Face is a featureless horror flick

GRAB YOUR POPCORN, here comes another horror flick from South Korea. But don’t expect anything ground-breaking from Face. Everything about this film has been done before.

The story is based around Hyun-min (Shin Hyun-jun), who is a leading face reconstruction expert. The police are hoping Hyun-min can help them solve a series of murders in which all the victims are found without a face. Hyun-min repeatedly turns them down, because his young daughter is recovering from heart transplant surgery.

One day, a mysterious young girl named Sun-young (Song Yun-ah) who works for the National Institute of Scientific Investigation brings a skull to Hyun-min, but still he refuses to be drawn into the investigation. That’s when weird things then begin to happen to Hyun-min and his daughter. They hear strange noises and see a terrifying ghost, which Hyun-min believes is one of the victims. Reluctantly he decides to help hunt for the murderer.

Director Yoo Sang-gon tries to meld elements of a horror and thriller in one plot. What he has concocted is visually very good. The shots are well-designed and the sets are rich in details. The sound effects send shivers down your spine.

However, Yoo has failed to offer us anything new, and you can’t help drawing comparisons between this film and other, far more successful horror movies.

The story, although it is clearly told, is too reminiscent of The Sixth Sense. Towards the middle of the film, you can guess the ending and it’s pretty obvious who the ghost is. Part of the plot involving an organ transplant tale is similar to the Pang Brothers’ The Eye. Even the scary moments look all-too familiar, such as a long-haired ghost which appears out of the blue and crawls along the ground, just like in Japanese horror hit Ringu.

Of course, films are always scarier on the big screen. But Face is not worth paying the price of cinema tickets, and it isn’t so scary that you would miss much by renting the DVD instead.

VERDICT: WAIT FOR THE DVD 😐

movie ratings: