



IN DREAMS ARE MONSTERS

# Def by temptation

## A contemporary review

The blossoming new black cinema is gradually reclaiming the generic territory seeded by the 70s wave of Blaxploitation pictures. While *New Jack City* redrafted the parameters of *Shaft* and *Superfly*, *Def by Temptation* returns to the potentially rich area of black horror first colonised by the absurd *Blacula* and then enhanced by more interesting, albeit marginal, pieces like Bill Gunn's *Ganja and Hess*. The guiding spirit of Spike Lee is also in evidence: the opening sequence, in which a black bartender spiels on the phone to a succession of girlfriends before succumbing to the wiles of the temptress, seems to have strayed in from *She's Gotta Have It*, while later barroom encounters, preceding the 'feeding' scenes between the shape-changing temptress and her victims, have the feel of a black version of *Cheers*.

This sharp, funny and borderline creepy socio-sexual horror story continues with a series of ambiguous scenes in the temptress' red-sheeted four-poster as she disposes of sundry victims, either in the approved fashion or in more bloody, bizarre manner. On one occasion, she seduces a mainly gay muscleman into a straight encounter, only to penetrate him anally by (it is implied) growing outsize male sexual equipment. Later she develops fangs borrowed from Fredric March's Mr Hyde and serpent eyes like those of Jacqueline Pearce in *The Reptile*.

The scenes between Joel and his actor friend are marvellously written and played in a Spike Lee, semi-improvised manner, but the central opposition between the naïve Joel and the inhuman temptress is disappointing, linked as it is to conventional, reactionary values. The complex, amoral world of the bar and the bedroom gives way to a backward-looking moralism that allows for a traditional (albeit in extreme form) vampire movie finish in which faith conquers all and the temptress is reduced to smoking bones by the cross and Joel's unshakeable faith.

**Kim Newman, *Sight and Sound*, July 1992**

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## DEF BY TEMPTATION

*Directed by:* James Bond III  
©: Bonded Enterprises Inc.  
Orpheus Pictures *presents*  
*a Bonded Filmworks production*  
*Executive Producers:* Charles Huggins, Kevin Harewood, Nelson George  
*Produced by:* James Bond III  
*Co-producers:* Kevin Simms, Hajna O. Moss  
*Production Manager:* Christina Diaz Norman  
*Production Office Co-ordinator:* Robin Downes  
*Post-production Services and Supervision by:* The Troma Team  
*Production Assistant Set:* Spencer McAdams  
*Production Assistants:* Kenneth August Carpenter, Elliot Wilson, Anthony Ogburn, Morenike Macauley, Desiree Jellerette  
*1st Assistant Director:* Marcus Turner  
*2nd Assistant Director:* Tyrone M. Henderson  
*Script Supervisor:* Adrienne Tien  
*Casting by:* Bonded Enterprises Inc., Hush Management  
*Written by:* James Bond III  
*Photographed by:* Ernest Dickerson  
*1st Assistant Camera:* Jonathan Bukhart  
*2nd Assistant Camera:* Darnell Martin  
*Gaffer:* Victoria Estern  
*Best Boy:* Vanya Edwards  
*Key Grip:* D. Piper Still  
*Still Photographers:* Albert B. Cooper IV, Salimah Ali  
*Special Effects:* Rob Benevides  
*Additional Special Effects:* Pericles Lewnes, Select Effects \*  
*Editor:* Yu Li-Shin  
*Additional Editing by:* Brian O'Hara  
*Associate Editor:* Stefan Harshman  
*Production Designer:* David Carrington  
*Art Director:* Marc Henry Johnson  
*Paintings in Temptress's Loft:* Jeff Robinson  
*Temptress's Wardrobe by:* Elden Glover  
*Hair & Make-up:* Matiki Anoff  
*Special Effects Make-up:* Christina Bone  
*Opticals:* Film Opticals  
*Film Score Composed and Performed by:* Paul Laurence

*Temptation Soundtrack Music Supervisor:* James Bond III  
*Temptation Soundtrack Production Co-ordinator:* Weldon Cochren  
*Temptation Soundtrack Executive Producers:* Beau Huggins, James Bond III  
*Music Editor:* David Ouimet  
*Music Technician:* Daryl Shepherd  
*Sound Mixer:* Charles R. Hunt  
*Re-recording Mixer:* Jack Cooley  
*Sound Editor:* Ron Kalish

### Cast:

James Bond III (*Joel*)  
Kadeem Hardison (*'K'*)  
Bill Nunn (*Dougy*)  
Samuel L. Jackson (*Minister Garth*)  
Minnie Gentry (*grandma*)  
Rony Clanton (*married man*)  
Steven Van Cleef (*Jonathan*)  
Guy Davis (*bartender 2*)  
John Canada Terrell (*bartender 1*)  
Cynthia Bond (*temptress*)  
Freddie Jackson (*himself*)  
Najee (*himself*)  
Melba Moore (*Madam Sonya*)  
Z. Wright (*young Joel*)  
Michael Rivera (*gay guy*)  
Sundra Jean Williams (*Mrs Garth*)  
Beth Letty (*lady 2*)  
Angela Stokes (*lady 3*)  
Lahaina Kameha (*lady 5*)  
Ellis Williams (*demon limo driver*)  
Michael Michelle (*lady 6*)  
Robin Harmon (*lady 4*)  
Starlina Young (*lady 1*)

USA 1990©  
94 mins

\* Uncredited

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## IN DREAMS ARE MONSTERS

### Def by Temptation

Wed 16 Nov 18:10 (+ intro); Sat 26 Nov 18:10

### Candyman

Thu 17 Nov 20:50 (+ intro)

### Kuroneko (Yabu no naka no kuroneko)

Fri 18 Nov 18:15

### Cronos

Sat 19 Nov 12:10; Sun 20 Nov 18:30

### Nosferatu (Nosferatu – Eine Symphonie des Grauens)

Sat 19 Nov 14:10

### Us

Sat 19 Nov 15:10; Tue 29 Nov 20:40

### Let's Scare Jessica to Death

Sat 19 Nov 20:45

### Jennifer's Body

Sun 20 Nov 15:15; Mon 21 Nov 18:00; Fri 25 Nov 20:45

### Pontypool

Mon 21 Nov 20:30; Sun 27 Nov 12:20

### Fright Night

Tue 22 Nov 20:40 (+ intro)

### Under the Shadow

Wed 23 Nov 20:40; Tue 29 Nov 18:10

### Ouija: Origin of Evil

Thu 24 Nov 20:40; Mon 28 Nov 18:10

### Pet Sematary

Fri 25 Nov 18:15; Mon 28 Nov 20:40

### Blacula

Sat 26 Nov 13:00

### Inferno

Sat 26 Nov 18:20

### The Autopsy of Jane Doe

Sat 26 Nov 20:40

### Ganja & Hess

Sat 26 Nov 15:20

### 28 Days Later

Sat 26 Nov 20:45

### Frankenstein

27 Nov 13:00

### Possession

Sun 27 Nov 15:30

### Good Manners (As Boas Maneiras)

Sun 27 Nov 18:10; Wed 30 Nov 20:25

### A Nightmare on Elm Street

Wed 30 Nov 20:50

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