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New York Times Review

Cast, Credits & Awards

Readers' Reviews

MOVIE REVIEW

Fate Is the Hunter (1964)

Screen: 'Fate Is the Hunter' Opens:Film of Plane Crash at Local Theaters Glenn Ford Is Starred With Nancy Kwan

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By BOSLEY CROWTHER
Published: December 10, 1964

"FATE Is the Hunter," which opened at the Palace and other theaters yesterday, is a film you may be sure will never be shown as an in-flight diversion in commercial planes. And it might be better for airline travelers if they never see it anyplace. For not only is it about the crash of a commercial plane, in which 53 are killed, but it also makes airplane travel look more chancy than taking a rocket into space.

What is the cause of the accident that is shown at the start of the film? That is what airline vice president Glenn Ford is determined to find. Had the pilot, Rod Taylor, been drinking, as reporters have heard and suspect? Mr. Ford is convinced his wartime buddy is blameless in this respect.

So, for the rest of the picture, he diligently snoops and pries, interviews various people, such as the pilot's fiancé, Nancy Kwan (who can come up with nothing more revealing of the pilot than the interests she shared with him in metaphysics and tropical fish), and two other wartime buddies, Mark Stevens and Wally Cox.

Finally, in a test flight simulating the take-off of the ill-fated plane. Mr. Ford makes the dismal discovery (which is heavily hinted at early) that the accident was caused by a cup of coffee spilling over an instrument box and short-circuiting some critical wiring.

Man, that's coffee! But it's a stupid, annoying film.

Also on the bill is a clinker of even lower degree, "Back Door to Hell."

FATE IS THE HUNTER, screenplay by Harold Medford, based on the book by Ernest K. Gann; directed by Ralph Nelson and produced by Aaron Rosenberg; presented by 20th Century-Fox. At the Palace Theater, Broadway & 47th Street, and other local theaters.

Running time: 106 minutes.

McBane Glenn Ford

Sally Fraser Nancy Kwan

Capt. Jack Savage Rod Taylor

Martha Webster Suzanne Pleshette

Guest Star Jane Russell

Bundy Wally Cox

Ben Sawyer Nehemiah Persoff

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