



BOTTOM LINE:

A messy script, mediocre acting and a huge lack of respect for the original story, Red Riding Hood is an absolute failure in cinema.

We all have our favorite fairytale classics we keep so close to our hearts. Even if we don't especially love them, we can recite the story well enough as common knowledge. Whether it's Rapunzel, Humpty Dumpty or the Three Little Pigs, they are all considered classics. But what happens when Hollywood decides to revamp a fairytale into a hip, teen-friendly Hollywood picture?

Director Catherine Hardwicke (Twilight) tries her luck with a new version of the classic fairytale, Little Red Riding Hood, simply calling it Red Riding Hood. As expected from dropping "little" from the title, Red Riding Hood is replaced with a teenage girl named Valerie (Amanda Seyfried). Valerie spent her whole life in a village known only by its' animal infestation problem: the wolf. With the villagers offering animal sacrifices every night, the wolf hasn't attacked a human in 20 years. Until now. When Valerie's sister is murdered, the town calls in Father Solomon (Gary Oldman) to help bring down the wolf. However, Solomon has news for the town when he announces that they're not just dealing with a wolf, but a werewolf. With the village in complete panic, Valerie begins to question if her friends and family are who they say they are. Could it be her planned fiancée' Henry (Max Irons)? Her childhood sweetheart, Peter (Shiloh Fernandez)? Or maybe even her own Grandmother (Julie Christie)?

Let me preface this: This movie is terrible. Absolutely terrible. Catherine Hardwicke leaves plenty of room to recognize the similarities between Red Riding Hood and Twilight. Hell, the fairytale was changed to almost an exact replica of the Twilight story. Let's look at the facts: Valerie is torn between a forbidden bad boy or a boy who is respected by her family. One of the boys might be a werewolf. The soundtrack is also way too similar, with a hip band playing dark instrumentals while a female vocalist sings about isolation. It's almost unfair to call Red Riding Hood a revamp more than just a completely different story. But regardless if a film is different from its' source material, it can still be enjoyable if the film is treated with respect. This film is not.

The acting is at Catherine-Hardwick-Level. What I mean by that is that the acting isn't exactly good or bad but more of a prolonged sense of mystery. Examples being: "Who is this boy? Why am I so attracted? How come nobody gets me but the bad boy?". Just awful. Amanda Seyfried, along with the majority of the cast, just puts her acting clutch in the neutral position and rides it out through the entirety of the films' runtime. The only actor to bring something to the table is the always reliable, Gary Oldman. From his love for Shakespeare to his excellent portrayal of Commissioner Gordon in the Nolan/Batman series, Oldman is always a sure thing. Whenever on screen, Oldman demands attention with his intimidating demeanor. Quite frankly, he's the man. As Father Solomon, his lack-of-character is met with Oldman realizing that this is garbage and rides it out, clearly acknowledging the quality of the script. Since he grabs a hold onto this "fairyfail" of a train wreck, he stands out as the only semi-redeeming quality of Red Riding Hood.

The script is painfully terrible and almost unbearable. The only thing stopping the script from being apparent garbage is that Hardwicke covers up flawed logic with decent conversations, leaving audiences with this sort of reaction: "Oh wow, that was some good dialogue. This film makes total sense. Oh wait, the wolf can talk but only to Valerie. This sucks". The writers of Red Riding Hood attempted to be clever by adding in memorable lines from the classic fairytale. These attempts are ruined by the fact that they make

Absolutely.

No.

Sense.



And I'm not just overreacting. With screenings like this, some people just shake their heads and walk away while others stand around and discuss what they truly enjoyed from the presentation. I do not joke when I say that every person I passed while exiting the theater was laughing at how terrible Red Riding Hood really is. (Side note: For a big laugh, pay attention when the wolf asks Valerie about "the rabbit"). Never have I seen a film that was so widely unaccepted by such a large audience.

A messy script, mediocre acting and a huge lack of respect for the original story, Red Riding Hood is an absolute failure in cinema. So, 2011, I give you our first runner-up for Disaster of the Year: Red Riding Hood!

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