SOFTWARE & TECH

With Six You Get Eggroll

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Introduction: A Quirky Title for a Chaotic Comedy

Few film titles capture the spirit of a movie as perfectly as the wonderfully odd **"With Six You Get Eggroll"**. Released in 1968, this comedy starring the beloved Doris Day is a delightful snapshot of late-1960s American family life, blended families, and the sheer pandemonium that ensues when two households become one. The title itself is a playful pun—a reference to a Chinese restaurant promotion that offers a free eggroll when you order six of something. Here, "six" refers to the combined number of children from two single parents who marry, creating a household of eight. It's a film that, while not as famous as some of Day's earlier works, has earned a fond place in the hearts of classic comedy fans. In this article, we'll explore the origins, plot, cast, cultural impact, and lasting legacy of this charming film, and why "With Six You Get Eggroll" remains a delightful phrase that still brings smiles decades later.

Origins and Meaning of the Phrase "With Six You Get Eggroll"

The phrase "With Six You Get Eggroll" is not only the movie's title but also a clever piece of marketing that perfectly sets the tone. The expression originated from an actual promotional gimmick used by some Chinese restaurants in the United States: purchase six of a particular menu item, and you'd receive an eggroll for free. The film's screenwriters, Gwen Bagni and Paul Dunlap, adapted this phrase to fit a story about two widowed parents—one with three children, the other with three children—who decide to marry. With six kids in total, the joke writes itself: you get an "eggroll" of chaos, laughter, and love. The title thus becomes a metaphor for the unexpected bonus that comes with combining two families: not a literal eggroll, but a hearty serving of happiness and humor.

The film's use of the phrase also reflects the era's lighthearted, pun-driven humor. The 1960s were a time when wordplay and innocent double entendres were common in family entertainment. "With Six You Get Eggroll" stands out because it is both a punchline and a promise—a promise that this movie will serve up a comedic feast of mishaps, misunderstandings, and heartwarming moments. For audiences in 1968, the title was instantly catchy and memorable, sparking curiosity and a smile before the opening credits even rolled.

Plot Overview and Key Characters

The story centers on Abby McClure, played by Doris Day, a widow who owns and runs a lumber and hardware business. She is a capable, independent woman raising three rambunctious sons: Flip (the youngest), Mitch, and Casey. On the other side, we have Jake Iverson, portrayed by Brian Keith, a widower and rancher who is also raising three teenagers—two daughters, Stacey and Carrie, and a son, Jason. Their lives collide when their children get into a series of misadventures, forcing Abby and Jake to meet and eventually fall in love.

Their courtship is anything but smooth. From the beginning, the meddling of Abby's mother, Maxine (played by the wonderful Pat Carroll), and the skepticism of the children create endless obstacles. Once Abby and Jake marry, the real fun begins. The newly formed family of six moves into a single home, and the result is a comedic storm of clashing personalities, territorial disputes over the bathroom, sibling rivalries, and the struggle to find a compromise between two established ways of life.

The Blending of Two Families

The heart of the film lies in the **blended family dynamic**. Long before terms like "modern family" entered the cultural lexicon, "With Six You Get Eggroll" tackled the trials and triumphs of merging two households with humor and warmth. Each child has a distinct personality: Abby's boys are wild and outdoorsy while Jake's girls are more refined and interested in social activities. The film uses these differences to generate both conflict and comedy. For example, the boys' pet crow wreaks havoc on Jake's prized garden, while the girls' obsession with the telephone drives everyone to distraction.

What makes the story resonate is that it doesn't shy away from real emotions. Behind the slapstick and one-liners, there are genuine moments of tension—the kids feeling left out, the parents struggling to balance discipline with affection, and the awkwardness of blending family traditions. The film ultimately shows that love, patience, and a sense of humor are the secret ingredients for making a new family work. It's a message that remains relevant today, especially in an era where blended families are common.

Cultural Touchpoints of the Late 1960s

"With Six You Get Eggroll" is a time capsule of 1968 America. The film showcases the era's fashion (think miniskirts, bright colors, and bell-bottoms), its music (a lively score by Robert Mersey), and its attitudes. There is a noticeable tension between traditional values and the emerging counterculture, but the film handles this lightly. Abby's character is particularly interesting: she runs her own business, which was somewhat progressive for a female lead in a mainstream comedy. She is competent, assertive, yet also vulnerable. At the same time, the film upholds some conventional gender roles, especially in the way the household duties are portrayed. Still, for its time, it offered a relatively modern take on the single working mother.

The film also reflects the growing acceptance of the **blended family**in American society. In the late 1960s, divorce rates were rising, and remarriage was becoming more common. The movie did not treat the subject with heavy drama; instead, it used comedy to destigmatize the idea of "his, hers, and theirs." This lighthearted approach helped audiences laugh at the very real chaos of merging families, making the film a comforting, relatable watch.

Cast and Production Details

Doris Day was already an iconic star by 1968, known for her wholesome image, sparkling comedies, and musical talents. "With Six You Get Eggroll" is notable as her final theatrical film before she shifted her focus to television and animal rights activism. Day brings her signature charm, comic timing, and warmth to the role of Abby. Her chemistry with Brian Keith is genuine; Keith, known for his rugged, everyman appeal, plays Jake with a gruff but tender demeanor. The two actors bounce off each other beautifully, creating a believable couple.

The supporting cast is also excellent. Pat Carroll, later famous as the voice of Ursula in "The Little Mermaid," steals scenes as Abby's meddlesome mother, Maxine. The children are portrayed by a talented ensemble of young actors, including Barbara Hershey (early in her career) as Stacey, Jake's older daughter. The film was directed by Howard Morris, better known as an actor (he played Ernest T. Bass on "The Andy Griffith Show") and a director of comedy television. His experience with physical comedy and timing is evident in the film's many chaotic sequences—like the infamous scene where the family attempts to eat together at a restaurant, complete with flying food and spilled drinks.

Filmed primarily on the backlot of Warner Bros. and on location in California, the movie has a bright, Technicolor look typical of late-60s studio comedies. The production design emphasizes a comfortable, suburban aesthetic that feels both dated and nostalgic.

Reception and Legacy

Upon its release, "With Six You Get Eggroll" received mixed to positive reviews. Critics praised Day's performance and the film's good-natured humor but sometimes noted that the plot was formulaic. Audiences, however, embraced the movie, and it performed reasonably well at the box office. Over time, the film has gained a cult following among Doris Day fans and enthusiasts of classic family comedies.

Its legacy is that of a heartwarming, gentle comedy that doesn't aim to be groundbreaking but succeeds in delivering consistent laughs. The title alone has become a nostalgic phrase for many who grew up watching the film on television or in reruns. It is frequently remembered for its memorable gags, such as the children's pet crow causing chaos, or the hilarious sequence where the newlyweds try to have a romantic dinner while surrounded by nine (yes, nine) children—including a neighbor's kid who tags along.

Compared to other family comedies of the era, such as "Yours, Mine and Ours" (also 1968, and also about a blended family), "With Six You Get Eggroll" has a more intimate, homey feel. While "Yours, Mine and Ours" starred Lucille Ball and Henry Fonda and had a bigger budget, this film relies more on character-driven humor. Both movies share a similar premise, but "With Six You Get Eggroll" carves its own niche with its quirky title and its focus on the everyday absurdities of family life.

The Title's Enduring Charm

Why does the phrase "With Six You Get Eggroll" still make people smile? Part of the appeal is its pure, unexpected silliness. It is a joke that doesn't require explanation—anyone who has ever ordered Chinese takeout can appreciate the punchline. The title also encapsulates the film's central theme: that with chaos comes a reward. The "eggroll" is not just a free side dish; it is the laughter, love, and sense of belonging that the characters ultimately find. In pop culture, the phrase is occasionally referenced in TV shows and articles about quirky film titles, often as an example of how a clever name can make a movie unforgettable.

For Doris Day fans, the film holds special significance as her big-screen farewell. It represents a time when Hollywood still produced light, family-friendly comedies that focused on humor without cynicism. While Day would later star in her own television sitcom, "The Doris Day Show," her movie career ended on a playful note with this film. The title "With Six You Get Eggroll" thus serves as a perfect capstone to her filmography—a testament to her ability to find joy and laughter in the messiness of love and family.

Conclusion

"With Six You Get Eggroll" is more than just a movie with a bizarre title. It is a warm, funny, and surprisingly modern story about the challenges and joys of building a blended family. Doris Day and Brian Keith deliver charming performances that anchor the mayhem, while the supporting cast adds layers of humor and heart. The film reflects the cultural shifts of the late 1960s—especially around family structures and gender roles—but it does so with a light touch that keeps the focus on laughter. Its title, a pun on a Chinese restaurant promotion, remains one of the most memorable in Hollywood history. For anyone who enjoys classic comedies, a trip back to 1968 with this film is well worth taking. After all, when you have six, you really do get an eggroll—or in this case, a generous helping of entertainment that has aged surprisingly well.

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