

Film reviews

Bal (Honey)

★★★★★

Director: Semih Kaplanoglu
With: Bora Altas, Erdal Besikcioglu,
Tülin Özen
103 mins, cert PG

Turkish film-maker Semih Kaplanoglu won the Golden Bear at the Berlin film festival for this calm, contemplative and compassionate movie, the third in his childhood trilogy - the first was *Yumurta*, or *Egg*; the second *Süt*, or *Milk*. In the densely forested region of north-eastern Turkey along the Black Sea coast, Yakup (Erdal Besikcioglu) makes a hand-to-mouth living harvesting wild honey, climbing trees to get at the hives. His disappearance one day exposes his already vulnerable family to yet more stoically borne agony: this is his wife Zehra (Tülin Özen) and six-year-old boy Yusuf (Bora Altas) through whose eyes we are invited to see the action. He is a lonely child, dealing with a stammer, desperate for attention, longing to get one of the red "reward" badges his strict schoolteacher gives out for reading aloud in class.

The image of honey itself stands for the richness, sweetness and plenitude of nature: and it is an image which is neither ironic nor unironic, standing perhaps simply for the placidity of nature which exists independently of human fortune. It is a film whose unhurried pace must be allowed to grow on you, but once it has, there is something engrossing about the tragedy unfurling slowly and indirectly before our eyes. Some of the images Kaplanoglu finds are superb: a forest, a mountainside, a rippling, pulsing moon reflected in a pool of water. It is poetic film-making. **Peter Bradshaw**

Just Do It

★★★★★

Director: Emily James
88 mins, cert 12A

This is an embedded documentary, by Emily James, who has placed herself within the ranks of climate change protest groups, following them as they show up at coal-fired power stations and gleaming corporate bank headquarters, supergluing themselves to each other,