

Blu-Ray Review: Kevin James Almost Saves Inconsistent 'Zookeeper'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 24, 2011 - 12:30pm

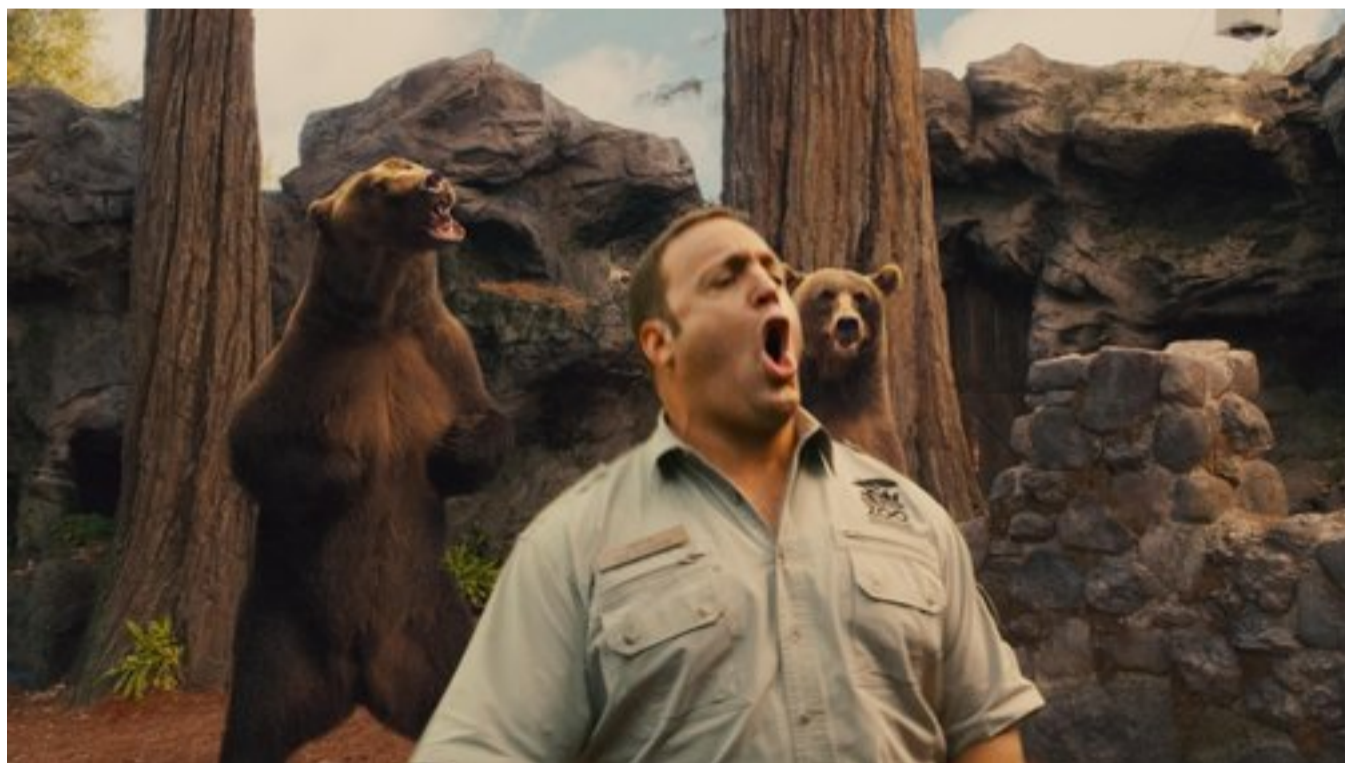
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CHICAGO – "Zookeeper" is a weird, weird movie. It was heavily advertised as a family film about talking animals but it's more of a Kevin James romantic comedy and even features some dark material about the treatment of animals. In other words, it's wildly inconsistent and sometimes just strange. Any movie that can feature a Gorilla getting a brain freeze at TGIFridays next to a standard romantic comedy love triangle next to an abuse subplot straight out of "Rise of the Planet of the Apes" is a weird, weird movie. James and Rosario Dawson are so incredibly likable that they keep it watchable but the movie just never clicks because it never picked an audience and, therefore, satisfies none of them.



Blu-Ray Rating: **2.5/5.0**

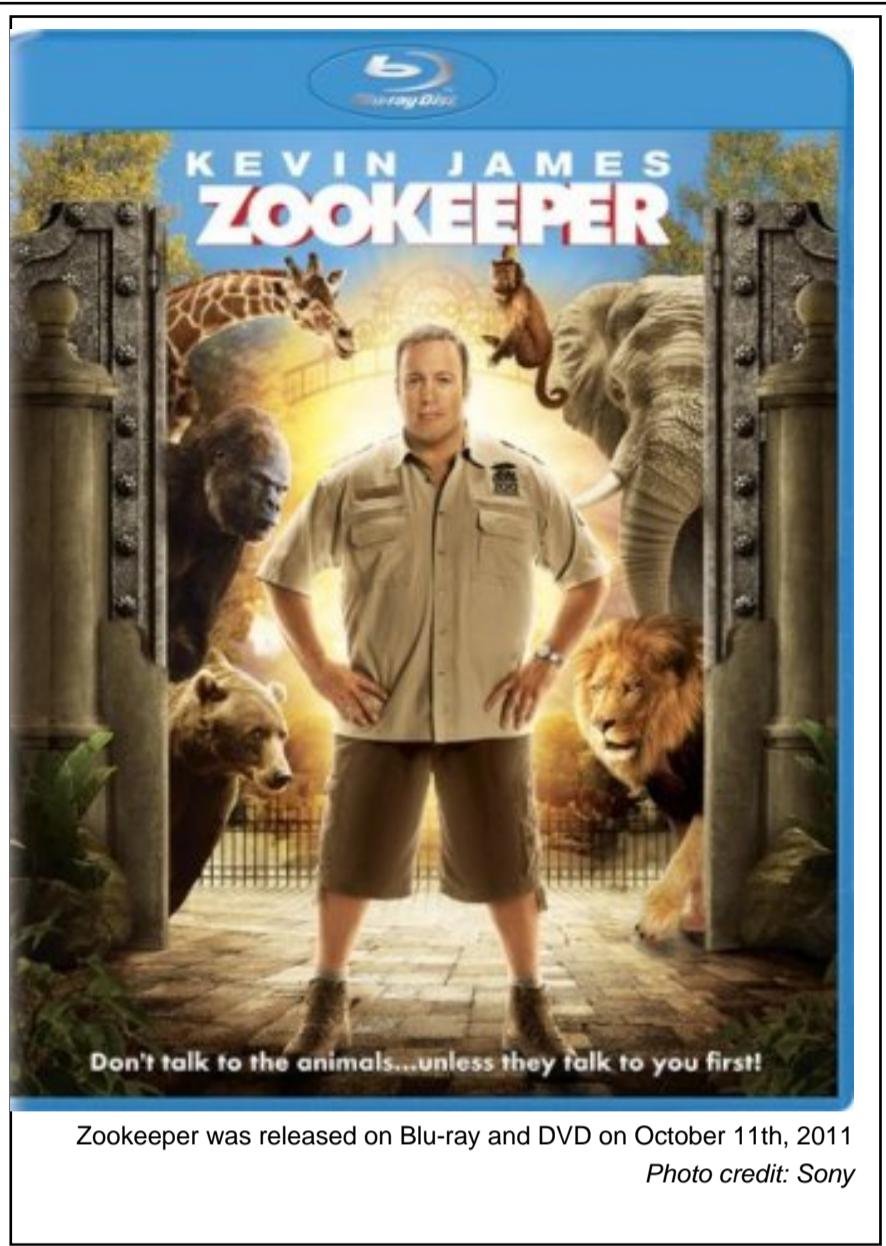
Kids will get bored every time the animals aren't talking. Parents are likely to cringe every time they do. And both will marvel that one movie can feature so many jokes that are basically riffs on "fat man fall down = funny." And yet, I didn't completely loathe "Zookeeper." James continues to prove that he's an adept comic actor who has horrible taste in scripts. While it's nice that buddy Adam Sandler has made him a fortune, James would be wise to distance himself from the producer of "Bucky Larson: Born to Be a Star" because he's just not finding the right parts. And director Frank Coraci proves, yet again, that he's just not that skilled at providing consistent entertainment. "Zookeeper" fits right in the resume of the man who gave us "Around the World in 80 Days" and "Click."



Zookeeper was released on Blu-ray and DVD on October 11th, 2011

Photo credit: Sony

The star of "The King of Queens" plays Griffin Keyes, a shy, awkward zookeeper who we are introduced to in a scene where his girlfriend (Leslie Bibb) dumps him while he's trying to propose. In other words, we are instantly meant to see this character as pathetic. Five years later, he's still struggling with losing the girl he thought was the love of his life and when she pops up on his scene again, he can't find the confidence to try and win her back. The animals at the zoo, to which Griffin has been such a loving protector, want to help their friend and so they decide to break the cardinal rule of all animals and reveal to him that they can talk. The bulk of "Zookeeper" consists of a series of odd scenes in which animals basically give Griffin relationship advice. And, of course, he never notices that the girl he works with (Rosario Dawson) is not only one of the most beautiful women alive but could actually be interested in him.



Who did they make "Zookeeper" for? I could never quite figure it out. There's WAY too much relationship stuff, including an embarrassing series of scenes with Joe Rogan as Griffin's main romantic competition, for the kids to not get bored. And self-respecting adults won't be entertained by most of the animal banter, including scenes voiced by Nick Nolte, Adam Sandler, Cher, and Sylvester Stallone. It's one of those films that even non-critics will instantly know was written by five people. It's just too much of a weird mess of styles and genres to have come from one person. Films this inconsistent were always made by committee.

And yet James and Dawson are two actors who I wish would appear in better material more consistently. At least we can be grateful that "Zookeeper" didn't do quite well enough to justify a sequel and that now these two stars can find something more worth their talents.

Special Features:

- o Laughing is Contagious - Bloopers Reel
- o Bernie the Gorilla
- o The Furry Co-Stars
- o Creating the Visual Effects - The Animals
- o Deleted Scenes
- o The Cast of Zookeeper
- o Behind the Stunts
- o Be The Bear
- o Playable PlayStation 3 Game Demo of Ratchet & Clank: All 4 One
- o BD Live Enabled
- o movieIQ+sync

"Zookeeper" stars Kevin James, Rosario Dawson, Leslie Bibb, Joe Rogan, and the voices of Nick Nolte, Cher, Sylvester Stallone, Jim Brewer, Jon Favreau, and Adam Sandler. It was directed by Frank Coraci. It was released on Blu-ray and DVD on October 11th, 2011.



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