

“Man of Steel” by director Zack Snyder is a Hollywood blockbuster released in 2013 that tells a story of one of the most famous superheroes ever: Superman. This movie was filmed as a re-launch of the DC Comics franchise, and since it was Christopher Nolan who was the movie’s producer, many people expected the Man of Steel to be as intense and prominent as the recent Batman film “The Dark Rises.” Unfortunately, the new picture about Superman is exactly what you can await from a Hollywood movie about the immortal invincible flying guy wearing red pants over blue tights.

Superman’s story starts on his native planet Krypton. His home world is under the threat of destruction because of the politics of its leaders, who want to mine the resources out of the planet’s core. The only one who is aware of the upcoming alert is a scientist and Superman’s father Jor-El. He implants something called the Codex (which contains the Kryptonians’ gene pool) into his son’s body, and sends him to Earth. The Codex makes Kal-El—or Superman—invincible; he can only be killed with kryptonite: a metal that is not present in the periodic table. After that, Jor-El gets murdered by general Zod; the general is a patriot of Krypton who has mutinied against the rulers of the planet, and who wants to get the Codex back. He chases Superman to Earth, and this is the moment when the story ends and the tumult of visual effects starts.

In my opinion, Zack Snyder can be called a director whose films consist of roughly 60% computer graphics. “Man of Steel” is not an exception. Try to recall all the visual effects you have ever seen in Hollywood blockbusters—you will definitely find them in “Man of Steel” as well. Sometimes it even seems that a bit less of them would be just fine, but Snyder just keeps ruining skyscrapers and blowing up gas stations. With such a background, you almost stop caring about the actors starring in the movie.

And the actors are really famous: Kevin Costner as Kal-El’s stepfather, Lawrence Fishburne, Russel Crowe, and many others. To tell the truth, I think the director could easily replace these first-class stars with amateur actors, and still no one would notice the difference, because in this movie the actors’ play is not the priority at all. Man of Steel is a kind of movie that needs actors to act only like triggers that make certain events happen, thus unfolding the story. Personally, I would feel totally alright if somebody else but Russel Crowe would act as Superman’s biological father.

One of the most remarkable flaws of this movie is the absurdity of the idea of somebody fighting Superman. Actually, this is the main thing why I never understood Superman: is it really exciting to watch his adventures knowing that he cannot be caused any harm just because he is so exceptional? Even when the main antagonist general Zod announces his intention to kill Superman, it cannot really worry you: the Codex makes Superman indestructible. What’s the point of fighting then?

Zack Snyder’s Superman reminds me of Clifford the big red dog. The dog is always around, always helpful; his size makes him exceptional and able to deal with almost any problem, but at the same time causes him trouble. Kal-El is the same: among regular people he is almost a god, he is always ready to give a helping hand, but his origins and power make him uncomfortable on Earth. The movie has intense action scenes, supersaturated with visual effects; it also has many first-class actors starring in it. But it does not make “Man of Steel” outstanding among dozens of other similar Hollywood franchises about superheroes.