

GREEN RIBBON



by Bishon Hart

LOGLINE

Popular high school senior Charlie is dared by his friends to get the strange girl next door, Helen, into bed - and finally find out what is beneath the green ribbon she wears around her neck.



SYNOPSIS



Based on the urban legend, Green Ribbon is about popular high school senior Charlie, whose fascination with his shy neighbor Helen turns into an obsession that has dangerous consequences for the both of them.

At age 10, Charlie's friends dare him to steal Helen's ribbon while she plays with her dolls. Though his attempt is unsuccessful, he questions her as to why she never removes her ribbon - and why she always stares at him in class. Frustrated by her lack of response, he rips the head off her doll.

Eight years later, Charlie is handsome and popular, and harboring a secret crush on Helen, who is shy, friendless, and desperately in love with him. Unbeknownst to his friends, Charlie invites Helen to a Halloween party. When his friends see her at the party, they dare Charlie to sleep with her and take the ribbon as a trophy. Charlie approaches Helen and flirts with her. She invites him home, and the horror that transpires between them changes both of their lives forever.



CHARACTERS

HELEN

The Girl with the Green Ribbon. Helen is the Preacher's daughter, completely ignored by her parents. She has worn a green ribbon around her neck since before she can remember, concealing a dark secret. Shy and dreamy, she spends much of her time working in the library, fantasizing about Charlie, the boy next door, whom she wants more than anything.



CHARACTERS

CHARLIE

Charlie has always been loved. He is the apple of his parents' eye, and the most popular boy in school. But Charlie has always nursed a soft spot for his neighbor, Helen, despite her mysterious nature, and unpopularity. Charlie's fascination with Helen stems from the green ribbon she wears around her neck, and her refusal to take it off - even for him, who gets everything he wants.



OTHER CHARACTERS

Joey, Patrick, and Ben

Charlie's friend group. Rowdy, degenerate. Wherever these boys go, they roughhouse - slapping, punching - violence disguised as play - always touching.

The Preacher and His Wife

Helen's parents. Always praying. They ignore her - as if she doesn't exist.

Mrs. Perkins

The librarian. She looks after Helen, and understands the casual cruelty of boys and men.

TOPE + COMPS



THE VIRGIN SUICIDES
1999



NORMAL PEOPLE
2020



STOKER
2013



PRISCILLA
2023

THEMES

Feminine Rot, Trauma, Innocent Violence, Casual Cruelty, Girlhood Grief, Forcible Coming of Age, First Love, Regret



WRITER + DIRECTOR



BISHON HART

Bishon is an award winning writer living in New York City. Born and raised in Philadelphia, she moved to NYC to study drama and playwriting at the Lee Strasberg Theater and Film Institute.

Her feature length screenplay, NO FURY, and her television pilot, HIRE, have both been shortlisted by The Blacklist / Women In Film for their 2022 feature and 2024 episodic residency programs. NO FURY also went on to rank in the top 15% for the 2023 Nicholl fellowship.

Bishon's work seeks to pull back the curtain on an intersectional feminine experience under patriarchal systems of oppression. The common thread connecting her work are the messy women at the center - bursting with rage and grief and desire.

Green Ribbon is part of her short horror duology and is being developed alongside her modern adaptation of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's THE YELLOW WALLPAPER.

WHY?

The stories we fear often reveal more about ourselves than the stories we love. The legend of the headless girl, held together by a scrap of green satin, kept my five year old self terrified to look in mirrors for fear of seeing her behind me. Today I am far more afraid of the boy who untied her ribbon. Because I do see her in mirrors, looking back from my own eyes.



PURPOSE

This modern update of the folktale reexamines the headless girl and her green ribbon through the lens of gendered trauma and the nuances of sexual assault.

Helen is treated like a body by Charlie and her male peers even before she loses her head. She is often seen through their male gaze from the neck down, lecherous leers lingering on her breasts and hips - the parts of her they desire, as if her identity is meaningless

In light of the on going Me Too movement, there is a demand for female led stories, recontextualizing well known characters through a feminist lens. The prime space for social exploration is through Horror.

The aesthetic of girlhood rot shows how trauma can freeze a person in time. As a survivor, I wanted to use the legend to discuss living with trauma after the fact - moving through the world dismembered and feeling as if you can never again be the whole person you were before the trauma. I wanted to not only explore the sexualization and disembodiment of teenage girls, but also show the casual, almost innocent cruelty inherent in so many teenage boys - why is it in their nature to use or harm girls, even the ones they like? Where does that come from?



*My body is a haunted house that I am
lost in. There are no doors but there are
knives and a hundred windows*

JACQUI GERMAIN