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ANGEL HEART

NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK OF Mickey Rourke's current status (as an actor or bizarre personality), there was a brief period of time in the '80s when he showed promise as an actor of Robert De Niro's range and caliber. Director Alan Parker's *Angel Heart* afforded Rourke his most vulnerable and extraordinary portrayal—that of a 1950's low-rent private eye who takes on a case which perturbs him from the start, and sends him deeper and deeper into a horrific nightmare of self-discovery. De Niro himself plays the enigmatic gentleman who sends him on his fateful journey. This film-noir/horror hybrid is a textured artistic work of perfection in its casting, direction, photography, editing and use of sound and music. When *Angel Heart* was originally released to home video, two versions were made available on cassette: the one shown theatrically with a minor but somewhat damaging alteration, and Parker's original version. Thankfully, it's the latter version that's been remastered as this widescreen disc. The Dolby Surround audio on this new edition is an improvement over the previous release, however the transfer is a bit too dark, often obscuring detail in a film that is almost nothing but. And while the framing is acceptable, it lops off a considerable amount of picture information visible at the top and bottom of the full-frame image. If only Parker had

supervised this release and provided a commentary track, one of his most underrated films might have finally gotten its due. (LIVE/Pioneer; 112 min., Dolby Surround; one CLV letterboxed [1.85:1] disc, \$35) —BL