

# Where Are You? Why Do You Hide?

I see by the old Firestats Count that Morat's Blog has had 1000 unique visitors from countries foreign and domestic. However unique the 5 or so repeat commentators may be, I urge even the casual passer-by to not be afraid to comment if you have any profound bits of wisdom to add. Surely my profound knowledge of even the most minute of trivia peaks enough curiosity to leave a few letters... and some of those letters may even form a word or two. Even Morat himself has asked me to send greetings to everyone living in Liswathistan. And there must be other fans of "The Office" out there who would like to share their views as well as on movies old and new. Especially with the summer blockbuster season approaching despite the early word on *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*. I heard reports that fans are not to expect too much... WOOLY SHEEP to you all who review movies months before they open.). Plus, [The Dark Knight](#) sounds like it will be fabulous.

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## It's nice to not have to drive far...

When they say the average American is stuck in traffic (i.e. not moving or moving slowly, **not** the total commute) commuting to work 38 hours per year (nearly **double** that if you hail from L.A.) it is nice to have a short trip. In fact, this is a trip that I could easily walk if not for the heavy bag I carry. I suppose I could stick my stuff in a backpack, but

that really wouldn't look very professional. In any event, coincidence gave me two half-day jobs- for two team teachers! From my understanding they did not coordinate this, but had to take off half-days for two different reasons. I literally walked through the wall to get to the other class. Okay, it was a collapsible wall that was partly open, but still. Both teachers taught 3rd/4th grade multiage and so I even saw some of the same students both morning and afternoon due to switching classes- they switched for spelling and math. It was a pretty pleasant day overall, in the top 15-20% of all my workdays. I just had to look around, because this is exactly the sort of thing I will see in June if I get to do camp again. What I mean is, combined 3rd/4th grades just graduated to 4th/5th. I would put up a video here of last year, but since I am not their parent I don't think I can since I'm sure more than my friends read this even if they don't post (hint, hint!). Perhaps I can be persuaded to give a private viewing if asked though. Of course it's possible I already showed a couple of you the video last year, but not all. What, still with me? Go on, leave a comment already! ☐

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## Make The Most Of What You Are Given

I just learned that I will be portraying the role of Braxton in my local theatrical production of [Little Women](#). Since I know very little about the show apart from the book that I read years ago, I have no idea who this character is. He is part of the ensemble which could mean anything. However important the character is I will do my best to make him as memorable as I can. Hopefully, it calls for some amount of energy and a chance to stand out (if not who's to say I

cannot do so on my own). There are no small parts only small performers, right?

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## Dumb-0-Dumb-One-0 Take 2

Yet another television series will be reimagined soon. Apparently, an update of "[Beverly Hills, 90210](#)" is on the way. According to sources, none of the original cast or characters will be included (unfortunately for them who seem to have disappeared into oblivion). I think a better approach would be to cater to the fans of the original series who probably are in their late 20s-early 30s and bring back the old and see them dealing with adult hood. If there actually were people who enjoyed the show of teenage-angst. Personally, I never missed an episode....HAHAHAHA. Actually, I proudly confess that I never saw one and cannot name a single character but do remember an actor by the name of Puke—[Luke Perry](#). However, the cast of the updated series will include [Lori Loughlin](#) from another late 80s classic "[Full House](#)." How about adding the actor from "[Family Matters](#)" who played Steve Urkel (what was his name?) or [Malcolm-Jamal Warner](#). Reimagining it as a comedy could not hurt it at all... right?

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## Game Days Past

For some reason, the old game show "[Sale of the Century](#)" from the 1980's crossed my mind the other day. I enjoyed this show tremendously as a kid, so I looked on youtube to see if I could find any episodes because I don't really remember what

it was all about. They didn't have any full episodes, but I did see enough bits and pieces to enjoy the nostalgia. And I came across this clip of Simon Cowell's first tv appearance as a contestant on the British version of this show:

Watching vintage game shows on youtube got my husband thinking about the movie [Quiz Show](#), which is about the game show scandal of the late 1950's. It was a time when quiz shows were very popular, and one of the most popular shows of the time called "[Twenty-One](#)" was exposed for being rigged – in other words, the producers would tell the contestants the correct answers, and when to answer correctly or incorrectly to guarantee or fix the outcome of the show. On youtube, we were able to find the actual episode of "Twenty-One" that was chronicled in the movie and where the scandal broke. [Click here](#) to see it – it's in 3 parts, so you can find parts 2 and 3 off to the side where it says 'related videos'. We also watched a "Time and Again" documentary about the scandal, which included interviews with the contestants involved and was very interesting – [click here](#) to see part 1 of 5 of that show; again, the remaining parts can be linked from the right side of youtube. Surprisingly, the movie "Quiz Show" is very true to the real story of the scandal. When watching the episode of "Twenty-One" that started it all, my husband noted that it was very close to how the movie portrayed it. It's been awhile since I've seen the movie, so I will have to see it again because I didn't remember whether it was close or not.

After watching the interesting "Twenty-One" videos, we moved onto the game show "[Press Your Luck](#)" from the 1980's. It's the one where people get spins on a big game board, and they yell, "No Whammys, no whammys, STOP!" A whammy was like a 'lose-your-turn'. When a contestant spun one, a cartoon character (the whammy) would come out and do something different on the tv screen, like a dance or something silly, but it meant no money and the end of the contestant's turn. If you were like me and a kid watching the show when it was on, then you were waiting for people to get the whammys so you could see the little cartoons. For this reason, I would NOT have liked the episodes that aired with a contestant named Michael Larson, an unemployed ice cream truck driver who

memorized the pattern of the board, and spun a whopping 47 times! He won the following prizes:

1. \$104,950 in cash
2. 1 sailboat worth \$1015
3. 1 trip to Kauai worth \$1636
4. 1 trip to the Bahamas worth \$2636

This amount of cash was unheard of for this show, and the host kept making dumb jokes about how the contestant could now *buy* the Bahamas or CBS. After the show, they gave Michael Larson a hard time about collecting his winnings, but in the end, it was found that his memorizing the board's patterns was not cheating. They reconfigured the game show board, of course, but sadly, Michael Larson's story did not have a happy ending. He had some struggles over the years, and ended up dying of throat cancer in 1999. His life during and after the "Press Your Luck" appearances makes for a very interesting story though; perhaps they should make a movie about that – [read it here](#). They pulled those episodes of "Press Your Luck" in syndication, but they have shown them in multiple specials that aired on tv, most notably the game show network. They even invited Larson's brother to compete against the newly configured Press Your Luck whammy board to see if he could beat it, and he could not. Below are Larson's appearances on "Press Your Luck". Note the reactions of his fellow contestants as well as those of the host. A few interesting notes: While waiting to be on the show, Larson met Ed Long, a Baptist preacher booked for his fourth taping. They struck up a conversation. When it was Ed's turn to go on, Michael said to him, "I hope we don't have to face each other on the show." His wish wouldn't come true, as Ed had won his previous game with \$11,516. Watch for Ed on the clip. Also note the host of the show, Peter Tomarken, who was killed in a plane crash in 2006. He was a private pilot who volunteered for an organization that flew low-income patients for medical needs. His airplane had engine trouble, and he and his wife were killed when their plane crashed into the Santa Monica Bay.



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# Retrogaming

Bleah. All weekend and no post to show for it. I could throw in a some edu-humor but I think you five readers would rather me put something substantial. Unfortunately it is too late in the evening for that. Besides, I really don't have anything to post- Friday was uninteresting and I didn't go to church since I had the weekend off from kid's ministry and needed the break. Should I start adding posts for one of the other passions I hold- retrogaming? I wanted to start a ~~sister~~ brother blog, but I have a hard enough time writing for **this** blog. Here are a few sites to whet an appetite for retrogaming:

<https://www.mameworld.net/>

<https://www.emulation9.com/>

<https://www.retroremakes.com/>

The first site is everything MAME for arcade emulation. The second is pretty much just a news site for all types of emulator releases: computer, arcade, and console. There really is no good site these days for computer and console emulation. For emulators you need game files to play, be it ROM images, disks, or CD images, but I don't think I should be telling you where to find these given their legality. The third link is all about remakes of older games, usually for Windows but sometimes for other systems. This would be the easiest one to get started with, but as remakes they are usually reimagining (thanks Sci-fi Channel for the term!) rather than exact copies, so if it's the original you want you will need to go with emulation.

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# Choices

Tonight was the big night for auditions. There were a total of six auditioners (5 ladies and yours truly). I was familiar with all but two of the females. I have worked with the remainder on more than 1 occasion... so at least I was familiar with most of them. And of course, I HAD to be the first to arrive. But when volunteers were taken to be the first to perform, there were actually people who were more eager than I.

The first to go was a high school age girl who had never been in a show her entire life. She knew the story of [Little Women](#), has read the book, seen the movie, and just wanted to try something new. She chose to sing "Think of Me" from [The Phantom of the Opera](#). She was really nervous. After she got through the excerpt, the director asked her to sing it again and gave her advice on how to better perform the song. The second time she sounded much better.

The next person to audition was a freshman in college who came just to audition for the show. My apologies because I do not remember what she sang or how she did.

The next contestant was someone I have worked with on several previous occasions. I have been in different show casts and she has been the vocal director for past shows. Most recently, we were part of the choir for a performance of *Faure's Requiem*. After she performed her two selections from [Little Women](#), her student also performed the same piece. This is something that seems very odd. I'm sure that it is not unheard of to audition with a song from the show you are trying for, but it just seems weird to me.

Which brings us to you know who. I chose to sing the last 16 measures of "Any Dream Will Do" from [Joseph...](#) I chose it because I felt that it really shows my vocal range and I have practiced it a time or two; but it has been a while since I have been able to rehearse it with an accompanist. I did take a bit of liberty with the last measure by taking it up an octave.. it just seemed right. Apparently, the director thought so, too because he said: "Good choice."

The rest of the tryout was basically finding where our vocal range is. On the audition form, it had a space marked "Vocal Part." I put tenor/baritone. The accompanist remarked that I sound more tenorish. I agreed so we labeled me a tenobear. It has been a while since I have gone through and actually determined where I fall. I have about an octave and a half (low A...which surprised me to a high G then on to falsetto where I almost reached soprano range). After the range game, I was surprised by the amount of writing the pianist did.

All in all, it seemed to be a good audition. The director was very laid back and made all of us feel at ease which is the mark of a good actor's director. Now all I have to do is **WAIT.....** which is always the hardest part of any casting process. We were informed that it could be a cast of 15-20 with doubling or a cast of 40. Unless the turnout is better tomorrow afternoon, it may be the 15.

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## We Squeeze To Please

1995's James Bond offering, [Goldeneye](#), introduced [Pierce Brosnan](#) as Agent 007. His road to the role is a long, detailed journey that I will not elaborate upon. The plot concerns the efforts of the Russian mafia to control the

world's electronic circuits with the use of a high tech satellite named Goldeneye. This would lead to a financial meltdown on a global scale.

However, as with most Bond films, the plot takes second seat to the tried and true devices seen in the best of the series. The pre-title sequence shows 007 taking a 720 foot plunge from atop a dam (which still holds the world's record for the highest bungee jump from a fixed structure). Later while driving a large armored tank, Bond chases villains through the streets of St. Petersburg.

The femme fatale, played by [Famke Janssen](#), disposes of her victims in a rather crushing manner. Some of the most memorable character names are attributed to roles from the spy series. [Goldfinger](#) gave us Pussy Galore; the rather forgettable [Moonraker](#) introduced Dr. Holly Goodhead; the title character of [Octopussy](#); not to be out done, Xenia Onatopp appears in *Goldeneye*.

The film was also significant for two other important reasons. It was the first to be produced following the collapse of the Soviet Union. *Goldeneye* also introduced [Dame Judi Dench](#) as the first female "M", head of the British Secret Service. She is extremely quick in establishing her position and making it known that she sees Bond as a "sexist, misogynist dinosaur" and a "relic of the Cold War."

While not the best of the series, *Goldeneye* does have several bits of necessary Bond lore to make it an important segment in the continuing franchise. It does have enough action to keep the viewer entertained and that is the most important part of any 007 film.

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# Christmas in April?

After walking downstairs this morning, I ALMOST looked at the calendar to make sure I knew what day it was. On the television, the [1994 remake](#) of the classic *Miracle on 34th Street* was playing. Whichever channel was playing this must have been pretty desperate, especially at the end of April when most people's thoughts are not focused on anything remotely related to Christmas. Plus, why choose such a horrible remake to play?

The beloved [1947 movie](#) starred [John Payne](#), [Maureen O'Hara](#), a young [Natalie Wood](#), and Edmund Gwenn who received the Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his role as Kris Kringle. It also featured William Frawley who is best known for his role as Fred Mertz on "[I Love Lucy](#)."

The overall plot of both films is relatively the same. A department store Santa who claims to be the real thing, is put on trial to prove his sanity. He seeks to not only convince the court but also a young girl who has been trained by her mother to dismiss all notions of myths, fantasy, and imagination.

Too much was changed from the original to the most recent remake. Characters were dropped including a young man who works with and idolizes Kris. In the original, Kris sings a charming song to a young Dutch girl in her native tongue. Macy's department store was wise enough to not allow the use of its name in the remake; instead, the name was changed to Kohl's (or if you prefer, Coal's which 20th Century Fox should have been given in their collective stockings).

But, the casting of [Mara Wilson](#) as Susan sent shivers down my spine. Something about the youngster's acting just makes me cringe. This film and [Mrs. Doubtfire](#) are the only times I remember seeing her on screen.

There have been a few other television remakes of the immortal classic. However, as in most Hollywood remakes, the original is far better. Next holiday season, treat the entire family to this fun movie (even if you have to explain to the children why there is no color).

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## Voices in the air

I'm sitting downstairs at the [theater](#) while tryouts are going on for "Little Women". My youngest is one of the singers/actors trying out. I'm sitting down here to get out of the way, and to make sure they don't ask me to try out. I don't sing, I don't dance, don't ask. But as I sit here we have some very lovely voices filling the air. I'm not sure who is who, but I think I heard my daughter once or twice. Me, I would hate trying to determine who would be in the show. For a small little theater in rural Ohio, we have a lot of very talented people. I'm sure the director will have a tough time of it, but in the end this will make a better show.

Fun stuff theater. I've been involved in almost every aspect of it. I do stay away from musicals, except to run lights or back stage stuff. I've had lots of fun with all of it. This is sometimes my second home. So check out the [dates of the show](#) and come on by.