No matter where you go, there are always the extremely rich and the extremely poor – hopefully with a bunch of people somewhere in the middle. Every once in a while my dad would take us on a Sunday afternoon drive to State Line Road. It fascinated me that the one side of the street was in Missouri and the other side of the street was in Kansas (I was easily impressed). On the Kansas side we’d drive through Mission which is where the ultra wealthy lived. We’d gawk at the beautiful mansions and manicured lawns (this was way before gated communities). My favorite was the white Stover Mansion, the house that chocolate built. On our way back home daddy would drive though the poorer parts of town so we could see that while some had it better than us, others had it much worse. We’d top off the drive with a trip to Velvet Freeze for Double Dutch Chocolate ice cream.

Director Neil Blomkamp brings his ideas of the futuristic progression of the classes to theatres in “Elysium.” The year is 2154. The beautiful people – the top one percent – have set up shop in paradise aboard a floating space station named Elysium. On Elysium we find the beautiful mansions and manicured lawns and all the good things man could want to include a health care device in every home which miraculously cures all disease, broken bones and even old age (I could really use one in my house!).

The rest of the human race lives no longer on a big blue marble, but on a piece of polluted rock in total squalor surrounded by disease, hunger and a myriad of other awful amenities. The crowds are controlled by security bots that are brutal with absolutely no sense of humor. “Elysium” tells the story of the people living in Los Angeles. The Elysium space station is visible to those on the planet, yet worlds away. Not unlike our own challenges when it comes to immigration, the people of Earth, especially those looking for the magic of medical care, find ways to pay smugglers for trips on shuttles to Elysium. Their Secretary of Defense (played by Jodie Foster as a bad guy) shows no mercy toward the unwelcome immigrants.

Max (Matt Damon) is an ex-con who works in a security bot factory. The work is dirty, difficult and lacks any type of OSHA standards; people are expendable. While on the job, Max gets trapped in a radiation chamber and receives a life ending dose of radiation. The company’s solution is to give him a bottle of pills and tell him he has five days to live – by the way, you’re fired. Max knows that his survival depends on a successful trip to Elysium to one of their magical medical chambers. He contacts a local crime boss and makes a deal to get a ride to Elysium, but at what cost?

“Elysium” offers us a new sci-fi movie which is full of action, conspiracy and suspense. While not being preachy, it causes us to consider what some of our decisions might be doing to our big blue marble. It also shows what man could be capable of in the fields of medicine, science and engineering. I remember thinking that the flip communicators used on the old “Star Trek” shows were pretty cool, even though my dad thought they were pretty much impossible. Now look at our smart phones – we’ve come a long way baby! On a scale of one to four Hart Beats ... I give “Elysium” ◇◇◇◇. This film deserves a date night to see it on the big screen along with a juicy hamburger and a beer.