



Blood & Honey

(alternative title: Slow Like Honey)

PITCH

SCRIPT PIPELINE GREAT IDEA CONTESTS

2020 (II)



LOGLINE/CONCEPT

A 6-man team of former Navy SEALs have spent the last 10 years transforming their devastated hometown of Whitebridge, in rural Pennsylvania, into an idyllic hamlet with mob-style rule. But remnants of a decimated “hillbilly mafia,” a vengeful former sheriff, and an angry cult leader miss how things used to be and aim to revert the town back to its old, corrupt ways. There’s also a wealthy real estate developer aiming to make Whitebridge his new project.

***BLOOD & HONEY is imagined as a triple combination of the careful storytelling of Breaking Bad, the niche subculture of Sons of Anarchy, and the dark, underrepresented setting of Ozarks.*

BACKSTORY

Whitebridge, Pennsylvania was once a small, rural town ravaged by the opioid crisis, gang violence, and economic strife. Today, 10 years later, it's a pleasant community that thrives economically, educationally, and culturally. Citizens of Whitebridge are proud over their town, but quiet about its success. They have to be, because it was achieved through a lot of spilled blood. Mainly of those who didn't want Whitebridge to change. Those who benefited from its destruction, such as the former sheriff, STAN JENKINS, who turned a blind eye but open hand to the drug war waged between the COOPERS and the FRANKLINS, two rural families vied to be king of the drug trade. But are now nothing but the skeletal remains of once powerful, yet cruel drug peddlers.

All of it gone: the drugs, the mob families, the racist, corrupt cops, crumbling schools, and foreclosed homes. In its place are a dedicated rehab center, Montessori schools, an eco-friendly environment, and a prosperous small business municipality. The only crime committed within the last 5 years has been trash citations and local teens breaking curfew.

Whitebridge's upward trajectory is all the work of 6 men, a team of Navy SEALs (ADMIRAL, POPE, DUTCH, HUBBY, GRIZZLY, and BABE) that sought to transform the town for the better. Admiral was born and raised in Whitebridge and found himself distraught with how badly the town he loved had gotten over the last 20 years. He asked his wayward squad to move to Pennsylvania and help him turn it into a town worth living in again, and they did. With militant precision, guerilla violence, and psychological warfare they managed to nearly eradicate the Coopers and the Franklins, help elect (i.e., rig) a new sheriff, mayor, superintendent, appoint (again, i.e., rig) new local judges, and loosen the stronghold a regional cult had over its most vulnerable citizens.

Admiral and his squad have maintained a strict code of rules the citizens of Whitebridge are to follow in order to continue living in their peaceful town, but the number one rule is to never, ever, tell anyone outside of town why or how Whitebridge was transformed. As far as anyone else knows, they're all a bunch of simple folk who one day decided to "pull themselves up by their bootstraps" and change things.

Currently, Admiral and the other SEALs use their lumber business as both an actual business and a front for their nefarious negotiations and plans. As well as the active bee farm Pope lives on (which is also where A LOT of actual bodies are buried).

CHARACTERS

MAIN CAST

- Aaron “Admiral” Wheeler (white, late-30s) – a strategic leader that puts family and community above all else
- Peter “Pope” Little (white, mid-30s) – a reformed Mormon and shy bookworm whose dark side is scarier than imagined
- Thaddeus “Dutch” Montgomery (Black, mid-30s) – a smart, reserved man, until pushed
- Abel “Hubby” Ruiz (Latinx, late-30s) – a playboy who’s only commitment is to his team and the town of Whitebridge
- Daniel “Grizzly” Nguyen (East Asian, early 30s) – a short-fuse brawler with patience only for his team and his wife
- Gideon “Babe” Hansen (white, early 40s) – a low-maintenance outdoorsman that’s incredible under pressure
- Kelli Flowers (Black, late 20s) – a new resident to Whitebridge that falls in love with Pope
- Fisher Wheeler (white, mid-20s) – Admiral’s domesticated and clever husband
- Erica Nguyen (East Asian, early 30s) – Grizzly’s no-nonsense wife
- Margot Franklin (white, early-20s) – the daughter of a former boss in the “hillbilly mafia” and Pope’s fiancée

SUPPORTING CAST

- Christine “Chris” Montgomery (white, mid-30s) – Dutch’s sweet but clueless wife and step-mother to his daughter, India
- India Montgomery (Black, early teens) – Dutch’s dogmatic, activist young daughter
- Neil Barnes (white, late 30s) – an egotistical real estate developer eager to turn Whitebridge into a resort town
- Ophelia Henderson (white, mid-50s) – a con woman and cult leader that lives on the edge of town with her violent followers
- Mayor Tess Armstrong (Native American, late 40s) – the mayor of Whitebridge appointed by Admiral and his team
- Pastor McBride (white, early 50s) – a kind-hearted, liberal Unitarian pastor whose pews are full every Sunday
- Stan Jenkins (white, early 60s) – the former corrupt, racist sheriff of Whitebridge, out for revenge against Admiral
- Jackson “Jax” Cooper (white, early 30s) – the son of a former boss in the “hillbilly mafia” acrimonious about the loss of power his family now has
- Father Perry (white, mid-60s) – a Catholic priest who’s dwindling church is the indirect result of the SEALS hold on the town

EPISODE 1 SYNOPSIS

While sneaking out of his married lover's house one morning, HUBBY spots movers unloading their truck into a house in town. He reports it to ADMIRAL who's livid. No one can move to town without his distinct permission and he hasn't given it for over a year now. Admiral confronts a local relator about the new person in town; a young woman named KELLI FLOWERS who inherited the house from her deceased great-grandmother. The relator couldn't put her off from moving into the old, Victorian house as much as she tried. Seeing as how Kelli's inheritance new in town, unaccustomed to their rules, Admiral can't outright bully her into leaving. But he can try convincing her to move if she proves to be a problem... In the meantime, he sends his husband, FISHER, over to her house to be nosy, spy on her. Fisher meets Kelli and instantly likes her. He does, however, warn Admiral that Kelli seems exactly like the type of girl meant for someone like POPE and keeping them separate for as long as he can would be a good idea. Fisher is typically right about things like that, so Admiral takes his advice into consideration.

Admiral is also none to happy with finding out Whitebridge has been named "Best Small Town" by Conde Nast. That type of attention draws attention. It draws travelers, tourists, and real estate developers. Which means more people. And more people than the 8,000 that already live in town is harder to control. Admiral meets with the SEALS as well as MAYOR ARMSTRONG, the superintendent, SHERIFF WATERFORD, and PASTOR MCBRIDE who all believe he's being paranoid about the Conde Nast write-up.

BABE is a doctor at Mulberry House, a year-long in-house treatment center for addicts. ERICA is a nurse that works alongside him. Currently, he has a problem with two patients: one is pregnant with no means to provide for herself or her unborn child as her rehab stint is almost up, and the other is a patient just released and susceptible to the manipulative charms of a nearby cult that preys on addicts and recovering addicts.

DUTCH spots JAX, a former son of the "hillbilly mafia," wandering around town being a menace and harassing townspeople (former addicts and peddlers) he knows. Dutch tosses Jax into the trunk of his car and drives him into the next county, leaving him on the side of the road. He tells him never to return to Whitebridge. Jax makes his own threats and begins a long walk home. Dutch also has to contend with the increasing vitriolic relationship between his pregnant wife, CHRIS, and daughter, INDIA, who seems to make it her mission to insult her step-mother every chance she gets.

EPISODE 1 SYNOPSIS, cont.

Pope lives on a bee farm right at the edge of town with his fiancée, MARGOT. Though friendly and accommodating to Margot, Pope is not in love with her. Theirs is a relationship of convenience; Margot is the youngest daughter of Harold Franklin, the head of the former Franklin Clan, rivals to Jax's family. When the SEALS took over Whitebridge Margot was used as a "peace offering." Outgunned and devastated at the toll fighting the SEALS took from him and his family, Harold asked for only one thing to ensure he'd stop fighting and go peaceful from town: if one of them "did right by Margot." She's his only daughter without a husband to "look after her." Between he and Babe, Pope drew the short straw, and has been engaged to Margot since she was 18 years old, ensuring Franklin and his family stay out of Whitebridge and remain civil with the SEALS. It's been nearly 9 years now of the two of them living together unwed; Pope hedging on setting a date, continually making excuses. And though he may be hesitant, Margot is not. She's grown to love Pope and is hurt he won't marry her. Or sleep with her.

Teenagers in town complain to Admiral that there isn't much to do for people their age and that a 10PM curfew for anyone under 21 years old is too strict. He complains to Fisher about the teens concerns and Fisher promises to take of it.

GRIZZLY is annoyed the old folk in town keep calling him to fix odd things around their homes instead of for actual emergencies. And Hubby has a contentious talk with FATHER PERRY, a Catholic priest who dislikes Hubby and the other SEALS, blaming them for the lack of attendance at his church and the overabundance of parishioners that attend the Unitarian church in town instead.

Fisher and Chris announces at a PTA meeting that the old, DRIVE-IN movie theater and the roller rink will be restored by Admiral and the other SEALS' construction company. He and Chris will also be creating an indoor carnival in the high school gymnasium once a month. And that curfew for anyone under 21 will extend to midnight, but only on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

With every crisis averted for now, Admiral sleeps a little easier. However, the next day, on his morning jog, he spots a man by a sports car admiring Red Roster Farm, an abandoned 100 acres of land Admiral has yet to figure out what to do with. The man, NEIL BARNES, remarks how it would make a perfect place for a hotel. He asks Admiral if he knows if it's for sale. Admiral heatedly tells Neil it's not, but Neil remarks that "everything is for sale," before climbing into his expensive car and driving off.

SEASON 1 OVERVIEW/PLOT POINTS

- Admiral effectively blocks Neil Barnes from buying property in Whitebridge, which causing discourse with citizens who would like the town to generate more revenue.
- Pope and Kelli fall head over heels for one another but abstain from a relationship given Pope is engaged to Margot.
- Grizzly and Erica decide to try IVF in their attempts to have a natural child after Erica suffers her third miscarriage.
- Babe has it out with Ophelia, a cult leader on the boarder of town, for preying on addicts which sparks a renewed hostility between her cult and the SEALS.
- The former sheriff, Stan Jenkins, attempts to forcefully take over the station with a band of alt-right cronies.
- The older brother of India's classmate dies of a drug overdose. Admiral and Dutch learn he got the drugs from Jax.
- Fisher's father, the ousted superintendent, wants to rebuild their relationship and get to know his grandchildren, but Fisher doesn't trust his sneaky father.
- Grizzly discovers teens smoking weed and finds out owners of a plant nursery have been growing and selling it in Whitebridge for the past 3 years.
- The archbishop comes to Whitebridge after Father Perry complains to him that the town is run by "local military thugs." Hubby confronts him and tries to make sure Whitebridge isn't drawing attention from the Catholic Church.
- Chris goes into labor early and delivers the baby prematurely with India's help.
- Mayor Armstrong has bigger political aspirations and considers a run for governor of Pennsylvania.
- The SEALS restore the DRIVE-IN movie theater and a roller rink.



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