This Gringo Needs Help

From dictionary.com:

gringo [gring-goh] —noun, plural -gos. Usually Disparaging.
(in Latin America or Spain) a foreigner, esp. one of U.S. or
British descent.

Sorry — didn't mean to be disparaging, but I am of U.S. descent and I need help.

This post is an appeal to country music fans to please help me figure out the details of a country song I want. I don't know the name of it or who sings it. It's an older song — maybe from the 1980's or '90's... I wouldn't even rule out the '70's. Just about the only lyrics I can remember are "...be your little gringo..." or something like that. The song is uptempo and sung by a male. If you can get me the name and artist of the song I'm looking for, you'll win a prize. Something tells me Carol might know this... or my dad... WHAT IS THIS SONG?

Please Come Home For Christmas

It's my favorite contemporary classic Christmas tune, yet I can't find the original version that made me fall in love with the song, "Please Come Home for Christmas". I spent much of yesterday evening downloading different samples of the song; it seems every famous recording artist from the past few decades covered it. The musical acts that were sampled were very diverse: Aaron Neville, Sawyer Brown, Bon Jovi, Vonda

Sheperd, Gary Allan, the Drifters, Lonestar, Toby Keith...

Twenty renditions later and I still haven't found the original version I heard — my favorite one to date. I heard it in the 80's or early 90's, and it was the most popular version they would play all the time on the radio; country and easy listening / rock. It's sung by a male artist or group... if anyone has any suggestions of who it might be, I might be up to fishing through a few more versions of the song. That is, unless any of them are as bad as Toby Keith's. And this is coming from a country music fan!

4 Christmases

I shouldn't have liked it. It's an 82 minute comedy farce costarring Reese Witherspoon — what's to like? But I actually enjoyed the movie <u>4 Christmases</u> more than I thought.

So why did I see 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 divored) 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. 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 <u>Christmas With The Kranks</u> 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.

Tim McGraw — Country Singer, Actor, Vigilante?

Being a country music fan, a recent news item caught my Seems country superstar Tim McGraw had to step in to perform security duties at his own concert. He spotted a large man in the front row roughing up a female concert-goer, and since security wasn't close to the guy, McGraw grabbed him up on stage to intervene in the situation. I don't know why security wasn't anywhere near the front row at the time, but it seems McGraw can add something else to his list of accomplishments. The guy already has an pretty interesting biography... He believed his step-father was his biological father until the age of 11 when he accidently discovered his step-father was not listed on his birth certificate. mother took him to see his real father, baseball superstar Tug McGraw, who denied him until Tim was 18 and he realized how much they looked alike. They remained close until Tug's death He met fellow country singer Faith Hill — a country superstar in her own right - when they toured together, and they married and have 3 daughters. He is one of the most talented and successful country singers of our time and has been in the headlines for a few bizarre incidents, including a run-in involving a police horse (his friend Kenny Chesney, a huge country star himself, was accused of stealing the horse and McGraw was accused of shoving an officer during the The two were later acquitted of all charges after it was proven that Chesney had permission to ride the horse and

McGraw was trying to keep his friend from being thrown off the horse). And now this. What a way to get on stage to meet your favorite country singer. And throughout the entire incident, the band played on and McGraw didn't miss a lyric. I really have to get to a country music concert; it's been awhile! Check it all out here:

Academy of Country Music Awards Night!

Awards time was upon us again last night! Overall, I had a good time during the Academy of Country Music Awards, not as much fun as actually being there like I was in 2000, but a good time! There were some disappointments for me though, as you will read in my play-by-play of the awards below:

Carrie Underwood opened the show — I like Carrie Underwood; even though she's a country crossover, I think she has an amazing voice. By the way, very early in her season of American Idol — when I still watched it — I predicted that she would win and also that she would be a very good country singer. Just had to get that in there to boost myself after I did so horribly at predicting this year's ACM awards. But her new song isn't country enough for me, and it made it seem like she is trying to cross back over into pop or rock. Was not a big fan of her performance.

Next Reba McEntire made a funny joke in a beautiful blue dress with a classy fit. The joke was about 1986, and she said, "Back then, Roger Clemens wasn't even interested in country music!" The audience oohed and ahhed, I guess it was kinda controversial, but I liked it. The joke was in reference to the affair that took place years ago and just now came to light between a married and much older Roger Clemens and a teenage up and coming country star named Mindy McCready, who unfortunately is better known these days for controversy than for country music. Reba's jokes were actually pretty funny tonight, I liked the Kenny Chesney song reference: "she thinks my fracture is sexy" and also when Reba was talking about the correlation between #1 hits and birthdays, she said, "I have 33". Her delivery made that joke pretty funny, and I do like

her as a host.

Next up was a live performance from Toby off-Keyth. To his credit, many of the performers seemed off pitch tonight, could there have been some issue with the sound system? That aside, his new song is simply awful. Quite possibly the worst country song ever. The lyrics are terrible, and hearing it off-key was even worse.

Time for the first award! SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR — I guessed Don't Blink by Kenney Chesney, and hubby guessed Stay by Sugarland. Other nominees were Miranda Lambert, Big and Rich, and Gary Allan -Slow start — hubby is one up on me already since the winner is Stay. Gotta give him some credit, it's a nice song.

Next is a live performance from Brad Paisley — his new song is ok, I like it, but he seems off key too. Hubby says, Brad Paisley? He's always off key on the live shows. I don't remember this being the case, Is he?

Next, Taylor Swift wins TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST — no surprise there — hubby is 2 for 2, and I am on the board with 1.

Miranda Lambert's live performance — alright.

Now the award for NEW DUO/VOCAL GROUP — Never even heard of any of the nominees since I listen to Kidsongs in the car now; I no longer get to listen to country radio, so all the new stuff on the awards show tonight was truly news to me. Quiz me on Kidsongs episodes though, and I'd win every time!

Rodney Atkins gives an off key live performance. Not that this song about kids swearing sounds that great on the radio either. It's an ok song, but he has a crackly country voice, and live singing just makes it worse.

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST — Hubby guesses Luke Bryan I guess Jake Owen, and the nominee not chosen by either of us wins — Jack

Ingram.

Live performance from Kenny Chesney — I'm never a huge fan of Chesney, but he wasn't off-key, so I won't complain.

Live performance by Geroge Strait — I was not crazy about his new song but at least he wasn't off key either. Live performance duet — Kenny Chesney and George Strait — Chesney went a little off key, but I don't like this song Shiftwork anyway.

Next was a world premiere of Sugarlands new single, which I really liked! The woo-oohs were a little corny, but the song reminds me of 80's country and it was a very catchy tune.

ALBUM OF THE YEAR was won by Miranda Lambert — and nobody in our household guesses this category correctly.

Live performance by Brooks and Dunn — not off key

SONG OF THE YEAR — I guessed Kenny Chesney, hoping he would win this instead of Entertainer of the Year, but I was disappointed because Hubby guessed Sugarland's Stay would get this award.

Taylor Swift gave a live performance — a little off key until it started raining on her on stage. That was pretty cool, but did they turn off her mic and let her lip sync? Would the mic even work in the rain? She got pretty wet and was suddenly on key, so I wonder…

TOP VOCAL DUO — Brooks and Dunn — We both guessed this one correctly — EVERYONE WINS!

Trace Atkins live performance — pitch problems

I have to comment on the baby puking commercial that aired here. I believe it originally aired during the Superbowl. But it shows a baby talked into a webcam, and all of a sudden, he spits up. I just love the irony of the baby talking like a

normal adult, then all of a sudden spitting up like a baby. You have to see it and probably have kids to appreciate it.

Now finally, after stringing us along all night, it was time for the Garth Brooks tribute. Garth used to be my favorite country singer, way back when, until he sold out, retired a few times, became Chris Gaines, etc etc. But he still has some great music in his library, some of which he treated us to tonight in a live performance. Reminded me of the 3 times I got to see him in concert. He was a GREAT performer, and even though he has aged a little, he can still give a good I loved how when he went off key, he covered by pretending he was just having fun with the song and meant to have pitch problems — yeah right! And he did mess up the words in The Thunder Rolls — he came in too early. But a good concert by him overall, even if he was a bit rusty. He also included the following songs in his montage: Callin Baton Rouge, Friends in Low Places, We Shall Be Free, The Dance, Just Ledoux, In Another's Eyes (special guest duet with wife Tricia Yearwood. Not to be rude, but I was POSITIVE Garth was going to be announcing some baby news — Tricia looked extra puffy. He didn't say anything though, so I guess I'm just a jerk for noticing and saying so. Being in the public eye must suck!), More Than a Memory, Rodeo, and the finale Ain't Goin Down Til the Sun Comes Up. Then, Garth was given the Crystal Milestone Award of which he is deserving, despite all the selling out he's done. And when he called Reba Ms. Yearwood, it was hilarious, but since it was followed by "I love her", I can see why he mixed up the names to say that about his wife aw!

Next award - VOCAL GROUP - Rascal Flatts

Keith Urban live performance — liked the song, but what's with the do doo's? This is the second do doo's song tonight!

David Spade's long joke was funny, but I have yet to understand his presence at country music awards?

Rascal Flatts live performance was off key.

Eddy Arnold tribute — Carrie Underwood and Brad Paisley sang one of Eddy's songs as a duet, and it sounded magnificent. Awesome tribute.

Kellie Pickler live performance — off pitch, like so many others before her.

Trisha Yearwood comes out to present MALE VOCALIST — kudos on the costume change, shouldn't be any baby rumors due to this dress. I have Kenny Chesney, Hubby has George Strait. Paisley wins.

Lee Ann Rimes — live performance — not off key, but the band is way loud.

Carrie Underwood wins FEMALE VOCALIST and puts me within one point of tying up the contest between my husband and me!

Montgomery Gentry - live performance off key - sounds horrible

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR — Wait, my ballot sheet says we still have Video of the year and Vocal Event of the Year, what happened? Some research on the internet shows I lost both those categories, ugh. I guessed Brad Paisley and Hubby has Keith Urban — Chesney wins AGAIN!!! I should have seen it coming, I was just hoping that with the new voting system this year — they let the fans vote for Entertainer of the Year — I thought the fans would take away Chesney's monopoly on this category. His joke about thanking his parents for doing what they did so many years ago that led to his creation was kinda funny, if a bit unexpected.

So, you can see where my disappointments lie — mainly with the entertainer of the year award, losing to my husband, and not liking many of the new songs that were performed. But like I said, I had fun watching, and now I know I will have to do more research before the next country awards in the fall so I

can get more correct guesses. I'll have to find a way to take back control over the car radio for starters!

Who's Got Even More Talent?

So.... yet another reality show has come and gone... this one lasted only one episode and for good reason. "Secret Talents of the Star" **attempted** to pit stars from various outlets against each other in order to show their dreams beyond what they have already accomplished. Haven't enough celebrities attempted to go beyond their day jobs and persue other avenues. Michael Jordan retired from basketball (the first time) to persue a second career are a major league baseball player.

While he was on the television series "Moonlighting," Bruce Willis recorded a rather forgettable album entitled "The Return of Bruno." Whoever Bruno is and from where he returned is a question better left unanswered. A good thing Mr. Willis stuck with his acting gig and action films such as the <u>Die Hard</u> quadrilogy.

In the category of should have known better, George Takei tried his hand at country singing on the celebrity reality showcase. The actor who played Mr. Sulu on <u>Star Trek</u> obviously failed to hear his captain's rendition of "Rocket Man" which may or may not have been one of William Shatner's many attempts at self-parody.

I am sure there must be a few examples of performers who found limited success in more than one outlet. Anyone care to share any or name other attempts? Was it Garth Brooks who tried to go from country superstar to Major League baseball player.... even creating a new persona to do so?

Mediocrity

Two things I was looking forward to watching today turned out to be disappointing. The first, a new horror movie in theaters called "The Ruins", I wouldn't classify as a bad movie. It was entertaining, at least... I say that a lot about movies, I know. But if they hold my attention, aren't boring (like The Night Listener), and don't disgust me too much (like Doomsday), then I generally don't consider the movie a waste of my time because I really like watching movies, spending time with my husband, and I just overall enjoy the movie theater going experience.

But as far as horror movies go, "The Ruins" is not my idea of a good one. I won't even go into the acting skills; it's so unimportant when talking about this kind of movie. stood out as horrible or unwatchable, and that's all that matters in a movie like this. I did lose a side bet with Hubby about whether or not one of the actors was also in the <u>Texas Chainsaw</u> remake - he was - but no matter, I really wasn't too sure about it anyway. The premise was interesting; 4 twentsters (people in their early twenties. Hey, I just made that up because as far as I'm concerned, many of them still act like teens, might as well give them a goofy name to go with their attitudes. Maybe it'll catch on...) on vacation in Mexico follow this German guy (actor with a fake accent. Why they couldn't just find a German actor is beyond me, but whatever) they just met on a trek miles into the jungle to see some ancient ruins. When they get there, they end up trapped on top of the pyramid thing by the natives who believe the ruins are cursed. That's basically it. The movie was pretty fast-paced, however, once I realized that the "monster" of this horror movie was plant life, somehow it wasn't very

scary... Also, everything creepy was already shown in the previews — I HATE when they do that to movies! None of the characters were very likable, so when some met their demise, it wasn't all that shocking nor disappointing. I don't know why the movie was rated R — I've seen much scarier PG13 movies, they could have cut out the nude scene, and the gore in this movie was all (POTENTIAL SPOILER ALERT — IF YOU CARE) mercy limb cutting. I was thinking the movie could redeem itself with a good resolution, but that was not to be. I can't see any replay value of this movie. Worth seeing once but not again. One good thing though, it didn't have you leaving the theater feeling like crap about humanity, like Doomsday or some other movies I've seen — that's always a plus.

On to disappointment #2 - Secret Talents of the Stars. A show about "celebrities" — and some people who call themselves celebrities who I've never heard of — who try their hand at other talents than what they've become famous doing. What was I thinking you ask? What would this shameless attempt at yet another celebrity reality show have that made me want to watch The answer — hype. It was hyped so much that I actually fell for it. And I really wanted to see Clint Black (I'll forgive you this once if you don't know he's a major country music star) attempt stand-up comedy. That was until I actually saw Clint Black attempt stand-up comedy. funny. And the show seems fixed too... ok, what show like this isn't, but still.... the "judges" all loved Clint Black's comedy... probably because he was the most hyped star of the show, and they wanted to make sure he'd be in the semi-And then there was <u>George Takei</u>, of former <u>Star Trek</u> fame, now most famous for coming out of the closet, sad to say that has overshadowed his years on Star Trek, but I for one had never heard of him before he came out... So, in between several obvious and Clint Black-ish (meaning not very good) type gay jokes, George sang "On the Road Again", originally by Willie Nelson. And if you don't know who that

is, you're on your own, I'm not going to spell it out for you! Needless to say, he butchered it and got kicked out of the show — big surprise. The other 2 contestants tonight — Sasha Cohen and a singer called just Mya, were trying for talents that were somewhat related to their profession anyway — something I did not think was fair. Figure skater Cohen was being an acrobat, while singer/entertainer Mya was tapdancing! The show is stupid, the format is obvious, the judges lines are scripted... but why will I be watching next week? Another country music star, Jo dee Mesina will be trying her hand at something other than country music and rehab. Low blow there, and I apologize... it's late, and I seem a wee bit crabby, maybe I should have gone to bed instead of staying up until 11 to watch this dumb show...

Spring Ahead... to Country Music Award Time!

Actually, it's time for the Academy of Country Music awards (ACM's), which are totally different than the Country Music Association's awards (CMA's), but somehow Spring Ahead to the Academy of Country Music Awards just didn't make such a great blog title. For you country music fans out there, you know that spring and fall are the awesome times of year for country music awards. We get 2 great awards shows, and coming up in May are the ACM awards — the nominations were announced last week, that's why I get to write about this now. I was lucky enough to attend this show live one time in 2000. It was TOTALLY AWESOME — I'd LOVE to go back... something like that (and lots of liquor) just might get me on an airplane again... yeah right. Anyway, Dolly Parton hosted, and Dick Clark ran around the stage during the breaks fretting over this and that

and everything in between. Winners' acceptance speeches got cut off, and there was the general glitz and glam of any L.A. awards show — only we were there! And talk about a GREAT concert! Getting to see like, 15 top country music performers LIVE, singing only their hits was unbeatable. And I learned a lot too because I had never been to the taping of a live tv event before. Did you know that they have "stand-ins" ready in case anyone who is seated down in front has to leave for the bathroom or anything else? They pay models to dress up and get ready in case they need to sit in say, Wynonna Judd's seat so it's not empty when they show the audience on tv if Wy needs a potty break (that actually happened!). So anyway, this year I will be watching the ACM's from the comfort of my couch; hopefully without interuptions from kids (should change the name of this post to Yeah, Right).

I can't remember if it's the ACM's or the CMA's where they'll have a live performer, and then that person will be nominated for the next award, so after their performance they'll be waiting backstage, and every time they end up winning the award! I wish they'd make it a little less obvious! We like to fill out our own ballots and make a guessing game out of our picks for winners, and this type of format makes that too easy! All you have to do is figure out the order of award presentations, figure out the schedule of performers, and Viola! You've won the bet! I'll let you know come CMA awards time which awards show does this, unless they've (hopefully) changed things by now.

Here are the nominees this year, enjoy the show!

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

Kenny Chesney

Brad Paisley

Rascal Flatts

George Strait Keith Urban

TOP MALE VOCALIST

Rodney Atkins

Kenny Chesney

Brad Paisley

George Strait

Keith Urban

TOP FEMALE VOCALIST

Miranda Lambert

Martina McBride

LeAnn Rimes

Taylor Swift

Carrie Underwood

TOP VOCAL GROUP

Diamond Rio

Eagles

Emerson Drive

Little Big Town

Rascal Flatts

TOP VOCAL DUO

Big & Rich

Brooks & Dunn

Halfway To Hazard

Montgomery Gentry

Sugarland

TOP NEW MALE VOCALIST

Luke Bryan

Jack Ingram

Jake Owen

TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

Sarah Buxton

Kellie Pickler

Taylor Swift

TOP NEW DUO OR VOCAL GROUP

Carolina Rain

Lady Antebellum

The Wreckers

<u>ALBUM OF THE YEAR [Award to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record Company]</u>

5th Gear — Brad Paisley (Arista Nashville) Produced by Frank Rogers

Crazy Ex-Girlfriend — Miranda Lambert (Columbia) Produced by Frank Liddell, Mike Wrucke

Just Who I Am: Poets & Pirates — Kenny Chesney (BNA) Produced

by Buddy Cannon, Kenny Chesney

If You're Going Through Hell — Rodney Atkins (Curb) Produced by Rodney Atkins, Ted Hewitt

Taylor Swift — Taylor Swift (Big Machine) Produced by Scott Borchetta, Nathan Chapman # 6 Produced by Robert Ellis Orrall

<u>SINGLE RECORD OF THE YEAR [Award to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record Company]</u>

Don't Blink — Kenny Chesney, Produced by Buddy Cannon, Kenny Chesney BNA

Famous In A Small Town — Miranda Lambert, Produced by Frank Liddell, Mike Wrucke Columbia

Lost In This Moment — Big & Rich, Produced by Big Kenny, John Rich — Warner Bros/WRN

Stay — Sugarland, Produced by Kristian Bush, Byron Gallimore, Jennifer Nettles Mercury

Watching Airplanes — Gary Allan, Produced by Gary Allan , Mark Wright MCA Nashville

SONG OF THE YEAR [Award to Composer(s)/Publisher(s)/Artist(s)]

Don't Blink — Kenny Chesney — Writers: Casey Beathard, Chris Wallin_Publishers: Lavender Zoo Music (BMI), Mama's Dream Music (ASCAP), Sony/ATV Acuff Rose (BMI), WB Music Corp. (ASCAP)

Lost In This Moment — Big & Rich — Writers: Keith Anderson, Rodney Clawson, John Rich Publishers: EMI April Music, Inc. (ASCAP), Romeo Cowboy Music (ASCAP), WB MusicCorp. (ASCAP), Warner-Tamerlane Publishing Corp. (BMI), Writer's Extreme Music (BMI)

Moments — Emerson Drive — Writers: Dave Berg, Annie Tate, Sam Tate Publishers: Gravitron (SESAC), WB Music Corp. (ASCAP)

Watching You — Rodney Atkins — Writers: Rodney Atkins, Steve Dean, Brian White Publishers: Bethar Music (BMI), Mike Curb Music (BMI), Multisongs (SESAC), Songs From The White House (SESAC)

Stay - Sugarland - Writer: Jennifer Nettles - Publishers:
Jennifer Nettles Publishing (ASCAP)

VIDEO OF THE YEAR [Award to Producer(s)/Director(s)/Artist(s)]

Don't Blink - Kenny Chesney - Producer: Tacklebox Films Director: Shaun Silva

Lost In This Moment — Big & Rich Producer: Big Kenny, Steve Lamar, Marc Oswald Director: Robert Deaton and George Flanigen

Online - Brad Paisley - Producer: Frames Per Second - Director: Jason Alexander

Stay — Sugarland — Producer: Kristian Bush, Byron Gallimore, Jennifer Nettles — Director: Shaun Silva

Watching You - Rodney Atkins - Producer: Broken Poet Production - Director: Eric Welch

VOCAL EVENT OF THE YEAR [Award to Artist(s)/Producer(s)/Record
Company]

Because Of You — Reba McEntire Duet With Kelly Clarkson — Produced by Tony Brown, Reba McEntire MCA Nashville

Find Out Who Your Friends Are — Tracy Lawrence With Tim McGraw and Kenny Chesney — Produced by Julian King, Tracy Lawrence — Rocky Comfort/C05

Shiftwork — Kenny Chesney Duet With George Strait — Produced by Buddy Cannon, Kenny Chesney BNA

Till We Ain't Strangers Anymore — Bon Jovi Featuring LeAnn Rimes — Produced by Dann Huff — Mecury

What You Give Away —Vince Gill With Sheryl Crow — Produced by Vince Gill, John Hobbs, Justin Niebank — MCA Nashville