

Just got home from watching THE GIRL WHO PLAYED WITH FIRE, same Swedish cast from the first film, but a different (and inferior) director, and the script was not good. It was two and half hours of plodding plot points, and unimaginative direction.

The second book by Larsson is complicated and convoluted, relies a great deal on coincidence. It would have worked really well as a multi-episode series a la HBO or Showtime. Instead this film is long, it's dull, and if you hadn't read the books I think it would be incomprehensible.

The screenwriter cut out all the intricate back room dealings with the police, but what went on with the police was pretty essential to ultimately solving the mystery, so that wasn't the best choice. All of the sex trafficking case was kept, but it ultimately didn't really help with the resolution. They showed me a lot of pointless scenes that were in the book, but were neither visual nor exciting they were just vehicles to impart information. They worked in a book. They didn't work on film because there are different mediums.

Some really hard choices, and deep cuts and changes needed to be made for this to work as a two plus hour movie, and they didn't make them. They tried to stay very true to the book, and made a bad movie. It's the same complaint I had about the first two Harry Potter films that were just endless and plodding, and Watchmen which was reverential, and as a result didn't work as a film for me.

Books two and three in this series would make a boffo series if you could get a network to commit to thirteen to twenty episodes. There would have been time to get to know the young investigative journalist and his girl friend who wrote the thesis on sex trafficking. Then when they died you would have cared. You could have seen the good cops beginning to realize that there is something really rotten higher up in the command structure.

Some things aren't meant to be movies without making profound changes. Other things aren't meant to be series. Art can sometimes occur when you can tell the difference, and then convince someone to finance your vision. Never easy.