

Watching *The Wizard of Oz* With Benjamin

Barry A. Klinger, 28 December 2019

Concerned that my son Benjamin didn't find *The Wizard of Oz* wonderful enough, I got him to watch it with me again.

Benjamin: I already saw it.

Me: Yeah, but that was when you were a kid. You couldn't appreciate it the way you can now that you're 19.

Movie begins.

Benjamin: Look, they don't even credit the guys who play the Munchkins. They're just listed as "The Munchkins".

Me: There will be more complete credits at the end. The movie probably credits them there. [It didn't.]

Miss Gulch arrives.

Benjamin: She's right, Dorothy should control her damn dog and not let it chase her cat.

Me: Sure, but the dog doesn't deserve to die because of it.

House is dropped by tornado. Dorothy slowly walks from room to room.

Benjamin: This is so slow.

Me: Wait for it...

Benjamin: When are we going to see Oz?

Me: Wait for it...

Dorothy: Toto, I don't think we are in Kansas anymore.

Me: C'mon, that's such a great line. Its useful in so many situations.

Benjamin: I don't trust these Munchkins, maybe they're the bad guys.

Me: I suppose you don't like Hobbits either.

Glinda: Only bad witches are ugly.

Benjamin: Dad, do I even have to...

Me: OK, I'm not going to defend that one.

Wicked Witch arrives.

Benjamin: Notice that so far the Witch hasn't killed anyone, but Dorothy killed her sister.

Me: No, the house killed her sister. Dorothy was just riding in it.

Glinda: Keep tight inside of them – their magic must be very powerful, or she wouldn't want them so badly!

Benjamin: First they kill her sister, and now Glinda is encouraging Dorothy to steal the slippers. And Glinda was the one who brought up the slippers in the first place. I think Glinda is the wicked witch!

Me: Well, there's a whole other play based on that, but this version is valid too.

Wicked Witch: I'll get you my pretty...

Me: "and your little dog, too". So many great lines.

Apple Tree: What do you think you're doing?

Dorothy: We've been walking a long ways and I was hungry and...

Benjamin: First she kills the witch and now she's ripping apples off of innocent trees.

Witch: Dorothy, I wish you luck with the Wizard of Oz. And a happy journey back to Kansas! Eeh hee hee hee...

Benjamin: The witch isn't doing anything to them.

Me: She's following them.

Benjamin: Yeah but she could kill them if she wanted to.

Me: She's clearly threatening them. Plus the fireball she threw at Scarecrow.

Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tinman, Cowardly Lion: We're off to see the wizard!

Benjamin: It's a little creepy that these grown men are hanging out with a little girl.

Lion: If I were the kinnng of the forrrrest...

Benjamin: That was random. Why did they even have that scene?

Me: I have no idea.

The Great And Powerful Oz: I am Oz, the great and powerful!

Benjamin: He's really being a jerk.

Me: Well, that's kind of the point. But he needs to be in order to keep up his mystique.

Oz: Bring me the broomstick of the Witch of the West.

Tin Man: B-B-B-B-But if we do that, we'll have to kill her to get it!

Benjamin: [opens mouth]

Me: Don't even say it, I know. But she's been threatening them all along.

Sign: Haunted Forest Witches Castle 1 Mile I'd turn back if I were you!

Benjamin: Really they're invading her space.

Me: Look, now the Flying Monkeys are abducting her. That's hostile.

Benjamin: She was trying to get to the Witch's castle and now when they're bringing her to the castle you're complaining!

Witch: Do you see that? That's how much longer you've got to be alive!

Me: See? See?

Benjamin: She could have killed her by now. She's hesitating because she doesn't want to be violent. Maybe she's bluffing.

Me: She just doesn't want to ruin the shoes.

Scarecrow: That's the castle of the Wicked Witch! Dorothy's in that awful place!

Me: The three of them outside the castle. Princess Bride! Star Wars! It all goes back to the Wizard of Oz.

Witch: How about a little fire, Scarecrow?

Benjamin: The fact remains, the only one who dies is the Witch.

Oz: Go away and come back tomorrow!

Benjamin: What's this bullshit?

Oz: Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain.

Me: He's not a bad man, he's just a bad wizard.

Dorothy: I don't think there's anything in that black bag for me.

Me: See, the whole point is that they were looking for their strengths externally, but they needed to learn to rely on themselves rather than an external magical power.

Benjamin: Well if they were relying on themselves, they could have figured that out themselves. Instead they are relying on an authority figure to tell them what to think!

Dorothy climbs into the balloon basket, and Toto jumps out of her arms to chase a cat. Dorothy jumps out to follow, and the balloon leaves without her.

Benjamin: Its really a shitty little dog.

Glinda: You don't need to be helped any longer. You've always had the power to go back to Kansas.

Me: OK I know that doesn't look good.

Benjamin: The Witch wouldn't have been killed if Glinda had just told her that in the first place.

Glinda: Because she wouldn't have believed me. She had to learn it for herself.

Me: Yeah, she had to learn it for herself.

Dorothy: if I ever go looking for my heart's desire again, I won't look any further than my own backyard.

Benjamin: She's from goddamn Kansas. Everything is brown. She should definitely go looking beyond her own backyard.