

Seen a good film lately?

Video viewing according to Kate

There's nothing I enjoy more than the prospect of an evening in front of the tube with a couple of movies I've been longing to see.

The older I get, however, the more I find that movies are depressingly like life itself: anticipation is often the best part.

And if it's hard to pick a movie for myself, it's harder still trying to please my cantankerous family.

My husband is quick to point out that he doesn't like movies anyway, before settling down beside me to deliver a blow-by-blow critique of the film I'm trying to watch.

Clare likes movies with soppy Kleenex endings and romance (this despite my attempts to raise her feminist consciousness to the correct levels), while Malcolm prefers science fiction and talking turtles.

There are some things we unanimously agree to avoid. These include movies starring Dudley Moore, whose ego always seems bigger than his talent, and anything featuring Eddie Murphy, because if you deleted all the expletives and laid them end to end, they'd go round the world twice, and what was left of the script would fit into a 30-second commercial.

There's no surer way of proving that your memory plays cruel tricks than to rent a classic from your youth, rave endlessly to your children about it, and then watch it with them.

I've suffered in silent embarrassment through everything from The Sound of Music to The Party, which starred Peter Sellers



kate's corner

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in one of his less memorable (and best forgotten) roles.

The real stars of this 1968 movie are the hilarious laminated hairstyles with flicked up ends, whose lacquered perfection could withstand a force-nine gale.

These fascinated the children, which is just as well, because nothing else in this tedious film did; they were soon snoring peacefully in front of the set as I pondered my generation's youthful lapses of taste.

Also best avoided are movies you've never heard of, even when the plots sound interesting. We rented one about a boy who inadvertently killed his brother with a gun; it wasn't long before we were wondering why, while he had the opportunity, he hadn't dispatched the entire cast to that great B movie in the sky.

Then there was the one about the legend of King Arthur, whose credits prominently featured Sean Connery.

I'd never heard of that one either, which should have tipped me off; after all, well-known actors have been known to be desperate for work, even if it entailed a script as dire as this was.

Connery's part lasted about five minutes, although it seemed longer.

As the Green Knight, he was possessed of magical powers

which enabled him to re-attach his head to his body after King Arthur, who looked like John Cleese doing Miss Ann Elk, cut it off.

As his head rolled onto the floor, his body strode towards it and it bounced obligingly back into place.

The family verdict: everyone

involved in this clunker should have been beheaded.

In every movie, there's at least one redeeming feature.

It's just unfortunate that in the ones I pick you have to plough through about 90 minutes of singing nuns or faked fights to find it.

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