

bMovies - pitch deck

The Weight of Water

\$TWOWX



In 1970s New Orleans, longshoreman Elijah Moreau teaches himself to read in secret until his grandson Marcus is framed for arson, forcing him to break thirty years of silence against the port bosses and police.

Act 1: Elijah Moreau, 58, has loaded cargo at the Port of New Orleans for three decades without complaint. Nights in his Treme shotgun house he traces primer pages with a pencil while Ruth sleeps. His daughter Lena brings fourteen-year-old Marcus over on weekends; the boy runs the docks with other kids. When a warehouse fire kills a foreman, police pick Marcus as scapegoat. Elijah watches the arrest from the loading platform and says nothing. Act 2: Elijah visits the parish jail with Lena. Marcus swears he was playing by the levee. Elijah begins carrying a library book in his lunch pail. At the docks Samuel warns him to keep his head down. Elijah sneaks into the main library after shifts, spelling out newspaper headlines about the case. Midpoint: he testifies at a preliminary hearing that Marcus was with him, a lie that unravels under cross-examination. Bosses cut his shifts; Ruth stops speaking to him. Harlan Shaw, the lead detective, visits the house and reminds Elijah of past union troubles. Act 3: Alone on the night dock, Elijah reads the full police report aloud to himself. He finds the witness who saw white teenagers near the warehouse. At trial he stands and names the real culprits, his voice cracking on each syllable. Marcus is released. Elijah returns to the water's edge at dawn, the primer book open on his lap, watching a new ship come in.

CHARACTERS



Elijah Moreau

PROTAGONIST



Marcus Moreau

DEUTERAGONIST



Ruth Moreau

SUPPORTING



Harlan Shaw

ANTAGONIST

LOCATIONS

Port of New Orleans Docks

EXT.

Rust-streaked cranes, stacks of wooden crates, oil-slick water. Forklifts rumble between ships. The river smells of diesel and rotting fish.

Harsh sodium lights cut through humid night air, turning everything the color of old brass.

Elijah Moreau's Shotgun House

INT.

Narrow rooms lined with faded floral wallpaper. A single window unit rattles. The kitchen table holds dock manifests and one primer.

Dim yellow light from a single bulb, shadows pooling in every doorway.

Main Branch Public Library

INT.

High ceilings, long oak tables, rows of card catalogs. The children's section is cordoned by a low wooden gate.

Cool fluorescent hush broken only by turning pages and distant typewriters.

TOPE & STYLE

PALETTE

mud-brown dock water, nicotine-yellow bulb light, faded denim blue, rust-orange metal, bone-white pages under dim fluorescents

REFERENCES

Lighting like Killer of Sheep (Burnett) - practical sources only, faces half in shadow. Pacing like The Piano (Campion) - long silences between lines. Framing like 12 Years a Slave (McQueen) - tight on hands and water.

TOPE

Quiet, humid, and patient. The film moves like a man who has learned never to hurry. Tension lives in withheld words and the sound of water against pilings.

SOUND DESIGN

Score limited to sparse harmonica and distant foghorns. Ambient texture dominated by crane hydraulics, river slaps, and the creak of old wood. Silence is used as punctuation; entire scenes play without music until Elijah first reads aloud.

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TIER

SCRIPT

\$0.99 PITCH

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