

THE PHROGGER

A Drama/Thriller Screenplay
by Joel McElvaney

PHROGGING:

(noun)

The act of secretly living in another person's home without their knowledge

LOGLINE

After escaping an anti-gay bootcamp, a frightened trans teen secretly lives inside the homes of unsuspecting suburbanites to evade capture by her ultra-religious parents.

“Establishes a sense of unease,
drawing the audience into a
world where danger lurks
just out of sight.”

—COVERFLY X

“The flashbacks are excellent
and the pacing and rhythm
in the scenes is strong.”

—FINISH LINE





SCRIPT SYNOPSIS

After escaping from an anti-gay bootcamp, trans teen RILEY secretly hides from her parents in SHERYL and KURT's home where she sees Kurt fondling himself on his 8 year-old daughter EMMA's bed. Horrified, Riley moves the couple's nanny cam into Emma's room and catches Kurt in the act; but not before she's chased out of the house by Kurt, who is later arrested when OFFICERS PEREZ and BURTON watch the nanny cam footage with a gobsmacked Sheryl.

Later, Riley herself is arrested for trespassing in another home and taken to the police station where Sheryl sees Riley's dad, who turns out to be Officer Burton(!), take her away. At home, Burton and MRS. BURTON lock Riley in the basement where she endures an exorcism and electro-shock "therapy." Near her breaking point, Riley fights back, escapes, and hides at Sheryl and Emma's house. Burton finds her there, has a standoff with Sheryl, Riley, and a couple of cop colleagues, which leads to his and Mrs. Burton's arrest. Soon after, Sheryl applies to foster Riley, and the last scene shows her tearfully watching Riley and Emma play together.

KEY CHARACTERS



RILEY BURTON

Our protagonist, a frightened trans teen who endures the worst kind of abuse but who has enough resilience and grit to fight back and ultimately bring safety and justice to not only herself but also a little girl experiencing her own abuse.



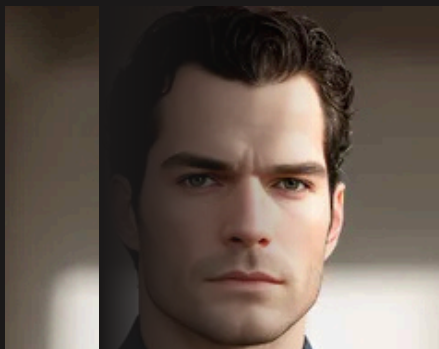
SHERYL COLLINS

An accomodating wife to Kurt and a fiercely protective mother to Emma, whose life gets upended when she views nanny cam footage of Kurt on Emma's bed. A good mom, grateful to Riley for revealing Kurt, and eager to salvage a happy life for Emma.



EMMA COLLINS

The spirited, perceptive only daughter of Sheryl and Kurt. She initially thinks Riley is a guardian angel.



OFFICER BURTON

Riley's homophobic father who rejects Riley's true self and who stoops to abuse and torture to try to change Riley into something she's not.

KEY CHARACTERS



KURT COLLINS

Sheryl's husband and Emma's father. A pedophile who abuses Emma and whom Riley catches masturbating on Emma's bed.



MRS. BURTON

Riley's mother and Officer Burton's wife. A deeply religious woman who believes the bible should be taken literally and that things were better when there were just two genders.



MARISA

Riley's lesbian friend from high school, her only friend.

“Riley’s resilience and resourcefulness are skillfully depicted, making her a relatable lead who is both fragile and strong.”

—COVERFLY X



LOCATIONS

POLICE STATION



UTILITY ROOM



SHELTER



FILM TONE



FINAL WORD

FROM THE AUTHOR



The Phrogger's twisty, tension-filled script helps viewers see trans characters as normal people equally deserving of empathy and basic human freedoms. The story avoids preachiness; instead, it simply presents a strong trans female lead dealing with real issues of homelessness and anti-trans violence — even from her own family. One reader said, “These elements lend realism and relevance to the narrative, transforming it from a straightforward thriller into a thought-provoking story that challenges the audience to reflect on societal shortcomings and personal biases.”

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