What a putrid last month of movies we had in January. It was as bad as I've ever seen, and I'm used to bad Januarys…just not on this level of suck.

Well brace yourselves, because February is stacking up to be almost as bad, without even a charming romantic comedy that my wife might enjoy (trust me, she has no desire to see Adam Sandler as a serial liar trying to pick up a Sports Illustrated swimsuit model).

The only good thing I can tell you is that March is looking pretty decent.

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News and Rumors

Several new blurbs to put in for this month.
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~ We have a new Superman, and just like our new Spider-Man, he's British. Henry Cavill, best known to most as Henry VIII's BFF Charles Brandon in Showtime's "The Tudors", will done the tights and cape in 2012's "Superman: Man of Steel", to be directed by Zack Snyder ("Watchmen", "300") and produced by Christopher Nolan. Supposedly there will be no Lois Lane in this one, but the short list for the female lead included Diane Kruger ("Inglourious Basterds") and Rosamund Pike ("Die Another Day", "Surrogates")

~ Turns out that Ridley Scott isn't "really" going to do a prequel to "Alien". Well…sorta not. What started as a prequel is now called "Prometheus" and it is supposed to be a sci-fi movie that's a completely separate story…except that Scott is saying that there WILL be some tie in to "Alien". OK. What I do know is that the star is Noomi Rapace, who blew everyone away as Lisbeth Salander in the "Millennium" series of movies that started with "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo".

~ Rumors are out regarding a movie adaptation of Stephen King's "The Stand", which was last adapted in 1994 as an ABC miniseries starring Gary Sinise. King himself has said that he thinks Jake Gyllenhaal would be an excellent Stu Redman…and that he'd love to see Billy Bob Thornton as the Trashcan Man.

~ More casting news from Tim Burton's upcoming adaptation of the goth soap opera "Dark Shadows". Eva Green, always to be remembered as Vesper Lynd in "Casino Royale", will have the lead female role of the witch Angelique. She will be playing opposite of (as mentioned earlier) Johnny Depp (who else?) as Barnabas Collins.

~ Ben Affleck is in early talks to direct "Argo", a dramatization of the 1979 Iranian Hostage Crisis.

~ At the end of this month, we'll do our traditional Oscar Run-up. I'll be reviewing the Best Picture nominations (or at least recapping the ones I've already reviewed, with new reviews of the ones I haven't previously published), and then I'll get around to my predictions…which have been pretty accurate the last few years, if I do say so myself. For this year, it's looking right now like a horse race down to the wire for Best Picture between "The King's Speech" and "The Social Network"…and a runaway win for both Colin Firth and Natalie Portman for Best Actor and Best Actress.

February new movie releases

Movies That Have a Chance at not Totally Sucking

Gnomeo & Juliet

February 11

Starring: the voices of James McAvoy, Emily Blunt, Maggie Smith

Plot : An animated version of Shakespeare's play, where Gnomeo and Juliet are would-be lovers from rival garden-based families..

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: OK, this one at least looks cute, but the buzz about it is that it's certainly no "How to Train Your Dragon" or "Tangled"…to say nothing of the Pixar animations, which are always in a whole nuther category. Still, with football season ending, this wouldn't be the worst thing to do if you had to drag the kids out for something.

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I Am Number Four

February 18
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Starring: Alex Pettyfer, Timothy Olyphnt, Dianna Agron

Plot : Nine alien teens come to Earth after their planet is destroyed by an enemy species. But soon discover that their enemy is now after them on Earth.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Some seriously major buzz coming about this little sci-fi film. The trailers look good, and the concept is at least interesting. Let's just hope they can pull it off without it becoming another tedious "Twilight" or "Percy Jackson" level snooze fest.

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Movies That Might not Suck Too Badly, but Probably Will

The Eagle

February 11

Starring: Channing Tatum, Jamie Bell, Donald Sutherland

Plot : In 140 AD, Roman soldier Marcus Aquila embarks on a quest to restore the reputation of his father, the one-time commander of Rome's Ninth Legion, who disappeared in the mountains of Scotland twenty years earlier.
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View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: It's about Scotland…so it can't totally be crap, can it? (). Maybe it won't be too bad, as it's the director from last year's excellent "State of Play" reuniting with the screenwriter from "Last King of Scotland". But I'm not sure…the trailers just make me think of a cut rate knock off of "King Arthur", without Keira Knightley at her hottest.

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Unknown

February 18

Starring: Liam Neeson, Diane Kruger, January Jones

Plot : Dr. Martin Harris awakens from a coma, only to discover that someone has taken on his identity and that no one -- not even his wife -- believes him. With the help of a young woman, he sets out to prove who he is.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: I just don't have a good feeling for this one, and I can't really put my finger on it. I love Liam Neeson, and after "Taken" and "The A-Team", I know he can pull off the action adventure thingy. It's just that the plot seems so out there, and I get bored with the lame plot device of "amnesia". I'm hoping that I'm wrong, but we'll see.

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Shelter

February 25

Starring: Julianne Moore, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Jeffrey DeMunn

Plot : A Forensic psychiatrist discovers that her new patient has multiple personalities -- all of whom are murder victims. Shaking her faith and beliefs, she works to uncover the secret buried deep within his mind in order to prevent more killings.

No Trailer Available

The BeerBuzz: This probably should go into the next category, as most are dismissing this as just a standard issue thriller. But I'll give it a little leeway based on the actors. Not that I plan to see this at the theater or anything…but it might be a decent rental in six weeks.

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Movies That Are a Lead Pipe Cinch to Suck

The Roommate

February 4
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Starring: Minka Kelly, Leighton Meester, Cam Gigandet

Plot : College student Sara finds her safety jeopardized after she's assigned to a dorm room with a new roommate, Rebecca.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: So the chick from “Friday Night Lights” is stalked by the chick from “Gossip Girl”. Unless they are going on with a full knock off of the infamous “Black Swan” scene with Mila Kunis and Natalie Portman, I have no desire to see one second of this. And obviously, they don’t think anyone else would either…which is why it’s being released on Super Bowl Weekend; always a disastrously bad weekend for the box office.

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Sanctum

February 4

Starring: Rhys Wakefield, Richard Roxburgh, Ioan Gruffudd

Plot : A diving team experiences a life-threatening crisis during an expedition to an unexplored cave system.

View Trailer
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The BeerBuzz: Producer James Cameron loves his technology and doing underwater stuff. Too bad he couldn't get an actual script around this lame project.

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Just Go with It

February 11

Starring: Adam Sandler, Jennifer Aniston, Brooklyn Decker

Plot : A guy convinces a mother of two to pose as his soon-to-be-divorced wife in order to woo the woman of his dreams

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: How stupid do they think we are? Oh, wait…it's an Adam Sandler movie, where watching a despicable person do obnoxious things is usually rewarded with $100 million at the box office. This one might break a record for Sandler on the "How Low Can You Go?" Scale.

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Justin Bieber: Never Say Never

February 11

Starring: Justin Bieber

Plot : A look at Justin Bieber's early life, his rise to fame, and behind the scenes of his 2010 tour.

View Trailer (I really wouldn't advise it…not unless you want to have all the testosterone drain out of your body).

The BeerBuzz: Justin Freakin Bieber. Just kill me now.

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Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son

February 18

Starring: Martin Lawrence, Brandon T. Jackson

Plot : FBI agent Malcolm Turner and his nephew Trent go undercover at an all-girls performing arts school after Trent witnesses a murder.

No Trailer Available (Imagine that)

The BeerBuzz: So why do they call it "Like Father, Like Son" when it's about Lawrence's
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NEPHEW? Why am I asking stupid questions about a movie that is only interested in being offensive to everyone on the way of picking up some quick bucks from people with no taste?

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Drive Angry 3D

February 25

Starring: Nicolas Cage, Amber Heard, William Fichtner

Plot : A felon breaks out of hell for one last chance at redemption: to prevent the cult who murdered his daughter from sacrificing her baby in three days' time. He's aided by a young waitress and her ex-boyfriend's muscle car, and together the duo will have to face down the leader of the cult, the police, and a killer known as "The Accountant" -- who wants to return him to the Devil.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Oh, look! It's a cross between "Gone in 60 Seconds" and "Ghost Rider". Oh, look! It's Nicolas Cage, a man who once won an Oscar for Best Actor, who now can't seem to turn down any crappy roll if it means a few more bucks to help him out of his bankruptcy.

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Hall Pass

February 25

Starring: Owen Wilson, Jason Sudeikis, Christina Applegate

Plot : Two married guys are given the freedom to engage in a week's worth of extra-marital affairs, though they get a little bent out of shape when their respective wives start having fun on their own, too.

View Trailer

The BeerBuzz: Judging from the previews, this may be even more offensive than “Just Go with It”. I’ve always thought that the Farrelly Brothers were two of the most overrated directors in Hollywood. They haven’t had a hit since “Me, Myself, & Irene”, their second major movie, and they look to be going even further downhill as they try to dig into Judd Apatow territory in this one…and just don’t have the talent to do so.

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New DVD/Pay-Per-View Releases

As mentioned in previous columns, these dates are when the movies are released to be purchased as DVDs, or released for DirecTV/Cable/Dish Network Pay-Per-Views. The actual release to Netflix or Blockbuster may be as much as 28 days later.

Compared to the last two months, it’s going to be a lean month for videos.

Let Me In – Feb. 1 – I’ll be watching this one this weekend. Slick remake of the spooky Swedish film about a young female vampire and her friendship with a lonely boy. Especially
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intriguing because of the two young actors; Chloe Moretz ("Kick-Ass") and Kodi Smit-McPhee ("The Road").

Conviction – Feb. 1 – Awards bait film based on a true story about a woman who goes to law school just to appeal the murder conviction of her brother. Hillary Swank and Sam Rockwell star in this film, which didn't get any awards nominations, and very little box office.

Life as We Know It – Feb. 8 – Stereotypical romantic comedy with Katherine Heigl and Josh Duhamel as two people who are forced to raise the infant of their recently deceased friends. An orphaned baby! What a laugh riot!

For Colored Girls – Feb. 8 – – More Tyler Perry hijinx about the lives of African-American women.

Paranormal Activity 2 – Feb. 8 - I thought the first one was an over-hyped bore, so guess what I think of this one?

Unstoppable – Feb 15. – – Best choice of the month. Denzel Washington and Chris Pine are great in this non-stop action popcorn thriller about a runaway train.

Megamind – Feb. 22 - Mildly amusing animated tale about a supervillian who now must take up the cause of good after the retirement of his arch-nemisis.

Due Date – Feb. 22– Robert Downey Jr proves that there are SOME movies that he stars in that I won't watch: The kind where he's paired with an idiot (ach Galifianakis) on a cross-country road trip.

Calendar Watch

High profile movies coming to a screen near you in 2011.

Trailers available wherever you see a hyperlink.

Rango – Mar. 4 – Animated story of a chameleon taking the role of sheriff in an old west town. Johnny Depp looks to be channeling his Hunter S. Thompson character from “Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas” on this one.

The Adjustment Bureau – Mar. 4 – Matt Damon and Emily Blunt as a rising politician and a ballerina being kept apart by a mysterious group.

Battle: Los Angeles – Mar. 11 – A marine platoon faces off against an alien invasion of LA. I guess these aliens didn’t have the “City Blaster” device that they had in “Independence Day”

Red Riding Hood – Mar. 11 – The fairy tale turned into a suspense thriller with Amanda Seyfried trying to protect her village from a werewolf. Fascinating concept, at least.

Limitless- – Mar. 18 – Bradley Cooper as a copywriter who discovers a top-secret drug that enhances intellect and other abilities.

The Lincoln Lawyer – Mar. 18 – Matthew McConaughey as a defense lawyer operating out of the back seat of his Lincoln Town Car, taking on a dangerous new case.

Source Code – Apr. 1 – An experimental government program sends a soldier (Jake Gyllenhaal) back in time, where he wakes up on the body of a commuter who witnesses a train bombing, so that he can find out who was responsible. Sounds like “Quantum Leap” to me.

Hanna – Apr. 8 – A 14 year old girl (Saoirse Ronan) is raised by her father (Eric Bana) to be an assassin. I’m intrigued by this disturbing looking film. It’s almost the movie that could have been had Natalie Portman’s Mathilda character actually started killing people at the end of

"Leon: The Professional".

Arthur – Apr. 8 – The Russell Brand remake of the classic Dudley Moore film. I think this is an early candidate for the worst movie of the year.

Rio – Apr. 15 – First big kid's movie of the year (I'm not counting "Rango" as a kid's film), about a domesticated macaw from Minnesota trying to take off for Rio de Janeiro.

Thor – May 6 – The summer blockbuster season kicks off with the Marvel comic superhero, played by Chris Hemsworth, and directed by Kenneth Branagh. Natalie Portman plays Thor's love interest, so it has that going for it, which is nice.

Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides – May 20 – Captain Jack Sparrow is back. Without Orlando Bloom and Keira Knightley, and with Ian McShane and Penelope Cruz. I haven't seen a more positive lopsided trade since Peyton Hillis for Brady Quinn.

The Hangover; Part II – May 27 – The boys are back…but in Thailand, not Vegas.

X-Men: First Class – June 3 – The origins of the X-Men, with Professor X and Magneto as younger men banding together. I really like the casting and the characters for this one, and have high hopes that it can get the franchise back on track.

Super 8 – June 10 – The latest big film from J.J. Abrams about an alien entity from Area 51 breaking free en route to an Ohio facility in 1979. An Ohio alien facility in 1979? Must have been in Cincinnati.

Green Lantern – June 17 – Here it is geekboys…the Holy Grail of your comic book fantasies.

Cars 2: - June 24 – It's from Pixar, so expect greatness.

Rise of the Apes – June 24 – James Franco as the experimental scientist who creates Caesar, the first talking chimpanzee, kicking off the whole "Planet of the Apes" thing.

Transformers: Dark of the Moon – July 1 – Please don't let this be as crappy as the last one.

Larry Crowne – July 1 – Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts in a comedy about a middle-aged man going back to community college after losing his job, and falling for a local teacher.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2 – July 15 – The End finally comes to this great franchise.

Captain America: The First Avenger – July 22 – Chris Evans, who played the Human Torch in the awful "Fantastic Four" movies, now becomes the famed WWII hero.

Cowboys and Aliens – July 29 – Harrison Ford and Daniel Craig as cowboys teaming with Indians to fight aliens in the 19th Century Old West. And Craig has a mysterious high tech blaster attached to his left arm. And he has no idea how it got there! I am SO there for this one.

The Smurfs – Aug. 3 – Just shoot me now.

Conan the Barbarian- – Aug. 19 – Another remake from the 80s that we'll probably wish hadn't been done.

Moneyball – Sept 23 – Brad Pitt as Oakland A's general manager Billy Beane. I really have no idea how this book could be turned into a movie worth watching, but we'll see.

Real Steel – Oct. 7 – Hugh Jackman as a manager/controller of real life, 10 foot tall Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots.

Footloose – Oct. 14 – Pushed back from 2010. We can only hope it gets pushed back to 3010.

The Three Musketeers – Oct. 14 – Another remake, but this one with Brits Matthew Macfadyen ("MI-5"), Ray Stevenson ("Rome"), and Luke Evans as the main three, with young Logan Lerman ("Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief") as D'Artagnan. Also with Christoph Waltz, Milla Jovovich and Orlando Bloom.

The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 – Nov. 18 – Only two more of these awful movies to go.

Hugo Cabret – Dec. 9 – Martin Scorsese directs the story of a 1930s orphan living in the walls of a train station.

Mission Impossible 4 – Dec. 16 – Tom Cruise sets the stage for Jeremy Renner taking over the role of the leader of the IMF for future movies. Well played, Tom.

Sherlock Holmes 2 – Dec. 16 – Robert Downey Jr., Jude Law, and director Guy Ritchie make another run at it.

The Adventures of Tintin – Dec. 23 – Steven Spielberg takes on the classic French tale, using motion capture animation.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo – Dec. 23 – English version of the outstanding Swedish film with Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara.