



The Inbetweeners Movie



Plot

Dumped by love of his life Carli (Emily Head), end of schooler Simon (Thomas), along with mates Will (Bird), Jay (Buckley) and Neil (Harrison), decides to head for Malia hoping for “sun, sand, sex, sea and sex”. Cue crap hotels, embarrassing sunburn, alcoholic fish bowls, willing girls and a boat party of a lifetime.



Review

Let's be honest, you can count great UK youth flicks on one hand. So Olly Murs hats off, then, to The Inbetweeners Movie, an upgrade for the E4 teen comedy that matches the gag rate of any film this summer and delivers it with the panache of the Yanks but the scatological feel of the best of Brit comedy. If you have Kevin & Perry Go Large in your head, forget it. This is much closer to Superbad. But with more vag jokes.

Financed by the death of Jay's grandfather, the boys, “looking like the world's shittiest boy band”, head off to Malia where writers Iain Morris and Damon Beesley put them through the lads' holiday from hell, taking in OAP shagging, nicking the sunbathing spot from a disabled girl, projectile vomiting, sleeping in ants' nests, pooing in a bidet and a run-in with a master of self-fellatio. Plot threads from the show are woven throughout - an introduction in Blighty sets everything up, Simon spends much of the movie mooning after Carli who is also on holiday - but this doesn't need any prior knowledge. It's just a succession of cringe-worthy set pieces - the boys dance-off to impress some girls is priceless - that escalate in embarrassment as the movie goes on.

Happily, the movie also has cinematic chops. Early doors, the camera starts high in the sky and then swoops down through suburban streets and up to a window where Jay is having a hand-shandy using the internet, diving goggles and slices of honey roast ham - it's American Pie directed by David Fincher. There are also strategic uses of slow motion - the boys in 'Pussay Patrol' T-shirts coming out of a hotel like a shite Reservoir Dogs - that make you laugh without laying it onto thick. It also captures those Greek holiday resorts in all their garish awfulness.

Unlike the Arsenal football squad, The Inbetweeners dramatis personae has always had strength in-depth and the movie is no exception: the four gals - Laura Haddock's wise owl Alison, Tamla Kari's lovelorn Lucy, Lydia Rose Bewley's sparky Jane and Jessica Knappett's straight arrow Lisa register in Romantic Interest roles, providing punchlines and pathos of their own. Yet supporting player of the match is Theo Barklem-Biggs as Richard, one of the wasted space cadets that haunt any holiday resort constantly muttering "cool beans... cool beans... cool beans". He drifts in and out of it but makes a lasting impression.

But, at the end of the day, The Inbetweeners has always been about its central friendship and amidst the vomit and the virginity losing, the film delivers a realistic believable portrait of young blokes - look out for a touching discussion as the penny drops that university might spell the end of the friendship. The performances from Bird, Thomas, Buckley and Harrison are pitch-perfect and amplify a sweetness that is only an undercurrent in the show. Lessons are learned - one huge element of the show is laid to rest - and friendships cemented, although never in a mawkish way. As they arrive in back in Blighty, the unthinkable might have happened: they might have come of age.

Verdict

Like any holiday, it is episodic and suffers from repetition but this is gag-for-gag the funniest film of the summer and a fitting end to a much-loved series. So long boys, it's been great to know you.



Reviewer: Ian Freer