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"After Earth"

By Derek Zemrak



Jaden Smith stars in Columbia Pictures' "After Earth," also starring Will Smith. Photo Claudette Barius ((c) 2013 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. All Rights Reserved.)

"After Earth" has all the elements of a great summer blockbuster with director M. Night Shyamalan ("The Sixth Sense," "Signs") teaming with mega star Will Smith ("Men in Black," "Independence Day"), but it just does not work on any planet.

The script, co-written by Shyamalan, Smith, and Gary Whitta ("The Book of Eli"), just could not pull it all together. Is Shyamalan just a "one hit wonder" with "The Sixth Sense?" His movies have been quickly sliding downhill with each release. His last directorial project, "The Last Airbender," received five of the eight Razzie Awards (worst movie awards) including worst director, screenplay and picture. Ouch!

"After Earth" follows Kitai Raige, a soldier in training portrayed by Jaden Smith ("The Pursuit of Happyness," "The Karate Kid") and his father Cypher Raige (Will Smith), as they crash land on earth which humans abandoned 1,000 years ago. It is Kitai who must save his father from the collision and head into battle with the CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) creatures. It is Jaden Smith who must carry this movie - a huge feat for any actor, and even more difficult for a young actor. Jaden meets the challenge in a few scenes, but falls short in more.

Do not expect a surprise ending in this M. Night Shyamalan movie - just be glad it's over. The best part of the film is the 100-minute running time. Most summer releases average more than two hours. "After Earth" is rated PG13.

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