

Vampire in Brooklyn

Vampire in Brooklyn (also known as ***Wes Craven's Vampire in Brooklyn***) is a 1995 American comedy horror film directed by *Wes Craven*. *Eddie Murphy*, who also produced and stars in the film, wrote the film's script, alongside *Vernon Lynch* and *Murphy's* older brother *Charles Q. Murphy*. *Vampire in Brooklyn* co-stars *Angela Bassett*, *Allen Payne*, *Kadeem Hardison*, *John Witherspoon*, *Zakes Mokae*, and *Joanna Cassidy*. *Murphy* also plays an alcoholic preacher and a foul-mouthed Italian gangster. The film was released in the United States on October 27, 1995. Despite negative reviews, the film became a cult film among fans.^[2]

Vampire in Brooklyn was the final film produced under *Eddie Murphy's* exclusive contract with *Paramount Pictures*, that began with *48 Hrs.* (1982) and included the *Beverly Hills Cop* franchise (1984-1994).

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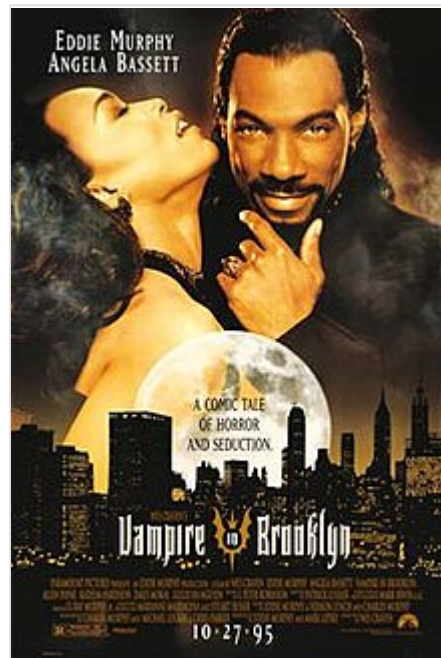
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Plot

An abandoned ship crashes into a dockyard in Brooklyn, New York, and the ship inspector, *Silas Green*, finds it full of corpses. Elsewhere, *Julius Jones*, *Silas's* nephew, has a run-in with some Italian mobsters. Just as the two goons are about to kill *Julius*, *Maximillian*, a vampire who arrived on the ship, intervenes and kills them. *Maximillian* infects *Julius* with his vampiric blood, thereby turning *Julius* into a decaying ghoul, and explains that he has come to Brooklyn in search of the *Dhampir* daughter of a vampire from his native Caribbean island in order to live beyond the night of the next full moon.

This *Dhampir* turns out to be *NYPD Detective Rita Veder*, still dealing with the death of her mentally ill mother (a paranormal researcher) some months before. As she and her partner, *Detective Justice*, investigate the murders on

Vampire in Brooklyn



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Wes Craven
Produced by	Eddie Murphy Mark Lipsky
Screenplay by	Charles Q. Murphy Michael Lucker Chris Parker
Story by	Eddie Murphy Vernon Lynch Charles Q. Murphy
Starring	Eddie Murphy Angela Bassett Allen Payne Kadeem Hardison Zakes Mokae
Music by	J. Peter Robinson

the ship, Rita begins having visions about a woman who looks like her, and starts asking questions about her mother's past. Rita is completely unaware of her vampire heritage, and believes she is losing her mind like her mother.

Maximillian initiates a series of sinister methods to pull Rita into his thrall, including seducing and murdering her roommate Nikki, as well as disguising himself as her preacher and a lowlife crook. Max, in these disguises, misleads Rita into thinking Justice slept with Nikki, making her jealous and angry with him. After saving Rita from being run down by a taxicab, Maximillian takes her to dinner. Rita is taken with Maximillian's suave charm, and while dancing with her, he bites her.

The next day, Justice finds Rita in her apartment, having slept all day with it completely darkened. Justice informs Rita about Nikki's murder, and vows to help understand her visions, as one correctly foretold Nikki's fate. Rita forgives Justice, but she almost bites him in the neck during a passionate kiss before catching her disappearing reflection in a mirror, and realizes she is becoming a vampire. She confronts Max about the changes occurring in her, and deduces he is also responsible for the murders she and Justice are investigating. Rita further finds out that Maximillian was sent to her by her father; his death at the hands of vampire hunters was what drove Rita's mother insane.

Max tries to convince Rita that she will be happier as a vampire instead of remaining in the human world, where he feels she will remain out of place and misunderstood by society. Justice plans to rescue Rita from Max, and seeks advice from Dr. Zeko, a vampire expert they visited earlier in the murder investigation. Zeko explains that he knew Rita's mother while she did her research on the vampires of the Caribbean islands, and she surrendered to evil by falling in love with Rita's father. To avoid becoming a vampire, Rita must refrain from drinking the blood of an innocent human victim; also, Maximillian must die before the next full moon. Zeko gives Justice an ancient dagger with instructions to either kill Maximillian or risk being killed by Rita.

When Justice reaches her, Rita is lying inside Max's coffin, almost completely changed into a vampire, and threatens to bite Justice. Justice and Maximillian fight, during which Justice loses Zeko's dagger on the floor. Maximillian encourages Rita to kill Justice and complete the transformation, but she rejects life as a vampire and drives the dagger through Maximillian's heart, causing him to disintegrate. Rita and Justice then embrace with a passionate kiss.

Meanwhile, Julius, now completely decayed, enters his master's limousine. He finds Maximillian's ring and puts it on, instantly transforming him into a fully intact member of the undead. Overjoyed, he tells Silas, "There's a new vampire in Brooklyn, and his name is Julius Jones!", as both of them drive off into the night to parts unknown.

Cinematography	Mark Irwin
Edited by	Patrick Lussier
Production company	Eddie Murphy Productions
Distributed by	Paramount Pictures
Release date	October 27, 1995
Running time	102 minutes
Language	English
Box office	\$19.8 million ^[1]

Cast

- [Eddie Murphy](#) as Maximillian / Preacher Pauly / Guido
- [Angela Bassett](#) as Detective Rita Veder
- [Allen Payne](#) as Detective Justice
- [Kadeem Hardison](#) as Julius Jones
- [John Witherspoon](#) as Silas Green
- [Zakes Mokae](#) as Dr. Zeko
- [Joanna Cassidy](#) as Captain Dewey
- [W. Earl Brown](#) as Police Officer
- [Simbi Khali](#) as Nikki

Production

African-American stunt performer Sonja Davis was fatally injured performing a 42-foot (13 m) backward fall.^[3]

According to Charlie Murphy, the movie was originally going to be a straight horror film with no laughs but Wes Craven brought a different focus to it. He also said: "Maximilian wasn't going to have any redeeming qualities. But Wes taught us that we must get the audience to care about our characters. And even if they didn't know any vampires personally, they would at least have to identify with the type of person he was."^[4]

About the movie, Eddie Murphy said: "I've always wanted to do something where I was the villain in the movie. I love horror pictures and I was a big fan of Wes Craven. This movie started out as something small, this was a movie my company was just going to produce and the screenplay came together so well that I thought it will be a fun role to play. Because I got to do something kind of scary and had a safety net because the vampire can turn into other peoples. I get to be funny when I'm the preacher and I get to be funny when I'm the Italian guy. And the vampire is pretty straight and I got all these funny stuff happening around me. I felt it was a unique piece to do."^[5]

Reception

Vampire in Brooklyn was released to coincide with the Halloween season. The film received mostly negative reviews, and is considered a lesser film of both Murphy and Craven. In the next year, 1996, Craven moved on to begin the hugely successful *Scream* franchise, while Murphy began concentrating on more family-friendly movies, with his remake *The Nutty Professor*.^{[6][7]} Rotten Tomatoes gives the film an approval rating of 10% based on reviews from 29 critics, and the site's consensus is: "Neither scary nor very funny, this misguided effort never lives up to its premise."^[8] On Metacritic, it has an aggregate score of 27%.^[9]

Roger Ebert gave the film 1 star out of 4, saying: "The movie is unpleasant to look at. It's darker than *Se7en*, but without sufficient purpose, and my overall memory of it is people screaming in the shadows. To call this a comedy is a sign of optimism; to call it a comeback for Murphy is a sign of blind faith."^[10]

In a positive review from *Variety*: "Helmer Wes Craven keeps the action moving despite some detours allowing Murphy to play other characters as he did in "Coming to America". Murphy proves effective and menacing as the vampire in a rather brave departure from what might be expected. Bassett looks great once she gets vampired-up. The vampire effects and makeup are also impressive."^[11]

Legacy

Although contemporary reviews were negative, *Vampire In Brooklyn* has since become a cult classic.^{[2][12]} Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "B+" on an A+ to F scale.^[13]

In the retrospective book *Wes Craven: The Art of Horror*, the author John Kenneth Muir said, "Given the fact that *A Vampire in Brooklyn* is an entry in an over-exposed horror genre and an uneasy mix of humor and horror, it is amazing that it is successful at all. The chemistry between Bassett and Murphy is strong, Kadeem Hardison and John Witherspoon are adept at comedy, the special effect sequences and transformations are startling, and the overall 1930s-'40s mood is charming." He also praised J. Peter Robinson's musical score, calling it "delightful".^{[14][15]}

In an interview with *Rolling Stone*, Murphy gave a reason *Vampire in Brooklyn* was a failure. "The only way I was able to do *Nutty Professor* and to get out of my Paramount deal, I had to do *Vampire in Brooklyn*. But you know what ruined that movie? The wig. I walked out in that longhaired wig and people said, 'Oh, get the fuck out of here! What the hell is this?'"^[16]

In an interview with director Mick Garris, Wes Craven stated that the movie was difficult to make because Murphy did not want to be funny, instead aiming to play his character totally straight.^[17] About the final product, he said: "I thought it was a good, fun little film and it was nice to get a chance to do comedy but i think the script really hampered it".^[18]

In an interview with The A.V. Club, John Witherspoon stated *Vampire in Brooklyn* was "one of my favorite movies. I had the chance to holler and scream." About Craven, he said, "Wes Craven, oh my God, he's funny; he's hilarious. But so, they let me ad-lib. But the worst thing about ad-libbing is that when you shoot it again, you don't remember what you said. So he would take notes and tell me what I said. I said, "I said that?" So many lines that you say you forget that you say anything—you're just ad-libbing, you're not committing it to memory. So it was kind of difficult working with him, because he shot a lot of scenes, you know, instead of shooting one scene and get the genius of it all, he'd shoot it from different angles. So now I gotta think about what I said. He had a little pencil and he wrote it down, he came up to me said, "I want you to say that again, that was so funny." That was kind of a difficult movie. But by the end of it, I just stuck with the script."^[19]

Charles Pulliam More from Gizmodo stated that *Vampire in Brooklyn* is one of the most underrated horror movies of all time.^[20]

See also

- Eddie Murphy filmography
- Stunts that have gone wrong (List of film accidents)
- Vampire films
- *Dracula: Dead and Loving It*

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External links

- *Vampire in Brooklyn* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0114825/>) on IMDb
 - *Vampire in Brooklyn* (<http://www.tcm.turner.com/tcmdb/title/title.jsp?stid=94663>) at the TCM Movie Database
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