

a Shadow Magic Production

WIND AND SKIES

Based on a screenplay by Naby Dakhlia and Houston Jones

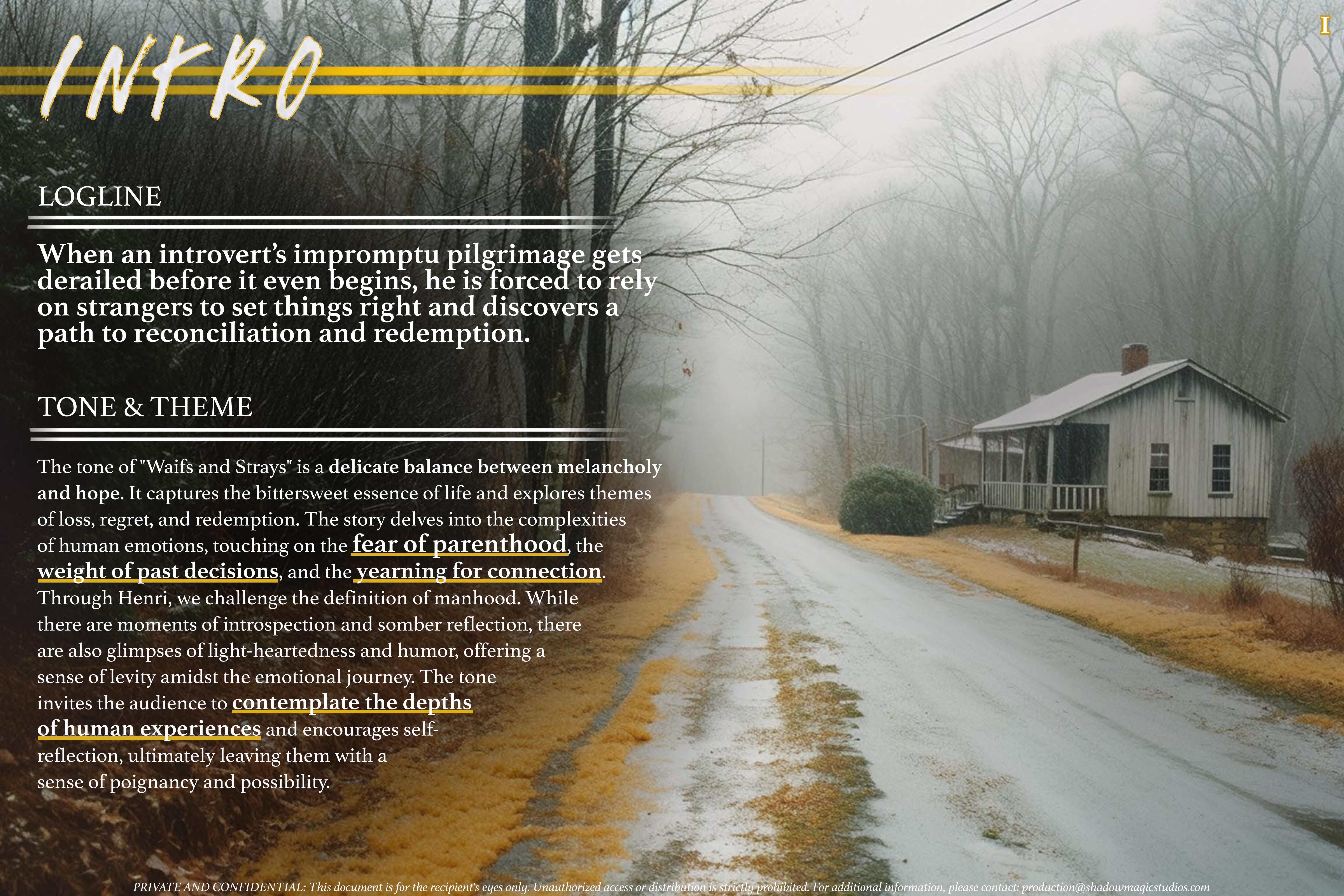
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OVERVIEW

Genre:	Manhunt Drama, POC Protagonist
Concept:	Reluctant mentor and a runaway teen
Running time:	Approx. 100 min
Perceived Rating:	PG-13
Film Comp:	Nomadland, Florida Project, Peanut Butter Falcon
Locations:	Kentucky & New Mexico
Production Co:	Shadow Magic Studios
Scheduled Start:	November 1st, 2024

INTRO



LOGLINE

When an introvert's impromptu pilgrimage gets derailed before it even begins, he is forced to rely on strangers to set things right and discovers a path to reconciliation and redemption.

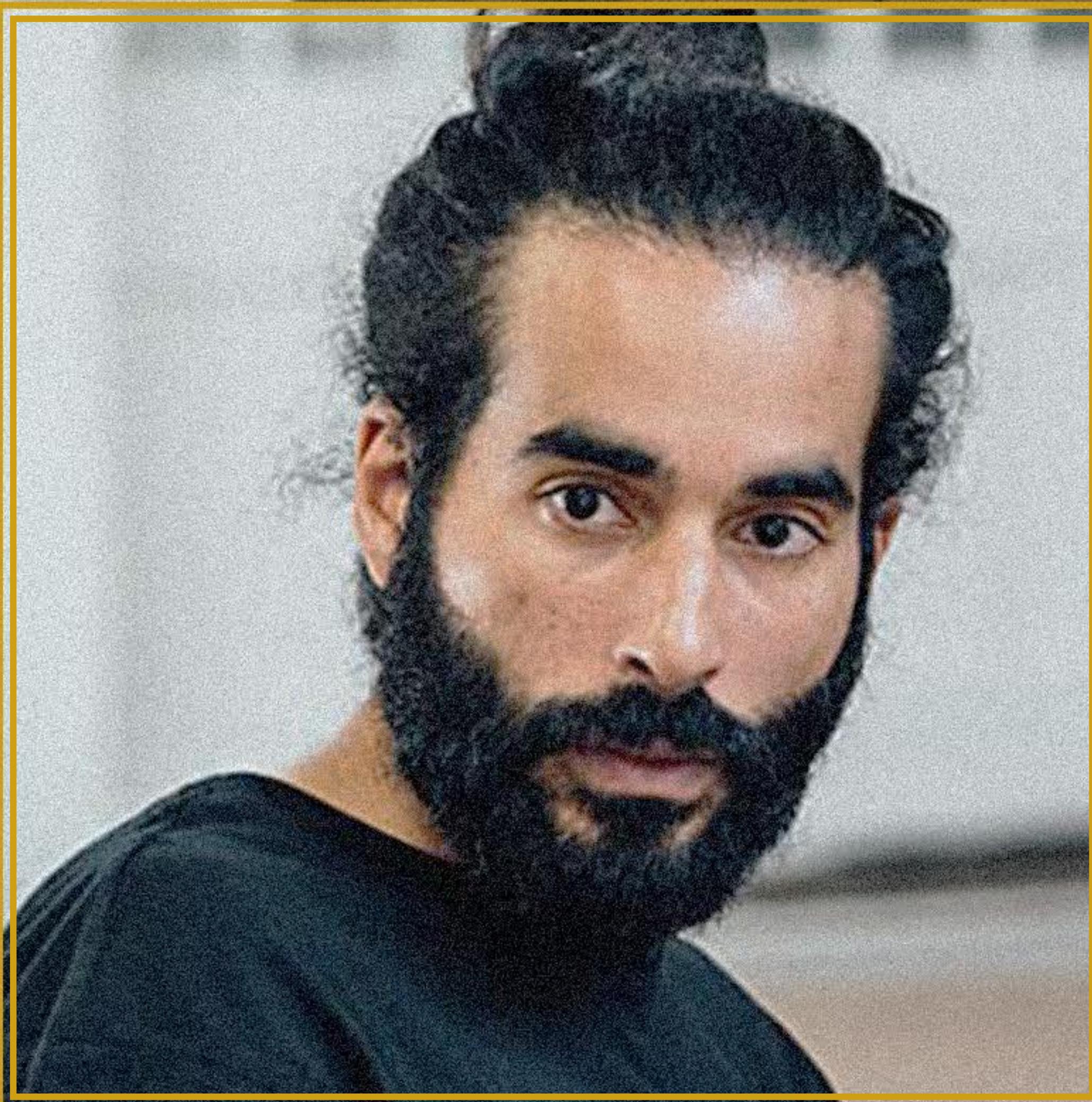
TONE & THEME

The tone of "Waifs and Strays" is a delicate balance between melancholy and hope. It captures the bittersweet essence of life and explores themes of loss, regret, and redemption. The story delves into the complexities of human emotions, touching on the fear of parenthood, the weight of past decisions, and the yearning for connection.

Through Henri, we challenge the definition of manhood. While there are moments of introspection and somber reflection, there are also glimpses of light-heartedness and humor, offering a sense of levity amidst the emotional journey. The tone invites the audience to contemplate the depths of human experiences and encourages self-reflection, ultimately leaving them with a sense of poignancy and possibility.

CHARACTERS

2



HENRI BENADARA

French (2nd generation) | Age: 30s
Ethnicity: Arabic/Persian/North African

HENRI is introduced as a brooding and enigmatic traveler ill-prepared for the journey ahead. While his origins are initially unclear, his destination is established early on: to walk in his late brother's footsteps . As life interferes with his quest, Henri is forced to confront this past he's running from (literally).

He **embodies masculinity** in every way *except* when it comes to **fatherhood**. He holds firm the belief that he lacks the necessary skills and qualities to be competent mentor and to protect his loved-ones. His unique struggle lies in reconciling his own self-doubt with the transformative power of **embracing paternal responsibility**.

Cast Attached: Naby Dakhli

CHARACTERS

3

LOU

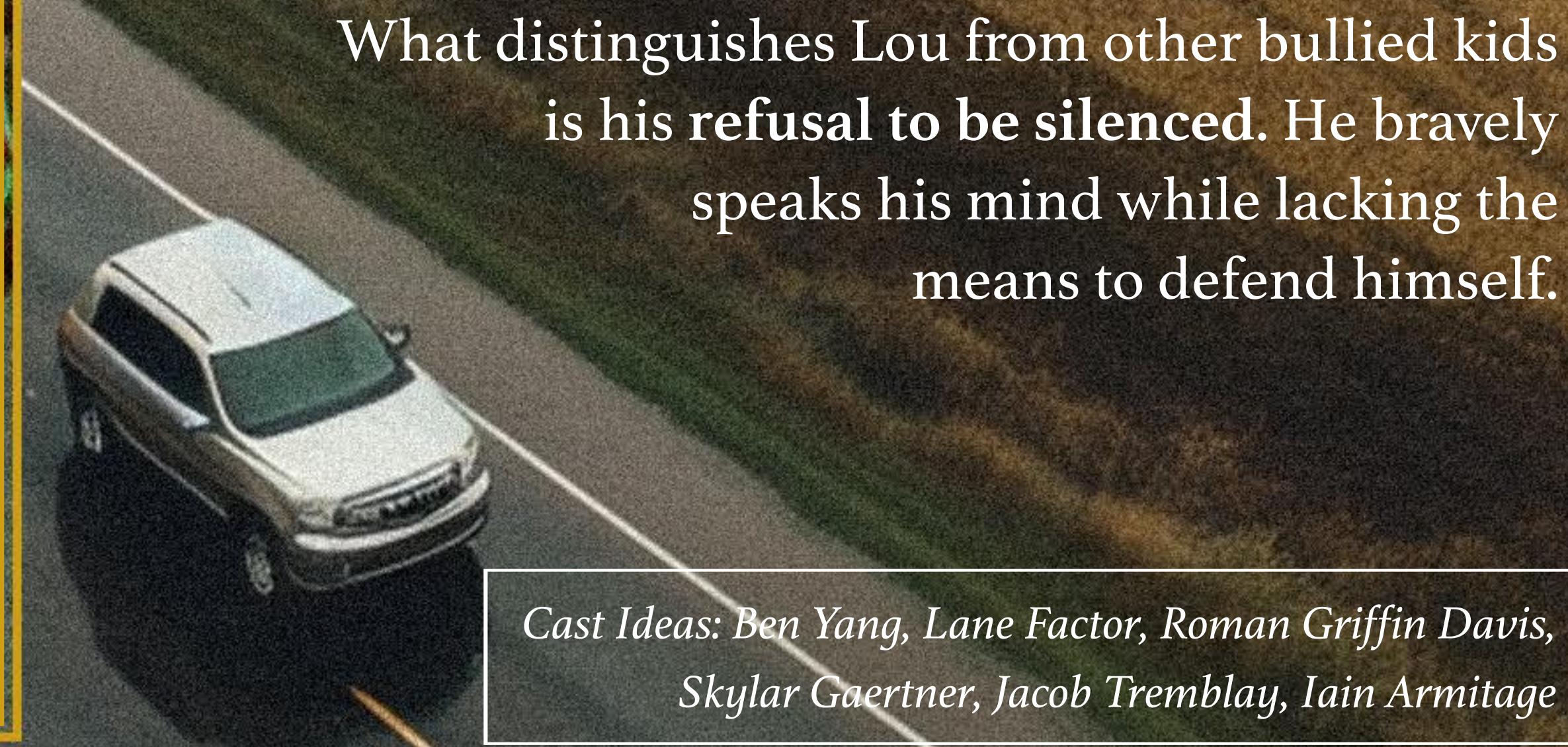
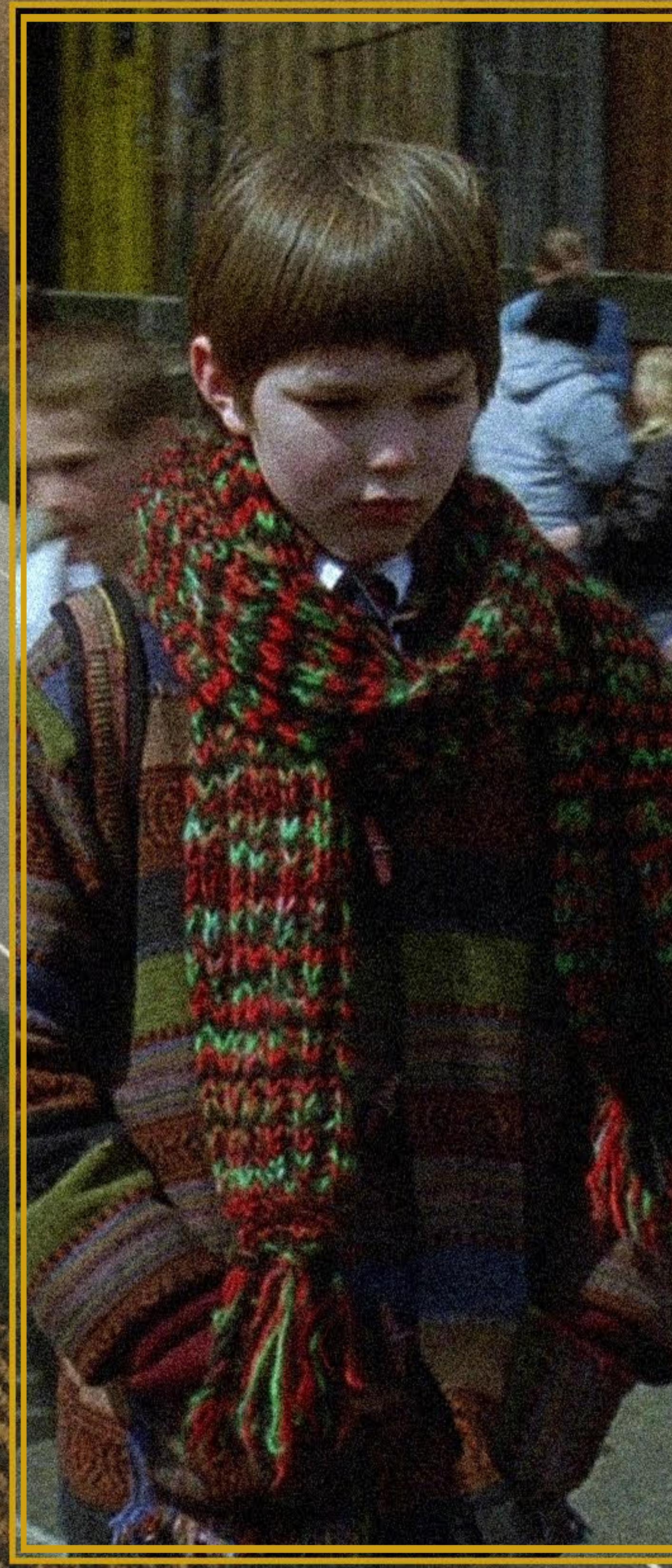
Age: teenager
Ethnicity: any

THE RUNAWAY TEEN. Black-eyed and bloody-nosed 15-year-old in a school uniform. His stolen car broke down. Stranded and vulnerable, he reluctantly turns to a shabby foreigner, Henri, for help.

Contrary to Henri, Lou's past is rather obvious but its his destination that remains a mystery. Despite their contrasting backgrounds, both characters need each other. An unlikely friendship grows as Lou finds **the role model** he desperately needed while unknowingly playing a **pivotal role in Henri's transformation..**

What distinguishes Lou from other bullied kids is his **refusal to be silenced**. He bravely speaks his mind while lacking the means to defend himself.

Cast Ideas: Ben Yang, Lane Factor, Roman Griffin Davis, Skylar Gaertner, Jacob Tremblay, Iain Armitage



CHARACTERS

4

SAM

Age: 60+

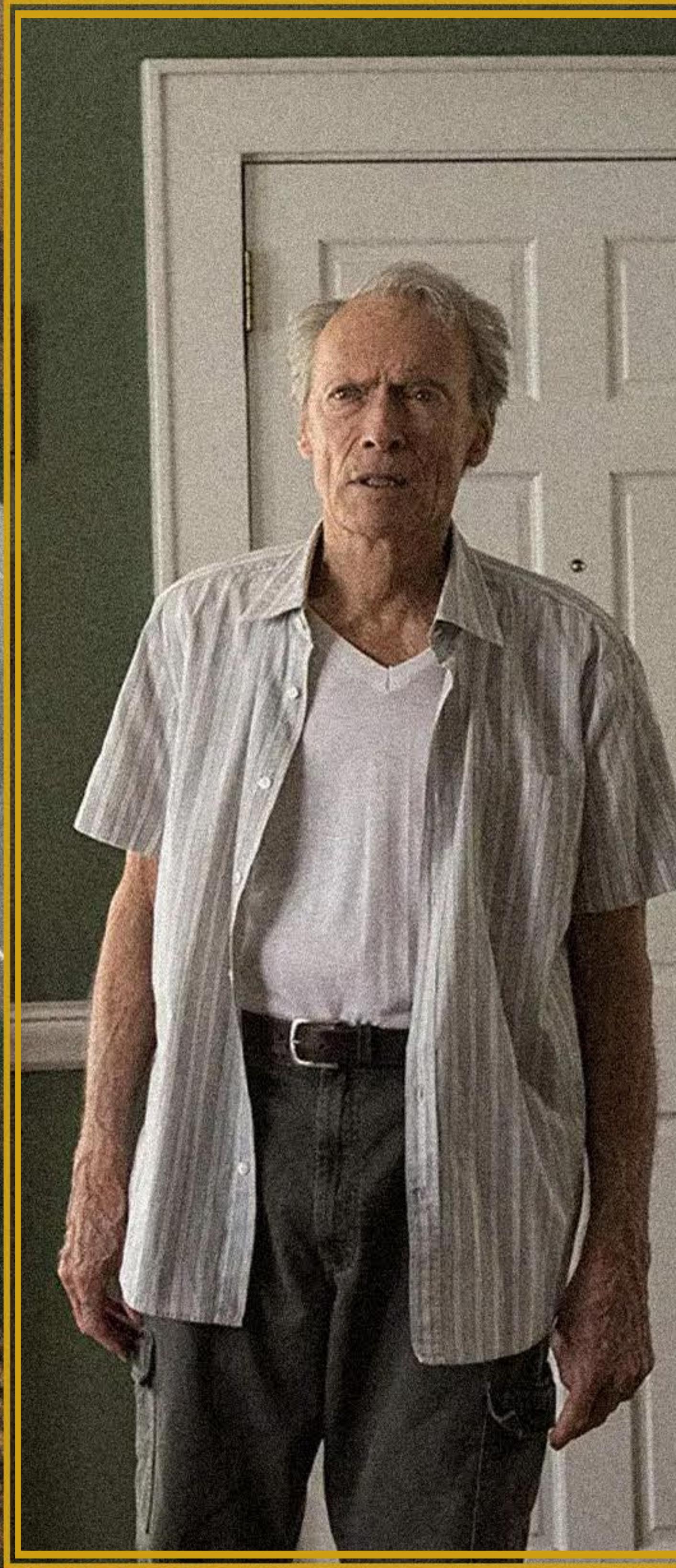
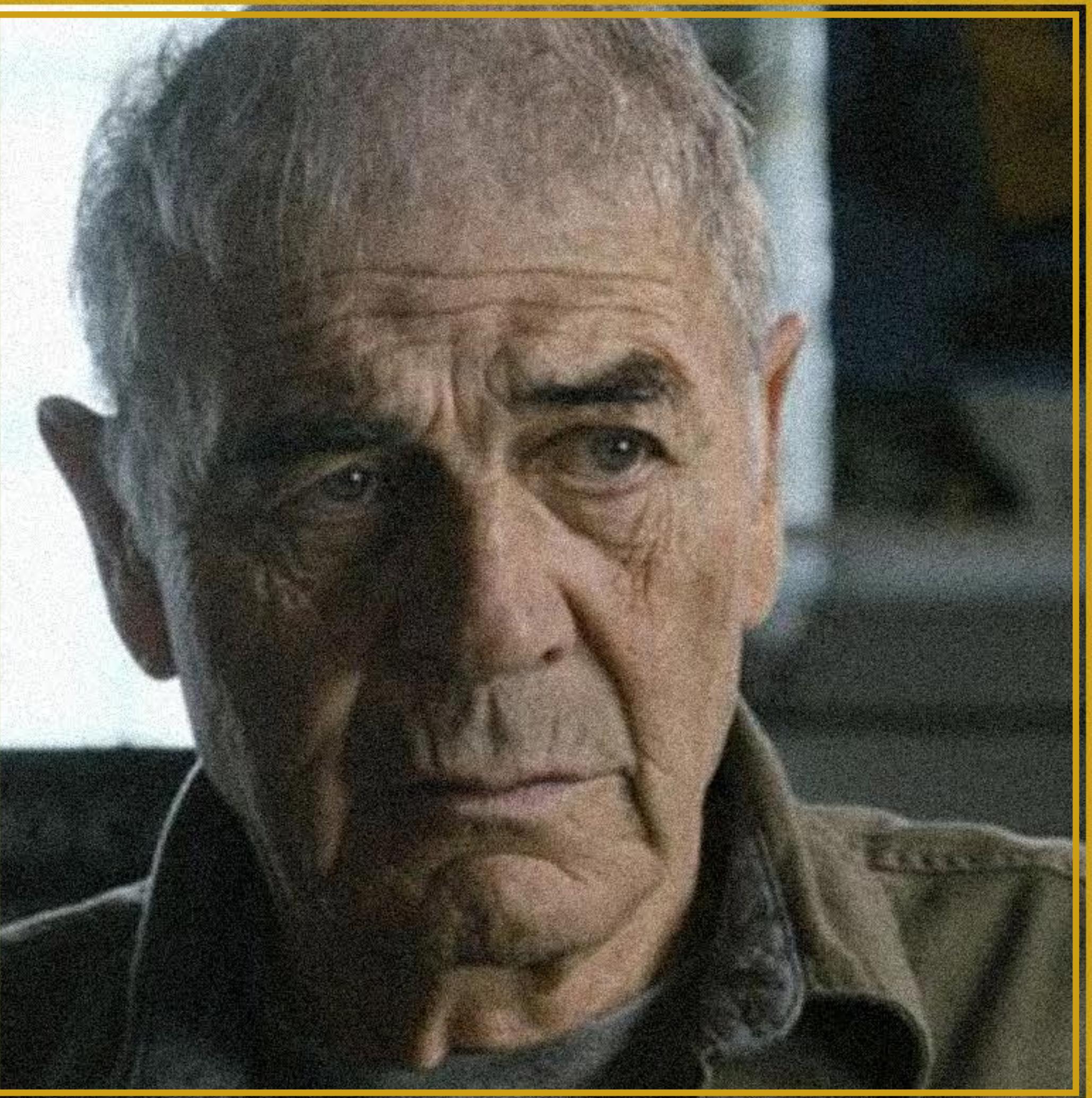
Ethnicity: any

THE ESTRANGED FATHER. Sam is the first helper along Henri's journey, even though he takes him further off-course. His relentless desire to prove that he has become a good man stirs regret in Henri who begins to question his opinion of his own severely-flawed father.

A retired trucker **burdened by the guilt** of his daughter's tragic death decades ago, Sam wants nothing more than to reconnect with his son. His short time with Henri teaches him to focus on the **positive potentialities of the future** and to **let go of the weight of past failures**.

What makes Sam unique is his unspoken humility and unwavering determination.

*Cast Ideas: Jonathan Banks, Stephen Dillane, Danny Glover
Ben Mendelsohn, Anthony Head*



CHARACTERS

5

DEMI

Age: 20+

Ethnicity: any

THE SINGLE-MOTHER. Demi's bubbly sarcastic personality acts as an escape from her mundane small-town life. She possesses an undeniable **wanderlust**, often half-joking about embarking on spontaneous adventures. However, her deep love for her toddler means she'll never leave, showing Henri the **true meaning of commitment and sacrifice.**

Abbey's uniqueness lies in her unapologetic honesty about her feelings regarding parenting and her candid admission of her desire to escape. She does not shy away from expressing the challenges and conflicts that come with motherhood.

*Cast Ideas: Bria Vinaite, Zoe Kazan, Haley Lu Richardson, Zazie Beetz
Ashley Benson*



SYNOPSIS

Henri, a Parisian in his 30s, arrives in New York City to hitchhike across the country, an hommage to his late brother. Visibly troubled, he fails to actually start and instead escapes into a drunken binge rocked by fights and hallucinations.

He meets Sam, a retired trucker seeking reconciliation with his son, and then Demi, a single-mother filled with wanderlust. Those encounters send Henri back in time to the incident that sparked this impromptu pilgrimage: a fight with his ex-girlfriend that ended with her falling on her 8-month pregnant belly.

Henri's journey takes a life-changing turn when he meets Lou, a rebellious teenager who has stolen his mother's faulty car. Despite their initial clash, Lou brings Henri to his brother's resting place in time for the 15th anniversary of his passing. It isn't until a tragic accident claims the life of a majestic buck that Henri's bottled up emotions gush out. Consumed by grief, he abandons Lou on the spot.

Ilene, a grieving mother, offers Henri a fresh start via clean clothes, a shower, and knowledge of Lou's whereabouts. Upon reuniting with the teen, Henri learns the heart-wrenching truth about the boy's quest: to meet for the first time his father... Except his father was terminally ill and passed away.

Henri convinces Lou to attend his father's wake so that he can unburden himself. With no money, they embark on a journey across the Rockies and Far West, filled with funny escapades and life lessons.

Unbeknownst to Henri, he becomes the father figure Lou had always yearned for. However, their joy is interrupted when Henri realizes he is wanted for Lou's alleged kidnapping. Simultaneously, Henri learns that his ex-girlfriend prematurely gave birth to their son..

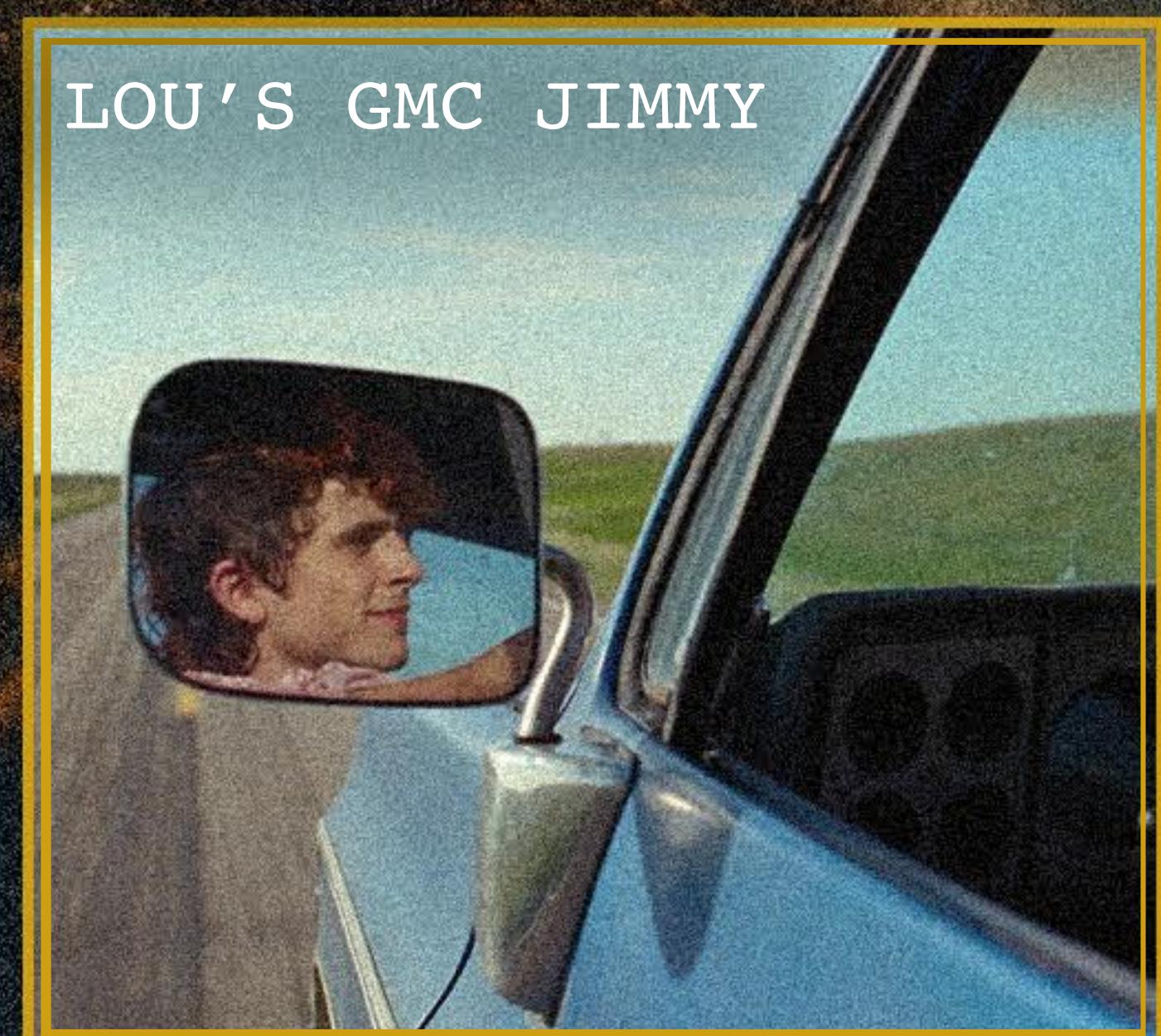
Henri conceals the truth from Lou and fulfills his promise to take him to the wake. Recognizing the importance of unburdening himself, Lou speaks to his deceased father in the casket, causing discomfort among onlookers. Lou's biological grandfather, Mr. Duvall, who had been aware of Lou's existence, defends his late son's actions and reveals the truth about Henri. Before Lou can confront his mentor, the police arrive.

Lou helps Henri escape but presses dangerously hard for answers, leading to a climax involving a police chase, Henri's come-to-Jesus moment, and a terrifying car accident.

Cops draw their guns at Henri who is believed to be violent. The threat to Henri's life is palpable but alleviated when Lou steps in to protect him. In that moment, Henri discovers the impact he's had on Lou and realizes that his fear of fatherhood never equated to incompetence.

LOCATIONS

7



LOCATIONS

8

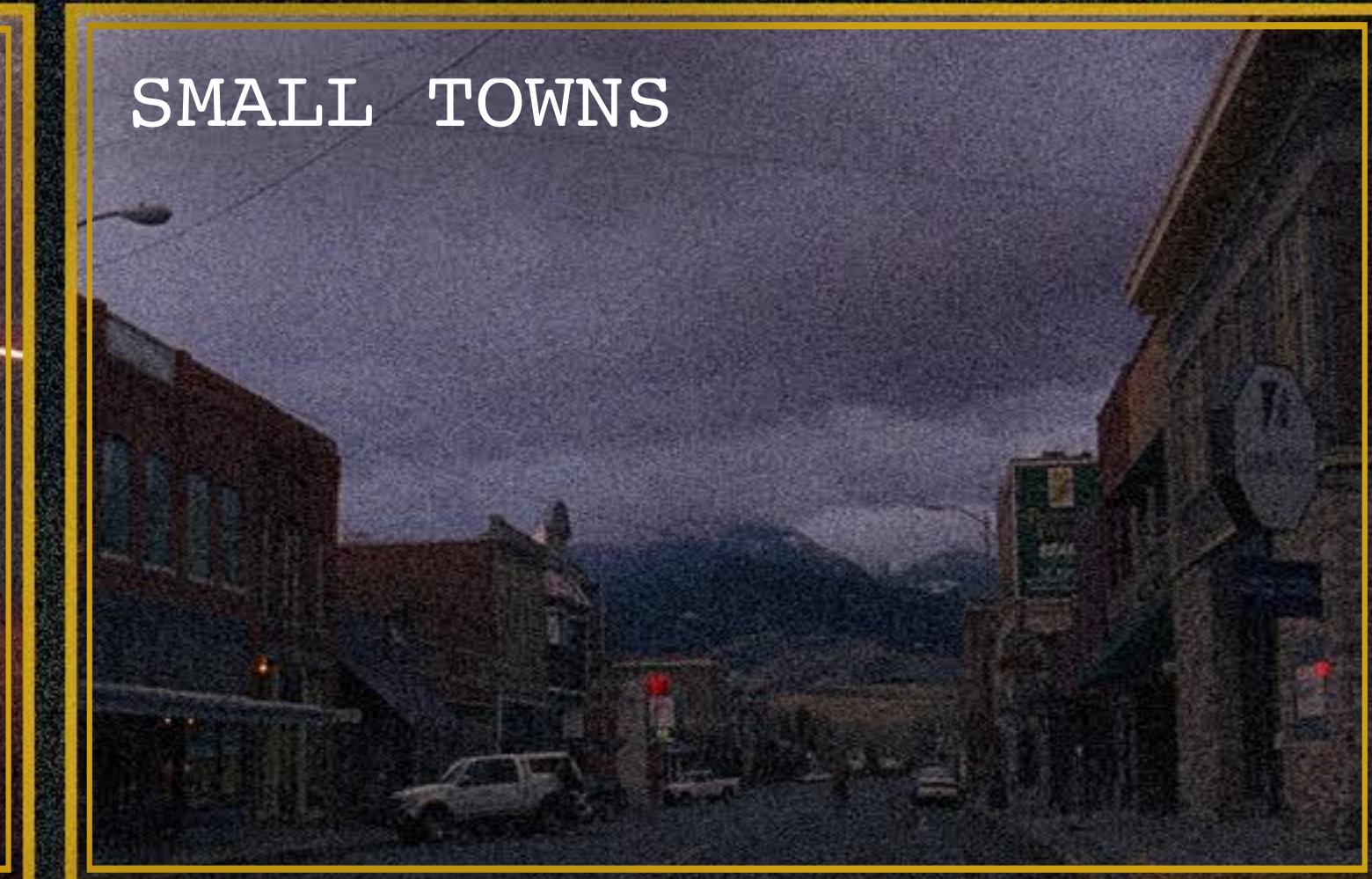
GRAZING FIELDS



OLD GAS STATIONS



SMALL TOWNS



MOUNTAIN ROADS



OLD HIGHWAYS & SERVICE ROADS



SPORTS BARS



LOU'S FATHER'S HOME
(funeral wake)



DESERT PRIVATE LAND
(police chase)



CAR WRECK SITE



STATEMENTS

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

“Waifs and Strays” is an ode to a very dear mentor who never fully assumed that responsibility. I wish he had.

The story unfolds on the open road, where two unlikely companions collide: a man running from the chains of impending fatherhood and a young boy in pursuit of the paternal bond he never had. Their journey is a tapestry of chance encounters and shared experiences, leading them down a path where their fears and desires intertwine. As the miles go by, they confront the realities of what it means to be a father and what it means to be a son.

My most precious goal is to reassure those who doubt in their capacity to nurture -- to tell them they can do it. That is why I plan to steal the uplifting spirit of "The Peanut Butter Falcon" and infuse it into the raw exploration of grief in "Manchester by the Sea". On a broader level, I want to invite audiences to hold-off judgement and learn to understand strangers, because through that comes self-discovery, and through self-discovery: the courage to embrace the roles we once feared.

From a technical standpoint, a “cinema vérité-esque” approach will be used to capture the unadulterated intensity of this story. In practical terms, this means the camera work will allow actors to freely explore the sets and find the truth of that moment; the takes will be short-numbered, precious, and intense; the lighting will be minimal and unobstructive; the script will act as a basic roadmap (pun shamelessly intended).

All-in-all, the filmmaking will protect the sanctity of the film set and allow authenticity to reign.

After all, for me, directing is first ‘authenticity-seeking’ before it is ‘problem-solving’.

FILMMAKERS

Houston Jones - writer/director

Born and raised in France, Houston is a writer-director currently based in NYC. He has been working in the film industry for over a decade, specializing in movies and TV shows with budgets ranging between \$500K and \$5MM. His deep understanding of the production process allows him, as a director, to make creative decisions that are simultaneously realistic without having to compromise the creative integrity of the project. One of Houston's most recent **pilot scripts, "Raymar"**, **was produced in 2023** and is being shopped around.

Houston's passion for storytelling stems from a **deep desire to understand strangers** and their journeys. That is why his protagonists are often **outcasts** who have been dismissed by society. His goal is to give these characters a voice and a platform to tell their stories.

Houston is set to produce a thriller

starring JK Simmons and August Diehl this October.



For more information about Shadow Magic Studios, please visit the website at: <https://shadowmagicstudios.com/>

STATEMENTS

PRODUCERS' STATEMENT

The commercial success of films like Peanut Butter Falcon and Nomadland, both domestically and internationally, is a testament to the audience's appetite for thought-provoking fiction. These films resonate with audiences emotionally and challenge them intellectually, encouraging them to question their own lives. The financial success of these films clearly indicates a hunger for cinema that is not just entertaining but also meaningful and impactful. The critical acclaim and awards recognition these films have received serve as further proof that audiences are drawn to stories that are not afraid to explore the darker aspects of the human experience, and that resonates on a deep, personal level.

FILMMAKERS

Atkin Korkis - producer

Naby Dakhli - writer / actor

represented by Identity Agency Grp (Illi El-Amriti)

Naby Dakhli is a multilingual French actor and screenwriter of Arabic descent. He is based in London and Los Angeles. Dakhli has a diverse range of film credits, including roles in the Netflix series "Messiah," the Norwegian film "Agent Hamilton," and the Spanish film "Traces of Sandalwood." He also has extensive theatre experience, having performed in productions such as "Falsestuff" at the Theatre Nacional de Catalunya, and "Othello" with the English Touring Theatre.



Naby's personal experience of leaving a career in banking in his late 20s to pursue acting in a foreign country lends authenticity to the role of Henri.

Additionally, his

experience abroad, having lived in several different countries, gives him an adroitness of incredible value when filming in remote location with locals who aren't used to film productions.

Naby is starring in an untitled Amazon Studios series currently filming in Greece until October.



understanding of the complexities involved in producing successful films. His expertise, professionalism, and dedication to producing high-quality films make him an ideal partner for investors looking to create successful and profitable independent projects.

Atkin's strengths extend beyond the technical aspects of film making. His creative approach to each project enables him to optimize resources and maximize dollars on the screen. Moreover as a **person-of-color** with firsthand experience navigating the complexities of **immigrant life in the US**, Atkin is perfectly equipped to ensure that the film effectively communicates its message and that it resonates with a diverse audience.

Atkin is set to produce a thriller starring JK Simmons and August Diehl this October.

FILMMAKERS

Daniel Wohl - composer

represented by Allegro (Patty Macmillan)

Catrin Hedstrom - editor

represented by WME (Jasan Pagni and Mira Young)



Catrin is a Swedish experimental filmmaker and photographer. After graduating with a BFA in Film Production from NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Catrin began her editing career editing commercial content but quickly moved into cutting feature films. Currently based between New York, Los Angeles, and London, she works as an editor on a wide range of projects. She's edited indie films like Lena Dunham's Sharp Stick, which premiered at Sundance Film Festival, to blockbusters like Jordan Peele's Candyman, which topped the US box office in 2021. Most recently she **edited Marvel Studio's The Marvels**.

Catrin's self-proclaimed passion for **crafting magic in liminal spaces** makes her a perfect match for the introspective nature of this story. With her unique perspective as a **foreigner** in this country, she brings a distinct viewpoint to our protagonist's journey. Her **feminist sensibilities** will undoubtedly add invaluable depth and balance to what could otherwise be a male-dominated narrative.

<http://www.catrinhedstrom.com/>

Daniel is a **French composer** now based in Los Angeles. He is celebrated for his **innovative fusion of electronics and acoustic instrumentation**. His diverse body of work encompasses solo pieces, immersive electronic compositions, film and television scores, chamber ensembles, and large orchestral works. Praised by critics as an imaginative skilled creator, Daniel's music captivates with its beauty and originality. He has performed at prestigious venues including the **Broad Museum, Carnegie Hall, and MoMA PS1**, collaborating with esteemed artists such as **Jóhann Jóhannsson and Julia Holter**. His talents have also led him to collaborate on media projects with notable directors such as **Luca Guadagnino, Patty Jenkins, and Josephine Decker**.

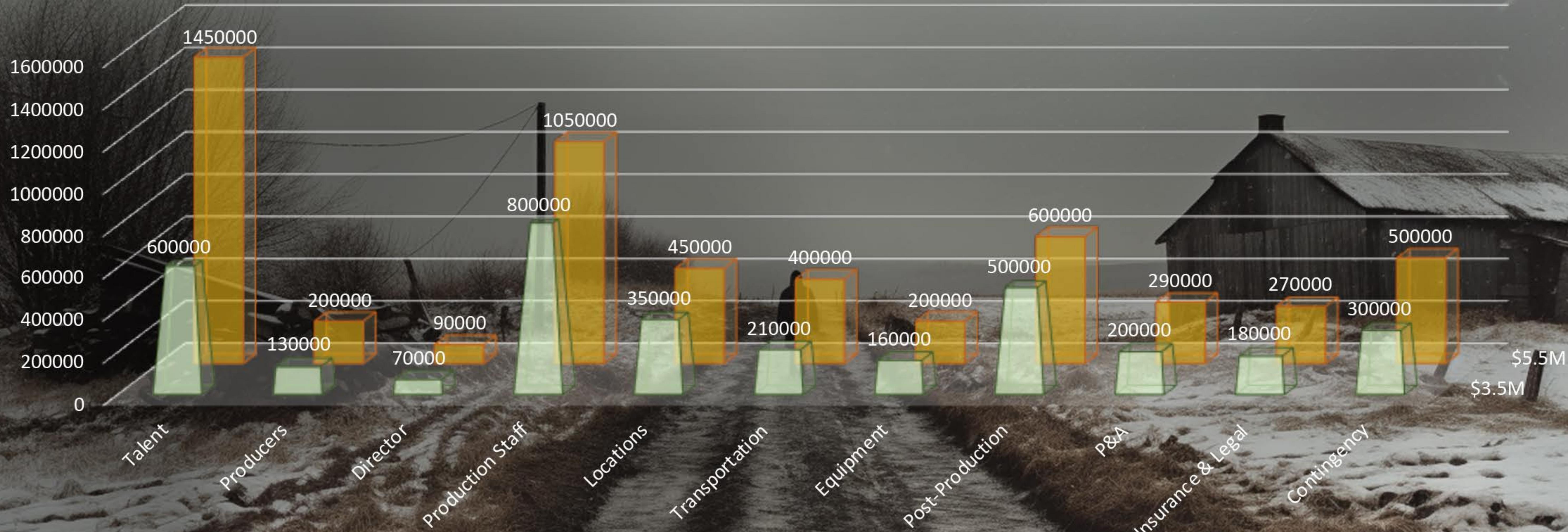
Daniel's latest album, **État**, captures what he bring to this project. His **aching melodies invite listeners on a transformative journey of self-discovery and reflection**, punctuated by jagged interruptions that mirror the unpredictable odyssey of story's protagonist. His background as a **multi-cultural artist** adds another layer of understanding and compassion crucial to the balancing of chaos and harmony in this story.



<http://www.danielwohlmusic.com/>

BUDGET

Two Budget Scenarios: \$3.5M \$5.5M



FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The budget for this picture will be comprised of various funding sources, including private equity, soft money such as state and federal tax incentives, product placements, and potentially Minimum Guarantees (MGs).

SCHEDULE

PRODUCTION

- Two production schedules based on budgetary scenarios:
 - Low-end: 25 shoot days
 - Higher end: 33 shoot days
- Locations:
 - Split between Kentucky and New Mexico
 - Kentucky for the Appalachian storyline and midwestern segments
 - New Mexico for the Rockies, deserts, and West coast chapters
 - **Extensive experience shooting in both states.**
 - Both states offer **aggressive tax credits** and diverse landscapes
- Additional Photography:
 - Skeleton unit will travel across to capture aerials, establishing shots, b-roll
 - 2nd Unit in New York City
 - Budget permitting: Unit in Paris, France

POST-PRODUCTION

- Remote editing workflow:
 - Editors in France and the US will work around-the-clock to create an assembly during filming
 - This workflow ensures nothing will ever be missed (we won't be able to return to locations)
 - Fast turn-around and delivery for festival submissions
- Our Post-Management branch at Shadow Magic Studios allows us to smoothly transition from one production phase to the next.

FESTIVALS

- Final delivery scheduled for early March
- **Close relationships to Sundance, Tribeca, Telluride, & SBIFF**

PRODUCT PLACEMENT

We've touched on our expertise in **maximizing dollars on the screen**. Below are ways in which we can derisk investments.

IMPACT

- additional avenue for raising capital
- baked into the production schedule will be marketing campaigns for the brands, which will also help the film's exposure to the public.
- large brands are breaking into film production (see case studies)
- lowered, if not completely cut line-items in the production budget:
 - if GM sponsors Waifs and Strays, production won't need to rent a picture car.
 - with Nikon, this could mean free camera gear.
 - with BP, this could translate to special deals with locations (gas station, stores).
 - with outdoor brands, this means free costumes for actors and craft services

WatchPro
https://www.watchpro.com › shop-harrison-fords-favou...
Shop Harrison Ford's Favourite Watches With EBay - WatchPro

Watch ID
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IWC Pilot's Watch Mark XV - Harrison Ford - Shrinking

Saint Laurent
https://www.ysl.com › es-us › displayname-saint-laurent...
Saint Laurent Productions | About | YSL

Document Journal
https://www.documentjournal.com › 2024/05 › ysl-cann...
Saint Laurent cinematic connection comes full circle in ...

CASE STUDIES

1. IWC Pilot

Instead of paying Harrison Ford nearly \$10 million for an ad campaign, IWC Pilot opted to invest that amount in an Apple movie. This strategic move not only provided them with the exposure akin to a commercial but also promises a return on investment from the film itself.

2. Yves Saint Laurent

Similarly, the luxury designer Yves Saint Laurent has been investing in pictures to promote their brand this way.

1. AUTOMOBILE: e.g. GENERAL MOTORS

- Approximately 70% of the script is set in/near the car.
- Sam's car is a CHEVY EV pick-up driven by an A-list actor
- Lou's car is a 1990s GMC JIMMY



2. OIL COMPANY: e.g. BRITISH PETROLEUM

- Gas Stations represent the second most common locations.
- BP owns/operates Amoco and Arco, offering countless location options.
- BP owns AM/PM which can serve as convenient store locations.
- BP owns CASTROL, manufacturer of engine coolant, a major prop.



3. OUTDOOR / ATHLETIC

This ranges from clothes, to gear, to snacks, etc.



4. CAMERA

Henri's Nikon camera holds sentimental value. Nikon owns Red camera and MRCM.

5. WATCH

Henri wears a Flick-Flack watch, which is owned by Swatch.



CONCEPT TRAILER

I7

CLICK LINK BELOW FOR
ACCESS TO TRAILER



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZ12Niplrlc>

The image shows a YouTube video player interface. The video frame displays a close-up of a man's face, looking intensely at the viewer. The video title 'Waifs and Strays Concept Trailer' is overlaid in white text. The Rotten Tomatoes logo is visible in the top left corner of the video frame. The video player includes standard controls like play, volume, and a progress bar showing 1:18 / 2:33. Below the video, the channel name 'Houston Jones' is shown with a subscriber count of 72.6M. The YouTube navigation bar at the bottom includes 'Analytics', 'Edit video', 'Share', 'Save', and other interaction icons.

CONTACT

About SHADOW MAGIC STUDIOS

We are a script-to-screen production company dedicated to the story and those who bring it to life. Our streamlined processes, from prep to post, allow us to optimize our workflows and support to the fullest the artistic vision. In doing so, we are able to empower filmmakers with innovative tools while also fulfilling fiduciary responsibilities.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION!

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