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Movie Review: Winter's End

A man goes to look for his car after parking it in a farm field the night before. He's been attending a concert and, a bit hungover, just wants to get home. However, when he looks for it, though, it's nowhere to be found. A seemingly friendly farmer offers to bring let him use his phone to call a friend. It's then that the driving plot behind Winter's End kicks in and things start to get weird for Jack, the man in question.

Winter's End follows Jack as he enters the lives of the secluded Rose family. The Rose's; Sean, his sister Amy and older brother Henry, live on the farm in question in an extremely secluded fashion. They have no radio or television and only venture into the nearby town to go to church or get the occasional item from the general store. They're the last members of their family since Henry, as we learn, has some sort of condition that prevents him from having children and Sean is mildly retarded - "simple" is what people like him would generally be called. Henry rules the family with an iron fist. He keeps Sean doing his bidding and has made Amy afraid to cross him in any fashion.

Jack, we learn, has been selected by Henry for a very specific purpose. He wants him to get Amy pregnant. Jack will be released, Henry promises, after the conception has taken place with a bit of money in his pocket as long as Jack promises to make no claim on the baby. See Henry wants the baby to take the surname Rose so he has a male heir to turn the family farm over to someday. Things, as you can imagine, don't quite go according to plan for anyone involved but I won't spoil the movie for you.

Produced by Damien Donnelly and written and directed by Patrick Kenny, Winter's End is a fantastic effort that very much seems like a labor of love. If you look at the story of the movie's production on the [official website](#), you'll see that is exactly what it is. The film was shot over the course of two years as funding - and the cast - was available. The efforts of all involved, though, pay off nicely. Henry is never presented as a caricature but a real person who's decided his way is the only way of achieving his ultimate goal. And he'll use any means necessary to achieve that goal. The other characters, too, are fleshed out and real, not cyphers as happens in so many independent movies.

The script is strong and the direction solid, two factors which give the able cast a solid foundation on which to build on. There were very few moments where I thought I was watching an independent movie. In fact, I found myself being sucked into the plight of the characters more so than I do with other films. Without big budgets and special effects the drama was allowed to build organically and naturally and not through stunts and other tricks. It's a very good movie and I highly recommend seeking it out if you can. In fact, you can [watch the film online](#) through a deal with Cinequest so take some time and enjoy.

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