

“Let Him Go”

By Helen Lutz

“The plane, the plane!” Years ago, when Ricardo Montalban and Hervé Villechaize hosted the weekly TV series about the fulfillment of vacation fantasies on “Fantasy Island,” we learned to be careful what we ask for since we just might get it.



George and Margaret Blackledge, played by Kevin Costner and Diane Lane, are grandparents living on a ranch in Montana with their son James (Ryan Bruce), his wife Lorena (Kayli Carter) and their infant grandson. Just one, big, happy family – or is it? Margaret falls into the category where no woman will ever be good enough for her son. We see some tension as mommy goes to give baby a bath and grandma butts in; ‘the water is too hot’ with a scornful look.

Not far into the start of the film, James finishes his breakfast and heads out on horseback to check the fence. A riderless horse returning to the house is never a good sign. George rushes out looking for James only to be heartbroken finding him dead after a horrible riding accident.

The story jumps ahead three years when we are guests at a small, civil marriage between Lorena and Donnie Weboy (Will Brittain). We sense that things are not quite right. Perhaps Lorena has had her fill of Margaret not having had James around to support her and needing an escape. One bad decision leads to another as Lorena and James move into an apartment in town taking their son with them. While in town, Margaret spies Lorena and Donnie having a disagreement on the sidewalk over a dropped ice cream cone. She also watches as Donnie strikes both Lorena and the boy. Time to worry.

Margaret decides to pay the couple a visit when she discovers their apartment empty – no forwarding address and the story begins to speed up. Loading up the family station wagon, she is bound, set, and determined to find her missing grandson; of course, retired sheriff George is welcome to tag along. He asks her if she is serious enough to carry out her mission, she is unstoppable.

The second half of the story takes us along for the ride with Margaret and George as they look for clues as to the whereabouts of their grandson. Those clues take them across state lines introducing them to a wicked Weboy clan headed by the meanest grandma matriarch I have ever seen, Blanche Weboy (Lesley Manville). It is during this second half of the movie that Margaret and George must determine just how badly they want to retrieve their grandson and at what cost. We never know just where the notorious Weboys may show up and how much fingers are worth.

“Let Him Go” starts out slowly and picks up speed during the road trip and meeting the Weboys. It is a pretty wild ride. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Let Him Go” TWO ½ HARTS. Costner and Lane are good, but Manville – Mama Weboy – steals the show.