

**MOVIE REVIEW**



# HUMAN IN USA, MONSTER IN SEOUL

MASHIAT LAMISA

With her horribly heavy bangs and dark-coloured jackets, Hathaway plays the role of Gloria - a writer with a drinking problem who's struggling to keep it together. But there's a bigger problem out there in the streets of Seoul and somehow, it is being caused by Gloria.

*Colossal* is a bizarre, intelligent, thought provoking science-fiction film that manages to hold your attention till the very end, despite its crazy storyline. The film starts off well with a promising ground and you'd expect it to get bigger and better with time. To be fair, it does get bigger and better but I think the film had a good number of possibilities to project more on the "inner demon situation" going on with the two main characters - Gloria and Oscar (played by Jason Sudeikis). It sort of felt like the writer ran out of ideas after the intermission and managed to put together the ending with minimum effort.

Having said that, one reason why I really liked this movie is because I think it takes a lot of courage to come up with a sci-fi story like *Colossal*. It can be interpreted in so many different ways - and might even be declared downright wacky by the audience. And this wackiness is exactly why I enjoyed this movie. Beneath the layers of Gloria, Oscar, and this *monster* - I think the story is trying to tell us something entirely different. It's obvious that it's trying to touch on the fact that a small internal brawl in America can cause another city in another part of the world to undergo colossal damage. Just as people in the Western world can create a monster in some country in Asia, the same people can also destroy the monster when it's time.

The film is actually a blend of a number of genres. It tries to go heavy on comedy, but just as you expect it to be falling-off-the-couch hilarious, it turns into something extremely dark, emotional and humane. It touches on the sensitive topic of alcoholism and how it affects an individual and the people around him/her. Gloria's drinking problem is what gets her to her parent's abandoned home in first place, and it might as well be why she and Oscar turn into monsters.

The usually charming actor Jason Sudeikis did a great job of playing the character of an irrational, privileged masculine figure whose sense of entitlement is so aggravating it literally hurts. The contrast of Oscar with the strong, fiercely independent female protagonist Gloria is something I really appreciated - you and I both know how rare female protagonists are in the world of science-fiction and cinema.

*Colossal* left me with a lot of dark questions, but that's okay. I enjoyed it thoroughly on a Thursday evening with a large bowl of chips in front of me, and if that doesn't justify the accurate rating of this movie, I don't know what does.

Mashiat Lamisa believes in unicorns, flashlights and everything nice. Prove her wrong at [mashiatlamisa@outlook.com](mailto:mashiatlamisa@outlook.com)

**TV SERIES REVIEW**

# TALES OF THE ENEMIES OF ROME

FATIUL HUQ SUJOY

*History channel's "Barbarians Rising" is a 4-episode documentary drama that aired in History Channel, compiling many of the major conflicts and revolts against ancient Rome, committed by the people who Rome deemed as "barbarians". The series looks at Rome through the eyes of the oppressed barbarians and doing so pivots from the usual narrative of depicting the civilisation of Rome that is filled with politics and culture to showing the accounts of the clashes and casualties of empire expansion.*



The show's timeline spans from the ancient Roman Republic with the Second Punic War to the demise of the western part of Imperial Rome in the 5th century. The show includes a total of eight Barbarian leaders starting with the great Carthaginian general Hannibal (who is not a definitive barbarian) to historic characters like Spartacus, Boudica and more.

The show switches between historical commentary complete with narration by Michael Ealy, expert comments from historians and scholars and a classic dynamic map of the Mediterranean, and the dramatised version with the leaders as protagonists. The map was a pleasant addition to the whole commentary as it helped to understand the events in question geographically and also visualise the massive expanse of the Roman Empire.

In terms of story, there have been accusations of inaccuracy due to an emphasis on dramatisation. If you're very familiar with any of the events or leaders, then the lack of details could cause annoyance. For instance, I was a little disappointed when Hannibal's victories in Rome did not get as much attention as I had hoped. It is, of course, not possible to fit in every single event but even a montage would have been

preferable to just hearing about them. But other than that, and especially with the characters I haven't heard of before, the story was consistent, entertaining and suspenseful. So to the general audience, inconsistencies in details will not hinder the overall experience at all.

The cast did a great job as well. From the visionary and driven leaders to the vengeful barbarians, arrogant Roman generals and even the unsuspecting Roman soldiers stepping into guerrilla traps, every character helped convey the struggles and build the Roman world.

The show is no study material, as I've explained already. But it works as a great medium to learn about the side effects of building an all-powerful empire and maintaining that power, understand the struggles of the victims, and comprehend how arrogance and pride can be the doom of a near invincible realm.

Isn't that how history ought to be appreciated?

*Fatiul Huq Sujoy is a tired soul (mostly because of his frail body) who's patiently waiting for Hagrid to appear and tell him, "Ye're a saiyon, lord commander." Suggest him places to travel and food-ventures to take at [fb.com/SyedSujoy](https://www.facebook.com/SyedSujoy).*