



This Week: Legend

Okay, here's the premise. In a far away land, a long, long, loooooong time ago, there was a beautiful princess who loved everybody. This was partly because she was naive, but mostly because she didn't know many people.

In this same land lived a young commoner who loved the princess. He had the same problem she had (i.e. not knowing anyone he could hate), but that was because he lived in the forest and didn't get out much.

Now, if they were right and there was no true evil in the world, this would be the most boring fairy tale on record. Fortunately, they are wrong... boy, are they wrong. Not only is there a heck of a lot of true evil out there, but its armies are led by the most diabolical Prince Of Evil the cosmos has ever known--....

Tim Curry in a foam suit.

So begins the saga of *Legend*, the most elaborately filmed Aesop's fable ever to hit the big screen. Brought to us by Ridley Scott (the director of the classic sci-fi epic *Blade Runner*), this is the most easily understood movie in history.

To sum it all up: The Princess (Mia Sara) loves a woodsy little fellow named Jack, played with baby-faced ease by Tom Cruise. It would appear that the Princess also loves Slushies, since she demonstrates a remarkable amount of brain freeze. When her True Love leads her to the glade where the Unicorns hang out, she fails to notice the noisy, smelly goblins following her. She also distracts the unicorns just long enough for her unseen, unheard and unsmelt pursuers to shoot one of them with a large honey bee.

This leads to the death of one of the unicorns, the capture of the princess and the changing of the world into a planetary penguin paradise. So of course, Jack has to go rescue her. He meets up with assorted pixies, sprites, and dwarves (who are nice, or if you prefer, Good) and various

species of troll, goblin and hag (who are Bad). In the end, good wins, the Balance of Life is restored, the Dark Prince retreats to get out of his hot foam suit, and everybody's happy but the bad guys.

Now this movie has been out for a while and has a lot of fans, so I'd just like to make it clear that I enjoyed this movie. It was a nice, simple story with a nice, clear moral and everybody acting like whatever stereotype they were. The Princess actually does some thinking once she reaches the Bad Guy's lair (it's a big castle with a huge fireplace; I like to think that's what thawed her brain out). Tom Cruise, while not Oscar material, handles the role of the slightly befuddled young hero very well. Unfortunately, he spends the first half hour of the movie running about in a tunic and loin cloth ensemble that makes him look like a leftover from *Quest For Fire*. And when he does put something else on, it's only a shirt of plated mail armour. Even in the harshest blizzard, he runs about bare-legged, and that makes him impossible to take seriously. Tim Curry, or Mr. Evil, as I like to call him, plays his role as ultimate evil with the

usual villainous perfection, but is continually upstaged by his costume. This rubber armour gives him the appearance of an Adonis... but the two enormous horns on his head are easily the size of Arnold S.'s arms (there's that X laziness again) and give the impression that he's gonna fall over on his face at any second.

The direction also bears mentioning. Ridley Scott is considered by a few to be akin to a god, and this film is one of the reasons- but he has his problems. Instead of evoking sweeping panoramas and wide-open spaces, everything seems claustrophobic. Also, there's something blowing through every scene in the movie. It might be snow, or millions of rose petals, or laundry, or Lawrence Welk-ish bubbles, but there's almost always something being borne on the wind. It makes sense in places-- the laundry on the line, snow in a blizzard, and so on-- but it's usually just something that makes no sense to the scene and is there because it's pretty.

In fact, that sums up the movie. Pretty. It's brainrot, but it's beautiful to look at.

Stuff To Watch For: The pretty things that waft through every scene; Tom Cruise and the Deadhead Dwarves; the climatic scene where the Prince Of Darkness gets literally lasered; and one very interesting scene where the Hero and his shrunken entourage are thrown into a cell in the deepest part of the castle and the bubbles start blowing by again. And me without my accordion!

Minor Quibbles: The closed-in feel of the direction and the overly simplistic story.

Judgement (someone write in a better name for this section, PLEASE!): I liked it. It's a great babysitter for the eyeballs while your brain goes out for a night on the town.

Available: Everywhere.

Next Time: You won't believe it when you see *Lion Man II: the Witchqueen* and our guide to reading *Turkey Dinner!*

TRENT DRAKE

