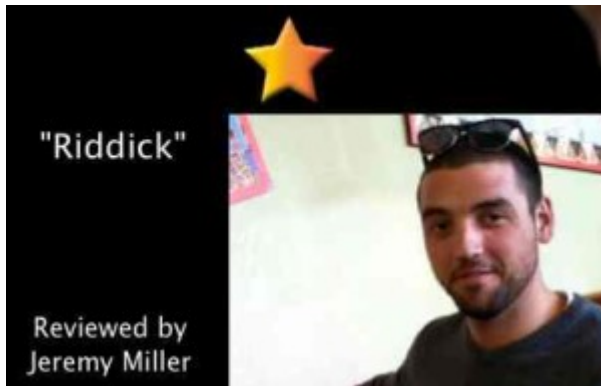


Latest 'Riddick' movie a complete disaster



By Jeremy Miller

Well here's the newest installment in the "Riddick" franchise. At the helm of course we have Vin Diesel sided by Katee Sackhoff, Jordi Molla, Matt Nable, and Karl Urban.

After being deserted by his newly adopted Necromonger pals Riddick gets back to his roots and rediscovers his more savage side in order to survive a whole new set of local beasts. After his betrayal, Riddick quickly discovers that the planet he now calls home has threats to be taken a little more seriously than he's used to.

For about half an hour of the film he gets very Bear Grylls on us as he adapts to his new turf and plans his escape. He eventually discovers a small abandoned out-post and with the help of his personally trained dog-type creature he heads out through a gauntlet of your typical sci-fi terribleness. Once he arrives, he fires up an emergency beacon, which essentially puts him on blast to anyone watching.



Before you know it two ships descend upon him. One of them is full of a more modern breed of bloodthirsty mercenaries, and the other carries a crew with an interest that stems beyond monetary gains. From there it's the typical cat and mouse that Riddick plays, taking names along the way in pretty inventive ways. He lures the mercs into his trap, as he typically does, and starts his rampage. His only intention is getting off this rock and heading home to Furya. Obviously the mercs have different plans.

Now, I was a huge fan of "Pitch Black" and "Chronicles of Riddick" wasn't terrible. I didn't see whatever it was that came in between. Either way, this one had promise. I was entertained for about an hour. As it fumbled toward an ending, I snapped out of my "Riddick is so badass" trance and realized I was watching a bunch of no name actors trying to make it tolerable for us to watch them. It got pretty rough.

No one on screen had anything to offer except for Vin, and even he struggled with delivery.

Now, here's the deal. In science fiction movies I expect a certain level of cheesiness in the script. I even settle for B-list actors who haven't really figured out how to act yet so long as the story is solid and I am entertained visually. This flick tried to hang on to the legacy but came up way short. As the plot developed, every passing minute I lost a little more interest. The last 20 minutes of the flick had me wishing I had a brand spankin' new set of Williams-Sonoma pots and pans I could use to bash my head in with.

The writers completely emasculated Riddick, not just through touchy feely dialogue, but his fight scenes and just overall demeanor. They made him soft as butter. They took a page from

Bryan Singer's "Superman Returns" and decided to take one of the all-time badasses of my generation and give him the ole snip-snip and call it quits.

If you're a fan of the first two, and you want your image of Riddick to remain the same, don't waste your time. It's extremely unfortunate that the last 20 minutes of a film could ruin it this much for me, but it did, and that's on them. Writer-director David Twohy must just be going senile, I don't know where his vision went, but evidently, it's gone.

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