

Not so Fantastic Four

 By [Charles Siboto](#)

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The Bridgeburners, an elite military unit of the fictional Malazan Empire, have a saying that is very apt for the situation that I find myself in. Going into something with eyes wide shut they say. In my case I went to see the new Fantastic Four reboot with eyes wide shut. I knew I wasn't going to have a good time, but I was morbidly curious to see the movie. No one likes writing bad movie reviews so I will be as nice as I can be whilst remaining sincere and you can decide whether or not Fantastic Four is worth your time from there. Well, let's jump right into it.

You have probably heard all the news doing the rounds on the interwebs concerning the squabbles between director Josh Trent (Chronicle, 2012) and the executives over at 20th Century Fox regarding the final cut of the movie that made it to screen. Trent maintains that the movie he made was ruined in the cutting room and that his vision for the movie was very different from what the audience got to see. To give Trent his due, the movie does feel a bit like something that was something else and then was cut up along the way, but whatever happened internally between the parties involved doesn't really help us much because we, the audience and fans of Marvel's long-time favourite comic book family, got the short end of the stick once again.



Quite horrid

The 2005 Fantastic Four movie and its 2007 sequel were quite horrid, but one could at least argue that they were fun and did not take themselves very seriously. This instalment feels like they were trying to set up something quite epic and that would be part of a larger franchise going forward, but somewhere along the line that vision just fell flat. The sad thing is that they really had the elements they needed to make a great movie and, in the end, everything just didn't come together to make a good product. The cast does a great job with what they are given and play their roles quite well, all things considered.

This being a reboot, the plot is loosely the Fantastic Four origins story we all know and love. Instead of getting their powers due to exposure to cosmic rays during a scientific mission to outer space they get their powers from visiting a planet in another dimension that they discover and get to by means of a Quantum Gate they build. It's the classic story of a 'sciency' group of people looking to advance humanity, but things go awry and they end up with superpowers. The government also gets involved and looks to abuse the group's powers for its own ends. You know what governments are like. Another thing that was quite a let down is that at no point in the film does the team get their superhero names. I guess they figured that they'll explore that in a sequel.



Reed Richards (Mr Fantastic) is played by Miles Teller (Divergent, 2014) and he becomes the leader of the group as well as the brains, growing up as a misunderstood science prodigy. His body acquires elastic properties, which allows him to stretch his limbs to suit his needs. Kate Mara (House of Cards, 2013) plays Sue Storm (Invisible Woman), who can render herself invisible and later project powerful force fields. Ben Grimm (the Thing) is played to perfection by Jamie Bell (Snowpiercer, 2013). I have always liked the Thing in the comics because his powers are a bit more difficult for him to deal with since he looks like a giant rock golem and they do quite good by him in this movie. Johnny Storm (the Human Torch) rounds up the team as the hothead of the group, both literally and figuratively. He can generate flames around himself and fly. Micheal B Jordan (That Awkward Moment, 2014) fits right in as Johnny Storm.

The whole concept is quite awful

On the more evil and more lacklustre side of things we have Toby Kebbell (Dawn of the Planet of the Apes, 2014) in the difficult position of portraying a horribly envisioned Victor von Doom (Dr Doom). Dr Doom is one of the greatest villains in comic books and this movie did him no justice. He looks hideous as a nightmare and the whole concept is quite awful. Fantastic Four missed many beats in that the story feels rushed, there is no real tension and everything is quite disjointed, but Dr Doom is where they went wrong the most. They took a character that should be presented with a certain gravitas and just stripped all of his personality.

Fantastic Four looks the part of a really fun and action-packed comic book movie, but sadly it is none of those things. You can still go to see the movie, but don't expect it to be good. According to the rumour mill a sequel is in the works and I honestly hope they do better with that. The world deserves a good Fantastic Four movie. Hopefully 20th Century Fox also does well with the Deadpool movie next year to keep things rolling.

ABOUT CHARLES SIBOTO

Charles Siboto is a delightful, youngish person. He firmly believes that kindness matters and cannot abide people who are asshats.

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