

Kaitlin Ugolik

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Director Ari Schlossberg took his screenplay for Hide and Seek and gave it a twist that sets it apart from the generic scary movie. There's no masked killer, no teenage drama and no haunted houses. Schlossberg's work is similar to that of M. Knight Shyamalan and Laurent Bouzereau/Stephen King.

In the movie, young Callaway (Dakota Fanning) witnesses the suicide of her mother and makes up an imaginary friend named Charlie to replace her, or get attention, or deal with her grief - the reason is not really clear. She follows a butterfly into the woods and stays there a while, suggesting that this is where she "met" Charlie.

David Callaway (Robert De Niro), Emily's father, decides to move from New York City to upstate New York after his wife's death to start life over. In their new town, the lighting, music, and people give it a creepy atmosphere.

Ironically, their first day in town David sees a woman and a child playing together in a park, dressed in the same colors his wife and child had been when they played together the day she died. He goes and talks to the woman, Elizabeth (Elizabeth Shue), and they begin to spend a lot of time together.

"Charlie" doesn't like this and writes disturbing messages on the shower wall, the place of David's wife's death in their old house.

"You let her die" is the first message, and when Emily is questioned, Fanning's "You believe me daddy, don't you?" heightens the suspicion that she is the villain, rather than an innocent girl.

David, being a psychologist, assumes that his daughter must be experiencing some sort of post-traumatic syndrome, and making up an imaginary friend to blame her acts of anger on. Normally this would seem rash, to blame such things as drowning the cat in the bathtub and scrawling "Now look what you've done" on the shower curtain, on your child, but Fanning's possessed acting is impressive.

Elizabeth, the woman from the park, joins the two for dinner one night and Emily puts on the clothes that her mother wore the night she died. She puts her hair up to resemble a gothic child. It seems that she's trying to scare away Elizabeth when she explains in gory detail how her mother died, glaring at her across the table and saying, "I hope you don't end up like her."

"Face it: Dakota Fanning is scary," Phil Villarreal of the Arizona Daily Star told RottenTomatoes.com. And the scariest part is that she is not making Charlie up. People start to die and she becomes involved in a twisted game of "hide and seek" with the killer.

Fanning stays in her scary girl character perfectly, with her big eyes and straggly hair. Looking sick and detached for most of the movie, she talks to De Niro as if she is in charge, not him. She is in

control throughout the movie, seeming to conduct the deadly game from inside her head.

"Dakota Fanning is very, very creepy," said sophomore Ryan Daniel. "De Niro wasn't as good, but he pulled off the insanity thing well." Toward the end of the movie, it becomes apparent that Emily is not the only one undergoing some sort of syndrome.