

BY THELMA ADAMS

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Shrek the Third

The oversize ogre returns — with giant laughs

★★★★

When the king of Far Far Away dies, Shrek (voice of **Mike Myers**) is seen as the land's next leader, a job the sweet ogre does not desire — especially after his wife, Princess Fiona (**Cameron Diaz**), becomes pregnant. So he sets off, with suave Puss In Boots (**Antonio Banderas**) and dopey Donkey (**Eddie Murphy**) in tow, to find distant family cousin Artie (**Justin Timberlake**), hoping he will want to rule. The sequel offers the same fizzy, ingenious mix of silliness for kids and wit for adults that made the first two flicks click. The best example: Fiona's scenes with spoiled, selfish princesses Snow White (**Amy Poehler**) and Rapunzel (**Maya Rudolph**). Snips Snow White: "Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your golden extensions."

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Fiona tries to save her kingdom.

Shrek (left, with Puss In Boots) journeys to find Artie (right), leaving the empire at risk of a coup by Prince Charming (Rupert Everett).