Rating: « out of 4

Running Time: 150 minutes

If you’re a big fan of this series of features, then you will be pleased to learn that you’ll get exactly what you were hoping for from the fifth installment, *Transformers: The Last Knight*. Sadly, this particular reviewer isn’t an enthusiast. Instead, I found that despite the nonstop action and noise, the movie wasn’t particularly exciting. In fact, it had a really difficult time keeping my attention.

As the film begins, viewers are told that there is an ongoing battle between the leftover robots and the human organization known as T.R.F. (Transformers Reaction Force). These well-armed, technologically advanced soldiers are out to capture or destroy all the transformers. Apparently, they’re doing a really terrible job because the robots appear to be just about everywhere blowing things up. This is particularly apparent within a small, blocked off area of Chicago where several pop up out of the blue. As if that isn’t enough to fill up the quarantined zone, Cade Yeager (Mark Wahlberg) comes driving in and assists Izabella (Isabela Moner), a young orphaned girl still living in the area.

There’s more absurdity when, via a lengthy flashback, we learn that transformers have been on the planet since the time of King Arthur. Apparently, during this period they created an all powerful weapon. Through time, a hidden society has kept the transformers a secret, even though the robots are revealed to have fought in and effected the outcome of all recent history’s major events. With the creator of the transformers, Quintessa (Gemma Chan), on her way from space to destroy the Earth, the heroes seek out this magic power. Of course, the T.R.F. also

want the weapon. They make a deal with evil transformer Megatron to get it for them first. He agrees, but only if they release his captured Decepticons (one of whom is in prison for a bank robbery).

Sounds pretty stupid, doesn’t it? This is just a sample of the many head-scratching elements making up the story. It is complete and utter nonsense. And in general, I’m okay with nonsense as long as it’s fun. Unfortunately, there isn’t much here that entertains. The human performances are as broad as can be (after all, they have to compete with the visual effects). And as for the Autobots, the verbal jabs are about as subtle and funny as being beaten over the head with a plank of wood. When most of the dialogue, banter and character development consists of, “I will f-you up,” and, “Let’s kick ass,” it doesn’t really matter what is happening onscreen. There’s literally no one here to relate to or cheer for.

The one thing that the movie has going for it are some impressive visuals. As expected, the special effects are quite good. Towards the climax, the characters travel to the bottom of an ocean to find a lost spaceship. The large craft’s design and appearance is striking. One can’t argue that great care hasn’t been taken with making the film look spectacular. Although if one does see it in IMAX, its appearance still manages to suffer. The film constantly changes aspect ratio from 1.43:1 to 2.00:1 with each fast-cutting shot. I can see complete scenes being filmed in different formats, but it actually becomes distracting to cut back and forth dozens of times within the same scene. As for the climactic battle, it goes on for so long that it eventually becomes tiring.

I know, everyone enjoys a different sort of popcorn entertainment and for some the impressive effects of *Transformers: The Last Knight* will do the trick. However, for me the movie is similar to nonsensically banging your head against a wall for two and a half hours; it’s loud, repetitive and just ends up hurting your brain (or at the very least, gives you a splitting headache).

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For the Sun