

'Brave' Misses The Mark of Pixar's High Standards

by Eric Tiansay



Pixar's 13th film, *Brave* features the studio's first leading heroine—a Scottish princess named Merida (voice of Kelly Macdonald) who confronts tradition and challenges destiny to change her fate. Christian parents are also confronted with something they're not accustomed to with Pixar, but that's for later on in this review.

Merida is a skilled archer and headstrong daughter of King Fergus (Billy Connolly) and Queen Elinor (Emma Thompson). Determined to carve her own path in life, Merida defies an age-old custom sacred to the unruly and uproarious lords of the land: massive Lord MacGuffin (Kevin McKidd), surly Lord Macintosh (Craig Ferguson) and cantankerous Lord Dingwall (Robbie Coltrane).

Merida's actions inadvertently unleash chaos and fury in the kingdom, and when she turns to an eccentric witch (Julie Walters) for help, she is granted an ill-fated wish. The ensuing peril forces Merida to harness all of her skills and resources—including her clever and mischievous triplet brothers—to undo a beastly curse before it's too late, discovering the meaning of true bravery.

Besides being stunningly beautiful in animation, *Brave* does feature true bravery from its heroine, but it's also dark and scary (creepy bear creature) with strong, I mean strong, occult content. This is why I believe parents should be leery of taking their children, especially small kids, to *Brave*.

I took my three oldest boys (aged 11, 9 and 6) plus their 10-year-old friend to the movie's screening. Although they all seemed to enjoy the film, the boys weren't gaga over it ala

Toy Story 3 or even *Cars 2*, for that matter. "I didn't like all the witch stuff and curses," one of them said after the screening.

I'll have to agree. Since Pixar released *Toy Story* in 1995, the studio, now part of Disney, has wowed us with perhaps the best and most family-friendly films ever. I'm disappointed to say to Pixar say missed its high standards with *Brave*.

Content Watch: Rated PG for some scary action and rude humor, *Brave* features several fight scenes, involving people and scary animals, frequent sense of peril, and creepy witchcraft bit that makes the movie way too intense for some younger kids. One of my boys had a bad nightmare after watching the movie. It likely has the most occultic content in a Disney film since 2009's *The Princess and the Frog*. The not-so-nice humor primarily includes animated male bottoms (including some kilt humor) and a cleavage gag.