



4-1-2000

Resurrection

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Recommended Citation

Blizek, Nicole (2000) "Resurrection," *Journal of Religion & Film*: Vol. 4: Iss. 1, Article 10.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.jrf.04.01.10>

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol4/iss1/10>

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Resurrection

Abstract

This is a review of *Resurrection* (1999).

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Resurrection stars one of France's most popular actors, Christopher Lambert, who also co-wrote the screenplay. Lambert plays Chicago police detective, John Prudhomme, who is tracking a serial killer (Robert Joy). The killer's goal is to recreate the resurrection of Christ.

Resurrection is a blatant copy of the movie, *Seven*, in which one victim is killed for each of the seven deadly sins and each victim is killed in a manner appropriate to the particular sin. In *Resurrection* each victim is killed to provide a body part for the Frankenstein-like resurrection the killer plans. The first victim provides a leg, the second another leg, and so on.

For the most part, religion only plays the role of providing clues to the murders in this film. That is, all of the victims are thirty-three years old, each victim has the name of one of the apostles, and Roman numerals carved into the bodies of the victims represent Bible passages. The victims are all killed on a Friday and the last killing should take place on Good Friday, just in time for the body parts to be assembled and given life on Easter Sunday. In a macabre twist of fate, Detective Prudhomme discovers the body parts arranged on a cross (the head has been crowned with thorns) before Easter Sunday. He finds, however, a hole in the chest cavity of the torso where the heart should be. Realizing the killer still needs a newborn heart, Prudhomme identifies all of the births possible to women named

Mary that would occur in the earliest moments of Easter Sunday. This final clue enables him to find the killer and to save the child.

One of the less prominent, but more interesting features of the film concerns religious faith. Detective Prudhomme, we learn, lost his only son in an automobile accident the previous year. The death of his son has driven him to despair and resulted in the loss of his faith. The killer, by contrast, is a man whose faith is so "strong" that it becomes horrifying. The juxtaposition of the faithless detective and the killer obsessed with faith raises the question of why some people lose their faith and others carry faith to evil ends. Unfortunately this question is not addressed in the movie.

One other feature of the movie deserves consideration. What is the resurrection for which the movie is titled? Emphasis is on the murderous collecting of body parts that are to become a "resurrection" of Christ. But there does seem to be another resurrection that takes place. Early in the movie, Detective Prudhomme is a very unpleasant person, both to his colleagues and to his wife. None of his colleagues want to work with him and his wife is about to leave him. His moodiness, anger, self-absorption, and depression are, of course, the result of his having lost his son. At the end of the movie, however, when Prudhomme saves the killer's last victim, the child born unto Mary, he is himself reborn and he is now

able to "live again." Again unfortunately, this resurrection is overshadowed by the bloody and gruesome murders and dismemberment that propel the plot.