

# ZOOM

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## On the home front

**H**ollywood loves a romance, but let's face it: A nasty breakup is a close second. For every movie about endless love, there's another one about the endless squabbles and fights that lead to divorce, like in "Tyler Perry's The Family That Preys" and "The Women," both opening Friday.

Unless, of course, the couple is really in love anyway, in which case the divorce is just a prelude to getting back together again. Here are some of Hollywood's bitterest marriage meltdowns.

### THE WAR OF THE ROSES (1989)

**Irreconcilable differences:** It's simply not possible that Oliver and Barbara Rose (Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner) could have had half as much fun being in love as they have tearing each other down in this black comedy.

**The settlement:** A scorched-earth policy guarantees there's not so much as a cocktail napkin left to split between the two after they're done scrapping over their home.

### A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS (1966)

**Irreconcilable differences:** Wow. When you defy the Church and God and even execute the noble Sir Thomas More (Paul Scofield) — the way Henry VIII (Robert Shaw) does — you must really want a divorce.

**The settlement:** The king kept his head and

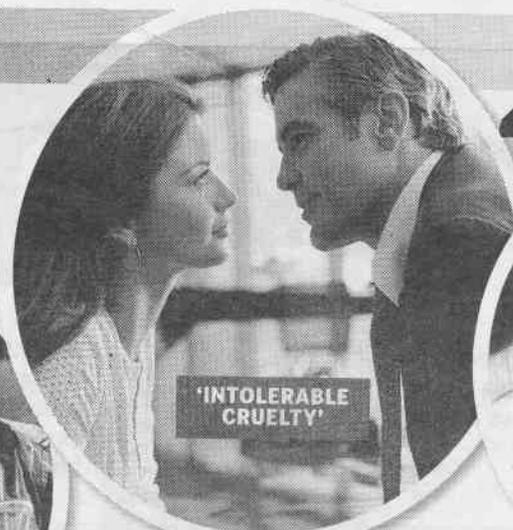


got his new marriage — and the Church of England to boot. More got immortality through an Oscar-winning movie and a great play (headed to Broadway this fall with Frank Langella).

### INTOLERABLE CRUELTY (2003)

**Irreconcilable differences:** You can imagine Tracy and Hepburn giving a less wacky spin to this delicious Coen brothers comedy about sterling divorce lawyer George Clooney and the serial divorcée (Catherine Zeta-Jones) who yearns to defeat him.

**The settlement:** Love, your honor! They may



tangle in court, but it's only between the sheets where these worthy adversaries will find true satisfaction.

### THE SQUID & THE WHALE (2005)

**Irreconcilable differences:** Mainly, Jeff Daniels seems annoyed that wife Laura Linney is getting published in *The New Yorker* while his novels are received indifferently; he takes revenge by "mentoring" younger women.

**The settlement:** Their two children — caught in the passive-aggressive cross fire of this literary couple — are the real losers as the divorce messes with their minds and leaves them emotionally bereft.

### THE FIRST WIVES CLUB (1996)

**Irreconcilable differences:** Debra Messing would call it being a "starter wife," but Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn and Diane Keaton were there first when it came to the humiliation of



being traded in for a newer model.

**The settlement:** Laughter — and looking fabulous — is the best revenge for these women, who find that bonding with each other is more important than getting back at their exes ... though revenge can be awfully fun, too.

### THE PARENT TRAP (1961)

**Irreconcilable differences:** You knew divorce was a fact of life when even Disney felt comfortable making a romantic comedy about Hayley Mills playing twins who want to bring their divorced parents back together.

**The settlement:** Luckily for dad Brian Keith, both Haleys succeed — he reunites with redheaded mom Maureen O'Hara, and everyone pretends the divorce never happened.

Michael Giltz