

# 'Guardians' Reaches for the Stars With Galactic Thrills, Humor

Move over *Star Wars*, there's a new space adventure in another galaxy far, far away, but this one has a more comedic tone.

Touted as a space opera rather than a superhero movie, *Guardians of the Galaxy* is cut in the mold of *Star Wars*, which is evoked in the movie's poster. But due to its intense violence and coarse language, the Marvel Studios flick is not appropriate for children under the age of 13.

*Guardians* tells the story of a ragtag band of misfits and mercenaries who, almost by accident, make the galaxy a safer place.

Chris Pratt plays brash adventurer Peter Quill/Star-Lord, a cocky, Han Solo-type adventurer/smuggler/thief who becomes the hunted after stealing a mysterious orb from a tomb on a forgotten planet. Ronan (Lee Pace), the all-round villainous bad guy, wants this orb to fulfill his own sinister ambitions and is willing to destroy anyone who stands in his way.

On the run from Ronan and his bounty hunters, Quill runs into Gamora (Zoe Saldana), a beautiful and deadly orphan raised from a child to be the perfect weapon; Rocket Raccoon (voiced by Bradley Cooper), an angry, battle-ready bounty hunter/mercenary who is also a raccoon; Groot (voiced by Vin Diesel), an adorably innocent tree-like humanoid; and Drax the Destroyer (Dave Bautista), a huge warrior with a very personal vendetta against Ronan.

Together, these scrappy unlikely galactic heroes squabble among themselves—yet find common ground as they are pushed into a showdown, pitting the true nature of the orb and the

danger it poses to the galaxy against Ronan's insatiable desire for ultimate power.

"So here we are: a thief, two thugs, an assassin and a maniac," Quill says. "But we're not going to stand by as evil wipes out the galaxy. I guess we're stuck together, partners."

They're easy to identify with as far as one can in a sci-fi, alien-world, comic-book movie. The film espouses loyalty, honor, friendship, conviction to a cause, generosity of heart, self-sacrifice and brotherly love.

On the downside, *Guardians* pushes the Marvel superhero-movie envelope when it comes to its dark and disturbing violence and foul language. Overall, the film has a witty and gritty tone as a rowdy and irreverent space adventure.

Hype around *Guardians* has been so high that Marvel and Disney already have announced plans for a sequel to be released in July 2017 with director/screenwriter James Gunn returning to direct.

**Content Watch:** *Guardians of the Galaxy* is rated PG-13 for intense sequences of sci-fi violence and action, and for some language. There are infrequent uses of obscenities. In one scene, Quill winds up his finger and flips the bird at the screen which reads: "OBSCENE GESTURE ALERT." There is a considerable amount of violence as well, including some impaling, but the depiction of bloodshed is light. Young Peter Quill's mother is on her deathbed in a hospital, presumably suffering from cancer. She is pale, weak and has no hair. He watches her die as he stands by her bedside, crying. Some viewers will find this upsetting. Strong caution is urged against bringing a child younger than 13 to this film.