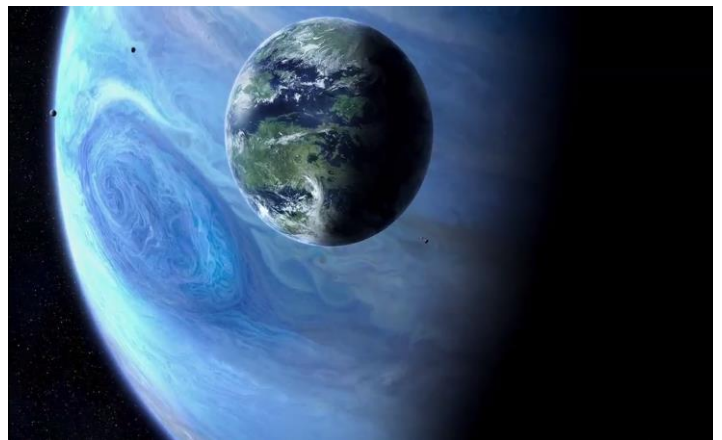


Jake Sully was hired to take place over his deceased twin in a mission taken in the distant world of Pandora. However, he was paralyzed during his military services in the marine force, which stirs up something in his character that he is determined to do tasks that of a normal person, despite his condition. Jake's twin was said to be a 'significant investment' as a scientist in the mission and since they share the same genome, he was asked to take over his contract. His mission which was under the Avatar program was quite simple, they are to control their Avatar and find their way to link with the Na'vi people to expand the mining operation of the company in search for the rare mineral called Unobtainium. He was assigned by Dr. Grace Augustine, the botanist and main researcher, as a body guard.



Describe the transformation that takes place in Jake from the beginning of the movie until the end. What are some of the key turning points that you can identify in his encounter with the Na'vi people?

At the beginning of the movie, Jake's only goal was to follow orders from the company and simply take place of his brother's position in the Avatar program. A sense of freedom was felt upon him when he first tried to link with his Avatar especially since he could walk, run and the like, things that he can't do due to his atrophy. During one of their field work, Jake's avatar was attacked by a thanator, leading him to flee and wander into the forest and was then discovered by Neytiri. She clan. Neytiri's mother who happens to be their spiritual leader instructed her to give Jake a chance and teach him their ways.



Jake, back in his body, was promised by Colonel Miles Quaritch that the company will restore his legs if in return he gathers more information about the Na'vi and the clan's gathering place, a giant arboreal called the Hometree, since they can't access it.



Set on his mission, Jake was receiving training from Neytiri herself and was slowly learning the ways of the Na'vi in which gradually we could see Jake being able to appreciate their life. We could sense the sympathy that Jake has felt with the Na'vi people and at about time, he gained their trust and was then initiated into their clan. You could be able to see that Jake is completely on the side of the Na'vi especially when he and Neytiri mated.



When a bulldozer attacked the sacred place, which was when Jake defended the other side by disabling the camera of the machine. Until the end of the movie, Jake was the person who with determination, was able to lead the Na'vi people despite not really a part of their kind, to defend their place against the 'sky people' or Jake's kind. Thus, in the end Jake Scully ended giving up his human life which he knew was happier being an avatar and joined the Na'vi people in the land of Pandora.



One interesting paradox in the film is the way in which the alien Na'vi people actually display far more human tendencies than the humans in the story. They appear more highly evolved than the humans in their respect of the life and the energy surrounding them. How do you see evidence of this throughout the film?

The movie was set in the distant future where humans are living in a world where the earth is already at risk and despite being technologically advanced, it suffers in a sense that everyone wears a mask of some sort to protect them. While in Pandora, the people working there are all towards a goal, which is to help in the possession of the Unobtainium which costs a massive amount of money.



I think that this people are too much blinded with this goal, all for the money in the end, which makes them seem to be mindless drones that just do whatever they are assigned to. What makes it surreal is that the Na'vi people are more in respect of their life and all these spiritual energy within Pandora. Take for instance, they respect the animals or living organisms especially when they kill them by accident or by hunting, they pray for its soul to a higher power.



They also have a connection with the organisms or the bond called 'Shahaylu' that they can ride the creatures like the *Direhorse* and the *Banshees* (Ikran/Toruk) and control it using their mind. When woodsprites appear, they take it to be a sign from Eywa, who is supposed to be their higher power or similar in a sense to our so called mother nature. They also have the sacred place the 'Utraya Mokri' or the Tree of Voices where they can have deeper connection with their ancestors. All in all I think that the Na'vi gives high regard to the environment given to them and respect everything given by their Eywa.



What was your favorite scene in the movie? What would you say is the main point or message of the film?

A scene that was really remarkable for me was when Jake was becoming one of the Na'vi through the teachings of Neytiri. I think the one that struck me the most was when he was able to establish a bond or Shahaylu with the great Toruk.



I think the film takes up on a lot of underlying themes in it. But the main point that is evident is the state of human society. Since this happens in a fictional future, a message it conveys is that if we continue to live like what we are now, that kind of future may be possible. An environment where the surrounding or air is toxic leading to find a solution in another planet. It also likes to portray that we, like the Na'vi, must respect our environment especially to the natural resources we have now and how it is becoming more less taken care of, and to do no harm to other forms of living. And that also we have a choice, as a human being, whether we choose the path of becoming good or bad, it is just a matter of choice among ourselves.

--- by Suellin Kaith J. Rivero

** All pictures screen captured by the author from the movie

Sources:

Cameron, J., & Landau, J. (Producers), & Cameron, J. (Director). (2009). Avatar [Motion picture].

United States: Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation.