

MOVIE REVIEW

ARRIVAL

(Anil Shrivastava)



On my way back from the East Coast, I was sitting next to a guy who looked like a passport picture.

“There is not a single place on earth I won’t like to visit,” he uttered while yawning on my face.

“Confucius?” I asked.

“Clint Eastwood,” he said.

“When did Clint Eastwood utter those words?” I asked frowning up at him.

“Have you watched his movies? He asked.

“Did you?”

“I watch all movies. I am a film critic,” he answered.

I wanted to change my seat so I looked around. People were packed like eggs in a crate every which way I looked.

“Did you watch any of the Oscar nominated flicks?” He continued the conversation.

“Yes, Arrival,” was my short answer.

“Is it not a brilliant movie? I gave it 4.5 stars out of five,” he replied

“It’s goofy, serious and seriously idiotic,” I replied, “Frankly, I think ET is still better for the money.”

“What do you know about linguistics?” snapped the stranger.

“What do you?” I asked. “If those octopus looking heptapods were that intelligent, they would have brought some sort of key to decipher their thunder and moan and logograms. Moreover, I don’t know of anybody who would argue that speaking a different language would radically alter anyone’s view of the world as it happened to Louise Banks (played by Amy Adams). She might as well be trying to learn the language of a dog or a dolphin.”

He looked at me over his coke-bottle glasses and inspected me like a bug.

“Mind your looks,” I warned him and continued, “Tell me how could those ink blot looking heptapods manufacture such a monstrous spacecraft? How did the spacecraft defy earth’s gravity by hanging a few feet above the earth in the air?”

“Movie making is not science. It’s an art. Art is neither right nor wrong. It only reflects the person who’s looking at it,” he fired a salvo at me.

“Just because you have the privilege to see a few free movies, it doesn’t make you a connoisseur of art. Deciphering an alien language doesn’t give one the capability to see the future. Get your head around that,” I fired back regaining my self-respect.

“And just because they let you enter into a movie theatre doesn’t necessarily mean you deserve to critique it. Leave the driving to Greyhound,” he was not making any sense anymore.

“Listen I don’t blame you for having an IQ lower than your age but can you tell me why the heptapods left any more than what brought them here? And here is a free tip for your patron filmmakers: take on one wacky sci-fi genre at a time. Don’t do what ‘Arrival’ does and make a complete fool of yourself on multiple dimensions at once,” I suggested.

“I will not, I do have a reputation to uphold,” he suggested.

“To tell you the truth, reading ‘War And Peace’ and ‘Atlas Shrugged’ cover to cover will be more entertaining than watching a movie like that.”

Luckily, we soon started preparing for our own arrival.