



True Grit is a Coen brothers remake of the 1969 John Wayne classic. I haven't seen the original, but my father who also attended this screening had, and just like me, he truly enjoyed this film. While the trailers make much of Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon, and Josh Brolin they fail to introduce the jaw dropping talent of Hailee Steinfeld. Steinfeld is powerhouse who drives the movie along as Mattie Ross, the determined, revengeful, lightning smart, irrepressible teenage daughter of a father murdered by Josh Brolin's The Coward Tom Chaney. Aware of that people will not take a fourteen year old girl seriously, Mattie never gives up until she gets what she wants and floors everyone with her keenly focused determination. A sharply written and entertaining scene where Mattie bargains with the very talented Dakin Matthews (as Col. Stonehill) cements the elements of Mattie's character.

Mattie is determined to find The Coward Tom Chaney and see him dead for what he did to her family. After securing a large sum of money from Col. Stonehill, she attempts to procure the services of the meanest U.S. Marshall in town, Rooster Cogburn (Jeff Bridges). Jeff Bridges turns in an incredible performance as the grizzled, whiskey soaked, trigger happy, but highly successful Cogburn. Just as everyone else has, Cogburn dismisses the teen's desires (calling her "little sister"). Even Texas ranger LaBoeuf (Matt Damon), who is after Tom Chaney for crimes committed in Texas, tries to intimidate Mattie into going home & giving up. She bests him with her wit and unvarnished opinion until he leaves frustrated. LaBoeuf and Rooster team up and attempt to send Mattie home to mother and find Chaney on their own, but she proves her mettle and courage to the both of them.

Damon does fantastic job as the stubborn and righteous LaBoeuf. Just as determined to find Chaney as Mattie is, he lets nothing stop him and will use every advantage he can find. He spends half the movie with a heavy lisp due to previous injury, but this does not dampen his performance. I believe this really some of Damon's finest work. Not only is his dedication evident, but it is also clear that he relishes the role.

True Grit serves up a dramatic, sometimes gruesome, surprisingly funny 128 minutes of western adventure, chase, & desperation. Do not be surprised when (NOT "if") this movie and its actors win awards for their excellence. The Coen brothers have made fast paced, smart film that doesn't tire or bore with incredible characters and beautiful vistas stocked with even fiercely talented and committed actors.

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