Another remake, another letdown.

The original version, directed by Brian De Palma and starring Sissy Spacek, stands as a bona fide horror classic. The remake isn’t so much a remake as a glossy re-packaging. It doesn’t explore any new angles or re-interpret the plot in any meaningful way. It’s just the same story, minus the inspiration and the sheer terror which marked the original movie. In short, it’s a total waste of celluloid.

Director Kimberly Pierce seems totally disconnected from her own film, almost as though she’s imagining her own movie as still directed by Mr. De Palma. She doesn’t take any significant changes in tone or offer us any different perspectives. It’s almost a paint-by-numbers job.

The casting is, with one notable exception, a disaster. Not that the actors in this film are bad or don’t try, but they are almost all poorly cast as the characters they are required to play. Chloe Grace Moretz is a most unfortunate choice to play Carrie White, the poor misfit who develops the power to move things with her mind, with terrifying results. Moretz doesn’t look much like a social misfit. Other than her outdated clothes, she comes across like a typical teenage girl, which Carrie most certainly is not, even if that’s what she wants to be. Moretz never captures the insecurity, vulnerability, and desperate longing that Sissy Spacek brought to the role back in the 70s, and a Carrie White without those characteristics simply isn’t Carrie White. Gabriella Wilde isn’t a much better choice to play Sue Snell, either, and should have been cast to play the villainous Chris Hargensen instead of Portia Doubleday. Doubleday shows some skills in her role as the wicked, spiteful Chris, Carrie’s primary tormentor, but she lacks the overwhelming presence of malice and venom that Nancy Allen personified in the original.

The only cast member who really excels is Julianne Moore as Carrie’s fanatical mother, Margaret White. Moore’s performance is at least equal to that of Piper Laure in the original film, and conveys a woman tortured by an indescribable madness which masquerades as religious fervor. Moore makes Margaret White believable but nonetheless overpowering and truly scary, and her magnificent turn is the showcase of the film. It’s not enough to save it.

Surprisingly, or perhaps not given our Politically Correct times, the movie is actually less violent than the original. Despite a few flashy special effects sequences, the climactic Prom Scene is a lot less malevolent and lethal than the same moment in the De Palma film. What should be mind-numbingly horrifying is instead merely spectacular, which isn’t at all the same thing.

Sometimes remakes work well. Occasionally they even surpass the original. The 2013 version of CARRIE is not one of those times. Don’t waste your money. The original’s on NetFlix.