

## 'The Grey' a thrilling tale of survival

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I'm a movie guy, thanks to my father, who sat me down and got me to watch all these black-and-white classics and some color ones too. At a young age I was in love with films such as "Witness for the Prosecution," "Mutiny on the Bounty," "Casablanca," "Ben-Hur," and I still am.

While I grumbled at first having to watch a movie without color or a movie made *so long ago*, I dispensed with the misconception that old movies just weren't cool and enjoyed every minute of them.

I loved when my dad would ask, "want to watch this movie?" Of course I took the opportunity to spend quality time with him, even if he fell asleep halfway through whatever we were watching. He could never sit through a whole movie, even if he loved it!

Hopefully, with this column I can properly gauge what works, or doesn't work in movies that you can find on local silver screens here in Wilson County. Often times, I don't agree with critic reviews and I'm not a professional critic. I'm a regular guy who loves movies, like a lot of people.

So I invite you to check back here each week and hopefully I can sway you one way or another off the fence about a film that's just opened in theaters, or you've been debating to see for a few weeks.

I'm sure we'll agree, disagree and everything in between, but even if you disagree with me and go buy a ticket, some popcorn and enjoy the flick, I think this would have been a success.

To start, I'll give you a recap on my latest venture to the local cinema where my wife and I watched "The Grey" starring **Liam Neeson**. I'm a big fan of Neeson so this was a must-see and I was fairly pleased.

The movie follows Neeson, playing John Ottway, and a small group of men through the Alaskan wilderness as they are hunted by a pack of wolves. I was worried wolves would be misrepresented, but I'll allow you to draw your own conclusion.

The film, directed by **Joe Carnahan** ("The A-Team," 2010), does a good job of balancing the wolves and the setting as the group's main adversaries, as well as studying how man copes with imminent death and survival.

The "pack" of humans crash-landed in the wilderness are trespassers in the wolves' home, as Ottway said, "we don't belong here."

There are great shots of Alaska's scenery, forests, snow-covered and hazy in the dead of winter. "The Grey" could easily refer to the Grey Wolf, the grey haze of the brilliant setting or that grey area between humanity and survival instincts.

Ottway is stuck remembering the life he once had and accepting the fact that he most likely, will not get back to that life. Each member of the group deals with the reality that death is imminent in very different ways, to the film's credit.

The intensity never lets up and while the wolves are rarely fully visible on screen, there are plenty of heart-pounding moments and sweaty palms. The old quote from Alfred Hitchcock, "There is no terror in a bang, only the anticipation of it," rings wholly true in this film.

With great camera work and editing, you're left just as uneasy and anxious in your theater seat as the characters on screen. Well, close to it at least. The characters are interesting, unique and each receives their prime development with good dialogue and interaction as they struggle to

survive together.

Ultimately, I give "The Grey" two-thumbs-up and will now be looking for the short story, *The Ghost Walker*

by

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, on which the movie is based. If you're looking to catch this film, I don't think you'll be disappointed.

But seriously, wolves are *not* as dangerous to human beings as portrayed in this film; wolves have often been, and in some areas, still are on the endangered species list. We are more of a danger to them.

*Check back on Wednesdays for weekly reviews, previews and general musings about films and more.*

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