

Money Monster



Holy workplace violence!! *Money Monster* is a riveting story about what happens when corporate greed is confronted upfront and personal, live on primetime television. George Clooney plays Lee Gates, host of a popular financial advice program. His on-screen antics should have made it clear about how seriously to take his investment tips. However, Gates considers his recommendations generally reliable and is stunned when his studio and everyone in it is held hostage by Kyle, (well played by Jack O'Connell) a low-wage earner, who has lost everything by following a tip given by Gates on his show aptly called *Money Monster*.

Kyle represents the everyman in all of us who lives paycheck to paycheck and needs to

understand how hundreds of millions of dollars could disappear in an instant from one single company. How many lives have been ruined by making the wrong investments? In this case, the answers are more complicated than you might think. The story unfolds in Stockholm-syndrome fashion as we learn more and more about the behind-the-scenes manipulations that created the stock price crash that led to this desperate act of vengeance. This creates a bond between two men who are caught up in the same web of lies and deceit.



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The way out of this mess is not simple. Nothing seems to work and time is running out. There is a vest set to explode, a hostage negotiator and police sharpshooters at the ready. But none of this is the right thing for this situation. It falls on Gates to figure it out and give Kyle what he demands—the truth. When it comes, it takes a toll on everyone and reminds us of the need to be cautious about who to trust.

The issue is not the loss of money, the ruin of a career or the risk of innocent lives, but rather the callous and indifferent attitude of the investor (Dominic West) who thinks nothing of manipulating the system for personal gain. He has nothing but self-interest.

Julia Roberts plays Patty, the show's producer, who is with Gates every tense step of the way. As Lee's public persona disintegrates, we see that behind the showman is a decent man willing to put himself on the line in service of the truth.

The movie is really about taking stock of your life and making the type of choices that, in the end, will matter to you and to those you love. *Money Monster* gives Clooney and Roberts another chance to show how well they work together. In an age when more and more news stories are about violence in the workplace, *Money Monster* also reminds us to be prepared for the possibility. I give *Money Monster* three-and-a-half tickets.

