

'The Secret World of Arrietty'—A Little Movie With A Big Heart

by Eric Tiansay



I didn't get to see *The Secret World of Arrietty* when it landed in theaters earlier this year, so my four boys—5-month old baby Blake still too small to care—were excited to catch the movie about little people.

The Secret World of Arrietty is based on British author Mary Norton's children's book series "The Borrowers," which tells the story of 4-inch tall tiny people who live under floorboards and swipe what they need from the Beans (what they call humans) upstairs.

The movie was the year's top grossing film when it was released in Japan in 2010, winning the Animation of the Year award. Translated, dubbed by an American cast and distributed stateside by Walt Disney Pictures, *The Secret World of Arrietty* was made by legendary Studio Ghibli (*Spirited Away* and *Ponyo*).

My wife, Tammy, had read *The Borrowers* to two of our older sons, Alex and Andrew, so they were obviously excited to watch the film version.

Arrietty (voiced by Disney TV star Bridgit Mendler) is a plucky 14-year-old Borrower who is eager to go on her first "borrowing" with her father, Pod (Will Arnett), on a night-time expedition into the Beans' house to get a sugar cube and one tissue.

Despite angst from her hysterical mother, Homily (Amy

Poehler), Arrietty goes with her dad, but is seen by sickly 12-year-old Shawn (David Henrie), who tries to befriend her. Arrietty (AIR-ee-ett-ee) slowly trusts Shawn. However, after they have been seen, Borrowers must leave their home and relocate to a new one. Meanwhile, the suspicious housekeeper Haru (Carol Burnett) makes it her mission to nab the Borrowers.

The movie for the most part follows the children's book, and my family was transfixed by the film, which features beautiful, vibrant animation. A little movie with a big heart, *The Secret World of Arrietty* offers kid-friendly lessons on the importance of family, consequences for choices and decisions, and sacrificial friendship.

DVD extras include the "Summertime" music video and making-of-featurette, while the Blu-ray features storyboard presentation, original Japanese trailers, television commercials and "Arrietty's Song" music video.

Content Watch: *The Secret World of Arrietty* is rated G—though younger children could be frightened by scenes of peril as the Borrowers have to be watchful of bugs, rats, cats, crows and beans. With no questionable language or messages, this movie is very safe for the little ears in your family. Even the "borrowing" is explained to be only for survival. Loving affection between different characters was prevalent, but always appropriate.