Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 15 March 2019 07:36



Rating: «« out of «««««

Running Time: 124 minutes

This week marks the first of three Marvel Cinematic Universe movies arriving in theaters this year. Set well before the events of the previous Avengers movie, *Captain Marvel* isn’t a familiar superhero for the average moviegoer, and in some respects feels like a film that has been wedged into the franchise. It certainly isn’t one of the best entries in the lengthy series, but does improve as it progresses and will provide enough fun to earn it a pass from comic book cinephiles.

The story introduces viewers to Captain Marvel/Carol Danvers (Brie Larson), a Kree warrior who possesses the ability to shoot a powerful energy beam out of her hands. After being sent on a secret mission with mentor Yon-Rogg (Jude Law) to fight their mortal enemies named the Skrull, she is separated from her group and finds herself stranded on Earth in the year 1995.

After Danvers discovers that a devastating power source is being developed nearby by a scientist (Annette Bening), she finds herself teaming up with a young Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) to stop the Skrull from finding and stealing the weapon. Along the way, she begins to have visions of a past life on the planet.

Frankly, the concept itself is a bit silly and it’s remarkable that the filmmakers and cast get away with as much of this clunky story as they do. Larson makes for a likable lead, although the script saddles her with some creaky one-liners that miss the mark. At least the cinematography is striking. It’s a darker looking movie and early slow-motion shots featuring close-ups of

explosions are impressive.

The film is also helped by the Skrulls themselves, an interesting alien race who possess the ability to shapeshift. This leads to a few tense moments as characters attempt to determine if the person they're communicating with really is who they appear to be or an alien copy. In fact, Skrull mission leader Talos (Ben Mendelsohn) even manages to sell a humorous exchange or two later in the film.

However, there are several problems. As mentioned, a big portion of the movie is a superhero buddy picture featuring Danvers and a young, CGI-treated Jackson playing Nick Fury (which is a bit distracting) trading barbs. A couple of gags along the way do work, including a later scene involving the characters waiting to read information from a CD-ROM, and a few moments featuring a feline stowaway. However, far more of their material simply falls flat or is mistimed.

The script peppers the film with too many jokes and references to the '90s for its own good, going well out of its way to squeeze in references to bands and pop culture from the era. Additionally, while this won't be as much of a problem for a casual viewer, the screenplay also bluntly states its themes, which include the typical trope of using one's power wisely and not resorting to rash and overly aggressive decision-making. While certainly well-intentioned, it comes across as too obvious.

And there are certain exaggerated elements and questions that viewers will simply have to ignore. One of these is an elaborate battle featuring an enormous spaceship appearing in the lower Thermosphere that fires numerous missiles, resulting in massive explosions. The story may be set in 1995, but it's hard to believe that this would go unnoticed below. And even though the intention is to tie one character's actions with the film's themes, it is kind of funny to watch a person accuse the villains of tearing them away from friends and family, and then almost immediately decide to take a 25-year leave of absence from the planet.

Naturally, fans will also be pleased to hear that the movie features a couple of extra scenes at the beginning and end of the credits tying events together and leading in to next month's *Aveng ers: Endgame.*
As it stands,
Captain Marvel
is a perfectly acceptable piece of superhero entertainment, but I wouldn't go so far as to call the character's first outing anything close to marvelous.

Visit: ***www.CinemaStance.com***

By Glenn Kay
For the Sun