



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 20, 2010

Toy Story 3 Might Be the Best of the Trilogy

Toy Story 3 proves that with great writing and endearing characterization, success is achievable, even after 11 years. The enthralling finale to the adored series opened on Friday, June 18, to an audience of 20-somethings who remember when the first and second films came out, as well as to a new generation of fans, and in a single day made \$41 million.



The beloved *Toy Story* characters — Woody (Tom Hanks), Buzz Lightyear (Tim Allen), Mr. Potatohead (Don Rickles), Mrs. Potatohead (Estelle Harris), Rex (Shawn Wallace), Hamm (John Ratzenberger), Slinky Dog (Blake Clark), and Jessie (Joan Cusack) — are in a quagmire of sorts when they discover that their toy owner Andy (John Morris) is off to college. Even after years of not being played with, the toys are saddened to learn that their time with Andy has come to an end. Andy decides to store his childhood treasures in the attic, but the toys are accidentally donated to Sunnyside Daycare Center instead.

When the toys arrive at their new home, they are delighted to learn that they will be enjoyed by children of all ages. The veteran toys of Sunnyside appear to be warm and welcoming and immediately win the hearts of Andy's toys. Woody, however, has reservations about the daycare center and believes that his only place is with Andy. After a squabble between the toys, Woody leaves to find his way back to Andy, but his trek is interrupted when he is snatched up by sweet little Bonnie (Emily Hahn), who claims him as her own.

Meanwhile, back at Sunnyside, the toys quickly learn that all is not as it seems. Sunnyside is controlled by an oligarchy of mean-spirited toys, headed by Lotso (Ned Beatty), a teddy bear with a past full of heartache that drove him to evil. Lotso and his mean cronies administer "torture" and punishments to the toys that defy their authority. Lotso manages to turn Buzz against his friends by simply resetting his system and brainwashing him.

Woody learns of the horrors at Sunnyside from Bonnie's toys and decides he must rescue his friends. It isn't an easy feat, however, when he learns of the intricate system Lotso has in place to ensure that no toys can overthrow his regime. What transpires is an exciting adventure that will have even the adults in the audience biting their nails.

Toy Story 3 introduces some new endearing characters to an already-delightful cast, specifically Bonnie's toys and Ken (Michael Keaton), Barbie's beau. True to form, the characters with whom *Toy*



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Story fans have fallen in-love treat the audience to hilarity and heart-warming displays of love and loyalty.

Child viewers will learn important lessons, like when it is important and appropriate to accept change, and when some things are worth fighting to maintain. Barbie teaches an equally important lesson from which future American voters can learn: "Authority is derived from the governed, not through control." (Perhaps Barbie should run for political office in 2012).

On the other hand, some of the darker elements of *Toy Story 3* might have parents a bit uncomfortable, tempting them to divert their children's attention from the screen at times. The "torture" scenes are mild and mostly humorous, but the implications are certainly present. Likewise, there is a scene when Andy's toys are about to be incinerated and, believing that they are doomed, accept their fate and grab each other's hands for comfort. It is both demented and heart-wrenching, and a scene that I believe should have been edited out of the final cut.

Toy Story 3's \$41 million is a record-winning opening day for Pixar. Friday's numbers indicate that *Toy Story 3* could earn as much as \$120 million in the first weekend, and if so, will surpass *Finding Nemo*, which currently holds the record for Pixar's biggest opening weekend at \$70 million. It is an awe-inspiring cinematic experience that couples impressive Pixar technology with a profound and heart-warming plot so touching it could bring the strongest most-jaded viewer to near-tears.



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