

With A Little Bit O' Luck

One of my best [friends](#) posted on his blog that readers would get "bored" with his posts about his family and his love of it. However, I think it would be highly entertaining. I hope I don't bore anyone with my occasional posts about my awesome friends. Tonight, a bunch of us met at their house for an Oscar party. I must say that I was shocked after the final tally in which I was the winner. I usually don't do too badly at these things... I am pleased if I get a quarter of the categories correct. I do have a system that mainly involves paying attention to the news a week or two before the awards and I go from there. Luckily, *Slumdog Millionaire* did not let me down for the most part. In fact, I think I went against the movie a few times and lost.

There were a few sure things. I honestly thought that Heath Ledger MADE the Joker his own. An interesting point was made tonight. Does anyone recall the villain falling to his death in the theatrical release? If so, it was apparently edited out of the DVD release. Definitely a bittersweet victory. The Clown Prince of Crime was the best part of *The Dark Knight*.

Also, who would not vote for *Wall-E*? While I am a fan of two-d animation of old, I think studios like Pixar create very fun, noteworthy work.

I have often thought that costume pieces are the way to go when choosing which Costume Design movie to pick. Thank goodness *The Duchess* kept that belief alive.

As for the rest, many of them were pure pull them out of the hat guesses... some good... others not so good. Guess I was just lucky.

The Unborn Gran Torino

Luckily for us, Tuesday's date night was not hindered by the recent barrage of snow in any way. We ventured to the larger town nearby to see what all the Golden Globe fuss was about Clint Eastwood's latest movie, [Gran Torino](#) (they didn't have [Slumdog Millionaire](#)). But after the previews and especially when the movie started, it became painfully obvious that there was something wrong with the theater's sound – you couldn't hear the dialogue. My husband went to report it, and all that did was cause several loud popping noises and lengthy annoying electronic burps while they tried to fix it. There were 3 other people in the theater with us, and we all left – seemed like a movie where you really need to hear what the characters are saying. They offered our money back, but that wasn't really enough because we had spent \$7 on pop and popcorn that we wouldn't have bought if we weren't going to a movie. The incredibly flustered but sensible kid working the counter saw our point, and apparently his manager agreed, so they let us go into another movie AND get a refund – COOL! Earlier in the day, we had been up in the air trying to decide between seeing Gran Torino and The Unborn anyway, so I guess the choice was made for us – We only had 20 minutes to kill before a showing of [The Unborn](#).

The Unborn was just as I expected – a PG13-rated supernatural horror movie, not quite as good as others in the genre like The Ring, Shutter, or One Missed Call. There were some jump-out-of-your-seat moments in The Unborn, but it was obvious when they were coming, at least to me. I don't want to give away too much like an article did that I read in the newspaper, so I'll just say that if you like the supernatural horror genre, check out The Unborn because it's entertaining.

Back to the newspaper article I read... seems the little boy who plays a scary kid in the movie is from the area where I grew up, so they featured him in the suburban Chicago newspaper I sometimes like to read online – but they spilled a major spoiler about the movie at the end of the article! But anyway, that's another thing I enjoyed about *The Unborn* – it is set in Chicagoland, so I enjoyed the sweeping overhead views of the city and some of the familiar sites in suburbia. Apparently the screenwriter of *The Unborn*, David Goyer, has a fancy for Chicago since he also wrote *The Dark Knight* which was filmed in Chicago, although set in Gotham City. But anyway, enjoyable movie for what it was – I might have liked *Gran Torino* better, but I guess I'll have to see that one another time.

And that brings me to the Applebee's saga. We don't really like Applebee's. They try to tell us we belong there, but I don't buy it. Their food seems pricey for what it is, and we stopped going there when the kids are with us because their food takes *forever* to come out (that and the small fortune it would cost our family of 6 to eat there). My husband was given an Applebee's gift card for serving on the board of a local non-profit agency (no, I am not talking about the community theater – did you really have to ask?), which is really nice of the agency of course. We got the same gift card last year, and so back then we decided to give Applebee's another chance. Last year, we got some sort of bland pasta dish and an appetizer sampler and shared everything, but we left there hungry AND having to add money to our gift card in order to cover the check. Flash forward to now, and we find ourselves with another gift card. Time to give Applebee's another try, we decided; after all, how bad can it be? They have lots of corporate suits overseeing those kinds of places, so maybe they've implemented lots of changes in the past year to make it a better establishment. Not the case. First, our food took forever to come out. I had gotten a soup-and-sandwich combo, and the waitress came to tell me they burnt

the soup and it would be a few minutes while they made a new one. My husband wondered if that meant his food was sitting under a warmer while mine was re-prepared, and his concerns were legit because when he got his food, the shrimp was cold. Not only that, but they had given him the wrong kind of buffalo wings. So they apologized, and that's another thing about places like Applebee's that really bug me – the pesty fake gushy niceness. I do appreciate a friendly server, but the people who work at these places are way over the top... I will cite an example in the hilarious movie [Office Space](#) – there's a character in the movie who is Jennifer Aniston's coworker at a TGIFriday's type of place who acts just like these people... annoyingly and unrealistically enthusiastic about his job – funny stuff, but only in the movies.

So anyway, we're waiting for my husband's new wings when the manager comes out to say that they have now put the wrong sauce on them, and they'd have to make him yet *another* order. Honestly, what is the cook *doing* back there? Again, for the second time this day (see my Dawn's Great Idea post), my fears of starring in a hidden camera show run rampant... And what has happened to all the food that they've messed up? From just our party of 2, they must have had 2 orders of wings and a bowl of soup all go to waste. I've often thought that restaurants should have a deal with local homeless shelters, giving them their leftovers and food mistakes, but I guess that wouldn't be considered sanitary. I wish they'd change this; something tells me that food is food and many people would be very grateful for restaurant "leftovers"...

We calculated our bill correctly this time, and we were about to rid ourselves of the entire giftcard, when the waitress showed up to tell us that because of all the errors, they were going to give us the employee discount on the bill. That was really really nice of them, but that means we STILL HAVE \$ LEFT ON THE GIFTCARD for another trip to Applebee's! I told my husband, maybe we'll just stop in for a couple drinks


sometime, but of course, you can't use a giftcard on drinks, at least on alcoholic ones, and after trying their flavored tea yesterday, I won't be stopping in for any more of that – yuck! And in case you're wondering, both my sandwich and my soup were virtually tasteless, save for the cheese on top of the soup – that was really good!

[poll id="7"]

Time In A Bottle, Time On My Hands, Time After Time

This weekend was really weird. It started off Friday morning when I was asked to work on my day off (now I am working like 12 days in a row). Later, I went to the game night that I previously described (in my newly repaired automobile..l brake problems) where I learned that some friends were looking for a sitter for Saturday night. The next morning, I contacted them and said that I would be happy to watch the four kids. I get off at 4. The plan ALMOST worked out. Instead of a 12-4 shift, it was a 12-9 shift. I felt horrible. I immediately called and explained the situation. Hopefully, there will be other opportunities when I ACTUALLY know my schedule.

Today was a fun day. I only worked until 2 so another great friend and I went to see [Four Christmases](#) which was kind of cute. You can read taylhis' indepth [review](#). Some laughs, not the best movie ever made but it was worth seeing with a friend. We then went to Wal-Mart and spent an hour there wandering around. I ended up completing my [Batman](#) movie collection (yes, I even am the proud owner of the horrendous Batman and Robin travesty; however, I still lack the original

big screen adventure from 1966). Along with my [The Dark Knight](#)  DVD is a reproduction of the original comics in which the Joker and Two-Face are introduced. One strange thing about the comic originally published in Detective Comics Issue number 66 (1942) the District Attorney who became the scarred supervillain was named Harvey KENT. I'm not sure how long it took to change the name to Harvey Dent but this took away any confusion that might have been caused with [Superman](#)'s alterego of Clark Kent. That would have made for an interesting story.

Breaking records...

The newest Batman movie

[The Dark Knight](#) has been breaking all kinds of earning records. The powers of the movie industry do not think that Batman will break the current \$ record held by *Titanic*, a movie I never saw by the way (the boat sinks), but it has a good chance of catching up to the Original *Star Wars* movie.

But I did some searching, and found out that adjusted for inflation, *The Dark Knight* is currently in 58th place. The #1 show is *Gone with the Wind*. #2 is *Star Wars*.

Just some cool things I found out at [Box Office Mojo](#). If your interested in box office takes at all, this is one very interesting site. They had breakdowns on the days of the week, time of the year and movie ratings. I may spend a little more time there looking for trivial information. (That may help in some games!!)

Send in the clowns

At one time most people thought of clowns as those funny guys who somehow emerged by groups from very little cars at circuses. I realize that some small children were scared of the wild antics of clowns at circuses. This probably was the driving force of the dark turn that clowns took in movies. The latest clown prince was of course [Heath Ledger's "Joker" in "The Dark Knight"](#). But to keep your interest in clowns going, here is [EW's list of 18 TV/Movie Clowns](#).

I remember Bozo from my youth. One not listed was a local clown, I remember seeing him as a kid in his clown suit and in normal person form. He would always take time to talk to me in his clown voice, and he always had balloons to make balloon animals. His clown name was Quacky the Clown. I found a site listing for the for [Quacky](#) and a picture at the bottom of this [page](#), but I don't think it would be the same Quacky from my youth.

I found it... News story to share

Ok, all you Dark Knight fans, I want to know who would dress up as one of the Batman bad guys and then try to rob a movie theater of its Batman posters? Maybe he thought there would be many other dressed the same way, but this wasn't the first weekend of the show. Most of the movie goers that dress in costume will go on the first day, or at the very latest the first weekend. Well, it happened [in Detroit](#). What was he thinking?

Now most who know me, know that I love to talk about ways to commit crimes. Someday, when I grow up, I would like to write a decent mystery/murder story. I just have some problems with developing characters, that is a story for another day. I can come up with good plots, and even a way to write about the crime and throw out a few false clues. But never in my wildest dreams would I come up with this sort of crime. I mean at the very least this guy should have been robbing a bank, but no, he wants Batman stuff. And how does he try to get it? Dress up as the Joker, and steal it during the Sunday Morning show... Hmm... There are a lot less people at the movie theaters for those early Sunday shows, but guess what guy, you're going to stand out like a sore thumb in that Joker getup. He would have had a much better chance putting on a pair of Dockers and a dark shirt. That would have given him a chance of looking like one of the theater workers.

Oh well, it takes all kinds. I think he could make it in a Dumb crooks list somewhere.

American Psycho Hellboy... Never Mind

We managed to fit in some movie watching this week while the kids are with Grandma, and I was attempting to put them all together in a clever blog post title, but it wasn't to be. Probably my lack of sleep with the new baby and my recovery process has inhibited my creativity. I hope to be back in full swing soon, but it will probably take a few months, especially because once I'm feeling better, I have lots of stuff around the house I need to catch up on and as much as I would like blog posting to come first, it doesn't. As people

keep reminding me oh so helpfully, a c-section is major surgery ☐ Don't I know it.

So the 3 movies we saw this week are Hellboy 2, American Psycho, and Fortress.

I did not like [Hellboy 2](#). I actually would have left the theater, but I never got around to asking my husband if he wanted to and that was a good thing because he liked the movie. It gave me a good laugh when we were walking out of the theater and he told me he liked it because we always have the same taste in movies and I really didn't like this one. That also means I don't have much to say about it except that the Abe fish-like character reminds me of C3PO from Star Wars, and I can't believe the actor who plays Hellboy, [Ron Perlman](#), was also Vincent the Beast in the old [Beauty and the Beast tv show](#) from the 80's with [Linda Hamilton](#). I thought he was going to be some Andre the Giant huge guy wrestler type, but it turns out, he is just a regular actor. I suppose my impatience with this movie had to do with the fact that my infection flared up and I was raging with fever yet again in the movie theater. So even though I felt crappy and wanted to leave, I could not pass up a night out with hubby while the kids were away. Even if it was to see Hellboy 2... I'm just glad one of us enjoyed the movie.

Next up is a movie from the early 90's called [Fortress](#). It's set in the future – and it's always fun to see what people thought the future would be like when the movie was made over a decade ago – and revolves around a corporate owned underground prison (think Walmart does Alcatraz). The main characters are sent there when they break the “one child per couple” rule. They had lost their first child, and now they've been caught trying to have another, so they are both sent to prison, even though she is pregnant. This is a fun action-packed movie. When I looked it up on [imdb.com](#) after we watched it, I learned that it is actually a kind of cult classic movie and there are actually multiple endings.

Our version was the less happy of the endings, but I still liked the movie. It's kind of violent for early 90's, and if you look it up on imdb.com, don't let the keywords fool you. Let's put it this way, if I had seen the keywords first, I wouldn't have watched this movie, but in retrospect, I don't think there was really much adult stuff in it – just violence and gore, but they didn't overdo it like they do in some movies nowadays, like the Saw movies for instance. [American Psycho](#) on the other hand...

I will start by saying that [Christian Bale](#) was excellent in this movie. I wasn't so impressed by him when he was Batman in [The Dark Knight](#), but he definitely shows versatility and depth in this movie. He plays a Wall Street executive who is just about as big a jerk as one can be. Also, he has blood lust and likes to kill people in his spare time. The movie is very strange for reasons I can't quite put my finger on. For one, I was confused about what the movie was trying to be. I guess it's just a story about this man, an American Psycho. But at times throughout the movie, the music was strange, and it just didn't play like a normal movie. And then there were the constant 80's references. I guess it was supposed to take place in the 1980's, given the characters' huge cordless phones and constant talk of musical artists such as Phil Collins, Huey Lewis, and Whitney Houston. Why they would change the time period of the movie, I don't know, but they did a good job because if [Reese Witherspoon](#) (who is about my age and would have been a kid in the '80's) wasn't in it, I would have been convinced the movie was actually filmed in the '80's. And I have to say the end confused me a lot. I won't say more because I don't want to spoil anything, but if anyone who reads this has seen this movie, maybe you can answer a question I have. I don't think I'd recommend this movie since there are many disturbing scenes and it didn't seem worth it to me to sit thru them for what you get from the rest of the movie. I don't think I'm going to put it on my list of baddies however, but then again, Hellboy 2 isn't going on

there either. Just 2 movies I didn't really like and wouldn't see again, but I don't feel like I wasted my time watching either of them, and that's always a good thing.

Bale Bails Out

I couldn't resist re-printing the following news item about the star of The Dark Knight, Christian Bale. Note the part about police not wanting to question him so they don't interfere with the premiere of the movie. Seems he took his Batman fight training a little too seriously?

LONDON, England (AP) – Batman star Christian Bale was arrested Tuesday over allegations of assaulting his mother and sister, police and British media said.

“Dark Knight” star Christian Bale pictured in London Sunday ahead of the movie’s European premiere

The 34-year-old actor spent four hours at a London police station before being released on bail.

British media had reported that Bale's mother and sister complained he had assaulted them at the Dorchester Hotel in London on Sunday night, a day before the European premiere of his latest film, “The Dark Knight.”

The Sun newspaper said police did not question the actor Monday because they did not want to interfere with the premiere of the movie.

Asked Tuesday whether Bale had been arrested, a London police spokesman did not refer to him by name but said: “A 34-year-old man attended a central London police station this morning by appointment and was arrested in connection with an allegation of assault.”

The spokesman spoke on condition of anonymity because force policy did not authorize him to be identified. British police do not name suspects before they are formally charged.

The force later said in a statement that the man had been released on bail pending further inquiries and told to return on an unspecified date in September.

U.S.-based representatives for Bale didn't immediately return messages seeking comment. Repeated phone calls to Bale's London representative went unanswered.

Wales-born Bale first made a splash as the child star of Steven Spielberg's "Empire of the Sun" in 1987. His screen credits also include "American Psycho," "The Machinist" and "Batman Begins."

In "The Dark Knight," Bale reprises the role of wealthy playboy Bruce Wayne and his crime-fighting alter-ego Batman, a brooding vigilante superhero still scarred by the murder of his parents.

The Warner Bros. film, which stars the late Heath Ledger as Batman's nemesis The Joker, took in a record \$158.4 million at the box office in its opening weekend in the U.S. last week.

Flashback!

In the last few days, my recovery from the emergency c-section has not been going well. I awoke from a nap Thursday night feeling awful, but luckily my medication kicked in, and I was able to enjoy the midnight showing of The Dark Knight – more on that later. Friday we met Grandma in South Bend Indiana which is halfway between Chicago where she lives and

Ohio where we live to transfer my kids for a week's vacation with Grandma. I felt awful all day, and I started shivering in the restaurant. I knew there was something really wrong when I went outside into the 90° oven and actually *enjoyed* it – uh oh.

When I got back to Ohio, I had an appointment with my doctor for her to take out my staples (yes, they had to actually use *staples* to put me back together, yuck) and that actually went well. Hardly hurt at all, just a little pinch, and it didn't take long. I brought up my symptoms to my doctor and she said everything was normal, and I believed her because when I had my other babies, I would heal up right away, so I figured these were all just side effects from the cesarean. But I took another nap when I got home and when I woke up, I felt like I was dying – that's really the only way to describe it. We took my temperature and it was 102.7°, so of course I had chills, the sweats, headache, and pain. A quick look on the internet gave us the diagnosis: mastitis – a common infection often suffered by breast-feeding mothers. We called the doctor and they wouldn't prescribe any antibiotics over the phone, so we headed to the hospital for the 2nd time in a week...

The admissions people panicked when they saw us coming in with the baby, but we quickly explained it wasn't him, thank goodness. Anyway, after a quick look, the ER doctor confirmed our internet diagnosis and sent us home with a prescription. But since all the pharmacies were closed in our town, they gave me some medicine right then and there. "Name and birthdate", they always ask at the hospital before they give you your meds, and I was like, FLASHBACK! I thought I was done with this for awhile! But for spending a Friday night in the ER, it wasn't so bad; we were actually in and out in an hour. If this had happened in suburban Chicago where I used to live, it would have taken 3-4 hours to wait our turn in the ER, and they would have wheeled a few body bags past us while

we were waiting. So today, I feel much better comparatively, and since the girls are with grandma, I slept until 11:30, so I'm sure that also helped. The antibiotics seem to be working already, and it was nice to wake up and not feel like I was dying, something that hasn't happened for a few days. I also feel better that now I think my recovery from everything is headed in the right direction, whereas when I felt crappy and didn't know why, it was discouraging because I was thinking, will I ever feel better?

My husband is peeved at my OB-GYN for not checking me more thoroughly during my visit with her yesterday. I agree; I did mention my symptoms and she was too dismissive, but being a man (especially one who won't listen to doctor's orders – if the doctor tells him to do something or recommends some sort of exam or test and he doesn't want to do it, he just won't) I don't think he understands how important to me it is to have a woman OB-GYN, and she is the only one in town. Besides, I do like her, she is gentle and she has been through 3 c-sections herself, so she knew exactly what to tell me about what to expect. If we do have any more children, there will be some debate about which doctor we will use. Well, anyway... off to Walmart to get my *third* prescription this week!

Early Morning BatPost

Before I get into the meat of my post, I would like to apologize to my new theatre chum whose name I could not remember until tonight. All I have to do is recall the name of a state capitol that shares its name with an omelet... hopefully, it does not come to that. I am terrible.

Anywho, *The Dark Knight* is an interesting problem. There are

pros and cons to the latest caped crusader adventure. As anyone who has access to any type of media knows, this is Heath Ledger's swan song. His Joker is the highlight of the movie. Everything about him just reeks of sadistic villainy. Just looking at him is enough to send chills up and down one's spine. But more than that, his entire characterization was evil to the core. I am sure that there will be parallels drawn to the performance (there already have been) and his untimely demise; yet, he was utterly phenomenal and should be remembered for it.

I found one aspect to be both a plus and a negative. I actually liked some of the depth of the key players. However, there was a bit (or A LOT) more than we needed. It seems that we knew the life story of EVERY character who has a name and this made the movie drag at times. Anyone who is remotely familiar with Batman knows that he fights to clean up the corruption within Gotham City... However, it seemed you could only count on one officer to be totally uncorruptable. I will say that it is a case of too much of a good thing. That being said, I believe that Mr. Nolan has gotten the characters and the overall atmosphere right in this film as well as *Batman Begins* (there are no nipples in the batsuit, and Bruce Wayne IS a playboy millionaire... although it is probably billionaire by now... and who is not above falling asleep in his own board meetings after an evening of "fun").

So, while it was lengthy and had lots of down time between action pieces I did consider it worthwhile to be among the first to see *The Dark Knight*. The major action scenes were fun to watch and as I keep commenting, Heath Ledger was phenomenal as the Clown Prince of Crime. The hype about that is totally true. Plus, it was awesome just to be among friends old and new (if I can just remember names). Also, I was the only person brave enough to bring my bucket for BYOB night at the movies. We did arrive before midnight after all ☐ .

I almost forgot to mention my favorite bit. DA Harvey Dent's

line:

*You either die a hero or you live long enough to see yourself
become the villain.*

Prophetic sentiment.