

## Film Review: Chris Pine, Elizabeth Banks in Moving ‘People Like Us’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 29, 2012 - 9:24am

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Rating: **3.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – “People Like Us” is an old-fashioned tearjerker with everything that phrase implies. It’s undeniably manipulative and sentimental but it’s also somewhat refreshing to see a drama that isn’t laced with irony, cynicism, or some form of postmodern commentary on the genre. “People Like Us” is a film that wants you to be moved; it wants you to cry; it wants you to feel something. Some audiences will be turned off by the blatant melodrama but the honest approach works for me and the strong performances from the cast clearly enlivened by the material elevates it beyond processed cheese.

Sam (Chris Pine) is a charismatic salesman, a guy who has made a unique success of himself by selling overstock from one company to another. But Sam has made a big mistake, the kind of disaster that could not only cost him his job but force legal action. As he’s done with so many problems in his life, he chooses to ignore it; to run away from his problems. He’s a smooth character with a gorgeous girlfriend (Olivia Wilde). He can talk his way out of anything.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “People Like Us” in our reviews section.](#) [14]

Sam’s bubble bursts when his father dies. While Hannah encourages him to go home and deal with the issues surrounding his distant patriarch, Sam pushes back in passive-aggressive ways like leaving his ID in the car at the airport so they miss the flight and the funeral. This kind of childish behavior was what clearly created the rift between him and his pop and mother Lillian (Michelle Pfeiffer) is particularly tired of Sam’s nonsense. It looks like he’ll end up leaving home and probably not seeing his own mother again for years, if ever.

And then he gets a package from his dad (through his attorney played by Philip Baker Hall) and everything changes. The toiletry kit contains \$150k and Sam’s dad wants his only son to get it to the sister he never knew existed. Frankie (Elizabeth Banks) is a waitress and a single mother to the troubled Josh (Michael Hall D’Addario), a kid who is getting in increasing degrees of detention at school. Sam works his way into their life, too scared to tell Frankie who he really is until, of course, everything has to come to the surface.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “People Like Us” review.](#) [14]

*“People Like Us” stars Chris Pine, Elizabeth Banks, Michelle Pfeiffer, Olivia Wilde, Mark Duplass, Philip Baker Hall, and Michael Hall D’Addario. It was written and directed by Alex Kurtzman. It is rated PG-13 and opens on June 29, 2012.*



People Like Us  
Photo credit: Disney Pictures

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