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In times of crisis, people react in different ways. Some try to avoid bad things, try to deal with them with positivity and humor. So in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, they turn to a sincere, ridiculous price. Others face a head-on situation that explains the current popularity of films such as contagion and outbreak. Still others may refuse to be affected in any way. Some people may think that it's not worth your time (regardless of the circumstances) to watch a movie that's not great. Why bother? This list is for those people, great movie lovers. Here are 15 great (or almost excellent) movies that are available for streaming on various free services, either on a library-based or ad-based basis. (For more offers of quality movies that will help you bide time, check out our list of lighthearted pick-me-up flicks and our follow-up list of 15 other Hollywood faves.) Adaptation (Roku, Crackle) Columbia Susan Orlean (Meryl Streep) admires orchids as part of an adaptation of her book research. The remarkable adaptation (2002) came about when acclaimed screenwriter Charlie Kaufman (Being John Malkovich, Eternal Sunshine of Spotless Mind) was hired to write a film version of Susan Orlean's non-fiction book *Orchid Thief* and couldn't figure out how to do it. Instead he wrote this story about a nerdy, anxious, blocked screenwriter, Charlie (Nicolas Cage) also trying to adapt *Orchid Thief* and his outgoing, adventurous twin brother, Donald (also Cage), who wants to write a brain-dead Hollywood thriller. Meryl Streep is perfect as Orleans, and Chris Cooper won an Oscar as John Laroche, the actual orchid thief. Kaufman and director Spike Jonze take their masterly meta-movie as far as it can possibly go, an adaptation of Laroche's explanation theory, as it applies to flowers that film its inverted-on-side brain dead in the Hollywood Chase scene. Tilda Swinton co-stars as a frightening agent, Maggie Gyllenhaal is Donald's girlfriend, and Brian Cox is a screen guru.A.I. Artificial Intelligence (Pluto TV) Warner Bros./Dreamworks Gigolo Joe (Jude Law) helps fellow Android David (Haley Joel Osment) on a quest to find Blue Fairy in A.I. Artificial Intelligence. Before Stanley Kubrick died in 1999 he deposited this project with his friend Steven Spielberg; the latter then went above and beyond to make one of his most divisive, challenging movies, and also one of his very best. Based on a brief history by Brian Aldiss, A.I. Artificial Intelligence (2001) covers the future of robot boy David (Haley Joel Osment). Grieving mom Monica (Frances O'Connor), whose son is sick, gets David and activates her love function, but when her real son recovers, David eventually throws out. David decides to find the Blue Fairy, who he hopes can turn him into a real boy so that his mother will love him again. Another android, Gigolo Joe (Jude Law), helps. Controversial Part of David's journey is truly indescribably beautiful and tragic. Tragic. the film as a whole is perfectly-looking and as fluid as any of Spielberg's movies, and with a power that's hard to deny. See it in double function with another great Spielberg sci-fi film, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, to be found in Crackle. *Ball fire* (Hoopla) RKO Bertram Potts (Gary Cooper, center) and his fellow professors interview showgirl Sugarpuss O'Shea (Barbara Stanwyck) in their encyclopedia *Ball of Fire*. This sexy screwball comedy classic is one of the unsung masterpieces, bursting with an amazing collection of talents. The twist on the history of *Snow White*, *Ball of Fire* (1941) stars Gary Cooper as timid Professor Bertram Potts, who, along with seven older colleagues, writes a kind of encyclopedia. Realizing his section slang is hopelessly outdated, he ventures into a nightclub and becomes fascinated by Sugarpuss O'Shea (Barbara Stanwyck), who says things like *Who's Buzzin'*, cousin? When the police begin to investigate her gangster boyfriend (Dana Andrews), she decides to hide with the professors and help them with her slang. Billy Wilder and Charles Brackett wrote a witty screenplay, Gregg Toland shot the movie with his trademark deep focus on black-and-white cinematography (he shot *Citizen Kane* the same year), and the brilliant jazz drummer Gene Krupa plays. He was director of genre master Howard Hawks, who made Sergeant York with Cooper the same year. *Chat* (Crackle, PopcornFlix, Pluto TV, Kanopy) Paramount, Harry Caul (Gene Hackman) and Stan (John Cazale) listen to the talk of the surveillance tape. Along with *The Godfather* (1972), *The Godfather Part II* (1974) and *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *The Conversation* (1974) helped set up director Francis Ford Coppola as perhaps the greatest American director of the 1970s. Harry Caul (Gene Hackman) is a tracking man in San Francisco, perhaps the best in his field. His latest work consists of a pair of eavesdropping (Cindy Williams and Frederic Forrest) as they walk around Union Square, trying to look and sound normal, but clearly careful, or afraid of something. Harry obsessively re-jiggers the recording, looking for clues and becoming increasingly paranoid. Coppola's original screenplay and vivid images (Harry's weird, opaque raincoat), as well as Walter Murch's powerfully accurate editing and haunting sound design, all contribute to a truly crafted film. John Cazale plays Harry's colleague Stan, Teri Garr plays his onetime girlfriend, and in brief appearances, Harrison Ford and Robert Duvall are his sinister employers. *Dark City* (Vudu Free) New Line Torch singer Emma Murdoch (Jennifer Connelly) after the mysterious Stranger *Dark City*. This incredible, assured sci-fi film is so sophisticatedly designed that it has up to a few views. *Dark City* (1998) wasn't caught at the time of its release (though Roger Ebert named it the year's best film and compared it to *Metropolis* in 2001: *The Space Odyssey*), but eventually became a cult classic. a man (Rufus Sewell) wakes up in a hotel room without remembering who he is or how he got there. He discovers that he has a wife (Jennifer Connelly) who works as a torch singer. He also learns that he may be responsible for the murders of several women. Australian director Alex Proyas (Varna) designs the film as a quiet, otherworldly film noir, radiating mystery and strangeness as the mind-bending puzzle unlocks itself. Keifer Sutherland co-stars as a weird doctor, William Hurt is a detective, and Richard O'Brien (Rocky Horror Picture Show) is Mr Hand, one of the sinister band Strangers. (This is the original 100-minute theatrical cut.) *Dr. Strangelove* (Crackle) Colombian President Musuffley (Peter Sellers, right) tries to warn of a nuclear attack while the Russian ambassador (Peter Bull) listens, Dr Strangelove. Directed by Stanley Kubrick, movies are sometimes accused of being cold, but here's a hilarious dark comedy, one of the funniest ever made to combat that notion. Shot in black-and-white, *Dr. Strangelove* (subtitled *Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Bomb*) (1964) features some of Kubrick's awesome, cavernous visuals, especially war room sequences, but he moves off a good clip and never stops tickling brains or funny bones. Insane Brigadier General Jack D. Ripper (Sterling Hayden) orders a nuclear strike on Russia, while nervous RAF captain Lionel Mandrake (Peter Sellers) tries to placate him. Major T. J. King Kong (Slim Pickens) pilots a B-52 bomber who receives an order, while General Buck Turgidson (George C. Scott) meets with the U.S. President (Sellers Again) and other chief of staff to discuss some (hilarious, disturbing) options. Sellers plays a third role as a bizarre, wacky title character, an ex-Nazi adviser, and he received an Oscar nomination for his incredible, triple-threat work. *Ghost World* (IMDB TV, Roku, Hoopla, Pluto TV) United Artists Best Friends Rebecca (Scarlett Johansson) and Enid (Thora Birch) try to figure out life after high school in *Ghost World*. After his highly acclaimed documentary *Crumb*, director Terry Zwigoff made his feature fiction debut with masterpiece *Ghost World* (2001). A dark but dryly funny and sympathetic look at outsiders and artists, it contains many personal Zwigoff touches and founded him as one of america's most impressive directors. Adapted from Daniel Clowes' graphic novel, Clowes and Zwigoff received An Oscar nomination for their screenplay film stars Thora Birch and Scarlett Johansson as Enid and Rebecca, two friends who agree to get an apartment together after graduating from high school. But Enid must first take on the summer school art class-taught constricting Roberta Allsworth (Ileana Douglas) and become obsessed with reclusive record collector Seymour (Steve Buscemi), and eventually the girls' friendship becomes strained. Despite its healthy dose of comic cynicism, the film is quite touching, and Explain. Bob Balaban and Brad Renfro co-star, with Dave Sheridan as roach head Doug and comedian David Cross. Page 2 Summit Ghost Writer (Ewan McGregor) reveals dangerous secrets while working for former Prime Minister Ghost Writer. Decades after Rosemary's Baby and Chinatown, director Roman Polanski proved that he was still at the top of his game with this thriller, based on robert harris novel. Ewan McGregor plays an unnamed title character known only as Ghost, who is hired to review the memories of retired British Prime Minister Adam Lang (Pierce Brosnan). The manuscript is secret, and Ghost has to work at Lang's house, with various assistants, and Lang's wife (Olivia Williams) treats him suspiciously. As he investigates, he begins to discover the secret that someone does not want to know him. *Ghost Writer* material (2010) is pretty standard, but Polanski's handling of it is crafted, perfectly using small details, sounds, air, and visual space to ramp up a deep, genuine sense of fear and paranoia. Like Hitchcock before him, Polanski lifts the pulp into art. Kim Cattrall, Tom Wilkinson, James Belushi, Timothy Hutton, Eli Wallach and Jon Bernthal co-star. Good morning, Vietnam (Roku) Touchstone DJ Adrian Cronauer (Robin Williams) shakes up the company when he's assigned to armed forces radio in Vietnam good morning, Vietnam. Good Morning, Vietnam (1987), Robin Williams plays real-life Adrian Cronauer, a military airman and DJ assigned to armed forces radio in Vietnam, who decides to shake up military radio's conservative rules and regulations by telling jokes and playing a loud rock 'n' roll. While the real Cronauer wasn't quite as outrageous, the role was nonetheless crafted by Williams' unique talents, causing him to riff on any era-appropriate ideas, doing accents and characters, reading forbidden news reports, and everything else that pushed the envelope. While Williams goes wild, director Barry Levinson keeps the movie around him smoothly and effectively on the road. The character's relentless pursuit of a Vietnamese girl (Chintara Sukapatana) seems a little iffy today, and most other actors are easily upstaged or outclassed by Williams' energy, but it's still a serious, powerful, cute, and very funny movie. Williams received the first of her four Oscar nominations for her work. *Forest Whitaker*, Bruno Kirby, Robert Wuhl, J.T. Walsh and Richard Edson also star. *Henry V* (Hoopla, Pluto TV) Samuel Goldwyn Company King Henry V (Kenneth Branagh) leads England to victory in the Battle of Agincourt by Henry V. At age 28, Kenneth Branagh audaciously took this \$9 million production of Shakespeare's *Henry V* (1989), directed and starring himself. Purists were offended that someone would try to out-do Laurence Olivier's beloved version of war, but Branagh replaced Olivier's rousing, bold colors with a muddier, bloodier, more realistic approach. It also includes flashbacks from others illustrating Henry's touching relationship with Falstaff (Robbie Coltrane). Agincourt's sequence battle is incredibly vivid, including a memorable few-minute-long take, and Branagh received a double Oscar nomination for Best Director and Best Actor (the film won one award for his costume design). It's all quite glorious, although it helps to have some knowledge of the Bard before you go. The cast includes Ian Holm, Brian Blessed, Judi Dench, Paul Scofield and Emma Thompson, plus a young Christian Bale as a baggage boy. Derek Jacobi talks starting things off the set of movies. *Lone Star* (Wood Free) Sony Pictures Classics Legendary Sheriff Buddy Deeds (Matthew McConaughey) may leave some dark secrets to the Lone Star. With his challenging, romantic films, John Sayles has been one of the most consistent, intelligent and culturally sensitive American independent filmmakers since the 1980s; The modern, humanist *Western Lone Star* (1996) is now widely regarded as the pinnacle of his impressive career. Set in a small Texas town, Sheriff Sam Deeds (Chris Cooper) investigates a skeleton found in mud and is working to solve his decades-old mystery. At the same time he must reckon with the shadow of his legendary sheriff's father (played by flashback Matthew McConaughey); many locals insist on comparing a son with a father. Sayles creates the whole story and political climate of the city, and complex, changing tapestry ideals between local races and cultures, but never ignores the characters and their intertwined relationships. Elizabeth Peña plays Sam in full love, mixed-race Pilar, and Frances McDormand has a memorable scene as Bunny, Sam's ex-wife. Also with Kris Kristofferson *Once Upon West Time* (Crackle, PopcornFlix) the Paramount Gunfighter known as Harmonica (Charles Bronson, third from left) comes on top of three killers once Upon West time. Many believe that this king-sized film by Sergio Leone will be the greatest Western ever made. When *Western Time* (1969) opens with an astonishing, 10-minute sequence as three men in duster coats wait at the train station. Leone cuts along huge, expansive landscape shots and smashes them with close-ups, and similarly slams along the dark with light. Finally, a man known only as Harmonica (Charles Bronson) arrives and easily sends three would-be killers (two of them played by Woody Strode and Jack Elam). Then, ex-prostitute Jill (Claudia Cardinale) tries to join her new husband and his family, but finds them all slaughtered. Trash-talking bandit Cheyenne (Jason Robards) is charged, but the real villain is a cold-blooded little down dirty dog Frank (Henry Fonda). Ennio Morricone's amazing, stunning harmonica-based musical score sometimes wails under the action, ramping things up to monumental heights. Two other notable directors, Dario Argento and Bernardo Bertolucci, worked on the story. *Punch Drunk Love* Columbia Everything changes the strange life of Barry Egan (Adam Sandler) when he meets Lena (Emily Watson) in *Punch-Drunk Love*. The beautiful, odd thing that paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love* (2002) is to grab a bag of ideas from pistons to dessert, but he's focused around the director's admiration for Adam Sandler. Anderson proved that Sandler can be a great actor (a concept that was recently endorsed by Uncut Gems). Clad in a lame blue suit, Barry Egan (Sandler) deals with bossy, bullying, overbearing sisters and trying to keep the explosive mood in check by juggling, bullying, overbearing sisters and trying to keep the explosive mood in check. He calls the phone sex line, meekly transmit his personal information, and finds harmony on the street. But then he meets and falls in love with Lena Leonard (Emily Watson), and everything changes. Anderson's prism color scheme, awkward and distant angles, and use music and sound (a tribute to his mentor Robert Altman) to make the movie into something dreamy of unreality, that funny, prickly, and cute. Philip Seymour Hoffman, Luis Guzman and Mary Lynn Rajs kub co-star. *Raging Bull* (Roku, Hoopla, Wood Free, Pluto TV) MGM Joey (Joe Pesci) helps his brother Jake La Motta (Robert De Niro) train in a raging bull fight. Voted best film of his decade, Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull* (1980), based on the story of real-life middleweight champion Jake LaMotta, still feels as powerful as ever. Robert De Niro won an Oscar for his portrayal of Jake through decades of aging and putting on weight. He meets the teenage blonde goddess Vickie (Cathy Moriarty), carries her and eventually marries her, but can't understand or relate to her and can't control her violent jealousy. Joe Pesci co-stars as Jake's brother Joey, in a performance full of dedication, anger, pain, frustration, and grief. It's a strangely entangled portrait of a self-destructive brute, classic and stylish with its glittering black-and-white cinematography, but raw and bursting with its wild strength. Scorsese's fighting scenes are extraordinary, with cuts to punches and photographers' flash-bulb rhythms; Editor Thelma Schoonmaker won her first of three Academy Awards for her groundbreaking work. *Stories We Tell* (TubiTV) Roadside Attractions Sarah Polley learns about memory and perception while making a documentary about her family in *The Stories We Tell*. Canadian actress Sarah Polley (*The Sweet Let*, *The Dawn of the Dead* remake) made an incredible splash when she became director, making highly acclaimed fiction films *From Her* (2007) and *Take This Waltz* (2012). But in her third movie, she gets even more personal. *The Stories We Tell* (2013) is a bold, shocking documentary about your family. Who cares about our family? – asks her sister at the same time, but the answer is: anyone who loves a good story. In search of long-lost family secrets, Polley that facts are distorted memories, different views and dramatic narrative. She documentary format, as we know it, and presents everything on screen. She shows herself trying to figure out where to go next, doing a different account of mine with her father recording, and even an interview with a film producer who explains why her film just won't work. How wonderful that it is wrong. Note: When you buy something by clicking on the links in our articles, we can earn a small commission. Read our partner link policy for more information.

