Written by By Glenn Kay For the Sun
Friday, 15 May 2020 05:50



Rating: «««« out of «««««

Running Time:
70 – 80 minutes

This “interactive special” will be available on Netflix on May 12. You’ll be able to use your remote, gaming controller, mouse, or finger to make choices on your device as the story unfolds.

If you grew up during the 1980s, then you remember the “Choose Your Own Adventure” book series. These paperbacks would allow readers to make choices as they read, taking the story in different directions as they flipped pages. Recently, Netflix has also displayed this unique branching concept including *Black Mirror* and even a children’s Puss in Boots escapade. The latest variation is a feature-length sequel to one of their popular comedy series.

For those unfamiliar with *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, protagonist Kimmy (Ellie Kemper) is an escapee from a doomsday cult run by the sinister Reverend Richard (Jon Hamm). After spending most of her early life in a hidden bunker, she must make a fresh start in the modern world. *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt: Kimmy vs. the Reverend* picks up some time after the series finale. The sweet and innocent heroine is now engaged to the

similarly naïve royal family member, Frederick (Daniel Radcliffe).

Three days before their wedding, Kimmy finds evidence suggesting that there may be another cult member still unaccounted for. With friends Titus (Tituss Burgess), Jacqueline (Jane Krakowski) and Lillian (Carol Kane), she must confront an imprisoned Richard, try to free whomever is still under his control, and get back to New York in time for her nuptials.

As mentioned, the unique factor making this different from a typical movie is the addition of interactive options made available to viewers as they watch. There are an awful lot of them included, asking viewers to make seemingly inconsequential choices. This includes selecting a wedding dress (let me be clear, this is a decision that is only insignificant to this reviewer) or deciding whether to stay on the phone and listen to an extended answering machine message, to more important and dramatic courses of action.

Fans of the show will certainly enjoy what they see, as the tone is similar to the show. This isn’t deep stuff, but the characters possess a goofy and upbeat charm that is engaging. Like any comedy, certain scenarios are more humorous than others, but the cast does its best to deliver quirky jokes and observations, many of which earn a chuckle. Some of the best running gags involve an increasingly upset Titus becoming more desperate for food as the story progresses.

He even begins having hallucinogenic visions that lead to the character hilariously devouring grub that may or may not exist.

Also entertaining are the extended silences and looks used by performers to stretch moments out while waiting for the viewers to use their remotes. Some of Jane Krakowski’s exaggerated pauses are particularly good. Hamm is also amusing as the antagonist with a multitude of plans to break out of prison, and the feature even gives The Reverend and Kimmy a brief opportunity to address the reasons behind his bad behavior. Radcliffe is a funny addition and each of the other cast members gets a moment or two to shine.

Additionally, there is a zany cameo from a famous singer, as well as a prank that occurs to those who decide to skip the opening credits.

This reviewer went through the picture a couple of times, trying various options in order to see what might change. In fact, I first went through the movie making eccentric and purposefully wrong selections, then re-watched it making all of the right calls. The central story generally heads in the same direction and many of the incorrect choices will lead you back to take another guess. However, some calls you wouldn’t think of as important, ultimately have a big impact, altering the story.

You’ll definitely note at least two significant story differences by the close, if you make all the correct decisions. It’s also worth noting that the film is actually more entertaining the second time around, as initially some of gags do slip by unnoticed while one is focused on guiding the characters through the plot.

This isn’t earth-shattering stuff, but *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt: Kimmy vs. The Reverend* has a likable cast and works quite well as an interactive experiment, managing to provide plenty of options and fun as viewers guide its entertaining characters through an enjoyably silly story.

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