

Jingle All the Way 1996

Rating PG

Directed by Brian Levant

Starring:

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Phil Hartman

Rita Wilson

Sinbad

James Belushi

Synopsis:

Howard Langston is a work obsessed man who always puts his wife Liz and son Jamie second. Although he means well, he always leaves things too late and ends up missing special moments in his son's life.

Meanwhile a divorced neighbour is moving in on Liz, offering to provide her with all that's missing in her life and making the most of opportunities provided by Howard being away so much.

What Jamie wants more than anything else for Christmas is the latest must-have action figure, Turboman. All the kids want on and Jamie is desperate to get one as well. Howard promises Liz that he will get one for Jamie but of course he forgets and goes out on Christmas Eve only to find all the shops have sold out. He meets Myron, a postman who is on the same quest and the two of them enter into a bitter competition to find the last Turboman. Howard becomes increasingly desperate, whether it's a case of spending enormous sums of money in a dodgy warehouse, being first in a radio competition or outrunning his opponent. He even considers stealing another child's present.

Eventually Howard admits defeat and doesn't know how to tell his son that he was unable to get him what he had set his heart on. However, by accident, he ends up starring as Turboman in the Christmas parade, and having to battle his postman adversary for the special edition Turboman doll that he is able to give to Jamie. But when Jamie realizes that his dad is Turboman, he decides that he does not want the doll. He gives it to Myron for his son instead, so everyone is happy.

Some excerpts to watch

The scene in the shop with the bouncing ball

The scene where Howard raids his neighbour's house to steal the present

The scene where Jamie decides to give up the doll to Myron

Some questions:

What does this film tell us about the commercialization of Christmas?

How did you feel when Howard thinks about stealing another child's present?

Do you sympathise with Howard?

What does this film tell us about the 'real' meaning of Christmas?

What do you think Howard learned from his experiences?

What does this film tell us about gift giving?

What does this film tell us about family life?

Some bible passages

Exodus 20.17

Matthew 6.24

Matthew 7.4-14