

Movie Review: 'Made of Honor'

by Nina Garin

It's only natural to make the comparison between Patrick Dempsey's "Made of Honor" and Julia Roberts' "My Best Friend's Wedding."

Both movies are about boy/girl best friends who don't realize how much they love each other until one of them gets engaged.

'MADE OF HONOR' - When his best friend asks him to be her maid of honor, Patrick Dempsey accepts - but only so he can woo the bride-to-be and attempt to stop the wedding before it's too late. CNS Photo courtesy of Peter Iovino. RATINGS

4 STARS - Excellent.

3 STARS - Worthy.

2 STARS - Mixed.

1 STAR - Poor.

0 - Forget It (a dog.) In 1997, Roberts was the anguished "best man" who watched Dermot Mulroney marry Cameron Diaz. Now, in the post-metrosexual age, Dempsey is the maid of honor for his gal pal, Hannah.

Dempsey plays Tom, a Casanova with a mean streak who can only say "I love you" to dogs. He and Hannah have one of those flirty platonic relationships. They eat dessert off each other's plates. They take sunset walks in Central Park. But that's it.

Michelle Monaghan is delightful as Hannah. She's smart and beautiful and has excellent taste in clothes. In real life, there's no way she would be friends with someone as self-centered as Tom.

But this is a romantic comedy, and in romantic comedies anything can happen. Like how Hannah goes to Scotland and meets her fiance when he rides up on a horse. A horse! Because girls love horses!

Tom agrees to be Hannah's maid of honor and, suddenly, the plot becomes very familiar - not just like "My Best Friend's Wedding," but like a mishmash of every romantic comedy ever written.

There's the supportive group of friends. Tom's lackluster buddies seem as though they're only there to provide male audiences with some basketball scenes.

Hannah's friends have more sass, especially Melissa, played by Busy Philipps, who gets the film's best lines.

And where would any romance comedy be without eccentric family members? Like a racy grandmother or an aunt with a thick Scottish accent? A crazy bachelorette party? And best of all, tearful proclamations of love?

Oh, it's all here.

Maybe because Dempsey is universally known as McDreamy from "Grey's Anatomy" the movie has the coziness of a TV show. Dempsey has lots of toothy charm, and it's only magnified on the big screen.

He has genuine chemistry with Monaghan. They're fun to watch, even when they don't have scenes together. So it's easier to forgive things that would normally be annoying, like all that physical comedy.

As the movie unfolds with its gorgeous scenes of New York and Scotland, it becomes more clear that "Made of Honor" isn't like "My Best Friend's Wedding" at all.

No, with its easy predictability and super obvious plot, it actually has more in common with another famous boy/girl pair of best friends: Ross and Rachel from "Friends."

"Made of Honor." Running time: 1 hour, 41 minutes. Rated: PG-13. 2 1/2 stars.

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