

The Bling Ring on Lifetime Television

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Jul 26, 2011 ★ [Francine Brokaw](#)



Austing Butler and Yin Chang star in The Bling Ring on Lifetime - Jack Zeman © 2011Lifetime Entertainment Services, LLC, All Rights Reserved.

Based on a true story, this movie follows a group of high school kids who break into movie stars' homes where they go "shopping."

Jennifer Grey, Austin Butler and Yin Chang star in *The Bling Ring*, a Made-for-TV movie inspired by actual events. Not long ago there was a rash of break-ins in the homes of young Hollywood. Paris Hilton and others were the victims of this strange crime spree. The crimes were unusual in that not all the high-value items in the homes were taken. As a matter of fact, the main items stolen were clothes, shoes, accessories and money. The electronics and other big ticket items were left in tact. And only some of the clothing was taken. To the police these crimes did not fit any profile.

High School Popularity

The story begins when Zack (Austin Butler) arrives at his new school. This guy is a loner and very troubled. He has psychological problems and suffers from extreme anxiety. When he is befriended by some of the students at his

new school, his mother Iris (Jennifer Grey) is happy and thinks that her family is finally on solid ground. What she doesn't know is that the kids Zack is hanging around with are not the fine, upstanding kids she thinks they are.

Natalie (Yin Chang) is the leader of the group. She is a spoiled, insecure young woman who longs to be noticed and part of the "in" crowd. To her, the "in" crowd is the people who get VIP treatment in the night clubs and hang around with the famous people of Hollywood. Zack, who had never had any friends before, is at first hesitant when Natalie takes him under her wing. But as his confidence level grows he becomes the co-leader of their little group.

In the beginning Zack notices Natalie shoplifting from some high-end clothing stores. This increases his anxiety. But as time goes by and they form their little band of thieves, Zack falls into the role perfectly and his anxiety disappears.

At first Natalie talks him into going to Paris Hilton's house where a party is supposed to take place. When they arrive the house is dark and empty. So, what else is there to do but to open the door and enter? Zack reluctantly follows Natalie inside where she immediately goes to the closet and, as she says, starts "shopping." She picks out several outfits and after the two leave the house Natalie decides that this is her kind of shopping spree.

The couple continues their crime spree in several houses owned by some of the young celebs of the town. They now include some of their other classmates who thoroughly enjoy this new lifestyle.

As they rack up the loot, they decide they need to sell some of it and enlist the help of a fence. Soon, their crimes are making headlines and the press dubs them the "Bling Ring." Natalie is, of course, excited by the publicity even though no one knows her name. Nevertheless, the notoriety is a drug for her. She wants more and more. Zack, on the other hand, is a bit more cautious. But the attention he is getting from his new friends and the press is intoxicating to him as well. So they continue their little nightly escapades, spending their "income" at clubs where they garner attention amongst the people they want to impress. They seem to have it all.

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Because of their desire for recognition they enlist technology to boost their image, using Facebook to basically advertise their escapades. This is how the police begin to put two and two together.

The Members of the Bling Ring

The movie shows the members of The Bling Ring as narcissistic young people whose only concern is having fun and getting attention. Natalie is more concerned about the publicity she is getting than anything else. The other girls are simply enjoying their time going through the houses and looking at the loot. Zack is finally feeling good about himself, although he cannot tell his parents why he is so popular all of a sudden. This guy has a dominating father who never gives an inch and puts him down every chance he gets. No wonder he has anxiety.

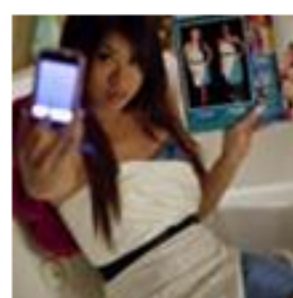
The story is inspired by actual events. When it broke, it was strange in itself. But watching the movie makes the incident even more bizarre. The mentality of these kids is outrageous. It must be the spotlight the press shines on celebrities that brings out the jealousy in young kids these days. Celebs are on all the magazine covers looking fabulous – and airbrushed. But that fame and fortune is enticing to young people, especially those with low self esteem. And this story bears that out.

The Bling Ring premieres later this year on Lifetime. It is an interesting story about some very troubled young people. The fact that it is based on actual events makes it an even stranger and more troubling tale.

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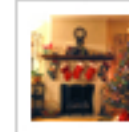


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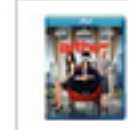


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