

## Charlize Theron in 'Tully' Turns Mom Into Martyr

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 5, 2018 - 6:44am

- [Charlize Theron](#) [2]
- [Diablo Cody](#) [3]
- [elaine tan](#) [4]
- [Focus Features](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Jason Reitman](#) [7]
- [Mackenzie Davis](#) [8]
- [Mark Duplass](#) [9]
- [Motherhood](#) [10]
- [Movie Review](#) [11]
- [Post Partum](#) [12]
- [Ron Livingston](#) [13]
- [Spike Walters](#) [14]
- [Tully](#) [15]



Rating: **2.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – “Tully” is a deeply weird motherhood fantasy snuck inside the friendly-but-distancing screenwriting constructs of another pseudo ironic story by Diablo Cody. Charlize Theron plays Margo, a mother of two kids with a third due any day, struggling with the sacrifices she’s made for motherhood.

When the third child finally arrives, her rich douche of a brother (Mark Duplass) gifts her a night nanny to care for the baby in the evenings so she and her husband (Ron Livingston) can get some rest. While admittedly apprehensive at first, Theron reaches her breaking point and eventually calls her up, because she also has an 8 year old daughter, and a kindergartener with behavior issues who is having trouble at school. Her husband is a hard worker and helps with homework, but is otherwise out of commission once bedtime rolls around.



Charlize Theron is a Tired Mom in 'Tully'

*Photo credit: Focus Features*

This is not a film that glamorizes the bonds between mother and child. This is a film featuring a montage of breast pumping, baby monitoring, and diaper genies to illustrate the drudgery of child rearing. Charlize Theron is a beautiful woman, and she has never been afraid to make herself look unattractive on screen, this time covering her body in 40 pounds of pure flab. Her face wears a continuous expression of suffering

which may reflect how some mothers feel about their lot in life, but also is an expression of her own narcissism. She turns the baby weight into a cross she continues to bear long after the children are out of her womb, as she begins to think back about what her life could have been.

The night nanny Tully (Mackenzie Davis) appears to be one part free spirit rock festival groupie, and one part Mary Poppins... she leaves the house spotless in the morning, the baby is sleeping and cupcakes are baked for the children's school. She represents the promise, optimism and freedom of youth. Tully not only attends to and nurtures the baby, but she attends to and nurtures Theron's Margo in ways no one else has. The rest of the house seems to benefit as well, with Margo shedding some of the exhaustion to regain a little bit of her spirit as she thinks about what her life could be like without these kids.

"Tully" is the third collaboration between director Jason Reitman and screenwriter Diablo Cody, and the director is the one who's been able to translate her hyper-self-aware-too-cool-for-school dialogue best on screen. And this is their third straight story about dealing with an emptiness at the center of adulthood that cannot be filled. Margo bears a passing resemblance to Jason Bateman's character in "Juno"... he was a prospective dad who wasn't sure he wanted to give up the trappings of his life to support another new child in the world. But the Juno-like quips don't land as often in this film.



Mackenzie Davis as the Title Character with Charlize Theron in 'Tully'

Photo credit: Focus Features

"Tully" is meant to be a deep dive into motherhood and the agonies, suffering, and compromises we make for others, and it's squarely pitched at them from an ironic distance... what mother hasn't fantasized about going back to their old life before kids got in the way? But "Tully" sometimes comes off as condescending as well. Margo is a martyr in her own mind, and isn't an entirely sympathetic character to begin with. And by the time her 90 minutes were up, she had more than worn out her welcome.

*"Tully" opens nationwide on May 4th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Charlize Theron, Mackenzie Davis, Mark Duplass, Ron Livingston and Elaine Tan. Written by Diablo Cody. Directed by Jason Reitman. Rated "R"*



[16]

By [SPIKE WALTERS](#) [17]

Contributor

HollywoodChicago.com

[spike@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:spike@hollywoodchicago.com) [16]

© 2018 Spike Walters, HollywoodChicago.com

**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 10:04am):**

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/28503/charlize-theron-in-tully-turns-mom-into-martyr>

#### Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>

[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/charlize-theron>

[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/diablo-cody>

[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/elaine-tan>

[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/focus-features>

- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/hollywoodchicagocom-content>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/jason-reitman>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/mackenzie-davis>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/mark-duplass>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/motherhood>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/post-partum>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ron-livingston>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/spike-walters>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/tully>
- [16] <mailto:spike@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#SPIKE>