

The Night Listener Returns

Regular readers of my blog know that I thought [The Night Listener](#) was a terrible movie. It stars Robin Williams as a radio show host who... you know what, I don't even remember. For a plot synopsis, click on the link above. I was actually surprised that an A-list actor like Robin Williams would do such an awful movie as The Night Listener, but he did. After sitting through a movie like The Night Listener, my husband and I are weary of Robin Williams. However, 3 of our friends and fellow tangents.org authors all agreed that August Rush is a good movie, so we checked it out. And you'll notice that the title of this post is called, "The Night Listener Returns", so uh-oh. But that was more of a joke, and now I've explained it, so let's get on with my review of August Rush.

Not nearly as bad as the Night Listener; I wouldn't even call [August Rush](#) a bad movie. At the very least, it was really refreshing to see a movie whose target audience was over the age of 18 that was absent any filth whatsoever. August Rush is a cute story, but I think the movie could have been done a heck of a lot better in some ways. The tale follows the life of a young orphan, an almost magical boy, named Evan Taylor as he "follows the music" to find his real parents. There were a few circumstances and events in the movie that weren't believable in any shape or form, and even if you suspended your disbelief, the cheesiness of other aspects of the movie was annoying. The storyline is intriguing, and the acting is not bad, but there are a few things that would have to change about August Rush in order for me to consider it a great film. To name just a couple of those things, I couldn't get over the fact that this entire love story is based upon a one-night stand. Tactfully done – as I said, there isn't any filth in this PG rated movie, but still, knowing it's true love after just a one-night stand? Come on! And, I guess you'll have to see the movie to appreciate this, but would an

abandoned theater really still have its electricity working? Doubtful. Like I said, just a few examples of what I perceived to be holes in the plot, but there are other things about the movie that could have easily been changed, improving the film's quality. Doing so would add much enjoyment and just plain common sense to this movie. And Robin Williams was not the shining star in August Rush either; that was left for Freddie Highmore who played Evan – he was also wonderful playing twins in the great movie [The Spiderwick Chronicles](#) – another highly recommended flick. Williams seemed almost annoying in his role as a musical outlaw with his multiple piercings and goatee. I flip-flopped between deciding if his character “Wizard” was a good guy or a bad guy. Maybe that was the point, I’m not even sure.

The actor who played Buford Benjamin Blue (Bubba) in Forrest Gump played a preacher in August Rush, so I was wondering if the line, “Run August run!” was a reference to the extremely famous line, “Run Forrest run!” from the Oscar-winning film based upon the Winston Groom novel, one of my favorite movies (one that **I** highly recommend). Or maybe it was the filmmakers’ way of laughing at us for even thinking of an awesome movie like [Forrest Gump](#) during August Rush. Ok, it wasn’t that bad... I did appreciate the sentiment. But my lack of suspension of disbelief just got in the way of me getting swept into the magic of the movie, I guess.

Sorry for those who disagree with me, but I’m still glad you recommended the movie; it was definitely worth a screening – thanks!

You Get What You Paid For At The Fun Park

Not so fun. Every once in a while our local movie rental place calls us up and tells us we've won a free rental. It happened just this week, so we made a stop there yesterday, and since we had all the kids with us, my husband just ran in and tried to be quick. He came out with a direct-to-video horror movie called [The Fun Park](#). It actually sounded pretty intriguing since it's about some teens who were murdered by the ghost of a clown at an abandoned amusement park. We know of an abandoned amusement park that we've visited, so we thought the movie would be extra scary. But we were wrong. It was awful – the 3.5 rating it got on [imdb.com](#) was no lie. Free movie = boring clown. For the first, I don't know, about 30 minutes of the movie, they're not even in the fun park. The movie wastes time setting up the characters' back stories – and who cares about that? So finally they get to the fun park, and it's not even scary. The movie has no suspense. There aren't any chase scenes, basically the movie is the clown cutting off people's faces. I think. The movie was so slow, I was dozing constantly. But I don't think I missed anything... It was awful. I would put it on my movie stinker list, but maybe it's not fair because I wasn't fully awake... never mind, who cares, it was that bad. At least it was a free rental. And as far as my worries about being scared of clowns the next time we go to that abandoned amusement park, no problem – that movie was not scary at all. The only thing scary about it was the idea that all the people involved in making it thought it was a good idea!

So here's my updated stinker list of the worst movies I've ever seen:

The Devil's Rejects
Doomsday

The Night Listener

The Love Guru

The Fun Park

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. No one 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 [Texas Chainsaw](#) 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 Domsday 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 it? 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. Not very 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-finals. And then there was [George Takei](#), of former [Star Trek](#) 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 tap-dancing! 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...

Doomsday – Not Just a Clever Title

The movie [Doomsday](#) is about a virus that wipes out all of Scotland. I'm not really inspired to write much about it because I didn't like the movie. I can't even think of anyone I know who would. I wasn't bored at the theater, but you couldn't pay me to watch this movie again. First of all, it wasn't my type of movie. It was sci-fi and took place in the future, which is already 2 strikes against it as far as I'm concerned. And then there was the violence. The never-ending, non-stop, constantly gruesome and always bloody violence. People died in any and every way you can imagine

and some hopefully you can't. I lost count after 5 decapitations, all very graphic, and there were also scenes of people getting squished, burned alive, smashed by cars... like I said, you name a method of torture, it was in this movie. I was not expecting this. I thought the movie was going to be more like *Outbreak*, where people try to combat the virus together – I would classify that as more of a drama from what I can remember. After seeing *Doomsday*, I even had a dream involving severed limbs last night... thank goodness it wasn't nearly as graphic or bloody as the movie... I wouldn't even classify it as a nightmare. And don't go thinking I'm some kind of weirdo – if you were exposed to almost 2 hrs. of that kind of violence, you would understand why it came across in my sleep! But anyway, *Doomsday* definitely goes on my *Worst Movies I've Seen* list. So far the list consists of:

1. [The Night Listener](#)
2. [The Producers](#) (2005)
3. [Doomsday](#)
4. [The Devil's Rejects](#)
5. [Meet the Spartans](#) – I'm actually going to remove this one – it doesn't really qualify as a movie, plus I didn't see the whole thing. I KNEW it was going to be horrible, but my husband wanted to try it for some reason... we lasted for about 10 mins, if that.

This list is in no particular order. It's really difficult to do that because they were all horrible in their own unique ways. I liked the original [Producers](#) (1968), but I never even saw the whole remake with [Nathan Lane](#) and [Matthew Broderick](#) because I couldn't get past the first scene, which is rare for me, usually I will stick it out. *The Night Listener* was horrible because it was predictable and dumb, but I would much rather sit thru that movie again than be subjected to *Doomsday* and all the violence again... But when I saw each of them for

the first time, I was more entertained by Doomsday than by The Night Listener... so it just depends on the movie and what you mean by worst. But they are all worthy of being classified as the worst movies I've ever seen, for one reason or another, some more than others.

I was totally surprised that Doomsday ended up being so bad after seeing that movies.com gave it an "A" as a rating! I used to have this theory that I would go opposite whatever the critics said about a movie, and I think I will have to continue that trend. If I remember correctly, Ebert and Roeper gave Devil's Rejects "2 Thumbs Up". As I said, movies.com liked Doomsday, but I think the following excerpt of their critic's review just about says it all – I say, see this movie at your own risk, on a dare, or if for some reason you are getting paid. Otherwise, don't bother with it, don't know why we did!

From movies.com:

"Name something you want in an ultraviolent action thriller and this movie delivers it. Impalement, decapitation, decapitated heads being affixed back onto bodies only to then take arrows through the skull and fall off again, motorcycles decorated with human skeletons, cannibalism, exploding bunnies, insane car chases, wacky costumes, incomprehensible editing, an indestructible a hot chick heroine (Rhona Mitra, who looks like what would happen if Kate Beckinsale and Victoria Beckham had a baby that was the Terminator) whose hotness grows in tandem with the number of people she mows down in the name of truth. Does it suck? Sorta. Is that awesome? Absolutely. In terms of sheer excitement, it's the best movie of 2008."

NOTE FROM ME – Best movie of 2008? I don't think it's a coincidence that we're only in the 3rd month!