



Rise Up, Little Girl

“Masterfully written”

Blue Cat Screenplay Competition



*Rise Up Little Girl is a chilling gothic western tale in the vein of **The Witch and Bone Tomahawk**, fused with the stark Americana of **No Country for Old Men** and **True Grit**.*

Steeped in frontier folklore, it delivers supernatural terror grounded in raw human emotion. A bold, character-driven horror story about love, loss, and redemption, it is a haunting meditation on sacrifice that offers not just scares, but a devastatingly beautiful tale of devotion - and the terrible price of resurrection.



Logline:

In 1915 Montana, two outcast ranch girls discover a hidden altar that resurrects lost souls. But when their experiments unleash something sinister, the local sheriff is drawn into a frontier nightmare to confront the dead, and his own buried sins.

Synopsis

Talitha Gwen is a wild-eyed outcast with mud in her hair and a pistol at her side, lurking in the woods with one mission: to bring back the only person who ever loved her, the beautiful and spirited **Annabelle Lee**. A reckless, free-spirited girl with everything to lose.

The way back is through a cursed hunk of quartz buried in a mountain cave known only in whispers as *the Lazarus Stone*. This is where Annabelle made the mistake of sacrificing herself for a glimpse of the afterlife. But this rock doesn't just wake the sleeping soul. It spits them out screaming, half-possessed, clawing at their own flesh, begging for release.

Annabelle fled into the woods that fateful night, but Talitha is convinced that what returned was not Annabelle, and her lover's soul is surely still trapped within the stone. Now, she is determined to get her back by any means necessary. Even if it means digging up every grave in town, or robbing every funeral parlor from here to Latigo.

Enter Sheriff Jack Shelby, a grizzled Texas Ranger turned small-town lawman with ghosts of his own. Haunted by the guilt of his wife and daughter's death, a bottle of whiskey is his closest ally next to a loyal but naive deputy, Shane Eaton. When graves start opening and townsfolk whisper about witches in the forest, Jack stumbles into a nightmare that drags him straight to the Stone, and into the path of Talitha's tragic orbit.

This leads him to the **Cassidy clan**, a violent family, scarred inside and out with an ugly past. After more graves are uprooted and corpses stolen, people begin to fear the evil buried in the mountain will resurface, and the Cassidy's will seize control through fear. Hysteria grips the town further when a young child is kidnapped, and through a frightening encounter with the corrupted Annabelle, Jack discovers Talitha's role in the ritual killings, and finds her alone in the forest, searching for her lost love.

Torn between duty and compassion, he recognizes in her the same pain his own daughter endured; a young soul punished for love. His affection for her grows until together they uncover the truth: the Lazarus Stone is not a window to heaven, but a doorway to hell, and the Cassidy's have been guarding it for a century. The grotesque family of Cassidy's soon catch on to their activities, and set a trap to capture them together, accusing them both of witchcraft and fighting to have the sheriff jailed.

But they have alternate purpose in their actions, and in a bloody showdown at the Cassidy homestead, Jack and Talitha face the feral clan, the corrupted Annabelle, and the resurrected horrors of the past. To end the curse, Jack must embrace the one lesson he's avoided his entire life: *sacrifice*. He offers his own soul on the stone, closing the door and saving Talitha, the daughter figure he could not save before.

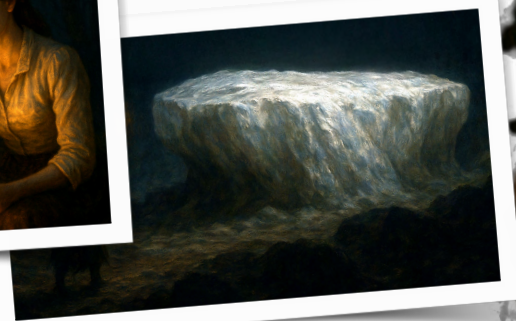
the Characters



TALITHA GWEN (23), is a farm girl struggling to find her place in the world. Born poor and abandoned as a child, she learned to survive in the Arkansas backwoods on her own. Hunting and trapping are her greatest skills, but she is illiterate, scarred, and hardened by neglect. She found work as a cowhand on a Montana guest ranch where she met Annabelle Lee, the first person to show her love, and treat her with true affection. As a result, Talitha latched on with feral devotion.

Through town gossip, they soon learn the local legend of an ancient altar in the mountains called **the Lazarus Stone**, a slab of quartz with power to resurrect the dead. Against *Tally's* best judgement, they venture into the forest to find it. When they do, *Belle* submits herself to the Stone and her soul is lost, leaving Tally with an impossible choice: to keep searching for the soul of her lost love by whatever means necessary, or give up and abandon her forever to the afterlife.

Torn between grief, obsession, and the hope of redemption, Talitha is the emotional core of the story. A young woman who embodies the film's haunting theme of sacrifice, consequence, and the terrible price of redemption. Her love is desperate, raw, and often misplaced, but drives her every choice.



A desperate outcast fueled by love and obsession, walking the thin line between savior and sinner.

Talitha





Jack

JACK SHELBY (54), was born in Waco, Texas, and raised in the rough-and-tumble Brazos River country. By his late twenties, he earned his commission with the Texas Rangers, becoming a celebrated gunman whose reputation for quick justice preceded him.

Yet beneath the legend is a man scarred by loss. His wife, Beth, sank into religious fanaticism after childbirth, and their daughter, Clementine, grew up in an atmosphere of piety & shame. When she revealed her love for another girl, Jack failed to protect her from Beth's judgment, a choice that ended in tragedy and tore his family apart. Jack fled Texas, haunted by guilt, with a bottle of whiskey as his only companion.

Now, as Sheriff of Arrame, Montana, Jack is a man of contradictions: world-weary, sardonic, but still dangerous when cornered. His bond with Talitha Gwen - a feral young woman tangled up with resurrection rites - pulls him back into the orbit of his own demons as she unleashes an evil terror upon the town. And becomes a target for the sinister Cassidy family.

To save Talitha, the town, a kidnapped young boy, and confront the cursed Cassidy clan, Jack must become more than the broken father who failed his own daughter.



A tragic lawman seeking redemption, a reluctant protector and dedicated servant of justice.

ANNABELLE LEE (24), is beautiful and charismatic, but also dangerously curious. Raised in privilege, she has big city culture and a fierce intellect, but no survival instincts or street smarts.

Belle was sent to work at the Montana guest ranch as punishment for rebellion against her high-society family, but she met and fell into passions with Talitha Gwen, a tough survivor and good listener who acts as an enabler for her wild ideas. She ignites a fire in *Tally* to embrace passion and adventure, but beneath the surface hides grief. Her heart once belonged to a boy who died, leaving her without direction or certainty in life or love. This makes her untamed, reckless and dangerous to the people who love her.

Annabelle is both muse and manipulator for the people in her life, primarily Talitha, whose devotion borders on worship. She draws them in effortlessly, but can cut them off and vanish without a trace just as easily. Annabelle's fascination with the Lazarus Stone began as curiosity but quickly became obsession, to use its power to find the soul of her former love. She tests herself on the Stone with catastrophic results, becoming something inhuman: a body possessed, and a haunting figure who shifts between victim and predator.

A radiant muse turned corrupted antagonist, the embodiment of dangerous passion and ruin.



Annabelle





SHANE EATON (27), is Sheriff Jack Shelby's loyal but naive young deputy. Born & raised in nearby Latigo, Shane has never known life beyond small-town Montana, and is eager to prove himself to the adults around him. In most situations, however, his earnestness with words outpaces his wisdom and he often ends up with a foot in his mouth.

Shane represents the *everyman* of the story. Wide-eyed, impressionable, and desperate to be seen as capable in a world where death, isolation and superstition are woven into daily life. His heart is always in the right place, and he idolizes Jack, even while quietly worried about his drinking. With rumors of witches going around, Shane's curiosity about the supernatural borders on belief, making him a perfect foil to Jack's cynicism.

Shane serves as both comic relief and a tragic figure. His youthful mistakes add levity, but his bravery is put to the test when violence escalates, and he must step into danger with courage beyond his years. He meets a brutal end, but his death is a gut punch to underscore the stakes; innocence rarely survives in Arrame.



Shane

A loyal deputy caught between innocence and horror, struggling to rise to a hero's calling.



the Cassidy's

EDGAR CASSIDY (45) & SHAWN CASSIDY (36) are the scarred and vicious patriarchs of the Cassidy clan. With leathery skin and grotesque claw-mark scars etched across their faces, they are both human and monster, reflecting generations of corruption. Descended from Father Nathaniel Cassidy (a missionary who betrayed his church and burned a local tribe alive) They believe it is their family duty to guard the cursed Lazarus Stone.

They are cunning, territorial, and merciless, cloaking their sadism in claims of tradition. To the townsfolk, they are both feared and despised, tolerated only because their violence has become a perverse form of protection. This family represents what happens when generational sin festers unchecked. Their presence is a reminder that evil is not just in the supernatural, but in bloodlines that rot from within.

A scarred patriarch and his wild-eyed enforcer, carrying their family's sins with cruelty and menace. Twisted by bloodline and brutality.

The **Lazarus Stone** is the cursed heart of the story.

A gleaming monolith of white quartz buried in the Montana wilderness. Hidden in the depths of a prehistoric cave, it is an altar not carved or quarried, but *grown* from the earth itself, with crystalline veins snaking deep into the mountain like roots.

Local legend ties it to **Father Nathaniel Cassidy**, a lone missionary who turned violent against the Blackfoot tribe over a century ago. But it truly dates back as far as the earth itself. The priest's journal describes the stone as a "doorway" between life and death, unlocking only when blood and sacrifice meet its surface at the appointed hour:

1:11.

To the desperate, the stone is salvation. A chance to bring back what was lost. But resurrection comes at a cost. Those who return emerge broken, their bodies scarred, their minds twisted, their souls haunted by something else that crosses through. The Lazarus Stone does not grant miracles; it trades for them.

For Annabelle it was obsession, the promise of peering beyond the veil. For Talitha, devotion. The last, desperate hope of restoring the only person she ever loved. But for **Jack Shelby** and the town of **Arrame**, the Lazarus Stone is damnation itself. A cursed altar demanding endless sacrifice.

A doorway between life and death, unlocked only by blood.

the Lazarus Stone





Talitha Gwen and **Annabelle Lee** came from very different worlds. Talitha, a dirt-poor drifter from Arkansas, grew up abandoned and alone, hardened by a life of survival. Annabelle, raised in refinement, grew up spoiled and rich, with a devilish streak of rebellious energy.

Talitha felt lucky to find work as a cowhand at the **Van Bryan Guest Ranch**, but for Annabelle it was a summer of punishment. Together they made a good team, and their bond grew quickly. Annabelle became teacher and muse, guiding Talitha's fumbling attempts to read and write, while Talitha offered loyalty, protection, and devotion, helping Annabelle navigate the rigors of living in the wild. They soon began a routine of sneaking into town to explore, and it was here they learned the legend of **the Lazarus Stone**, and heard whispers it could still be found in back country owned by **the Cassidy Family**.

Finding the Stone was Annabelle's new obsession. She convinced Talitha it would be a grand adventure, to pierce the veil of death and glimpse at the spirit world beyond. With **Mary Ann Van Bryan's** disapproval of their relationship already causing tensions on the ranch, it was an easy choice to quit, steal a horse and wagon, and vanish to the forest in search of the Stone. It was a bold journey, a self-imposed exile, and a shared rebellion against anyone who judged them.

A love so fierce it defied death, but invited something far darker to take its place.

BlueCat Screenplay Competition

“Your action and description lines are masterfully written, being clear, concise, and cinematic - while still maintaining a prose-like vividness which makes your writing feel like an old ghost story.”

“You do a phenomenal job of immediately establishing the gothic, mystical tone of your script. The opening sequence... immediately draws the reader in with its disturbing and creepy imagery.”

“The relationship between Talitha and Annabelle is compelling and believable... we completely understand and sympathize with [Talitha’s] struggle and are completely invested in wanting to see her succeed.”

“Your script is wonderfully well-paced, with key information and plotlines unraveling at just the right rate.... An incredibly satisfying conclusion to the emotional arc of your script.”

Fast Track Screenplay Competition

“This dark tale takes on complex themes of afterlife, love, death, and faith, and delivers them within a dense storyline... The writing process is definitively headed in the right direction.”

“The concomitance of spiritualism and personal beliefs provide an insightful work, even for the young generations; something that’s not so common nowadays in films.”

Finish Line Script Competition

“RISE UP LITTLE GIRL is [a] supernatural horror western that combines elements of these genres well to create an original story from familiar tropes.”

“The scene where the not-Mr. Wilson tells Talitha all of what ‘it’ knows... is terrific! There was an audible ‘no’ from the reader when Jack shot ‘it’ before Talitha got all her answers. It’s a very strong section overall.”