The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug

In December 2012, I went to see the first of Peter Jackson’s hobbit films with an old school friend and we decided to see the next one in December 2013. Well, time flies and we almost missed it, but eventually we got around to seeing it in the local cinema here in Odense, Denmark, in February 2014.

The film entitled “The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug” lasted 161 minutes, which was actually a bit less than the first one, but still very long. Maybe that had scared the audience away? At least we were only 8 people in the audience: 5 women, 2 girls and a little boy around 5 years old despite the film being rated PG-13. I guess at the cinema they hadn’t expected the audience to consist of mostly females – at least all the cinematic trailers were for typical “guy films” like “RoboCop” and “Lone Survivor”! Oh well…

In “The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug” we get to see short glimpses of Beorn (Mikael Persbrandt) and the giant spiders, but to be honest, the film has very little to do with Tolkien’s book. In Jackson’s version, poor old Gandalf (Ian McKellen) is attacked by the orc Azog (Manu Bennett) and overpowered by a Necromancer (Benedict Cumberbatch), whose identity we had all guessed in the first Hobbit film. Furthermore, there’s a female elf, Tauriel (Evangeline Lilly), who has been created especially for this film so that she can fall in love with the dwarf Kili (Aidan Turner). A lot of the film takes place in the Laketown, by the way, and is about Bard (Luke Evans) and his family as well as his “enemies”: the Master of Laketown (Stephen Fry) and his counselor Alfrid (Ryan Gage).

Most notable is the eloquent dragon Smaug (Benedict Cumberbatch) and it’s nice seeing Legolas (Orlando Bloom) again, but Bilbo (Martin Freeman), who ought to be the main character, has almost been forgotten by Peter Jackson. All in all very little happens in this very long film and in fact it seems to be just a “filler”, getting Bilbo and the dwarves from point A to point B for the grand finale in the third and final Hobbit film.

After much thought I’ve decided that I can only give “The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug” three out of five stars: \*\*\*

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