

# ROCKETEER

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more than just the damsel in distress.

Timothy Dalton is Neville Sinclair, a Hollywood matinee idol a la Errol Flynn who is secretly a Nazi. He tries to use Jenny to get to Cliff and the jet pack. The audience knows this guy is a sleaze from the beginning, but the other characters don't catch on to until later. Dalton is suitably nasty.

The stunts in this movie are great. Director Joe Johnston, whose only previous feature was the special effects bonanza *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*, seems as comfortable in the air as on land.

At times, the aerial scenes put the audience in Cliff's perspective. On the big screen, these work great.

Some will complain that the movie is too simplistic in both plot and morality. For example, the supremely bizarre Howard Hughes is portrayed as no more than an extraordinarily rich man.

But simple is exactly what this movie wants to be. Even the film's gangsters, when they find out they have been working for a Nazi, turn against him, saying, "We may be crooks, but we're Americans, through and through!" It's this kind of gleeful flag-waving innocence that many viewers will find so appealing.

My one complaint with this picture is that for a movie with so little plot, the characters talk too much. The movie is exciting, and it has a good share of action, but I would have liked even more.

All the actors seem to have a clear idea of what the film set out to be. The plot is functional but not terribly imaginative. Perhaps that will change in the inevitable sequels. As an origin story, it's effective and exciting.

If watching movies has become a chore for you, with complex morality plays and plots that twist and turn like a screw, see *The Rocketeer*. It tries to be fun, and it is.

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