

I am legend film review

Literature, Russian Literature



From its gripping start to its touching finish, this high-grossing blockbuster film is the film everybody has been eagerly waiting for. The third big-screen adaptation of Richard Matheson's "I Am Legend" novel (1954) this box office hit is sure to have you gripping your seat the whole way through. Hollywood hunk Will Smith stars alongside an Alsatian called Abby, who steals every scene she's in. This post apocalyptic film is surely one of a kind. After watching this, I am definitely going to read the original novel.

PLOT

New York City-2012. Robert Neville (Will Smith) gets up every morning. Does his exercises. Eats breakfast. Takes his dog, Samantha, out for walks, and to pick up supplies. Goes to work. Plays a little golf. At exactly noon, he sends out broadcasts on the radio. Sounds completely normal? Well... no. Once a normal man with a loving family, Robert Neville is (as far as he knows) the only living human being left on Earth. He and Samantha are entirely alone, and have been for three years.

In 2009, a scientist called, ironically, Dr Krippen (Emma Thompson), announces that she has discovered the cure for cancer; which at the beginning was praised as a breakthrough in modern medicine. But it isn't long before the virus has mutated into a deadly airborne form, killing millions of people. And those who the virus didn't kill, it changed... Neville, a military scientist, is part of the team working to find a vaccine, but as the pandemic spreads, the government orders Manhattan locked down, with only the uninfected allowed to evacuate.

And now Neville lives alone with Sam, surrounded by strange creatures that devour or infect anyone or anything in their path. Sensitive to UV radiation, they dwell in darkness, only emerging at night to eat. And all the while, the infected lurk in the shadows, watching Neville's every move, waiting for him to make a fatal mistake. Perhaps mankind's last and best hope, Neville is driven by only one remaining mission; to find a way to reverse the effects of the virus by using his own immune blood. But his blood is also what the infected hunt, and Neville knows he is outnumbered and quickly running out of time...

CHARACTERS

The title " I Am Legend" is very relevant; Will Smith's acting was LEGENDARY! If you actually think about it, it's not easy when you're the only character most of the time. Throughout the film, he was pretty much interacting with a dog... and that was about it. We witness Robert trying his best to lead a normal existence, slowly losing his sanity, and yet trying to save the world; all at the same time. It is nice to know that his range of acting is not just limited to action films (although there is a fair bit of action in I Am Legend) but it's in the quiet moments that Smith gracefully and effortlessly shines- his strained expressions and his persistent battle for his sanity. The close relationship with his dog is extremely touching. His performance was excellent and believable, so hats off to him.

TECHNICAL ELEMENTS/ SOUND

The opening scenes of " I Am Legend" have special effects so good that they just about compensate for some later special effects that are slightly clumsy. We see Manhattan three years after a deadly virus has killed every healthy human on the island, except one. The streets are overgrown with weeds, cars are abandoned and the infrastructure of clumsily quarantined buildings is beginning to collapse.

The film does a good job of revealing the monsters bit by bit, but once displayed, their CGI-ness is hard to ignore. By the time they're in full-on assault mode, they resemble something like zombified versions of something out of a video game. This makes for exciting action sequences, but dials down the horror considerably.

The song " 3 little birds" by Bob Marley is used extensively and is also on the soundtrack in the film. The song has bittersweet undertones as Robert sings the song " Don't worry about a thing, 'Cause every little thing gonna be all right" in an attempt comfort himself and his dog, to avoid intense loneliness, and also to remind him of his family (his daughter was called Marley; after Bob Marley).

THEME/ CONCLUSION

Cleverly set in the year 2012, the film just makes us feel even more paranoid. Like many of the best sci-fi films, I Am Legend says a lot about the times we are currently living in. One of the main themes of this film is that one day, we, humans ourselves, could be the cause of the wipe out of the entire human race if we keep on messing with nature and trying to play God.

Smith clearly states so in the film, " God didn't do this. We did!" But Smith is like a ray of hope and reminds us that there are good people left in the world. Using a quote from Bob Marley, he says that " the people that are trying to make the world worse never take a day off, so why should I? Light up the darkness." In this case, Smith feels it's his duty to save humans and " Light the darkness" (cure the Dark seekers).

I Am Legend is available in Blu-Ray and DVD on Monday 21st April 2008.

Bring home the 2 disc special edition of I am Legend and you'll not only get the theatrical version, but also the complete alternate unseen version with a controversial ending. Definitely worth having on your shelf.