

# ***“Truth or Dare”***

By Helen Lutz

As kids we used to play lots of neighborhood games since there were no video games or even videos for that matter. For the most part that new fangled invention of the television was primarily for the news and the Ed Sullivan Show. We would spend hours playing tag, hide and seek, dodge ball and Red Rover (childhood obesity wasn't much of a problem either). Another game we played was Truth or Dare; at least until someone got mad, feelings hurt or something worse – usually requiring Grandma's medical attention.



The rules of the game are fairly simple. Player 1 starts the game by asking another to choose "truth or dare". If Player 2 chooses "truth", then Player 1 asks a question, usually an embarrassing one, which Player 2 must answer truthfully. If Player 2 instead chooses "dare", then Player 1 dares them to do something, often embarrassing or dangerous, which they must do which can entail telling an embarrassing story or acting out embarrassingly. A player can not choose "truth" for the whole time.

The game “Truth or Dare” is now playing out on movie screens everywhere but with an interesting twist. It's time for Spring Break and where do college seniors love to go? Mexico, of course with fun, sun, surf and drinking – lots of drinking. However, Olivia (Lucy Hale) has set her plans in motion or something far nobler, spending the break working with Habitat for Humanity. Her friends beg to differ with her decision, it's senior year and their last chance to party. After extreme coaxing Olivia relents and heads off to Mexico, what could it hurt?

The week is filled with partying, yet since Olivia's best friend Markie (Violett Beane) is there with her boyfriend she feels a bit like a fifth wheel. Sitting alone at the bar a cute guy, Carter (Landon Liboiron), strikes up a conversation with her. He encourages her and her friends to accompany him to a neat, old monastery, pretty creepy, but fun. While there he suggests a game of “truth or dare” with the beer flowing, what harm could it do? It doesn't take long for the group to figure out that something isn't quite right and why is their newfound friend suddenly running away in fear?

After a couple of ‘accidental’ deadly mishaps the group comes to realize that they aren't playing the game – but the game is playing them. It seems that Carter managed to unleash an evil-spirited demon that loves to play games. The rules are simple, tell the truth or die; do the dare or die; fail to play – you just die. Director Jeff Wadlow brings our evil spirit to life everywhere with piercing eyes and a playful grin whether on the face of a friend or complete stranger and our demon plays to win.

Everyone has secrets they don't want to share, but our merry group is given little choice; truth or die. As for the dares, best be careful when having to walk around a rooftop while drinking a bottle of tequila – don't fall. Olivia and others investigate the demon and origination of the game tracking down an old lady in Mexico who manages to explain just what happened. In order to put the ‘genie back in the bottle’ they must track down the mysterious Carter and coax him to do the unthinkable. Meanwhile, the friends keep dropping like flies.

“Truth or Dare” offers little that's new or scary even though it's a horror film (my kind of scary movie). The characters are young and will appeal to a younger generation. Unfortunately both the story line and script end up being predictable and somewhat contrived. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give ... “Blumhouse's Truth or Dare” a generous TWO HARTS. The next time you're playing a party game, you might want to pass on Ouija Boards and Truth or Dare.