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Nightcrawler – Review

The directorial debut of **scriptwriter** Dan Gilroy, *Nightcrawler* is a fantastic film: an exploration and **indictment** of capitalism and shock **news** culture that, via an incredible central performance from Jake Gyllenhaal, is also extremely **creepy** and **unnerving**.

Gyllenhaal plays Lou Bloom, a low-level **thief** operating in Los Angeles, who accidentally stumbles across the world of ‘stringers’: cameramen who make a living filming the **aftermath** of brutal crimes and car accidents, typically before the police **arrive** on the scene. They then **sell** their **footage** to local news stations, who, in a battle for ratings dominance, are only too happy to pay the stringers for the ‘exclusive’ content they provide.



Gyllenhaal plays Lou Bloom with a **fiery** intensity. He modelled his performance on a hungry coyote, and lost nearly ten kilograms for the role, and his unblinking, amoral anti-hero has brought about (justified) comparisons with the likes of Robert DeNiro’s Travis Bickle in Martin Scorsese’s classic *Taxi Driver*. He is absolutely superb - pathetic and **charming** and **terrifying** all at once - and the cast around him are impressive as well, particularly Rene Russo as the head of a local morning news station.

The city of Los Angeles is very much a character, too; its **bright** lights, **haunted** locales and power-hungry residents bring to mind films like Polanski's *Chinatown* - which explored corruption in a similarly **bleak** manner - and, more recently, *LA Confidential* and *Drive*. These are all fantastic films, but *Nightcrawler* is very much its own **beast**, with a story that becomes more fascinating minute by **horrifying** minute, and asks some **uncomfortable questions** about capitalism and the media.



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