

Film Review: 'I Wish' is Moving Portrait of a Broken Home

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 31, 2012 - 2:36pm

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Hirokazu Koreeda is one of the most interesting and acclaimed international filmmakers alive and his latest drama is one of lingering power, a film that moves a bit too slowly for its own good but has remarkable cumulative strength by its emotional finale. “I Wish” is about those days in which scope is subjective. The smallest things – physical and emotional – can be given life-changing importance. And a kid can convince himself that a miracle can happen.

Twelve-year-old Koichi (Koki Maeda) and younger brother Ryunosuke (Ohshiro Maeda) are products of a newly-broken home. Their parents have divorced after their mother has tired of their musician father’s lack of focus. While mom has moved in with her parents with Koichi, Ryunosuke and his father live hundreds of miles away. Ryu is young enough that he seems mostly unfazed by the situation (and Koreeda smartly draws parallels between Ryu and his more lackadaisical father and Koichi and his more serious mother) but Koichi dreams about his family being reunited.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of "I Wish" in our reviews section.](#) [7]

Koichi lives in a small town in which an active volcano dominates the horizon. It spews ash, which litters the town and leaves many of the buildings covered in black soot. As Koichi wanders how everyone is OK with the potentially deadly volcano (a symbol for how the young man can’t believe that his parent’s separation is as much a fact of life as the likelihood of lava), he hears a story about how people can wish for a miracle at a unique point on a train track. The story goes that as two bullet trains pass each other, a wish can be made. Koichi plans with Ryu and his friends to trek to the spot where the trains pass and make a wish for a volcanic eruption. If his mother’s town is covered in lava, she’ll have to move back in with her husband and Koichi’s brother.



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“I Wish” stars Koki Maeda and Ohshiro Maeda. It was written and directed by Hirokazu Koreeda. It opens at the Music Box Theatre in Chicago on June 1, 2012.



I Wish

Photo credit: Magnolia Pictures

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