

= Short Term 12 =

Short Term 12 is a 2013 American drama film written and directed by Destin Daniel Cretton . The film is based on Cretton 's short film of the same name , produced in 2009 . It stars Brie Larson as Grace , the supervisor of a group home for troubled teenagers .

Cretton was inspired to write Short Term 12 based on his own experience of working in a group facility for teenagers . He first wrote and produced a short film based on the idea and later adapted it into a feature @-@ length screenplay . While Larson and John Gallagher , Jr. won their roles after auditioning through Skype , most of the children featured in the film were cast through open casting calls . Filming took place over 20 days in Los Angeles , California in September 2012 .

Short Term 12 premiered on March 10 , 2013 at the South by Southwest film festival and was released in theaters on August 23 . It grossed over US \$ 1 million and was met with critical acclaim . Reviewers praised the film 's realism and intimacy , drawing particular attention to Larson 's performance and Cretton 's direction . The film won South by Southwest 's Grand Jury and Audience Awards for a Narrative Feature , as well as three Independent Spirit Award nominations .

= = Plot = =

Grace is the young supervisor of Short Term 12 , a group home for troubled teenagers . She lives with her long @-@ term boyfriend and coworker , Mason , but finds it difficult to open up to him emotionally . When Grace finds out she is pregnant , she schedules an appointment for an abortion ; she eventually tells an overjoyed Mason about the pregnancy , but not about her plan to have an abortion . At the facility , Grace and Mason focus their efforts on Marcus , a Short Term 12 resident who is about to turn 18 and is struggling with the prospect of leaving the facility .

Grace bonds with Jayden , a recent arrival at Short Term 12 who has a history of self @-@ harm . Jayden distances herself from the other teenagers as she does not intend to stay at the facility for long , and when her father fails to pick her up on her birthday , she reacts violently towards the staff . After her outburst , she sits in the " cool @-@ down room " with Grace , who shows Jayden her own scars from cutting herself . That night , Jayden leaves the facility in the middle of her birthday celebrations and , unable to force her to return , Grace follows Jayden to her father 's house . After finding the house empty , they return to Short Term 12 . When Jayden reads Grace a cryptic story she has written , Grace begins to suspect that Jayden was abused by her father .

At a party hosted by Mason 's foster parents , he proposes to Grace , who accepts . The following morning , Grace is upset by a phone call that reveals her father is being released from prison , and refuses to be consoled by Mason . She arrives at Short Term 12 to discover that Jayden has been picked up by her father overnight . She is angry at the decision to send Jayden back to her father , but her boss maintains that Jayden denied that she was abused by him . Later that day , Grace finds that Marcus has attempted to commit suicide after the death of his fish .

While waiting at the hospital as Marcus is being treated , Grace breaks down and Mason becomes upset with her for refusing to talk to him about how she feels ; instead , she tells him that she no longer wants to marry him and that she plans to have an abortion . Upset , she returns to Jayden 's father 's house and breaks in , intending to injure him while he sleeps , but she is interrupted by Jayden , who suggests that they smash his car instead . Grace opens up to Jayden about being sexually abused by her own father , and after Jayden shows Grace bruises from where her father hit her they return together to Short Term 12 , where Jayden reports her father for physical abuse . Grace goes home to apologize to Mason , who tells her that Marcus will recover .

Several weeks later , Grace starts seeing a therapist and she is shown viewing a sonogram with Mason . Mason tells the rest of the staff about running into Marcus , who is doing well and has a girlfriend .

= = Cast = =

Brie Larson as Grace Howard

John Gallagher , Jr. as Mason
Kaitlyn Dever as Jayden Cole
Rami Malek as Nate
Keith Stanfield as Marcus
Kevin Hernandez as Luis
Melora Walters as Dr. Hendler
Stephanie Beatriz as Jessica
Lydia Du Veaux as Kendra
Alex Calloway as Sammy
Frantz Turner as Jack
Diana @-@ Maria Riva as Nurse Beth

= = Production = =

Short Term 12 was originally conceived by Destin Daniel Cretton as a short film based on his experiences as a line staff worker at a group facility for teenagers where he had worked for two years ; it served as his thesis project for his Master 's degree in film at San Diego State University . The short film ran for 22 minutes and premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival , where it won the Jury Prize in Short Filmmaking . After graduating from film school , Cretton decided to adapt the short into a feature @-@ length screenplay , which won one of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences ' five Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting in 2010 . The largest change Cretton made when adapting the short film into a longer screenplay was changing the lead character 's gender : Denim , a man loosely based on Cretton himself , became Grace , a young woman and the facility 's supervisor . Cretton researched similar facilities and interviewed former employees for the film , noting that the script featured stories directly told by children in these facilities from his interviews .

Brie Larson auditioned for the role of Grace via Skype after the script had been sent to her ; John Gallagher , Jr. also won his role after a Skype conversation with Cretton , calling the screenplay " probably the best script that I 've been sent , ever " . Larson and Gallagher prepared for their roles by shadowing line staff at a group home similar to that in the film , and collaborated to create backstories for their characters . Keith Stanfield was the only actor from the original short film to reprise his role in the feature . Cretton struggled to contact Stanfield when casting the film in 2012 ? Stanfield had stopped acting , left his managers , and did not own a cell phone ? but Cretton was eventually able to reach him by email to tape an audition . Most of the children featured in the film were cast through open casting calls , and most had no prior acting experience . Alex Calloway , who played Sammy , found a casting call through Craigslist and won the role after sending in a cell phone video audition .

The film was shot over 20 days in September 2012 . Filming took place in Los Angeles , and scenes set at the group home were shot at a former short @-@ stay facility located near the neighborhood of Sylmar . The film was edited by Nat Sanders as it was filmed . Both the original cut of the film and the shortened director 's cut were over 2 hours long , whereas Cretton wanted the final cut to be under 100 minutes . Sanders said that the original cut of the film felt too heavy and " made you feel pretty depressed about humanity " , so a number of scenes were deleted or trimmed to " lighten up " the film 's mood , with a final running time of 96 minutes .

= = Release = =

Short Term 12 premiered in March 2013 at the South by Southwest Film Festival in Austin , Texas , where it won the Grand Jury and Audience Awards in the Narrative Feature category and was purchased for distribution by Cinedigm . Its international premiere was held at the Locarno Film Festival in August 2013 , where it received a standing ovation .

In theaters , the film was given a platform release : on August 23 , it was released in Los Angeles and New York City , expanding the next weekend to Phoenix , Washington , D.C. , Philadelphia , Boston and Berkeley , and progressively expanding to more cities until its widest release on

September 13 .

== = Box office == =

The film grossed \$ 56 @, @ 206 in its opening weekend , playing in four theaters , with a per @-@ theater average of \$ 14 @, @ 052 that was considered a strong result by Forbes magazine 's Mark Hughes . Overall , it earned a total of \$ 1 @, @ 013 @, @ 100 in North America over a total of 26 weeks in theaters , with a widest release of 75 theaters , and \$ 632 @, @ 064 outside the United States for a total of \$ 1 @, @ 645 @, @ 164 .

== = Critical response == =

The film has a " Certified Fresh " score of 99 % on Rotten Tomatoes based on 153 reviews with an average rating of 8 @. @ 3 out of 10 . The critical consensus states : " Short Term 12 is an emphatic , revealing drama that pulls audiences into the perspective of neglected youths . " The film also has a score of 82 out of 100 on Metacritic based on 36 critics indicating " universal acclaim " .

Germain Lussier of / Film wrote of the film , " The whole thing just feels perfect or magical , a shining example of what cinema is all about " , adding , " The performances are mindblowing , the writing sharp , and the direction beautiful . It 's a very special movie . " In Variety , critic Peter Debruge wrote , " the stunning SXSW fest winner puts the recent Park City competition lineup to shame ... this compelling human drama finds fresh energy in the inspirational @-@ teacher genre , constantly revealing new layers to its characters . " In a review for the Los Angeles Times , Kenneth Turan described Short Term 12 as " a small wonder " , " a film of exceptional naturalness and empathy " , and " moving and intimate " , offering particular praise to the film 's honesty and plausibility . Peter Bradshaw of The Guardian , on the other hand , criticized the film 's credibility , describing it as " well intentioned , but somehow inauthentic " with a " too @-@ cute @-@ to @-@ be @-@ true ending " .

The Hollywood Reporter 's John DeFore called the film " genuinely moving " and " effortlessly balanced ... Brett Pawlak 's handheld camerawork and Cretton 's unsentimental direction have a frankness that acknowledges the dramatic extremes in these lives without needing to parade it before the audience . " Manohla Dargis from The New York Times also praised Cretton 's direction , saying he " brings you into this coed group home and the lives of its inhabitants casually , with images and scenes that , no matter how transparently considered , feel as if they had been caught on the fly . "

Brie Larson 's performance as Grace was singled out for praise by critics . Katie Walsh of Indiewire writing , " [Larson] manages to convey her character as someone fierce and strong and steely , and also utterly fragile , delicate , scared and broken ... It 's an incredible emotional and physical performance , and she 's a whirlwind . " Similarly , Empire critic Ian Freer felt that Larson gave " a whirling dervish of a performance ... She , like the film , breaks your heart and raises your spirit in one fell swoop . "

== = Accolades == =