

Piano prodigy frustrated by drug-addicted mom in dysfunctional family dramedy

Written by Kam Williams , DVD Review



Eli Bloom (Jesse Eisenberg) is a classical music prodigy who dreams of attending a prestigious conservatory in Boston. The only thing standing in the way of his promising future is the constant distraction of having to care for his 9 year-old sister, Nicole (Emma Rayne Lyle), and his mother (Melissa Leo), a 45 year-old cocaine addict who just can't seem to get her act together.

She finally agrees to enter rehab on the very same day of his big audition. But a complication arises when she's rejected by the clinic for passing the drug test they administer, since the program only admits people who flunk.

Therefore, Penny pressures her son to purchase \$50 worth of blow from her dealer (Tracy Morgan) so she can get good and high to satisfy the center's by-the-book bureaucrats. Although Eli'd prefer to be practicing piano, he grudgingly agrees to approach the pusher, unaware that his mom happens to be deeply indebted to the guy.

Then, once Sprinkles learns that Eli is Penny's son, he and his henchman, Black (Isiah Whitlock, Jr.), proceed to carjack the whole blooming Bloom family in order to recoup their losses come Hell or high water. Meanwhile, time's a wasting and the odds that Eli will even be

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able to attend his audition worsen by the minute.



So unfolds "Why Stop Now", a raucous road dramedy featuring the unlikely casting of Oscar-winner Melissa Leo (for "The Fighter") and Oscar-nominee Jesse Eisenberg (for "The Social Network") opposite SNL alumnus Tracy Morgan. The oil-and-water is a classic case study of squandered talent, with the serious thespians looking lost when asked to react to the motor-mouthed comic's ostensibly improvised jokes like "somebody needs tough-actin' Tinactin" about smelly feet.

Whitlock isn't any funnier as Morgan's partner-in-crime, coming off as mean-spirited when he tosses little Nicole's beloved puppet out the window of the moving auto. Nonetheless, the movie delivers just enough laughs to remain recommended, despite the fact that this hard to pigeonhole head-scratcher would have benefitted from making a total commitment to either comedy or drama.

Good (2 stars)

Unrated

In English and Spanish with subtitles.

Running time: 88 minutes

Distributor: MPI Home Video/IFC Films

DVD Extras: Featurette; Tracy Morgan interview; and a trailer.

To see a trailer for Why Stop Now, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1mqGQ6M69E>

To order a copy of Why Stop Now on DVD, visit:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B009B8YZCQ/ref%3dnosim/thslfofire-20>