

Handsome, mustachloed Tom Selleck, with a 5 o'clock shadow, mugs his way through the film adventure "High Road to China."



the movies Louise

Tom Selleck takes to air in the style of 'Smokey' flicks

Judging from audience reaction to "High Road to China" (PG), there are large numbers of women who go into glandular overdisches the state of the sta

Bandit" with scenery and airplanes.

IT ALSO CAN BE compared with television's "Tales of the Gold Monkey" or with the light romantic convocience of the 1908, such as Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert in "It Happened One Night."

I prefer the comparison with the "Smokey" movies. Selecek and his co-star, Bess Armstrong (the newcomer among the group of married couples in "The Four Seasons"), are in a race to flod her eccentric, wandering father. Instead of a Pontiac Trans Am, we have a biplane. Instead of interstate freeways, we have serial hops across Asia.

The time is the flapper era of the 1920s, Armstrong is Eve Toccr, a millionaire socialite who will lose her inheritance unless he can find her missing father in 12 days. Otherwise, her father's partner (Robert Morley) will have him declared legally dead and will inherit the business.

Enter Selleck as ex-World War I flying ace Patrick O'Malley, He now a private pilot and flight instructor who spends more time drinking than flying.

Armstrong who is an accomplished flyer hersoif, hires O'Malley, his two biplanes and his mechanic, Struts (Jack Weston), to help her search for her father.

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THEIR ADVENTURE takes them from Turkey to Afghanistan, Nepal and China- They skirmish with a wild Afghan chief and Chinese warlords. Between these encounters, O'Mailey is boozing, posturing and generally acting like the founder of the society of male chauvinists. His characteristices, actually, are a lot like those of the Afghan chief.

In spite of continual male-fermale bickering, Tozer and O'Mailey develop a grudging affection for each other (Did anyone doubt this would happen?)

Fortunately, Armstrong gives a convincing performance of Tozer as a strong-willed and intelligent woman, even in her early scenes as a social gadabout. This helps in maintaining a balance with the burly mascullaity of Selleck, who sports a 5 o'clock shadow throughout the movie.

Theirs isn't the only romance in the movie, "High Road to China" features romance, which is of more than passing interest—the romance of flying. The aerial photography is very attractive, and the biplanes are an exciting sight as they swoop, dive and spiral through the sky.

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The biplanes are interesting relies of the early days of aviation, and their showy stunts are reminders of what it must have been like to be an aviator, a term that is disappearing from our vocabulary in an era of pilots, navigators and aviation specialists.







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