



UNCERTAIN EYES

PITCH DECK

A life-spanning survival story about the look people give you when they no longer know what to expect — and the lifelong fight to become more than their fear.

Uncertain Eyes is currently a Semi-Finalist in the Cannes World Film Festival and was a Quarter Finalist in both the Page Turner Screenplays Genre Competition (2026) and the Wiki Screenplay Contest (May 2026).

“Always try to be the cream that enriches the rest of the cup.”

Screenplay by Gary B. Haley

THE PITCH

COMING-OF-AGE • SURVIVAL • DRY HUMOR

After a daredevil bicycle accident leaves a Fort Worth teenager with a life-threatening brain injury, he returns to school wearing an orange helmet — only to discover that surviving is just the beginning.

STORY PROMISE

A gritty, funny, heartfelt ride from teenage recklessness to adult purpose — built around pain, stigma, intelligence, work ethic, and the choice to keep living as if the best day is still ahead.



THE STORY

FROM IMPACT TO IDENTITY

SYNOPSIS

Fort Worth, 1975. Fifteen-year-old Gary is all nerve and velocity until a freak bicycle crash turns a normal afternoon into emergency brain surgery. Against terrible odds, he lives — but returns to high school marked by an orange helmet, chronic pain, and the wary stares of classmates, teachers, and friends.

What follows is not a single comeback. It is a decades-long recalibration: first love, shame, work, failure, reinvention, technical mastery, fatherhood, authorship, and the final understanding that other people's uncertainty does not get to define a life.



“The best day of your life is probably still in your future.”

TONE

GRAVE DANGER WITH A WRY HEARTBEAT

Visceral survival

The injury and surgery are immediate, frightening, and bodily — but the camera never loses Gary's point of view.

Human comedy

Hospital grammar jokes, awkward teen humiliation, and stubborn sarcasm to keep despair from taking over.

Coming-of-age ache

The orange helmet makes the invisible visible: pain, stigma, and the impossible task of fitting back in.

Earned inspiration

The ending is not magical recovery. It is a life assembled over decades, one problem solved at a time.

The tonal lane

A true-story character drama with the memory texture of the 1970s, the emotional pressure of medical survival, and the underdog satisfaction of a man quietly outworking the world's assumptions.

Fear → Laughter → Alienation → Purpose

THE WORLD

FORT WORTH, 1975: SUN-BLEACHED, UNSAFE, ALIVE

The first act feels like the last free afternoon of childhood: dirt ramps, stacked tires, payphones, Hot Wheels shirts, and kids measuring courage by how many tires they can clear.

TEXTURE

- Golden Texas light
- Neighborhood kids and empty lots
- Analog urgency: payphones, waiting rooms, paper records
- A world where adults are often late, distracted, or wrong

VISUAL RULE

The memory is warm. The consequences are not.



GARY

A SURVIVOR WHO HATES BEING TREATED LIKE ONE

At 15, Gary is fast, funny, smart, reckless, and proud. After the accident, those same qualities become survival tools — and sometimes liabilities.

INTERNAL CONFLICT

He wants to be seen as the same kid he was before. Everyone else only sees the helmet and the rumor while viewing Gary through uncertain eyes.

EXTERNAL CONFLICT

School, work, relationships, the military, and even family repeatedly ask whether he is damaged — while Gary keeps answering with competence.



“I promise, I’m still the same person I was.”

RELATIONSHIPS

LOVE, LOYALTY, SHAME, AND MISREAD SIGNALS

Mom

Love under pressure. She is terrified, practical, broke, and fiercely present.

Mike

The first witness to the injury — loyal, panicked, and unforgettable, even though Gary never saw him again as he distanced himself from Gary's brain injury.

Sharon

A lifelong friend and crush whose own trauma complicates Gary's hunger for connection.

Mick & friends

The bridge back to normal teenage life, sometimes clumsy, sometimes lifesaving.

Doctors & teachers

Authority figures who range from brilliant to callous, each shaping Gary's sense of worth.

The uncertain eyes

The recurring antagonist: pity, fear, suspicion, and the quiet social exile of being "different."

SIGNATURE SET PIECES

THE MOMENTS THAT SELL THE MOVIE

1

The tire jump

A teenage daredevil's swagger freezes in golden slow motion.

2

The injury

A sudden, brutal crash turns play into survival.

3

The ER wait

Fear and absurd humor collide under fluorescent lights.

4

The orange helmet

A symbol of survival that becomes a public target.

5

The school chase

Pain, bullying, and self-disgust become a breaking point.

6

The river awakening

A doe and fawn help Gary recognize his nature.

7

The F-16 floor

The "damaged" kid becomes the precision problem-solver.

8

The final video

An older Gary turns hard-earned wisdom outward.

VISUAL LANGUAGE

A LIFE TOLD IN CHANGING LIGHT

Memory amber

The pre-accident 1970s glow: warmth, nostalgia, speed, dust.

Hospital blue

Cold light, polished floors, echoing tunnels, the body as a machine under repair.

Orange signal

The helmet becomes a warning light, a shield, and a bullseye.

Steel precision

The F-16 factory turns stigma into competence: exact, controlled, engineered.

Camera grammar

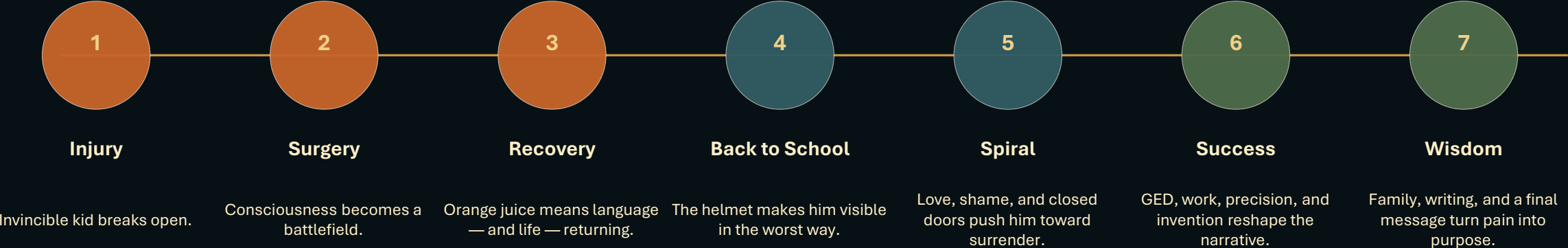
Use POV when pain, confusion, or stigma are the story. Pull wide when Gary regains agency — the world opens as his life does.

Warmth returns not because pain ends, but because purpose begins.

STORY ENGINE

SEVEN ACTS, ONE QUESTION

Will Gary let other people’s fear define the size of his life?



“I need to at least act like I’m going to live a long life.”

AUDIENCE & POSITIONING

AN UNDERDOG DRAMA WITH BUILT-IN HUMOR

PRIMARY AUDIENCE

Viewers drawn to heartfelt true-story dramas, 1970s coming-of-age stories, medical survival narratives, and characters who win through intelligence rather than spectacle.

TONAL NEIGHBORS

The everyday nostalgia of *The Wonder Years*, the blue-collar ingenuity of *October Sky*, and the emotional recovery arc of *Awakenings* — with a drier, Robert A. Heinlein-like sense of humor.

HOOK

A boy survives what should have killed him. The world keeps reacting to the damage. He keeps proving there is more to see.

This is a resilience story that does not pretend resilience feels noble while you are living it.

WHY NOW

THE PRIVATE COST OF BEING “DIFFERENT”

Uncertain Eyes speaks to anyone who has been reduced to a diagnosis, scar, disability, rumor, family history, or any other difference that makes people feel alienated — and had to keep functioning while other people recalibrated their comfort around them.

EMOTIONAL RELEVANCE

The story reframes survival not as a miracle moment, but as decades of ordinary, stubborn proof: keep learning, keep building, keep loving, keep choosing purpose.

“Ignore it. Just ignore it.”

UNCERTAIN EYES

A story about survival, stigma, and the long road back to being seen.

“Always try to be the cream that enriches the rest of the cup.”

PITCH DECK

Prepared as an editable presentation deck.

