Every city

has a place

where secrets

are buried.

THE NIGHT WATCHMAN

Written By Thomas C. Gaunt

An emotionally tormented veteran's decision to help a victim of human trafficking exposes him and his remaining family to a criminal underworld hellbent on finding the girl and making him pay.

- a feature film -

Synopsis & Mood Board

Set within the crime thriller genre, THE NIGHT WATCHMAN is the dramatic story of a fractured Chicago family whose lives are turned upside down by a vicious criminal underworld. At the center of the story are a homeless veteran (Walter) and his old friend Manny, who owns a local diner. Walter's traumatic past has kept him from revealing that he is the father of Glenn, a punk-rock teen who works as a dishwasher at the diner. When Manny arranges an impromptu meeting between the two (without Walter's knowledge), Walter is unable to cope and retreats to a nearby cemetery to confront his past demons at the grave of the boy's mother. Walter awakens from a botched suicide attempt to find armed human traffickers (Angus and Danny), unaware of his presence, as they prepare to bury an immigrant girl (Natalia) in a nearby grave. Despite his fragile state, Walter attempts to help Natalia, but when Glenn sets out to find Walter, he runs head-first into the dire situation unfolding in the cemetery. Both are wounded as they narrowly escape - leading Angus on a harrowing foot chase through the cemetery away from Natalia (hidden within a mausoleum). The extreme circumstances forge a bond between Walter and Glenn as the chase ultimately leads back to Manny's Diner where the misfit group must band together to protect Natalia and survive a predawn siege led by Angus's corrupt politically connected boss (Burke) and his fellow henchmen.



- a feature film -

Concept Trailer



(click the image to play)

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Website

http://thenightwatchmanfilm.com

THOMAS C. GAUNT Screenwriter 773.957.5455 - gauntfilms@gmail.com

- a feature film -

THOMAS C. GAUNT Screenwriter

Thomas C. Gaunt is an award-winning filmmaker and screenwriter whose work has been recognized by film festivals and competitions (CineStory, ScreenCraft, Austin, Heartland, Nashville, Nicholl, and Slated) and has aired on television and streaming networks (PBS, El Rey Network, Netflix, PIVOT TV (Participant Media), The Documentary Channel and The Sundance Channel).

The eldest son in a large family, Thomas spent his first ten years in northern Indiana farm country before moving to downtown Indianapolis. This rural/urban duality has informed his writing immeasurably, allowing him to imbue stories with a wide range of characters from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Thomas is also influenced by his parents fostering dozens of special needs children over the years (adopting twelve), all with unique personalities and character traits. It took a big imagination, artistic ability, and captivating storytelling to stand out in a family so large. As a result, his talents won him acceptance to the School of The Art Institute of Chicago where he received a BFA in filmmaking.

Drawing from his vast interests and life experiences, Thomas has written many feature screenplays and TV pilots – placing in the Finals, Semifinals, or Quarterfinals of over 30 screenwriting competitions. Most recently, his crime thriller <u>THE NIGHT WATCHMAN</u> is in the Top 1% of screenplays on Coverfly and has been named a Finalist in the 2022 Nashville Film Festival. His social justice heist drama, <u>CIRCLE OF THIEVES</u>, was a Semifinalist in the 2021 CineStory Foundation Retreat & Fellowship and his Sci-fi Adventure Pilot, <u>WORLDS APART</u>, is in the Top 3% on Coverfly and was a 2021 ScreenCraft Drama and Sci-fi Competition Semifinalist.

Thomas' first feature documentary <u>A PLACE CALLED HOME: AN ADOPTION STORY</u>, about his parent's adoption of nine siblings, won a 'Crystal Heart Award' at the 2004 Heartland Film Festival and the 'Audience Award' for Best Documentary Feature at the Indianapolis International Film Festival before premiering on PBS in 2005. Thomas went on to write, direct, and produce many more shorts and docs including the 2017 short thriller <u>RED MAZE</u> which premiered on Robert Rodriguez's El Rey Network – winning six festival awards including a 'Silver Remi' in the suspense/thriller category at the WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival. In 2012, Thomas produced, photographed, and edited the PBS Illinois Arts Councilfunded documentary <u>ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE</u>, about five aging artist families navigating the rocky path to first-time home ownership. He has also contributed cinematography to the Sundance Channel / Netflix documentary <u>HOWARD ZINN: YOU CAN'T BE NEUTRAL ON A MOVING TRAIN</u> (narrated by Matt Damon) and the Slamdance Film Festival premiering documentary <u>CORRECTIONS</u> about the business of privatizing prisons and profiting from prison labor. For more information, go to Thomas' production company website (<u>http://gauntfilms.com</u>) or view his demo reel <u>here</u>.

- a feature film -

Screenplay Recognition

Top 1% (2022) – Genre/Format on Coverfly

Top 2% (2022) – All Screenplays on Coverfly

On THE RED LIST (2022) – Top Rated Feature Screenplays on Coverfly

Finalist (2022) – Nashville Film Festival Screenwriting Competition (Genre Feature)

Quarterfinalist / 2nd Rounder (2018) – Austin Film Festival Screenplay Competition

Finalist (2017) – Robert Rodriguez's 'Rebel Without A Crew' Television Program

Semifinalist (2022) FILMMATIC Inroads Screenwriting Competition (Season 7)

Semifinalist (2018) – Roadmap Writers/Route One Entertainment Contest

Semifinalist (2017) – ScreenCraft Drama Feature Script Contest

Semifinalist (2013) – Final Draft Big Break Screenwriting Contest

Quarterfinalist (2022) – Table Read My Screenplay Genre Screenplay Competition – Summer

Quarterfinalist (2022) – ScreenCraft Action/Adventure Screenplay Competition

Quarterfinalist (2021) - CineStory Retreat & Fellowship / TV Contest

Quarterfinalist (2020) – ScreenCraft Drama Screenplay Competition

Quarterfinalist (2018) – ScreenCraft Screenwriting Fellowship

Quarterfinalist (2017) – ScreenCraft Action/Thriller Screenplay Contest Quarterfinalist (2015) – Stage 32 Feature Contest

Quarterfinalist (2014) – Chicago Screenwriter's Network Contest

Top 20% (2020) – Academy Nicholl Fellowships

Scored 7/10 – The Black List

Scored 72 – Slated (Script Score)

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