

Tomorrow War proves to be underwhelming



Chris Pratt stars in *The Tomorrow War*, now available on Amazon Prime.

Amazon Prime

By TJ REID
For the *Keizertimes*

I was actually pretty excited to finally sit down and watch *The Tomorrow War* for two reasons: One, it is a big budget sci-fi movie starring Hollywood's fourth favorite Chris (the Pratt one), and two, it was originally set to release in the theaters before the pandemic hit and therefore had a pretty decent chance of breaking the subpar-action-movie-made-exclusively-for-a-streaming-service streak that I am currently stuck in.

I wasn't expecting art, of course, just a stupid good time watching Andy Dwyer shoot up some aliens. But it turns out there was a pretty good reason that Paramount sold the movie to Amazon Prime: It's, well, not great.

Well-acted and occasionally pretty cool to look at, *The Tomorrow War* is also



shoddily written, clichéd, and about 30 minutes too long.

For a sci-fi action movie, the acting is actually pretty decent and goes a long way in elevating what otherwise might have been straight crap to acceptably watchable levels. Chris Pratt, Yvonne Strahovski, J.K. Simmons, and Betty Gilpin all do the best that they can with the middling script, earning their paychecks well by making silly lines sound natural and plausible (I was not a fan of the comic relief character, but I don't want to single him out by name—wasn't

his fault his lines were dumb).

The CGI is also respectable, if not great—I was, for some reason, occasionally (and keenly) reminded that I was watching actors fight things that weren't really there. Maybe it was the chaotic alien design, maybe it was the lighting—I don't know. All I know is that I was forced to un-suspend my belief once or twice.

This is, in fact, a big problem the movie has as a whole. As I said, the script is far from the best and the plot requires characters to do stupid things left and right just so it can keep moving forward (or backwards. Stupid time travel).

Plot holes are plentiful and gaping, even more so than in other films of this genre, and there are so many convenient and contrived coincidences that I wanted to laugh out loud at several points. Need a volcano expert?

Well, what about that random student from earlier in the movie who randomly loves volcanoes? Need a plane to Russia? Wait—your dad is a pilot, isn't he? And he just happens to have a disdain for the government? Oh cool, that's a lucky break! Come on, movie... I am only one man, and I only have so much belief that I can suspend.

And when *The Tomorrow War* isn't giving the middle finger to logic it wallows in cliché, from an unnecessary amount of slow motion shots (I swear this movie could have been 10 minutes shorter if the director kept the camera rolling at a normal speed) to tired character archetypes (the gruff and distant dad, the black best friend/comic relief, the suicidal badass army guy).

None of it feels terribly original from start to finish, and certain plot points and even lines can be accurately guessed long in advance. If you read a basic outline of the very beginning of the film you can probably guess everything that happens.

Is *The Tomorrow War* terrible? Not really, despite all of the things I've griped on. It's just far from good, which is a darn shame. The streak will have to be broken another time.

Time. Get it?

The Tomorrow War is now available on Amazon Prime.

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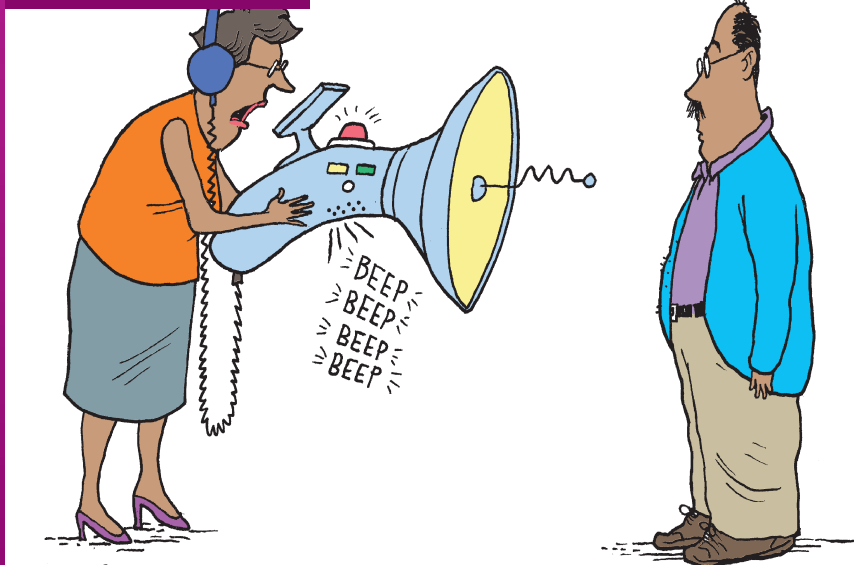
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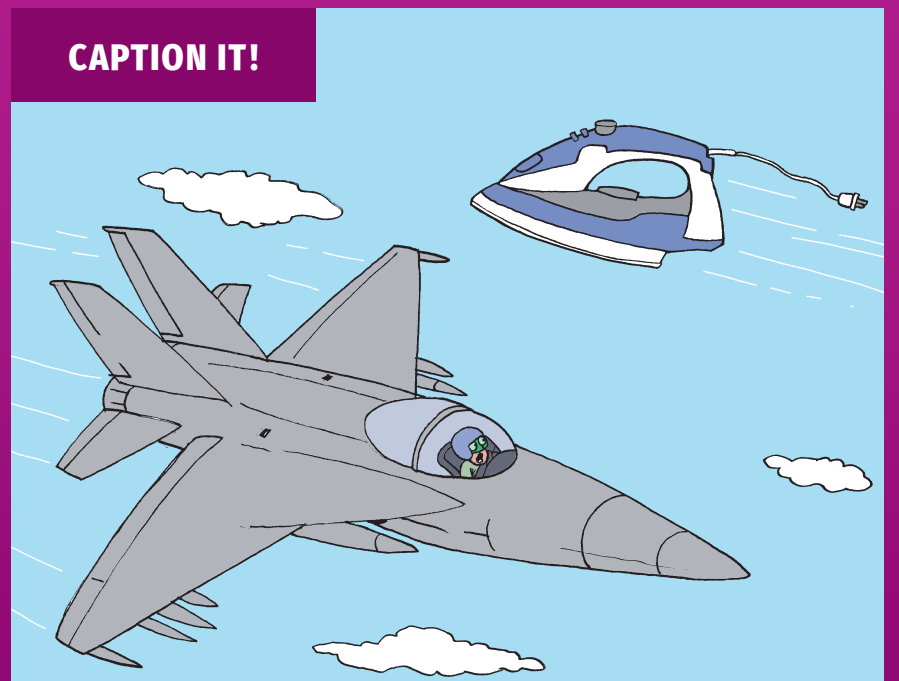
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