

'Thor' lives up to legacy of Marvel Studios



By Jeremy Miller

"Thor: The Dark World" is the newest installment in the Marvel Studios franchise, and it doesn't disappoint.

The film stars Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman, Tom Hiddleston, Stellan Skarsgard, Christopher Eccleston, and the great Anthony Hopkins. The gang's all here.

Ages and ages before the rule of Odin (Hopkins), there was a civilization known as Dark Elves. They possess the weapon Aether, which turns everything in its path into darkness. Their leader Malekith (Eccleston) was plotting to turn the lights off universe-wide using the Aether. Odin's father showed up and put the kibosh on that idea, backed by thousands of Asgardian warriors.

Malekith flees, planning on seeking revenge. The all-powerful Aether cannot be destroyed so the Asgardians decide to hide it in a place that could never be found. But let's be real, if that were the case, we wouldn't have a story.



Jane (Portman) is back on Earth, waiting Thor (Hemsworth), as it's been two years since she's seen him. She stumbles across an anomaly that sucks her through a wormhole type thing and suddenly she's face-to-face with the Aether. It works its way into her body, and bam. She's back on Earth.

Meanwhile, Thor and his crew have been stomping all around the nine realms restoring peace throughout. Upon his return, he meets up with Heimdall, the mysterious and ultra-masculine badass that protects the gates to Asgard and keeps watch over the nine realms. He looks for Jane to give Thor his weekly update, but can't see her. This gives Thor the perfect excuse to break his father's rule on visitation to Earth. He beams down right as the wormhole spits Jane back to Earth. They reunite and it's as hopelessly romantic as you could imagine.

However, he quickly discovers that she's got something going on other than hormones. He decides to take her back to Asgard to check it out. Odin doesn't like that one bit, and discovers that she's full of Aether.

This awakens Malekith and he immediately attacks Asgard trying to retake his Aether and continue his plot to darken the universe. From here the battle spans from Asgard to Earth, and it's high-octane action from that point until the credits role.

It comes as no surprise (if you've seen the trailers) that Thor enlists the help of his brother Loki (Hiddleston) who's been in timeout in the dungeon since what took place in New York in "The Avengers".

The story was exceptionally well arranged; it was perfectly written to keep you entertained until the very end. Not to mention, what's a Marvel movie without the perfectly placed humor? Every character got a chance to be a little funny, and it was timed perfectly in between epic battle scenes.

The film's director, Alan Taylor, came from television directing, and you would have never guessed. The action sequences held true to the Marvel franchise, they were just as epic and awe-inspiring as those in "The Avengers". I really expected an overabundance of cheese between Thor and Jane, but they did a pretty good job of keeping it mellow while at the same time giving enough to satisfy the inner sap in all of us.

The film's crescendo was amazing. It was loud, explosive, epic and full of character driven emotion. It was everything you'd want to see in a super hero movie and as far as sequels are concerned, it's my favorite Marvel sequel thus far.

Why the close to perfect but not quite perfect rating you ask? Well, here's the deal. The plot was perfect – not too simple, not over the top – until the end. Jane and the gang play a little too much of a role in saving Earth (again) that almost lost me. Other than that, it's a very well rounded experience. Go see it; it's the kind of movie that reminded me why I love going to the movies as much as I do.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.