

Spotlight – Review

“They knew and they let it happen! It could’ve been you, it could’ve been me, it could’ve been any of us.”

So says one of *Spotlight*’s characters at a key moment in the film. The ‘they’ he’s referring to are, essentially, the higher powers of the Catholic Church, and what they let happen: the widespread abuse of children at the hands of priests whose **role** it was what to guide and **support** them.

Tom McCarthy’s film is a **rarity** in modern cinema. It features a fantastic ensemble cast who work together beautifully, and **focuses** on a **sensitive** issue without ever coming off didactic or sensationalist. The result is something powerful indeed: as much a celebration of the importance of long-form, investigative **journalism** as it is an **exploration** of the sin and corruption of a powerful organisation.



Michael Keaton, Liev Schreiber, Rachel McAdams, John Slattery, Brian d’Arcy James and Mark Ruffalo form the central cast of reporters and editors at the Boston Globe, and around them swirl the likes of Stanly Tucci and Billy Crudup as lawyers: the **former embittered** yet **idealistic**, the **latter compromised** and conflicted.

The ‘Spotlight’ team are the Globe’s investigative reporting department, and the film is at pains to **highlight** the unglamorous world which they **inhabit**. Journalism is painted as a **valuable** and noble profession, as indeed it should be, while the real life characters portrayed exhibit **diligence**, dedication and not a small amount of **courage** in their work exposing the horrors covered up by the church.

McCarthy is a **talented**, empathetic director, whose past work yields such gems as 2003’s *The Station Agent* (starring a pre-*Game of Thrones* Peter Dinklage) and 2007’s **moving** immigration drama *The Visitor*. Those pictures touched on bigger themes, but were marked by intimacy and a feel for how human beings interact. *Spotlight* takes those qualities and projects them onto a broader canvas; it is perhaps his best film yet, and one that triumphed at the Oscars in a strong field, **deservedly** winning the awards for Best Original Screenplay and Best Picture.