

Matthew McConaughey, Kate Hudson Feel Valentine’s Day Love in ‘Fool’s Gold’

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CHICAGO – Check off this list of stock movie characters: the broke rogue adventurer, his sensible love interest, the daffy heiress, her gruff but benign wealthy father, the evil rival, the doltish but loyal sidekick, the evil rival’s goons and the “seems to be evil but in the end turns out heroic” buddy.

These role players appear in every Cary Grant film from 1935 to 1960 along with the current release of “Fool’s Gold”.



Matthew McConaughey and Kate Hudson in “Fool’s Gold”.
Photo credit: IMDb

The buff Matthew McConaughey plays the rogue (nicknamed Finn) who is about to be divorced from his more sensible wife Tess (Kate Hudson).

At the same time, he has closed in on a historic treasure trove off the South Florida coast. It’s funded by the infamous Bigg Bunny: a scurrilous rapper who has a reputation for dispensing his rival enemies (which Finn is about to become).

After Finn’s boat sinks, he has to rely on the kindness of some rich strangers: Nigel Honeycutt (Donald Sutherland doing a Thurston Howell impression) and his Paris Hilton-esque daughter Gemma (Alexis Dziena).



Luckily, Finn's estranged wife, Tess, works on Honeycutt's yacht and this unlikely team form a coalition to beat Bigg Bunny to the treasure and the payoff.

This is actually a pretty fun adventure/romantic comedy that never takes itself too seriously (except maybe for the long lectures and clues about the background of the gold).

The screenplay works hard to make sense of all the situations and characters and for the most part does a plausible job. While the jokes fall flat sometimes, it's not for lack of trying.

The "Indiana Jones"-style adventure, which is set against impossibly gorgeous Caribbean scenery, is a great winter diversion as the colorful tones of the cinematography practically emit warm tropical breezes. There is enough background material (read: long lectures) to make the search for treasure intriguing if not sometimes exciting.



The casting and performances also uplift the material. Hudson and McConaughey have electric chemistry and are two appropriately hot lovers.

Sutherland holds together the goofy troupe with his sad rich man persona and party girl Dziena (who had a most memorable scene as Lolita in 2005's "Broken Flowers") never overdoes the dim little rich girl routine.

Add Ray Winstone for British actor credibility as Finn's rival plus Ewen Bremner as Ukrainian comic relief and all those Valentine's Day plans have a perfect movie compromise for both guys and gals.

On the other hand, perhaps it should have been titled "Buff Boys and Hot Women in Paradise," but that sounds too much like a Playboy DVD revue. "Fool's Gold" it is.

"Fool's Gold" opened on Feb. 8, 2008.

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