

KHARGA DOOM – TMFF Review

As the action-adventure genre seems to be recovering the strength it once had through movies such as *The Lost City*, *Jungle Cruise*, or the return of Indiana Jones, the market needs new proposals. Granted, we all love Indy, but after 40 years of adventures, it seems a little unlikely that we will continue watching more of his crazy paranormal experiences... and so it comes to the question, what will be the alternative for us, the people who love action-adventure flicks on the big screen?

Well, *Kharga Doom* might be an option. A more than decent one, and one that doesn't fall too far from Indy's legacy – that of charismatic archaeologists seeking ancient cities or objects while dealing with paranormal enemies... and, yes, Nazis.

Kharga Doom follows Dr. J.Bo, an Arab-American female archaeologist, and her assistant, 28-year-old boy of action, Kase, as they head on an expedition to find an ancient city in Egypt that might provide eternal life – a compelling adventure, for sure, but one that will get even more exciting once they begin dealing with the supernatural (and incredibly creepy) threats they'll be facing.

While Indiana Jones used to have some disturbing moments (particularly in *Temple of Doom*), most of his enemies were dumb nameless Nazis that he could defeat after an exciting action sequence... but *Kharga Doom* doesn't do that. *Kharga Doom* does justice to its title by making some of its supporting characters absolute monsters that rip off women as they try to use their blood to keep their youth.

Of course, a lot would depend on how the director handled these scenes, but overall, the entire experience *Kharga Doom* provides is one way darker and creepier than most of Indy's adventures (with the exception, perhaps, of *Temple*), and that is one of its main strengths. The writer shows clear knowledge when it comes to creating horror sequences and moments of tension where we can't be entirely sure what will happen to our protagonists. Besides J. Bo and Kase, there will be some other supporting characters with lovely and/or intriguing personalities, such as Michelle or Wurmholtz, that will keep us on the edge of our seats whenever they are about to face some danger.

But most of our concern will always go to J.Bo and Kase, two protagonists who have a terrific dynamic that comes alive right from the opening pages of the script and that will introduce us with some clever humor to the world the characters are about to explore. Perhaps the script takes a little too long in setting its action, and it would be exciting to see either J.Bo or Kase (or both) going through an action sequence as Indy did, but their funny relationship is enough to keep us interested in them for most of the first act (then comes Sullivan and Crowley, and things begin to get creepy), and it is quite thanked that one of our protagonists is a middle-age Arab woman. That alone makes this project stand out among its competitors, who often bring brave men or cocky teenagers that, quite frankly, often make the movie a tiresome experience. But that's not the case with *Kharga Doom*. Here we have a believable, likable individual that shows realistic concerns for her partner, and that makes us worry a lot for her as we

often wonder how she will survive this terrifying experience. It sure would be very interesting seeing someone like her on the big screen.

All of this makes *Kharga Doom* a very engaging experience to be enjoyed on either the big or the small screen. While it sure would be quite exciting to see it in a theater, we can't ignore the fact that, currently, the big releases are often given to movies that come from an existing IP or a well-known actor or director, and even though J. Bo or Kase would be great to be seen portrayed by a famous face; perhaps the script could have a bigger chance as a streaming platform movie. It certainly feels like the kind of project that either Netflix or Amazon could pick, and that would make it a strong presentation for the writer's craft when it comes to telling fantastic stories that smartly combines action, adventure, sci-fi, and horror.

That said, on a final note, the formatting can be improved. The script needs to go a little deeper on its characters and give them stronger introductions that tell us right away their genre (I was a little confused during the first pages as I wasn't sure whether J. Bo and Kase were men or women). Furthermore, the script needs to prevent itself from using so many pronouns during the stage directions, as that also makes the reading confusing. The writer is suggested to use the names of the characters instead, even if that sounds a little repetitive, to get a clear idea of what is happening. At the same time, some sentences, such as "nazi eyes", are kind of odd. These kinds of lines would work in a book but not in a screenplay; they are a little hard to visualize. Try not to write anything that can't be seen as an action.

Other than that, this is a very original adventure.