

4 Christmases

I shouldn't have liked it. It's an 82 minute comedy farce co-starring Reese Witherspoon – what's to like? But I actually enjoyed the movie [4 Christmases](#) more than I thought.

So why did I see it if I thought I'd hate it? For one, it was the only thing playing at the matinee price and for two, I had a sort of curiosity about the acting abilities of two country music super-stars: Dwight Yoakam and Tim McGraw. Actually, having seen Dwight Yoakam in [Sling Blade](#), I'm well aware of his acting skills. It was such a great performance in Sling Blade that I thought it was Oscar-worthy. He's not given much to work with in this movie however, and his role as one of those [Leap of Faith](#)-type preachers is not very well developed. I don't think it's any fault of Yoakam, though, but more a testament to the lazy script.

Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon star as a freewheeling couple who don't see the need to marry since they're already happy, and they don't want kids. The first scenes of the movie really emphasize how perfect this couple's lives are, and it's almost sickeningly sweet how well they get along. Enter their extended families, and they become miserable people. It begins when their flight to Fiji is cancelled on Christmas and they are featured on the news. The couple (their names were not memorable) is now busted in their annual lie about travelling to some exotic location for charity work. They fib about this every year to their families so they can avoid seeing all 4 families (each set of parents is divorced) for Christmas. So now that they can't go to Fiji, they have to visit 4 sets of crazy relatives on one day and yada, yada, anticipated baby jokes and predictable chaos ensues, you get the picture.

For some reason, a lot of Hollywood stars agreed to be in this movie. And just as I expected, Vince Vaughn was the same in

this movie as the characters he always plays. He can be funny, but he's not very versatile. I was surprised that Reese Witherspoon did not get under my skin because for some reason, she annoys the heck out of me, and it's distracting when watching her in movies. As far as the country music super-stars are concerned, I consider this movie a waste of Dwight Yoakam's acting talent, and Tim McGraw was barely in the movie at all. I read somewhere that he beefed up for the role, and he was hard to recognize, although I don't really know why he bothered gaining all the weight for a part that hardly has him on camera and with barely any lines. Other big name actors making cameos were Mary Steenburgen, Jon Voight, Robert Duvall, and Sissy Spacek – maybe it's just me, but even though she's almost 60, I still look at her and see [Carrie](#) the fire-starting teen from the famous Stephen King horror movie of the '70's.

Overall, there was only one scene where I couldn't even watch because of its ludicrousness, so instead I turned to my husband and whispered, "This is unbelievably dumb". Other than that, I was entertained, and mostly because it was a holiday movie, it was fun to sit, watch, and eat popcorn. I wonder how [Christmas With The Kranks](#) will compare. I've heard that one is just awful, yet I want to see it since I read the John Grisham novel upon which it was based.

Brain Fart = Abandoned Child

I'll start right off with the excuses. I have a lot going on right now. My October is booked solid. I've adopted the philosophy to just take one thing at a time because if I try to think about it all at once, I will end up breathing into a paper bag. Last week, my focus was on my daughter's 2nd

birthday party – inviting guests, buying supplies, getting the house ready, etc. I decided to put this week on the back burner last week and not try to do things to plan for our trip to Florida we're taking at the end of this week.

So this morning, I got up and when I went to check my oldest daughter's backpack for school, she said Dad had already signed her papers that needed to be signed – which is why I missed the memo. All was well, I thought, until the school called our cell phone. It was RIF week at my other daughter's school (Reading is Fundamental), which means parents can come in and read books to the class. Normally we would just drop off our daughter and be on our way, but of course today we stayed at the school for awhile to read books, which is why my other daughter's school called our cell phone – thank goodness we had picked up the lost cell phone at the corn maze place Friday night – see one of my [previous posts](#) if you're curious about the adventures of the cell phone.

So anyway, they were calling to tell us that today was Columbus Day, there was no school, and could we please come pick up our daughter. Talk about embarrassing. I realize it happens; everyone forgets something now and then, but why did it have to involve one of the kids? And I'm out of good excuses – I'm not pregnant anymore or recovering from surgery or anything like that... just an average, run-of-the-mill brain fart. It's not a big deal; we retrieved my daughter, and both she and the people at the school were laughing about it (and probably will be for years to come). But this really stinks because this is really bad for the way my mind works. I'm obsessed with detail and constantly worried about forgetting things; I'm always trying to relax about these things but when something like this happens, there's a little voice in my head that says, "See? Look what happens when you weren't so obsessive about details!". Oh, well... the good news is today my oldest is perfectly happy spending time with her little sister, and likewise. So without our trouble-making middle

daughter around (she had school today – or did she?!? I was at the school with her, but now I better double check!), they should get along quite well giving me some much needed catch-up time for housework and vacation packing. So why am I sitting here blogging?!?

Here's a footnote – it's now later in the day, I was able to sort thru some of the accrued clutter in our house, and I found a newsletter from my daughter's school. Guess what? October 13 is not listed under important dates in the newsletter for having a day off! So there! Not completely my fault! I can transfer 2% of fault to the school!