

## Blu-Ray Review: Brittany Murphy Deserved Better Send-Off Than ‘Abandoned’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 24, 2010 - 10:05am

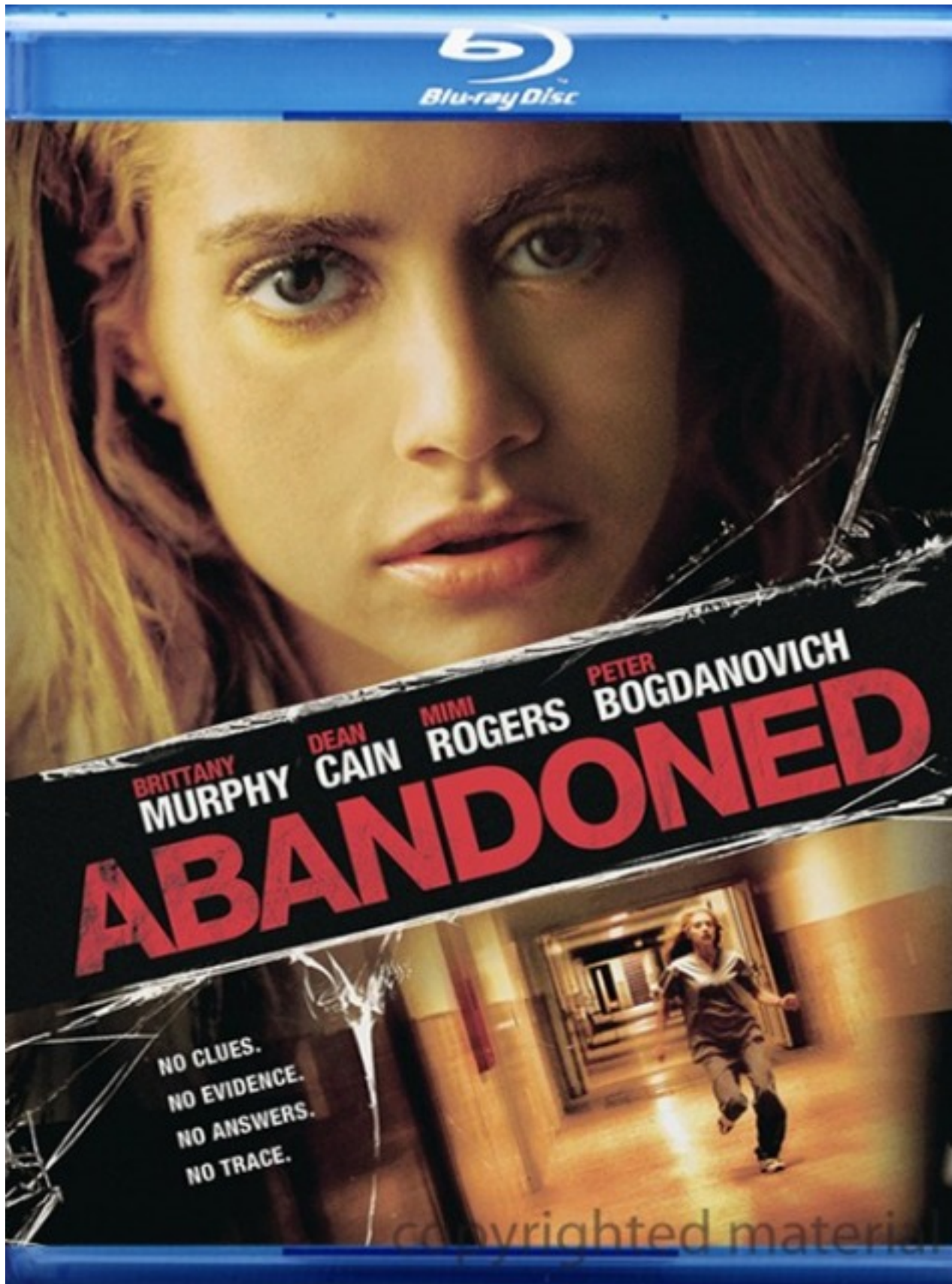
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CHICAGO – I wonder how the movie history books will remember Brittany Murphy, who died suddenly at the end of 2009. When she went, she had a few films in some stage of post-production and one, the thriller “Abandoned,” makes its way to Blu-ray and DVD this week. The film works about as well as your average straight-to-DVD thriller but distinguishes itself a bit due to Murphy’s underrated acting ability, but this actress deserved a more fitting final note.



Blu-Ray Rating: **2.5/5.0**

Especially when one considers the ugly rumors that surrounded her death combined with a few recent career decisions that pulled her out of the spotlight — most obituaries turned to “Clueless” or “Don’t Say a Word” as her most notable roles — it seems likely that history won’t be as kind to Brittany Murphy as it should be. What’s saddest is that she gave arguably the best performance of her career just a few years ago in the drama “The Dead Girl.” Other career highlights include “Sin City” and “8 Mile” but it really feels like Murphy had a comeback in her if only fate had been kinder.



Abandoned was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 24th, 2010

Photo credit: Anchor Bay

Instead we're stuck with films like "Abandoned," a relatively mediocre thriller about a woman named Mary (Murphy) who brings her boyfriend Kevin (Dean Cain) in for routine outpatient surgery. She even comes to visit him later after check-in and meets his doctor and sees his room. But when she comes back to take him home after the procedure, he's completely disappeared. Hospital administrators claim that Kevin was never there and they have no record of his procedure. He doesn't even show up on security cameras. As she continues to scream her case to whoever will listen, she's deemed unstable and forced to find her man on her own.

Like a lot of twisting and turning thrillers, "Abandoned" actually gets less interesting as it goes along. And, sadly, Murphy's simply not that good here. She often looks tired, pale, and overly thin (sometimes a byproduct of a horribly over-lit film set in a hospital) and it's hard to watch her fragile state with the knowledge of what would happen so shortly after filming "Abandoned." Even through that, she regularly finds herself honestly in a two-dimensional character.

No, the relative failure of "Abandoned" falls more on the script and lackluster direction by Michael Feifer than anything to do with Murphy. The dialogue is often ludicrously on-the-nose and the handheld camerawork sometimes makes the film feel too much like a university project instead of a feature film. The film is never well-done or believable enough to be honestly thrilling, despite Murphy's best efforts to make it so. As for the plot, I'll just say that the movie goes some ridiculously melodramatic places. All I really need to say is that I was actually more interested in the film before Kevin disappeared, but perhaps that's just because it shows Murphy smiling and being in love one last time. She's an actress that will be missed.

Almost as if they knew any superfluous special features might seem in bad taste given the controversy around the star's passing, "Abandoned" does not include one minute of bonus material. The film isn't so bad that it deserves that kind of lackluster release. Like its star, it deserved better.

*"Abandoned" stars Brittany Murphy, Dean Cain, Mimi Rogers, and Peter Bogdanovich. It was written by Peter Sullivan and directed by Michael Feifer. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on August 24th, 2010. It is rated PG-13 and runs 93 minutes.*



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