it's surprising he's in the movie at all. So that is Freaks of Nature twenty fifteen.

That brings us to the end of the first half of the spooky movies I watched in October. Not a lot of commentary on each because I had so many to get through, but hopefully you found it amusing. Maybe you heard about a couple that you thought seemed like movies you'd want to watch. If there are, the best way for you to learn more about them is to head over to Rattlebox Games.com and click on the Pick Up and Deliver link to find the show notes for this episode, where I have links to my reviews on letterboxd. You could also go to boardgamegeek.com/guild/3269/ and post about this episode. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have about the movies I talked about, or anything else about the podcast.

Well, that's about it for me today. I want to say thank you for joining me on my walk, and I hope your next walk is as pleasant as mine was. Bye bye.

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