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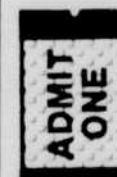
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ENTERTAINMENT

'Late For Dinner' delivers syrupy but sweet plot

FILM: *Late For Dinner*. Now showing at Cinema World. Rated PG.



What would happen if you were awakened from a cryogenic sleep of twenty-nine years as if one day had passed? What if, also, after all those years, you returned to your friends and loved ones who assumed you to be dead?

Well, aside from the medical improbabilities, you'd probably encounter a fair amount of culture shock, extensive medical prodding and lucrative offers from tabloids and television movie producers to tell your story.

If, however, you're in the middle of a movie, you're more likely to get involved in the romance that you left behind all those years ago.

Such is the case with *Late For Dinner*. It involves an unemployed New Mexican milkman, Willie Husband (Brian Wimmer) and his cute-as-a-button but slow witted brother-in-law, Frank (Peter Berg).

After being unjustly accused in the shooting death of the henchman of a cruel land developer, these brothers high

tail it away from home. They end up in Pomona, California, where Willie has to stop because of the gunshot wound he suffered in the shooting.

They conveniently land at the doorstep of a doctor who is experimenting with cryogenic research (the freezing of humans in the hopes of bringing them back to life at a later time). The doctor talks Frank into submitting Willie and himself to the process by promising that they will wake up fine and that Frank will have access to a new kidney that he needs due to a disease he suffers from.

Twenty-nine years later, they are brought out of their frozen state by a freak accident. It is here that the picture

decades is a weighty task.

Sure, the movie is hokey and more than a little predictable, but on the level it reaches for, it's quite successful.

This is thanks mostly to some assured writing which is realistic within the context of the contrived premise, and winning performances by Wimmer and Marcia Gay Harden, who plays Joy, Wimmer's wife.

She has had a productive life since the accident and lives happily with her boyfriend. It is the attempt by Wimmer to get his old life back that works best in the movie. He retains his 1950's ideals about the world and uses this mind set to warm the heart of his wife, who is a little more jaded than when he left.

Sure, this is as syrupy as they come, but it works. The only big problem with the movie is the decision to concentrate on the set-up to the real plot for so long.

Not that it's any more or less realistic than, say, a time machine, but to spend so much time on that premise only invites criticism.

But on the whole, this is a warm tribute to love, family and friendship — the kind of

gentle film that hasn't been seen in some time.

By Lucas J. Gutman
Emerald Contributor



Colleen Flynn is reunited with her long-lost uncle, Peter Berg (left), and her father, Brian Wimmer.



Marcia Gay Harden and Brian Wimmer try to recapture their love after 29 years.

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