

Welcome to Pick Up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step off the train and deliver an episode to you while I walk home.

I'm Brendan Riley.

Well, good afternoon listeners.

It's a lovely day here in suburban Chicago.

The sun is out, the sky is very lightly covered with drifting clouds, but generally nice and clear.

The weather is in the mid-60s, which is perfect.

No jacket, long sleeve shirt, and I'm enjoying my walk home.

I'm excited to talk to you about some games and enjoy the weather together.

Well, I figure out, because I'm not going to talk about games, or at least not mostly, because it's the end of April, which means it's time for me to look back a couple months and talk about some movies.

That's right, it's time for the February 2025 movie Roundup.

If this is a new segment for you every month or a couple months, I look back at the recent viewings and I talk about what I've watched, what I thought of those films, and how they connect to gaming.

Either a thematic connection, if you're going to watch this movie, here's a game you can play with it, or some other observation about the hobby related to the film.

That's my plan.

If you're not interested in talking about movies, maybe this isn't the episode for you, but I hope you'll stick around with us.

Anyway, because I feel like I have something to say.

All right, the first movie I want to talk about is "Saturday Night".

This came out in 2024, so that's a pretty new movie.

This is a... I don't know what you'd call it, it's not a biopic, because it's not about a specific person.

I guess in the fall under the category of "Inspired by True Events", it is a movie about the first season of "Saturday Night Live".

For narrative convenience and dramatic purpose, what they've done is they took the first season of "Saturday Night Live" and compressed it all into a single night.

So the idea is, all of a bunch of different things that happened on the first season of "Saturday Night Live" are depicted.

They're all depicted as happening in one night.

And the idea of "Saturday Night Live" at its core as being approved by the network because it was a bargaining tactic with Johnny Carson is part of the overall gambit.

Loren Michaels, the famed producer of "Saturday Night Live" is depicted as the main character, but really what we're doing is we're following this large ensemble of people trying to figure out what this show is supposed to be and how it's going to work.

A bunch of different characters have a lot of different kinds of motivation and because it's a huge cast, each one gets just a little bit of nuance.

The heart of the film is a kind of conflict between the old and the new, between the way of doing things that was the standard for studio series at the time and the out of improv in line with youth culture mode that Loren Michaels was chasing as the way he constructed the show.

A lot of the things that became part of the lore of the show are there.

The idea of them trying to figure out what sketches they're going to do right up until the last minute.

The idea that sketches are being written or rewritten or revised and so on all throughout is part of it.

The idea that the sets are being worked on here and there at a moment's notice.

There's a bunch of stuff that is really entertaining.

There's a plot line with a scene that's supposed to have where there's supposed to be a floor that has a brick surface and the people who brought the bricks in are teamsters.

So they're there to move bricks but they're not mason's.

So, their union prohibits them from working on the brickwork.

They don't have a union mason on site and so there isn't someone who can within union rules do the mason work and so they have a staffer who is doing the mason work.

And he's struggling to get it done by the time the show comes on the air.

There are the issue of John Belushi kind of disappearing because he feels like he is a legitimate, strong, comedic presence and he doesn't want to play the Bumblebee character but the Bumblebee is what they have set up for him to play so he's kind of having a tantrum about that.

There's an ongoing plot with Chevy Chase being kind of a jerk to everybody but then Milton Burle's showing up and being an even bigger jerk to Chevy Chase.

There's a whole bunch of stuff that makes the film a really compelling chaotic mess about a compelling chaotic mess.

I like the movie a lot.

I think it's worth watching.

My guess is if you don't care at all about Saturday and at live it's probably less compelling but I think it is an ensemble story about a bunch of people trying to do a thing that's hard to do.

It's a pretty entertaining yarn.

So that is Saturday night.

I think the closest game play experience I can think of that comes near to that is Roll Camera! which is a game about making movies.

In that game you have a whole bunch of different stuff that's going on.

You're trying to coordinate a variety of different effects and ideas, a variety of different people trying to participate in the process of making the movie.

And of course there's a undercurrent in the film of not being able to solve problems without working together.

So I guess if I were going to suggest a game to go with this you could play Roll Camera.

There are also a number of Saturday Night live themed games.

I don't know anything about them.

That would be another option if you wanted to.

Next up is Paddington 2.

Paddington 2 is a lovely movie about our title character Paddington trying to find more about his history and understand his place from the universe and particularly in his world.

Better.

It's also about characters looking for their past.

And of course there's a villainous con man.

It's a very cute movie with a heartwarming message.

I like the overall flow of it.

I don't have a lot more to say in terms of a meditation on anything.

It is a nice lesson about how we all have an impact on people around us.

I think very early on there's this idea that Paddington is an important figure in his neighborhood.

But then we also see how when he finds himself in a new community he's able to influence that community positively by just being himself and being engaged with the world.

In a lot of ways Paddington is sort of a Ted Lasso figure, ruthlessly positive, relentlessly upbeat and earnest and holding people to account.

It's a good movie.

If you haven't seen it you definitely should watch it.

I had the impression it was going to be life changing.

I didn't really think it was life changing but I think it's very very good.

It's hard to find a game that has a similar weight to it.

I haven't played it yet but the pursuit of happiness might be one.

But I know that game is competitive like you're trying to have a better life than other people.

So some sort of cooperative game probably is a better situation there.

In terms of being engaging for children, the game stuffed fables is probably meant to be more in line with what you would have in Paddington too.

But ultimately I don't have a good fit for that one.

Next up I rewatched Watchmen.

I'm not really sure why.

I guess I just felt like it.

It's fine but I think it's too slavish to the comic book and it doesn't feel like it has a lot of soul.

I also irritated that they changed the ending.

It didn't change the ending much.

It still has the same purpose but I like the comic book ending and the movie is so outrageous in terms of being slavish to the rest of the imagery and ideas in the book in the comic book.

I don't know why they couldn't stick to that part as well.

But whatever they didn't.

If you're going to play a game to go with that, I think probably heroes wanted would be my pick.

You could also do Sentinels of the multiverse.

Although I didn't enjoy that game as much.

Heroes wanted has more of the wry, failed superhero feel to it.

That you are these sort of weird ridiculous superheroes trying to make a name for yourself.

Much closer to like the mystery men or something.

Which Watchmen isn't funny that way.

Or maybe that's not serious enough.

But I think that's kind of the idea.

That's Watchmen from 2009.

Next up we have Love Hurts.

This is a movie starring Ke Huy Quan of who is in Goonies and Indiana Jones when he was a kid and more recently in everything everywhere all at once.

And now end in Marvel Loki show which was pretty good.

In this one he plays a sort of very upbeat silly real estate salesman who is very very good at being a real estate of salesman.

And then one day his past shows up and turns out people are after him and they're out for blood and blah blah blah.

It reminds me a bit of the movie Nobody or the movie A History of Violence.

This idea of these characters who secretly have a brutal dark side that they have tried to leave behind and can't.

It's meant to be funny in there are parts of it that are funny.

Also Ke Huy Quan's experience as a martial artist and his stature is a short man of Asian descent.

And the decision they made to have him do sort of comic fighting style where he's improvising with objects around him.

Like it really hard not to compare this film with something like Rumble and the Bronx or the Drunken Master, right?

The early Jackie Chan films where he is improvising with a lot of material around him.

And obviously it's hard to stand up to that scrutiny.

I would also say the plot in this movie wasn't as well developed the story that they established for this character.

There are parts of it that were really good.

My favorite bit was one of the assassins who comes after him is played by this very tall guy with a really mesmerizing deep voice who then recites poetry and that character is super compelling and I would like to see more of them.

But otherwise it was pretty pedestrian in terms of the plot.

And there's a lot of loopholes in terms of understanding what the story is about or in terms of having the story make a lot sense.

And worst for me, there's a romance between Ke Huy Quan who is over 50 and the main character who is like early 30s or the main female lead.

I don't know why you can't have women female characters, women in films.

I don't know why you can't have women in films who are somewhat near the age of the male leads they're supposed to be romancing.

It bugs me.

And it's annoying.

Lover it's fine, not great.

I would wait for video for sure.

Even then I'm not sure I would pay to watch it.

If it comes on a streaming service that you already have you can check it out if you like some dumb kung fu.

In terms of games, I don't know what game would go with it maybe kick ass but I don't have a lot of games about like brawling or revenge.

So vengeance I guess would be another one that I haven't played but seems like it would fit.

So we have the menu.

I didn't know much about the menu at all.

I just knew it was a sort of dark thriller and it was about an exclusive restaurant.

Boy I really like this movie.



Rafe finds plays a high high end chef and several of the characters play people going to this extremely exclusive restaurant where things start to go terribly, terribly wrong.

The style of the movie is very precise.

It's beautifully shot.

It feels very deliberate.

The casting is impeccable.

Lots of really smart and interesting people on screen.

Really compelling narrative choices throughout.

I don't want to tell you too much about it because if you haven't seen it you should watch it without knowing too much more.

But it's a dark thriller set at a fancy restaurant.

That's the menu.

Boy I don't know what game would go with that.

Probably fiasco maybe or dread.

It might be a good one.

It would be kind of a weird adventure but you could play a dread game sort of themed around the menu or the menu and I think that would work pretty well.

The last movie I watched in February was another repeat like Watchmen.

I watched again the imitation game.

I really like movies about people solving complicated problems and lately I'm sure you can figure out why.

I really enjoyed stories about people besting the Nazis.

Reminding us that the Nazis are terrible and pointing to how hope and ingenuity and collaboration

can allow us to defeat them.

Which is something I love to see.

So I know the movie is a little bit complicated in terms of the way that Alan Turing is depicted and the idea about the way that his romantic life particularly happened.

But overall I think the imitation game is a really compelling story about how the British forces collaborated to crack the enigma machine and probably one of the main factors in the allies winning the war.

So if you haven't seen enigma or the imitation game you should.

Obviously the game would go with that would be Turing machine.

A game with deductive reasoning and punch cards.

So get on that.

Well that's about it for me today.

I hope that you've seen some of those movies and enjoyed them.

I'd love to hear which ones.

You can share that knowledge over on boardgame geek and guild 3269.

I would love to hear what you think of those movies.

Well thanks for joining me on my walk today.

I hope you're next walk as a supposant as mine was.

Bye bye.

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