

## **The Movie (2012)**

Houston Hodges, for Writer's Corner, WLRH Radio Huntsville, AL USA

Here I am, at the complete mercy of a total stranger, all because of my grocery cart.

When I go to the grocery store, see, I sometimes get a movie from the kiosk outside the store; they're fairly current, and very inexpensive -- at a dollar twenty-nine a night. I said "inexpensive..." unless you leave the disk in your grocery cart. Then the next person to get that cart gets your movie -- to watch, or to take back to the store. Or... and this is that worst-case scenario ... to keep forever, for their very own.

If you don't get it back to the kiosk, that daily tab mounts up for nearly three weeks -- and eventually they bill you about twenty-five bucks and call it yours.

Could be worse, I guess -- in theory they could keep on charging you forever, a buck-a-day, and it would eventually come to rival the national debt.

That's my fantasy fear, of course -- a carefree movie fan, intent on increasing their world-famed collection of movies, humming blithely... and watching my movie every time they want to... forever. Or -- and this is the hope -- maybe they'll do the right thing, and watch it -- or not -- then take it back to the grocery store in a day or so, just because it's the right thing to do.

I'll find out when the credit card bill comes in, to see if that extra charge is on it... which ought to be labelled: "Sheer stupidity, twenty-five bucks."

Come to think of it, that transaction is a symbol of a whole lot of our lives, isn't it? We're always subject to the whims and whines of strangers, and their lives may intersect ours at any time. That speeding car in the other lane is only three feet away from us, when it passes... and we count on it's doing that. The house we pick to live in may be in the path of tornado, or hurricane, or smack-dab on top of a quakey seismic fault. When the person next to us sneezes, no telling what organisms waft our way.

Everything connects to everything, doesn't it? We need to live like that.  
Hey... take that movie you found back to the store, hmm?

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Houston Hodges can be found helping most Sundays at the Big Cove  
Presbyterian Church out in Hampton Cove.