

True Story (2015) by Mougheh Javadi



MOVIE INFO

True Story

6.3/10 · [IMDb](#)

45% · [Rotten Tomatoes](#)

50% · [Metacritic](#)

New York Times journalist Michael Finkel (Jonah Hill) loses his job when it's revealed that he was not entirely truthful in a cover story he wrote on contemporary slave trading in Africa. His world collapses even further when he learns he's a victim of identity theft; a man named Christian Longo (James Franco) assumed Finkel's name and stood accused of murdering his own family. Seeing a way to rebuild his shattered reputation, Finkel meets with Longo to hear his story.

Initial release: January 23, 2015 ([Park City](#))

Director: [Rupert Goold](#)

Running time: 1h 39m

Story by: [Michael Finkel](#)

Initial DVD release: August 4, 2015 ([USA](#))

Idioms, slangs and expressions used in the movie (By Mougheh Javadi)

1-I have a ***hunch*** that...

have a hunch about Sth=to have an idea about what did, will, or should happen; to have a feeling that something will or should happen.

2-The cops clearly felt they had enough to **bring him in** = summon him and interrogate him

3-This turned out to be the ***end of the line*** for them = they cannot escape their destiny

4-I don't **recall** us ever meeting = remember

5-At the very same time that you were using my name, they **stripped me of it.**

They stole my identity so now I am nobody a

6-I'm just another... ***Pariah.***

Pariah= outsider

7-I need the story to ***be ahead of the game*** =

8-The children came like ***a flock of starlings*** = *in large numbers and suddenly*

Starling is a kind of bird

9-These were the ***boom years*** in America

Boom year= a period of high economic growth characterized by rising wages, profits, and prices, full employment, and high levels of investment, trade, and other economic activity

10-It's part true crime, but it's part ***mea culpa***

mea culpa = my fault

11-It will **eat away at you**

eat away at=destroy gradually, erode; worry one constantly

Ex: The fact that he failed the test is eating away at him.

12- This was a violent and **frenzied act**. A **ferocious attack**.

frenzied activity is fast and uncontrolled, usually because it is done by someone feeling very anxious or excited

ferocious attack = violent, dangerous, and frightening attack

13-I intended to put it all **out into the open**

(out) into the open =available for everyone to see or experience,

Ex: You need to bring the evidence out into the open.

14-None of the stories **hold water** because they're all f... Lies

Not hold water= not able to be proved; not correct or true.

15-I just came back to make sure they didn't sub the shit out of me again.= they will kill me, or hurt me

16-Can someone help me **scoop up** all this money

scoop up [scoop sth⇔up] phr v

if a lot of people scoop something up, they buy it quickly so that soon there is none left

17-You hire people like me to **get on the ground and hunt**.

18- We **made a pact** that we would never lie to each other.

Pact= formal agreement

19- The outlines are clear, but they **fade at the edges** leaving blurs and **smudges**.

20-Then why'd **flee**?

Flee = escape a place

21-you have such a **mastery of words**

22- I got so **wrapped up in** trying to tell a great story that I completely lost my obligation to the truth. = much too focused

23- My whole reputation's **on the line**, or what's left of it anyway.

On the line= in danger/at risk

24-Let me **spell this out** for you = explain it very clearly

25-If he can **sow enough doubt** to force a mistrial, he's won.

Sow sth = to do something that will cause a bad situation in the future

sow doubt/confusion/dissatisfaction

26-Is it because you don't want to share your **scoop**? Interesting story

27-Dozens of **facial capillaries** burst as she struggled for air. مویرگ های صورت

Synopsis

True Story is a 2015 American [mystery thriller](#) film directed by [Rupert Goold](#) and written by Goold and David Kajganich. Based on the memoir of the same name by [Michael Finkel](#), the film stars [Jonah Hill](#) and [James Franco](#). Other actors include [Felicity Jones](#), [Gretchen Mol](#), Betty Gilpin, and [John Sharian](#).

Franco plays [Christian Longo](#), a man on the FBI's most wanted list for murdering his wife and three children in Oregon. He hid in Mexico under the identity of [Michael Finkel](#), a journalist, played by Hill.^[3] The film premiered at the 2015 [Sundance Film Festival](#) and was released theatrically on April 17, 2015 in the United States. The film explores the relationship that develops between the two men after the journalist Finkel begins to meet with Longo in prison.

Plot[edit]

Christian Longo ([James Franco](#)), an Oregon man whose wife and three children have been discovered murdered, is arrested by police in Mexico. There he claimed to be a reporter for the [New York Times](#) named Michael Finkel.

In New York City, Finkel ([Jonah Hill](#)) is an ambitious and successful reporter. He is confronted by his editors in a separate incident, who accuse him of partially fabricating a story which they had featured on the cover of the [New York Times Magazine](#). Although Finkel attempts to defend his actions, he is dismissed. He returns home to Montana, where his wife Jill ([Felicity Jones](#)) lives. He struggles to find work but is unsuccessful due to his dismissal from the *Times*.

Finkel is contacted by a reporter for [The Oregonian](#), who is seeking his opinion on Christian Longo's theft of his identity. Finkel, who was not aware of Longo's actions, is intrigued. He arranges to meet with Longo in prison. During their first conversation, Longo claims that he has followed Finkel for his entire career, being fascinated by his writing. Longo agrees to tell Finkel his side of the story, in exchange for writing lessons, and Finkel's promising his silence on their encounters.

Finkel becomes increasingly absorbed by Longo, who is evasive about his guilt. Convinced that the story will be redemptive, Finkel continues to meet and correspond with Longo over several months. Finkel receives numerous letters from Longo, including an eighty-page volume entitled "Wrong Turns", which contains what Longo describes as a list of every mistake he has made in his life. Finkel notices increasing similarities between the two men, including parallels between the styles of writing and drawing in Longo's letters and Finkel's personal journals. As the murder case approaches the time for trial, Finkel's doubt about Longo's guilt increases. Longo tells Finkel he intends to plead not guilty, and that he did not kill his family.

At the plea hearing, Longo pleads not guilty to two of the murders, but pleads guilty to the murder of his wife and one of his daughters. Confused, Finkel confronts Longo, who claims that he has to protect certain individuals, whom he refuses to name. Greg Ganley ([Robert John Burke](#)), a detective who tracked Longo down, approaches Finkel. He claims that Longo is an extremely dangerous and manipulative man; he tries to convince Finkel to turn over as evidence all of the correspondence between the two. Finkel refuses, citing journalistic integrity and the promise he made to Longo.

At the trial, Longo takes the stand and describes his version of the events. He claims that, after an argument with his wife about financial struggles, he had come home to discover two of his children missing, one of his daughters unconscious, and his wife sobbing, saying that she put the children "in the water". Longo says that he strangled his wife to death in a blind rage, and performed a mercy killing on his daughter afterwards. During his testimony, he refers several times to techniques that Finkel had taught him during his writing lessons.

As the jury deliberates, Longo is visited in jail by Finkel's wife, Jill, who tells Longo that he is a narcissistic murderer who will never escape who he is.

Longo is found guilty of all charges and sentenced to death. As he is sentenced, he smiles and winks at Finkel. Finkel, to his shock and rage, realizes that Longo has been telling lies the entire time, using him in order to make his testimony more believable. A short time later, Finkel meets Longo on death row. Longo tries to convince Finkel that he discovered his wife strangling their daughter and then blacked out, having no memory of the murders. Finkel angrily tells Longo that he will not believe any more of his lies, and will warn the judge at the upcoming appeal of Longo's manipulative nature. Longo retorts by pointing out the success Finkel has had with his book about their encounters, leaving the reporter shaken.

Finkel reads a section of his book, entitled *True Story*, at a promotional event. Taking questions from the audience, he imagines Longo standing in the back of the room. Longo says that, if he has lost his freedom, Finkel must have lost something as well. Finkel is unable to respond.

Title cards reveal that although Finkel never wrote for the *New York Times* again, Longo has had several of his pieces written from death row published by the paper.

Cast

- [Jonah Hill](#) as [Michael Finkel](#)
- [James Franco](#) as [Christian Longo](#)
- [Felicity Jones](#) as Jill Barker
- Connor Kikot as Zachary Longo
- [Gretchen Mol](#) as Karen
- Betty Gilpin as Cheryl
- [John Sharian](#) as Sheriff
- [Robert Stanton](#) as Jeffrey Gregg
- [Maria Dizzia](#) as Mary Jane Longo
- [Genevieve Angelson](#) as Tina Alvis
- [Dana Eskelson](#) as Joy Longo
- Joel Garland as Dan Pegg
- Rebecca Henderson as Ellen Parks
- Charlotte Driscoll as Sadie Longo

Production

Filming

[Principal photography](#) began in March 2013 in [Warwick, New York](#) and [New York City](#).^{[4][5]} [Brad Pitt](#) produced, along with several others, and [Fox Searchlight Pictures](#) distributed.^[6]

Music

[Marco Beltrami](#) was hired on July 18, 2014, to score the film's music.^[7]

"Se la mia morte brami," a madrigal by the Italian renaissance composer [Carlo Gesualdo](#) plays an important role in the film. Gesualdo infamously murdered his wife and her lover and this biographical detail offers parallels to the narrative of the film.^[8]

Release

The film was originally scheduled for a [limited theatrical release](#) on April 10, 2015.^[9] That release date was subsequently delayed for one week in favor of a [wide release](#).^[10]

Critical reception[\[edit\]](#)

True Story has received mixed reviews from critics. On [Rotten Tomatoes](#), the film has a rating of 45%, based on 141 reviews, with an average rating of 5.5/10. The site's critical consensus reads, "James Franco and Jonah Hill make a watchable pair, but *True Story* loses their performances — and the viewer's interest — in a muddled movie that bungles its fact-based tale."^[11] On [Metacritic](#), the film has a score of 50 out of 100, based on 40 critics, indicating "mixed or average reviews".^[12]

(Wikipedia_)[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/True_Story_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/True_Story_(film))