



Lamb to the Slaughter

FOLK HORROR / PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR / PERIOD THRILLER

Writer: Gabriella Niles-Ewen

Format: Feature Film (90–100 mins)

Country: United Kingdom

Synopsis

A chilling folk-horror steeped in British rural gothic traditions, *Lamb to the Slaughter* blends folklore, family trauma, and supernatural dread to explore cycles of violence, belief, and female survival.

Set in the fog-laden English countryside of the late 1960s, *Lamb to the Slaughter* follows Isobel Hale, a quiet teenager trapped under the rule of her domineering and abusive father, Abraham. Hoping for a fresh start, Isobel moves with her father and two younger siblings to the remote village of Wychcombe, only to discover that the decaying farmhouse they now call home is anything but a sanctuary.

As the oppressive weight of her father's religious fanaticism and the uncanny strangeness of the surrounding woods close in, Isobel begins to experience disturbing visions, cryptic whispers, and a bodily transformation she cannot explain. The voice of her deceased mother calls to her, while the village priest warns of the land's dark debts. Drawn deeper into the forest's shadow, Isobel sheds the role of victim, awakening a vengeful power that threatens to consume all around her.

Lamb to the Slaughter is a gothic folk horror exploring generational trauma, religious extremism, and the grotesque inheritance of womanhood. Torn between survival and metamorphosis, Isobel must confront a chilling question: is she merely the product of generational violence - or its final reckoning?

Key Characters

Isobel Hale

A quiet, intense girl raised in near-total isolation under her father's strict rule. Homeschooled, obedient, and naive in many ways. The years of repression, cruelty, and the whispers in the woods begin to crack her mind.

Abraham Hale

A harsh, devout man who sees sin in every shadow. A widowed farmer with calloused hands and a heart hardened by grief, he believes Isobel must remain pure and untouched. But his punishments go beyond discipline—his control over her is terrifying.

Silas Hale

Strange and unsettling, Silas is a child of dead things. He collects bones, dissects animals, watches creatures struggle with a quiet fascination. He is eerily intelligent, speaking in whispers, always watching Isobel.

Evie Hale

The last child, the innocent one. A soft, golden-haired girl who hums nursery rhymes and skips through the fields, untouched by the darkness that seeps through the Hale family. Isobel adores her, shields her.

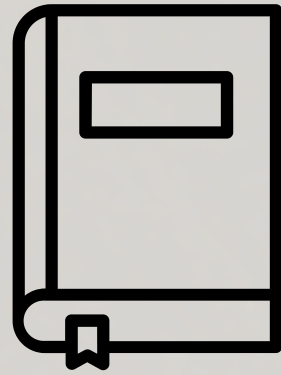
Reverend Thomas Keane

A fire-and-brimstone preacher who shares Abraham's rigid beliefs. He warns the village about Isobel's family, fueling the paranoia that has simmered for years.

Mrs. Cooke

The woman who watches Isobel with narrowed eyes, whispering behind her back. She remembers what happened in these woods long ago. She knows the signs.

Vision & Style



Tone: Atmospheric, slow-burn horror with flashes of brutality.



Setting: 1960s rural Britain - a period where folk superstition clashes with modernity.



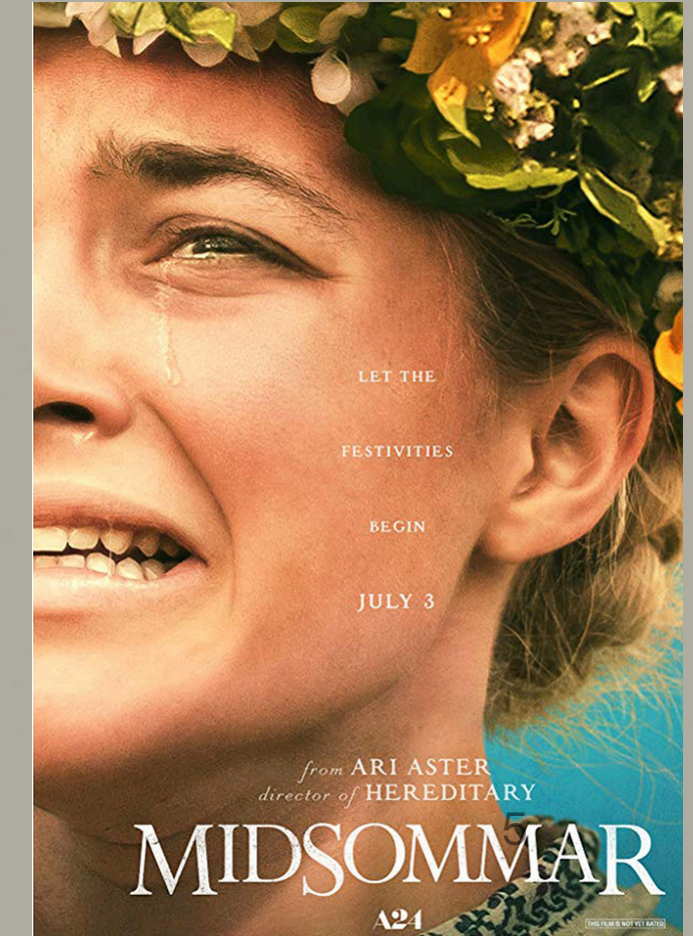
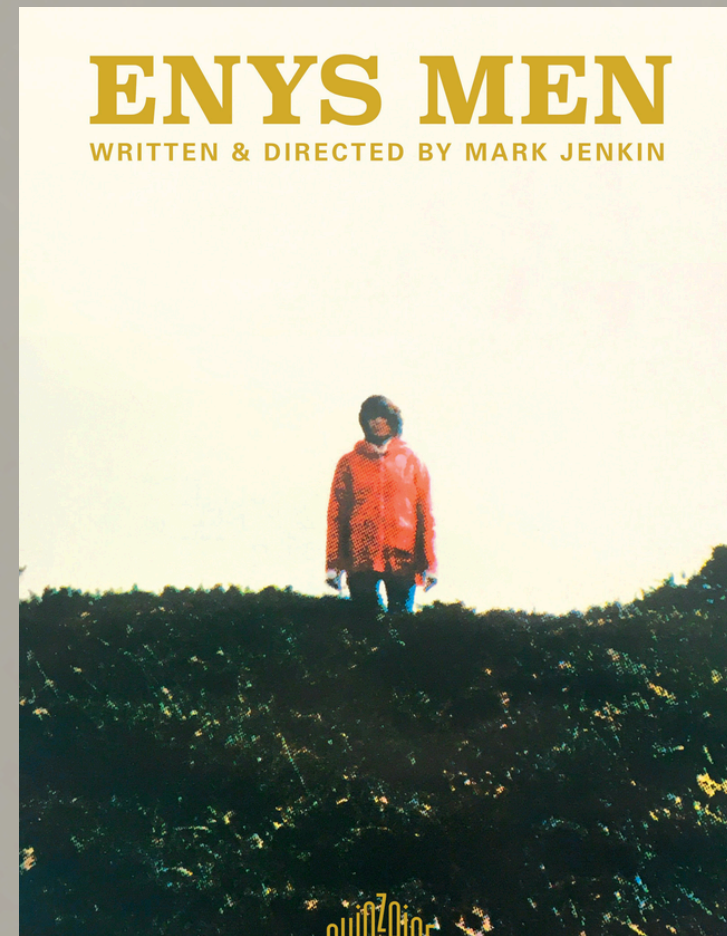
Themes: Religious fanaticism, generational trauma, female resistance, folklore as living memory.

Why Lamb to the Slaughter?

- Folk horror revival is booming - proven success of *The Witch*, *Midsommar*, and *Enys Men*.
- Horror remains the highest ROI genre in indie film, thriving on both box office and streaming.
- Audiences are seeking intelligent, atmospheric horror that engages with folklore, trauma, and female survival - exactly what this film delivers.
- The UK's distinctive cultural and landscape identity makes the project highly exportable in today's international market.
- Blends prestige arthouse horror with mainstream folk-horror appeal.
- Isobel's journey offers a powerful, marketable female lead - resonant with audiences hungry for complex, resilient women in horror.
- Visually striking rural gothic aesthetic with a festival-ready look.
- Backed by awards recognition and critical validation.
- Designed for global commercial appeal at a lean indie budget.

Comparable Films (Box Office // Reception)

- The Witch (A24) – \$40m worldwide on \$4m budget.
- Saint Maud (UK, A24) – \$1.5m on festival acclaim, cult success.
- Enys Men (BFI) – £800k indie, UK critical darling.
- The Innocents – timeless British Gothic influence.
- Midsommar – \$48m worldwide, proof of appetite for folk horror with ritualistic and cult elements.



Marketability & Sellability

Proven Audience for Folk Horror: Recent successes (The Witch, Midsommar, Enys Men) prove demand for arthouse horror with folklore roots.

Budget-Friendly Genre: Horror sells internationally with lower budgets and higher ROI compared to most genres.

Streaming & VOD Demand: Horror thrives on platforms (Shudder, Netflix, Amazon Prime, Arrow Video).

Awards Momentum: Already validated by festivals (Best Screenplay, Official Selection) - gives prestige and leverage in packaging.

British Identity: Distinctly set in UK countryside - highly exportable in the global horror market (the “British Gothic” brand).

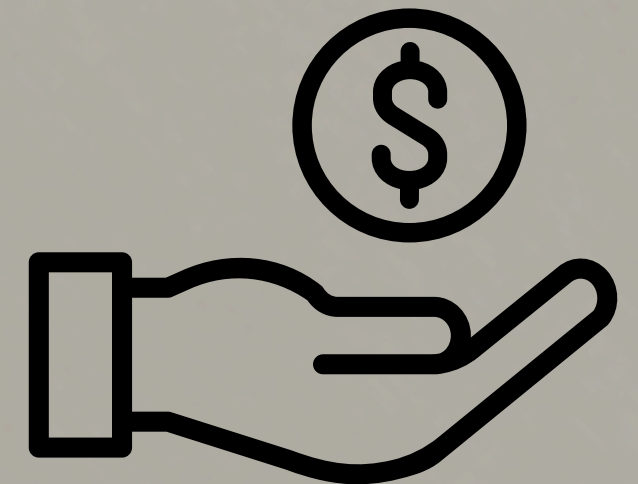
Audience Reach: Core Horror Fans (18–35), Arthouse/Festival Audiences, Folk Horror Communities, Critical/Academic Circles.

Budget Breakdown

(Rounded to percentages rather than exact)

- Cast & Crew: 25% (£250k)
- Production (locations, design, costumes, SFX): 20% (£200k)
- Camera/Lighting/Sound Equipment: 15% (£150k)
- Post-Production (edit, sound design, VFX, colour grade): 20% (£200k)
- Music & Score: 5% (£50k)
- Marketing, PR, Festival Submissions: 5% (£50k)
- Contingency / Insurance: 10% (£100k)

Total: ~£1m (scalable between £750k–£1.2m)





Lamb to the Slaughter

GABRIELLA NILES-EWEN

Screenwriter Statement



“Lamb to the Slaughter is an atmospheric folk horror feature about a devout young woman who begins to unravel - mentally, spiritually, and physically - after returning to her family’s isolated farmhouse. Raised by a fanatical father and haunted by the ghost of her mother, Isobel Hale must confront the dark inheritance that runs through her blood: a supernatural legacy tied to the forest, femininity, and ritual sacrifice.

As her body changes and whispers rise from the roots, she’s forced to decide whether to become what she fears - or burn with the rest of her family. With echoes of The VVitch, Relic, and Carrie, the script offers a powerful exploration of trauma, repression, and the monstrous beauty of feminine rage.”

– Screenwriter, Gabriella Niles-Ewen

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