

'All is Lost' captivates from the get-go



By Jeremy Miller

Welcome to one of Robert Redford's most powerful performances. "All is Lost" is the story of a man out at sea trying to recover after his boat collides with a shipping container.

From the get-go it's real that "our man" (Redford) is a seasoned sailor and instantaneously his skills are put to the test. As he sails solo on the Indian Ocean he awakens to the sound of water drifting into his boat. He discovers his radio and navigational equipment is damaged beyond repair and goes to work patching up his ship. Unfortunately the misplaced shipping container was hardly the antagonist compared to the storm he was drifting toward.

The storm hits and his power as a captain really kicks into gear. He quickly handles each of the several massive and extremely daunting misfortunes endured by a storm this size. Left battered and broken, he's got nothing but a sextant and charts of the Indian Ocean to go by. From here he battles every minute not just as a mariner trying to seek rescue, but also as a man trying to survive.



The film is incredibly powerful, intense and incredibly believable. Welcome to one of Robert Redford's most captivating performances. He delivers all of five lines the entire film, and somehow captures the essence of desperation, loneliness and defeat better than any type casted actor I've seen in years. The real power of the film lies in the fact that unlike many of the stranded at sea films in the past, this one constantly delivers hope.

Our man keeps you fired up as he conquers every challenge that you're positive will call the picture wrap on our lead character. Murphy's Law had an adversary that was maybe unexpected, especially given his age and everything he had thrown at him. I've got to hand it to writer/director J.C. Chandler ("Margin Call") who captured it all beautifully. The picture he painted was absolutely perfect. The contrast of environments was a character in itself.

Our man is stuck on a 30-foot ship, leaving nothing up to the imagination. Pan up and you're on one of the biggest sets in the world giving you the complete opposite. It's unsettling to see someone in this guy's shoes and the entire time you're really taking mental note to hop on Amazon and pick up a survival guide for the open sea so it never happens to you.

Last thing I would like to mention is the special effects. I was absolutely blown away. I recall trying to figure it all out for a split second, but was quickly brought back to believing that it was all just completely real. That's a good sign. All in all, I thought it was a magnificent film. However, the one thing that irked me was the speed of the ending. To wrap up a story like this it takes time, and the end felt rushed. That's one small flaw in a "sea" of perfections so I highly recommend it.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.