

A Refusal to Cave

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her existence. Reacting to that requires the powerful to behave in ugly ways in order to maintain the upper hand, so they do.

The film's debut at the Cannes Film Festival happened to coincide with the ouster of Brazil's duly-elected progressive female president, by business interests. The cast and director at Cannes protested those events as a coup, apparently reflecting deep divisions in Brazilian society. Braga

and the film's brilliant writer and director, Kleber Mendonça Filho, have spoken and written about the parallels between Clara and the Brazilian president, each being ousted from their homes. The tactics used by the developers in the film also feel like a metaphor for how economic power is sometimes exercised. Meanwhile, an opening section of the film grounds Clara's attachment to the apartment in her personal and family history, a very different lens for making decisions

about one's home.

The film's fall release in the U.S. now feels particularly resonant. The Brazil of this film has no heroes; Clara and her family are privileged and have benefited from their privilege in ways that they can't always see. We see the echoes of those power imbalances, too, and of the limited means the poor have for asserting their interests. There are some particularly poignant, though understated scenes involving Clara's housekeeper, whose young son was killed by a drunk driver and who reaches for ways to insist on recognizing his memory in the

face of unredressed injustice. Yet the film also contains some wisdom regarding how those without power can be and often are held to a standard of behavior that the powerful need only pretend to uphold.

Filho, Braga, and a uniformly excellent cast have assembled a canny film that has the power to stay with you for a long time -- not so much because of its plot but because of the time it takes with the perspective of someone who simply insists on standing up for what she actually thinks and wants, refusing to adjust who she is and what she wants to where

the wind is clearly blowing. The film's resonance is both particular to this one woman, and to the heat of the exchanges her resistance provokes. In the end, though she is sometimes angry, she is not primarily so. And she is only crazy in the eyes of those who can insist on a reality that does not really include her as herself.

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CALENDAR December 2016

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<p>12</p> <p><i>Barbara Emberley</i> born, 1932 <i>Hovercraft Patented</i> (1955) Poinsettia Day</p>	<p>○ 13</p> <p>National Cocoa Day <i>Susan B. Anthony</i> dollar coined in 1970</p>	<p>14</p> <p><i>First Miniature Golf</i> Course Opened, 1929 <i>South Pole Discover-</i> ed, 1911</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Bill of Rights Day Underdog Day <i>David McCord</i> born, 1897</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Beethoven's Birth- day (1770) <i>Boston Tea Party</i> Anniversary (1773)</p>	<p>17</p> <p><i>Wright Brother's</i> <i>First Flight</i> (1903) National Maple Syrup Day</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Wear a Plunger On Your Head Day <i>Baseball great Ty</i> <i>Cobb</i> born, 1886</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Oatmeal Muffin Day <i>Dickens' A Christ-</i> <i>mas Carol</i> pub- lished in 1843</p>	<p>◐ 20</p> <p>Games Day <i>Electric Light</i> demonstrated in 1879</p>	<p>21</p> <p>First Day of Winter Humbug Day Bright Side Day National Flashlight Day</p>	<p>22</p> <p><i>First Christmas</i> Lights, 1882 <i>Mercury Thermome-</i> <i>ter Invented</i>, 1714</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Roots Day <i>Federal Reserve</i> System established (1913)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Hanukkah Begins Christmas Eve National Egg Nog Day <i>Apollo 8</i> reached moon, 1968</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas National Pumpkin Pie Day</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Boxing Day Kwanzaa Begins National Whiners Day</p>	<p>27</p> <p><i>Ingri d'Aulaire</i> born, 1904 Visit the Zoo Day <i>World Bank</i> created (1945)</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Card Playing Day <i>Iowa</i> became the 29th state (1846) National Chocolate Day</p>	<p>● 29</p> <p><i>Texas</i> became the 28th state (1845)</p>	<p>30</p> <p><i>Tiger Woods</i> born, 1975 <i>Author Rudyard</i> <i>Kipling</i> born, 1865</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Year's Eve</p>	