

Taher Shah: The Angel we have but don't deserve

RAYAAN IBTESHAM CHOWDHURY

Angel is the newest song from Pakistani sensation Taher Shah. The music video, with its portrayal of the tender nature of humanity, has done the song justice, representing the various idiosyncrasies of Shah's artistry.

The video starts with a view of the earth and sky, reminding us of the higher purpose that humans serve in this physical world. Afterwards, Shah is shown walking across a giant green lawn, clad in a purple robe and beautiful wings. Shah is free of lust and greed, pure of body and mind, as he sings the opening line "I am like an angel. My heart is like a rose." while cameras play from various angles, creating a sense of dissonance in the viewer.

At around the two minute mark, we see The Lover, also clad in an angelic robe and sporting wings. The lady is graceful in her posture. As Shah and his lover exchange sweet confessions of love, we are reminded of what humanity could have been, stirring a sense of guilt in the viewer about the vile state that humanity has been in. Shah then reminds us "We can all be angels." His voice echoes.



REACTION

That is when The Child makes the entrance. There have been disagreements as to what exactly The Child represents. Taher Shah Junior, wearing a blonde wig in certain scenes, seems to represent the unadulterated nature of the human mind

at the point of creation. The Child then loses the blonde wig, perhaps denoting a loss of innocence.

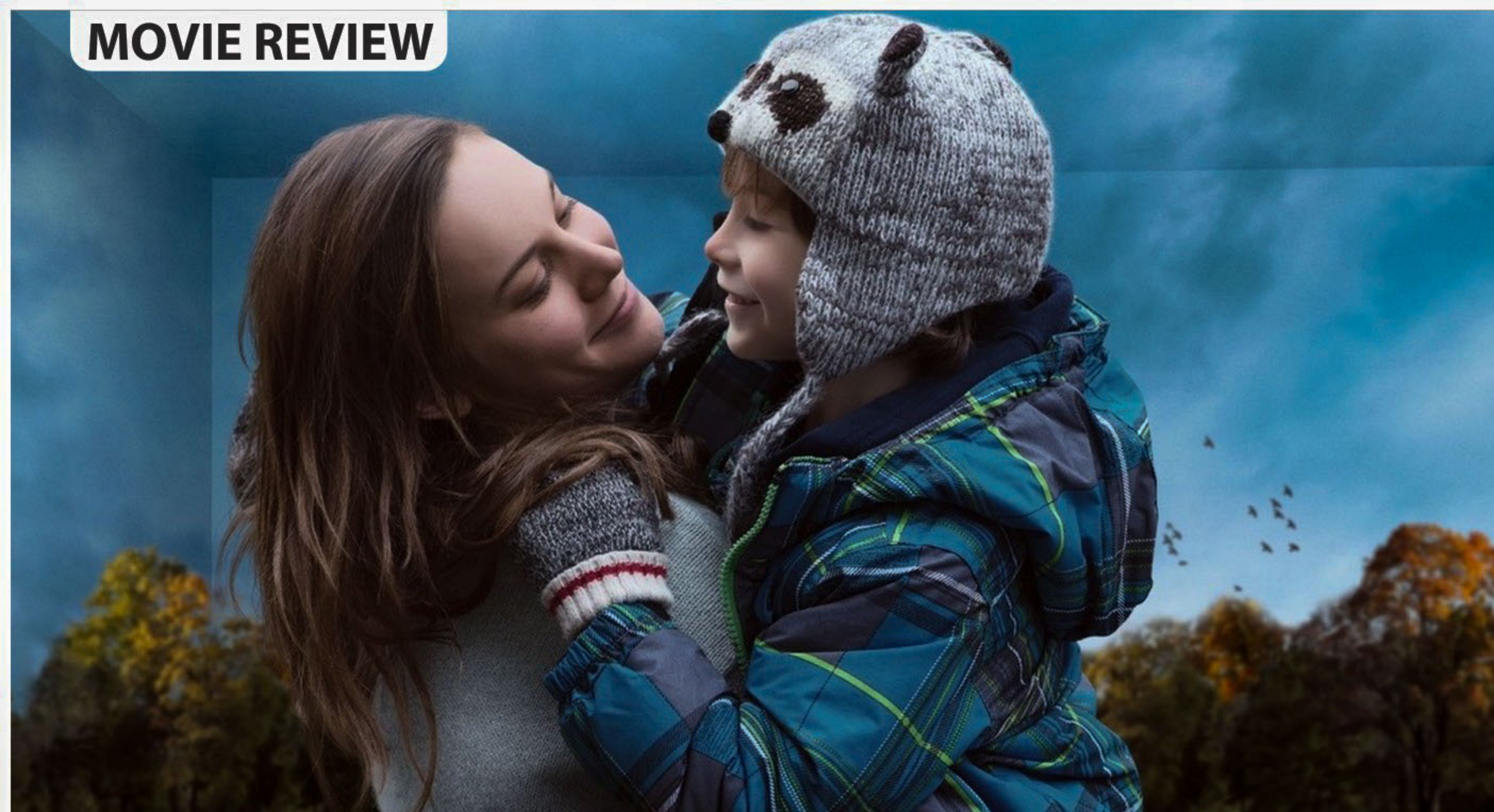
As Shah, The Lover and The Child then roam around the lawn, you could be mistaken for thinking that the trio of

them are about to take flight with their wonderfully crafted wings.

Very straightforward at first glance, the song packs many messages in six minutes. This has been a powerful addition to Taher Shah's already glistening career.

ROOM: Macabre, yet hopeful

MOVIE REVIEW



MITHI CHOWDHURY

What if your world was no bigger than a tiny, squalid room that was visited by a monster every night? What if the contents of that room were the only friends you'd ever known? These were the circumstances that Jack and his mother, Joy, had witnessed for years. Based on Emma Donoghue's best-selling novel, *Room* is a heartbreaking story that'll make you feel a whirlwind of emotions in one sitting.

A young mother, Ma, (Brie Larson) and her son, Jack (Jacob Tremblay), live in a cramped room with a primitive stove, lavatory, sink and a small cot - isolated from the outside world by a heavy steel door protected by an electronic code. As the movie begins, we see that it's Jack's birthday, and Ma has decided to bake him a cake. She painstakingly proceeds to go through the motions of the day, as she does always - despite the hollowness of her cheeks and her gaunt, malnourished frame. Every evening, Old Nick (Sean

Bridgers) visits them while Jack pretends to be asleep in an old wardrobe, away from him. The story is told from the perspective of Jack who believes the entire universe is constituted in "room", and the realm beyond the steel door is "outer space". At some point, Ma can no longer accept her son's dreary existence and comes up with an escape plan.

To describe the impact that *Room* has is quite impossible. There are few movies that linger with you and haunt you long after you've seen them - *Room* is one of

those rare gems. Brie Larson won the Academy Award this year for her performance and my, was she an extraordinary contender. Her portrayal of the bleak hopelessness of an abductee hits you in the gut every time. Jacob Tremblay is a force to be reckoned with. Why he didn't receive an Academy Award nomination is beyond me. Everything - from his broken grammar to sudden, juvenile outbursts - makes you empathise with him. His performance allows you to experience the world again with childlike curiosity.

Director Lenny Abrahamson and cinematographer Danny Cohen brought to life a script that is nothing short of an artistic masterpiece. Abrahamson translates the horror and misery of their existence so well that certain scenes become unbearable to sit through. Before the "escape", the pace of the storyline picks up and before you know it, you're gripping the edge of your seat. Yes, this movie makes you feel many different emotions.

Room is undoubtedly one of the best films I've seen in a while. After watching it, you'll have a new appreciation for all the tiny, inconsequential events of everyday that are taken for granted. The story doesn't just let you in - it makes you live the horrors, sorrows, fears and joys of the two characters. For me, *Room* was much bigger than the four walls that never seemed to end.

Mithi Chowdhury is a dog-loving-movie-watching-mediocrity-fearing normal person. Either that or a penguin. Find out at mithichy612@gmail.com