

M. Night Shyamalan's *Glass* is a conceptually intriguing film

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Glass is the final part of M. Night Shyamalan's "superhero" trilogy and was preceded by *Split* (2016) and *Unbreakable* (2000). The central plot revolves around three "ordinary" men who each believe they have special abilities thus making them superheroes.

In *Glass*, Bruce Willis's David Dunn and Samuel L. Jackson's Elijah Price aka Mr Glass (from *Unbreakable*) and James McAvoy's Kevin Wendell Crumb (from *Split*) are brought together and incarcerated at Raven Hill Memorial Psychiatric Hospital under the supervision of psychologist Dr Ellie Staple, played by Sarah Paulson. It is Dr Staple's mission to convince them that they suffer from delusions of grandeur.



Hero versus villain

While the pacing through the midway mark of the film could've been sharper and more dynamic, Shyamalan presents a moral tale of good versus evil or, true to comic tropes, hero versus villain. In doing so, he crams a lot of story into one film. Though this film may be premised on comic books and can, perhaps cautiously, be placed in the superhero genre it is far removed from the CGI-enhanced men in capes or sword-wielding demi-gods. Instead, Shyamalan's *Glass* utilises stimulating camera angles that let you in on the character's perspective, more than a few extended close-ups and blatant use of colour, to keep its audience engaged.



Like in *Split*, James McAvoy delivers a startling performance as he switches seamlessly between his abundance of personalities, otherwise known as the Horde. The super amongst the more than 20 personalities is The Beast. Although the film centres on the inevitable face-off between Dunn and The Beast, Shyamalan sets up what could be another intriguing path worth following.

Another chapter isn't unfathomable

Dr Ellie Staple is terribly inept as a psychologist but this may not be a coincidence, as there seems to be a lot more to her than initially presented. Her motivations, partially revealed in the film, for persuading the three men that they are ordinary human beings suggests that there is a lot more beneath Dr Staple's surface than meets the eye. Shyamalan has left tantalising suggestions and hints that insinuate another chapter to this story isn't unfathomable. It would, likely, be one that fans will want to see especially if it places the character of Dr Ellie Staple at the centre of it.

As a conclusion to a trilogy, *Glass* ties the narratives of its predecessors, *Unbreakable* and *Split*, together in a satisfactory manner and presents itself, in true Shyamalan fashion, as a conceptually intriguing film.

Screening courtesy of SterKinekor Baywest.

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