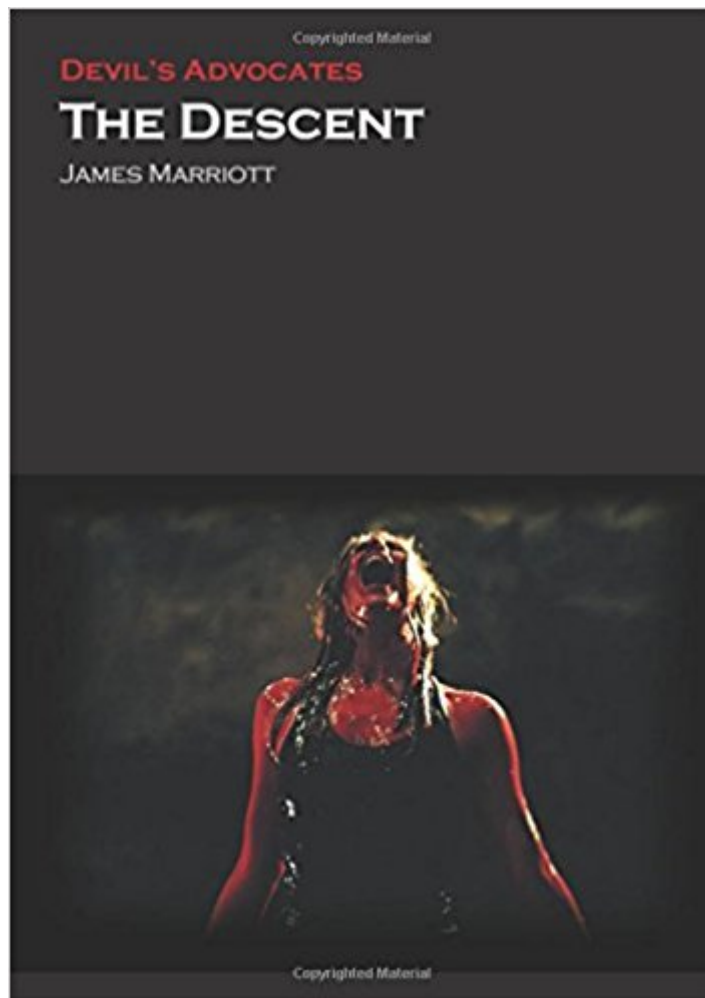


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The Descent (Devil's Advocates)



Synopsis

The story of an all-female caving expedition gone horribly wrong, *The Descent* (2005) is arguably the best of the mid-2000s horror entries to return verve and intensity to the genre. Unlike its peers (*Saw* [2004], *Hostel* [2006], etc.), *The Descent* was both commercially and critically popular, providing a genuine version of what other films could only produce as pastiche. For Mark Kermode, writing in the *Observer*, it was "one of the best British horror films of recent years," and Derek Elley in *Variety* described it as "an object lesson in making a tightly-budgeted, no-star horror pic." *Time Out*'s critic praised "this fiercely entertaining British horror movie;" while *Rolling Stone*'s Peter Travers warned prospective viewers to "prepare to be scared senseless." Emphasizing female characters and camaraderie, *The Descent* is an ideal springboard for discussing underexplored horror themes: the genre's engagement with the lure of the archaic; the idea of birth as the foundational human trauma and its implications for horror film criticism; and the use of provisional worldviews, or "rubber realities," in horror.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Excellent. (Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts)

James Marriott is the author of the *Virgin Film Guide to Horror Films* and coauthor, with Kim Newman, of *Horror! 333 Films to Scare You to Death*.

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