

# Barefoot

SCREENING AT the upcoming Czech Film Festival, *Barefoot* is a beautifully made gem that highlights not only the picturesque country of present-day Czech Republic, but also the history of when it was still called Czechoslovakia.

Set in 1943, the story is from the perspective of young Eda, who unintentionally lets out the fact that his father listens to resistance broadcasts on the radio, at a time when Nazi threat is still present.

The family then have to leave their home in Prague to a sleepy village in Slavonice, where his extended paternal family lives.

Eda, who is used to city life, takes time to adjust to the new environment, where he also learns to make new friends who teach him how to survive in the countryside, and one of the things is walking barefoot.

His new friends invite him to their den made out of funeral wreaths, which is situated inside a local cemetery where they regularly hang out.

The movie is based on the life of director Sverak's father, Zdenek. The elder



Sverak also plays the role of the headmaster in the movie.

Right from the start, the soothing music and opening shot of white smoke billowing out of a moving train in *Barefoot* are awe-inducing.

A high contrast from more mainstream blockbusters, Sverak adds complexity and layers to his film, keeping the audience captivated by peaceful shots intertwined with beautiful storytelling.

This historical drama is easy to digest, partly due to Eda's expansive imagination, where his young but

▶ **Cast:** Alois Grec, Ondrej Vetchy, and Tereza Voriskova

▶ **Director:** Jan Sverak

▶ **E-Value:** 8

▶ **Acting:** 9

▶ **Plot:** 8

innocent mind exaggerates events, like the story of why his outcast uncle is called Wolf.

And despite his young age, Eda's parents do not hold back when it comes to their problems, telling him

everything from war-related troubles and family issues.

*Barefoot* is humorous and heartwarming, especially since it's set in a time when war is a reality, and Eda still manages to carry on.

Catch this movie for free at GSC Pavilion Kuala Lumpur tonight at 7.30pm and at GSC Mid Valley, Kuala Lumpur, tomorrow night at 7.30pm.