



Press Kit



Logline

In a bustling laundromat, a woman wrestles with grief... and a fitted sheet.

Synopsis

Greta relishes in the comforting mundanity of the laundromat when a call from her younger sister snaps her back to reality. She is reminded that today is Father's Day, a holiday that triggers sadness for both sisters who grieve the loss of their father. Greta pulls double duty by comforting her bereaved sister while struggling to crisply fold a fitted sheet. After the phone call, the laundromat's owner takes notice of Greta wrestling with her linens. He walks over, takes a sheet, and folds it for her. The two strangers fold the rest of the sheets together in a quiet moment of sublime connectivity.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

My father died of ALS during my senior year of high school. Knowing the disease was terminal, I quickly settled into a future without him, distracted by SATs, homecoming, prom, and college applications. But one never truly heals from losing a parent, especially the one who sparked their love for filmmaking.

Cinema was our shared ritual—our movie theater visits felt sacred. My father valued my perspective on films, and now, as a filmmaker, I feel his absence more than ever. For years, I coped with grief by keeping busy. Then COVID-19 forced the world into stillness, leaving me alone with my loss.

One day, desperate for a change, I went to a laundromat to wash my sheets, determined to fold them neatly. But fitted sheets proved impossible. Frustrated and on the verge of tears, I was ready to give up—until the laundromat owner stepped in. Without hesitation, he folded them for me and showed me how.

That small act of kindness was cathartic. I needed help but didn't know how to ask. I longed for companionship but didn't know where to find it. I needed a father figure but had none to call. And yet, in that laundromat, I found what I was searching for.

I hope this film offers catharsis for those processing grief as I did. Loss is complex and ever-changing—you never truly move on, because your loved ones live within you. But you will endure, and sometimes, the universe sends unexpected help when you need it most.

-Chinwe Okorie



DIRECTOR'S BIO



Chinwe Okorie is a multi-genre writer and director who crafts stories rooted in reality and elevated by witty and absurdist observation. In 2021, the Austin Chronicle nominated Chinwe for Best Austin Filmmaker along with Richard Linklater and Robert Rodriguez. Her film LOVEBITES was hand-selected by Issa Rae to be distributed by her production company Hoorae Media and her follow-up film ELEPHANT!, a dark comedy about mental health in teens, premiered at the 2022 Austin Film Festival. This achievement led to recognition as a Top Writer to Watch by MovieMaker Magazine. She is currently writing the feature-length version of ELEPHANT! with plans to make it her feature directorial debut.

A CONVERSATION WITH CHINWE OKORIE

Why were you the right person to tell this story?

In *Cycles*, I am Greta. Like her, I lost my father years ago, and grief still catches me off guard. As the eldest daughter, I carry the weight of responsibility in my family, yet rarely does anyone check to see if I'm okay. I believe many people who relate to Greta's experience would also love to feel seen—to have someone ask how they can be helped.

How did you approach the casting of your film?

We saw many fantastic actresses for Greta, but Kendra Franklin stood out. Her stillness allowed her vulnerability to shine, especially in the moment she freezes upon receiving her sister's call. Casting Kendra shifted our entire approach—we initially sought younger actors, but with Kendra and Marc close in age, we reimaged their scene as a dream sequence, where Greta remembers her father at the age he died.

What surprised you the most about this project?

I didn't realize how instrumental sound design would be until post-production. But it all makes sense, with the laundromat setting and a character shifting between reality and memory, it became a playground for my sound designer to blend subjective and objective soundscapes. Experimenting with ideas and seeing what stuck was incredibly fun. I can't wait for audiences to experience the intricate details we layered on a theater sound system.

How does *Cycles* fit into the larger themes of your work as a whole?

I'm still trying to figure that out myself. My second film, *Lovebites*, was about feeling alone within a relationship. My previous film, *Elephant!*, is about feeling alone within a system, and *Cycles* seem to be about feeling alone and the transformative impact of community. I believe I play with perspectives a lot in my films because I don't believe individuals live in a vacuum, but that's just how I feel right now. I will change, and so will my filmmaking - that's what makes the medium so exciting. It reflects experience.



A CONVERSATION WITH CHINWE OKORIE

How did you meet your EP, Josh Ruben?

Josh Ruben (Werewolves Within, Heart Eyes) has been a champion of mine since we met in 2021. I was hired as a script supervisor on Blood Relatives, a horror film he produced for Shudder. He loved my previous short, Elephant!, and wanted to support my next project. Since he specializes in horror, I hope we can collaborate in that genre in the future.



What's next for you?

I have another short film in development, called Help is on the way. It's about a woman whose car is stranded in the middle of a Texas rural town and she doesn't know who to trust. It's also a psychological horror that blends supernatural elements, this short will prepare me for a feature length horror film that I am writing.

AWARDS

- Best Screenplay & Best Cinematography – Black Women Film Network
- Audience Award Winner – Charlotte Film Festival
- Best Direction – Feedback Female Film Festival



Crew

Writer	Alex Chew Chinwe Okorie
Director	Chinwe Okorie
Executive Producer	Josh Ruben
Producer	Ashley Robinson Jane Schwartz Travis Lee Ratcliff Brody Carmichael
Director of Photography	Andrew Baird
Wardrobe Stylist	Dev England
HMU Artist	Shay Yo
Production Designer	Ashlie Adams
Colorist	Andrew Baird
Sound Mixer	Kenzie Slottow
Editor	Chinwe Okorie Travis Lee Ratcliff
Post Sound Supervisor	Joseph Kennemer

Cast

Kendra Franklin	Greta
Marc Pouhé	Matthew/ Greta's Dad
Masood Javed	Laundromat Owner
Elena Kent	Anne
Jordan Baier	Kayla
Jiavani Waldren	Emotional Vampire
JJ Summers	Metal Head
Ashley Robinson	Infomercial Actor
Jane Schwarz	Infomercial Narrator
Jonathan Flanders	Father
Nathan Flanders	Son
Casting Director	Ashley Guaragna



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