

My Day: Review

10TH DECEMBER 2020 BRWC SHARE



My Day: Review. By Trent Neely

This film follows Ally ([Hannah Laresa Smith](#)) a teenage runaway trying to survive on the streets of London. We follow her as she seeks shelter along with other young people making a living through various means including prostitution and selling drugs. Ally makes cash as a drug mule for dealers Carol (Sallyann Fellowes), her son Kevin (Karl Jackson) and her boyfriend Gary (Daniel O'Meara), who in turn work for brutal drug supplier Illyas (Gediminas Adomaitis). One day, Ally volunteers to deliver drugs to a customer not usually on her route, Chris (Jonas Cemm).

The day starts out as normal, Ally talks with Frank (Mike Kinsey), a kind old man before delivering drugs to her usual customer across the street from Frank's residence. Things take a turn however when Chris drugs and sexually assaults Ally. She is able to escape but is forced to leave the money for the drugs and the supply of drugs behind. Fearing blame and punishment from Illyas, Carol and Gary send him after Ally. The rest of the film follows Ally as she attempts to escape punishment from Illyas, who seeks retribution for his lost payment and product.

At the heart of this film lies a meditation on survival and what the pursuit of survival can do to a person. In the beginning, Ally is shown to be weary of the constant hustle required to survive on the

street, but still seems to at least partially enjoy the freedom and autonomy it offers. But, once the realities of the dangers of the criminal underworld and those that inhabit become clear to her, when she considers how far she would have to go to continue to survive in this world, and when she comes to the realization that those she thought of as friends are willing put their own sake before hers, Ally truly begins to experience fear and sadness over where life has taken her.

As a result, her need for survival becomes less focused on getting by one day at a time, but instead on a much larger change and centered on getting out of this way of life alive. Smith portrays this arc brilliantly, playing Ally at first with a sense of confidence in her ability to get by. As the film progresses and Ally's circumstances become more serious however, Smith plays a more withdrawn Ally, one who has grown tired of being forced to get by on her own. Someone who begins to feel truly isolated when people she trusted begin to abandon her or use her for their own gain.

This theme of survival extends beyond the character of Ally. When we first meet Carol and Gary, they are shown to have an affinity for Ally. However, once their relationship with Illya, and by extension their own survival and safety in this world becomes threatened, they show little hesitation in offering her to him as a means of reconciliation. This is not to say that they do not care for Ally. There is one scene where Carol tries to comfort Ally after she is attacked.

The subtle yet emotionally charged delivery and expression of Fellowes allows the audience to infer that Carol herself has endured hardship as a result of her surviving in this criminal landscape. It is this survival instinct that causes her and Gary to put Ally in harm's way, not callousness. For his part, Kevin is one of the few characters who from the outset is portrayed as wanting to leave this life behind.

This is difficult for him however due to his mother's influence and Illya's power over those in his employ. Speaking of Illya, in his character we get the ultimate embodiment of a character who does what is needed to survive. Illya's willingness to use others, threaten punishment and even death is what allows him to survive and keep his position as a top authority in this underworld.

Director Ibrahim Miir and writer Shirley Day do a great job crafting a story that showcases real, flawed characters operating in a world that feels harsh and lived in with escalating stakes and tension. This is in no small part due to great cinematography by Martyna Knitter and George Burt, whose handheld and cool-colored cinematography grants the audience easy access into the headspace of characters constantly on the move, under stress, and fighting a variety of enemies.

However, the expansive nature of the world and the ensemble cast leads to a slight loss in cohesion of the narrative. While the film is undoubtedly Ally's story, she becomes somewhat sidelined for a stretch of the film near the halfway mark. While Ally is still the

driving force of the narrative, the shift in character focus may be slightly disorienting for some viewers.

This film serves as a great offering for viewers looking for a grounded, gritty **thriller**, featuring layered characters and complex themes focused on the choices people make in harsh conditions.