

## "THE DEVIL'S BUSINESS" (Fantastic Fest Review)

Written by Samuel Zimmerman  
Thursday, 29 September 2011 09:44

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Hitman horror, who knew? Following this year's astounding KILL LIST (which DEVIL'S BUSINESS will no doubt be compared to) UK filmmaker Sean Hogan has planted his own stamp on a subgenre we didn't necessarily know we wanted. The truth is, the two films are fantastic companions and you shouldn't waste time seeing either at your earliest convenience.

Clocking in at a lean 75 minutes, the second likening THE DEVIL'S BUSINESS will be unable to avoid is that of the theatre. Confined mainly to a single house and seriously dialogue-heavy, the film would have very little trouble transforming into a stage adaptation. While the two aforementioned traits may tend to send off signals, know that neither are cautionary sentiments, as Hogan captures excellent performances from his tiny cast, and cinematically so, using Argento-esque lighting and often stimulating talk throughout.



The title is an applicable one, easily referring to either the career our duo of contract killers have chosen, or just what their target has been up to. On an assignment of notable importance, Pinner (Billy Clarke) and his young partner Cully (Jack Gordon) settle into the house of their hit and boss' old associate, Kist (Jonathan Hansler) as they await his arrival from the opera. Pinner and Cully pass time in conversation, with the elder of the two visibly annoyed by this first-timer he's been saddled with. Their talks are heavy; filled with regretful, mysterious tales of times past, as well as self doubt in what they've signed up for. As they explore the setting, the

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two find evidence of serious evil on hand, a notion only amplified when Kist arrives and proves his interest in the occult isn't just a passing hobby.

Given its running time, it may seem odd to classify THE DEVIL'S BUSINESS as a slow burn, but it really does take its time surrounding you with atmosphere. Thankfully, Hogan and Clarke have the talent and confidence to regale us with long scenes of introspection and debate. There are moments of eerie fright peppered throughout, but the film saves its true physical manifestation of horror for the very end, an end in which the audience will have to decide to go with. For many, it could be a deal breaker, but there's no doubt here that Hogan really goes for it, an admirable aspect within itself. For those (like this scribe) who will dig the film's last hand, know that THE DEVIL'S BUSINESS is well-spoken and out there, and a damn good little film.

