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Movie Reviews – UNFAITHFUL

by Talaria Haast

Okay, so honestly, the fact that this movie was way hot almost outweighed its flaws. Almost...but not quite.

So let's begin with Richard Gere. First of all, I thought his initial reaction was accurate. Well, not accurate, because I can't really back that up...but handled in what seemed to be a realistic way. His relationship with Diane Lane was logical up to the point where you believed that she cheated because they were just so mismatched. I don't much see Gere as a romantic lead (even though some casting directors do), so I really could see Lane growing apart.

Diane Lane, meanwhile, was fantastic. She was truly wonderful in the portrayal of a woman who does not want to cheat, but is unable to stop herself. Beautifully done.

Olivier Martinez? Pssh. Loved him since *The Horseman on the Roof*. Sexy, fun, French....basically a nice combination.

Finally, the kid. Erik Per Sullivan....needs to stop. Seriously, did Adrian Lyne know how to direct kids? Did the agency people want him to be infantile, stupid and obnoxious? Because if they did, it bloody well worked. Seriously, it was horrible. It was like he was pushing to be "cute" and thereby achieved the direct opposite. His mother is making dinner, and he is "helping"....but is it completely necessary to have the collinder on his head? No. It's not. He's supposed to be how old in the movie? Four? Yeah. No: stupid. He gets an "F."

Okay, so Sullivan is one of my issues with this movie. My other? Richard Gere? What? Why would I ever have an issue with the man who said "I know who I am. No one else knows who I am. If I was a giraffe, and someone said I was a snake, I'd think, no, actually I'm a giraffe."

Can we just pause and appreciate that?

Yes, he said that. He said that and I love it. Wow.

So aside from some really interesting and realistic reactions, I really couldn't stand how they pretty much copped out on this film. It was going very well, and then Gere had his "Oh I'm feeling ill because I am confronting the man who has been sleeping with my

wife and it's put me in a very difficult, emotional I KILL YOU WITH A SNOWGLOBE!" moment. As soon as that happened, I was gone. It became unrealistic. It went stupid. It basically failed.

Neat idea, but with some unforgivable moments/circumstances. That and Sullivan managed to rank high on my list of most annoying children on screen since the kids in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* way back in '58.

MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

So technically this was a cute premise...but then something happened along the way: something bad. I would have to say that this was a bit of a waste of talent. Uma Thurman: like her. Luke Wilson: he's good. Eddie Izzard: pssh, you KNOW I love him. But, sadly, this movie slowly collapsed like a flan in a cupboard.

Bit of a shame, but I just didn't care.

Best part was Uma hurling the shark through the window. But, as cool as that was....where'd she get the shark? And why? This was Manhattan. When I think of problems in Manhattan, I'm sorry, but sharks don't immediately pop into my mind. Although, the reasoning behind it soon became apparent when Luke Wilson delivers the line "Well....you did throw a shark through my window." Hence: the reasoning behind the bizarre aquatic display.

As silly as it was, I wouldn't rush out and see this one unless you are willing to embrace the horror of implausible scripts made even more implausible by moronic choices.

I'm done.

THE LADY IN THE WATER

I only saw half of this one....and, you know what, that's okay. I mean, seriously; what was going on?!?!? It was like some horrible, drug-induced vision of....hotel management mixed with ridiculousness. Wow. M. Night Shyamalan, may I be so bold as to ask: "What the hell happened?!"

Let's look at the chronology, shall we?

In 1999, we were enthralled by the *Sixth Sense*, which (besides amazing casting) was very very good. (Now we're going to ignore the fact that he wrote *Stuart Little* in 1999 as well....well, because it messes with my point.) Next was *Unbreakable*, which was interesting and quite decent. Moving on to 2002: *Signs*. Bad move. Just bad. Finally, in

2004, he did *The Village*, which I honestly do not have as much of a problem with, save for the fact it was mildly stupid.

And now this.

Didn't Shyamalan notice that his films were getting progressively worse? Wouldn't he have put a stop to this nonsense? One might think. But NO.

Not a possibility. This film was almost funny: "Are you the guardian?" "I don't think I'm the guardian..." "You might be the guardian." "Is this the council?" "Yes, we think we're the council. Are you the healer?" "Well, I could be the healer...if you're the guardian and she's the Madame Narf." "The eagle will soon come for me." "But wait, where's the scrut?"

WHAT THE HELL!?!

Aside from numerous psychotic issues, the best was Bob Balaban. He held my attention. Very funny, very tongue-in-cheek. Everyone else seemed to have smoked far too much weed for my taste. But wait....before I trash this even more, let me just quickly say that it was visually pleasing. Loved the look of the entire thing. Christopher Doyle did a great job. I'm not all too familiar with his other work, but it was beautiful. Other mentionable parts: the wolf-thing was interesting (but aren't they all?), and Bryce Howard (who was also in Shyamalan's *The Village*) is not only neat to watch, but also quite striking. So well done there.

But that's about it.

Several people that I've spoken to liked this film: now, I have admitted to not being present for the entire thing, as well as being very very choosy with movies....but what I did see does not tempt me to go back and see the rest of it at all. Seriously, there's no interest on my part. I hear people say it's good and they are annoyed at me....but from what I did see, I was not impressed in the slightest. Ick.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Never thought Dumas intended a story to be so homosexual...but if he did....well, right on! Those two hooking up would be hot. (Distressing, yeah...but hot.)

"Why didn't you come to me first?!"

"Well, why did you keep it a secret from me?!?!"

Hahaha! Wow. If those two don't have some serious sexual tension, I'll eat my hat.

Guy Pearce, as much as I love him, was just so completely reprehensible. I despised his wig in most takes, but thought he did well in some moments. When he wasn't over-acting like a jealous lover, that is....

And Jesus was in it too! (And by Jesus, I mean Jim Caviezel.) ...On some level though, I just really wanted to smack him. Mr. Oh-I'm-the-son-of-a-clerk-and-I-have-no-money-and-I-can't-read-and-my-fiancee's-wicked-hot-and-I'm-just-such-a-nice-pious-guy-who-gets-treated-so-unfairly-so-pity-me-love-me-give-me-cash...?Rrrrrr.? Meanwhile, Michael Wincott rocks. He's great. I love him. Always have. Always will. End of story.

I loved the advice to the fiancee, too: "Oh, don't be sad that your boyfriend's locked away in prison forever....take solace and comfort in his 'friend' who has obviously had the hots for you since grade school, but has an odd obsession with your boyfriend and would probably much rather have sex with him." I'm aware that I'm paraphrasing, but you get the idea.

And yeah, I'd hate to be in isolation with no idea of my crime, but I doubt that I'd say such cheesy stuff. Where was the script girl? But being in a prison forever, with your only chance to mark the time passed is a yearly beating...man, that bites. Some anniversary present.

Oh, the guy who comes through the floor: I love him...what a nut. Gotta love Richard Harris....and it was actually believable on some level that he would prove a phenomenal teacher. Why? Because he's Richard Harris, that's why. Bummer when he died. I did like the prison scenes, however....very Dumas. Thought that was promising.

?? Apparently I was mistaken though.... ?

There were numerous plausibility issues (as always). The chick kept that little string around her finger for how many years? And when Pearce and Caviezel finally duel, pardon my squirrely ignorance about the technology in Napoleon's time, but aren't those power lines behind them? And was that a radio tower far off in the distance? Yeah, I think so. As far as action films go: blah! Not great fight choreography. As far as acting: far from stellar. But as far as fantastic sets and costumes: pretty sweet. ?

Oh, I admit....I thought it was fun. A bit on the unconvincing side, but (if I remember correctly) the book had tons of odd coincidences and such. The story really is the most classic (not to mention most famous) of all revenge stories.?

And you know me: I'm all about revenge.