Film Review: Exploring an Inverse Superman Makes 'Brightburn' Shine

Submitted by **PatrickMcD** [1] on May 25, 2019 - 4:34am

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CHICAGO – The opening to the 1950s "Adventures of Superman" TV series includes the words "strange visitor from another planet." But because Supes had used his subsequent powers for good, he eventually was found not so strange. What if, however, he had been evil, and used his powers destructively? The new film "Brightburn" speculates on such a phenomenon.

Rating: **4.5**/5.0

The premise is simple, yet could have been so easy to mess up. The creators – producer James Gunn ("The Avengers" series), director David Yarovesky, with writers Brian and Mark Gunn (James' brother and cousin) – take care to use the situation as symbolism for adolescent emergence and emphasis an outside force (puberty?) as changing the power dynamic within this "superman." There is so much to unpack in a tight story, there could be a new cinema wing built just to analyze it. It's powerfully absorbing as well, never shying away from its thesis, even depicting graphic death of good people. This ain't your grandaddy's comic books.

Tori (Elizabeth Banks) and Kyle (David Denman) Breyer are a married couple who cannot conceive children. As fate would have it, a giant meteor falls near their farmland, which turns out to be a space craft carrying a toddler boy. Without alerting authorities, Tori and Kyle adopt Brandon (eventually Jackson A. Dunn), as they name him, and settle in for domestic bliss.

Ten years later, the boy is now 12 years old, and beginning to assert his adolescent changes. But with him it comes with sleepwalking, a connection to his hidden space vehicle and the use of his newly discovered super strength. With this power a strict disobedience emulates from Brandon, and he eschews parental, institutional and moral authority. He is out to change the world his way.

 "Brightburn" opens everywhere on May 24th. Featuring Jackson A. Dunn, Elizabeth Banks, David Denman, Matt Jones, Meredith Hagner and Michael Rooker. Written by Brian and Mark Gunn. Directed by David Yarovesky. Rated "R"

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Fuji Gabesta, His Eyes are Burning! Jackson A. Dunn is 'Brightburn'

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

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