
Breakfast at Tiffany's Movie Review

Film Critique: Breakfast At Tiffany's

Blake Edwards' Breakfast At Tiffany's left a lasting impact on film and pop culture with its release in 1961, from the immediately recognizable ballad, "Moon River," to the leading lady and now fashion icon, Holly Golightly, played by doe-eyed Audrey Hepburn. To many people who have never seen the film, the protagonist is pictured as a classy socialite living an ideal, romantic existence. However, upon viewing Breakfast At Tiffany's, one can see just how flawed and troubled Hepburn's character truly is.

The famous '60s film was adapted from Truman Capote's novel of the same name, but was met with mixed reviews due to its straying from the original storyline. Capote's novel – filled with everything from a homosexual leading male character to an unglamorous, not-so-happy ending – was a simple story of one character, our nameless male protagonist, sharing the tale of another, Holly Golightly. Hollywood, however, would much rather see a sweet romance with a satisfying happily-ever-after. The story centered even more around the glamorous Golightly, while the nameless homosexual protagonist and writer was transformed into the dashing love interest of Holly, Paul Varjak (George Peppard). Although the movie sacrifices elements from the novel, it gains the Hollywood appeal that can still be felt today.

The story of Holly Golightly is one of excitement and glamour on the surface, but as the story progresses, we see underneath the shiny exterior to the broken young woman who is only afraid of herself. No one character in Breakfast At Tiffany's is without flaws (except perhaps Cat, Holly's pet), which brings an aspect of believability to the wide variety of characters. Paul Varjak spends the first half of the film as a paramour to a married woman, Holly's former husband Doc Golightly lives in a constant delusional desperation, and José da Silva Pereira – Holly's Brazilian promise for a new life – is revealed to be a coward who cares more about his image than he does about Holly. All of these people bring a sense of humanity to this piece of fiction, creating likable and relatable characters.

The choice of Audrey Hepburn for Holly Golightly was met with dislike from everyone from Truman Capote to general audience members. Hepburn had only played innocent, girlish roles before Tiffany's. Therefore, many people could not see her as this character who uses men for their money and even assists in drug trafficking. Hepburn, however, does undeniably bring that sense of sophisticated glamour that the role of Holly calls for, making herself into the fashion icon that she is today.

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Famous composer Henry Mancini provided original music for Breakfast At Tiffany's, most notably the hit, "Moon River," which was written specifically for the film. Ironically, this signature song was almost removed from the film but remained by request of Hepburn. From the opening shots of an unusually quiet New York City morning, "Moon River" is heard, setting a sweet tone for the length of the entire film. Mancini's various compositions throughout the film act as a vessel, carrying the tale of Holly Golightly through the carefree and exciting atmosphere of '60s New York City.

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