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Saw VI Review

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In what is clearly the surprise of the season, Saw VI, the sixth and far-from-final film in the low-budget horror franchise, proves to be the one to pull the series out of its tailspin. After the third film, which climaxed with the death of the infamous Jigsaw, the series began a downhill slide that felt as if the filmmakers were simply beating a dead horse and stretching contrivances beyond believability in order to keep the money machine working. But film No. 6 is not only good, it is really good -- a rare treat that breathes new life into this sequel factory and inspires hope it is back on track.

So, how did they do it? They made this Saw movie about something.

My biggest problem with this series has always been that Jigsaw always seemed like half a villain. You were supposed to, on some level, root for him because he was out doing good work. While his traps were diabolical and positively lethal, he was doing it to wake people up to life. But the series lacked the cleverness to really engage us with both the villain and the subjects at the same time, and it quickly became about unlikable people put in terrible situations that inevitably led up to a big third-act twist. But this time around, writers [Patrick Melton](#) and [Marcus Dunstan](#) injected a bit of satire into the series and created the first film to really capture the essence of what Jigsaw always seemed to be aiming at.

Saw VI is about healthcare. Jigsaw, always portrayed

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HALLOWEEN HORROR 2009



The creepy season is upon us - it's time to head to the cinema and prepare to be scared. Find out which horror films are being released in perfect time for Halloween this year.

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as a dying man trying to leave his mark on the world -- sometimes literally -- has clearly had his ins and outs with the healthcare system, and in this film his primary target is William ([Peter Outerbridge](#)), the head honcho of a particularly ruthless health insurance claims division. When William wakes up in a traditional Jigsaw trap, he soon discovers that he's not in for the usual, simple one-trick-pony Jigsaw experience; he's in for the full ride. At the end of four tests is his family, who will die if he doesn't complete the tour of pain in under an hour, but the tests are worse than he could ever imagine. Rather than simply having to do horrible things to himself, he must do horrible things to himself while trying to save fellow employees at the insurance company -- often having to decide between who will live and who will die.

Just like he does at his job every day -- only this time he has to look people in the eye when he kills them. And the effect is brutal. As one would expect from a Saw film, the traps are ingenious, the gore is sickening and the overall effect is disturbing. But when those elements are applied with a cunning sense of morbid satire, the film's message shines through and creates a non-political vantage point of a hot-button issue. Is it heavy-handed? Sure. But it doesn't choose a side politically. In fact, its only message is that if there is an enemy at all, it is the insertion of greed-driven profit into the system. Jigsaw's long-standing mission of choosing humanity over the selfish stands out perfectly and allows this film to transcend previous sequels to become the very best of this beleaguered series.

But that's not to say that it is perfect. While the writing and editing are top-notch here, it is still a Saw film, which means it looks like it was shot for \$12 on your sister's crappy video camera through a lens no one bothered to clean. While that look may have been cutting-edge in 2004, it is 2009 now and it looks tired, cheap and unimaginative. The film also suffers from the continued involvement of [Costas Mandylor](#), one of the worst actors working today. His stiff, monotone delivery and unchanging expression make one pine for the Shakespearean tenor of CSI: Miami's [David Caruso](#). Alas, poor Yorick (REMOVES GLASSES PASSIONATELY), I knew him well, Horatio.

But even Mandylor and the film's tired look can't suck the fun of this film. Everything the writers aim for works, and for the first time in a long time, you feel truly invested in a Jigsaw story. This single film has truly brought the series back to the forefront of American horror. No one else is trying to say something important with such a rock-solid premise in this genre. One hopes that this is the beginning of a trend rather than the fluke that slipped through the cracks in the system.

This film comes recommended to horror fans of all sort and kind, and is a must-see for anyone who still



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- [St. Trinians 2](#)
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considers himself a fan of the series. This is the best the series has to offer and will stand for a long time as a shining example of how to take something as weary as this franchise felt and give it a new lease on life.

Hollywood.com rated this film 3 stars.

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