

Satisfying Emotion in 'How to Train Your Dragon: Hidden World'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on February 22, 2019 - 10:22am

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO –All fiery things must come to an extinguishing point, and the “How to Train Your Dragon” animated film series concludes with its third entry, subtitled “Hidden World.” To finish things up the creators turn on the Dragon power, there are literally thousands of them flamed up and ready to go.

The series is notable for the connection that the hero Hiccup creates with his dragon pal Toothless, and that theme is carried through to an appropriate and emotional conclusion, which is the biggest selling point of the film. The atmosphere is mind-bogglingly rendered into a significant created universe, including the so-called “hidden world” of Dragonland, which turns up the volume on psychedelic color schemes ... the film is available in 3D, IMAX & RPX options. As it is said, if you have followed the first two films, you'll be properly satisfied as it comes to an end.

Hiccup (voice of of Jay Baruchel) is now the chief of his Viking/Dragon village, in a sense hiding the mythical creatures from dragon hunters, led by the evil Grimmel (F. Murray Abraham). Hiccup's pals, Snotlout (Jonah Hill), Fishlegs (Christopher Mintz-Plasse), Ruffnut (Kristen Wiig) and Tuffnut (Justin Ripple) are all on his side, but become wary of protecting the village, especially as Hiccup keeps talking of a “hidden world” of Dragons.



Stop Dragon His Heart Around: 'How to Train Your Dragon: Hidden World'

Photo credit: Universal Pictures

Grimmel is wise, and decides to use a female dragon to lure the male Toothless to give up the village location. This works as sure the birds and the bees, and suddenly the whole collective is in trouble. Although Hiccup is willing to let Toothless find his mate, he worries for his responsibilities, including his burgeoning relationship with Astrid (America Ferrera).

The strongest element of the story is the emotions of letting go (the story was written by director Dean DeBlois). Hiccup plays the role of parent with Toothless, and the dragon is leaving the nest. Given he was raised by a single parent, the parallel between him and Toothless becomes the theme of the film. If you grew up with the story or have experienced it with your kids, for example, this stab of emotion hits the target, and saves the film from an oblivion of "how many dragons can we fit in?"

The film also ups the ante on their animation environment, not only creating their world precisely but turning up the volume on certain set pieces. The "hidden world" of the title is the payoff, combining spectacular vistas with a black light style glow. There are so many cool scenes in cool places – including an opening sequences where houses fall down like dominos – that I suspect we've reached the point where animation creativity is taken for granted. It's apparent the "How to Train.." series wanted to go out with a bang.



Toothless and Lady Toothless in 'How to Train Your Dragon: Hidden World'

Photo credit: Universal Pictures

The true emotional moments don't come until the end of the film, and build-up to it had some story slogging to get through. The romance between Toothless and female Toothless smacked of some breeder propaganda ... the couple's courtship takes so long I was tempted to throw some hotel keys at the screen and tell them to get a room. Little Jason and Jennifer are learning to be good family vessels through the animation they play over and over and over.

I kid the kids. These films are the new storybooks, and will be the common point in the Oxygen Bars of the future, where the mating ritual will include a reenactment of the beach sequence between Toothless and Lady Toothless. Hopefully when I'm observing this, the oxygen will be near by.

"How to Train Your Dragon: Hidden World" opens everywhere in 3D, IMAX, RPX and regular screenings. See local listings for options and show times. Featuring the voices of Jay Baruchel, America Ferrera, F. Murray Abraham, Cate Blanchett, Gerard Butler, Jonah Hill, Craig Ferguson and Kirsten Wiig. Written and directed by Dean DeBlois. Rated "PG"



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