

August Rush meets the Chipmunks

I rented two movies for this evening, the first was "Alvin and the Chipmunks". From my childhood days I remember listening to The Chipmunks Christmas Song and Alvin's Harmonica Song. I didn't think I would like the Chipmunk movie. It was cute, not at all what I thought it would be. Great kids movie, and entertaining enough to keep the parents amused. The did play the Chipmunk song during the movie, but I didn't here the Harmonica song. Just a little disappointed in that. Can't have everything.

Now the movie "August Rush". Much different than I thought it would be. I saw the previews and theatrical trailers for this movie, and the didn't do it justice at all. This is one I may end up purchasing for my collection. I'm not exactly sure where it would fit in. Not my normal movie choice. It's not exactly a music movie, not exactly a love story, not exactly anything but what it is. I found that Robin Williams can be a bad guy. His character was played to perfection. Since he was the only actor whose name I recognized, it wasn't hard for me to put and keep everyone in their own character. The movie flowed around the story, and the characters made the story. I can give no better compliment to a movie. I was entertained through the whole thing

19 years ago...

The first Indiana Jones movie was released 19 years ago. My wife and I didn't go to movies often. At that time we had 3

daughters at home the youngest was 1 1/2 years old. Somehow we got to a movie theater to see this one. When we did go to movies, they were usually action movies. My wife was hard of hearing, and she felt she got more out of the action movies, because she didn't need the dialog. On this movie, she said she was wrong. We waited for the movie to come to the cheaper theaters just to see it again, so she could watch the lips and pick up more dialog. Then when they came to video, we actually bought them to get the closed captioning. Except for the 2nd movie, we watched these shows over and over again. Our children grew to like them too (something about brainwashing could go in here, they were just repeatedly shown 2 of the Indiana Jones Movies).

Then came today. Since 1989 a lot has changed. My children grew up, the baby at that time is now 20. My youngest is 16. Two other daughters are married. I have grandkids. I am a widower... This was the first Indiana Jones Movie I did not see with my wife. There is a piece missing to the show. That after show conversation, trying to fill my wife into some of the dialog. Her squeezing my hand when something in the show startled her. Her say how good looking either Harrison Ford or eventually Sean Connery was. Complaining about all the new characters, the story, or just whatever. Who we liked, who we didn't. And after the first two movies and the Alan Quartermain spoofs, watching the third, saying when will we see the new Alan Quartermain??? There never was a 3rd Alan Quartermain. By the time the last Indiana Jones rolled out, the lead in Alan Quartermain was looking like Indiana did in this last movie. No, there won't be a spoof following this one, unless its by the same people who brought us Scary Movie and the Superhero Movie. That might be fun.

So today was a fun day, since I got to see the newest Indy, but at the same time there was a bit of a shadow over the whole thing.

I wore my Indy outfit (Brown slacks, beige shirt, boots and

Fedora – too warm for the leather jacket) to the theater today, I'm not sure how many noticed. Funny thing, while I got an "Indiana Jones" Fedora a couple of Christmases ago, it was just one of the brown fedoras I've had. I started wearing one shortly after the first movie. My lovely wife said it looked good on me, and I needed something to keep the sun off my face during our summer vacations (usually hiking somewhere). I lost my first hat, but I still have the second (not as nice since we couldn't afford a good one at the time). Now I have the hat my daughters bought me for Christmas. I can never thank them enough for that gift. As they can tell you, I wear that hat often. Most of the winter, and summer. I don't tend to wear it in the spring or on windy days. In the spring, I'm looking for as much sun as possible, so all hats are off my head.

Strange what watching a movie will make you think...

Back to Narnia

I took 2 of my daughters to see Prince Caspian tonight. While I enjoyed the movie, but couldn't help but feeling that it wasn't quite flowing with the book. It has been years since I've read the book, so I couldn't be sure. I will have to read the book again to determine if my feelings were accurate.

As far as the movie. I was entertained. I think that I will want to get the DVD. I think I would just rent this to see it again in most normal instances, but since I have the first movie, and the books, it will add nicely to a collection.

I'm not sure I would take younger children to this movie unless they have a good idea that movies are "make believe". This movie was a little more intense than "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe". There are two major battles, and a couple

of more intense chase scenes. So while a good movie, you may want to watch it first before taking the young ones.

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.

Other sites

What's the use of coming here if not to get a look into my life? Such a look into my life might include some of the websites I visit often, including some message boards. Just click on the title to go there and see what this sub likes to read and do.

[Worthyboards](#): This is a Christian message board. It is part of a larger ministry, but I tend to stay on the message board. I don't post often being more of a lurker, but if you see any posts by Qun Mang, that's me. There is a prayer forum there so if you need a lot of people praying for you, sign up and put a post there. There are also some forums you can't see until you sign up, and one or two you can no longer see once you do!

[MAMEWorld.info](#): This is the message board for [MAMEWorld.net](#), posted in my last retrogaming post. It primarily deals with the arcade game emulator MAME, but people sometimes post about retrogaming in general there. Just do yourselves a favor and walk carefully in the Loony Bin. This part of the site is not safe for work, if you get my meaning. I try to avoid certain posts on this part of the site, but there is much posted here that is actually interesting so that's why I visit it.

[English Amiga Boards](#): All Amiga, all the time. This board is everything dealing with the Commodore Amiga, a very popular computer in the late 80s/early 90s. That is, popular in Europe, not the U.S. English refers not only to the language, but to where the site is hosted. I had an Amiga 500 back in the days. A certain administrator had an Amiga 3000. You can also visit the main site, [abime.net](#). From there you can find information on just about every Amiga game, read old Amiga magazines, and more.

[Internet Movie Database](#): Most of you regular readers already know of this site. If there is anything to be found about a

movie, you can find it here. TV shows as well, but the next site is a little better for it, excepting in some cases the forums. IMDB forums seem to be more popular, however you have to sign up to even *read* the IMDB forums let alone post in them. I've been using this site since before it became a website, when it was a database you downloaded from the internet and read via software you install for it.

[TV.com](#): Same as above except for television shows. Their search engine stinks though. I typed in an exact title once and the search came up empty. I typed in a couple of key words and suddenly the show was found. Here you can read about the characters, the actors, episode guides, news about the shows, forums you don't need to sign up to read (just to post), and more.

[Geek.com](#) and [Neowin.net](#): A couple of sites with computer-related news.

[Majorgeeks](#): Lots of software for Windows computers, including both shareware and freeware. If you need an application, try this site. They also have some news at the end of each daily roundup. They seem to be based in Florida, so a lot of news revolves around that state.

Well, I think that's enough for today. Maybe I will post some more another time. There are also the sites I mentioned in my previous post, so check them out as well.

Widowers in the Movies

***** Movie Spoiler Alert *****

I took my girls to see "Nim's Island" last week. Good movie

overall, but I can't help to think of how they portray widowers and their families. (something personal here). This is the second recent movie that I've seen that has a widower as one of the main characters, the other was "Enchanted". By the end of both movies the widower dads were attached/married. Hmm, if only real life was that easy.

In "Nim's Island", the father hooked up with his daughter's favorite author. A dad and daughter out in the middle of the ocean, and an agoraphobic author from San Fransisco meet. Wow, that was easy. This was computer dating at its very best (worst?). The daughter seems to set them up too. (Come on girls get your acts in gear... ☐)

Now all I have to do is set up some sort of research on a south sea island (doesn't sound too bad), and I will be able to find a future Mrs. Somehow I don't think things are ever that easy.

And on to "Enchanted". I enjoyed this movie, and all the ins to other "Disney" shows. Cartoon characters come to life in New York. Of course the beautiful princess meets up with the widower, thanks to his daughter (again, girls, you aren't working things right!!!). Singing and Dancing ensue. At the end through many trials and of course defeating the "Evil Stepmother", the widower and princess are together. One happy little family.

Then of course there is another widower meets girl picture. Can anyone say "Sleepless in Seattle"? This time the son of the widower calls up a radio talk show to get dad a wife. Cross country trips occur, and they walk off to what is assumed another happy family, Hollywood style.

I will admit that "Sleepless in Seattle" did a admirable job of actually portraying what a widower goes through, at least if you have enough money to pull up roots, and have the luck and or skill to get another high paying job in another city.

Yes, there were many a night that I didn't sleep, even less than my normal sleepless patterns. Yes, I've daydreamed about talking with my late wife. Yes, I had to get up every morning and remind myself to breath. I don't normally need to remind myself of that anymore, but it was there. There were many things I have gone through that were in that movie. This in itself gets my vote for a good movie. Most movies I've seen with widower or widows don't even touch the problems with losing a spouse. It is for good reason that losing a spouse is on the top of most lists of traumatic life events.

My last question. Why are a lot of movies about hooking up widowers? Doesn't that fly in the face of all the "Evil Stepmothers" of fairy tale fame?

SPLASH! It's Mr. Woodcock in Real Life

We went kinda crazy with the movies this weekend... We watched the 1984 classic [Splash](#) with the kids, and we also took in [Mr. Woodcock](#) and [Dan in Real Life](#) (for the adults). [Splash](#) is a [Tom Hanks](#) and [Daryl Hannah](#) movie about a mermaid who leaves the ocean to come to New York city and fall in love with Tom Hanks. It sounds dumb, but it's actually pretty well done and a movie with substance and heart. The special effects of her fins aren't bad either, considering they're over 20 years old and most likely made without computer assistance. Since I haven't seen the movie since I was a kid, I was wondering this time around about how many takes it took to film the underwater scenes... mainly the one where Daryl Hannah's character looks on a map in a sunken ship to find where Tom Hanks lives. Also, there's a scene in the movie where they

are trying to choose a name for the mermaid, since her name is unpronounceable in English. They're walking down a New York street, and Tom Hanks mutters, "where are we, Madison..." to which Daryl Hannah replies, "Madison, I like Madison." That was a joke in the movie at the time, that the mermaid was named after a street in New York, but nowadays, the name Madison is almost TOO popular. We had about 4 Madisons or Maddies in a play we directed last year out of 21 kids! Anyway, I would recommend this as a good family movie, especially for little girls. There is actually some nudity (female rear end), and I could have done without a few of the kissing scenes, but overall, it is good family entertainment. I wonder if it would have gotten a PG13 rating if it had come out a few years later? I know there is a [Splash Too](#), but judging by the lack of returning actors, I haven't bothered to check it out. After a quick lookup on [imdb.com](#), I found that it got a whopping 3.0 rating with only 170 votes. Also interesting is that Madison the mermaid in [Splash Too](#) is played by [Amy Yasbeck](#), who is nowadays best known for being [John Ritter's](#) widow. She was good in her bit part in [Pretty Woman](#), but still... I wonder if I should bother getting it from the library for the kids? Also in the original [Splash](#) is [Eugene Levy](#), who plays the bad guy trying to expose the mermaid – literally, by throwing water on her in public. This must be one of his first movies; I think he was a relatively unknown actor back then... Also, the late, great [John Candy](#) is hilarious as Tom Hanks' party animal brother, and those two have great chemistry in the movie... but on to the adult movies... ahem, I'm talking about the movies we watched without the kids...

Mr. Woodcock is a comedy starring [Billy Bob Thornton](#), who came no where near to reminding me of his character in [Sling Blade](#) – that's probably why he was nominated for an Oscar for that performance. I wasn't expecting much from this movie, but it was actually worse than I thought. It wasn't horrible, and I didn't feel like I wasted my time watching it, but it wasn't

very funny, and there wasn't much to get from it. For one thing, I thought they would make the Mr. Woodcock character a little more nasty. As it turned out, he was really only nasty to little kids, which is still pretty bad, but I thought we'd catch him being nasty behind his girlfriend's back. Let me back up for a minute and give a plot synopsis – Mr. Woodcock is a horribly nasty gym teacher who terrorized kids so badly that a former student uses his experiences as fodder for an inspiring self-help book he wrote. This former student returns to his hometown in Nebraska to receive the “corn key to the city” only to find that his mom is happily dating Mr. Woodcock – his childhood nemesis! The successful author is played by [Seann William Scott](#), whose acting I wasn't thrilled with. His mother was played by [Susan Sarandon](#), and she was pretty good in the movie, given the character she had to play, who didn't have much depth. Like I said, I didn't feel like I wasted my time on this movie, but I don't know that I'd watch it again either. It definitely wasn't one of my favorite comedies.

Dan in Real Life is a touching comedy (just falls short of a dra-medy, I would say, not quite sad enough, thank goodness) about a columnist widower named Dan (the ever-awesome [Steve Carell](#)) who is raising 3 daughters alone. The girls seem to be about 16, 14, and 9. For starters, let's just say that this movie had me dreading my life in about 10 years – the movie depicted teenage girls as frightening challenges for parents! Anyway, Dan takes his girls to visit their extended family for a few days, and when he first arrives, he really falls for the ‘perfect woman’. He gets to his mom and dad's house, and wouldn't you know it, the ‘perfect woman’ turns out to be his brother's girlfriend. After a few days of torture... well, I'll let you watch the movie, I don't want to spoil anything for you. It's a really cute romantic comedy. If you have sons, you will be amused at Dan's daughters' antics. If you have daughters, be afraid, be very afraid! On another note, Steve Carell has beaten out Tom Hanks as my favorite

actor – he is just amazing and so fun to watch, whether it's in [the Office](#), [Evan Almighty](#), or Dan in Real Life. His characters never remind me of each other, and it's not like they're mentally impaired like Billy Bob Thornton in Sling Blade or Tom Hanks in [Forrest Gump](#) – sometimes those types of characters are actually easier to play since they have a very specific demeanor about them. Steve Carell plays 'regular' guys, yet he gives them such depth and character that it really helps draw you into the movie and / or show. I never watched the tv show [Get Smart](#), but with Steve Carell playing Maxwell Smart in the big screen version of [Get Smart](#) due this summer, you can bet I plan on checking it out! Dan in Real Life is funny and heartwarming, and it makes me look forward to having huge family get-together weekends at our house someday with the kids and their spouses and kids... providing we survive the teenage years of course – that remains to be seen!

imdb quiz

If you haven't been to the site imdb.com and you like and/or watch movies, I give you permission to take a break from my blog and visit it now: imdb.com

This site has everything about pretty much every movie: a list of the actors and crew involved with clickable links so you can see where else you've seen them if they look familiar or where else to find them if you like their work, trivia about movies, quotes, discussion boards, and much more. They also have a movie rating system for users, so you can see if a movie is going to be worth the time to watch it according to popular opinion. Imdb lists keywords for movies, which I've often thought would make a fun game. I've posted some below

for you to try. These are the keywords imdb has listed for some popular movies – I will give a hint – all but 2 are movies made pre-1990. Keep in mind that I didn't choose these keywords; imdb chose them for whatever reason and some can be quite strange! Let me know if you would like additional hints, I can give you genre, actors, or just random hints, happy guessing!

1. Punch / Kiss / Muscleman / Eggs / Fistfight
 2. Bikini / Used Condom / Champagne / Broken Window / Brother Brother Relationship
 3. Coming Of Age / Controversial / Fantastic / Wish / Wish Fulfillment
 4. No Opening Credits / Tragic Incident / Talking Animal / Copyright Infringement / Falsely Accused
 5. Planet / Concert Scene / Box Office Flop / Laser / Physicist
 6. Miniaturization / Shrinking / Remake / Sword Fight / Toy Soldier
-

ANOTHER forward?

I hope you're not getting the wrong opinion of me – I'm really not a big fan of email forwards... it's just that I get so many. I don't religiously forward every one to everybody I know. And I am certainly not superstitious and don't believe that I will get bad luck for not forwarding emails. But occasionally, I will follow the directions on a forward, or sometimes I even pass it on to my friends and family because I find something cute, fun, or just a little bit entertaining.

One popular forward is the “4 Things About You” forward. I’ve recently received this one for the umpteenth time (wish I had been keeping track), but I don’t mind since filling out questionnaires about yourself tends to be fun, I don’t know why... maybe to get a chance to think about your favorite things and put them in a list? Anyway, I’ve decided to post my answers here:

A) Four jobs I have had in my life:

Mommy

business owner

receptionist

office manager

B) Four movies I would watch over and over: (I’m just gonna put my favorites even though I wouldn’t watch them over and over – Forrest Gump is just too sad, but it’s still my favorite even though I haven’t seen it in years)

Wizard Of Oz

As Good as it Gets

Forrest Gump

Nanny McPhee

C) Four places I have lived:

Warrenville, IL

Lincoln, NE

Pioneer, OH

Wheaton, IL

D) Four TV shows I watch:

The Office – writer's strike is OVER – can't wait for new episodes!!!

Lost

Dr. Phil

Friends / Everybody Loves Raymond reruns

E) Four places I have been:

Orlando, FL

Washington, DC

Idaho

California

F) Four people who e-mail me (regularly):

Sue

Vickie

My mom

Elizabeth

G) Four of my favorite foods:

gyros off the spit

saganaki

spaghetti

cheese

H) Four places I would like to be right now:

home

somewhere warm

at a zoo

at an animal park

I) Four friends I think will respond:

Elizabeth

Jamy

Vickie

MB

J) Four things I am looking forward to this year:

The birth of our 4th daughter

having 4 kids

warm weather

the Cubs season

Gone Baby Gone

Saw the movie *Gone Baby Gone* the other night... Had a free rental at the video store; every once in awhile they call and give us one... but I hate standing there forever trying to choose a good movie! So we had *Saw IV* in hand, and my husband's like, you know, we really haven't liked the last 2 *Saw's* all that much, compared to the first one. So I said yeah, and I saw *Gone Baby Gone*, and since I'd heard it was

supposed to be good, we went with it. Besides, it got Oscar nominated, and I always like to be in on Oscar buzz... Not my kind of movie. Not that it was bad, but just a lot of dialogue and violence... not my kind of movie. It was entertaining, and I appreciated the twists and turns without seeing them coming, though I can't say the same for Hubby. We like to give movies we watch our own imdb (internet movie database – cool site!) ratings, so I gave this one a 6.2. Hubby gave it a 4. 2. I appreciated the movie for what it was, and I can't say much more without spoilers, so I won't. The bottom line is, if you like violent crime dramas with intense dialogue, this movie is for you. I personally have trouble following movies where they talk about a bunch of characters and the audience is expected to keep them all straight, but that's just me. A few plot inconsistencies, but my rating was kinda high because I did appreciate the complexity of the plot, even if it was a bit difficult for me to follow at times... so to quote one of my favorite movies, That's all I have to say about that.