

Release Date: November 24, 2010

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# Tangled Review

Disney returns to princess fare with this cheeky Rapunzel retelling. November 23, 2010

by Jim Vejvoda

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Walt Disney Animation once again embraces traditional "princess" fare with *Tangled*, a cheeky retelling of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale, Rapunzel. In this more action-oriented musical comedy, Rapunzel (voiced by Mandy Moore) is a princess who was abducted as a baby and raised as a virtual prisoner in a remote castle by the evil witch, Mother Gothel (Donna Murphy). Rapunzel boasts 70 feet of magic, golden hair -- hair that keeps Mother from aging.

Having spent her entire life within the tower (with just Mother and the tiny, silent chameleon Pascal for company), Rapunzel is full of curiosity about the outside world. One day while Mother Gothel is away, Rapunzel is frightened by a surprise visitor coming through her window, the dashing, roguish bandit Flynn Rider (voiced by *Chuck*'s **Zachary Levi**). Flynn is on the run from his brutish former cohorts, the Stabbington Brothers (one of whom is voiced by **Ron Perlman**), after escaping with a jeweled tiara they had stolen.

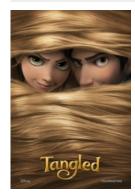
Following their meet-cute introduction, Rapunzel and Flynn make a deal. He will escort her through the wilderness to the kingdom, where she'll finally get to behold the annual festival of lights. (This festival, held on what is the unsuspecting Rapunzel's birthday, is in remembrance of the lost princess.) In exchange, Rapunzel will give Flynn back the stolen tiara she's hidden from him. SHARE THIS ARTICLE

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Tangled

Release Date: US (wide): November 24, 2010 US (limited): November 12, 2010 UK: December 17, 2010



- Disney

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Rapunzel and Flynn find themselves on the run from not only the Stabbington Brothers and Mother Gothel, but also from the royal guards (and one very determined horse named Maximus) who want Flynn in custody. As Rapunzel and Flynn grow more attracted to one another, the question becomes whether Flynn will succumb to his bad boy ways and betray her trust.

*Tangled*, renamed from *Rapunzel* seemingly in an attempt to not seem like another Disney "princess" flick aimed strictly towards girls, is a very funny, handsomely produced CG-animated toon that looks like a throwback to more traditional, hand-drawn animation but with the fluidity allowed by modern technology. Coupled with 3D, the end result is an immersive experience featuring the best of both schools of animation. Disney cartoons, though, are marked not only by their technical excellence, but also by the quality of their storytelling and characters. That's where *Tangled* is a mixed bag.

The repartee between Rapunzel and Flynn is clever and sharp, and there's good chemistry between them. Flynn is an extremely charming rogue, just pompous enough to laugh at and whose change of heart towards Rapunzel is believable and slowly earned. Mother Gothel nearly steals the show, with her overprotective tyranny being made to seem almost rational through some of her sly exchanges with the naive young princess. Mother also gets one of the film's biggest musical numbers, which Murphy nails. Genre: Animation Other Genres: Musical, Fantasy Studio: Walt Disney Pictures Language: English





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Disney vet Alan Menken once again provides the music (with lyrics by Glenn Slater). While there are plenty of catchy tunes here, none of them are as truly memorable as those in Menken's *The Little Mermaid, Aladdin* or *Beauty and the Beast*. But it's still fun stuff that allows Levi to show off his impressive pipes opposite Moore. (I can foresee *Tangled* becoming Disney's next Broadway sensation a la *The Lion King* and *Beauty and the Beast*.)

*Tangled* might not ultimately be a modern Disney classic like some of the aforementioned animated films, but it's nevertheless a lot of fun, full of humor, adventure, good music (especially the Mother Gothel number and a set-piece in a tavern full of cutthroats) and great production values. *Tangled*'s biggest drawback is the overall formulaic nature of its story, as well as its cop out ending. Those mar this otherwise fine film and prevent it from being among Disney's best contemporary toons.



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