

Formula Takes Another Lap in ‘Fast & Furious 6’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 23, 2013 - 12:53pm

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – “*How did you know the car would be there to break my fall?*” Everything you need to know about the current tone of the “Fast & Furious” franchise exists in that line. Not only are these people superhero enough to leap through the air from one vehicle to another but this is a world in which automobiles are designed to BREAK falls. It’s ridiculous, insane escapist entertainment, and while the bloated running time and less-exciting setting makes “Fast & Furious 6” a slight step down from the more well-paced “Fast Five,” it’s still a damn fun ride that’s sure to please the audience out to see a sixth installment of vehicular man-sanity.

At the end of “Fast Five,” Dom Toretto (Vin Diesel) and his team went their separate ways with millions of dollars but with warrants remaining on their heads. When an international criminal named Shaw (Luke Evans) surfaces in London with the intent of buying a WWII-capable military weapon, Agent Hobbs (Dwayne Johnson) knows that Dom and his driving family are the only ones who can stop him. It helps entice Dom back into the world of hot cars and hotter women that Letty (Michelle Rodriguez) has surfaced in Shaw’s crew. Dom buried Letty, the love of his life. How could she still be alive? Get Letty, give Shaw to the authorities, and everyone gets the pardon that will allow them to go home again. Sounds like a deal.



Fast and Furious 6

Photo credit: Universal Pictures

Of course, we are treated to a getting-the-band-back-together montage like the Car & Driver version of “The Avengers.” Dom is ready to rock after saying goodbye to a supportive Elena (Elsa Pataky). Brian (Paul Walker) and Mia (Jordana Brewster) have a baby but she’s ready to let him risk his life again for the family (the “Fast” movies LOVE to play on the concept of makeshift families and how these people will do anything for one another...it’s an emotional hook that grabs both women and alpha males and is an underrated reason for the franchise’s success). Hobbs has a new, hot partner in Riley (Gina Carano). Tej (Chris ‘Ludacris’ Bridges) and Roman (Tyrese Gibson) are off spending their cash while Gisele (Gal Gadot) and Han (Sung Kang) are ready to start a life together. They all come back for Dom and the chance for freedom.

The script for "Fast & Furious 6" simply must have been outlined and bullet-pointed as a series of action set pieces (with a break for what is essentially a music video in the middle before a great street-race sequence). You can picture the production meetings. "How do we get a tank involved?" "Will audiences believe that a man can jump from a moving plane to a moving car?" "Speaking of that plane, where's the longest runway in the world?" Characters? Plot? Those are secondary to squealing tires and things that go boom. If the characters of "FF6" aren't driving at truly irrational speeds, they're beating the crap out of each other. Remember that great fight scene between Johnson and Diesel in "Five"? There are a few of those in "Six," including two between Rodriguez and Carano and a free-for-all in the climax that had the preview audience I saw the film with screaming with delight.

"Fast & Furious 6" is action porn for alpha males and the women who love them. The plot doesn't matter nearly as much as the "good stuff" and so it's a shame that director Justin Lin spends so much time on it in this 130-minute film. He lets Diesel monologue way too many times about the importance of family and everyone explains what they're doing and why over and over again. We get it. You're going after Shaw and trying to get Letty back. Now just DO IT. There's a surprising amount of talking in "Fast & Furious 6" and I found the plot more annoying this time than in "Five." (And scenes that go for comedy like a bit in which a car salesman is forced to undress are tragically awful.)



Fast and Furious 6

Photo credit: Universal Pictures

Yes, I'm saying the opposite of what most critics when presented with a film this thin in terms of character and realism – I wanted less dialogue. The attempts to flesh out the characters – Brian's fatherhood & guilt, Dom's love for Letty, the affair between Han & Gisele – feel forced and drag the film down. These characters are like video game protagonists. No matter how many times the writers try to make them feel like a real family, they're going to have to pull off stunts that are simply impossible in the real world. They're not real. They're virtually cartoons.

And when they get to play up that cartoonish aspect of "Fast & Furious 6," the movie does exactly what a film like this should do – it gives fans what they're looking for. There used to be a theory that the best Summer action blockbusters showed audiences something they had never seen before – a T. Rex chasing a family, the White House blowing up, etc. "Furious Six" delivers in that respect. It is over-the-top, ridiculous, escapist entertainment, a thrill ride with fantastically well-shot action scenes, beautiful people, and gorgeous locales. So, cars don't really break falls. In this world, they do. And, especially in the blockbuster world of Summer, this is the world in which movie goers want to live.

"Fast & Furious 6" stars Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson, Jordana Brewster, Michelle Rodriguez, Tyrese Gibson, Sung Kang, Gal Gadot, Chris 'Ludacris' Bridges, Gina Carano, and Luke Evans. It was directed by Justin Lin. It is rated PG-13 and opens on May 24, 2013.

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