

“Ice Age”

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“Ice Age” from 20th Century Fox is like most. It follows Manny the Mammoth, Sid the Sloth and Diego the Sabertooth, who find a human baby and try to return him to his father. They forge an unnatural relationship as they go about the task of returning the tyke.

“Ice Age,” of course, plays with the notion of evolution as its characters struggle to flee the impending ice age. With lines like, “You can play extinction later,” and sight gags like an animal evolving right in front of our eyes, there’s plenty of developing humor.

But the movie focuses on Manny, Sid and Diego to the exclusion of adequate characterization for the other animals. Too often, these other characters drop a one-liner and move on.

Nevertheless, the movie offers some memorable moments. After Manny risks his life to save Diego, Diego—who has not seen this kind of devotion before—asks Manny why he did that. “That’s what you do as a herd,” Manny says. Of course, the touching comment stands outside the “reality” of their situation, which is one where only the fittest survive.

But that’s what animation does: it anthropomorphizes animal characters. We want the animals to be more human than we are. And when they are, we’re touched.

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“Ice Age” has a good story. There’s just not enough of it to keep this feature moving along.

[Mike Parnell](#) is pastor of Burgaw Baptist Church in Burgaw, N.C.

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MPAA Rating: PG for mild scenes of peril

Director: Chris Wedge

With the voices of: Manny: Ray Romano; Sid: John Leguizamo; Diego: Denis Leary; Soto: Goran Visnjic; Zeke: Jack Black