

JENNIFER LAWRENCE
AND CHRIS PRATT IN
PASSENGERS

SPACE GARBAGE

Passengers' Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt can't save an excellent premise from lousy execution

For the first 30 minutes or so, *Passengers* is a decent film. If you like Chris Pratt, you'll probably raise that decent to a "good" or "interesting," as the first section is essentially a solo act for one of America's Favorite Chrises.

On the good ship *Avalon*, which soars through space on a century-long mission to another planet, 5,000 passengers pass the years in hibernation — until Pratt's Jim Preston wakes up, 90 years too soon.

As all lonely movie men must, Jim eventually grows a gnarly beard. He frequents the ship's bar, with its endearing robot bartender (an excellent Michael Sheen) and tries everything he can think of to go back to sleep, including an extended attempt to bust his way into the crew's hibernation quarters.

A year passes, the ship's amenities lose their charm, and Jim stumbles upon the pod of Aurora (Jennifer Lawrence).

Yes, the sleeping woman with whom Jim becomes obsessed shares a name with *Sleeping Beauty's* princess — who also didn't have much say in being awakened. For a long while, Jim agonizes about waking her up, and if Jon Spaihts' script is very good at one thing, it's very good at sympathizing with Jim's loneliness. Your entire life, alone in space: Who *wouldn't* want company?

The trouble is, Spaihts — and apparently everyone else involved in this film — never figured out how to truly extend that sympathy to Aurora. Of course, Jim wakes her up, hiding the evidence of his tampering; of course, he and Aurora get together for a long stretch of space romance; of course, she eventually finds out the truth, and Lawrence absolutely sells Aurora's fear and rage at what's been done to her.

Passengers, from the moment Jim wakes Aurora, should be a horror movie, and not just because the *Avalon* is experiencing cascading failures. It's a nightmare for Aurora, trapped in space with a man who prioritized his emotional needs over her autonomy of self. "It's murder," she says, at one point, and she's absolutely correct.

But that's unimportant in the face of the foundering ship, and it gets in the way of the story Spaihts and director Morten Tyldum (*The Imitation Game*) want to tell, which is about a capable everyman who ... maybe sort of tries to make up for having ruined a woman's life?

Passengers' final act is full of so many inane moments that it feels like a sloppy first draft: The ship has 5,000 passengers, plus crew, and only one medical bay? We're supposed to believe that no emergency procedures exist in case of pod malfunction or, say, giant space rocks?

In brief moments, *Passengers* shows its potential: It flirts with class issues, shows a too-brief glimpse of future Earth and is sly about corporations who pretend to make your life better for their own gain. But none of these things can make up for the grotesque turns the narrative takes on its way to the end.

To say more would be spoiling it — though it's difficult to spoil something when it's already this rotten. (*Regal Valley River, Cinemark 17*)

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SUN			1:50	2:00	4:40
	5:00	7:30	7:40	9:35	10:10
MON-THU	11:00	11:35	1:50	2:00	4:40
	5:00	7:30	7:40	9:35	10:10

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ASSASSIN'S CREED 3D [CC,DV] (PG-13) ★	Fri. - Sat. 445 PM 1015 PM
PASSENGERS [CC,DV] (PG-13) ★	Fri. - Sat. (100 PM) 945 PM
PASSENGERS 3D [CC,DV] (PG-13) ★	Fri. - Sat. 430 PM 730 PM
SING [CC,DV] (PG) ★	Fri. - Sat. (1200 PM) 615 PM
SING 3D [CC,DV] (PG) ★	Fri. - Sat. (345 PM) 915 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY [CC,DV] (PG-13)	Fri. - Sat. 630 PM 930 PM
ROGUE ONE [CC,DV] (PG-13) ★	Fri. - Sat. (1215 330) 700 1010
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FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM [CC,DV] (PG-13)	Fri. - Sat. (1245 PM 345 PM)



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2:00, 4:00, 6:15, 8:15
Thursday
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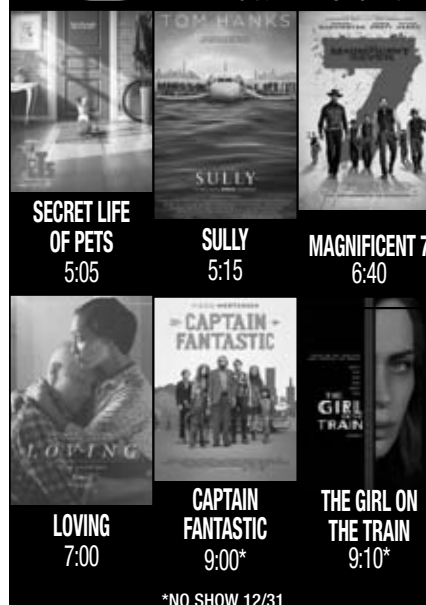
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ASSASSIN'S CREED (DIGITAL) (PG-13) 10:05AM, 1:30PM, 7:50PM	PASSENGERS (2016) (DIGITAL) (PG-13) 9:50AM, 12:55PM, 7:00PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY (DIGITAL) (PG-13) 8:00PM, 10:35PM	ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY (3D) (PG-13) 10:15AM, 1:40PM, 5:05PM, 8:30PM
FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM (DIGITAL) (PG-13) 9:45AM, 1:05PM, 4:40PM	ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY (DIGITAL) (PG-13) 9:30AM, 12:45PM, 4:05PM, 7:20PM, 10:40PM
MOANA (DIGITAL) (PG) 10:25AM, 1:25PM, 4:25PM, 7:15PM, 10:15PM	SING (3D) (PG) 4:45PM
OFFICE CHRISTMAS PARTY (DIGITAL) (R) 9:40AM, 12:15PM, 3:00PM, 5:35PM, 8:20PM, 11:00PM	SING (DIGITAL) (PG) 10:35AM, 1:45PM, 7:40PM, 10:30PM

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