ELECTRIC ENTERTAINMENT COVERAGE REPORT

**TITLE**: THE MCAULIFFE EQUATION

**FORMAT:** Feature

**WRITTEN BY:** Andrew Bowen

**GENRE:** Coming-of-Age, Action/Adventure, Sci-Fi/Comedy

**ANAYLIST:** Oscar Gervet

**DATE:** 03/23/2020 **LOGLINE:** The lives of two painfully awkward teenage “misfits” are changed forever when one vanishes and reappears from a wormhole as a 40-years-old futuristic-soldier*.*They set out to rewrite the future to save the world from aliens, but alien assassins are after them.

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|  | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** | **Poor** |
| **CHARACTERIZATION** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **PACING** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **STRUCTURE** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **DIALOGUE** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **STORY** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **RECOMMENDATION** | **RECOMMEND** | | | |

**SYNOPSIS:**

DANIEL MCAULIFFE (40's) accidentally creates an equation that causes a wormhole.

The previous day, Geeky “misfits” JESSICA "JESSIE" CHASE (14) and LUCAS MOKE (14) showcase their short action sci-fi film in class to appear cooler, but it has the reverse effect. Afterward, Lucas vanishes into thin air, and comes back as a futuristic-soldier (40's, THE ROCK). He explains to Jessie that he was sent into the future and fought a war for 20 years against the Klathorians, aliens who arrived through Mcauliffe's wormhole and wiped out the human race. Lucas receives a holographic message from Old Mcauliffe (80): they must stop him from doing the equation to rewrite the future.

They go to Lucas' home to locate Mcauliffe on his computer. Lucas passes for Jessie's cousin but hugs his MOM (40), and she flirts with him. In Jessie's bedroom, a LUGORC - a huge half-wolf half-ant genetically designed Klathorian assassin - attacks them and accidentally kills itself, melting in milk. They spot two Lugorcs in Central Park and kill them.

With little time, they seek the help of school mate FREDDY BURNS (16), who locates Mcauliffe in the highly secured Westford laboratories. Lucas flirts with their teacher MADISON WU (30's) to take her Westford pass until a Lugorc attacks them. After a difficult fight, Madison is on board with them and they stop Daniel from doing the equation. But Daniel explains their universe will slowly collapse until he sends Lucas back through a wormhole. The latter erases Daniel's recent memory for him to make the equation mistake this night.

Back at Jessie's, the body of the first Lugorc disappeared and replicated near the lab. Lucas, Jessie, Madison, Freddy, and “misfits” schoolmates CAMERON PIKE (15) and Goth PARKER BLUE (14) face the Lugorcs with milk bombs, and milk filled water guns.

Lucas weakens as the universe collapses. Jessie takes on his armor to face Lugorcs and an alpha one which takes the appearance of a naked Lucas. Daniel creates the wormhole and unexpectedly kills the Klathorians who arrive by it. Lucas leaves through the wormhole, and the world stops collapsing, but Lucas went in an alternate universe. Daniel and Jessie take a wormhole to a hazard sky-ship driven by Lucas in a lightning storm. Lucas banks down the ship into the storm clouds in an attempt to leave this universe. – TO BE CONTINUED.

**COMMENTS:**

BACK TO THE FUTURE meets STRANGER THINGS in this entertaining and humorous sci-fi adventure. This good popcorn movie could benefit from more complex secondary characters but has excellent entertainment potential.

THE MCAULIFFE EQUATION intertwines fun and action effectively in the vein of JUMANJI: WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE, and like the latter never takes itself too seriously. The dialogue and action are full of sci-fi references, including ALIENS, DOCTOR WHO, AMERICAN HORROR STORY, GREMLINS, STRANGERS THINGS, THE FIFTH ELEMENT, FAST AND FURIOUS, MATRIX, and TOTAL RECALL. The characters get to live the thrill of their favorite films, and the script cleverly refers to movies’ expectations. For example, Jessie feels them preventing Daniel from doing the equation was an anti-climactic ending and expected an epic final battle.

The script is fun with witty dialogue, wordplays, toilet humor and visual humor, and thrilling action scenes. THE MCAULIFFE EQUATION effectively intertwines irony about the action-hero archetype with face value badass moments, culminating in badass fights with milk filled water guns. Soldier Lucas is explicitly written for THE ROCK and fits his persona perfectly. All this, however, gives low stakes to “saving the world” as the audience expects everything to go well in the end. THE MCAULIFFE EQUATION is good family popcorn entertainment.

The dialogue is character-based and often witty. Nevertheless, characters often unnecessarily declare themselves geeks when simply letting them be geeks would feel more organic. Central characters, while based on archetypes, are complex. For example, Lucas and Jessie are intelligent and aware of the futility of school popularity but still primarily seek Instagram followers and to appear “cool” in the beginning. However, secondary characters like**Cameron, Parker, the bully Dexter, and Jessie’s sister Camille all feel generic and one-dimensional. They could be more complex and developed with as much screen time.**

The structure is classic but effectively builds up to an “epic final battle,” and a high pace is maintained throughout with plot twists, humor, and thrilling action. The plot could sometimes feel mechanical. For example, Jessie wants to use Freddy as a “last resort” to find Mcauliffe but, once they get Lucas’ computer at his home, they go to Freddy without even trying to use it. It seems going to Lucas only took place to showcase Lucas meeting his mom as a 40 years old hulk of a man and her flirting with him.