DISCLAIMER: Before reading this review, I urge anyone who is even remotely interested in film as a medium for storytelling to watch this movie blindly (the preferred way to watch any great film), without any knowledge about the content of the film.

Being the winner of the coveted Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival and the award for Best Foreign Language Film at the Golden Globes among many others, it is no surprise that Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* is a great film.

The pacing of the film is, for the most part, incredible, never stays on anything too long, but is good enough for casual, first-time viewers to comprehend what's going on which makes the film very accessible.

The original score by Jung Jae-il fits the tone of each scene extremely well, for example, some eerie themes that play whenever the mansion or the tutoring service is mentioned--"On the Way to Rich House"-- making you think something is not quite right, which build a tone of uneasiness near the beginning alluding to the dark themes of the ending. In addition, the blending of unsettling violins with the upbeat singing during the setup of the party is a magnificent way to display dread within the protagonists while simultaneously showing the joyful mood of everyone else (near the end of the song "It is Sunday Morning"). The goal of music in cinema is to be beautiful and/or purposeful and the music in *Parasite* achieves both simultaneously.

Beautiful cinematography immerses you in the atmosphere of South Korea, from the rich mansions to the impoverished slums.

The humor is very well crafted. Nowadays, humor in film is largely dialogue-driven and relies on characters giving snarky one-liners (a.k.a the Marvel effect). But in this film, the humor does not simply rely on the dialogue of the characters but also extends to their actions, all of which are not so over the top as to conflict with the serious nature of the ending. This all comes together to make a film that encourages the audience to laugh at its humor rather than holding their hands and forcing them to.

The relevant social commentary on the class divide and the artificial pursuit of wealth (i.e. the idea of "fake it 'till you make it") is expertly constructed and fleshed out.

Every single character's motivations are believable, most of them are simply trying to protect the well-being of their loved ones by making a living. Even the main antagonist, the husband of the original maid, is understandably driven mad by the death of his wife right in front of him and the years of isolation he has faced in the basement of the home.

The ending shot of the fade to black to the sliding transition reminiscent of the beginning of the movie showing the true gravity of the son's situation is one of the most powerful endings in cinema.

The complexity of the film is immense and it is quite frankly impossible to unpack everything that this film has to offer in the first viewing. While certain metaphors, such as the stone, are quite easy to handle and deconstruct, others, like the son's inability to contain his laughter, are quite multilayered and require a lot of time deconstructing. But, in the end, it's the best types of art that force you to actively chase the message that is beautifully disguised in symbolism.

If it seems like I am only endlessly praising this movie, it's because it's very hard to find a flaw with this movie. The middle of the movie (in particular the part where all the characters are hiding in the house) could have had better pacing (except I might give it a pass as it gave some character exposition while allowing audience members to not be overwhelmed by the plot they just witnessed), but this was only really noticeable on subsequent watches. Some of the violin suspense music choices were a bit cliché and I expected a more from a movie with such an amazing soundtrack, but that's a VERY minor nitpick.

The acting is great, every single one of the actors had significant contributions in the film and, luckily for a film that relies heavily on the bond between the audience and the characters, there were no bad actors in the movie.

Overall, this film deserves every bit of critical acclaim it's receiving and more. It truly elevates the already great directorial career of Bong Joon-ho. Hopefully, you have already watched this movie and I urge you to give it a second watch. It's enjoyable both on a surface level and on a deep introspective level as well. This film is easily one of the most accessible, great films of the year, and of all time, and I'm certainly going to revisit this film several times in the future.

As of right now, this is my favorite foreign language film ever.

Final Rating: 9.5/10