

Review By Stephen Davis

College Movie Review

Imagine yourself trapped within your own home. Not by the external forces or immediate threat of danger, but by your own mind. For Sara, that is a reality that she is learning to cope with. Her panic attacks are increasing in strength, as is her willingness to seek help. When her husband disappears, she begins to feel as if he and her doctor, Dr. Reznik, are conspiring to drive her insane. But what she soon discovers is that everything is happening for a reason, as part of a bigger picture, and she is merely there to piece together the puzzle and discover the truth for herself.

Starring an extremely small cast of unknowns, *Solitary* is a unique debut feature film from director Greg Derochie. Not only does it all take place within a single set, Derochie's own home in fact, but the film cleverly interlocks mystery and drama to create an illusive film that is as intriguing as it is addicting.

Amber Jaeger serves as the film's lead star, playing the self-conscious and insecure Sara. She is the film's lead character, appearing in nearly 100% of the feature's 90-minutes worth of footage, and to my utter surprise, she carries the film perfectly. Through her emotions and desperate search for the truth, Jaeger is a woman on a mission. Her dynamic personality serves as the driving force behind the mystery. The story often relies on her wordless expressions, and when she delivers, she takes the entire feature to a whole new level.

Director Derochie compliments Jaeger, using his own home as the other central figure in his psychological thriller. Working with locked doors, an outside office and a drawer full of keys, we get to see and understand the film's lone setting, its characteristics and eventual purpose. Unlike other film's of its kind, *Solitary* doesn't suffer from repetitive boredom, a symptom that arises when the same set is used repeatedly during the course of a film. Beyond that, the film represents what all can be accomplished with a micro-budget. Instead of appearing handicapped, the film looked to excel on its single set and small cast. It thrives in the moment, and while I didn't truly appreciate the final scene, there is still no reason not to experience the tragedy and mystery that surrounds Sara and her chaotic mind.