

SYNOPSIS

“RAISING FLAGG” is a zany comedy-drama about a small-town handyman, Flagg Purdy (**Alan Arkin**), who calls himself a man of principle – though he often can’t remember which one. In one of his best comedic performances since the 1979 madcap blockbuster, “The In-Laws,” Arkin’s Flagg Purdy ekes out a living doing odd jobs for his neighbors while his wife Ada (**Barbara Dana**) sells cage-free chicken eggs.

Lovable but stubborn to the core, Flagg is easily overwhelmed by life’s little annoyances. Only Ada is able to look past his crusty personality to the tender and vulnerable side of the father of their six children. Unfortunately, few of their eclectic clan share her feelings.

Ann Marie Purdy (**Glenn Headly**), the popular radio talk show hostess “Ann Marie, no PhD, just common sense Purdy,” hasn’t spoken to her demanding father since escaping from him by eloping with a used car salesman.

Rachel Purdy (**Lauren Holly**) bills herself as “the spiritual real estate agent” and drives clients around in a late model Mercedes selling subdivision houses built on prime farmland – no doubt to annoy Flagg.

Eldon Purdy (**Matthew Arkin**) is a minister who travels the countryside on a BMW motorcycle but rarely visits his agnostic father.

Travis Purdy (**Daniel Quinn**), the brooding second son, defiantly sports a pony tail and – to Flagg’s chagrin – leads a hippie lifestyle selling composting worms.

Jenny Purdy (**Stephanie Lemelin**), still in high school, is counting the days until graduation and freedom.

Flagg and his neighbor Gus Falk (**Austin Pendleton**) have been dogged competitors since childhood, and their feisty relationship is still filled with eruptions – Flagg always the instigator.

The latest flair-up occurs during one of their weekly checkers games when Flagg accuses Gus of cheating. The conflict escalates when Flagg awakens to the sound of bleating sheep relieving themselves next to the pump house that supplies the Purdy drinking water.

“You know what woke me this morning?” Flagg demands, as he storms through the door of Gus’ general store. “Your zest for life?” Gus retorts sarcastically. “Your sheep pissing on my pump house,” Flagg shouts. “I always said you’ve got remarkable hearing for your age,” Gus responds, with a mischievous grin. “You never told me you were going to graze sheep there,” Flagg steams. “I guess I forgot to mention it, but since it’s my pasture and my well, I figure I can graze elephants there if I want,” says Gus, obviously enjoying Flagg’s frustration.

So Flagg resolves the matter in typical American fashion: he sues. It gets him the justice he wants, but at a price he wasn’t prepared to pay. The neighbors are outraged when Flagg wins the case on a technicality, and they refuse to hire him for odd jobs. His youngest daughter is harassed at school, and Gus succumbs to pressure and quits selling Ada’s eggs. The final blow comes when Flagg is accused of being just like his father, a difficult, self righteous man for whom Flagg has only bad memories.

Devastated by community ridicule, Flagg climbs into bed and refuses to leave it – insisting he’s about to meet his maker. “Call the children, I want to say goodbye,” he tells Ada. She is too wise to fall for the charade, but she goes along with the it.

The Purdy offspring reluctantly descend on the family farmhouse for the “final rites” – several of them returning home for the first time in years. Their doubts about Flagg’s condition generate several plots to raise him from his “deathbed,” but the humorous failures only serve to stir long simmering resentments and sibling conflicts.

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