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There were a lot of things that felt like they were kept secret on purpose before sitting down and viewing The Grey for the first time. The trailer hints at the movie being nothing more than a survival thriller starring Liam Neeson as he struggles to survive not only the unrelenting cold elements, but also the ferocious wolves that inhabit his surroundings. The Grey is...

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The basic problem of The Grey is the difference between what the filmmakers think they had and what the marketing department wanted to sell. This is promoted as a dramatic survival action movie in the trailers and even Liam Neeson's talk-show circuit tour pushed the same line - a plane crashes and a bunch of guys have to survive things that want to eat them. Kind of...

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Carnahan's best work to date? Possibly, January 26, 2012

By C. Sawin (TX) - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grev (DVD)

There were a lot of things that felt like they were kept secret on purpose before sitting down and viewing The Grey for the first time. The trailer hints at the movie being nothing more than a survival thriller starring Liam Neeson as he struggles to survive not only the unrelenting cold elements, but also the ferocious wolves that inhabit his surroundings. The Grey is written and directed by Joe Carnahan, the man who brought us Smokin' Aces and The A-Team. The movie is also produced by Tony and Ridley Scott, which you think the marketing campaign would jump all over but doesn't even mention. Not only that, but there is quite a bit more to the movie than the trailer and TV spots let on.

As the movie begins, Ottway (Liam Neeson) narrates a letter he's writing to his wife. This segment just made me realize what my life is lacking most right now and that's a Liam Neeson voiceover for every thought that crosses my mind. Think about that. It'd be the most amazing thing ever. The trailer reveals a few major things: that Ottway is stranded in the middle of nowhere in the blistering cold thanks to a plane crash and that wolves stand in the way of him actually surviving this ordeal. The plane crash itself is one of the best executed in recent memory. The way it's filmed and edited is downright ruthless. It's as if you're on the plane as it goes down. The Grey doesn't just place you in this blizzard-ridden hell infested with wolves, it kicks your teeth down your throat, laughs in your face, and throws you into it with everything it has.

The movie gives new meaning to some of the simplest things. Seeing your breath in cold weather takes on an entirely new definition and the way The Grey deals with death just feels incredibly powerful. Ottway questions faith right from the start and takes matters into his own hands throughout the movie. The events that transpire take a toll on even the most religious plane crash survivors. Death is more of a relief than something worth distancing yourself from. Ottway describes it as being a warm sensation and thinking about the thing you love most in life before completely giving

yourself into it. Many of the campfire conversations are entirely more impactful than they have any right to be. The conversation about faith in general hits you like a potato sack full of cinder blocks.

The Grey manages to shout its message even when there's nothing being said onscreen. One of the images that stuck with me long after the movie ended was the shot of blood flowing into the paw print of a wolf in the snow. There's a scene by the river that strictly relies on sound and the way you succumb to it is nothing more than brilliant. There's another shot at the end of the film where (and I'm trying to avoid

spoilers the best I can) Ottway is arranging some objects in the snow. The way Liam Neeson's fat, sausage-like fingers delicately wrap themselves around these objects and the way his hands tremble as he does this illustrates not only what this man has been through, but also that he's at the end of his rope. Plus the movie will make you want to look over your shoulder the next time you consider relieving yourself out in nature somewhere.

That level of greatness The Grey eventually achieves isn't around at all times. Some lame dialogue does squeak through and characters manage to do really stupid things at times (John Diaz, played by Frank Grillo, especially), but that seems to help the movie more than anything. People, real people, occasionally do stupid things especially when they're scared. So this kind of made the characters feel more genuine and made it very clear that certain characters were caving under pressure.

There was a movie that came out back in 2000 that was called Vertical Limit. It was one of my most trying times at the movie theater. I fought vehemently to leave about halfway through because I hated it so much, but I was with people at the time who wanted to stay until the end. It was probably one of the worst experiences I've ever had to pay for. The Grey is basically everything I wanted that movie to be. The cast is fantastic, their actions are mostly believable, and there's this meaning to everything that really speaks to you.

The Grey is a grainy thriller that knocks the wind out of you on more than one occasion. In fact, it's rare that the movie actually allows you to catch your breath. Everything is such a raw, vicious, and brutal test of faith. It's fantastically violent and Liam Neeson is superb. If The Grey is anything to fall back on, then 2012 is going to be one hell of a year for movies.

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128 of 167 people found the following review helpful

A wolf in sheep's clothing, May 20, 2012

By <u>James Beswick "Thanks for your time"</u> (San Antonio, TX) -See all my reviews

Verified Purchase (What's this?)

This review is from: The Grey (Amazon Instant Video)

The basic problem of The Grey is the difference between what the filmmakers think they had and what the marketing department wanted to sell. This is promoted as a dramatic survival action movie in the trailers and even Liam Neeson's talk-show circuit tour pushed the same line - a plane crashes and a bunch of guys have to survive things that want to eat them. Kind of 'Alive' meets Jurassic Park. With Ra's al Ghul.

Unfortunately, it's this difference that's going to disappoint most of the audience. The film starts with Liam's melancholic voice-over (which isn't a good sign) and a fairly dim setup of oil-riggers beating the ever-loving out of each other. We then see Liam shooting a wolf, lamenting the loss of his wife and then putting a rifle in his mouth and contemplating sparing us from another 2 hours of this. And it gets more depressing from there when the trip home ends abruptly in a plane crash.

It's at this point that the film's indecision about what it is becomes a real problem. As an action or survival film, Liam guides his band of survivors in the most irresponsible way possible, making mistake after mistake and fundamentally dooming them all to becoming wolf entree. There are some basic errors, such as a stack of shotgun shells packed with his rifle, and anybody who's familiar with wolf behavior is going to be really unhappy at their depiction in this film. Anyone from Alaska is going to be even more unhappy at the depiction of swimming in rapids too.

Also as an action film, the wolves have a supernatural capability to outsmart the survivors and behave more like Spielberg's raptors than any real life wolf. At one point they jump a ravine and the wolfs are waiting with GPS precision. They pick off our band of survivors one at a time, leaving us with intermittent testosterone-fueled in-fighting to pass as drama. If only Liam hadn't left the crash site, where rescue teams would already have arrived with burgers and cocoa.

But here's the problem - it's not an action film. It's not a survival film either. It's a psychological drama about facing death where the wolves act as furry metaphors for the grim reaper. From the very first scene to the last, Liam Neeson (who's very good as always) emphasizes this theme and it reverberates over and over. And that's where the film could have been quite good and a welcome break from the survival genre but unfortunately it's too late by the time it becomes clear that the wolves' uncanny supernatural sense has a very good explanation.

My guess is that the everyone expecting an action drama is going to be very unhappy, along with animal rights, PETA, Alaskans and oil-riggers. It's a real shame they didn't recut the trailer before the release.

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53 of 68 people found the following review helpful

By Raul Vito (Mexico, DF Mexico) - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grey (Blu-ray + DVD) (Blu-ray)

Countless philosophers and religions have tried to answer that by actually giving us a set of commandments, rules or viewpoints to actually give meaning to something we simply do not have a straight answer for. In the end, the meaning of life is the meaning we ourselves give to it.

The Grey is all about this, had the writer director for this move have been a fan of normal Hollywood movies with a lollipops for everybody and a happy endings this probably would never have made, and that would have been such a shame. The basic premise of the movie is pretty simple; a plane crashes in the middle of Alaska and a group of survivors try to make their way into civilization while being hunted by the local wolves. I could talk about the magnificent photography, the brilliant casting of Liam Neason or the stark beauty of the Alaskan landscape, but instead I will focus on what becomes the central point of this movie; when everything seems to be against you, what is it that truly matters to us, what makes us tick and in the end when everything seems to be done, what comfort do we get out of it? The answer is as varied as the characters of the movie itself, and in a sense some have that quite moment of reflection take away from them by the circumstances, and some others simply have the moment come upon then after everything else seems to be exhausted.

Rarely have I watched a movie and felt this weight upon me, because we might dodge the issue and try to justify the way we have lived and the things we have done, but it is with movies like these that we feel a creeping feeling that we might have take our time for granted or numbed ourselves in our petty little lives surrounded by our petty little machines and toys...but in the end we face the reality of the meaning of our lives...and we might find it lacking, or surprisingly fulfilling ... Do not watch this movie looking to pass a few fun hours, try to see is for what it is, a masterpiece of modern cinema that dares to make us come face to face with our deepest demons and the way we deal with them in our everyday lives....

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51 of 72 people found the following review helpful

The Grey- A brilliant survival story- Devastating, January 31, 2012

By **Dddd** - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grey (Blu-ray + DVD) (Blu-ray)

Once more into the fray.

Into the last good fight I'll ever know.

Live and die on this day.

Live and die on this day.

And with these words, the Grey becomes in my mind, the greatest film of its generation in this genre, although I am not quite sure what exact genre that is.

I saw the Grey 4 days ago, on the big screen, and it has not left my mind since. It is, by far, the best film I have seen in a very long time. It is truly, as Mr. Neeson puts it, about "Men, unfit for mankind" against mother nature in all of her absolute fury, but most of all it is a pulse pounding and riveting exploration of loss and real courage, and faith, and how real men face almost insurmountable odds, and how men, in the worst of circumstances treat and regard their fellow man. I was devastated by "the Grey" in all of its ferocious and poetic power.

First, the acting was astounding. From Mr. Liam Neeson (who is in my mind a bona fide action star with incredible acting ability) to Frank Grillo, and Dermot Mulrooney, and the rest of the cast, the acting was the best I have seen in ages. The acting seemed so natural, and truly imitated the way real people, especially men, actually relate to each other. it is probably the first time I have ever actually seen it captured

so well and naturally on film.

The cinematography, and the story were excellent. The movie is grim, ultra violent, dark, but it is also an incredibly deft and soul wrenching journey into what it means to be a man and have real courage in the face of almost certain death? It asks, how would I treat my fellow man in the worst hell the cosmos can conjure up? The Grey is also a film about and of faith, and of loss, and not just the loss that is depicted on film, but the silent loss and pain that so many men (maybe all men) have and go through in their lives and carry with them (whether it be self destructive in origin, or bad luck, or loss of loved ones, or what ever form it takes). The Grey is brilliant on both a physical and metaphorical level.

Truthfully, I was devastated by this film, and any time a character died, I felt each death so intensely (I looked around and there were grown men in the theater sobbing silently). Anytime a character revealed himself, in terms of his life and his view/faith, his own loss, I was transfixed. Some of these characters were seemingly rotten scoundrels, but ultimately I grew to give a damn about them, and their plight, and that. in my opinion, is the brilliance of "the Grey". These men were revealed ultimately to be not scoundrels who were at their core bad men, but men, who had made too many mistakes, like so many of us, and just couldn't get their lives kick started out of the hurricane that consumes so many lost souls. As a man viewing this, it struck me as an incredibly deep study of the true heart of man. I felt that any one of these fellows could have been me or one of my friends out there. I did not want in any moment, for any one of these characters to die. I said to myself, I am watching a movie, a work of fiction, but am reacting like what was on screen was something real. It felt that way to me. And I can give "the Grey" no greater praise. For example,

huge emotional impact on me. A real and quiet impact. I said to myself, this is the way that I would be if I experienced this, I think, although who can know until you go through something like that.

Other reviewers here have briefly summarized the plot far better than I could, and I would say that on its surface it is an extremely well told survival tale... extremely intense and violent, with 7 men trying to escape a ravenous pack of wolves hell bent on punishing them physically and metaphorically, but what is interesting is that the rest of mother nature was just as, if not more, brutal towards these souls as the wolves were. It is almost as if the wolves could have been an afterthought to mother nature's fury and rage.

For me, the Grey was not just a film, but an experience. If you are a deep thinking man or person, I believe that The Grey will be an experience for you to savor. It is also a hell of an exciting movie, but I was so plugged in, that the excitement was just an after thought for me against the emotional intensity of this cinematic masterpiece. Joe Carnahan, Liam Neeson, and all of you who made this happen, I say bravo to you, and tip my cup and hat to the masterpiece you have put on the screen. Thank you. Thank you.

I have read some reviewers complaining about the ending, and I have to say to them, "Are you kidding me?" It is the right ending. Make sure you stay till the end of the credits and you will learn what happened. Anyone who doesn't like the ending, I truly believe misses the point... of what the Grey is saying. thank you for reading.

 $\mbox{P.S.}\ \mbox{I am absolutely interested in hearing other people's thoughts. Feel free to send me some comments.$

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2 of 2 people found the following review helpful

Survival Of The Fittest, May 17, 2014

By prisrob "pris," (New England USA) - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grey (Amazon Instant Video)

Before you view this film, be aware that this film is not for the faint hearted. Take these words as they are given, and do not even rent the film if you are squeamish. If you are prepared, this is a film that might bring you to your knees. It will leave you with a sense of foreboding.

Liam Neeson is one of those actors that can take this kind of material and make it his own. He plays Ottaway, a man who has not much to live for, has gone to the wilds of Alaska to work for an oil drilling company. In the company of misfits and men who may be criminals or worse. Ottaway was hired as a marksman to shoot the wildlife that preyed upon the men as they worked. He is good at his job. The title of the film refers to wolves, 'The Grey' ones. This is a group of animals who travel in packs, are always hungry and will do whatever it takes to feed their hunger. In a sense that's exactly what this group of men have become. Ottaway seems suicidal, we see him put his qun in his mouth, but at the last minute he removes the barrel.

Ottaway and a group of men are on their way to Fairbanks, the plane is being de-iced as we see the men board. This is a bumpy ride, none like I have seen before, and at the end of the bump, the plane gives down. Most of the men die, 7 live with various sorts of wounds. They find a bit of the plane and climb in for shelter. In the morning they find one of them killed by the wolves. They decide to move on, to try to find their way out of this wilderness. This is the story, this is their story, foraging through the wilderness, fighting off packs of wolves who are following them day and night. Building fires and fighting for their lives. Pretty tough stuff I kept looking for a silver lining

Whatever you do, sit and watch this film through the credits to the very last scene which arrives in the very last minute.

Recommended. prisrob 05-17-14

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4 of 5 people found the following review helpful

Jaws + Wolves + Snow - Shark - Plot = The Grey, May 27, 2012

By **Anonymous** - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grey (DVD)

A completely unrealistic movie about people jumping off mountains and fighting wild beasts (beasts that have very little resemblance to actual animals here on planet earth). Putting aside how unrealistic this film is (there's enough commentary out there about that) there still isn't even a real story here. Do the characters survive? More importantly, who cares?

I'm surprised this movie gets as many stars as it does here. The absurdity of the film is a major let down. I didn't come in to this expecting an unrealistic alien action flick or something, I was looking for a survival nature film with a plot (and some action). I could forgive a little artistic license but this stravs way too far from reality to be

forgivable. Wolves don't attack people for fun (they attack for food and they seldom attack humans) and they don't attack prey alone just to "test" them. Also people get hypothermia in the conditions these characters were in (especially when they don't create shelters and jump in running rivers) and no one in their right mind is going to leap off a mountain in these conditions (or any conditions for that matter). The crash, coldness, desolation or fear aspects of this film were never properly explored. Even basic survival stuff like creating fires and finding food is skipped over. They actually continued hiking in the dead of night at one point which seemed absurd to me personally. Basically this movie is just "our plane crashed so um, let's go run around and fight wolves or something".

The other major let-down in this movie is lack of plot or proper character development. We never really find out in any depth who these people are or what motivates them to survive. The two characters we do get some exploration on are apparently miserable people who have nothing to live for anyway. As the movie goes on you'll ask yourself: will these characters survive? Half way through I concluded that I don't care. I actually ended up rooting for the wolves towards the end.

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4 of 5 people found the following review helpful

i kept waiting for something to happen and then the ending sucked!, May $25,\,2012$

By goon - See all my reviews

Verified Purchase (What's this?)

This review is from: The Grey (Amazon Instant Video)

I watched it pure and simply because Liam Neeson was in it. I don't like flying so that should have been my first warning to not watch a plane crash. I kept waiting and then it was the end. Liam Neeson needs to stick with being a bad ass secret agent!!

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71 of 104 people found the following review helpful

Leave any knowledge and common sense at the door., May 19, 2012

By <u>clayski</u> - <u>See all my reviews</u>

Verified Purchase (What's this?)

This review is from: The Grey (Amazon Instant Video)

What an enormous disappointment! Whoever made the trailer should have been hired to write and direct the film. This movie defies reality about wolves, cold-weather survival, firearms, human nature, and the basic laws of physics. Usually it's possible to suspend disbelief, but our intelligence is insulted throughout the film. SPOILER ALERT (but don't waste your time with this film)Liam Neeson belting himself in tight with not one but three seat belts, and still being thrown clear of all the other wreckage of the plane? Wolves answering back human howls? A professional hunter who has a rifle but carries shotgun shells? Wolves killing a man and then then not destroying the body? A professional hunter who thinks a bolt action rifle is ruined because the stock is broken? Shotgun shells that can go off by having a stick poked in them, and then fire instead of exploding out the sides? Leaving the wreck behind to seek safety in the woods???? A 200lb guy jumping across a chasm, and the other guy holds him back with one hand after the rope slips? Sticks pulled out of the fire that burn bright as torches while running full speed through the woods? Jumping in a freezing river and ever getting back out again? I've seen more realism in Saturday morning superhero cartoons.

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34 of 50 people found the following review helpful

Epic survival movie, March 26, 2012

By Christopher Sullivan - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grey (Blu-ray + DVD) (Blu-ray)

The Grey is one of the greatest survival movies I have ever seen, The plane crash seen alone is worth huge props. It is right up there with "Alive", and "The Edge". It starts out a little slow. But once the plane crashes its a chess match between man and beast. And oh yeah, dont forget mother nature, These guys are extremely outmatched, they have no food, no weapons, they are being hunted by a pack of wolves. And to top it all off, they are in the middle of the Alaskin wilderness, with no civilization in sight.It is a treat to watch Liam Neeson in my opinion, one of his greatest performances to date. Just an all around epic movie, If you like outdoorsie flicks, survial stuff etc. you will love The Grey. I give it two huge thumbs up, one last thing, the score for this movie is perfect, subtle tones, nothing overbearing like loud drums, just perfect, especially at the ending, the music was perfect for the mood.

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Disappointing, September 23, 2013

By Paul - See all my reviews

This review is from: The Grey (Amazon Instant Video)

THe sad thing is that the first 20 minutes or so seriously grab you. I sat back to watch a great survival story But less than half way through the movie, it became a drama about the surety and hopelessness of death. Then it became boring, with tedious dialogue about the only thing that exists is the air in your lungs. Hollywood folks must live a tragic life.

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