

# A review of the last house on the left movie

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



### **The Last House on the Left**

A remake of the 1972 film of the same title, *The Last House on the Left*, directed by Dennis Illiadis, tells the story of a father and mother, John and Emma Collingwood, who take revenge on the family of criminals, who they unsuspectingly let into their home, who have assaulted and tried to kill their daughter, Mari. *Last House* is a crime thriller film that includes actors Sara Paxton, Monica Potter, Tony Goldwyn, and Garret Dilluhunt. It was released March 13, 2009 and won Best Director in the Brussels International Festival of Fantasy Film.

I think this movie is worth seeing because of setting of the film, the acting, and the delivery of scenes. This movie will definitely draw out emotion from the audience and have them on the edge of their seats and yelling at the screen. *Last House* was a great remake to watch than the original film.

The setting of this film sets the tone of the movie. The movie gives off a dark theme, which goes in hand with the lighting. The setting in the beginning starts off at night in a rural area, secluded where there really is not anybody around. When no one is around, that gives into the suspense of the film and heightens up the drama. The setting of *Last House* is the same as another notorious horror film remake, *The Amityville Horror*. The setting of this film takes place somewhere on the East Coast in the countryside where the Collingwood family are vacationing for the summer at their lake house. Their house in the last on the left, thus the film's title, miles away from the town and are in total isolation. Their lake house consists of the main house and adjacent to that is their guesthouse. The setting of being in a remote area

and all that privacy works in the movie's favor. The total seclusion adds on to the suspense of the film, especially at the climax where Mari's parents come to realize that they are harboring the people that assaulted and almost killed their daughter. It adds to the suspense because a storm begins and everybody is in the house and there is total privacy to that when Mari's parents do take revenge, they are able to

do whatever they want and as loud as they want because there is no one around to object to it. This setting allows the parents and the others to fight with all their might without any type of interruptions from the outside.

Another component that enhanced this film was the acting. I think Sara Paxton, who portrayed Mari, does an excellent job at playing a complete opposite role than what she is usually used to portray, the bubbly blonde type. In the Last House, she plays Mari, a swimmer, who is determined to "go for the gold" as she brother Ben told her before his death. Because of that, she is a fighter, which is shown throughout the entire film when she is kidnapped by the family and tried on numerous occasions escaping. Another good portrayal of acting comes from the family of criminals, consisting of Krug, Francis, who are brothers, Sadie, Krug's girlfriend, and Justin, Krug's teenage son. The breakout acting came from Garret Dillahunt, who plays Krug, the leader of the family. Krug is a sadistic and twisted criminal. The scene where he does his best acting skills is during the rape scene. Krug wants to "make a man" out of his son Justin by encouraging him to rape Mari. When Justin refuses, Krug later viciously assaulted and raped her. That scene was the most powerful scene in the film because it was powerful and

dark, arising emotions from the audience to feeling disgusted, sick, and also helpless at the act.

The acting also goes in hand with the delivery of the scenes. The delivery flows nicely and plays along with the flow of the plot. The acting or the situation-taking place did not overly do the scenes. I think each significant scene provides a powerful structure and makes the audience wonder like what is next to come. This can be tested in the beginning of the film where two policemen are driving Krug to jail. The scene starts off slow with the officers just talking and then out of nowhere you see a car smash right into the police car with no warning. As part of the audience, it surprised me and that is where the film is trying to do: surprise its audience. Another good delivery of a scene has to be the revenge scenes. These were delivered greatly as each moment has the audience on the edge of their seats and are interactive with the characters. Peter Hartlaub, a film

critic for SFGate, agrees that Last House is a good remake film. In his review, Hartlaub states the movie has “ an interesting direction with new direction, bold camera angles, and good actors.” He states that the film tries a new look from the original but still maintain the basic premise of the original. He too agrees the acting is strong and the scenes are “ gripping”. One thing he does mention is the original was more gory and depraved and that the remake has less of that but still makes a good film.

While I think Last House is an entertaining film, of course there are going to be critics who disagree with me, labeling it as condemnable and as torture

porn. Claudia Pulg of USA Today reviewed the movie and criticized it as “grisly and sadistic.” Pulg states that in the plot, “the parents take enjoyment of their revenge rather than assisting their daughter.” Concluding in her review, she states Last House as fetish violence and does not recommend anyone to see it.

A user review on the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) also asserts the movie does not deliver. This person asserted that some scenes were unnecessary like the rape scene. Also, he claimed that Last House was not a horror film, but rather a “snuff film”. This user claims the film was a waste of talented actors and the movie failed at its attempt to draw out some emotion from the audience. The last thing this user claimed was there was not enough bloodiness like the original had. The original was more brutal and gruesome in terms of killings and did not try to make the audience feel for a certain character as the remake did.

I think both of these reviews fail to see that Last House is classified as a horror film. It is supposed to be gruesome with the fillings and the violent action involved, especially with the rape scene and the murders. I think most viewers, including myself, were shocked and surprised at the film’s explicit scenes. But that is what makes the movie so successful. The director was bold enough to go in that direction and do something that is not a norm in films. In Pulg’s review, she said the parents were more interested in their revenge than helping Mari. During the film, once they found Mari, they immediately went to her rescue. And the father, being a

doctor, used his skills to assist to make sure his daughter would still be alive. Once they knew she was safe and secure, that was when they sought out their vengeance.

The Last House on the Left is a disturbing and dark film. Even though it will arise thoughts of “ Why am I watching this”, the plot will keep you pulled in. It is an effective remake of the original by staying somewhat consisted to the plot. This makes for a perfect horror film because it does not tone anything down.