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A hooded serial killer stalks Natasha Gregson Wagner, re-enacting a popular urban myth in 'Urban Legend.'

'Urban Legend'

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teachers begin to drop like flies, she must convince the breathing ones that there is a killer lurking in the shadows on campus.

With the help of campus journalist/sleuth Paul (Leto), who just happens to be after the elusive college Pulitzer Prize, Natalie tries to uncover the identity of the ax-wielding killer, who wears a hooded jacket (think Kenny of "South Park" with a sharp object and a bad attitude).

The film gets a little crowded as Blanks clumsily tosses in a slew of characters in an effort to throw off the audience. Many of these characters are painfully clichéd: the angry and grizzled janitor, the snooty dean and the creepy professor.

Along with the jumbled cast of characters, Blanks weaves in a 30-year-old urban legend about a campus dorm massacre. Blanks does not stay with this particular urban legend, and the film veers off track onto a roller coaster se-



Alicia Witt, who plays Natalie in 'Urban Legend,' has a close encounter with a campus

ries of murders. But part of the fun for the audience is being able to point out the urban legends wrapped around the demise of each character. Even the dog meets an untimely death - but I won't give that one away.

By the time the film comes to the grand finale, the dialogue and setting become almost comical. But I have to admit it was fun trying to guess how Blanks was going to finish off the killer.

If this film has anything original, it's the camera angles. Blanks adds some visual candy to the film with some unique close-up shots of the characters. Look for an array of crane shots and good use of darkness.

Although "Urban Legend" merely rides the tsunami-sized wave of horror films that began with "Scream," its catchy concept makes up for its lack of suspense and character originality.

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