

# A Mediocre Prequel to a Prequel

## Doll, demon, and possession. What's new?

MITHI CHOWDHURY

Horror movies are difficult to get right. We often come across great ones that keep us at the edge of our seats, face hidden by a blanket. Whether we admit to being scared easy, we're all waiting to see what'll jump out of the dark. And then we go back to our busy, humdrum lives and forget all about the movie. When I walked into the Cineplex, I had no recollection of what the previous *Annabelle* movie was about (even though I had enjoyed it), only vaguely recalling that it was, of course, about a demonic doll. A lot of the criticism about contemporary horror movies centers around a generic formula that rides off of CGI and jump scares to box office glory. Other than a few gems (a la *The Babadook* and *The Witch*), horror movies these days rarely offer anything memorable. *Annabelle: Creation* too falls into the same dusty pit of forgettables.

The movie opens with a slightly unsettling scene where toymaker Samuel Mullins (Anthony LaPaglia) puts the finishing touches on the titular doll. He lives a charming life in the middle of nowhere with his wife (Miranda Otto) and daughter Bee (Samara Lee), until a car accident kills Bee and uproots his seemingly perfect life. 12 years later, the

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heartbroken couple open their doors to a group of orphan girls accompanied by Sister Charlotte (Stephanie Sigman). Obviously, a door that's clearly off-limits to the new residents sets off a chain of dreadfully slow events whereby each character visits the room and faces the horror within. Long story short, demonic possession drives the entire narrative. The protagonist is a polio-stricken orphan, Janice (Talitha Bateman), who offers the perfect vulnerable soul for the taking.

I'll admit that I'm the atypical horror

movie buff that scares easy. In one particular scene, Janice finds herself having this exchange with what seems to be Bee's spirit.

"Will you help me?" Bee implores.  
"What do you need?" Janice asks.  
"Your soul!" howls a rapidly morphing demonic creature before embarking upon yet another cat-and-mouse chase. I could barely contain my laughter at this scene and afterwards, I just wasn't as scared anymore.

Is *Annabelle: Creation* still an enjoyable

watch nonetheless? Definitely. Director David F. Sandberg, notable for *Lights Out*, is gifted at making movie-watchers feel an inescapable sense of dread before each character faces off with the demon. The build-up is truly stunning. The movie itself is beautifully crafted and authentic to its era. However, we're 4 movies into *The Conjuring* universe, with more scheduled to be released, and this just didn't stand out of the pack for me. There are some terrifying moments (the scene where the weightless blanket develops a form of its own) but not enough to make an impact. Every time the monster was revealed, I couldn't take the movie as seriously anymore. I'll just chalk this one up to sub-par CGI.

The resultant horror movie is a hundredfold better than the likes of *Ouija: Origin of Evil* (also starring Lulu Wilson) but not good enough to be inaugurated into the Horror Hall of Fame next to heavyweights such as *The Exorcist* and *The Shining*. I'll still recommend this though. Wasting 99 minutes of my life watching *Ouija: Origin of Evil* sure puts things into perspective.

*Mithi Chowdhury is a dog-loving-movie-watching-mediocrity-fearing normal person. Either that or a penguin. Find out at mithichy612@gmail.com*

## Better jobs for superheroes

VERONICA GOMES

There are two kinds of people in the world — firstly, people who have thought about themselves having superpowers and secondly, people who probably have a life outside their imaginations. But have we ever thought about superheroes struggling to fit into the norm with their, often less than convincing, side occupations structured to help them blend in with the real world? Of course not. We only think about ourselves. On assessing a few superhero day jobs, I came to the conclusion of how dumb their choices were in several instances. The following is therefore a list of alternative career paths that our inspiring heroes could adopt in order to achieve a more sensible lifestyle both in terms of job satisfaction and a more secured identity.

*The Flash:* Being faster than the speed of light, he could use his gifted abilities to deliver us our much-awaited food orders by working for food delivery agencies, thereby saving us from our hunger pangs one delivery at a time. Moreover, being his chirpy extroverted Barry Allen self, he could just as easily ensure customer satisfaction while fulfilling his daily need of social interactions in an efficient manner. With his suit doing most of the hiding for him, unlike most other superhero suits (\*coughs\* Superman \*coughs\*), protecting his identity wouldn't be much of a

problem and so would not pose as a barrier in adopting this job.

*Superman:* For the man of steel himself, the most fitting job would most likely be that of a private investigator. Safe to say, this job has the 'low profile' thing in check, or atleast more than a newspaper reporter position ever would. With his x-ray vision and superhearing abilities, he

could thrive at this promising occupation hiding behind the safe conformities of his PI van. Moreover, with his less than convincing disguise as an ordinary news reporter with overcompensating glasses, this job would actually give him a better shot at keeping himself away from the public eye.

*Spiderman:* I could never wrap my head

around why exactly he would choose a career in photography, all the while dealing with pictures of himself, than pursue a prospective career as a chemist. Moving past all that, if a boring job is what he wants to avoid, he can much as easily become a professional gamer. With perfect hand-eye coordination and applaudable reflexes, he could just as easily flourish in this profession all the while having a reason to be in his room for hours, while actually being out fighting crime, without anyone suspecting.

*Hulk:* Hulk as a yoga instructor, although at first glance posing as quite the unlikely combination, would actually work out. This would not only allow him to make use of his flexibility but rather aid in his much needed anger management orientation. This 'body and mind' healing occupation would be quite the fit, enabling him to channel his inner calm conscience in the process. While helping others with the betterment of their physiological being, he will successfully have mastered the art of controlling his own emotions, thereby learning to control his transformations more fluently and with more ease.

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