



## The Search For Simon (DVD)

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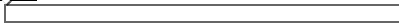
<b>Starring</b>	Martin Gooch, Millie Reeves, Noeleen Comiskey
<b>Directed By</b>	Martin Gooch
<b>Audio</b>	Dolby Digital 5.1
<b>Visuals</b>	2.35:1 Anamorphic Widescreen
<b>Running Time</b>	97 mins
<b>UK Release Date</b>	October 13, 2014
<b>Genre</b>	Comedy, Sci-fi
<b>Our Rating</b>	
<b>User Rating</b>	



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**HD**

All of us at some point in our lives have looked to the stars looking for answers. For our protagonist David (Gooch) this is literal as he has spent the last 30-odd years searching for his brother who disappeared at the age of 7, all because their father told him that Simon was abducted by aliens.

This is a film which I was curious to see: a low budget British sci-fi comedy drama featuring a wealth of actors from various iconic British TV shows such as Carol Cleveland (Monty Python), Simon Jones (Hitchhikers Guide) and Sophie Aldred (Doctor Who), some more underused than others. However curiosity isn't always a good thing.

In places this film is very funny as we follow David's globetrotting journey to seek out extra-terrestrial life, meet his geeky role-playing friends and get a hilarious insight into his thought process. He is obsessed and gullible, which creates an uncomfortable feeling for the viewer early on as this is a grown man who is seemingly being taken for a ride by various UFO experts who are just after his cash. As such you feel sorry for him.

Along his path he meets psychologist Eloise (Comiskey – who looks a bit like Rachel Stevens) whose ulterior motive is writing a book about troubled individuals. This encounter shifts the film from a quirky comedy into a study of obsession and we really start to question David, whose coping strategy as a child has developed into being a somewhat damaged grown man. However this side plot doesn't delve too deeply into serious territory and seems underwritten, like a lot of moments in this film.

My main problem is that this film is very uneven in tone throughout and the jokes are hit and miss, much like some of the scenes.

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From the start we see that this is a low budget film with pretty bad cinematography and a soundtrack that is bad even for 70s sci-fi television. However this is perfectly acceptable by my standards, as it started as a fun sci-fi quest in the vein of a TV comedy.

David just won't let Simon go, which is painful for the ones who love him. He lives at home with his mum (Cleveland) and these scenes are meant to give some dramatic and emotional weight to the search. Unfortunately they are misplaced, not within the tone of the rest of the film and just feel awkward. Although Cleveland can act there is no chemistry between them and the family drama is unconvincing, mostly due to the script.

To say this film is a mess is a bit harsh but some moments should have been left out altogether or been reshot.

Don't get me wrong, this is a watchable film and has some great moments, characters and performances. Along the way David meets love interest Sally (Reeves) who is attracted to him as he's someone who just doesn't give up. He gets a job for a shady corporation who are investigating alien beings and there are some enjoyable revelations (although some predictable and poorly executed). Despite its many flaws The Search For Simon still manages to be funny.

This is mainly due to the character of David, who is harmless, relatable and ultimately free and rebellious as he lives his life and does what he wants regardless of the consequences. He confronts those around him who are sick of hearing about aliens and even his main provider of extra-terrestrial information when he suspects he is being conned. But without giving away the ending his search is ultimately rewarding.

I did enjoy the in-jokes and this is a quirky British comedy, although I thought it would be best if a lot of the unconvincing dramatic moments were removed, then this would be a tight 60 minute comedy. I've stated that this has a television feel to it and I believe it would be best suited / developed into a series.

**Overall Verdict:** Very funny in some places but it's unconvincing dramatic moments and lack of consistent tone unfortunately damage what this film could have been. That being said it is entertaining and worth a watch, just don't expect too much.

Reviewer: George Elcombe

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