

MARTHA MARCY MAY MARLENE



The men eat first.

Things start out on an odd tone and only get exponentially more terrifying from there. You see a kid in fifties clothing playing with a modern Nerf ball. The houses look handmade, and there is no electricity. A thought enters your head in the beginning of the film, and it certainly never left mine.

What the hell is this place?

Elizabeth Olsen is in the lead here, in this headlock of a movie that makes the idea of a survivalist cult much creepier than you can already imagine. Yes, there is a younger Olsen sister, yes, she looks like a carbon copy of the other two, and no, she is actually much more talented an actress than one would expect.

The men are confident and charming. The women are quiet and terrified. I saw this movie three months ago and it has just now stopped getting under my skin. As layer by layer of "holy sh*t!" is peeled back on the compound, I wasn't struck not only by how engaging the movie was, but by how sickeningly plausible its premise is.

It's a story about what isn't said and what isn't seen. There's a part early on when Olsen escapes and finds a pay phone. It's the first time in a long time she's talked to someone on the outside, and you can see the thrall the place has over her. She can barely manage to speak and when she does it's hardly a squeak.

I'd like to call this a modern day wicker man, but it isn't half as ridiculous. No, this is an achievement in modern horror all its own, and if you can stomach it, you should see it.

By Alex McCracken
Staff Writer

The joke is on you

by Josh Mower

