

Turkish Delight What A Treat

Tomorrow, the young summer blockbuster season will continue with the second installment of *The Chronicles of Narnia* series: *Prince Caspian*. I was really excited three years ago when [*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*](#) was brought to magnificent life on the big screen. I was introduced to the marvelous fantasy world in the fourth grade when our teacher read the entire 7 book series to the class. The first movie was an extremely faithful imagining of C.S. Lewis' novel. It tells the story of the four Pevensie children who are sent to live with an old professor during World War II. While there, the four children discover a magic wardrobe which leads them to a world in which animals speak and magic is all around. Narnia is under the spell of the wicked White Witch. Only two sons of Adam and two daughters of Eve can break the spell of endless winter... always winter but no Christmas (that would seem to change with the appearance of a gentleman dressed in red riding in a sleigh). Along with several mythological creatures including the omnipotent lion Aslan the great, Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy attempt to restore the magic kingdom.

Along with the excitement and wonder present in Narnia. There are several religious undertones: the Adam and Eve connection, a resurrection, and betrayal (although it is for a treat called Turkish Delight and not 30 pieces of silver).

Prince Caspian picks up one summer later in "Earth time." However, once the Pevensie children return to Narnia, 1000 years in the magical land have passed.

If you have not experienced the world of Narnia for yourself and you enjoy a great fantasy movie or book, treat yourself to this truly magical world.

[Chronicles of Narnia](#) tickets on sale now!



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OPA!

Good news from our date night this week – we found a new restaurant in a neighboring town that has good gyros! Finally, no more trekking to Toledo or further just for gyros off the spit! And for you Greek food fans, stay tuned because we are currently trying to convince the owner to offer Saganaki, another one of our favorites in Greek cuisine! He said it's a difficult thing to carry since many waitresses won't serve it because of the fire involved. Yes, I said fire! For those of you who are unfamiliar, Saganaki is a greek dish made of sheep or goat cheese, and they bring it to your table, splash brandy on it, yell OPA! and light it on fire. A large flame erupts, the entire restaurant turns to stare at you, children cry, they extinguish it with lemon juice, and then the other restaurant patrons begin asking questions – what is that? Is it safe? What does it taste like? Can I have some? One time we ordered it from a restaurant and 3 more tables ordered it after seeing ours! It is DELICIOUS! Just for fun, here is a video of a waiter serving it, though he begrudgingly *mumbles* opa while he's really supposed to be yelling it while smiling.

My 8-year-old daughter can eat a whole Saganaki appetizer herself. She is part Greek, of course, but the stuff is that good. It is my dream to get to Greece someday to try actual Greek food – if I ever had the babysitter, time, and money, it might just be enough (along with heavy sedatives or alcohol) to get me back on a plane...

Now onto the movie, I've been wanting to see the movie [Baby Mama](#) since I'm expecting and it looked like a cute comedy based on pregnancy – dumb title though I have to say. For some reason, our local theater didn't have it until now, so we finally got to see it. It actually wasn't quite as funny as it looked in the previews, but it did have a better plot and better acting than I was expecting – it did not disappoint. [Steve Martin](#) was hilarious as a very hippy-ish owner of a large company; I would consider his character the CEO of the Walmart of organic food. My favorite gag in the movie happened when [Amy Poehler](#) and [Tina Fey's](#) characters were fighting in the car and Amy Poehler's character couldn't get out of upper-class Tina Fey's "space car". So Tina Fey's character goes, "Quit touching the door handle while I'm trying to unlock it for you!" That is hilarious, I can't tell you how many times that's happened to us that the car door won't unlock while an impatient person is touching the handle. Whether you like comedies about pregnancy or just feel like watching one, I would recommend Baby Mama.

Did You Say MacGuffin Or McMuffin?

Perhaps in an attempt to cash in on the Indiana Jones craze sweeping the nation (not to mention this blog), a treasured

crystal skull was stolen from a New Age store in Claremont, California.

[Hunt for the Crystal Skull Begins Early](#)

Let me just point out that I was nowhere near California on the date in question.

Perhaps authorities should begin by questioning the ~~two~~ three young men (?) responsible for grave robbing to retrieve a skull to use as a bong. I was surprised to learn of the laid-back nature of the store. Although they have never had any trouble with shoplifting in the past, it would seem that such a high profile item would draw considerable attention. As with the MacGuffins (the Ark of the Covenant, Sankara stones, and the Holy Grail) used in the previous 3 Indy adventures, the crystal skull does have its basis in reality perhaps just not as widely known as some of the others.

Skip the lines. [Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull](#) tickets on sale now!



Gump in Iraq

In my previous post, I touched on “Where are they now?” when

it comes to celebrities. I read an interesting article the other day about the “kid” who played young Forrest in [Forrest Gump](#), one of my favorite movies. [Michael Conner Humphreys](#) is now a 23-year-old young man who is currently serving in the army like Forrest Gump did in the movie, ironically enough. Another twist of irony – in the movie, a young undiscovered Elvis Presley teaches young Forrest how to dance, and Michael Conner Humphreys served in the same place that Elvis did in Germany when he was in the army! Humphreys joined the U.S. Army in 2005 and is currently an infantryman assigned to a tank battalion and is known by the nickname Gump. After a year deployed to Iraq in its dangerous Anbar Province, Humphreys was transferred to Fort Riley, Kansas. He will leave the Army when his enlistment ends on June 4, 2008, and has already landed a part in an upcoming World War II film, *Pathfinder*. It’s nice to see a former child actor making a good name for himself.

Course Heading, Captain?

Ok, I know this is just asking for trouble but something strangely intriguing was brought up in David Letterman’s Monday night Small Town News segment. I have heard some strange town names before but this one takes the cake: [Intercourse, Pennsylvania](#). The weekly publication “Intercourse News” has the subtitle “about families that do things together.” Strange and twisted I know but I just had to research it further. What prompted this post is the fact that it has ties to two Hollywood movies. The previously mentioned film *Witness* was filmed in the Pennsylvania Amish community. Secondly, the Tim Allen/Kirstie Alley starring comedy [For Richer Or Poorer](#) (?) was set, but not filmed in the Amish community. And the reason I decided to watch Dave Monday

night... Shia LaBeouf who revealed absolutely nothing about his little movie opening on May 22nd and spent most of his time talking about his arrest in a Chicago Walgreens in November.

Those Wacky Wachowski Kids

After the whole family (siblings and their children) all took Mom out for Mother's Day brunch HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL! I decided to tag along and watch *Speed Racer*... following a brief play-reading meeting. Going in, I had little expectation. I only vaguely remember seeing repeat episodes of the 60s Japanese animated import. I most remember the little brother and the chimp popping out of the trunk of the race car. And since this was another Wachowski brother production, I was expecting a visually dazzling display with little plot, or character development much like the *Matrix* trilogy of a few years ago.

Here we have the Racer family (Pops, Mom, Speed, his girl Trixie, little brother Spittle, mechanic Sparks, and cute chimp Chim-Chim). Speed is offered the opportunity to race for a huge racing team that is reknowned for dirty racing. In fact, those who do not take the opportunity usually end up regretting their decision. In order to reveal the racing cartel, Speed joins forces with the mysterious Racer X (Matthew Fox from *Lost*) and a Japanese racer (whose name I do not remember).

The stylized fighting with Ninjas is comical. Watching John Goodman twirl one above his head as if he were tossing pizza dough created a huge roar from the audience. The entire production design resembled a comic book come to life. The colors were all super exaggerated: the sky a bright, bright

blue. The sets all appeared to be futuristic... especially the racetracks). The races were fun to watch with the gadget enhanced speedsters flipping, swerving, jumping over each other, etc. In short, it was a fun movie to LOOK at. One of the downsides of the movie is the length. It ran over 2 hours and 10 minutes which is just too long for a movie to run aimed at families and there was a lot of downtime that would probably be a distraction to younger children. But, if you are a fan of the computer generated wizardry of the Wachowski brothers then *Speed Racer* is fun to watch.

On a tangent, the Wachowski's must know their Bond flicks. One of the racers is poisoned by a Ninja in a scene which is played identically to one in *You Only Live Twice*.



Tag, You're It

Most memorable movies have at least one promotional ad campaign that features a catchy phrase that in some instances have become ingrained in the world of pop culture. Some of these are: "A Long Time Ago In A Galaxy Far...Far...Away," and "Don't Go In The Water." See if you can match the tag with the movie. Heck, I'll even throw in the year some of the movies were originally released. Isn't that just so nice of me?

1. "Be Afraid. Be Very Afraid" (1986... there may or may not be more than one correct answer so look at the date)
2. "An Adventure 65 Million Years In The Making"

3. "The Human Adventure Is Just Beginning" (1979)
4. "This Time...It's War" (1986)
5. "The Adventure Takes Off" (1995)
6. "He Is Afraid. He Is Alone. He Is 3 Million Light Years From Home"

Answers will be forthcoming after enough time has passed to see how many readers attempt to respond. I will try to keep it fair to everyone by monitoring the post and deleting the guesses. Good luck.

Don't Know Much About History

It's no secret who one of my favorite popcorn munching, thrill seeking, Saturday afternoon movie actors is. However, like most actors worth their salt, Harrison Ford does have a repertoire that extends far beyond two of the most successful film franchises in movie history and as I have been mentioning in probably half of my posts, he will be returning to the silver screen as a certain globe-trotting, snake fearing, bullwhip cracking, Nazi despising archaeologist. Below is a List of some of my other Ford favorites.

Witness: His first and (so far) only Academy Award nomination and it features a very cool song from days gone by.

The Fugitive: The best motion picture based on a television series. Tommy Lee Jones' Best Supporting Oscar winning film. Excellent cat-and-mouse chase of the on the lam doctor and the obsessed federal marshal tracking him down. Also believed to be based on the actual case of Cleveland, OH physician Sam Sheppard.

What Lies Beneath: Hitchcockian in its suspense without the blood and gore.

The Jack Ryan duology (*Patriot Games*, *Clear and Present Danger*). Alec Baldwin started the franchise in *The Hunt for Red October* and Ben Affleck concluded it in *The Sum of All Fears*. I know it is another series but Harrison's two films are the best.

Air Force One: Flawed, cliched, but seriously, would it be so bad if he were our president? Another good popcorn film.

I know I am forgetting a lot so please feel free to comment on some of your favorite Harrison Ford movies. Any will do.

The Chickens Take Manhattan

This weekend at the movies you can either set off the summer blockbuster popcorn season by catching up with the number one movie *Iron Man*. You can take in the new Ashton Kutcher comedy *What Stays in Vegas...* or catch the animated series turned big screen live action extravaganza *Speed Racer*. These are the wide release features. However, if you live anywhere near the burrough of Manhattan you may want to check out the very limited release [*Poultrygeist: Night of the Living Chicken*](#). It is described by the *New York Times* as a "satirical sexploitation zombie chicken gross-out musical extravaganza" with such characters as "Wendy," "Micki," "Arbie," "Paco Bell," (anyone seeing a pattern here), and "Carl, Jr." (there is a fast food chain by that name, correct?). As the writer who reviewed this fine piece of cinema stated "it is just about as perfect as a film predicated on the joys of projectile vomiting and explosive diarrhea can be." That sounds like a crowd pleaser to me... or at least part of a good

game of Balderdash.

The Island of Dr. Moreau

No, I'm not talking about the movie [The Island of Dr. Moreau](#)... Many people thought it was awful, but I actually liked that movie, last time I saw it anyway over a decade ago. Scared the heck out of me though; I saw it in college and had to walk home from my friends' dorm all by myself late at night afterwards... I was so freaked out that I ran all the way home, prompting some other college-aged jerks to jeer at me, "Run Forrest, Run!" See what they did there? That's a reference to the great movie, [Forrest Gump](#). Clever kids, weren't they? I will have to try that Dr. Moreau movie again; even though I bet nowadays the special effects would appear outdated and it would just be dumb, but I'm not about to try it any time soon with all the nightmares I've been having...

Anyway, I was just looking for a way to tie in my latest activities, that's why I called the post The Island of Dr. Moreau. I went to the Dr. today, and watched the movie called [The Island](#) last night. The Dr. visit was routine... but I do have to mention how I just sat there waiting for the Dr. to come in with nothing to do but stare at the walls because after reading the CNN article called "Don't Let a Hospital Kill You", I was too afraid to touch any magazines in the Dr.'s office. See one of my previous posts of that title if you would like to experience the same paranoia. Dr. told me we're going to induce me a week before my due date because I have large babies... thank goodness for that, except that I'm ready NOW – do we really have to wait until July?!?

Now for the movie... The Island is a sci-fi movie about a

factory that manufactures humans. It is set in the future – but not too far in the future, 2015 or something like that – there are monorails, flying motorcycles, and human clones aplenty. It's funny how in one scene, they thought they were being clever by showing gas prices to be over \$4 / gallon, but I guess our 2008 society is a bit ahead of them, not in a good way either ☐

So anyway, in *The Island*, the general public is under the impression that their “insurance policies” – as the clones are known – are simply organisms being grown for spare parts and will remain in a vegetative state. The “insurance policies” however, are living, breathing, thinking, feeling humans who are housed in a self-contained facility within the factory. They live from day to day with the hope of winning “the lottery”, which will send them to “the island” – supposedly a place of bliss where they will live happily ever after. [Ewan McGregor](#)'s character accidentally finds out however, that winning the lottery is fatal, and “the island” is really what happens when a customer needs their insurance policy – ie, the clone is killed for its spare parts. I'm not normally a fan of sci-fi, but this movie has a very interesting premise that doesn't go too over the top, and I enjoyed it. Without giving too much away, I would trade a scene in the middle (too cheesy!) for 2 at the end – scenes I thought should be added with things I'd like to see in the movie... if you see or have seen the movie, I'll tell you what I mean. But I did like it, and like I said, I am not normally a fan of sci-fi, so I would recommend this one to sci-fi fans or action movie enthusiasts.