

THE OUTLANDER

based on the book by

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Screenplay by

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1 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 1

Close on running feet, and a black dress moving fast between the trees. The running figure trips and falls. A girl, long hair, clear bright eyes rolls onto her back breathing hard. Mary Boulton (23) is running for her life. She looks up at the trees above her, hearing nothing but the wind.

2 INT. BOULTON HOUSE - NIGHT 2

A Black dress, intricately beaded is pulled down to reveal Mary, hair scraped back, face pale but determined, she looks straight ahead, staring into a mirror.

3 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 3

Mary lying still, then distantly but distinctly she hears a dog barking, then a second. She pulls herself to her feet and runs on, the black dress catches and snags in the undergrowth but she forces herself forward.

4 EXT. BOULTON HOUSE - NIGHT 4

A small wooden shack standing in a clearing, at the back of the shack we can just make out the silhouetted frame of a new room under construction. There is an untidy, half finished look about everything, we might think it abandoned but for the faint light coming from the window.

5 INT. BOULTON HOUSE - NIGHT 5

Fingers buttoning the black dress. Lace at the neck. Mary removes a fleck of dust from her collar. A stockinged foot slips into a black shoe. A black glove is tightened around a raised hand. Each finger stretched.

6 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 6

THREE DOGS running through the trees, jaws snapping, sharp teeth flashing, chasing a scent. Close on their heels, a boy, 14, wearing threadbare clothes. The dogs hesitate, they have found something, a rotting animal. The boy catches up with them and pulls the dogs away urging them forward.

BOY

Go on! On!

The dogs run on.

7 INT. BOULTON HOUSE - DAY 7

A black gloved hand unlocks a narrow pine cabinet nailed to the wall, opens the crude door and reaches inside for a double barreled shotgun.

8 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 8

Eight men on horseback carrying flaming torches are thundering through the undergrowth.

9 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 9

The silhouetted hunters reach the boy, shapes outlined by the light of their torches.

BOY

They've got the scent again. She won't get far.

*

He runs on and the horsemen follow.

10 INT. BOULTON HOUSE - NIGHT 10

A ceramic sink with a hand operated water pump. The sink is piled high with unwashed dishes. The pump drips. A doll sits on a child's chair. Two cartridges are placed, one in each barrel and the breach snapped shut.

11 EXT. STREAM, FOREST - NIGHT 11

Mary stumbles down the slope into a stream almost losing her balance. She staggers across, her dress soaking up and dragging around her. As she reaches the other side, she stops and listens. The dogs are closer. She thinks for a moment and then rather than crawling up the opposite bank reaches down into the water and pulls up a stone and unwinds a black scarf from her neck and wraps it in the stone and then throws the stone onto the far bank, and starts to wade upstream, hoping to lose her scent.

12 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT 12

On a side table we see a candle, beyond the candle is a photo frame showing a couple on their wedding day. The man stocky and curly haired, the woman, young, almost a child, dressed in white. It is Mary.

13 EXT. STREAM - NIGHT 13

Mary, her dress soaked, wading desperately up the stream looking for a way up onto the steep bank.

14 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 14

The horsemen are moving through the trees with their torches.

15 EXT. STREAM - NIGHT 15

The dogs have reached the stream where Mary left the scarf, they are running backwards and forwards confused. The boy grabs one of the dogs and drags it across the stream onto the other bank.

The horsemen reach the stream and wait.

On the other side the boy and dogs frantically searching.

Watching from the bank, catching their breath, are two red headed men, JUDE and JULIAN (late 30s), who look so similar they must be brothers. Both have guns strapped to their waists. The boy stands on the opposite bank waving Mary's scarf.

The horsemen cross the stream.

EXT. BOULTON HOUSE, - NIGHT

The house, with a flicker of candlelight showing inside. A shot rings out. Then another.

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16 EXT. LANDING PIER, KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 16

Pink rays of dawn slanting over a wide river and a small steam-powered ferry, a flat skiff with a pilot's cabin in the rear, is coming in to land. A small group of passengers, including a woman with two children stand waiting by the simple wooden pier. An old boatman waits with them.

17 EXT. ROAD - DAY 17

Mary stumbles out of the woods onto a dirt road, clutching the skirt of her muddy dress. She glances up and down the road, no landmarks. The noise of the ferry's whistle can be heard. A flicker of hope -- she digs down and finds the will to sprint.

18 EXT. LANDING PIER, KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 18

The Passengers, rub their hands to keep warm, as the Ferryman ushers the last group on board, a woman with two small boys.

19 EXT. DOWNSTREAM BANK, KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 19

The horsemen have reached a river, too wide to cross. In the morning light they look a bedraggled group, an old man, three teenage boys, and the two redheads Jude and Julian. Distantly they hear the ferry whistle

JUDE

What was that?

BOY

Ferry, I reckon.

JUDE

Where?

BOY

Up river, about a mile.

Jude wheels his horse around and sets off down the bank the others follow.

20 EXT. FERRY LANDING, KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 20

The bow of the ferry is loose and veering into the current, as the boatman lifts the last rope from its mooring.

MARY (O.S.)

Please!

The Ferryman turns to see Mary, sprinting up the road in her muddy, bedraggled dress.

MARY (CONT'D)

Please, stop -- please!

The PASSENGERS stare as Mary staggers the last few yards.

FERRYMAN

It's fifty cents.

Mary feels in her pocket and pulls out a coin.

MARY

(desperate)

Please ... I

The Ferryman looks at her. Then begrudgingly reaches out his hand, helping her on-board.

FERRYMAN

Wife'd have my hide if I didn't.

He makes his way to the steering house, as Mary looks anxiously back at the trees beyond the jetty.

21 EXT. WOODS - DAY 21

The Horsemen at full pelt now riding, along the river.

22 EXT. KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 22

The Ferry slowly chugging up river.

23 INT. FERRY, KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 23

Mary sits on the deck, the other passengers watch her, curious. She ignores them.

24 EXT. FERRY LANDING, KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY 24

The boy and his dogs approach Julian and the others standing at the now deserted Ferry Landing. Jude is talking to the boatman.

JUDE

She was on it alright. Last one aboard.

JULIAN

When's the next one?

JUDE

Goes up river, back here tomorrow night. Old Fella says there's a stop two hours ride from here. We can be there to meet her if we leave now.

Julian turns to the other horsemen.

JULIAN

You boys go home, this ain't gonna take all of us. Tell Pa we'll have her back by sundown.

As they all start to ride off the Boy hesitates for a moment, but his sense of what's fair overcomes his fear.

BOY

What about my money!

The brothers stop and turn to look at him, then Julian pulls out his gun and walks his horse over towards him. The boy looks around, but there is no one to help, and nowhere to run. Julian looks at him, then slowly lowers his gun, as the boy begins to relax Julian fires once. A Dog is killed.

BOY (CONT'D)

No...

Julian lifts his gun again and the boy is silent..

JULIAN

(to Jude)

Pay him what we owe.

(to boy)

Get yourself a better fuckin' dog.

Julian rides away as Jude comes up and throws a small purse of coins to the boy who catches it and watches as Jude turns to catch up with his brother. The boy cradles his dead dog.

25 EXT. KOOTENAI RIVER - DAY

25

Mary watching the mother with two young boys unwrap some jam sandwiches wrapped in brown paper. As the boys eat, one of them stares at Mary and she looks away, embarrassed by her hunger.

26 EXT. LANDING STAGE - DAY

26

Horses tethered, Jude and Julian wait at the landing stage as the boat approaches. A wagon is waiting with them. The mother and two children get off and the children run to greet the wagon driver.

Jude and Julian step onto the boat. Looking for Mary, there is no sign of her.

FERRYMAN

If you're looking for a girl, she ain't here. Dropped her off at Sanford Head. Said she only had half the fare, only wanted half the journey.

On Julian, expressionless.

JUDE

Maybe we should just tell the sheriff.

JULIAN

(grim)

We lost her, we find her.

He leads the way off the boat.

27 EXT. FIELD - DAY 27

Mary walking, in bright sunlight, she seems to have new energy.

28 EXT. TREES - DAY 28

Mary sits with her back against a tree, still. Then she moves, feeling in a pocket of her dress she produces a crumpled piece of brown paper and unwraps it to reveal a single jam sandwich. She looks at it carefully, starts to eat, slowly at first then, unable to resist, she gobbles it down. She stops eating, noticing a bird watching her. She pulls a piece of crust from her mouth, considers it then throws it to the bird which takes it in it's beak and flies off. Mary smiles then stops, hearing something. A baby crying. She gets up looks around. It is definitely a baby crying.

*
*
*

MARY

Is any one there?

No answer. She wanders towards a clump of trees but there is no baby.

29 EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT 29

Jude and Julian have made camp, a fire is burning and the unsaddled horses are tethered nearby. A rabbit is cooking on a small spit, watched by Jude. Julian is adding more wood to the fire.

JUDE

Still say this is a Sheriff's job.

JULIAN

Sheriff'll ask too many questions.
This is our family, our business. You
don't like it, I'll find her myself.

JUDE

(we feel the
suspicion between
them)

I ain't leavin'.

JULIAN

She won't get far, no money, no
horse, no friends.

He gives the fire a poke.

30 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

30

The moon high above the trees. Mary lying asleep by a fallen log.

CHILD'S VOICE

Hello?

Mary wakes, opening her eyes and looking around. Two children, Nellie (7) and Ellie (8), sisters with long blond hair, are sitting in the branches of the tree in front of her. They are both dressed in pyjamas. Ellie is smoking a crudely rolled cigarette she passes it to her younger sister.

MARY

What time is it? Do your parents know you're here?

NELLIE&ELLIE

(together)

Yes.

ELLIE

Everyone knows.

MARY

(sitting up)

I don't believe you.

NELLIE

We always come here.

She jumps down from the branch and stands in front of Mary, Ellie follows.

MARY

You should be at home, in bed.

NELLIE

So should you.

MARY

(quickly)

And you shouldn't smoke or you'll get the habit.

ELLIE

Like you?

MARY

(lying)

I don't smoke.

NELLIE&ELLIE

(laughing)

Yes, you do.

ELLIE

(gently)

You must be hungry?

Mary looks at them, and for a moment her confidence falters. She looks as though she is about to ask a question but Nellie interrupts.

NELLIE

We came up just to see you.

MARY

Up from where?

The girls look at her.

ELLIE

Come on.

They both run past Mary into the trees and Mary turns to stop them but they have disappeared.

31 EXT. FIELD - DAY 31

Mary walking through a field, a tiny figure in the landscape. The mud has dried on her dress and she trudges on hardly aware of her surroundings. Distantly we hear the peal of Sunday church bells.

32 EXT. CHURCH - DAY 32

A small wooden church with a graveyard next to it. We hear the sound of the hymn 'Be thou My Vision' as Mary, brushing the mud off her dress, makes her way to the door.

33 INT. CHURCH - DAY 33

The small congregation is singing as Mary walks up the aisle. A child stares at her and some of the women glance at her muddied dress and shoes. A painted crucified Christ looks down as Mary slips into a pew occupied by an impeccably dressed boney looking woman, Mrs. Cawthra-Elliot. (70) who ignores her. Mary picks up a hymnal and turns the pages.

*

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

(briskly)

Here take mine, or you'll miss your chance. Last verse.

She takes Mary's hymnal in exchange for her own as the congregation start the last verse and the old priest makes his way to the pulpit. Mary stares at the words of the hymn but does not sing.

PRIEST

'Now we see but through a glass,
darkly. Now I see in part, then I
shall know even as I am known'.
Corinthians, Chapter 13, verse 12.

*

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

(to herself)

Same sermon as last week, silly old
coot.

(looking at Mary)

Doesn't bother you I suppose.

PRIEST

Our heavenly father understands that
it is hard for us to know his will,
but one day we will stand beside him
and on that judgement day we will see
it revealed in all it's terrible
glory.

34 EXT. CHURCH - LATER

34

The CONGREGATION files out, passing the priest as they leave and head away from the Church. Mrs. Cawthra Elliot climbs into an old fashioned filigreed carriage with two smart looking horses, assisted by a black manservant, Joseph (30's) who closes the door and climbs onto the seat in front.

35 INT. CHURCH - DAY

35

The priest walks down the aisle past the empty benches. He stops, Mary is lying on the pew, asleep.

ELDERLY PRIEST

You can't stay here. Evensong is at
six. You're welcome back then.

Mary looks at him as though for a moment she might speak, but he looks back impassively and she gets up to leave.

36 EXT. ROAD, NEAR CHURCH - DAY

36

Mary walking mindlessly down the road, Mrs Cawthra-Elliot's ancient carriage is stopped ahead. Mary walks past, ignoring it. The carriage door swings open.

*

*

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT (O.S.)

Are you mad?

Mary is startled.

MARY

I... I don't...

The woman inside leans out of the shadows. It's Mrs. Cawthra-Elliot.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

Well make your mind up. I can't help a lunatic. Look at the state of you, girl. Are you in grief?

Mary stiffens.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I'll take that as a 'yes'.
Get in then.

Mary hesitates.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Well?

Joseph, gets down from the carriage, and walks up to Mary.

JOSEPH

(gently)
Madam, will you ride with us?

MARY

Why?

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

Why not? What else have you got planned?

MARY

I have to get home.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

Get in, girl.

(dry)
Might just as well lie to me in here where it's comfortable, as out there.

*

Mary looks at Joseph and makes her decision, and walks toward the carriage.

The carriage makes it's way through the open countryside.

38 INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

38

Mrs. Cawthra-Elliott sits opposite Mary.

*

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT
My name is Cawthra-Elliott, Widow.

MARY
How do you do.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT
(dry)
Better than you it would seem.
You are very much in need of a bath.
I have a bath, I also have food and a
number of beds that you can sleep in
and two women just dying to change
sheets who never have enough to do.

MARY
(protesting)
Thank you, you're very kind but...

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT
But what? Go on. What is it? You'd
rather run around like a demented
animal I suppose?

MARY
(weakly)
I have to get home.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT
(brisk)
Don't be absurd, child. You haven't
got a home, or a husband. Any one
can see that and it's foolish to
pretend otherwise.

Mary is too exhausted to argue, her eyes fill with tears.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT (CONT'D)
(softening)
Don't worry, you can run off as soon
as we arrive if you want.
(wry grin)
Do I look like I could stop you?

39 EXT. ROAD - DAY

39

The carriage heads off.

40 EXT. CHURCH - DUSK

40

Two horses are tethered at the church gate.

41 INT. CHURCH - DUSK

41

Jude and Julian are closing the door behind them, they look even larger and more sinister now that we see them inside, dressed in long coats with rifles strapped to their backs. The elderly priest comes scurrying out of the Vestibule.

ELDERLY PRIEST

Can I help you gentlemen? The service is...

He stops, it being clear that these are not potential parishioners.

JULIAN

We're looking for a woman.

The priest looks at them blankly.

JUDE

(explaining)
Our sister in law.

42 INT. DINING ROOM, MRS CAWTHRA-ELLIOT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

42 *

Mary sits at the head of an oak table in the dimly lit room. She is eating stew out of a bowl with thick slices of buttered bread. On either side of her watching stand two servants Zenta (40), a large and formidable black woman, and Emily (15), a nervous looking girl with dark hair.

ZENTA

What's her name?

Mary carries on eating hungrily.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

Goodness, I don't know.

(to Mary)

What is your name?

*

Mary looks about her warily.

MARY

Mrs. Tower.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT

Are you telling the truth?

MARY

Yes.

ZENTA

She's lying.

MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT
(ignoring Zenta)
What's your first name then? Mrs.
Tower? *

Mary hesitates, unable to think of one.

ZENTA
I told you! She's lying.

43 INT. MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

43

Mary sits huddled in a bath while Zenta washes her hair, lifting her arms and pulling her about as if she were a child.

ZENTA
I tell you one thing, if you hurt that woman's feelings or abuse her kindness, it'll be a damnation on you. I'm not like her you know, I don't believe you're mad. I don't think there's anything wrong with you at all.

MARY
(quiet)
I'm not mad.

ZENTA
I don't wonder you're weak, though. You've had a baby. I can tell by the look of you.

Mary is startled.

ZENTA (CONT'D)
I'd guess two months. Where is he now?

Mary can't answer.

ZENTA (CONT'D)
Did you lose it?

Mary just keeps her head down, away from Zenta.

ZENTA (CONT'D)
Look at me when I'm talkin' to you.

Zenta roughly tilts Mary's head up.

ZENTA (CONT'D)
You're not the first one she's brought home. Out you get.

Mary steps out of the bath and Zenta wraps her in a towel and starts to dry her like a child.

MARY

First what?

ZENTA

(drying vigorously)

Don't be smart. I despise a smartass. She takes it too far I say, bringing home all manner of rubbish so Emily and I have to deal with them. Charity is one thing. Stealing the silverware's another. Pissing in the coal room. Making off with my Sunday roast in their jackets. And guess who doesn't like it when there isn't any dinner? *

44 INT. BEDROOM, MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

44 *

Mary, now wearing a linen nightgown, sits in front of a mirrored dressing table, Emily is carefully combing her hair.

EMILY

(shyly)

I wish I had a baby. More than anything in the world. My own baby to keep forever. I don't care what they say about it being bad for you, I'd make sure she went to school and learned every thing there was to learn. That way she'd not end up stupid like me.

(seeing Mary)

Sorry. I didn't mean to...

MARY

I know.

Zenta bustles in with a glass of milk.

ZENTA

You're to sleep now. She'll see you in the morning. I've made you a glass of warm milk.

(sharp)

Emily, come on girl.

Emily puts the brush down and goes to the door. Zenta and Emily leave. Mary regards herself gravely in the mirror.

45 EXT. MRS. CAWTHRA-ELLIOT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

45 *

The house is dark.