

## Film Review: Bizarre Friendship Forms in Center of ‘Starlet’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 7, 2012 - 4:58pm

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Sean Baker’s “Starlet” is about an incredibly unlikely friendship between two women six decades apart and, like a lot of acclaimed independent films, it plays like an interesting short story adapted to celluloid. The first forty-five minutes of Baker’s debut really work, as the writer/director works with his two talented leads to craft an interesting character study. When the film has to get into more depth regarding its characters futures and pasts, it falters a bit but there’s still a lot to like here.

Jane (the beautiful Dree Hemingway, daughter of Mariel) is a porn star, although that’s not even revealed until well into the film in an explicit way that would earn the flick an NC-17 if it weren’t unrated. Jane’s life seems relatively empty, smoking down in her non-descript apartment with her two easily distracted roommates, Melissa (Stella Maeve) and Mike (James Ransome). They play video games, fall asleep on the couch, and walk Jane’s dog, Starlet. Melissa is also a porn star and Mike is into some shady business, including homegrown porn, although they seem more headed for inevitable disaster than Jane, a girl who has a sweet personality and a good head on her shoulders even if she’s becoming more well-known for what’s between her legs.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “Starlet” in our reviews section.](#) [9]

Trying to add a little energy to her boring room, Jane goes to a yard sale, where she finds a thermos that she plans to use as a vase even if its owner, Sadie (first-time actress Besedka Johnson, who was reportedly found at an L.A. YMCA and convinced to star in her debut flick), keeps telling her it’s not a vase. When Jane gets home, she finds ten grand hidden in the thermos. She tries to take it back to Sadie but the woman is the definition of irascible. She’s not in the mood to talk to Jane for even a second but the young lady won’t give up. It’s almost as if she’s trying to get closer to Sadie to see if she should give back some or all of the money that Sadie has yet to notice is missing. So Jane ends up pushing her way into Sadie’s life, driving her to the grocery store and showing up at bingo. The two form a friendship.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “Starlet” review.](#) [9]

*“Starlet” stars Dree Hemingway, Stella Maeve, James Ransome, and Besedka Johnson. It was written and directed by Sean Baker and was released in Chicago on December 7, 2012.*



Starlet  
Photo credit: Music Box Films

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