Film Review: 'Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil, and Vile' Unfortunately Lives Up to Its Name

Submitted by JonHC [1] on May 4, 2019 - 4:19pm

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CHICAGO – Hearing the details of tragic stories, we often find it hard to understand how they got into that situation in the first place, especially since all the red flags are so obvious to us. “I’d never be so dumb,” we tell ourselves. “Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil, and Vile” takes us through how easy it is to miss something that we’ve never truly seen.



Rating: **1.5/5.0**

Ted Bundy is one of the most notorious serial killers in American history, not just for his brutality and the methods of corpse desecration, but because of how mainstream his case became. The “If it bleeds, it leads” television news mentality could have found its roots with this case, especially since it was the first televised case of its kind. The fascination of the case stretched well beyond the details and focused much more on the subject to the point of fanaticism. Much of this we already knew, but what exactly new does this Netflix original film have to offer us that a well-balanced documentary can’t? An odd perspective.

The film tricks you even in the beginning, leading you to believe that we will be shown a story from the perspective of Elizabeth “Liz” Kendall, who wrote the novel the film is based on. We begin where Liz’s (Lily Collins) relationship with Ted Bundy (Zac Efron) began, and then watch their relationship blossom. Each step along the way, we see what a great man Ted is, especially for taking a chance on a single mother. Early on, we never see him raise his voice or even express any form of anger, and why would he? Those are all too obvious signs of other underlying issues and we aren’t meant to see anything of that because Liz apparently didn’t either. This form of gaslight storytelling would have been a fine tone to stick with if it had stayed consistent throughout the entire film.

“Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil, and Vile” available on Netflix on May 3rd. Featuring Zac Efron, Lily Collins, Haley Joel Osment, Kaya Scodelario, John Malkovich, and Jim Parsons. Directed by Joe Berlinger. Written by Michael Werwie. Rated “R”

**Continue reading for Jon Espino’s full review of “Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil, and Vile”** [18]



Photo credit: Netflix

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