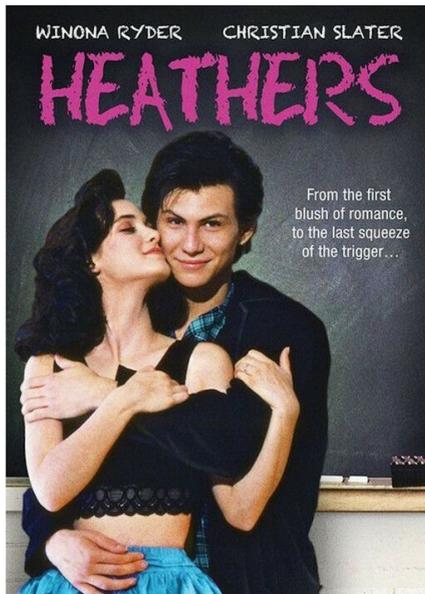


Film review: Heathers



I have decided to introduce to you the film Heathers, called Fatal Games in France. Heathers is an American film released in 1988 and directed by Michael Lehmann. It is a black comedy teen film which means that the film shows serious and taboo subjects with a humorous way. The film is about suicide, violence and also harassment.

The story takes place in 1988 at Westerburg High School in Ohio, USA. The story is told to us by Veronica Sawyer, a young freshman high school student, in her diary. Veronica is part of the Heathers group who call themselves the elite and want to be the most popular girls in high school. So, Veronica's friends are: Heather Chandler, the leader, Heather Duke, the bookish bulimic and Heather McNamara, the weak-willed cheerleader. One day at lunch, Heather Chandler decides to trick Martha Dunnstock into believing that Kurt Kelly, the quarterback, finds her charming. She wants to humiliate Martha. On the same day, she meets Jason Dean, a dark, marginal young man, and he intrigues Veronica. Then the young high school girl realizes the cruelty of her friends and wants to find her old friends again. She wants to put an end to the high school cruelty that comes from the Heathers or the jocks. After a drunken evening and an argument with Heather Chandler, Veronica wants to apologize to Heather who decided to kick Veronica out of the Heathers' band. With Jason, Veronica goes to Heather Chandler's house but however, she kills Heather unintentionally so Jason finds the idea to cover up her murder by suicide. This event then marks the beginning of a dark period in high school. Veronica and Jason won't be strangers to this dark time.



Veronica Sawyer is played by the actress Winona Ryder, known in particular for her role as Kim in Edward Scissorhands and Lydia in Beetlejuice. Today, we can see her in the series Stranger Things in which she plays Joyce Byers, Will's mother. This is the main character in the film. Veronica used to wear blue to symbolize her deep personality since Veronica Sawyer is an antihero. Veronica goes out with the rebel, Jason Dean, and helps him in his macabre adventures. However, she is loyal and takes care of her friends. Veronica is an incredibly gifted person with an incredible talent, she can reproduce people's writing to perfection. She wishes for happiness to return to high school. Before meeting the Heathers, she was friends with Betty, a very polite and respectful young girl, the opposite of Heather Chandler.

Jason Dean is Veronica's boyfriend and he just moved to Ohio. Christian Slater is the actor who plays Jason. Jason is a young man on the margins of society and he also scares the other students because he comes to class with a gun. Jason and his father have a rather strange relationship since they've reversed their roles. In fact, Jason's father owns a building demolition company and he loves watching videos of the buildings he demolishes. Jason is a psychopath as well as a toxic person.



Kim Walker from the 1990 series, *The Outsiders* played Heather Chandler. Heather Chandler is a rich girl who wants to be popular. She's as much loved as hated by high school students. She loves to humiliate students or even insult Heather Duke and every lunchtime she asks stupid questions to high school students. She loves going to college parties and flirting with students. Her tragic death marks the beginning of a dark period in high school. She wears red to symbolize her power.

Shannen Doherty who notably played Prue Halliwell in the series *Charmed* interprets Heather Duke. She is bulimic and forces herself to throw up in the high school bathroom, which gets her a lot of grief from Heather Chandler. Initially, Heather Duke is a rather fragile young girl who is constantly being humiliated by Heather Chandler. However, when Heather Chandler dies, she decides to resume her role and decides to humiliate others as Heather Chandler does. When they play cricket, she is constantly being eliminated by Heather Chandler. Throughout the film, she reads *Moby Dick*. At the beginning of the film, she wears green but when Heather Chandler dies, she decides to take back her color which is red.



Heather McNamara is played by Lisanne Falk. This is the kindest and most fragile of the Heathers. Heather McNamara is a cheerleader who falls into a depression after Heather's death. She is the one who put Veronica's fake note on Martha's set. After Heather Chandler's death, she is insulted and intimidated by Heather Duke, which contributes to her depression. Heather McNamara was probably raped by Ram, a football player. She and Veronica have a long and strong friendship and Veronica tries to look out for her. She wants to have her own life. Heather McNamara wears yellow, which symbolizes friendship and illness (her depression).

I love the movie Heathers, which is a film about cruelty and darkness among teenagers. It's a good film for teenagers but also for adults even if the adults have a really secondary role in the film. Characters are not Manichean and everyone can then identify with a character. I recommend this film which is without headache but tries to convey a message of hope. By the way, there is a Heathers musical with very good songs. If you liked The Breakfast Club or Clueless, I am sure you will like Heathers. I hope I have made you want to watch this movie that inspired Mean Girls or Lolita malgré moi in French.



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