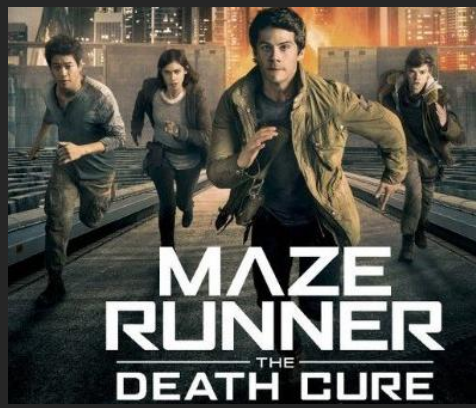




FILM



Written by – **T.S NOWLIN**
Directed by – **WES BALL**

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SYNOPSIS:

Months later after the events of 'Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials', Thomas, Newt and Frypan, the last of the Gladers, with Brenda and Jorge, go on a mission to rescue their friend Minho who is held captive and being tested by WCKD, an organisation performing tests on the young in order to find a cure for a deadly virus wiping out humanity known as the flare. With the whole world at the mercy of the virus and WCKD taking great lengths to find a cure, how much longer can Thomas protect the people he loves?

FIRST-THOUGHTS:

This is the third and final movie in the 'Maze Runner' trilogy, and for this film I had high hopes, but low expectations. The previous 'Maze Runner' films have, at best, been enjoyable for me with some stunning action sequences and a very good cast of young actors, but they've always left me leaving the cinema with mixed feelings.

The first 'Maze Runner' was a solid start (7/10) with some interesting characters performed by a terrific cast, whilst other roles were either under-developed or just unnecessary to exist in the script. It had a very interesting concept with some great action, despite it taking too much time and not leaving enough space for me as an audience member to get to know the characters.

The second instalment of the trilogy titled 'The Scorch Trials' (5/10), suffered terribly from being the middle-movie (a movie that exists in the middle just for the sake of the trilogy). It spent way too much time showing off how awesome the action scenes were, rather than giving us moments with the characters to see deeper into their thoughts and emotions, to see how they feel about what's happening to them and their world, and it's even more frustrating because these are very talented actors who deserve compelling material to showcase their talent, except they're just given a lot of running to do. Though the ending of the film was pretty good and did give some of the actors a moment to shine.

So with mixed results from the previous two films, how was the third and final instalment? Well, 'The Death Cure'... was surprisingly REALLY good! It was VERY GOOD! Easily the best of the trilogy! It was a massive improvement in terms of storytelling compared to previous films, it felt like my issues with the previous two films were finally fixed with this film!

WRITING:

One of the great things about 'The Death Cure' was the writing! Finally the writer decided to calm down on the action and take the time to stop and breathe with the characters, letting me, as an audience, emotionally engage with them. There are a few roles which weren't exactly developed because the writing didn't give much for those characters, but at least it got the main characters right (I'll expand more on them later).

As I said, the moments where we just breathe with our main characters is fantastic, it's just wonderful to get to know them emotionally through their dialogue than to just see them constantly running every thirty seconds, because now we get to have a stronger emotional connection with them, meaning when the really tragic stuff happens, we actually care for them!

The dialogue is well paced, there are some great one liners here and there, but it's the really touching moments where the dialogue is at its strongest, though in some of the other scenes there are a few lines which stick out like a sore thumb. Best dialogue has to go to the ending monologue from a character (who I can't name because of spoilers) which was very well written (and performed) with some moments where the words flooded my eyes with tears.

So all in all, the writing was a stellar improvement compared to the previous films!

Continued...

CHARACTERS / ACTING:

The characters are better developed (with the exception of a few here and there) and credit does go to the writing, but because of the writing's development it's now given the actors more meat to chew on. And the actors rise to the challenge! They were all on their A game in this film! Dylan O'Brien (who plays the main character, Thomas) is the star of the trilogy, but he was never given anything extraordinary in the previous films. He wasn't a bad actor and Thomas wasn't a bad character, I just wanted more from him than just someone who can run fast. He has had an interesting arc where he is partially responsible for the actions of WCKD (he used to work for them), but it wasn't expanded on, it was kind of said and done. But once again, improvement was made! Thomas' character has developed a lot more into a stronger leader, but also someone who's determined to put things right in order to save his friends and Dylan O'Brien does a phenomenal job of portraying a character with so much blood on his hands. He captures the determination of Thomas so brilliantly, and his emotional scenes in the film are easily the golden moments of Dylan's acting in the whole 'Maze Runner' saga.

The character of Newt is easily my favourite character in the whole 'Maze Runner' series, he's the strongest out of everyone and brilliantly performed by Thomas Brodie Sangster who injects such a great dose of humanity into the role which is why I connected to his character more than the others. Whenever he appears on screen and says his words of encouragement to Thomas, he makes you feel that while things are looking grey and that the characters could die at any moment, he makes you believe that there is hope for the future in this dystopian world, and for me that boils down to the extraordinary performance Thomas Sangster delivers. I can't give full details, but the best Newt scene (with Thomas Sangster's best performance) is a heartbreaking section involving the line "Please Tommy, please" (All I'll say for that scene is... brace yourselves).

Other roles in the film are also very well developed, improved and fantastically performed. It's great to see a more scared and vulnerable side to Minho, played by an awesome Ki Hong Lee. It's lovely to see more of Teresa's character and why she made her choice at the end of the previous film, and Kaya makes you sympathise with the character despite the fact that she is working with the bad guys! Frypan is performed well by Dexter Darden, but unfortunately his character hasn't really developed much, though he does get more to do in this film compared to the previous films, and has a fantastic action sequence involving a crane. And Brenda played by Rosa Salazar proves to be a top actress, conveying not only just a badass (which is what I felt she only was in the last film) but someone who against all the odds is able to put on a brave face against an organisation that are near to killing her.

The villains are also really well developed, it's nice to finally see them in their environment and why they're doing what they're doing, understanding why they're the bad guys which was slightly missing and not explored much in the previous films, but here we get it, we understand it and we actually sympathise with them a bit.

Other roles are performed well, but they are mostly one scene roles given not much to do, or they're just forgettable and don't really add to the story. Though there is a returning role (which will surprise you) who is written in a new light, giving the actor a new take which works incredibly well.

DIRECTING

Like the previous films, the action sequences are very well shot and edited, but the improvement here compared to the other films is that the action has been placed where it is necessary and isn't overdone to the point where it eats so much into the story and scenes of beautiful character moments.

There are some pretty rough fights here and there, with the best being a fight between Thomas and Janson, which does get really gritty and tense and will have you on the edge of your seat!

There is some fantastic visual comedy in there too, which sent me into hysterics, one of which involves an awesome bus rescue which had me fear for the characters, and then laugh at the end with the final image of the bus.

The best sequence of the whole film is the scene I mentioned earlier that involves the line "Please Tommy, please". It is a stunning sequence, it's well filmed and paced and Wes Ball (the director) really ramps up the tension and keeps you on edge and it nearly had me screaming in the cinema at the screen as it got me right in the heart with fear before breaking it with the emotional punch at the end.

FINAL THOUGHTS

'Maze Runner: The Death Cure' is a thrilling climax to the trilogy, despite a few little niggles here and there. This conclusion was simply a masterpiece!

'Maze Runner: The Death Cure' results = **9/10**



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