



**27 Dresses**  
**Directed by Anne Fletcher**  
**Original Screenplay by Aline Brosh McKenna**

We're first introduced to "Jane Nichols" (Katherine Heigl), the main character in **27 Dresses**, as she rushes back and forth between two weddings on the same night, changing outfits in the backseat of a taxicab (warning the driver all the while not to watch her in his rearview mirror). We see into Jane's character at once: she's overly eager to please and willing to do almost anything for her closest girlfriends on their special day.

Complications ensue when Jane's younger, sexier sister "Tess" (Malin Ackerman), returns home from Italy. Tess meets Jane's boss, "George" (Edward Burns), and unaware of the fact that Jane is secretly in love with George, Tess shamelessly flirts with him. Soon enough, Jane is asked to be Maid of Honor at their wedding. Of course, Jane can't refuse because she never says "no" to anyone—especially not her baby sister.

The plot thickens when a cynical reporter named "Kevin" (James Marsden) is assigned to cover Tess's wedding. He taunts Jane relentlessly, but along the way, Kevin also learns interesting facts about Jane's life. In one of the film's funniest sequences, Jane models a closet-full of ridiculous bridesmaid's dresses left over from prior weddings. As the title suggests, Jane has already been a bridesmaid twenty-seven times!

**27 Dresses** is lighthearted fun, with an original and enjoyable, albeit somewhat predictable plot. Screenwriter Aline Brosh McKenna presents the viewer with material that is fresh and funny. Jane's interactions with Kevin are a joy to watch, and Judy Greer also adds a great deal of humor as Jane's sarcastic best friend "Casey."

The major shortcoming in **27 Dresses** is the Tess character. She's irritating and one-dimensional: all beauty and no brains. It was

infuriating to watch Tess try to connect with George by lying to him about her own likes and dislikes, and her web of deceit became increasingly annoying as the film went on. I was a bit surprised to see such a stereotyped female character in a movie both written and directed by women.

On the other hand, Jane's character oftentimes came across as too good. Jane embodies the phrase "Always a bridesmaid, never a bride" completely as she bends over backward to help Tess prepare for her wedding. How refreshing to see Jane's humanity come through when she finally loses it with Tess late in the film!

Heigl's onscreen chemistry with Marsden adds nuance to Jane's character, and helps make her truly multi-dimensional. Nevertheless, I still think the personalities of the two sisters worked too much in opposition. The film makes it almost painfully clear that we're supposed to root for Jane and hate Tess.

That being said, I highly recommend **27 Dresses**. It's entertaining and fun, and although clearly targeted to women, it should delight audiences of all ages. Despite its flaws, I thoroughly enjoyed watching it.

© Rachel Weinberg (8/15/09)—SPECIAL FOR FILMS FOR TWO®



Photo Credit: Cheryl Corley (5/2/09)