

Josh Keyes (Aaron Eckhart) and Beck Childs (Hilary Swank) try to figure out who's boss and how to save the ship.



ROB MCEWAN. PARAMOUNT PICTURES, 2002

# Rash Journey

Jump-start the core.

**THE CORE:** Directed by Jon Amiel. Written by Cooper Lane and John Rogers. Producers, Cooper Lane, David Foster, Sean Bailey. Cinematography, John Lindley. Production design, Philip Harrison. Editor, Terry Rawlings. Costumes, Dan Lester. Visual Effects Supervisor, Gregory L. McMurry. Composer, Christopher Young. Starring Aaron Eckhart, Hilary Swank, Delroy Lindo, Stanley Tucci and Tch ky Karyo, with D.J. Qualls, Richard Jenkins, Bruce Greenwood and Alfre Woodard. PG-13. 135 minutes.

**A** howler from start to finish, *The Core* is a movie to enjoy for its stupendous stupidity. Its premise is such nonsense that it makes disaster flicks like *Twister* look positively brainy. But here's the good thing: If you are worried about the state of the world we live in — and who isn't? — this foolishness will take your mind off your troubles for most of a couple of hours. Guaranteed.

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The first pseudo-scientific crapola you're asked to accept as realistic is that the Earth's inner core has just stopped rotating. The planet's electromagnetic field begins to fail in dramatic, sudden waves of catastrophic events. Lest you think you have wandered into a remake of Hitchcock's *The Birds*, one of the first mini-cataclysms is a scene in London's Trafalgar Square with dead pigeons careening from the skies with such violence that tourists, for gods' sake, are pummeled and left addled and panicked.

OK. Next, a tousled-haired, brown-sweater-wearing science professor, geophysicist Josh Keyes (Aaron Eckhart), lectures away in a hall empty but for a few students. Suddenly, two stone-faced refugees from *Men in Black* interrupt class. He is to go with them. Turns out he and his buddy, French atomic weapons expert Sergei Leveque (Tch ky Karyo), must "pass a test" devised by spooks in suits. Keyes correctly solves the mystery of why a number of people suddenly dropped dead at the same instant in Boston. But because this movie has so few moments

of real discovery, I will leave it to you to be awed by his reasoning.

Meanwhile, a nail-biting re-entry drama plays out in the skies. Onboard the space shuttle, the heroine of the day is Major Rebecca "Beck" Childs (Hilary Swank). Her commander, Robert Iverson (Bruce Greenwood), ignores her until almost the last second, at which time she saves the ship and crew from fiery death. Then she's reprimanded by NASA and out of a job.

So far, the body count is only a few dead pigeons. Try to imagine a world-wide calamity of such proportions in which no one dies! That's like hoping that no one gets killed in a war.

The military soon gets involved. Gen. Thomas Purcell (Richard Jenkins) summons Keyes and Leveque to Washington to meet with Childs and Iverson as well as a truly outrageous, dandy scientist, Conrad Zimsky (Stanley Tucci). They travel to remote Utah to meet with Zimsky's estranged colleague, "Braz" Brazzleton (Delroy Lindo). Braz has created a monster machine that can bore holes deep into rock. It's made of a super metal he calls Unobtainium. This is the first overt example of a dry-as-bone humor that the "crew" may be in on.

Here, the film could have taken a wild, satirical direction, as much of the laughable dialogue suggests would be a reasonable thing. But director Jon Amiel sticks with the plan, and a deadly serious adventure drama ensues. Once the "terranaunts" are launched on their trip to Earth's inner core, you can only pray, in vain, for a rapid conclusion to the whole charade. A number of preposterous heroics and noble sacrifices later, you can still count on the dialogue for a few chuckles.

The real heroes of the film are the actors, who sacrifice their dignity and risk their reputations to mouth inane sentences that should never have been spoken. Is the film a metaphor for the unexpressed anger and anxiety just below the surface in today's society? I don't know. But as Zimsky says, "Three months, and we're back in the stone age. A year, and we're fried."

Now playing at Cinemark and Cinema World, *The Core* is heartily recommended for its irrelevance to reality. Or not. **EW**

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<b>PHONE BOOTH*</b> (R) 12:25, 2:20, 2:45, 4:35, 5:05, 7:20, 7:55, 9:40, 10:15	<b>BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE</b> (PG-13) 1:05, 3:40, 7:10, 10:00
<b>A MAN APART*</b> (R) 1:00, 3:55, 7:45, 10:30	<b>CHICAGO</b> (PG-13) 12:40, 3:35, 7:00, 9:55
<b>THE PIANIST*</b> (R) 12:10, 3:25, 6:50, 10:10	<b>DREAMCATCHER</b> (R) 12:05, 3:30, 7:05, 10:25
<b>BASIC*</b> (R) 1:25, 2:15, 4:25, 4:55, 7:30, 8:00, 10:05, 10:35	<b>LORD OF THE RINGS TWO TOWERS</b> (PG-13) 12:30, 4:30, 8:30
<b>HEAD OF STATE*</b> (PG-13) 1:35, 4:10, 7:15, 9:45	<b>OLD SCHOOL</b> (R) 7:35, 10:05
<b>THE CORE*</b> (PG-13) 12:00, 3:15, 7:15, 10:30	<b>TEARS OF THE SUN</b> (R) 7:10, 10:10
<b>PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE</b> (G) 12:15, 2:30, 4:45	<b>THE HUNTED</b> (R) 2:00, 4:40, 7:50, 10:25
<b>A VIEW FROM THE TOP</b> (PG-13) 1:40, 4:15, 7:20, 9:55	<b>SNEAK PEEK:</b> WHAT A GIRL WANTS (PG) AT 7:30PM ON SATURDAY. *NO PASSES OR SUPERSAVERS [ ] SHOWING FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY ONLY

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<b>CATCH ME IF YOU CAN</b> (PG-13) [1:20], 4:20, 7:30, 10:35	<b>MAID IN MANHATTAN</b> (PG-13) [11:30], 2:00, 4:35, 7:15, 9:55
<b>CHARLY</b> (PG) [11:30], 2:00, 4:35, 7:10, 9:40	<b>PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE</b> (R) [12:30], 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:25
<b>DAREDEVIL</b> (PG-13) [11:45], 2:15, 4:45, 7:20, 9:50	<b>THE 25TH HOUR</b> (R) [12:15], 3:25, 6:55, 10:10
<b>DARKNESS FALLS</b> (PG-13) [12:35], 2:55, 5:25, 7:45, 10:20	<b>THE HOT CHICK</b> (PG-13) [11:35], 2:10, 4:50, 7:25, 10:05
<b>HARRY POTTER: CHAMBER OF SECRETS</b> (PG) [11:55], 3:20, 6:50, 10:15	<b>WILD THORNBERRYS</b> (PG) [12:05], 2:25, 4:40, 7:05, 9:30
<b>JUST MARRIED</b> (PG-13) [12:25], 2:45, 5:15, 7:35, 10:00	<b>TWO WEEKS NOTICE</b> (PG-13) [11:40], 2:05, 4:30, 7:00, 9:45

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<b>HEAD OF STATE</b> (PG-13) ★ DIG ✓ Fri. - Sun. (12:30 2:50 5:05) 7:25 9:40
<b>A MAN APART</b> (R) - ID REQUIRED DIG ✓ Fri. - Sun. (12:15 2:45 5:15) 7:45 10:15
<b>WHAT A GIRL WANTS</b> (PG) DIG ✓ Fri. - Sun. (11:50 2:20 4:45) 7:10 9:35
<b>BASIC</b> (R) - ID REQUIRED DIG ✓ Fri. - Sun. (12:20 2:35 4:55) 7:20 10:15
<b>THE CORE</b> (PG-13) DIG ✓ Fri. - Sun. (12:05 3:00) 7:00 10:00
<b>SPIRITED AWAY</b> (PG) DIG Fri. - Sun. (12:45 4:30) 7:15 9:55
<b>CHICAGO</b> (PG-13) DIG Fri. - Sun. (12:00 2:30 5:00) 7:30 10:10

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<b>BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE</b> (PG-13) DIG Fri. (2:10 4:40) 7:10 9:40 Sat. & Sun. (11:40 2:10 4:40) 7:10 9:40
<b>WHAT A GIRL WANTS</b> (PG) DIG ✓ Fri. (1:50 4:25) 7:00 9:35 Sat. & Sun. (11:15 1:50 4:25) 7:00 9:35
<b>BASIC</b> (R) - ID REQUIRED DIG ✓ Fri. (2:40 5:05) 7:30 9:55 Sat. & Sun. (12:15 2:40 5:05) 7:30 9:55
<b>HEAD OF STATE</b> (PG-13) ★ DIG ✓ Fri. (3:00 5:20) 7:40 10:00 Sat. & Sun. (12:40 3:00 5:20) 7:40 10:00
<b>DREAMCATCHER</b> (R) - ID REQUIRED DIG Fri. - Sun. 6:50 9:50
<b>AGENT CODY BANKS</b> (PG) DIG Fri. (2:15 4:30) Sat. & Sun. (12:00 2:15 4:30)
<b>THE HUNTED</b> (R) - ID REQUIRED DIG Fri. (3:10 5:30) 7:50 10:10 Sat. & Sun. (12:50 3:10 5:30) 7:50 10:10

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<b>SPIRITED AWAY</b> (PG) DIG Fri. (5:00) 7:30 10:00 Sat. & Sun. (12:00 2:30 5:00) 7:30 10:00
<b>CHICAGO</b> (PG-13) DIG Fri. (4:45) 7:10 9:30 Sat. & Sun. (12:10 2:25 4:45) 7:10 9:30
<b>THE CORE</b> (PG-13) DIG ✓ Fri. (4:00) 7:00 9:50 Sat. & Sun. (12:30 4:00) 7:00 9:50

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**9:00 Nightly Sun Mat 3:05pm [R]**

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**7:15 nightly SUN MAT 2:45 [PG]**

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 Martin RESTORED PRINT! 11:40 nightly  
 Scorsese's **TAXI DRIVER** [R]  
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\*PHONE BOOTH - R (2:40) 4:40 6:40 [8:40]  
 \*HUNTED - R (2:20) 4:30 6:50 [9:10]  
 \*CORE - PG-13 (2:30) 5:30 [8:30]  
 \*BASIC - R (2:50) 4:59 7:10 [9:20]

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\*MAN APART - R (1:35) 4:00 6:30 9:00  
 \*WHAT A GIRL WANTS - PG (1:25) 3:50 6:15 8:40  
 \*HEAD OF STATE - PG-13 6:50 9:10  
 \*AGENT CODY BANKS - PG (2:00) 4:30

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 \*CORE - PG-13 (12:30) 3:30 6:25 9:20  
 \*BASIC - R (12:40 3:00) 5:10 7:20 9:30  
 \*PIANIST - R 5:35 8:40  
 \*VIEW FROM THE TOP - PG-13 6:20  
 \*DREAMCATCHER - R (12:10) 3:10 6:10 9:10  
 \*HUNTED - R (12:20 2:40) 4:59 7:15 9:35  
 \*BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE - PG-13 (1:40) 4:10 6:40 9:00  
 \*CHICAGO - PG-13 (WINNER 6 ACADEMY AWARDS INCLUDING BEST PICTURE) (1:10) 3:50 8:30  
 \*PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE - G (1:50) 3:40

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