

Movie Review: '28 Weeks Later ...'

by *David_Elliott*

About 28 hours after viewing "28 Weeks Later ...," I woke up sweating, staring hungrily at my arm through scarlet eyeballs, and babbling, "No more reviews! No more reviews! No more. ..."

'28 WEEKS LATER ...' - Rose Byrne hides from her attackers in the sci-fi thriller '28 Weeks Later ...'
CNS Photo courtesy of Fox Atomic.

But that passed. And in less than 28 days, "28 Weeks Later ..." will have fallen into the compost of memory where compulsively generic movies that rely on fiercely gullible viewers all tend to retire, hazily.

Sequel to Danny Boyle's cult-hit "28 Days Later ..." - may we please have the next sequel in 28 years? - this one takes place after the plague of zombies has eaten Britain. Nearly all the humans got munched, and the rapacious zombies have died off like pigs after a toxic binge.

What cavalry rides in? Not Canada's Mounties, but Uncle Sam, always eager for foreign travel with guns. Yep, we're back, over there and over-fed. We take over the part of town Prince Charles surely hated most, an area of high-rises you could call Dallas East.

You don't need to be George W. Bush to spot the analogies. London is really Baghdad. The military safety area District One equals the bunkered Green Zone of that scary capital. And, although the citizenry became a suicidal weapon of mass destruction, we're gonna make Old Blighty better than ever.

Robert Carlyle and Catherine McCormack are Don and Alice, surviving couple. The Yanks bring in "repatriated" Britons to restock London (forget Liverpool). Coming back are the couple's kids, a spunky Artful Dodger type played by superbly named Mackintosh Muggleton, and his lovely teen sister (almost equally well-named Imogen Poots).

Now, there's a New Britain for sure! But maybe not. Don is a guilty wreck. Alice has bad, secret issues. And the young darlings slip away to to joy-ride among septic ruins littered with grotesque bodies (somewhere, Harry Potter smirks and Winston Churchill groans).

It takes just one contagious human to get bad blood foaming again, and, although our boys slaughter people like termites, the zombies infest central London within 24 hours. Spanish director Juan Carlos Fresnadillo can do a panic and bloodbath, though the barely guarded contamination ward is ludicrous, and the subway carpeted in grisly corpses is less scary than the real subway squatters of "Dark Days."

It is a bit witty when a helicopter becomes a real chopper, slicing up zombies with its rotor blades. But, digitally it looks dumb. And Jeremy Renner as sniper Doyle can lob the line, "You guys do what ya want, I'm gonna get the (bleep) out of here!" But John Wayne, or even Kurt Russell, he isn't.

The movie has some vivid shock touches and the scenes of depopulated London are queasily strange. Still, this is really about a grimly ravaged couple and two kids put through hell. Your idea of fun? Munch on it.

RATINGS4 STARS - Excellent.3 STARS - Worthy.2 STARS - Mixed.1 STAR - Poor.0 - Forget It (a dog) A 20th Century Fox release. Director: Juan Carlos Fresnadillo. Writers: Rowan Joffe, Juan Carlos Fresnadillo, Jesus Olmo. Cast: Robert Carlyle, Catherine McCormack, Jeremy Renner, Imogen Poots, Mackintosh Muggleton, Rose Byrne. Running time: 1 hour, 39 minutes. Rated R. 2 stars.

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