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## The Grand Seduction – Review

“Back then,” states Murray French at the **beginning** of Don McKellar’s *The Grand Seduction*, “People from Tickle Head were **strong**, dignified, **brave**. Their days were filled with purpose. By no means was this life for the faint of heart, for the **weak** or the **lazy**, but as I look back now, I can truly say life was a thing of **beauty**.”

A remake of the French-Canadian film *Seducing Doctor Lewis*, McKellar’s first film behind the camera for a decade is a story about community, much like *The Full Monty* or the more recent *Pride*, in which the residents of a small town in Newfoundland must band together to **overcome** a common **foe**. In this case, however, the foe is effectively the modern world: the fishing market that sustained the **town** has **collapsed**, and unemployment is rife. Memories of a time when the town was prosperous have long since **vanished**.



This sets up an interesting state of affairs: the people of the town need to convince big business - in this case, a petrochemical byproduct-repurposing facility - to **come** to the town, rather than to **leave** it, in order for its citizens to find work and regain some of the purpose that Brendan Gleeson’s **wily** character considers in his opening monologue. In order for the plant to be built, **however**, a doctor must live in Tickle Head, and Taylor Kitsch’s Dr. Paul Lewis - recently caught with a small amount of cocaine on his person - may be their solution, if they can convince him to stay and live there.

The towns people’s efforts to **ingratiate** themselves to Lewis include learning to play cricket, his favourite sport, and even including his favourite dish on the menu of their only restaurant. Kathleen, the postal lady, is the sole voice of dissent, suspicious both of Lewis’s charm and the prospect of a factory in the town, while Murray **strives** desperately for the scheme to work.

*The Grand Seduction* isn’t about to win any awards for originality, but its **outcome** isn’t as predictable as might be imagined, and the cast - especially Gleeson, Kitsch and Mary Walsh as Vera, the town’s phone operator, who listens to Murray’s private conversations - are a delight, as is the **stunning** cinematography of a locale so **rarely** seen on the big screen.



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