

Blu-Ray Review: 'Your Highness' is One of 2011's Most Disappointing Comedies

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 10, 2011 - 10:25am

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CHICAGO – David Gordon Green's "Your Highness" still makes me sad. Not only am I giant fan of nearly everyone involved but the concept of a pot-fueled riff on the fantasy-adventure films more popular in the '80s is a great one. And yet, even watching it again on Blu-ray and DVD, "Your Highness" just sinks, deflating my like a leaky balloon. I'm gonna go cry now.



Blu-Ray Rating: **1.5/5.0**

Critics and movie goers expect questionable projects like "Something Borrowed" or "The Change-Up" to fall flat but when you get two recent Oscar nominees (James Franco, Natalie Portman), the incredible writer/director of "Pineapple Express" (David Gordon Green), the delightful Zooey Deschanel, and the scene-stealing star of "Tropic Thunder" and "Eastbound & Down" together for one project, expectations change. To say this is Green's worst movie is a massive understatement. With that context, it's more of a tragedy than a comedy. It may be the worst film of everyone involved.

The portly Prince Thadeous (McBride) is the black sheep of the royal family in this fantasy-comedy. He's always overshadowed by his handsome, chivalrous brother Fabious (Franco) and spends his time getting stoned with his man Courtney (Rasmus Hardiker) and chasing sheep. When Fabious returns from yet another successful battle with the head of a Cyclops and a lovely virginal fiance (Deschanel), Thadeous sulks as his brother prepares to marry. During the wedding, the evil wizard Leezar (Theroux) wreaks havoc and steals the new lady love for an upcoming ceremony involving moon alignment and a dragon. Fabious, Thadeous, and Courtney head off to save the damsel in distress and run across a gorgeous warrior (Portman) to serve as love interest for our portly hero.



Your Highness

Photo credit: Universal

Mel Brooks used to make parodies like this more commonly in the '70s and '80s before the day when all satires had to be filled with pop culture references and the effort should be rewarded (it's the only positive thing that can really be said about the film). Not every comedy needs to be self-referential and it's to the credit of McBride & Ben Best's script for "Your Highness" that they don't specifically parody films like "Lord of the Rings," playing with fantasy concepts more than specific works. Imagine your stoned best friend in college going on a fantasy book-reading bender and then being told he had to write a movie — he might come up with something like "Your Highness."

But he'd probably come up with something funnier. This is the kind of material that not only seems written by someone who was stoned but ONLY enjoyable if you're stoned yourself. Watching Franco and McBride give a puppet wizard a handjob or an extended bit with a minotaur's severed penis is the kind of material that the makers of "Your Highness" clearly thinks is much funnier than it actually ended up. It's like that drunk guy at the party who thinks the joke he just told is WAY funnier than it actually is. It just make you uncomfortable. There's a desperation to the comedy that has never even been hinted at before in Green or McBride's work.



The timing of "Your Highness" is horrible, unrated or rated. The film never finds a rhythm, lurching uncomfortably from one gross-out joke to another, and there's certainly no relief in the action scenes, which are simply horrendous. You know that common complaint that the last act of "Pineapple Express" doesn't really work because Green can't handle the action as well as the comedy? I never agreed with that criticism but the action here is horribly conceived, staged, and executed. And there's a lot of it. When Fabious & Thadeous have to pull out their swords, you'll roll your eyes and the loud, nonsensical, poorly-done action that's about to follow.

Let's just forget it ever happened. We need to move on. McBride has "30 Minutes or Less"; Franco has the awesome "Rise of the Planet of the Apes"; Deschanel appears in one of the most promising new sitcoms called "The New Girl"; even Green has another movie this year (the upcoming "The Sitter" with Jonah Hill). Let's move on. It would be best if we all just forget it ever happened.

I definitely want to forget not just the film but the HORRENDOUS deleted scenes on the Universal Blu-ray. Believe it or not, "Your Highness" could have been worse, as evidenced by a duet between Deschanel & Franco and a scene where Justin Theroux lays an egg that hatches a dragon to kill him. I'm trying to forget I ever saw it. I'm all for film presentation but this negative should have been burned. And probably smoked.

Special Features:

- o 15 Minutes of Extended Scenes
- o Line-O-Rama - An outrageous montage of alternate jokes from different scenes
- o Perverted Visions - More of Thadeous and Fabious's raunchy visit to the Great Wise Wizard
- o A Vision of Leezar - Hysterically inappropriate moments with the Evil Wizard
- o Alternate and Deleted Scenes
- o Gag Reel
- o Damn You Gods: The Making of Your Highness
- o Feature Commentary with Video Intro
- o BD Live Enabled
- o Pocket Blu

- o My Movies
- o D-Box Motion Enabled

"Your Highness" stars Danny McBride, James Franco, Natalie Portman, Rasmus Hardiker, Justin Theroux, Toby Jones, Damian Lewis, and Zooey Deschanel. It was written by McBride & Ben Best and directed by David Gordon Green. It is rated R and runs 102 minutes. It was released on DVD and Blu-ray on August 9th, 2011.



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