

# REEL REVIEWS

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but a nightmare of a date. And you'll have to agree with Paul when he says, "I've had a very, very bad night."

By Michael Giltz

## A Flash of Green

### Oaks Six

Jimmy Wing is a very lonely man. In the beginning of *A Flash Of Green*, we see him in a hospital talking to his wife. She is suffering from a degenerative disease and can only sit quietly, playing with a piece of string. He carries on a painful, one-sided conversation with her, telling her that he'll bring her a new piece of string next week and won't that be nice.

Slowly, we meet Jimmy's other acquaintances, including a fellow reporter on the newspaper he works for, and a friend of the family, Kat Hubble, played sensitively by Blair Brown. Though friendly to him, these people seem at times to be somewhat brusque.

The only affection offered to Jimmy is from a high-school sweetheart who is now a hooker, and we feel his loneliness. Ed Harris' (*The Right Stuff*) performance as Jimmy is quiet and controlled, and he wins our sympathy. That's good, because we're not used to seeing the hero of a movie start off by doing something reprehensible, which is exactly what he does.

Elmo Bliss, the local hotshot, has big plans to build a development in

the middle of the bay, but local townspeople, who fear it will ruin the beauty and environmental balance of their bay, want to stop him. Bliss bribes Jimmy into getting dirt on the opposition, many of whom are Jimmy's friends.

Jimmy begins to regret his involvement when Bliss starts playing hardball — one woman is beaten, another robbed, and a third is discredited by a scandal she was involved in years ago. But why would Jimmy spy on his friends in the first place? That is the central, probing question of this thoughtful film, which was shot entirely in Florida and directed by Victor Nunez.

In his own defense, Jimmy simply tells Hubble, "I needed something to do." But a more telling exchange takes place between Jimmy and his aunt. She tells him, "You're gettin' too much pleasure outta actin' tragically."

"I gotta get it somehow," he answers quietly.

In the end, you'll draw your own conclusions about why Jimmy did what he did, and whether or not he redeems himself. It is a plaintive film, underscored by the lonely music that haunts it. Even the intermittent exchanges of love and sex seem tinged with sadness. Though you may not completely understand Jimmy's motives, *A Flash Of Green* is good enough to keep you wondering, and it shouldn't be missed.

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