

Rock Racing

Sunday afternoon in an attempt to beat the heat, I went to my brother's for a swim. After, I watched *Race to Witch Mountain*. Last winter when it was in theatres, I really was unsure about seeing it. I really liked *Escape* and *Return* but have found most updates/reboots/prequels to be less than ideal. Also, the added attraction of Dwayne "the (c)Rock" Johnson was enough to make me question it even more. I am pleased to say that the movie was not THAT bad. The action and effects were heightened from the original movies from the 70s but there were nice touches from the previous films to delight fans.

Johnson plays Jack Bruno, a Las Vegas cabbie who has grown irritated with transporting weird Sci-Fi fans (including two Stormtroopers) to a convention at the Planet Hollywood. Enter siblings Sara and Seth, two seemingly innocent young teens who hand Jack a huge wad of money for transportation to a remote, run down shack in the middle of nowhere.

Like the original children, Sara and Seth are victims of a spacecraft crash landing. The government has acquired it and is hot on the trail of the survivors to "study" them. Unlike the previous installments, the children are being pursued by an alien "Assassin."

Sara and Seth's powers are basically the same as Tia and Tony's with a few additions... probably due to the limited budget restraints of the 1970s. Sara's touch with animals harkens back to her predecessor only this time the trio is joined by a canine companion instead of a black cat. A Winnebago RV is also instrumental in the action. Also, don't miss a creative cameo by the original actors all grown up. I was expecting them to pop up as Sara and Seth's parents or other adult aliens, but that would be too logical. For fans of *Star Trek II* who aren't already in the know, Ike Eisenmann (who played Tony in the original movies) had the role of

Engineer's Mate, Peter Preston. In the extended Director's Cut of *The Wrath of Khan*, it is discovered that he is the nephew of Chief Engineer Montgomery Scott.

I would recommend *Race to Witch Mountain* to fans of the original movies. There is a lot of action that may be a bit much for the really young, but it is a Disney movie.

Busiest Weekend EVER! Part Two

(continued from a previous blog post)

So here's a recap of Sunday – church, brunch, Hannah Montana movie – and that is where I left off.

So we get to the Hannah Montana movie, and of course our 9-month-old son wakes up from his nap just in time for the movie (couldn't be awake to play at church, couldn't be awake to indulge in brunch, alas – that's always the way when you have kids – they sleep thru everything good, and I swear it's a rule – they always wake when the irony is thick!) But, because the Hannah Montana movie is a musical, our 3 youngest were kept too busy to perform their usual awful antics at the movie theater. It was a girly movie, especially with a double love story plot, but our little boy is only 9-months-old, so he didn't notice the girlishness. Instead he loved the musical interludes, and he clapped to each one enthusiastically. For some reason, and I've written about this before, the movie theater turns our normally sweet 2-year-old into a little stripper. Luckily, by the time the idea to take her clothes off occurred to her today, it was near the end of the movie, so she only got as far as taking

off her socks and shoes – although she did make sure to note (yell) while doing so, “Don’t look at me – I take clothes off!” Ok, Disney, if you don’t want people looking, why are you taking your clothes off? Such is the logic of a 2-year-old, I guess.

We had no major spills this time (I’m referring to our last experience when we saw Monsters Vs. Aliens and we somehow dumped an entire soft drink into the lady’s purse who was sitting behind us – major oops!), and today our baby was on his best behavior as well because of all the music in the movie – something that I think saved us as far as our 3 youngest kids’ behavior at the movies today. As for the movie itself, I enjoyed it more than I did Monsters Vs. Aliens, probably because I actually got to watch this one. But an extra nice surprise for me was the country music add-ins – surprise performances from Taylor Swift and my favorite group, Rascal Flatts. They sang one of their best songs acoustically as if they were relatives just sitting around jamming at a family get-together (can this be MY family get-together?), and it was thoroughly enjoyable. Miley Cyrus even showed her country roots in a song which attempts to revive line-dancing; I guess kids these days (now I sound like I’m 80 – GREAT, when did THAT happen!?) have a dance they do to this song, but whatever, I kind of liked the song. Overall, I truly enjoyed the country theme that was abundant in this movie – groovin’ country music, gorgeous farm fields, cowboys ropin’ horses... what’s not to like? There was also a surprise (for me) appearance by Jan Levinson Gould from the tv show, The Office. Of course in this movie, she wasn’t Jan – she was some southern belle who played Miley’s dad’s love interest – almost as far away from Jan as one could be, but I still enjoyed the Office reference. Also, keep in mind that this is a Disney film, so there are LOTS of prat-fallish types of humor, as well as recurring movie themes. For example, ‘lobster trouble’ (ala Splash, circa 1984), ‘switching identities for different dinner dates’ (ala Mrs. Doubtfire, circa 1993), ‘major celebrity comes in to save a town’ (ala

Wayne's World 2, circa 1993 or ala Mystery, Alaska circa 1999), it's always best to be yourself' (ala... wow, WAY TOO MANY TO MENTION – take your pick...)

So anyway, I have to (reluctantly) admit that I was pleasantly surprised with the Hannah Montana movie – plenty of stuff in this one for the parents as well as the tweens and even the stripping two-year-olds. But the movie wasn't as plot-less as I had hoped – in other words, we didn't get home until 2:55 – just 20 short minutes before we had to leave for a class we had signed up for through church. So for the next 20 minutes we scrambled around – letting dogs out, repacking diaper bags, changing diapers, etc. We arrived at our class pretty much on time, though a bit exhausted, thank you very much!

The class was great! We learned a lot about our church – their beliefs, their history, as well as their foundations for building a relationship with Christ – a very well-spent 3 hours. And we got to meet other couples at our table too – which is memorable for me because they were surprised to learn we had 4 kids – and I quote, “You don't look old enough to have 4 kids!” NICE!

Following the class was a great dinner of homemade pasta provided by a local chef. Following the delicious dinner was a tour of the north campus of our church – we worship in the south campus, so it was nice to learn the ins and outs of the north campus – so awesome! Our oldest daughter was so excited to show us where her Sunday school was held, and their rooms for youth were VERY impressive! There was a room with a stage for youth productions, and it even had backstage areas, which is almost more than I can say for one of our community theater's stages, haha! Also, there was a game room with multiple foosball tables and 'carpet ball' – something new to me, but a game I'd definitely like to try! One of the youth rooms had state-of-the-art stage lights and restaurant-style booths for kids to 'hang out' in... Overall, it was a fun evening, and I learned a lot. But, as became common for

today, we had to rush from the church class in order to be home in time for the community theater's play reading committee meeting and my much anticipated Cubs game. I was looking forward to this game for days. It was a long series (most are 3 game, some are 2 game, this one was 4 game) against the Cubs rival – the St. Louis Cardinals, with whom the Cubs are vying for first place. The game was at night, which is rare for a Sunday, so I was VERY excited about rounding out my weekend with such a game. But alas, the darn rain had its way, and the game was postponed. So only play reading meeting to look forward to for me – at least I didn't have to rush the meeting and kick people too hard to leave my house since there was no Cub's game! And for once, I think we actually achieved a lot at the play reading committee meeting. Probably because of the fact that there were only 4 of us in attendance – but hey, maybe that 's what needs to be done in order to achieve something... too many people get in each others way, I guess. It will be interesting to see what the absent members think of the decisions the four of us made while they were absent – I hope the decisions stick!

In summary, a great, if extremely exhausting weekend. Come on now, would I have it any other way?