

# Goodbye Childhood Classics

FIRST, it was the recent [Red Riding Hood](#) which looked totally asinine. Now, I hear of not one but two updates of [Snow White](#). Finally today no less, I learn that “the boy who never grew up” is getting a new adult makeover. [Pan](#) is going to revolve around Captain Hook and his partner Smee who are on the lookout for the title character, a serial killer who preys upon young children... . DEPLORABLE! I mean, this story could just as easily been named something else, the names changed to protect memories of childhood gone by. No... I do not intend to watch any of these masterpieces but when I hear that classic tales which millions of children have grown up on are skewed into such utter trash, then I think it is worth a post!

I just have to wonder who the intended audience is for this rubbish. Certainly not the toddler set who have been read these tales for years. I would think that the wise (?) adult movie-goer would be turned off. Maybe it is the Twilight-obsessed teenage female set? I just have to shake my head at the very thought of such travesties. I thought the Jim Carrey *Grinch* movie was a disaster... at least that presented some resemblance of the classic Dr. Seuss tale.

Is this Hollywood’s attempt to bring originality to the big screen?

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## Sharing the Stage with a Monkey

Tonight was my first recital EVER and the first time I have been on a stage since I graced the halls of Baskerville Hall

WAAAAAAAAAY back in October. Last Thursday, K was not sure where in the program of 12 students she wanted to put CC and I. When I arrived at the Little Theatre, I found out that we would be last! "Who would want to follow you?" she asked. WOW!

I have always, ALWAYS, **ALWAYS** wanted to perform the showstopping "Master of the House" from *Les Miserables* and I am so glad that it was the piece I chose to do. Not to worry, plenty of other things I want to do, too. In the context of a recital, the song lends itself beautifully to a bit of audience participation. I needed two "Monsieurs" to come in at various times during the song. One was a fellow student (named Davy Jones) who was more than willing to fill the bill. The other was a little (or more so) hesitant about the bit since he had no advance knowledge. But happily, he played along. Thanks justj! I do think the guillotine in my old age would be the way to go.

If I had one critique, it is the size of the stage we performed on. The other 11 participants were all seated upstage and all the equipment limited the amount of movement I could do. I could always do more with the song no matter the size of the stage... so not really complaining!

The end result was **EXTRAORDINARY!** An audience member said that I was "the best Thenardier" she had ever seen. I'm not sure how the other 11 did but they sounded good. CC and I were in the green room until it was our turn. Kind of a grand introduction if you will. Either that or she did not want a slovenly innkeeper and his wife slopping up the stage the entire time ☐

Thank you CC, justj, Monkeyman, and K for making my first recital super! And in all the excitement prior to heading for the theatre, I forgot to take my rat poison but did take it before typing the post.

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# Widower's rant. You've been warned.

Just read a comic strip that involves a widower. His new love interest said the following words to him: "today was special... Because it was the first time I didn't see Lisa in your eyes.". Ok, that did it. Something in me tripped, and I knew I had a rant to write.

So many problems with those thoughts. But let's go back a bit in the life of a widow, widower, and just about everyone else. If you are not a hermit, there is a good chance that you will meet people who have great influence in your life. Whatever lessons you learn, you keep them close to your heart and mind. These things are important to you and they become part of who you are. To remove them is to remove part of your being.

Now, take the situation of a widow/widower who had a good relationship. (this was the situation of the characters in the comic strip, and my life for what it is worth.). They spent a good many years with one person, and that influence was immense. Then at some point, the relationship is torn apart and the surviving party only has memories to see them through what ever lies ahead.

The relationship, the following period of grief, and everything else that follows becomes part of who you are. But your only connection to your best friend, lover, parent to your children is in the memories you retain. If you believe that the eyes are the windows to the soul then a reflection of your dead spouse remains and is reflected out. It is a part you don't want to lose.

I guess if I heard those words from someone I felt close to, I

would need an explanation. The reflections of my late wife that you may see in my eyes, made me who I am. I am not looking to remove or replace those memories. I'm looking to build new memories. Hopefully the new memories will build on and add to the old memories. The minute I feel that someone is trying to replace my memories is the time I say so long.

What you see in me today is the result of all of my experiences in life. I cannot remove parts of my past and remain the same person I am today. I cannot live life tomorrow without changing who I will be. What you see in me tomorrow, is the result of all I experienced through today.

Rant over.

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## The Return of the Commodore 64?

It holds the Guinness World record for best-selling single computer model of all time, so who had a Commodore 64?



My family had one when I was growing up, and I enjoyed playing hours of games on it. I remember how novel it was that we could create a sign, card, or banner on the computer and then print it out – complete with pixel-riddled graphics and what-do-you-call those side strips on the paper with the holes in them that you tear off

and either discard or twist them together and make art out of them. My uncle had a subscription to Loadstar, which was a Commodore club of sorts – he would get magazines and new games monthly in the mail. I used to love some of those Loadstar games, unfortunately, I can't find them to play on emulators now. I really enjoyed an Activision game called Toy Bizarre, and my all time favorite game for the Commodore 64 was Maniac Mansion – I was addicted to it until I won it, and then I had to go back and win it with all the different character combinations. They did make a version of Maniac Mansion for the original Nintendo, but I was biased toward my Commodore version. I always thought that game would make a great movie (think Clue), and when I was younger, I tried to write the game into a novel but never finished it.

So what's got me thinking back to the 80's days of the Commodore today? I came across an article on [cnn.com](#) about how advance orders are being taken for the resurrection of the Commodore here in 2011. It's being made to look just like the Commodores of the 80's, but it will have today's computer capacities since the '64' in Commodore 64 referred to the unit having 64 Kilobytes of memory – about the equivalent of one long email, according to the article. If you'd like to read the article, [click here](#).

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## One More Episode

The end of a 10 year odyssey is upon those who have been able to follow the formative years of Clark Kent on the series *Smallville*. I like to think of the series as an Elsewhere's storyline (one in which much of what you know about a character is somehow altered). Characters were introduced earlier than what long time fans were accustomed to. The "No

Flights, No Tights" scenario concocted by the show's creators has been adhered to but something tells me that this may change as the young man finally fully accepts his destiny. If not, then I sense a HUGE letdown... even if it is for the last seconds of the series.

My favorite parts of the series were definitely the guest appearances of the past keepers of the Superman legacy. Dean Cain played a villain. Teri Hatcher played Lois Lane's mother (how ironic). Margot Kidder made an appearance. Get this... Terence Stamp (who played the EVIL General Zod in Superman I and II) has been the voice of Jor-El (Superman's father) for the last several years. Finally before his untimely tragic death, MY Superman, Christopher Reeve made two memorable appearances as Dr. Virgil Swan who taught Clark more about his Kryptonian heritage. The two episodes were definitely my favorite. It was if a torch was being passed from one man of steel to another. Not forgetting that Annette O'Toole (who plays Martha Kent on *Smallville*) portrayed Clark Kent's high school sweetheart Lana Lang in *Superman III*.

So, while not always the most faithful of shows to what has come before, it will be very strange not to see new episodes of the series after this Fridays 2 hour series finale. Which will leave one must see show on the air.

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## 5 Days More

Well... the last lesson before the recital went very well indeed. The second half of my duet adds much to the piece and it should come off with much hilarity. I have ALWAYS wanted to perform this piece and it was one of several I had picked out on my first lesson back in July (THANK YOU, C for recommending that I start taking them).

I would like to invite all of my fellow tangenteers to the event on Tuesday May 10th at the Little Theatre. The recital is divided into two groups. The first group of 12 takes the stage at 6PM, the second act (the one I am part of ) rises at 7:30. Because of the limited amount of seating and the number of performers, I am inviting only a select few family and really close friends.

Hopefully, many of you will be able to come cheer us all on. ☐

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## 10 Years

They say that time flies once you reach a certain age (or when you are having fun). To me the decade from 9-11-01 to the events which unfolded last night have flown by. I'm not sure if the killing of Osama Bin Laden will have the same, lasting impact as the destruction, devastation, and heinous mass murdering of that fateful autumn day. I wonder how many will remember where they were and how they found out about the death of the Al Qaeda leader. How many of us can remember where we were nearly 10 years ago? I was at home watching GMA

when the announcement hit and rushed out into the beauty shop to tell everyone out there.

Last night, I was reading on my nook and happened to flip to the local ABC network to watch the 11 o'clock news after everyone else had turned in. And I saw the blurb on the screen: Osama Bin Laden Killed. The news held me captive for the two hours it was on. People in front of the White House cheering "USA, USA!" It really was like the gathering, camaraderie, and patriotism felt by so many hours and days following 9/11. Kind of an awkward feeling: although most of us feel glad and grateful that the murderer was silenced somehow, the Christian in me questions if killing him is justified. However, in my opinion, the feeling that the head of this organization of pure EVIL is gone THIS time and in few other situations justifies the operation.

However, we should not be so quick to celebrate too prematurely. My cousin came downstairs last night and I showed her the news and told me that her husband was informed that the military is on alert. They did not know for what.

Her husband is not officially out of the Army until May 8th (or somewhere thereabout) and could still be called and returned to duty. Who knows what retaliation the sects of Bin Laden supporters could exact?

But until then... God bless our military forces. May the thousands left in mourning during this war find whatever closure they can.

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## Easter 2011

Easter is definitely a favorite holiday of mine. Can't be THE favorite because nothing beats Christmas, but it's proven to



be even better than Halloween these days. No matter how you celebrate Easter, there is always lots to do this time of year, and I think our family found the perfect balance between celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the traditional kids' stuff like Easter eggs and bunnies.

Every year, our community has an Easter egg hunt, and my kids always love it. My oldest is now too old to participate, but I was proud that she chose to come along with us and that she was a HUGE help with the little ones. Our community's Easter egg hunt is more of a candy scramble now. They used to have it in the park, and the volunteer teens from the high school would hide the candy all around the park, but they got tired of having to move the event indoors at the last minute because of inclement weather. With Easter being in April, you just can't guarantee a sunny, dry, Saturday morning without muddy ground in which to hide the Easter surprises. So now they have it in the middle school gym, and while they can't exactly hide the candy, the kids seem to love it all the same. If the kids find a piece of candy with a colored dot on it, then they win an extra prize, and 2 of my 3 kids did just that – those of you who know our family can guess who was the one with the (as always) bad luck – poor kid.

At church the following day, we had two special guests join us – one friend who doesn't go to church but began to come after falling on hard times in his life, and a new friend who is also going through tough times and looking to switch churches. I'm so happy to report that New Friend now calls our church her church home – she and her kids really like it! Also, Friend #1 has been coming to church every week since! God is amazing!

Monday, we were invited by some friends to attend "The Living Last Supper", a show near Fort Wayne Indiana staged solely for God's glory – to depict the last days and the death and Resurrection of Jesus. It was an **awesome, powerful** show; one I **strongly recommend**. This will be an annual tradition for

our family for sure! Especially since all 4 of our children were moved by the performance, and we didn't even need to use the child care!

Friday saw the annual kid-friendly tradition of egg coloring, and I think this was really the first year we've done egg coloring with a little BOY in the house. Our son is 2, and what a difference there was between his rowdy excited way of dropping the eggs into the colors versus his sisters' delicate quest for prettiness in their egg designs. Our son barreled through his allotment of eggs so quickly that his sisters were still working on theirs when he was done, and this is what happened:



After dinner, our family sat down in a circle to do another one of our favorite Easter traditions: [Resurrection Eggs](#). It's a set that was given to us by my sister last year, and I have to remember to tell her how much we enjoy doing this every year. We even lent our set to some friends this year for them to enjoy! It comes with a booklet, and we take turns reading the little paragraphs that tell the story of Jesus' death. The booklet asks questions and gives you places to pause, and you open each of the 12 eggs when prompted. Each of the different colored eggs contains a little something that represents the part of the story that was just read, and we have kids take turns opening eggs. It's a wonderful way to combine the eggs aspect and the spiritual meaning of Easter into a fun-filled educational family activity, and we love it!

Saturday morning the kids got a nice surprise – the Easter Bunny had visited early and hidden their gorgeous eggs! I think the Easter Bunny thought it would be too much for us to search for eggs while trying to get to church on time Sunday morning, and he was right ☐ Oh, here's a pic of the kids with their eggs; Dude is still recovering from his egg coloring tantrum:



After the egg hunting , we attended a fun Easter event at the community theater up the street, and the weather actually cooperated. There were Easter egg hunts, games, lunch, and plenty of prizes for everyone, and the kids had a blast. We returned home and made a last minute decision to check out another Easter drama at a friends' church.

It seems that the Easter Bunny made another visit to our house on Saturday night since Sunday morning the kids woke up to a laundry basket for each of them full of surprises. We went to church, and I enjoyed a whopping class size of 13 first-graders to teach! Problem was, all of their jacked-up-on-candy brains could only think about the other aspects of Easter, and we had difficulty doing some of our planned activities. It's often difficult to accomplish much when I have a class of that size anyhow, so I took it in stride and we went to the gym early to run around and burn off some of that sugar! At adult worship, we were blessed to see enough friends join us so that our group filled up an entire row! It's not about quantity, but it was amazing to see some friends there who don't regularly go to church and some whom

we've been inviting for years and haven't come until now. I am so excited to see what God is doing in the lives of those I care about!!!

We went out to brunch, took a family nap, and then we took the kids to the movies. No, we didn't see Hop, which might have made sense for Easter, but our older kids have already seen it. So we took in Rio, which is a cute family movie about a couple of rare parrots – fitting for our family since we reside with a jerky parrot of our own, and we had fun.

Overall, one of the best Easter seasons ever; actually, this season just keeps getting better and better every year, especially as I become aware of what the season is all about and how to really celebrate it. I am truly blessed!

So a belated happy Easter to everyone! I hope you all had a wonderful Easter and have many more to come! Celebrate Easter, celebrate Jesus, celebrate love, celebrate family – Easter is great & we have God to thank!

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## Life Goes On

There's not a lot to write about in my life. I tend toward things remaining the same in my life, nothing really new that I haven't already mentioned in other writings (back when I used to write...). Still at the same job, doing the same thing, going to church, leading 4th and 5th grades, haven't been in a show since December, still never go out socializing, etc. As retrogaming me I did get two new products toward that end. Well, one has been ordered but not shipped yet as they never emailed me on it. That would be a small bluetooth game controller called the Zeemote that I understand actually works with my phone. You see, my phone has crippled bluetooth

(oddly by HTC, not AT&T) that doesn't allow most game controllers to function. People have bought and used Wiimotes with Android, but any phones like mine that use HTC Sense cannot use this and other controllers. In fact the one I ordered won't work as a controller, but as a generic input device that replaces the touch keyboard. As such, it has to be enabled only when used, then turned off when done so the touch keyboard will work again. Oh, well. The other item I ordered and have been using is a Supercard DSTwo for my DSi. This allows me to play older games on the DS, though it lacks good Atari and Genesis emulators, and some emulators don't exist at all like Intellivision and Atari 5200/7800. Of course newer devices like Playstation, Saturn, N64 and later generations can't be reasonably emulated on the DS.

So, other things? I have my eye set on a musical production called Noah next fall (same group as Wonderful Life), or if not MoS will be doing Dracula the Musical, another co-production with another group like they just did for Jesus Christ Superstar. Six weekends- wow. I just went to see it today- it actually wasn't that bad. I think they toned down the original to make it less disrespectful of our Lord and Savior, but there were still a few of those elements there. I suppose there is only so much one can do without starting to rewrite it. It's a little surprising though that they did anything at all, not being a Christian group. Do either of my readers happen to know if there are character roles in Dracula besides the title role? I fully expect that role to go to their resident lead. I suppose I am not a romantic lead type in any event, which is part of the role, in a way. Still, he is part character like Jekyll and Hyde (same writer by the way) so who knows? Maybe the lead will be busy with other things.

On a similar note, can anyone see me as Archibald in Secret Garden? That's a role I still want to do at some point if the show isn't completely dead. There's also Les Mis, but there

is truly small hope in that show for the foreseeable future.

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## No More Truth, Justice, &

the AMERICAN way.” In [Action Comics #900](#), the Man of Steel renounces his U.S. citizenship to embark upon a more global “neverending battle”. Quite a milestone in the 72 year life of the superhero who was sent to Earth from a doomed planet, raised in America’s heartland by a kindly midwestern farm family who would instill within their adopted son the morals and ethics which would become his greatest weapons, and finally become the World’s Finest while disguised as a mild mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper. Flight, near invincibility, X-ray vision, and all the rest could be used for other things than engaging the likes of Lex Luthor, Doomsday, and Bizzaro if not raised in a loving environment.

Yes, I know that opinion could be debated infinitum but still...

In other Super-related news, Brandon Routh (rhymes with *south*) and Sam Huntington who played Superman and Jimmy Olsen, respectively in *Superman Returns* are teaming up in a new zombie-hunting film. Routh plays detective Dylan Dog in the aptly titled *Dylan Dog: Dead of Night*. Judge for yourself, but it looks like the curse may have claimed its latest victim.