

QLH-S3E5M: The Company of Wolves

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SPEAKERS

Jessi Chartier, Jen Myers



Jessi Chartier 00:04

Welcome to Quiet Little Horrors. Here we talk about the films that creep under your skin and take up residence in the dark.



Jen Myers 00:17

We talk about movies. So we're going to talk about parts of movies that may be spoilers. If that doesn't bother you, you can keep on listening. Or you can hit the pause button and go watch the films that we're talking about before you continue here. Consider yourself warned.




Jessi Chartier 00:34

Let's talk about The Company of Wolves. Jen, this movie, man, I gotta tell you, so trying to figure out the plot of this movie we were. So listeners of our podcast, we were trying to be like, Okay, how do we create a synopsis for this one? I don't I don't really think we can. It's like the story of Little Red Riding Hood. But that is. That's like, not even a third of the movie.



Jen Myers 00:59

Yeah, it's this one's really not about plot more so than I think even some other movies that we will watch. It's about I mean, this one, we're talking about fairy tales. And this is very much about fairy tales. I also feel like we can't talk about fairy tales in this genre of film without talking about this film, though. Because it really is the one that kind of goes to the heart of all of that. And it really is just kind of like, let's tell stories. And let's like hint at the stuff that's underneath these stories. And it really does anything, the plot doesn't really come into it at all, as far as I'm concerned.



J Jessi Chartier 01:38

No, it doesn't. It. The feeling I had watching this was similar to the feeling I had while watching images. I just I really liked both of them, but couldn't figure out what I really enjoyed about both of them. But for those of us who are following along at home, it's about a young girl who has a relationship with her grandmother. And it's her company, it's the girls coming of age story. And boys start to see or a boy starts to notice her but she's not really interested in him. It's kind of a gothic romance where she eventually meets this strange older gentleman who's still in like Victorian garb and lives in the forest. He claims to be a hunter, but it's he's not wearing hunter attire. And then you discover he's a werewolf. And he steals her away and they've run away together as wolves through the forest. And it's just, it's great. It's so good.

J Jen Myers 02:36

And then there's like the other stories that the grandmother is telling that get kind of like interspersed into this as well.

J Jessi Chartier 02:44

Yes. Like never trust a man with a single eyebrow, or blend it with basically a unibrow don't trust a man that has a Yeah, and she's almost like a man hater. She's, like, very salty to all the men around her. But it comes down to like, they tried to make it a comical way. But it's yeah, kind of

J Jen Myers 03:06

The tone of that is a little weird. But yeah, I mean, it's, it's really about that this is a movie about the themes, right? It not so much like what is actually happening. But what what that symbolizes. So like, I don't know, that's how that's what I think this movie. I think that's important thing as you go through it. Because yeah, if you try to just sit down and get a singular cohesive narrative out of this, there is what you said that does exist. But yeah, I don't think it's about that. It's about themes and images and feelings and how all those play together.

J Jessi Chartier 03:42

Yeah, and they did a really nice job of making it feel like a fairy tale. Everything's a little over the top, but not enough that you not enough to make it comical. Yeah, that's interesting.

J Jen Myers 03:57

Do you want to talk a little bit or I mean, I can I guess I'm setting myself up to talk about it. But you can we talk a little bit about where this comes from, or the writer and things like that. And like I say this, like I because I can start with it. But I definitely came to this film from the writing of Angela Carter, who I'm very big fan of and I discovered when I was a teenager probably like too young to actually understand some of the stuff she's really gets across and some of her

stories. I was also like, really into well, fairy tales in general. But when I got into teenage years, I was really into the darkness underneath fairy tales. So I liked going back and studying the original versions. There was a series of anthologies when I was a teenager that were all about like dark and twisted version new versions of fairy tales so it was like super my thing. Angela Carter was is like the I don't know she was really I don't even know what the right words to call are. But she really was the The one in I think she was writing in like the 70s. And the 80s, who really brought fairy tales into this kind of modern fantasy literature. And also, like really infused it with a lot of feminist themes very deliberately. Like she, she was really into that. So Angela Carter wrote *The Bloody Chamber*, which is a series of stories, and the first one is about Bluebeard. And that's just like, my high water bar of everything that I would ever want to write myself is what's in *The Bloody Chamber*. It's so great. So eventually, when I saw this movie, I feel like, and I'll say, right off the bat, I liked this film a lot, but it didn't quite get me the same kind of feeling that I had, when I read a lot of her work. I feel like it's a little bit more of a mixed bag. I also feel like they're trying to figure out how to bring this type of, you know, more mature fairytale sensibility to a film? And I don't know, I don't know, I just feel like they're still figuring that out in this film. Because it's got, I think there's a lot of different tones going on. There's a lot of different, like you said, like we talked about, it's more about these themes and feelings than it is, like the plot, but there's sometimes it's, it's difficult to figure out where you are and all of that. So I don't know. I like this. But it's I like it because it fits stuff I'm really interested in. But I think I almost in some ways it almost fall short, because it doesn't fit what I'm interested in, if that makes sense. It's like a, it's like a good and bad thing that this is part of all these things that I really like. But what do you think about that? How did how did this land with you?

J Jessi Chartier 06:35

I don't know. It was a mixed bag. I enjoyed the film. It was confusing at first, because they have this framed story motif going on, that doesn't have anything to do with most of the story. And I think that that was how they tried to ground it a little bit. In this modern family, where she was the youngest daughter is reading a book about wolves or reading *Little Red Riding Hood*, I can't remember. But she's like, asleep. And so all of this is theoretically going on in her dream. So it was very confusing initially. And then but once we got into the actual dream sequences that it was like, oh, yeah, totally get this. And I think they may have tried to use that as an excuse, or as a lead in for like, look at how fantastical This is. It doesn't have to make sense. It's a dream. And I agree with you. I just, I would have been fine without the framing of it. Like just dive right into it.

J Jen Myers 07:30

Maybe that's that's a good point. Yeah, it felt like for me, they were trying too hard to put it in our framework that people would. I don't know, I guess understand, even though like we both said, it seems to make it more confusing. So I don't know.

J Jessi Chartier 07:45

Yeah. Yeah, it did make it much more confusing. I also like, I'm fascinated by the stories, especially in the horror genre that tackle coming of age for women. Yes. Because it's it's just weird. It's just like, if there it's always something is amiss. Like the common someone's coming

of age for women is always something's wrong, like not wrong, but they're, suddenly Yeah, no, I agree with you, outside of social norms. So like, in this particular movie, the little the main character whose name escapes me at the moment of Rosaleen, Rosaleen, yes. Who, like her coming of age, is driven by a sexual nature where she's starting to be, and you can tell because her grandmother is like, Oh, you need to watch out for strange men who don't trust those men don't trust the men, the men are bad men are bad men are bad. And then her friend is also starting to go through this as well and is hey, I really like you. And is actually like, a gentleman about it. Ish, at least in the beginning. And he's I'll take you for walks or whatever, she's no, I don't want you I want someone dangerous. I want there's this like, bad boy kind of sexuality drive. And it's okay, that's not I can understand how that's totally not untrue. Like, women mature faster than men. So like the appeal of an older man, I totally get it. But like it was just like, forced. And but I also do like how they did it because she's not overt. She's just more like, no, no, I'm just, I may not be interested in you. You're always my friend. But then she's really a lured by all of these other thoughts of men. Right?

J Jen Myers 09:38

Yeah. Yeah. And I think it's interesting that and I think you're absolutely right about this. This is about coming of age. And I think that's what we have. We need to talk about it. And and it's interesting though, I don't even know a lot of other films that take on female coming of age stories, which is honestly something For a while, whenever I heard the term coming of age in a film, it like turned me off because I was so used to seeing the same type of kind of male centered story, which those are valid, lots of people go through them. But I don't know if men who tell those stories and every, you know, part of the society who just assumes that coming of age stories are like that, I don't know if they quite understand what it's like to see yourself as somebody else's object in their coming of age story over and over and over and over again. And I got to the point where I'm just like, even when there was like, a good filmmaker, or a good story, it was described as coming of age, and the main character was a boy, or man, you know, I was just like, Okay, I probably don't want to see that. Just because I'm tired of it. You know, I don't even really feel there are many genres other than this kind of horror genre that has taken that on. And it's really interesting, and but I think because of that, it immediately goes headlong into these kind of darker things. This is a we don't have time, we don't have room for anything lighter, we're just gonna go straight for it. And I think that that's what this this film was all about. It's just like, This isn't like a cutesy coming of age. This is like all of the deep, dark psychological stuff underneath that nobody wants to talk about in society. Basically, Angela Carter is like the only way we ever talked about this was in fairy tales. And then we sanitize the fairytale. So nobody even knows that's what's going on in them anymore. Let's fix that. And so she's like, you know, that story, Little Red, White RIDING HOOD that everybody thinks is this cute tale. Let's, let's look at that. And let's, let's look at the fact that maybe the young girl in there, once you start looking at it that says it gets it gets real dark and real adult really quickly about all of the metaphors and there. But they've got a point like these, I do feel like these stories did come from those places. And we have water them down over the years. So this whole movie is like, what if what if we didn't want him down anymore? What if we went back into that? And what if we use this to talk about the stories we've been coming of age that we don't talk about? And so it just it's all of these, like, stuff that's been buried all of the really deep, dark stuff that's been buried for so long as all coming out in this?

J Jessi Chartier 12:25

Yeah. And I think it's important to note too, that this particular movie came out in 1984. And like the only other storyline that's really overt about that I shouldn't say only but like, other storylines of female coming of age were like Carrie, and that era, and you're 100% Spot on. This was the dawn, this was well before, like, eighth grade, or Booksmart, or Red Panda came out, like those are all recent movies. Yeah. And the idea of like, just that sense of growing up as a female and really coming of age is always safely hidden away in the horror films, mainstream media for him.

J Jen Myers 13:03

I was just I really liked how you brought up some of the more modern films that I think is it turning red that just came out? is a really great example of why this has had to happen. It is Turning Red. Yes. Because people had freaked out about that film for because how dare we talk about 13 year old girls having their periods and feeling sexual feelings about boys, the most innocuous things like natural things that human women go through? Right, you know, are human people who menstruate and have those those urges, you know, that's what they go through. But there's been a huge backlash to portraying that in a Pixar film, right. It's, it's such a great like, case study of everything we're talking about. There's this, this is still being buried, these type of stories are still being buried decades later. And so I really liked the idea of going back to fairy tales and breaking them open and seeing what's inside and almost using that as a way to start talking about it and getting it through because people are like fairy tales that's innocent, there's eat less you can get away with it before they realize what you're doing with it.

J Jessi Chartier 14:13

That is so true. That is so true. And in our full feature episode that we're you can hear in a couple weeks here, or if you're listening to this, after we've released it, go listen to it. We're going to dive a lot more into that because the full full story of Hansel and Gretel really does dive into that in conjunction with Little Red Riding Hood and so many fairy tales like you said, Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty. All of these fairy tales are all about women coming of age. And it's just it's it's like you said it's a safe place for us to talk about it. But they have been super sanitized. And I'm really excited to that. I'm excited that Angela Carter really started us off with this with this particular one because it has evolved and you'll hear more about that dear listener or when you get into the Gretel and Hansel episode that we'll talk about here in a bit. Yeah.

J Jen Myers 15:05

And I will say, like I mentioned earlier, in some ways I feel like this particular film, The Company of Wolves. Like I mentioned before that there's a little bit of mixed tones for me. And I think part of that is because there is this lighthearted, almost comic fairy tale-ish with it, or maybe more of this kind of fantasy aspect. And I almost would have preferred it if they didn't have that. And it was just all dark. I wish I would have gone like full-tilt into horror territory. That's just kind of my personal feelings about it. Because I think that some of the more fantasy elements almost detracts from that dealing of dealing of the the darker themes. I don't know, I just I wanted it to be all dark. For me personally.

J Jessi Chartier 15:57

I don't disagree. I don't disagree. And I think that it couldn't be at that point in time. Yes. But I think that by the time Hansel and Gretel came out just a couple years ago, we could go there, we could get pretty dark. Yeah, I think that we should start talking about Hansel and Gretel, which means, dear friends, we're gonna close this podcast out and we will see you in a few weeks. Anything else that we should mention? Jen, am I missing something? I feel like I'm missing something. I don't think so. How to find us?

J Jen Myers 16:27

Hmm. There are lots of places to find us. So you can you can find us on all your favorite podcasts apps. We have a website at quietlittlehorror.com. We also are on Twitter at [quiethorror](https://twitter.com/quiethorror) and Instagram at [quietlittlehorror](https://www.instagram.com/quietlittlehorror). And you can also email us at hello@quietlittlehorror.com

J Jessi Chartier 16:49

Thanks for listening everyone. We'll see you in the next episode. Bye