

## Nightcrawler (2014) Gilroy

P Michell, April, 2018.

First time film from director.

Huge success. Budgeted around US\$8.5M, made four times that domestically.

Worldside some US\$50M.

Described as 'depraved black comedy'.

Connection with *Ace in the Hole* / *Big Carnival* (1951, Wilder) screened in 2017.

This film is very much of an in-'house' production by Gilroy family: Production, Direction, Editing (John), Script.

### Synopsis:

NIGHTCRAWLER is a thriller set in the nocturnal underbelly of contemporary Los Angeles. [Jake Gyllenhaal](#) stars as Lou Bloom, a driven young man desperate for work who discovers the high-speed world of L.A. crime journalism. Finding a group of freelance camera crews who film crashes, fires, murder and other mayhem, Lou muscles into the cut-throat, dangerous realm of nightcrawling - where each police siren wail equals a possible windfall and victims are converted into dollars and cents. Aided by [Rene Russo](#) as Nina, a veteran of the blood-sport that is local TV news, Lou blurs the line between observer and participant to become the star of his own story. *Written by [Open Road Films](#)*

**Dan Gilroy (Director & Script)** – debut film for scriptwriter Gilroy. Husband of Russo. (Two for the Money (2005), Bourne Legacy (2012), etc. Nominated for academy award for Best Original Screenplay for Nightcrawler. Brother is Tony Gilroy who produced this film as well as *Hosue of Cards* (lesser US version of insightful UK TV series). Tony is a screenwriter too, working with Dan. Also edited the film.

Cinematography – Robert Elswit (83 films) untitled Dan Gilroy Production (2018), Bourne Legacy (2012), Micahel Clayton (2007), Bad Influence (1990), River Wild (1994). Godfather of Jake Gyllenhaal!

### Trivia:

[Jake Gyllenhaal](#) lost 20 pounds for his role. This was Gyllenhaal's own idea, as he visualized Lou as a hungry coyote.

The films creators consulted with an LA based Stringer Organisation called RMG News, owned and operated by Howard, Austin and Marc Raishbrook, who also feature in Netflix's original series 'Shot in the Dark' (2017). Two of the brothers also appear very

briefly as extras in the film after Lou arrives late to a structural fire scene following Rick's employment.

The billboard for eyeglasses that Lou passes is reminiscent of the eyes of Dr. T.J. Eckleburg in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Great Gatsby*; both stories address the idea of the American Dream and its flaws.

Jake's godmother is Jamie Lee Curtis. He is godfather to Matilda (Rose) Ledger, daughter of late Heath Ledger.

### **Analysis:**

*This script (by Dan Gilroy) is a little different from the norm in the sense that there are no sluglines nor scene numbers. The end result is a story that moves constantly forward, taking you from one location to the next without reminding you of it nor losing you. Day, Night, Int. or Ext. are expertly woven into the descriptions, underlining the fact that this is all about the protag, Lou Bloom. Thus, Gilroy takes us on a guided tour through the twisted world of his main character, showing us everything from his point of view only, making this a very interesting script to study.*

From Psychology in Everyday Life:

<http://www.psychologyineverydaylife.net/2015/02/26/nightcrawlers-antihero-lou-bloom-sociopath-par-excellence/>

The Mexican restaurant scene with Nina (Russo) and Lou (Gyllenhaal):

<http://www.vulture.com/2014/11/nightcrawler-mexican-restaurant-scene-explained.html>

### **Reviews:**

NY Film Review here:

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/11/03/making-news-2>

### **A No Spoiler Review - A Fantastic Unique Thriller**

2014 | by [Knox D Alford III \(knoxiii\)](#)

Nightcrawler is slang. I will not ruin or spoil anything in this review. Jake Gyllenhaal has never been better. His character must have been incredibly hard to play, and you will see why. There is a reason this Thriller & Drama opened on Halloween. His character is ambitious to a fault & highly intelligent. He interacts most often with Rene Russo & a man he calls his intern. If you thought Julius Caesar was ambitious or Alexander the Great, this character must have the same motivation to succeed minus the goal of conquering the world. Needless to say he is driven. Russo is also ambitious, so they make a good team. The difference is how far each is willing to cross the lines of morality, legality & humanity.

The movie is original in every sense. There has never been a movie similar in the character or the situation, and the movie makes an open commentary about an important but not political aspect of American society. To say it was gripping would be literal. I looked down at one point, and I was clutching my outer thigh. The movie is tense & intense. Every move seems known to Gyllenhaal but not to anyone else. If you like entrepreneurs, this movie will appeal to that in one aspect. Overall, it is definitely a Thriller full of danger & illegality. It is Gyllenhaal versus the world, if he were a diplomat & the world represented achieving his goals. That's his character around others. When left unwatched, even for a moment, he devolves into a character that does whatever it takes.

See this movie for the originality. See it if you enjoy thrillers. See it because he gives the best acting performance of his life in a character with many sides. See it for fun. See it for a cool fast car. Or, the fact it is tracking above 8 stars out of 10 which is about as good as it gets on IMDb, considering that is the average of thousands & thousands of ratings by people as diverse as patrons watching on a Washington, D.C theater. From that number you can safely predict it's very likely you will find it as highly entertaining as the international average (plus or minus 1 star). In my estimation, I reserve a 9/10 rating for the best of the best. 10/10 stars are for the greatest movies. This is easily the best of the best.

One friendly tip: If you are on heart, or anxiety medication, take it as scheduled or if it's as needed, make sure it's within reach.

### **This Is Why There Are No Sex Scenes In 'Nightcrawler'**

Ryan Buxton, HuffPost, 2014

Jake Gyllenhaal is winning rave reviews for his kinetic performance in "Nightcrawler" -- he may even break into the Oscar race -- but there's one thing you definitely won't see in the acclaimed new film: Gyllenhaal's character having sex.

Though Gyllenhaal's freelance journalist, Lou Bloom, succeeds in propositioning another character, played by Rene Russo, for some intimacy in "Nightcrawler," the act does not appear on screen. HuffPost Live's Ricky Camilleri asked Gyllenhaal and "Nightcrawler" director Dan Gilroy about the omission during a Monday interview.

Apparently when it comes to Gyllenhaal's creepy character, the mere idea of him in bed is much more interesting than anything the production could have dreamed up.

"I can tell you that there were financiers who wanted to put up the money if we put the sex scene in, and I specifically said no," Gilroy said. "I said, 'There's nothing we could show that would match whatever you're imagining is going on behind closed doors.'"

## Review by Blake Goble (2014):

This guy's clearly vermin, but he's got something you want.

Lou Bloom (Jake Gyllenhaal, thinner than a twig) repeats himself, often, with intense focus, and sunken, emotionless eyes. He sounds like he's memorized a Wikipedia summary on highly effective habits for truly successful people, acknowledging the "self-esteem movement," "job loyalty," and making "the money to buy the ticket." It's all generic, meaningless statements. But no one's interested in what Bloom has to say, it's what he can show them that's interesting. He's like the newsmen he works for: mechanical and awkward, but worth putting up with because he'll bring the goods.

Below the courtesy lies a profoundly id-like monster. Lou Bloom's a freelance news cameraman, looking for a "screaming woman running down the street with her throat cut" as he understands it. Bloom's job is to find terrible things in the deepest, darkest hours of Los Angeles, film them, and send them back to his local news station for them to murder ratings. He's sensational. He's sellable. He's certifiable.

That is the character concept that drives *Nightcrawler*, the seedy satire from first-time director Dan Gilroy (writer of *The Fall*). A scrappy, scary loser, Bloom finds his way behind the lens. We start with the man stealing copper and fences, riding around in his beat-up little hatchback, shamefully begging and haggling at every corner. He's a rat, a survivalist in Los Angeles. Yet it's this desperation that clearly shows why he might find his calling videotaping gore. One night, Bloom watches cameramen intrude upon and cover an awful car crash. Obviously it's just legal enough, and it doesn't require too much know how. Bloom learns a quick and lucrative lesson: blood and guts sell.

Videotape something awful, and people might watch it. His camera becomes a powerful weapon as he learns how to not just film but drive news.

As depraved as it all sounds, it's not far-fetched at all. In fact, *Nightcrawler* is pretty can't miss stuff.

Bloom learns the tricks of the trade and ascends to real, scary power. It's shocking, riveting, compelling, and often very exciting. Bloom's not killing anyone, but he's definitely contributing to and profiting from hysteria; he's the latest beneficiary of a hungry 24-hour news cycle.

Is a well-composed, high-def shot to bump sweeps week on the morning news worth, say, moving a body at a crime scene, or entering a home after an invasion, before the police arrive? Lou Bloom seems to believe so. Legally, he's on the high wire, but Bloom trips every moral, ethical line possible in his process. He cares more about his shots than his own life, his "intern's" life, his new equipment and car, or even the network that is

addicted to his work. It's a shock to watch Gyllenhaal get off on mayhem porn, and as a viewer, you feel the rush and nausea of it all.

At times, you want to wretch at Bloom's risky work, and that makes the moments of nervous laughter all the more earned. Bloom believes in his own self-worth so heavily that one has to let out a cackle — you're supposed to. The movie acts like a three-piece circus, with Bloom's beginnings, his ascent, and his struggle to stay in power in a wildly exciting and shocking last act. Gilroy has pointed vision, and patience for Bloom, because this is about news, and the shameless art of hooking 'em in.

Yes, the themes are incredibly obvious (news is a nightmare), and Gyllenhaal could be accused of putting on an oversimplified geek show performance for the sake of being creepy, but those themes are magnificently done, in a sensational premise, and talking about how we digest and regurgitate the news is more pressing than ever. *Nightcrawler* is cynical, but so was *Network*, *Sweet Smell of Success*, or *Ace In The Hole* (this film's very clearly spiritual mentor). Gilroy's picture has a potent take on how extreme TV news has gotten: Sometimes the news has to go out and make it themselves.

Gyllenhaal is our nightcrawler. He delivers his most exciting and committed work to date. As Bloom, he wears trendy, tight, old clothes, probably affordable at thrift and pawn shops. He's lean, like he's been starving for years. It's a total physical and emotional work, impossible to ignore and get startled by. Gyllenhaal is a patient, but feral creature, slowly evolving into some sort of king of the night. As Bloom's work improves, and becomes more profitable, the character also finds a sense of egomania. His wants and desires are explored, often ickily, throughout the film, but it's a testament to Gyllenhaal's commitment and willingness with this character.

In *Nightcrawler*'s most uncomfortable moment, Bloom blackmails his boss, makes sexual advances, takes her down to his level: he promises good TV in return for a lot of unfortunate demands. Gyllenhaal turns what could easily be seen as a grotesque moment into a greater metaphor for desperation in media. The tension he adds is what makes *Nightcrawler* such a knockout thriller, and a depraved black comedy.

With Gyllenhaal in place, the film allows you to notice the high quality and suppressed ambition at display. *Nightcrawler*, like Bloom, feels like it's been building in Gilroy for years. The director and his star have something interesting and even exciting on their hands.

<https://consequenceofsound.net>

## **Gyllenhaal at his Best**

2014 | by [Chrismeister](#)

*Nightcrawler* from the very beginning is not a traditional Hollywood film. It certainly does not follow the narrative of one and even though it has the three-act structure we are all familiar with, it spins them around. This is particularly evident in the third act,

incredibly suspenseful with a brilliant, almost anti-climax. Suspense is the main key to this film's success, it build and builds to the point where the last twenty minutes of the film are completely unpredictable.

Dan Gilroy in his directorial debut here has shown a real understanding of how to keep an audience engaged and following a character who isn't an easy man to spend a great deal of time with. Gilroy's screenplay is fast paced and one of the finest this year. The script focuses the audience on the characters, Louis Bloom particularly yet the supporting characters are just as impressive by Bill Paxton and Rene Russo alike. It doesn't follow the rules of a typical script, we are introduced instantly to a criminal and this man is supposed to be our protagonist.

Yet what becomes clear is that there is not a protagonist in Nightcrawler, Jake Gyllenhaal's Louis Bloom is the antagonist. He can be described as nothing less than a psychopath and his portrayal by Gyllenhaal is one of his greatest performances. He is very gaunt here, losing a lot of weight for the role, however that is not the main reason for his impressive performance. Gyllenhaal is an actor who continues to impress me; his work in Enemy from earlier this year was just as brilliant. He has chosen excellent roles in films such as Zodiac, Prisoners and End of Watch. The cinematography is also fantastic, night-time LA has not looked this good since 2011's Drive. All these elements come together to make a captivating piece of filmmaking, a film I expect will be discussed more as time goes on.