

ALL THIS IS TRUE

Sore Though It Grieves Me

Feature Film | Intimate Road Drama | Written by Susan N. Guggenheim

Logline

When a 72-year-old white woman drives the troubled young Black man she helped raise from Philadelphia to South Carolina while he is wanted on multiple charges, their road trip forces both to confront addiction, race, privilege, family, and the difference between loving someone and trying to save him.

Premise

Cate has loved Malik since he was a child - not as a charity case or a project, but as the godson she has fed, housed, defended, forgiven, and tried to help for years. Malik has survived poverty, neglect, homelessness, addiction, incarceration, and the hard education of systems that were supposed to protect him but often failed him.

When Malik asks Cate to drive him south to relatives while warrants are active, she convinces herself that family may offer what she cannot. On the road, his omissions multiply. There are more charges than she knew. He steals. He pushes against her boundaries. And he forces her to confront the racial privilege embedded in the ways she has judged, helped, and misunderstood him.

In South Carolina, Aunt Denise refuses both Malik's fantasy of refuge and Cate's fantasy of rescue. Her challenge is blunt: Cate has been trying to save one person crisis by crisis without seeing the family, poverty, and community around him. Love can be real and still fail to build anything that holds.

Cate and Malik turn north together. He surrenders on his active warrants. Cate stays beside him as far as the law allows, but she does not lie, promise rescue, or pretend love can erase consequence.

Months later, the change is concrete: Miss Denise's Kitchen, a food-truck business built with the family rather than around Malik's emergencies. Cate is not the center. She is using the tools she has to help something stand.

What remains when love is real, but rescue is not possible?

For professional review

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Why This Film

All This Is True is an anti-rescue drama. It rejects both sentimental salvation and easy condemnation. Malik is neither redeemed nor abandoned; Cate is neither savior nor victim. Denise changes the frame from one person's emergency to the larger family and economic ground beneath him.

The story asks what love becomes when it can no longer mean fixing, financing, excusing, or carrying someone else. Its answer is not withdrawal of love, but a harder form of solidarity: truth, boundaries, consequence, and investment in structures that can hold more than one person.

Principal Roles

MALIK DEVONTE DEMAS, 24

A young Black man shaped by poverty, grief, incarceration, charm, rage, need, humor, and survival. He lies, steals, tests love, and longs to belong. His surrender is not a redemption scene; it is a first act of truth.

CATE JONES, 72

Malik's white godmother, intelligent, stubborn, loving, and deeply implicated in the rescue pattern she believes is help. Her journey is from individual crisis response toward useful, accountable solidarity.

AUNT DENISE, late 50s

Malik's aunt and the film's essential third perspective. Denise loves Malik without romanticizing him and forces Cate to see poverty, family, care, and responsibility as a system rather than a series of emergencies.

Production Profile

- Estimated budget range: \$1M-\$3M, subject to professional line-producer review.
- Contained road-film footprint: car, motels, diners, family home, justice center, and final food-truck location.
- Two major lead roles, one substantial supporting role, and a limited ensemble beyond the family/community scenes.
- Minimal VFX and strong flexibility for regional production incentives depending on final shooting locations.

Project Status

- Feature screenplay completed - 115 screenplay pages.
- Original song, I Have Done What Love Can Do, completed and available separately.
- Proof-of-concept short film, Miss Denise's Kitchen, in development.
- Seeking aligned producing partners, independent production companies, and actor-driven development interest.

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