

The Wizard

In The Wizard, an emotional disturbed boy named Jimmy enters a video game competition to compete for the grand prize money. Jimmy is exceptional at video games, seemingly picking them up in minutes and defeating children older than him and even adults.

At the beginning of the movie, Jimmy has snuck away from his family and is walking along a major freeway because he wants to go to California. There is never an explanation about how he got away or how an eight year old could get that far on their own. When he is confronted by a police officer all Jimmy can offer as an explanation is that he “wants to go to California.”

When Jimmy is brought back to his home, his mother and step-father consult a psychiatrist about institutionalizing Jimmy. His mother is at her ends and ready to give up and the step-father seems to just wants to get rid of the poor kid. Throughout the movie he is played off of Jimmy's biological father as the “bad guy.” The psychiatrist they speak to notes that Jimmy has been “heavily traumatized” and that he is “fascinated by buildings.” Eventually the viewer finds out he is traumatized due to his twin sister drowning the year before.

Jimmy is then taken away by his teenage brother, Corey, so they can run away together. Of course, somehow, an eight year old and a thirteen year old manage to evade police, helicopters, and a bounty hunter to sensational Hollywood style. Along the way they meet a teenage girl who notices Jimmy's ability to play video games and offers to help get him to California for the Nintendo World Championship. Throughout their trip westward Jimmy is fascinating. At many points, he just ups and walks away from Corey without any provocation. Jimmy, on at least two occasions, has to be psychically touched to get his attention while watching television. Of course, in the end after many Hollywood vicissitudes, Jimmy does win the video game tournament.

Overall, this movie is pretty bad. I feel like the viewer does not really get to know Jimmy

all that well because the plot is moving so quickly. The viewer finds out why he is traumatized but they only seem to find this out because it is a plot point to bring in his older brother, whose carelessness caused the drowning. Jimmy is given the blanket diagnosis of being “emotionally disturbed” but I think this could have been a lot more specific. Jimmy seems to be autistic, but there is nothing wrong with his brain so that is not possible. I wish this film went into his actual condition more instead of using the awful experience Jimmy went through as a means to sell video games to kids.