

Unfunny 'Tammy' is a Melissa McCarthy Misfire

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 2, 2014 - 11:53am

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Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Melissa McCarthy has jumped the shark. Or if she hasn't, she's strapped on the skis and is contemplating the ramp. Going once more to the same character well – this time with a script co-written with her husband Ben Falcone and directed by him – McCarthy shows little originality or gumption as the title character in "Tammy.."

What could have been a interesting character journey into the lower middle class wage slavers, becomes a tired exercise in "Tammy always wins" and "Tammy is super attractive once you clean her up," etc. McCarthy can't help being the hero in her own film, which is fine, if the damn thing had any laughs. Instead, it's a road trip movie with seen-it-all-before stereotypes and a waste of a superlative cast in support of Tammy's greatness. Seems to me, I've heard that song before.

Tammy (Melissa McCarthy) is having a bad day. She has been fired from her fast food job, she walks in on her husband (Nat Faxon) with another woman (Toni Collette) and has to move back in with her mother (Allison Janney in a total miscast). In such a situation, what does our plucky gal do? She starts a road trip with her grandmother (Susan Sarandon, not a grandma type).



Tammy (Melissa McCarthy) and Grandma (Susan Sarandon) are On the Road in 'Tammy'

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

The road consists of wacky adventures, including the high concept element of dragging a jet ski that Tammy has damaged on a trailer hitch. Through some long reaching circumstances, Grandma is arrested, and Tammy must rob the same fast food joint she used to work at, but in a different town. But lo and behold, Tammy's rich lesbian aunt (Kathy Bates) saves the day, and allows romance to blossom between the title character and a dude named Bobby (Mark Duplass, looking embarrassed).

So many familiar faces, who obviously owed Ms. McC some serious favors. Hell, there are three Oscar winners in the cast – Sarandon, Bates and Nat Faxon (Best Screenplay for "The Descendants") – and two former Oscar nominees, one being a former Blues Brother (Toni Collette and Dan Aykroyd). With that much credibility, the least Ben Falcone and McCarthy could have done was write a decent script, instead of a cliché ridden, high concept one with few real laughs.

The most egregious offender of the material – besides Ms. McC – was the fabulous Susan Sarandon. Okay, she may be the age to play Grandma, but she had NONE of the grandma attitude they had written for her to perform. An old lady who drinks, boy that's NEVER been done before, and Sarandon simply couldn't handle it – not that the script did her any favors. Do you think there will be an encounter between Tammy and Grandma about their past? Have you seen this movie before?

The screenplay had the feel of a list rather than a story. Road trip (check), funny vehicles (check), inappropriate drunkenness (check), wacky robbery (check), rich relatives who happen to be lesbians (hoo-ha! check). Nothing added up to any authentic story, so the laughs had to be spoon fed to the audience, and forced down like bitter medicine – nothing flowed naturally out of the characters.



Too Much Mileage: One of the Wacky Vehicles in 'Tammy'

Photo credit: Warner Bros.

The main problem was McCarthy's fear of doing something different. Here was an opportunity to create another memorable character herself, and all she – and her husband Falcone – did was rely on her other movie characters, starting with "Bridesmaids" and morphing "Identity Thief" with "The Heat." Even the dullard "Identity Thief" had a more interesting persona, and that's saying something. If her career is to continue, she needs to create better comic roles.

Here is a list of better movies to see this weekend – "Life Itself," "How to Train a Dragon 2," "Edge of Tomorrow," and if you want comedy, "Think Like a Man Too" and "They Came Together." Skip Melissa McCarthy and her ego exercise.

"Tammy" opens everywhere on July 2nd. Featuring Melissa McCarthy, Susan Sarandon, Allison Janney, Ben Falcone, Dan Aykroyd, Gary Cole, Kathy Bates, Mark Duplass, Sandra Oh, Nat Faxon and Toni Collette. Screenplay by Ben Falcone and Melissa McCarthy. Directed by Ben Falcone. Rated "R"



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