

MST3K Recap: 1105, The Beast of Hollow Mountain



Mystery Science Theater 3000: Experiment 1105

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There seems to be an unspoken rule with some monster movies to go as long as possible before actually showing the creature. Whether in the name of building suspense, or (more likely) saving money on the effects budget, more often than not you're lucky if, when sitting down to a 50's - 60's-era monster film, you get a proper look at the thing before the third act. Much as we make fun of the Japanese rubber-suit *kaiju* movies, at least they delivered the goods. Conversely, this week's experiment, *The Beast of Hollow Mountain* (1956), is basically a western-themed Lifetime movie interrupted by a claymation dinosaur.

The episode opens with painting day on the Satellite of Love. Tom is accidentally a cubist, and Crow manages to recreate "Tippy" and the pirate from the old **Art Instruction Schools** advertisements. The invention exchange consists of an instant disco cannon that will look awfully familiar to My Little Pony fans, and a demonstration of how the *Titanic* could have been saved with a giant hot water hose. (Also, as an unrelated aside, Kinga looks really good in a captain's hat)

Basically, the movie revolves around a Mexican village where the cattle have been disappearing. Fortunately for them, there's a clean-shaven handsome white guy in town to make it all better. The town's most eligible bachelorette is in love with him, but engaged to be married to his bitterest rival. No fair guessing how that turns out. There's also father-and-son team who are there for the heartstring-tugging duty. When the dad gets offed nobody bothers to tell the kid which, you know, makes total sense. Meanwhile, the cattle (and less vital cast members) continue to disappear in a flurry of giant muddy footprints. Finally, at just over an hour in, the monster itself deigns to show up. Eventually, Our Hero lures him into some quicksand, and that's that. As cowboy-dinosaur films go, this one's pretty much the bottom of the heap. And that's saying something.

In the first host segment, the gang get to talking about their own dream monster movies. Tom, being Tom, wants to go for an arty sort of thing, a gloomy character piece about a wandering

monster just looking for someone, anyone, to terrorize. Crow, on the other hand, comes up with a brain-free summer crowd-pleaser about growing up when you're already 200 feet tall. Money quote: "*Bro-Zilla* will be the hit of the summer, creating synergy with and between all of our corporate subsidiaries!" How quickly they learn.

In the second segment, Tom presents his new fall line inspired by the movie. Crow is wearing a fetching ensemble that creams "50's Mexican stereotype", while Gypsy demonstrates that an outfit can never go out of style if it's never been *in* style in the first place. The Mads approve, though they don't care Jonah's one-button shirt. Fair warning: there *is* a wardrobe malfunction, so try not to look directly at the pasty white skin without some sort of eye protection.

The third segment is...well, see, just before it in the movie, we get treated (treated?) to one of those scenes that comes from out of nowhere, adds nothing to the story but bewilderment and confusion, then bugs off just as abruptly. It seems to be some sort of traditional festival or other--no explanation is given. Just a parade of people duded up to beat the band. Jonah & the bots speculate on how in some movies this would be a cue for a major set piece, or a plot point, or at least *something*. So in the host segment, the 'bots gad about in the weird festival costumes while the humans (Jonah & the Mads both) are slowly driven mad, trying to figure out what it all means. It's pretty funny, actually, with Max getting the best lines in this viewer's opinion.

Post-movie, the SOL gang discuss other movies that would have been improved by having the characters be eaten by dinosaurs (I'm totally with them on *Mrs Doubtfire*, btw). They then proceed to turn *My Dinner with Andre* into a dino-fueled action spectacular.

So, a low-budget monster-lite movie from the golden age of the drive-in. Right up the show's alley, in fact. Lots of good riffs here, and the tone was consistently funny throughout. Westerns don't pop up on the SOL that often, but when they do they tend to be memorable (*Gunslinger*, anyone?). The dinosaur is just the frosting on top: i.e., a thin layer plopped on at the very end full of empty calories and making your teeth ache. This one looks to be a fun one to go back and rewatch, as they really dig in to the movie's problems and let rip.

What do you think, sirs?

Kelly Luck is only amazed the cute kid didn't wind up befriending the dinosaur. Her other SciFi4Me work can be read [here](#).

