



'Foul Play' brings lovable characters together in danger

If there is such a thing as a movie with a winning personality, "Foul Play" (PG) has it.

First of all, the two principals are quite endearing. Goldie Hawn minus the squeaky-voiced, dumb-blonde image of "Laugh-In," creates a warm and sympathetic character as Gloria Mundy, a librarian and recent divorcee in the classic innocent thrust by circumstances into a world of intrigue and danger.

Chevy Chase, after a stumbling start, emerges cool and likeable as a San Francisco police lieutenant who is eager to comfort and protect her.

Secondly, the movie was written and directed by Colin Higgins who wrote the cult hit "Harold and Maude" and the successful "Silver Streak." "Foul Play," like "Silver Streak," belongs to that popular genre of movie, the romantic comedy-thriller ("Harold and Maude" is in a class by itself).

THIRDLY, THE FILM selectively borrows and builds on some of the most effective idioms of suspense and adventure. The melodramatic ending of "Foul Play," a race against time to stop a planned assassination at an opera house, vividly suggests the similar climactic ending in Alfred Hitchcock's "The Man Who Knew Too Much."

Although I do not know Higgins' thinking, I suspect that this kind of conscious borrowing is done in a spirit that salutes previous masters of the medium and also invites the audience to join in the fun that comes from recognition of movie experiences we've shared.

For example, Gloria, the librarian in jeopardy, is also a film buff. And in one comic sequence, she, the popcorn-chomping movie audience, watch Gloria sitting amid a popcorn-chomping movie audience watching Alan Ladd in a '40s melodrama, "The Gun for Hire."

Gloria's real-life situation is more imaginative and bizarre than any movie she watches. She is less than effective, however, in convincing the police that her life is in danger, especially when she claims she's threatened by an albino and a dwarf.

When it's discovered that she was held captive in an apartment leased by a man named "Stiltskin," the police begin to take her seriously. The officer who takes her most seriously is Lieutenant Carlson (Chevy Chase) who likes her blue eyes.

THE FILM DOES NOT always move along smoothly and Chase's role is one of the reasons why. Initially, the humor is labored in a script which calls for him to be bumbling and klutzy. These characteristics disappear (all to the good) as the movie progresses and the comic episodes involving him depend more on repartee than slapstick.

Another hitch is Gloria's willingness to return to and enter her apartment, even when she finds the door unlocked and the memory of the last assault is still fresh. Higgins, I'm sure, has the talent to create a sense of danger without making his characters unbelievably naive.

These few deficiencies are overcome by the general excellence of the production and the performances. The supporting cast deserve honors for their distinguished characterizations: Burgess Meredith as a loyal and feisty landlord, Marilyn Sokol as Gloria's friend who is suspicious of all men, Rachel Roberts as a karate-chopping villainess, and Dudley Moore who steals numerous scenes as a symphony conductor with some kinky ideas.

Glimpses

NEW RELEASES

BAD NEWS BEARS GO TO JAPAN (PG). Scrappy action with the Bears, their scheming agent Tony Curtis and a Japanese wrestler, not to mention the ball game.

CAPRICORN ONE (PG). Haax about a space shot is the gimmick in this flick with lots of action and lots of loopholes.

THE CHEAP DETECTIVE (PG). Peter Falk and terrific cat click in Neil Simon's comical take off on the Bogart movies of the '40s.

COMING HOME (R). Powerful story of Vietnam war with Jane Fonda at officer's wife who falls in love with a wounded vet (Jon Voight).

CONVOY (PG). Kris Kristofferson leads convoy of angry truckers in movie expanded from hit record.

DAMEN: Omen II (R). The nasty kid from "The Omen" is now 13 and he's back to kill more people as the world heads for Armageddon.

THE DRIVER (R). Explores the state of the professional getaway driver (Ryan O'Neal) and the detective (Bruce Dern) who hunts him.

THE END (R). Black comedy about misadventures of an about-to-die guy. Burt Reynolds and Dom De Luise star.

F.I.S.T. (PG). Sylvester Stallone as union organizer in film that spans decades from early struggle and idealism to national strength and corruption.

GREASE (PG). Broadway musical about the funky '50s is translated to film with John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John.

HARPER VALLEY PTA (PG). You heard the song (in the '60s), now see the movie as Barbara Eden and Nanette Fabray touch the hypocrites.

HEAVEN CAN WAIT (PG). Warren Beatty's successful and distinctive remake of humorous fantasy, "Here Comes Mr. Jordan." Football player goes to heaven and returns to earth as business tycoon. Fine performances.

INTERNATIONAL VELVET (PG). Sequel to "National Velvet" (1944). The faces are new and the social relationships contemporary, but the story is an old favorite comprised of a girl, a horse and a race.

JAWS 2 (PG). Unimaging recap of original "Jaws" as another shark with a case of overbite and a taste for teens terrorizes beach resort.

REVENGE OF THE PINK PANTHER (PG). Peter Sellers is superb as the idiotic but successful Chief Inspector Clouseau. A fine addition to the "Panther" series.

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER (R). John Travolta (of Kotter's sweat-soaked) is the main man in film with plenty of disco action.

THE SWARM (PG). Killer bees wing and sting their way into the United States and assault the city of Houston. Movie by Dean of Disasters Irwin Allen.

MOVIE RATING GUIDE

- G General audiences admitted.
- PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.
- R Restricted. Adults must accompany person under 18.
- X No one under 18 admitted.

All-American gal needs versatility

So you're tired of watching beauty contests? Well, here's another one, but with a new twist.

And it's one that should appeal for entries from young attractive women who may not be great beauties but are all-around capable, particularly in athletics.

Bob Parkinson is producer of "The All-American Girl," a TV special which will air this fall. Last Plaza, Parkinson talked about the contest and described some of its unusual features.

First, it will offer the biggest money prize. Miss America gets \$15,000; Miss Universe, \$20,000; Miss U.S.A., \$10,000, but the All-American Girl will receive \$25,000 cash. She also will receive a TV and movie contract and car, he said.

THE COMPETITION will be more complex than the usual bathing suit and talent trials. Parkinson compared the contest to the board game, Monopoly, in the intricacy of its rules, but said that's what will make it more fascinating for the TV viewing audience.

In the past, Parkinson has been associated with the Miss U.S.A. contest and Miss Universe, for 11 years. He was vice-president of the corporation, which presented these shows on CBS-TV.

"I think it's a great advancement over the other types of shows," he said, about the All-American Girl.

For one thing, judges will make their choices for the finals by looking at TV tapes of the girls. The winners from 24 cities in nine categories will compete, to choose five finalists in each category.

If a girl is not "talented," she probably won't make it to the finals.

"The finalists will win by television tape," Parkinson declared. "I'm excited about that from a TV point of view, because it's never been done before."

The two-hour show will be presented on ABC-TV. Nine winners in each cate-

gory will each receive a gold-plated Olympic-like medal on the air.

THE COMPETITION is open to young women ages 18-25. They vie in five divisions: athletic, disco dancing, fashion coordination, personality projection and appearance.

In the athletic division, entrants may select one of nine areas: Skateboarding, roller skating (figure), synchronized swimming, diving figure skating (ice), gymnastics, baton twirling, waterskiing and tennis. Parkinson said the rules were complicated.

He pointed out that if Dorothy Hamill were to compete, she would undoubtedly get the highest marks for ice skating but not necessarily in the other four divisions of the contest.

He's of the opinion that a champion may not be quite as versatile as a less talented but "more well-rounded" All-American Girl.

Whether this is all just a bit of fluff remains to be seen, but entry blanks for interested young women are available at all the YWCAs, which have been cooperative, and at many discos, too.

Applications are due Aug. 21. Local contestants will compete in disco dancing on Monday, Aug. 28, at 9 p.m. in Waterford, Angie's in Farmington, Napoleon's in Plymouth, The Syndrome in Dearborn Heights and Carmen's East in Warren.

ATHLETIC competitions will be held Tuesday, Aug. 29. Water skiing is scheduled for 9 a.m. at Pine Lake Marina in West Bloomfield, figure skating (ice) at 9 a.m. at Fairlane Ice Skating Area in Dearborn, roller skating (figure) at 10 a.m. at Skate World of Troy and skateboarding at 11 a.m. at Skateboard City in Warren.

Hillcrest Country Club in Mt. Clemens will host tennis at 9 a.m., gymnastics at 10 a.m., synchronized swimming at 11 a.m., diving at 1 p.m. and baton twirling at 2 p.m.



Getting Around

By ETHEL SIMMONS

The national telecast emanate from Sea World in Orlando, Fla. Joyce Brothers is creating the personality section of the show, Parkinson said. There will be a male emcee, who has not yet been selected, overseeing "The All-American Girl."

Parkinson said he realizes this TV show may not strike a responsive chord with the viewing audience right off the bat, but he notes that a TV show "The National Cheerleader Contest" sounded dumb, yet was interesting to watch and got a 26 rating.



Producer Bob Parkinson explains what they are looking for in the All-American girl.

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