

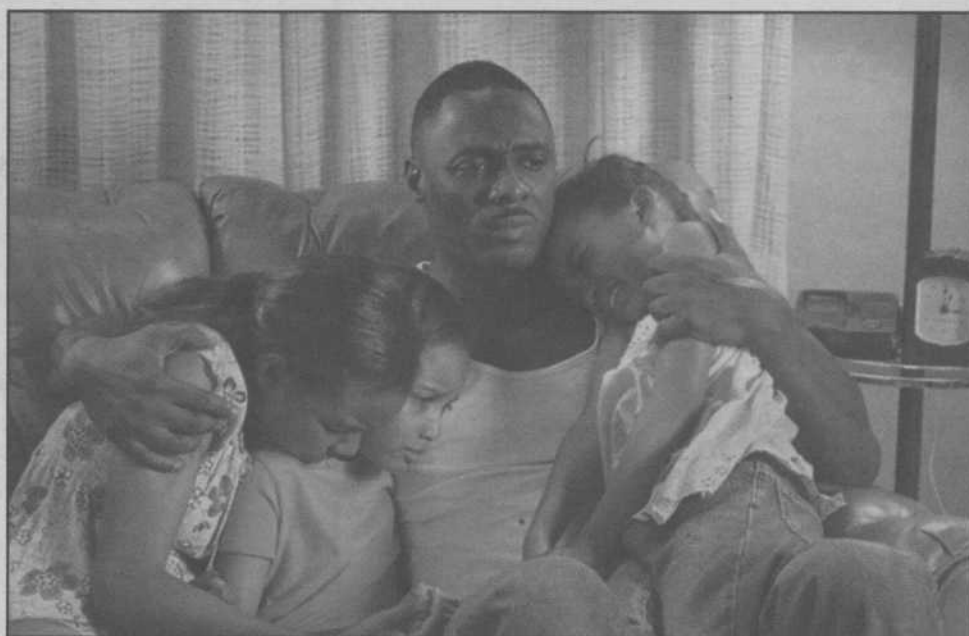
# 'Daddy's Little Girls' charmingly predictable

By Kam Williams  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Julia (Gabrielle Union) is a very busy attorney pulling down a six-figure salary at an Atlanta law firm founded by her father. She has a corner office and a pricey condo with a breathtaking view of the city. The only thing missing in this workaholic's life is a mate to share all her success with, because, as she says, "It's really hard to meet a nice Black man."

Lucky for her, she has a couple of girlfriends, Cynthia (Tracee Ellis Ross) and Brenda's (Terri J. Vaughn) who are intent on playing matchmaker. But all the blind dates they come up with turn out to be total disasters. One loser is an unemployed, 40-year-old, aspiring rapper who describes himself as "between jobs," expects Julia to pick up the check, and makes a scene in the restaurant by complaining, "How come all the White people have bread!" very loudly. Another player seems like a nice guy till a confrontation on the street from his wife and young son who screams, "Get away from my daddy, tramp!"

Just when Julia is resign-



Idris Elba plays a struggling but responsible and loving father in 'Daddy's Little Girls.'

ing herself to a perpetual state of spinsterhood, Mr. Right appears in the person of Monty (Idris Elba). The problem is that she barely notices him, since the only reason their paths cross is because he's moonlighting as a limo driver to supplement his income as an auto mechanic.

Monty needs the extra income to support his three adorable little girls (Sierra, China and Lauryn McClain), plus he has a big custody battle brewing with his trashy

ex-wife, Jennifer (Tasha Smith) who is shacking up with a drug dealer (Gary Anthony Sturgis). The wayward woman has already indicated that her outlaw Sugar Daddy is willing to underwrite her legal fees.

Not wanting his daughters to end up with their obviously unfit mother and a bad, male, role model, Monty, in a stroke of genius, impulsively asks the pretty, high-powered lawyer he happens to be chauffeuring around to handle his baby mama drama

in the courtroom.

Julia reluctantly agrees to take his case pro bono. Then, he even summons up the courage to ask her for a date, once he senses a little chemistry between them.

This daddy's little rich girl-meets-humble poor boy premise underpins "Daddy's Little Girls," the latest modern morality play from Tyler Perry. Although there's no Madea character in the mix this time out, the film was written and directed by Perry and therefore features plenty

of his pictures' trademarks.

Thus we find an assortment of recognizable African-American archetypes from the abuse victim to the trifling womanizer to the sassy sister to the gallant knight in shining armor who serves to smash the prevailing negative stereotype of the Black male as a gangsterish thug.

Gabrielle Union has never before exhibited as much of an emotional range as seen in this role as an ice princess whose cold heart melts when offered an opportunity with a real man who comes with a ready-made family. Idris Elba is just as endearing as that too-good-to-be-true patriarch willing to do whatever it takes to protect his offspring. And the rest of the principal cast deserves kudos

for giving their all in executing Perry's timely script designed to tap into his targeted demographic with another very positive message.

Given the reliable quality of such recent Lions Gate productions as "Crash," "Madea's Family Reunion," "Akeelah and the Bee," and Tyler's latest, the studio has quietly established itself as the industry leader when it comes to producing dignified African-American-oriented fare.

This flick's a breath of fresh air after the insulting garbage some of its competition has been pushing lately like "Norbit" and "Code Name: The Cleaner."

Excellent (4 stars). Rated PG-13 for sexuality, profanity, violence, drug use and mature themes.

## Brandy

(Continued from Page 8)

name is Brandy Norwood, with misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter, which was recommended by California Highway Patrol investigators, spokesman Jonathan Diamond said Wednesday. If charged and convicted, Brandy, 28, faces up to a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Brandy, who earned a Grammy in 1999, has made five albums. She began her recording career at 14 and has acted for film and television, starring on the sitcom "Moesha" from 1996-2001 and most recently as a judge for NBC's "America's Got Talent."



# Ashford & Simpson

Ain't nothing like the real thing, baby.

**LIVE IN CONCERT**  
A Fitzgeralds Casino Hotel Las Vegas  
5th Anniversary Celebration Event.

**1 NIGHT ONLY**  
Saturday, February 24, 2007  
Doors Open: 6:30pm  
Show Starts: 8pm

**CASHMAN THEATER**  
850 N. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89101

**TICKETS ONLY \$44 PLUS TAX/FEES**  
Go to: [vegas.com](http://vegas.com)  
Call: (702) 492-3960

FIVE YEARS



## TASTE & SOUNDS of SOUL

Friday, February 23 • 4pm-11pm  
Saturday, February 24 • 11am-1am  
Sunday, February 25 • Noon-7pm

**EVERYONE'S WELCOME**  
Enjoy a Fremont Street Block Party Extravaganza Honoring Black History Month and celebrating the 5th Anniversary of Fitzgeralds Casino Hotel Las Vegas.

**FEATURING BOOTHS, ATTRACTIONS AND EVENTS:**

- Enjoy delicious Soul Food
- Over 60 booths including arts and crafts
- Entertainment all day long



301 Fremont Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101 • [www.fitzgeralds.com](http://www.fitzgeralds.com)