

FEATHERBONE

Written by: Callie Currence

Format: Feature Film, 95 - 105 min.

Genre: Crime Drama/ Romance

Setting: 1970's. A small, Midwest American town

Comparables: *Bones and All, Dexter, Natural Born Killers*

"I've loved you since the night you brought me something I didn't ask for." - Marigold "Mari" Reed

LOGLINE:

A sweet, but reclusive butcher with a dark appetite forms a pact with a charming drifter who supplies her with fresh bodies. As their twisted romance spirals into violence, and a local detective closes in, they are forced to choose between hunger and redemption.

SYNOPSIS:

Our opening image introduces Marigold Reed, a lonely small-town butcher, framed against the cold glow of her shop's meat counter. Mari hides a grotesque secret: she craves human flesh, thanks to her upbringing. For years, she has survived by quietly harvesting unclaimed bodies from Henry, the town mortician. Never killing, only taking what is already gone. Ritual, routine, and strict rules give her control over the part of herself she fears the most. But her carefully managed world shatters when a charming drifter, Vincent Mercer, stumbles upon her secret. Instead of exposing her, Vincent admits he's a killer and offers a deal: he'll supply fresh bodies, no questions asked, as long as she makes them disappear. For Mari, the offer is both horrifying and irresistible. He sees her fully, without flinching. And for someone who has lived her entire life hiding in plain sight, that's intoxicating.

"Don't be a putz, butcher girl. What choice do you really have?" - Vin

In Act II, Mari and Vincent fall into a twisted rhythm, sharing stolen moments of passion and violence. At first, it feels almost fun: Vincent brings the kills, Mari prepares the meat, and together they build a strange kind of intimacy. For Vincent, who's spent his life unwanted and adrift, Mari is the first person who needs him, and he clings to that with growing desperation. But halfway through, a turning point arrives. The local detective begins circling, suspicious of the rising number of disappearances, and Mari's trusted lifeline, Henry, suddenly dies, leaving her emotionally unmoored. As the pressure mounts, Mari and Vincent concoct a desperate plan to frame a local ex-con for their crimes. But as their lies thicken and the emotional strain builds, Mari's guilt grows too heavy. She tries to pull away, only to discover Vincent has no intention of letting her go. The relationship that once fed her begins to consume her, leading Mari to question whether they were ever truly in love, or just enabling each other's worst instincts.

"Are you in this for the long haul? Or do you bail the moment it gets hot?" - Henry to Vin

In Act III, after realizing they can't escape what they are, Mari and Vincent reconcile—not out of denial, but acceptance. After a tense night of staging evidence, their plan works: the framed ex-con takes the fall, and the detective is hailed as a local hero. With the investigation closed and their tracks covered, Mari and Vincent quietly sell the butcher shop and leave their old lives behind. The ending follows them as they head to the West Coast, determined to start over, even if the hunger still lingers between them. The final image rests on the road ahead. Uncertain, unnerving, and darkly hopeful. They may still be monsters, but now, they are no longer alone.

"I'll carry it with me. All of it. But not the way I used to." - Mari

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

Marigold “Mari” Reed (Female, 30’s):

“I don’t kill. I just don’t waste what’s already dead.”

- A small-town butcher with a monstrous hunger and a moral code. She will not kill. She only eats what’s already dead.
- Mari is quiet, self-reliant, and meticulous. Her addiction is buried beneath routine, ritual, and denial. She believes she’s keeping the darkness contained, until Vincent drags it into the light.
- **What makes her different:** She’s a cannibal protagonist who’s not a killer. A horror heroine who isn’t trying to escape her darkness, just keep it ethical. Her arc isn’t about defeating a monster, it’s about *not becoming one*.

Vincent “Vin” Mercer (Male, 40’s):

“The first time’s always the hardest. If it wasn’t, you’d have more reason to be worried.”

- A charming drifter and contract killer with a code of his own: disappear before anyone gets too close. But when he meets Mari, who sees his violence as useful and not shameful, he lingers.
- Vin is cocky, dangerous, and surprisingly domestic. He treats murder like maintenance. He brings Mari victims, banter while they clean, and slowly grows attached. But when she tries to quit, he panics, and the possessive, unstable side emerges.
- **What makes him different:** He’s not a romanticized bad boy, he’s a real killer grappling with the first relationship that makes him feel wanted. He’s not just enabling Mari, he *needs* her to validate his own existence.

Henry Langston (Male, 60s-70s):

“You’re stronger than your granddad ever gave you credit for.”

- Mari’s closest friend and longtime accomplice, Henry is the town mortician who’s quietly supplied her with bodies for years. He sees her as family, not a monster, and keeps her grounded with rules and routine.
- **What makes him different:** He’s not a moral voice, he’s complicit, loyal, and deeply human. His death isn’t just tragic, it’s Mari’s breaking point.

Detective Calloway (Male, 50s - 60s):

“It’s not the blood that tips you off. It’s how clean everything else is.”

- A weary local cop with sharp instincts and a long memory. Calloway suspects Mari, but he’s not out for blood, he just wants the truth, and he won’t stop digging.
- In the 70’s, many investigators had no access to DNA testing or digital records/databases.
- **What makes him different:** He’s not the villain. He’s guilt with a badge. The closer he gets, the more Mari’s lies unravel her.

THEMES:

- **Addiction as intimacy** - the hunger that binds them.
- **Complicity vs. control** - how love enables or restrains us.
- **The cost of being known** - can you be loved without being saved?
- **What we feed to survive** - and what it eats in return.

BUDGET RANGE: >\$15M, feasible with practical FX (focused setting, contained cast, limited locations)