

Missing (2023 film)

Missing is a 2023 American screenlife mystery thriller film written and directed by Will Merrick and Nick Johnson (in their feature directorial debuts) from a story by Sev Ohanian and Aneesh Chaganty, who also produced the film with Natalie Qasabian. The film is a standalone film in the universe of *Searching* (2018). It stars Storm Reid, Joaquim de Almeida, Ken Leung, Amy Landecker, Daniel Henney, and Nia Long. Its plot follows June Allen, a teenager who tries to find her missing mother after she disappears on vacation in Colombia with her new boyfriend.

An anthology sequel to *Searching* was announced in 2019, with Merrick and Johnson, who edited the first film, signing on to make their directorial debuts in January 2021. Reid and Long joined the cast in the spring of 2021, and filming took place in Los Angeles from March to May that year after delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Missing* also serves as a spiritual sequel to *Run* (2020), directed by *Searching* director Chaganty and edited by Merrick and Johnson, confirming the fates of that film's characters.

Missing had its premiere at the Sundance Film Festival on January 19, 2023, and was released in the United States the following day, by Sony Pictures Releasing. The film received generally positive reviews from critics and grossed \$48 million at the box office.

Plot

18-year-old June Allen lives with her single mother, Grace, in a suburb of Los Angeles. Despite being close, June is annoyed at Grace's attempts to micromanage her life. When Grace heads out for a vacation to Cartagena, Colombia with her boyfriend Kevin, June spends the time partying while trying to avoid Grace's lawyer friend Heather. A week later, June awaits her mother and Kevin at LAX, but they never arrive, and an inquiry at the hotel reveals their luggage never left. When the FBI attaché at the American consulate are unable to make any headway, June decides to investigate herself, eventually hiring Javier, a Colombian gig worker who complies with June's requests for a small fee.

Missing	
	
Theatrical release poster	
Directed by	Will Merrick <div>Nick Johnson</div>
Screenplay by	Will Merrick <div>Nick Johnson</div>
Story by	<u>Sev Ohanian</u> <div><u>Aneesh Chaganty</u></div>
Produced by	<u>Natalie Qasabian</u> <div>Sev Ohanian</div> <div>Aneesh Chaganty</div> <div>Timur Bekmambetov</div>
Starring	<u>Storm Reid</u> <div><u>Joaquim de Almeida</u></div> <div><u>Ken Leung</u></div> <div><u>Amy Landecker</u></div> <div><u>Daniel Henney</u></div>

June cracks the password to Kevin's Gmail account, in which she discovers several aliases and a criminal record of scamming many women for their money. Believing Kevin to have kidnapped her mother, June has Javier look for clues as to their whereabouts in Colombia. She traces Kevin's past movements to a location in Nevada, where she talks to Jimmy, a pastor at a Christian rehabilitation centre for ex-convicts, who tells her Kevin has been rehabilitated and is genuinely in love with Grace. Kevin's online dating profile seemingly confirms this, as past messages reveal Grace was already aware of Kevin's past. FBI agent Elijah informs June he received footage of a band of criminals kidnapping Kevin and Grace in Colombia. June quickly unmask this as a fabricated event, as she discovers Kevin had hired a lookalike actress named Rachel to impersonate her mother, who had been kidnapped en route to LAX beforehand. It is revealed Grace went by another name in the past, sparking online speculation about her character.

Swearing by her mother's innocence, June's suspicions fall on Heather when she discovers an encrypted communication line between her and Kevin, leading June to confront Heather, intending to capture evidence of her wrongdoing. She finds her office ransacked with her computer in the process of being erased. She then discovers Heather's corpse in a storage closet. Later, June views live footage of a police raid in Colombia focusing on Kevin, who is shot and killed despite surrendering. Seemingly at a dead end, June is about to give up but figures out the password to her mother's email from old voicemails. Checking through her blocked users, she finds a threatening e-mail directed at Grace, which leads her to discover security cameras Kevin bought to install at an abandoned house, which happens to be her old vacation home in Nevada. Jimmy arrives and reveals he is June's father, James, who June thought died of a brain tumor when she was a child. He claims Grace was emotionally unstable and took June away from him after having him arrested under false charges. When he unwittingly reveals he was in the same prison around the same time Kevin was incarcerated, June realizes James and Kevin planned the entire ruse. It is revealed James was a drug addict whose abuse endangered his family, and Grace had told June he died of cancer to protect her. James sought revenge by enlisting Kevin, whom he met in prison, to pose as a prospective boyfriend so he could find Grace and June.

James kidnaps June and takes her to the abandoned house, where Grace is also detained. When Grace finds out James has taken June, she attempts to escape but is shot. James tries to leave with June, but Grace fatally stabs him in the neck with a shard of broken glass. James locks them inside the room again and attempts to search for a nearby hospital on his computer but dies while doing so. June, realizing James never shut off her laptop when he kidnapped her, uses the audio feed on the security cameras to tell Siri to

	<u>Nia Long</u>
Cinematography	Steven Holleran
Edited by	Austin Keeling Arielle Zakowski
Music by	<u>Julian Scherle</u>
Production companies	<u>Stage 6 Films</u> <u>Screen Gems</u> <u>Bazelevs</u> <u>Company</u> Search Party
Distributed by	<u>Sony Pictures</u> <u>Releasing</u>
Release dates	January 19, 2023 (<u>Sundance</u>) January 20, 2023 (United States)
Running time	111 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States ^[1]
Language	English
Budget	\$7 million ^[2]
Box office	\$48.8 million ^{[3][4]}

call 911 for their rescue. One year later, Grace has survived her gunshot wound, and June is in college. Their story has been adapted on the true crime show *Unfiction*, and Grace started a friendship with Javier after June introduced them. June texts her mother she loves her, and Grace responds she loves her too.

Cast

- Storm Reid as June Allen
 - Ava Zaria Lee as 6-year-old June
- Joaquim de Almeida as Javier Ramos
- Ken Leung as Kevin Lin
- Amy Landecker as Heather Damore
- Megan Suri as Veena
- Tim Griffin as James Walker
- Daniel Henney as Agent Elijah Park
- Nia Long as Grace Allen
- Michael Segovia as Angel
- Lauren B. Mosley as Rachel
- Tracy Vilar as Detective Gomez
- Sean O'Bryan as Radio Host

Production

In August 2019, a standalone sequel to *Searching* (2018) was announced to be in development, with the original film's director, Aneesh Chaganty, clarifying that the story would not "follow the same characters or plot line as the original", making the series an anthology.^[5] In November 2020, producer Natalie Qasabian said the COVID-19 pandemic had postponed production on the film, simply going under the title *Searching 2*.^[6] In January 2021, it was announced that Will Merrick and Nick Johnson, the editors on the first film and Chaganty's *Run* (2020), would write and direct the film in their directorial debuts, with additional literary material by Micah Ariel Watson, and producer of *Unfriended* and *Searching* Timur Bekmambetov to executive produce the sequel with Ohanian, Chaganty, and Qasabian.^{[7][8]} In the following months, Storm Reid and Nia Long joined the cast.^{[9][10]}

Principal photography took place from March 30 to May 30, 2021, in Los Angeles, California.^[11] In September 2022, the film's title was revealed to be *Missing*, with the film set for a 2023 release date.^[12] In November 2022, producer and co-story writer Sev Ohanian revealed on Reddit that the film would also be set after *Run*, serving as an epilogue to the events of that film as well as a continuation of *Searching*.^[13]

Release

Missing was theatrically released in the United States on January 20, by Sony Pictures Releasing under their Screen Gems banner.^[14] It was originally scheduled for February 24, 2023.^{[12][15]}

Home media

Missing was released on digital platforms on March 7, 2023, and on DVD and Blu-ray on March 28, 2023.^[16] It was then released on Netflix on May 20, and became the number 1 most streamed movie in the US within 2 days.

Reception

Box office

Missing grossed \$32.5 million in the United States and Canada, and \$16.3 million in other territories for a worldwide total of \$48.8 million.^{[3][4]}

Missing made \$3.4 million on its first day, including \$760,000 from Thursday night previews.^[2] It went on to debut to a \$9.2 million weekend, finishing fourth behind holdovers *Avatar: The Way of Water*, *Puss in Boots: The Last Wish* and *M3GAN*.^[17] The film made \$5.7 million in its second weekend, finishing in sixth.^[18]

Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 88% of 145 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.8/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Missing* can strain credulity in its efforts to keep the audience guessing, but a fast pace and relatable fears keep this twisty techno-thriller from completely losing its way."^[19] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 66 out of 100, based on 32 critics, indicating "generally favorable" reviews.^[20] Audiences surveyed by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "B" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled by PostTrak gave it an 81% positive score, with 60% saying they would definitely recommend it.^[2]

See also

- List of films featuring surveillance

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External links

- Official website (<https://www.missing.movie/>)
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