



It's a Gift

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It's a Gift is Norman McLeod's classic comedy of disasters, in which W.C. Fields plays a general-store proprietor who buys an orange-ranch by mail and transports his family to California. This study features a brief production history and detailed filmography.

It's a Gift Details

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From Reader Review It's a Gift for online ebook

Realini says

It's a Gift, written by Jack Cunningham and others, including W.C. Fields who stars in the comedy

A different version of this note and thoughts on other books are available at:

- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list...> and <http://realini.blogspot.ro/>

It's a Gift is really a ...gift for the audience.

A lovely comedy, included by TIME Magazine on its list of films, The All-TIME 100 movies that you can find at:

- <http://entertainment.time.com/2005/02...>

The hero is Harold Bissonette and he is played exceptionally by W.C. Fields, who has also been involved in the writing of the script.

Mind you, the way the name is pronounced is indicated by Amelia Bissonette, who is hard, if not impossible to satisfy.

Maybe the best one liner that can describe how domineering and impossible this wife was is the following:

- "Amelia: Wake up and go to sleep!"

No wonder that Harold Bissonette has to apply what the ultimate expert on marriage calls "one of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse".

John Gottman, the best authority on couples has a classic book in which he explains what to do and what to avoid in a relationship:

- The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work should be the bible for couples

And the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are:

1. Contempt
2. Defensiveness
3. Criticism
4. Stonewalling

The last one is the solution used by Harold, even if the results are not positive, the reason why they are listed above...

Since he is going to inherit a small fortune, Harold is determined to buy an orange grove and move to California.

This could be a mistake, even if a common one, for many people imagine that if they only moved near the ocean, in the pleasant weather of the West coast they would be as happy as could be and for ever and ever. Positive psychology studies have demonstrated that this is a myth that is exposed in two other classics of this science:

- Stumbling Upon Happiness by Harvard Professor Daniel Gilbert and The Myths of Happiness by University of California Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky

To make things complicated, Mrs. Bissonette is opposed to the idea and so Harold has to make the move behind her back.

Before that, there are disasters in the shop they own and the husband manages, where a blind man destroys goods and smashes two windows, a child adds to the havoc and damage and a client has to leave without his kumquats.

The dialogue is funny and entertaining:

“Harry Payne Bosterly: You're drunk!

Harold: And you're crazy. But I'll be sober tomorrow and you'll be crazy for the rest of your life.

.....

Amelia: As I was saying - are you listening to me?

Harold: Eh, yes dear, yes dear, yes dear.

Amelia: For twenty years, I've struggled to make a home for you and the children.

Harold: That's right dear.

Amelia: Slaving day-in, day-out, to make both ends meet. Sometimes I don't know which way to turn.

Harold: Eh, turn over on your right side, dear. Sleeping on your left side's bad for the heart.”

Harold is an endearing man, with a lot of patience, resilience and grit.

The psychology studies that I keep reading reveal that grit is about twice as important as IQ, resilience being the real key for success.

And Harold Bissonette is a funny, likeable, sympathetic, enduring, persistent and finally successful man.
