



PITCH DECK

No one paid attention...

The Outpost

A feature film

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Coming-of-Age Thriller

Stand by Me meets Super Dark Times

Life quickly turns into chaos as two teen boys struggling with their sexual identity attempt to cover up an accidental murder leading one to unravel a disturbing truth about the other.



Setting

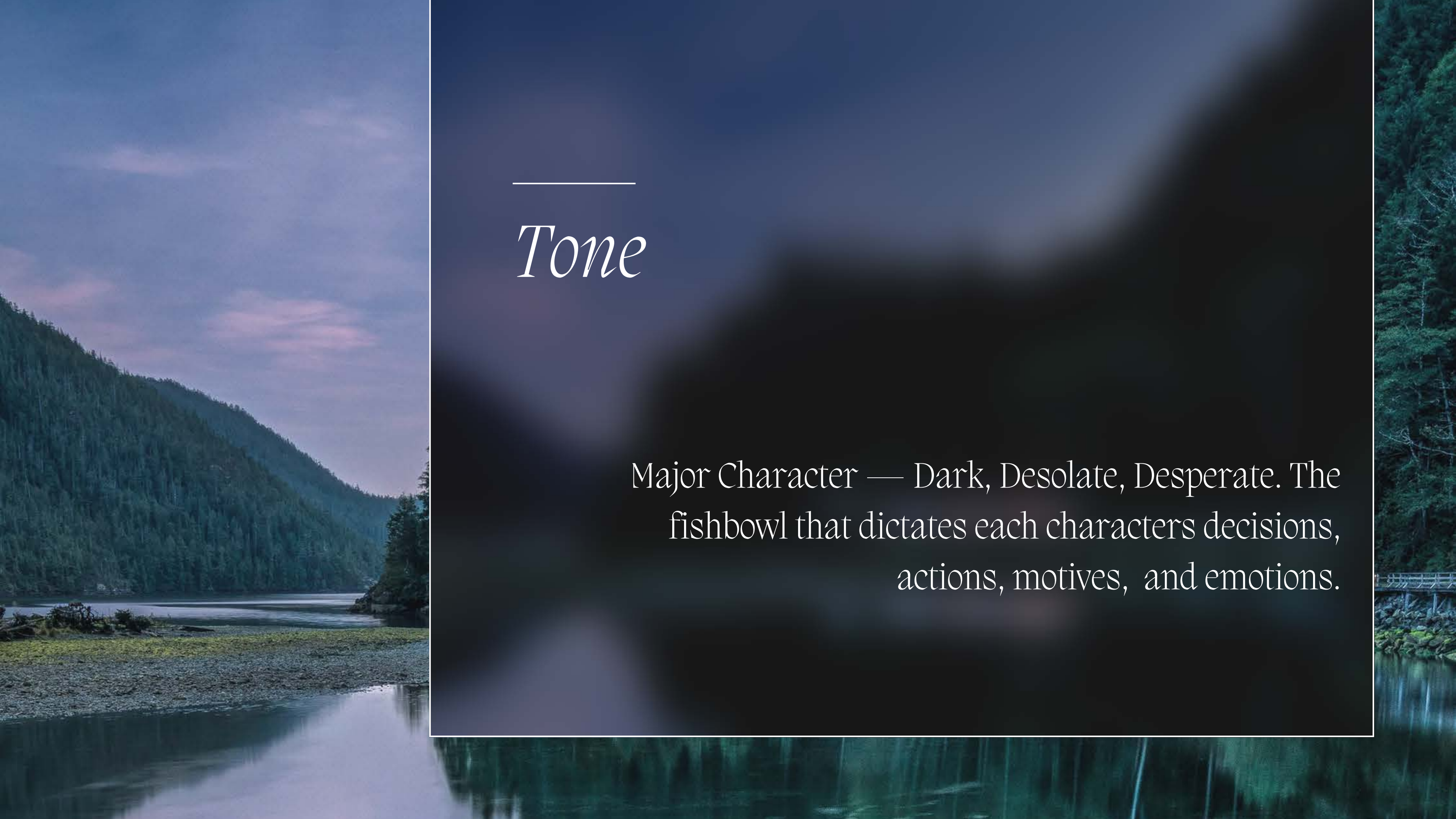
Clayoquot Wilderness
Resort/Vancouver Outback

[HTTPS://CLAYOQUOTWILDERNESSLODGE.COM/](https://clayoquotwildernesslodge.com/)

Contained Location





The background of the slide is a scenic landscape. On the left, a river flows through a valley, reflecting the sky and the surrounding forest. The riverbank is covered in green moss and small plants. In the distance, a small bridge is visible. The right side of the slide is a dark, blurred image of a forest, with a small bridge visible in the background. The overall tone is dark and desolate.

Tone

Major Character — Dark, Desolate, Desperate. The fishbowl that dictates each characters decisions, actions, motives, and emotions.





Main Characters

Finneus "Finn" Hopper



Good kid who is painfully aware of his budding feelings for his best friend. He is frustrated with his mom's promiscuity and his relationship with his best friend Alister.

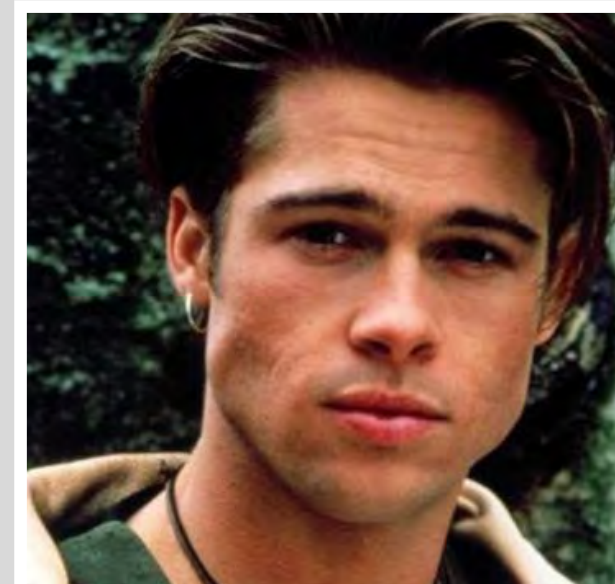
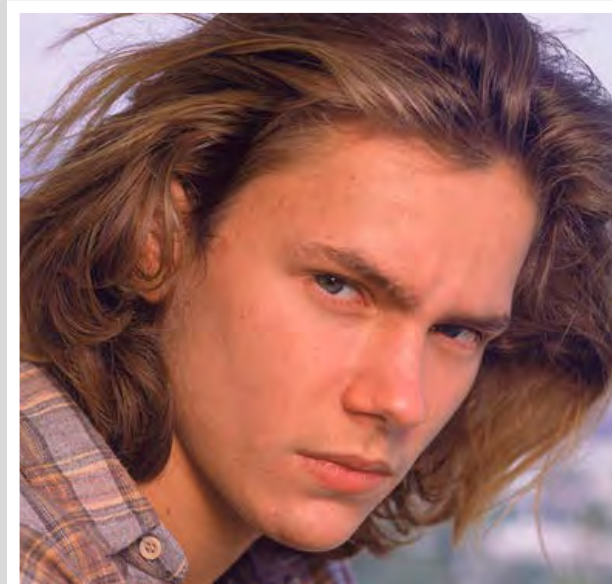
Overall, no matter what life tosses at Finn he tries to do the right thing even if that means being the sacrificial lamb on just about every occasion.

Finn remains constant while the characters around him change. His goodness and genuine loyalty is stretched to the limit but never falters.



Alister

Alister "Ali" Gibbons



A kid with questionable motives who knows how to turn on the charm to get what he wants even if that means misleading everyone around him, including his best friend Finn. He avoids confrontation or owning up to responsibility by distracting or diverting the conversation. A tactic that lands him the power to control and achieve his desired outcome.

He has genuine feelings for Finn but tries to stifle them by developing a relationship with the newcomer, Emma — the resort Chef's daughter. This is not the result of an intolerant environment but rather the fear of losing his best friend. He desires a bond with his father, Dane, above all. And his proclivity to be impulsive and reactionary leads him down a dark path ending in murder.





Secondary Characters



Emma Campbell

Emma is our entry into this dark, desolate world. She's a fish out of water and she would rather be anywhere else than the Clayoquot Wilderness Resort.

She's angry with her mother for dumping her with her father for the summer. A rage she projects on her father since he opted to take a seasonal job as a chef in what she considers hell.

Her involvement with Alister lands her right smack in the middle of a triangular web of deceit, marking her as a possible accomplice to murder. A scar she'll carry with her long after she leaves The Outpost.

Emma, unlike the boys was never meant to stay in this decaying place. She's a temporary fixture and the only one to escape unscathed and able to go on with her life intact.



Emma



Clarissa Hopper

Clarissa loves her son with all her heart and is doing the best she knows how to do with the deck of cards she has been dealt.

She's a single mom trying to survive the same depressing environment as everyone else on the remote island.

Her grave mistake is giving her son too much freedom and not speaking up or heeding the warning signs staring her straight in the face.



Jake Matson

Jake has his work cut out for him when he decides to reconnect with his old highschool flame, Clarissa Hopper, and accepts a position as the new Sheriff in order to be close to her.

He follows up on what at first sight appears to be a vandalism lead. A lead that quickly spirals into something much more sinister.





The Story

The Story

Summer break has just begun and the residents of a small tourist town in the heart of the remote Clayoquot Wilderness have taken off on their annual vacations. The town is on the verge of depression. The one thing this place has going for it is the sought after cowboy style resort — THE OUTPOST — known for its rugged glamping experience, outback activities, pampering, privacy, and seclusion. In fact, one seldom sees a guest.

FINN and ALISTER are childhood friends who would do literally anything for each other — even if that means murder or sacrificing one's own self to make sure the other is safe from harms way. Their bond is unbreakable, though not without its cracks, even when their world is turned upside down in the worst possible way. Both boys are from broken homes and both boys are beyond bored, being the only teens left behind to fend for themselves, summer after boring summer. Finn's mom, CLARISSA, works at the resort and Alister's family owns the resort and pretty much the entire town.

Finn and Alister are given a lot a freedom, one could argue too much freedom. Both Clarissa and DANE care about their children but tend to turn the other cheek in order to live their own lives. They don't see that they are paving the way for a disaster by fostering the “latch-key kid” mentality. The result is that there is virtually zero parental supervision, even from the one person who should be watching out for Alister, his UNCLE BOBBY, the resort owner.

For Alister particularly this is a problem. Alister is a kid standing at a cross roads. His coming-of-age trials and tribulations are leading him down a dark perilous path, one he is happy to embrace, but one that could possibly be prevented if his father were around to notice — but then again possibly not! Finn, on the other hand, would probably fair just fine, with or without supervision, were it not for his friend's influence. An influence Clarissa is not just aware of but fears, yet she keeps it to herself rather than confronting her son.

The Story Continued

Finn and Alister aren't perfect by any stretch and engage in childish pranks to pass the time away. Unfortunately, these pranks have been drawing a touch too much attention. Finn, the more innocent of the two, is unaware of Alister's dark side and just how menacing Alister has become as of late. Alister, knowing Finn would never be on board, has been engaging in some very dark voyeuristic activities which have lead to theft and vandalism. This has left Finn alone waiting for his friend on more than one occasion.

At Clarissa's urging, JAKE, Clarissa's high school crush, has taken a job as Sheriff in the small town. The boys mistake Jake as a guest and just another one of Clarissa's one night stands. As a result, they take it upon themselves to play a prank on Jake, believing he's just another guest at the resort — a married guest with kids at that. This is the first step in a series of missteps that leads to a tragic end for these two, otherwise lovable teens. What if Clarissa had just told her son about Jake?

Alister, fearing Clarissa's exploits are going to cause her to lose her job and wind up leaving the island — taking Finn with her, takes this prank a step further and decides to send Finn's mom a message, by leaving a gutted fox for her to find. It doesn't help he smears the word tramp across her wall with the animals blood. What if he'd handled his fear and anger in a more mature way?

This sets off a series of events that leads to the boys covering up an accidental murder caused by Alister's anger and Finn's inability to stand up to his friend to any meaningful degree. Toss in Finn's unrequited love for Alister and his jealousy over EMMA, the only other teen on the island, and the plot thickens, leading both boys to make truly tragic decisions.

The most tragic of all and the event that spirals everything out of control, is Alister's confusion over Jake, given Clarissa didn't inform her son that her potential new love interest was moving to the island, let alone the fact he was going to be the new Sheriff in town. How could either kid process the guy in uniform standing outside Finn's cabin, was there for any other reason than to arrest them for the accidental murder that just occurred because of their childish pranks?

The Story Continued

Alister hurt beyond measure at the thought of Finn betraying him, a betrayal that he believes has not only damaged his relationship with Finn but completely destroyed his relationship with his father, sets Finn up to take the fall for the murder. Finn willingly accepts this fate. Not only out of guilt, but more out of his unconditional love and understanding of his friend and his desire to keep him safe.

Alister goes out of his way to right his wrong, but sadly there's too much evidence stacked up against his friend. Unable to contain his rage, he sets out to make the one person pay he blames for the entire series of unfortunate events — Jake!

There are no happy endings for anyone!





Theme

The notion “what if” is the heartbeat all else weaves around. What if some parents (like Dane) weren’t so self-consumed they actually noticed their children’s turmoil, bad behavior, cry for help, and so on — and did something about it?

What if the parents who did notice (like Clarissa) either weren’t too afraid or confused about how to broach sensitive topics —and just spoke up?

What if some of us (like Finn) were strong enough to walk away when we don’t agree with our best friend, instead of following along?

What if those of us (like Alister) desperate for a connection had the maturity to ask for help — rather than lashing out?

Unfortunately, many of us do not, especially children. But even if we did confront our feelings, disappointments, and fears head on — Could we prevent horrific things from happening and prevent a tragic tale from taking shape?





Inspiration

In one word — Parenthood!

Inspired by my children, their friends, and parents struggling with what to do and say when conflict arises.

It's hard to be a parent. It's hard to be a kid. It's tragic when you can't see one another, be empathetic, and sometimes just listen, rather than imposing help or an opinion. We seldom have answers, let alone a cure, but what we could try to have more of is unconditional acceptance and compassion. Something much easier said than done.

It is my greatest hope that when bad things happen even if my children are somewhere they shouldn't be, doing something they shouldn't be doing — that it's me they know they can reach out to!



Personal Statement.

My hope with *The Outpost* is to blend the emotional conflict facing teens today and have a tragedy strike that only the kids know about. Whom do they tell? How do they handle it? When innocence vanishes, good kids can do really bad things they never would have done had just one person paid attention — had just one person seen them, truly seen them, and had a nurturing instinct to help. Many of us ignore the truth staring us right in the face, instead of finding the courage to face it. It's worth asking the big question "what if" when standing at a crossroad. We've all been there over one thing or another and we'll all be there again.

The tone is a critical character in *The Outpost*. The mood and the sequences share equal footing with the characters and their journey.

When diving into the story world, writing these pages, it was my desire and hope to keep the over-arching darkness front and center. A world for all else to live within and react accordingly. The characters had limits imposed on them as a result. Similar limits in a lighter world, such as a *Stand By Me*, would have allowed for a happy ending.

The Outpost is a timely tale relevant to the real world facing us and our children today.





Director's Vision

The Outpost is a contained coming-of-age thriller with menacing suspense lurking under the surface.

- The characters are conflicted yet innocent of the repercussions of their actions.
- The visual style is gritty and natural -- dark and desolate.
- Establishing shots of the remote location will set the stage for the fishbowl confining Alister and Finn.
- Emma is our guide into Alister and Finn's world. She was never meant to stay. She escapes the prison the two boys can never shake.
- Close-ups will capture the raw emotional turmoil devouring this confined resort town and its inhabitants.

The tragedy that strikes binds these three troubled youths forever.



What executives are saying...



Reviews

What I find truly compelling about this script is how it explores its themes of influence and friendship through their relationship. Finn is a more reserved kid who is easily influenced by Alister's reckless behavior, as seen through the eyes of the townsfolk and Finn's parents. So to separate both characters for the majority of the second act is very intriguing, to see Alister handle the situation of their secret more strongly than Finn, who is suffering and panicking greatly by the deadly accident

-- **ACADEMY NICHOLL FELLOWSHIP (TOP 10%)**

This is a moving and emotional screenplay! I found myself entirely invested in the characters, and love how you handle their psyches. Their response to the murder feels entirely realistic. Finn mostly shuts down, terrified by what he's done, and Alister lashes out, refusing to go down for it.

Alister is an especially fascinating character. He's most likely a sociopath, but you write him with more empathy than this type of character is typically afforded. He pins moths to trees, gaslights his friends, and is unfazed having committed manslaughter.

But he's also a kid. He's confused by a world that's done nothing for him, and afraid of his sexuality that his community may not accept. You emphasize that he does feel genuine love for Finn, and ultimately attempts to get his friend out of trouble even if it means taking the fall in his place.

You have a good balance between intimate character moments and plot, and the script really resonates as a result. You've built this cool hopeless atmosphere, contrasted by the affection the teens have for each other. -- **PAGE AWARDS**

THE OUTPOST is an evocative script that reads almost like a novel. The writer captures all the shadows and crags of a small town in the Pacific Northwest in this elegantly-crafted story about two boys. Alister and Finn make for two compelling leads. Finn's sweetness and naivety presents an interesting foil to Alister's calculating, manipulative nature. The two boys have grown up in such isolation that their dependence on each other resembles a folie à deux. Their unspoken romantic feelings and near obsession with each other brings HEAVENLY CREATURES to mind. The writer also succeeds in depicting the racial aspects of the story with subtlety. The script never explicitly states that Alister can get away with being a teenaged troublemaker because he is a rich white kid, but it is clear enough that Finn is not granted that same freedom as a working-class black kid. THE OUTPOST is a small-scale story, but its portrayal of the ways society excuses white violence and condemns black existence unfortunately resonates everywhere in the United States. -- **BLACK LIST**

Reviews

The first act of *The Outpost* centers on the lives of the people who live and work at this upscale wilderness retreat. The setting is isolated and quite cinematic, and slowly we begin to focus on the intense relationship between Finn and Alister. Right from the moment we see Alister pluck wings off the moths he's captured, it's clear that he has violent impulses that will come back to haunt all the people in his life. The moment at the end of Act 1, when the fisherman dies, helps raise the stakes, and shifts the story from a moody queer love story to a full blown thriller.

The Outpost is an engrossing and suspenseful thriller with a strong premise and two compelling, complex central characters. The story unfolds in a really deliberate, confident way, and though the broad strokes of the plot feel sadly inevitable (that Finn will be punished for Alister's crimes) the details of how everything unfolds is what makes the script so fresh and unpredictable. — **WeScreenplay**

This was an incredible screenplay and should be considered as a contender to win because it showcases great writing with imagery that transports the reader into the story. The concept follows an accidental murder that spirals out of control, which while not new, has a unique and fresh perspective that separates it from others in the genre. The story itself is totally absorbing and full of emotion and plot twists and the world is described in rich detail without distracting from the plot. The screenplay is well structured with a clear beginning, middle, and end with a pace that builds throughout as the boys lives spiral more and more out of control. The main characters of Finn and Alister highlights the innocence of young teenagers and also the terrible decisions they make. Their relationship feels raw, and reel and they are incredibly complex and rounded. All of the other characters in the screenplay are also interesting and enjoyable to read. The dialogue fits into the world of teenage boys trying to get out of the mess they made and adds to each character's personality. — **Austin Film Festival**





Contact

Office Address

78 Post Office Road Waccabuc, New York 10597

Phone

917.655.8509

Email Address

writing4em@gmail.com

Website

www.bellementertainment.com