

THIN ICE

SMALL TOWN. BIG SECRETS. BLOODY COLD.





To solve a brutal crime in the frozen Yukon wilderness, a rookie police officer must uncover an isolated community's long-buried secrets, while confronting her own complicated past.

A character-driven dramatic crime series presented over six one-hour episodes.

WATCH TEASER TRAILER

THE ICE

The bleak early northern light rises on a pair of beaded moose-hide mittens, frozen to the edge of a hole in the ice. The lake is large and long and scoured by wind. The body of Shelly Beamer, an aging hippie, is submerged below the surface. Shelly's boyfriend Freddy Blackstone is dead, frozen under an overturned snow machine at the edge of the lake. The officials are calling it a tragic accident. But behind closed doors, the locals whisper murder.

THE STORY

Amy Frossett is a rookie police officer whose first posting lands her in Gladstone, a rural Yukon town where the reception is as frosty as the biting northern wind. Amy has tattoos under her uniform and a past she's determined to forget. Since her father's untimely death she's resolved to straighten up, get married, join the force and live somewhere things are simple. Except they never are.

Soon after Amy arrives, the tiny town is rocked by the death of a local woman and her companion. Everyone seems to have something to hide, and it's Amy's job to find the truth. If she doesn't learn to trust someone – even herself – she'll never solve the mystery. But to do it, she must uncover the town's long-submerged secrets while holding fast to her own.

NEVER TRUST THE ICE. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT LIES BENEATH.

THE CONCEPT

This is a short-order returning dramatic television series that tells the story of a woman, a community, and the struggle to find identity and reconcile the past. The story plays out in an isolated town in the Yukon Territory. Here, different worlds are colliding. There's the old, tired North: the gold rush, the settlers, the colonial institutions that have led to a legacy of dysfunction. There's the new North: the vibrant, activist Indigenous resistance, the long-term land claims, the quest for self-determination. And there's the North that's always been there: the land that challenges and sustains, the wisdom, the culture, the heart-piercing dangerous beauty.

The people in the town are either outsiders or insiders – those who've been there forever and those who are trying to belong; people with roots and those who are passing through. There are First Nation Elders with deep ties to traditional ways, a generation damaged and angry, and young people wanting a future that's yet to be imagined. There are those that want to stand up and fight and those that want to hide. Not only that, but there's power at play: who has it, who wants it, and who will never let it go.

Control matters, because the stakes are high.

With the regional quirk of Fargo and the unforgettably strong characters of The Killing, Thin Ice is a riveting study of the lengths that a person can go to keep themselves hidden and the tragic consequences when a community buries their secrets. It's a story of transformation and identity set in a community torn between the conflicting realities of Canada's North. This is a contemporary story that reflects the current conversation in a country that is grappling with how to reconcile relationships with Indigenous communities and how we are defined as a Northern nation.





THE SETTING

The Yukon landscape is as much a character as anyone on the show; the stark scenery provides a fitting metaphor for the extremes Amy faces when she arrives to her new posting. Gladstone is a small, rough community perched on the edge of a large lake and in the shadow of North America's largest mountain range. Its remoteness creates a loneliness that is palatable, while the vast wilderness that surrounds it presses in on all sides. A lonely highway cuts through the town's centre, connecting it to the nearest community 300 kilometres away. The highway also provides a neat divide, with the motel, school, health clinic, police station and rec centre on one side and the Indigenous "village" on the other. The Gladstone Arms, an oddly grand structure on an isolated highway, is the hub of the community. It's a motel and gas station with an eclectic supply of groceries. It also has a small bar that is, in some ways, the centre of town.



CHARACTERS

AMY FROSSET, 31, is a rookie police officer on first posting out of Depot training. Amy 'grew up' in the force - her father was an officer for over 40-years. Amy is strong: she grew up tough, contained, and self-reliant. She made it to university on a big athletic scholarship, but after she was involved in a tragic accident she went off the rails. Amy decided to pull her life together after her father's death. She resolved to straighten up, join the force and live somewhere where things are simple and clear. Except they aren't.

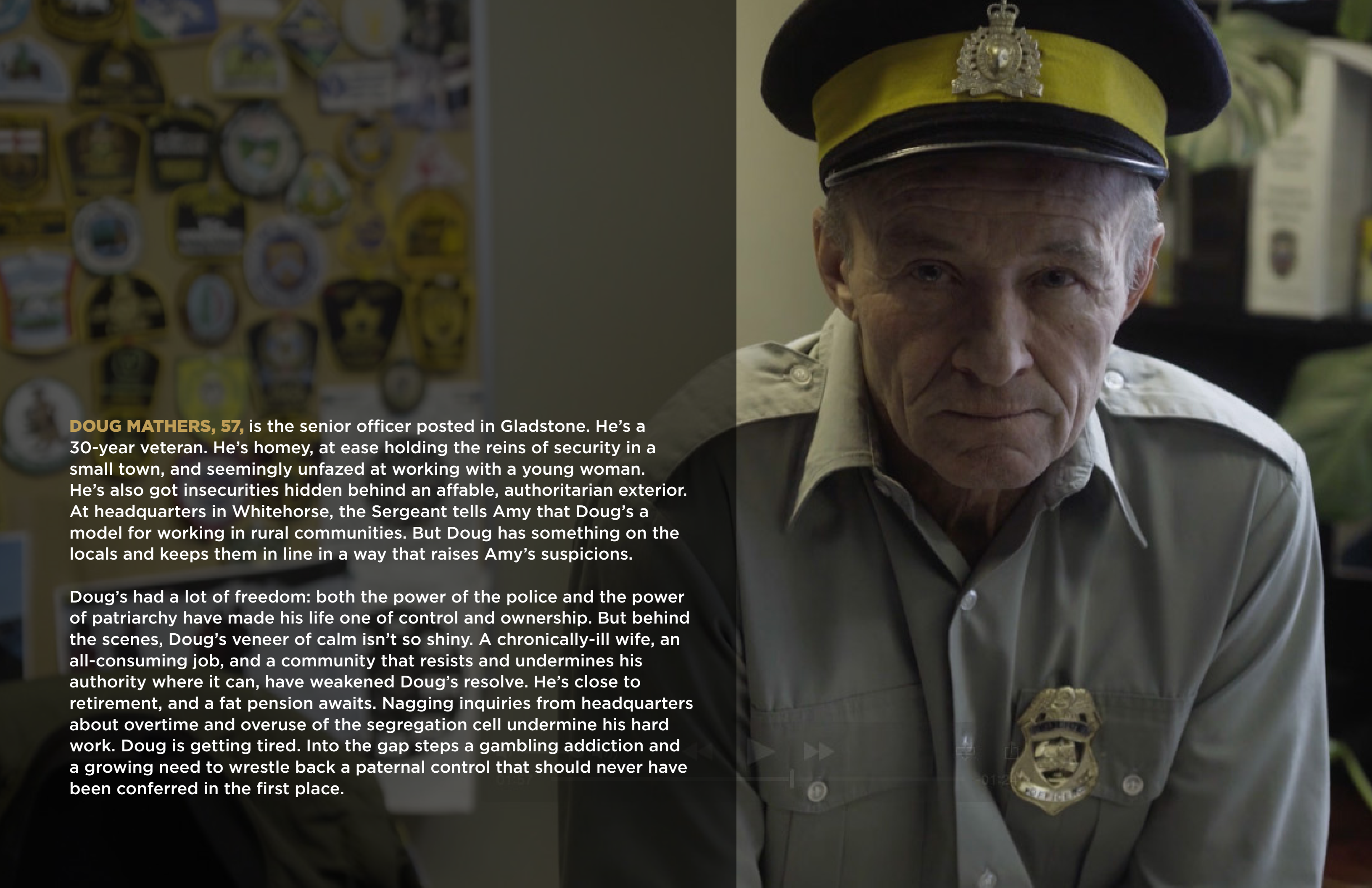
In the past, Amy pulled herself out of her family's shadow and right into the darkness: prescribed opiates for an injury, and encouraged by an abusive former partner, she lost a lucrative hockey scholarship and nearly lost herself all together. Her girlfriend at the time - a woman in the grips of addiction, seeking to control and hold on to Amy through ready substance provision - nearly killed Amy by administering an accidental overdose of crushed painkillers. At rock bottom in hospital, Amy tentatively connected with recovery, and reunited with her father. Newly sober, she found that most of her party friends had disappeared. A few, including a young man named Carter, with an inheritance and a penchant for the occasional Molly-fueled dance party, remained by her side. When her father suddenly died of a heart attack, Amy grasped at his legacy and signed up for the force. Now, married and in a small and strange town, Amy and Carter need each other to support the imagined people they've yet to become. For Amy, however, the truth - about herself and about a dead woman she'll never meet - is the only path forward.






CARTER DELINE, 30, Amy's husband, is looking forward to the adventure of living in the far north. He's handsome, confident and a bit...lost. He loves Amy but doesn't quite know what to do with her, or with himself in a town so small. He comes from money, and he admires how hard Amy works, how tightly wound she is. Both of them want the marriage - admittedly one of convenience for both of them - to work. Neither knows how. Amy thinks she needs a straight-and-narrow family to keep her police career on track. Carter thinks getting away - from family, from constrictions, from convention - is the way to freedom. Though Carter had encountered Amy during the party days, something compelled him, and he stuck with her through her shaky recovery. Like many things, moderation came easy to him. In a moment of passion, he proposed marriage, and, tickled by his new wife's policing role, has found himself a house-husband in an isolated town.

Alone and at loose ends while Amy gets deeper and deeper into the case, Carter tries to make inroads in a community that's wary of outsiders. He sees a new chance for independence in the North: in the way that survival trumps convention, in the way that people adapt, even shine, in a landscape stark and cold. Carter sees possibility in the wide wilderness, and in the strangeness of the north. But his life of easy, wealthy privilege has made Carter careless and sometimes, recklessly risky. Can Carter step up, and stand up, when he's most needed, or will he take the easy way out?




DOUG MATHERS, 57, is the senior officer posted in Gladstone. He's a 30-year veteran. He's homey, at ease holding the reins of security in a small town, and seemingly unfazed at working with a young woman. He's also got insecurities hidden behind an affable, authoritarian exterior. At headquarters in Whitehorse, the Sergeant tells Amy that Doug's a model for working in rural communities. But Doug has something on the locals and keeps them in line in a way that raises Amy's suspicions.

Doug's had a lot of freedom: both the power of the police and the power of patriarchy have made his life one of control and ownership. But behind the scenes, Doug's veneer of calm isn't so shiny. A chronically-ill wife, an all-consuming job, and a community that resists and undermines his authority where it can, have weakened Doug's resolve. He's close to retirement, and a fat pension awaits. Nagging inquiries from headquarters about overtime and overuse of the segregation cell undermine his hard work. Doug is getting tired. Into the gap steps a gambling addiction and a growing need to wrestle back a paternal control that should never have been conferred in the first place.

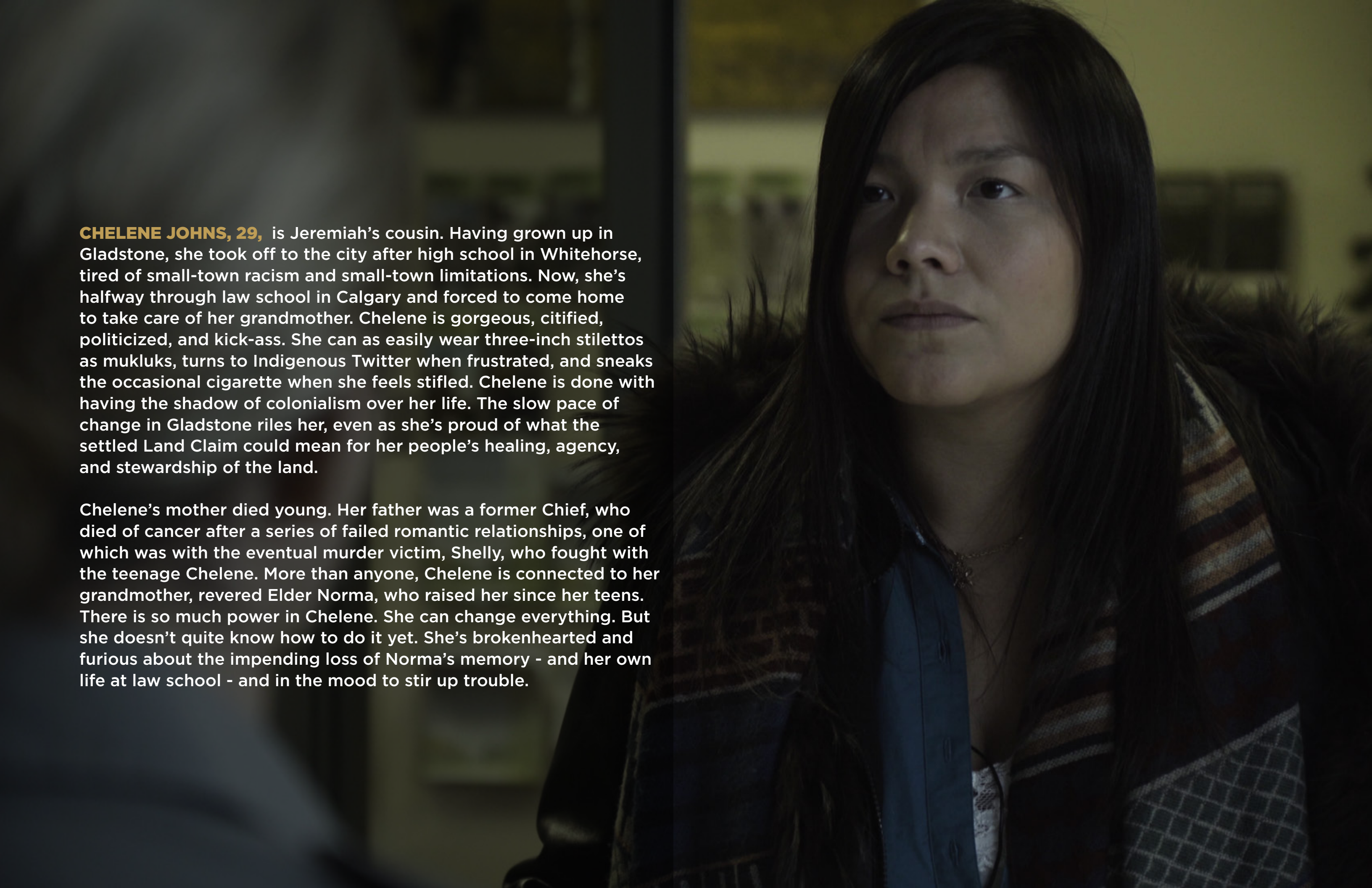


JEREMIAH CROSSWOOD, 19, is a clerk and cleans the rooms at the highway motel: a jack-of-all-trades, and a talented artist, Jeremiah is non-binary and walks a line between genders that is all their own. Jeremiah is accepted by the elders and most in their Indigenous community, but not everyone is as comfortable. Some people sneer, and the white establishment in Gladstone - possibly to their detriment - doesn't see Jeremiah as worthy of much notice. There are words - both in their Indigenous culture, and in the broadening queer spectrum - for who Jeremiah could be. But Jeremiah is wary of words, and careful with actions. They work hard, they consider what life could be. In a revitalized community, or in a diverse city, there are other possibilities. But Gladstone is home.

Jeremiah is a pure gem, a hope for a future not everyone can yet see, and that some don't want. Jeremiah doesn't talk a lot, but sees everything. And there's something Jeremiah sees in Amy - her own border crossings, perhaps, or the fire beneath her containment - that connects them. Their tentative connection could harm - or save - them both. But can they trust each other?

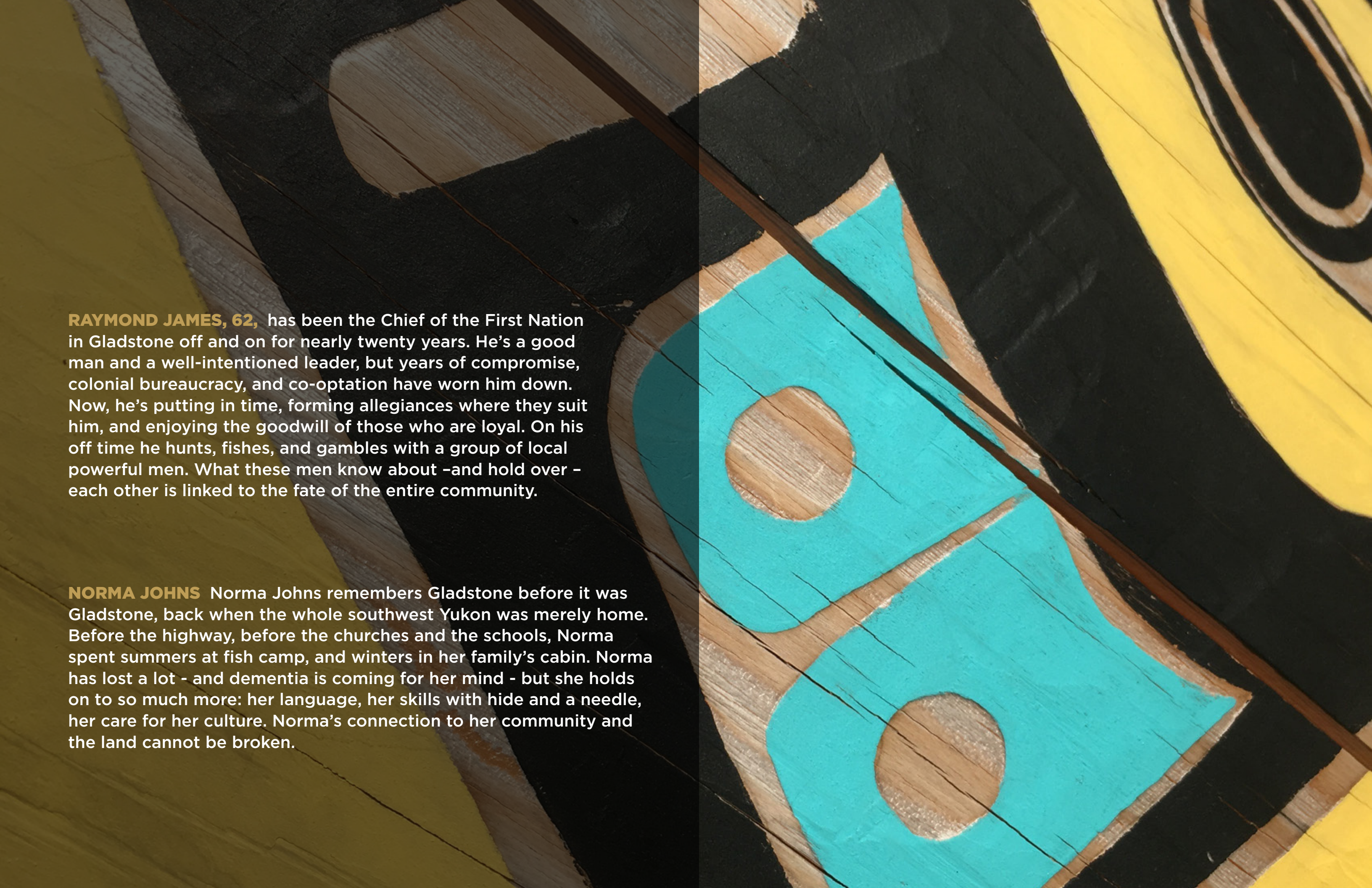
A man with a long, full white beard and a dark beanie is looking out over a dark, hazy landscape. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The man's face is partially illuminated, highlighting his beard and eyes. The background shows a dark horizon line with some faint, indistinct shapes that could be trees or structures.

JOE CLEARY, 74, is a wild and rough longtime Yukoner and half-crazy...or maybe not. Maybe a draft dodger, definitely a loner, Joe runs a salvage yard and patrols the highway that bisects Gladstone. He tows, steals, and scavenges whatever he can and drags it back to his barbed-wire enclave. Joe doesn't get along with the First Nation any more than he does with the local established settlers: but then, Joe is only out for Joe. What exactly Joe thinks is uncertain, and he'll shoot before asking questions. But he knows about everything that happens on the highway and he's not telling unless there's something in it for him.



CHELENE JOHNS, 29, is Jeremiah's cousin. Having grown up in Gladstone, she took off to the city after high school in Whitehorse, tired of small-town racism and small-town limitations. Now, she's halfway through law school in Calgary and forced to come home to take care of her grandmother. Chelene is gorgeous, citified, politicized, and kick-ass. She can as easily wear three-inch stilettos as mukluks, turns to Indigenous Twitter when frustrated, and sneaks the occasional cigarette when she feels stifled. Chelene is done with having the shadow of colonialism over her life. The slow pace of change in Gladstone riles her, even as she's proud of what the settled Land Claim could mean for her people's healing, agency, and stewardship of the land.

Chelene's mother died young. Her father was a former Chief, who died of cancer after a series of failed romantic relationships, one of which was with the eventual murder victim, Shelly, who fought with the teenage Chelene. More than anyone, Chelene is connected to her grandmother, revered Elder Norma, who raised her since her teens. There is so much power in Chelene. She can change everything. But she doesn't quite know how to do it yet. She's brokenhearted and furious about the impending loss of Norma's memory - and her own life at law school - and in the mood to stir up trouble.




RAYMOND JAMES, 62, has been the Chief of the First Nation in Gladstone off and on for nearly twenty years. He's a good man and a well-intentioned leader, but years of compromise, colonial bureaucracy, and co-optation have worn him down. Now, he's putting in time, forming allegiances where they suit him, and enjoying the goodwill of those who are loyal. On his off time he hunts, fishes, and gambles with a group of local powerful men. What these men know about -and hold over - each other is linked to the fate of the entire community.

NORMA JOHNS Norma Johns remembers Gladstone before it was Gladstone, back when the whole southwest Yukon was merely home. Before the highway, before the churches and the schools, Norma spent summers at fish camp, and winters in her family's cabin. Norma has lost a lot - and dementia is coming for her mind - but she holds on to so much more: her language, her skills with hide and a needle, her care for her culture. Norma's connection to her community and the land cannot be broken.

FRANK DILLON, 54, is a third-generation Yukoner. His grandfather arrived as part of the gold rush and made his fortune running a small general store and motel that the family still owns. The Dillons have ruled Gladstone for years, running everything from the Fish and Game association to the school council and influencing decisions made by the local government when it suits them. There's a reason why his family's ownership of a hunting lodge is grandfathered in on First Nation land, and a reason why Frank thinks he is the king: he always has been. Frank blasts around town in a brand-new F150, sleek snowmachine at the ready in the back for a hunting trip. He guides trophy hunters when it suits him, and benevolently hosts a regular poker game in the bar at the Gladstone Motel. Frank doesn't need to strive. Frank knows it will all work out just fine.





SHELLY BEAMER went North at a time when it was a place for outsiders: draft dodgers, hippies, the unconventional and the just-plain-too-weird for the South. A hippie herself, and a partier, growing older but no wiser, Shelly was rough around the edges but she found something in the North and the community that suited her. A fetishistic interest in Indigenous culture gave way to a real and lasting connection when Shelly fell in love with William Johns (Chelene's father) and went on to care for Norma Johns, an Elder in the First Nation. Shelly got by, waitressing, delivering mail, doing odd jobs, when she wasn't sabotaged by her own addictions. Shelly tried to leave behind caught up with her in the form of an alcohol addiction that recurred, pulling her into a place she never wanted to be.

FREDDY RAVENSTONE came of age in a white family and city far from his Northern home and heritage. A product of the 60s Scoop, Freddy found a place and a passion after returning to Gladstone and connecting with his birth family. A skilled negotiator and activist, Freddy was determined to see self-determination for his First Nation, and a real shift in power in the community. He's thrown all his energy into working as the Community Health worker for the First Nation Government and has big plans for making Gladstone a better place. What Freddy didn't reckon with was what lurks, deep-seated and insidious, beneath the seemingly banal structures and powers in the town. What he didn't see coming was what left him dead.

EPISODES

EPISODE I: COLD WELCOME

Amy and Carter are newlyweds and new arrivals to Gladstone, a small community in the Yukon 300 kilometers away from anywhere else. The expanse of frozen lake along the highway stretches on and on until it hits a wall of mountains. Amy's the rookie cop in town, her first posting since graduating from Depot, the RCMP Cadet Training Program. The couple is anticipating a new adventure and at the same time hoping to leave their old selves down South. They roll up with their U-Haul to a row of brown bungalows — police housing, reminding Amy of her uncomplicated years growing up on military bases. Uniform identities...

Amy's new boss, Sergeant Doug Mathers, meets them there. It turns out unit #3 (theirs) is infested with black mould. He directs them to stay across the street at the local motel until their place is repaired. Jerimiah Crosswood, a local First Nation youth, checks them in and Amy is almost immediately called out to a domestic in the village. Over at the incident, Amy tries to maintain composure despite her confusion about local police protocols and the Indigenous culture. Doug, a 30-year veteran on the cusp of retirement, does what he usually does. He takes the man to the cells to sleep off another bender while he clocks some overtime.

The next day, Chelene Johns storms into the station to report a theft. Chelene, a young First Nation woman, has been studying law in Vancouver. She has come home to visit her ailing grandmother. Norma's new walker has been stolen and Chelene suspects their neighbour Joe Cleary, the town scavenger whose junkyard is on settlement land — their land. In fact, she decides right then that she also wants to lodge a trespassing complaint against the stealing squatter. Amy isn't sure if Land Titles are within her purview, but she'll look into it.

Before Amy can get her bearings, the community is shaken by the discovery of a body at the lake. Amy and Doug investigate and find Shelly Beamer frozen under a large hole in the ice, her red mittens clutching its edges. Shelly was an aging-party-hippie and bartender at the motel. In Doug's assessment, it looks like she fell in the lake while ice fishing. He says he doesn't know Shelly personally but he knows of her and he's certain alcohol is involved. Amy scouts the woods surrounding the lake and finds footprints fading in the snow alongside snowmobile tracks that lead her to another body, a mangled Skidoo, and an empty forty of vodka.

The second body is identified as Freddy Ravenstone, a man from the local First Nation, recently returned to the community. Word is Freddy and Shelly had become close lately and she was trying to clean up her act. The lake is turning into a spectacle as the community gathers. Amy approaches the crowd to make some inquiries. Why is the fishing hole so big? How did Shelly cut through the ice? The locals cast her off. Amy wants to go "by the book" with forensics, coroners and questioning but Doug just wants to clear the scene. This is a no-brainer that happens too often up North. Booze is to blame — he'd bet his professional reputation on it.

EPISODE 2: UNDERCURRENTS

Amy mans the station, steeping on yesterday's events. Gladstone's coroner is expected to clear the deaths later this afternoon. Apparently the system is more practical than medical. Doug taps Amy to ride with him to Norma Johns's place to inform her about the accidents. One of the oldest Elders in the village, Norma's mind is on the decline. Shelly Beamer had been crashing there recently, in exchange for helping with odd chores. Freddy Ravenstone was a city boy, apprehended during the Sixties Scoop. He had recently returned to Gladstone to bond with his birth parents, advocate for his culture and agitate against the northern legacies that continue to bring them down. Amy tries to connect all the dots.

Norma's small log cabin glows with propane. Chief Raymond James is already inside, stoking the woodstove. Norma has an ageless air but her frown deepens with the news — Shelly and Freddy just left to go netting. Netting? Amy inquires more and Norma tells her about the traditional ways. They drop nets in the ice, not lines, to get more fish. There are currents in the lake, even in the winter, and plenty of whitefish swim in. They used to chip the ice with an axe but nowadays a chainsaw does the job. Freddy just got a new one... Doug shoots Amy a sharp look and they leave.

Visiting Norma reminds Amy to follow-up about the stolen walker Chelene reported yesterday. Joe Cleary's junkyard is a clatter of old car parts and bony, barking huskies. Joe gives her the run-around about the walker and a not-so-subtle hint to leave before he unchains the dogs. On her way out, Amy catches an orange glint from a new Husqvarna chainsaw behind a salty tarp.

Carter has had a deflating day. He went to the school this afternoon, keen to find a job and confident his Masters of Education would impress them. But the teacher told him the position is already filled — and that she's also the principal, librarian and janitor. Back in their room at the motel, Carter makes a casserole on the cooktop and sets the formica table for two. But Amy is a no-show (again) so now he's at the bar trying to fill voids with pints. "That's the Northern spirit," Frank Dillon encourages him.

Frank is a third-generation Yukoner. His grandfather cashed in on the gold rush selling drinks to prospectors. The family staked its influence with local government and managed to get the Title of their hunting lodge grandfathered on First Nation land. Frank inherited the Gladstone Arms motel (and its bar, general store and gas station), which is now the de-facto nerve centre of town. Frank pours a whiskey on the house and Carter warms up a bit.

Amy eventually pulls up to the motel in her police car, exhausted and on edge. The coroner's report showed no evidence of alcohol in either Shelly or Freddy's systems. Distracted, Amy watches a motel cleaning lady rattle across the icy parking lot with her supply cart, face obscured by plumes of breath vapours. When she passes, Amy recognizes that it's Jeremiah from the front desk and they're pushing the cart with painted acrylic nails. On her way through the lobby, Amy spots Carter on a bar stool. She ducks out of view, worried about the optics of a rookie Constable's husband getting chummy with the locals. Amy marches up to the room and pulls her university hockey jersey over her police uniform. She arms herself with a stick and goes downstairs to slap a ball against a wall. Jeremiah watches from a distance, inscrutable in eyeliner.

EPISODE 3: BLUFF

Doug sends Amy to headquarters in Whitehorse to pick up supplies for the detachment. When she arrives, she meets the officer who was previously posted in Gladstone. He's chatty. Apparently Doug has been struggling since his wife died a few years back. They were going to retire to Victoria but now he works around the clock — on who knows what? The officer has heard the Gladstone Nation has some building projects in the works, but he won't hold his breath on progress up there. The Superintendent calls Amy into his office. He reminds her of the oaths of allegiance she has pledged and that he has high expectations, considering her upbringing with a revered military man. She listens, stoic on duty.

In Gladstone, Chelene Johns strides into the First Nation's new government building to talk to Chief Raymond James. She shares her concerns about what she is seeing in the community. They are losing people to the tank and the bar (and the ice) and she wants him to take action. Chief Raymond, normally calm, snaps back at her demands. On her way out, Chelene passes Freddy Ravenstone's empty office in the Health Department. She slips in the room, shuts the door and thumbs through the pile of files.

Outside the rec centre, Carter is heckled by a group of kids. Embarrassed and feeling useless, he wanders out to the lake. The frosty trail wraps a ribbon around the shoreline up into the pines where he is surprised by a family of grouse. The large male bird beats its wings against the air, WHUP-WHUP-WHUP. Then the sound of a snowmobile interrupts the moment and Frank Dillon crosses Carter's path, offering him a ride back to the motel. Carter's mood lifts a bit when Frank invites him to join tonight's poker game (for Gladstone's insiders).

Frank drops Carter at "home" and Jeremiah is at the front desk, crowded behind a basket of wormy apples and a carousel of beef jerky. Jeremiah is unusually flustered and hissing out loud. A shipment of vodka has arrived under Shelly Beamer's name but Jeremiah can't locate the records in the ordering system. Carter puts an apple on his tab and heads up to the room.

Still in Whitehorse, Amy decides to pick up some fresh fruit while she has the chance. Driving towards the landmark lights of the SuperCenter, she can't stop replaying the Superintendent's lecture and the shame it has stirred. Her adolescent acting-out, the traumatic injury, the wasted hockey scholarship, her spiral with addiction, reckless sex... The Force, Carter and Gladstone were supposed to set her straight. She gives her head a shake and does a U-turn back down 4th Ave. She parks at the community hall and walks into an AA meeting.

At the motel, Carter grabs the room key and leaves another beige casserole to get cold. He goes downstairs to the backroom and finds Sergeant Doug Mathers and Chief Raymond James (among a few others) stacking their chips. He takes a seat at the table and inhales into his poker face.

EPISODE 4: ANIMALS

The town wakes up to another shocking discovery. A man has been mauled and seriously injured on a trail behind the school. A crowd gathers and speculates about wolves while Doug and Amy inspect the animal tracks scattered between shreds of flesh and clothing. They put the town on alert and shut down school for the day. The kids are happy to carry on sledding down the icy luge chute they've carved beside the trail.

Norma's backyard is a haze of animal skins draped over teepee-like frames. Traditional moose hide tanning is an intense, orchestrated labour: soaking, fleshing, scraping, stretching and finally two-rounds of smoking. Norma and Chelene are on in the final stages when the animal's brain is used to soften and cure the hide. "Every animal has just enough brains to preserve its own hide — dead or alive," Norma shares an ancestral saying. But these days, tanners take shortcuts with chemical store-bought substitutes. Chelene listens and works. She has recently decided to put law school on hold to stay up North and take care of her grandmother. Now she's realizing that Norma is stronger than she thought, and that Gladstone has things to teach.

In town, the locals are organizing small teams to fan out and hunt down the pack of wolves suspected in this morning's mauling. Carter is a passionate animal rights activist, but he feels compelled to join a boy and his uncle on the community mission. They head out on snowmobiles but find no sign of wolves. When they come across a few woodland caribou, the uncle takes a single shot. It's the first time Carter has witnessed a kill and he's surprisingly moved by the nature of the moment, the beauty of the animals and the ritual of harvesting. They show him how to give thanks and butcher the animal. They ask him to share a small piece of the liver and take some meat home for Amy. Tonight he'll try making his first caribou stew.

Amy is at the school investigating. A teacher mentions that a student had an altercation with an aggressive animal a few weeks earlier and that Joe Cleary's dogs had been getting loose and mixing with the feral packs. Amy meets Doug at Joe's junkyard to follow-up on the lead. They find scraps of the victim's jacket in a caged area and inform Joe his dogs will have to be destroyed. He's devastated. He is their person and he has failed them. Amy starts inquiring about the chainsaw but Doug gives her one of his "let's-go-looks". They call animal control and Amy heads home, spent.

Carter is braising the meat and excited to tell Amy about his day. She's not in the mood to listen and she interrogates him about where he was last night. He tells her about the poker game with all the town's power players, including Doug. He also mentions that Jeremiah can't locate records for liquor Shelly Beamer had ordered. They fight and she storms out back to the station. Sitting in the dark at her desk, Amy listens to the messages she missed today. She is taken aback to hear her mother's voice (they haven't spoken in two years) and gutted when her mother talks about how much Amy's actions hurt her father before he died. She's reeling from the day's events and from her general station in life. She remembers seeing an old container of pills in the bathroom that had been prescribed to Doug's wife. She pops the cap and stares in the mirror.

EPISODE 5: TRUTHS

Amy returns to the motel in the morning, a shell of her usual self. She spots Jeremiah in a backroom pattering in a makeshift art studio. She's impressed by Jeremiah's original talent. They chat and Amy tells Jeremiah about her younger days drumming in a punk band. Jeremiah offers to let her set up a drum kit in the corner if she wants to make some noise. Amy is lifted by the interaction and emboldened to ask what Jeremiah knows about the bar's liquor ordering system. Jeremiah quietly returns attention to the artwork. Amy goes out to the lake, laces her skates and finds a groove carving the ice with some old warm-up drills.

Chelene walks over to Chief Raymond James's house. She has exchanged her city shoes for mukluks. Raymond's new Dodge Ram with an extended cab is parked outside. She confronts him with some documents she found in Freddy's office, a proposed "Healing Plan". Freddy was campaigning the council to pass a resolution to go dry on band land, establish a treatment centre and enforce some restrictions at the bar. Raymond admits he is at a crossroads without the energy to marshal change.

Chelene decides to go to the lake to meditate on the situation. She sees Amy finishing her skate session and strikes up a conversation. Chelene is intent on reforming the town's issues with alcohol and leadership. The Gladstone Arms and its backroom politics have too much power and destructive influence. She has decided to run for Chief and reclaim the community's command of their consequences. Amy can relate.

The next day at the station, Amy informs Doug that Chelene is ready to take charge and that she is suspicious of some accounting discrepancies at the bar. Doug seems caught off guard. He tells her she has a rookie understanding about the way things work and she should respect the limits of her rank. He puts on his badged cap and leaves. He's desperate to talk to Frank.

Driving back from Frank's hunting lodge, Doug spots Jeremiah leaving the motel in a fluorescent orange hoodie. He stops and insists on giving Jeremiah a ride home to the village. Jeremiah gets in the police cruiser and Doug starts in, grilling Jeremiah about knowledge of Shelly's side-hustle selling liquor after hours. "Who would benefit from that?" Jeremiah's question hangs in breathy vapours. Jeremiah stares straight ahead at the road and Doug veers onto the highway.

Amy finds a case of cheap vodka in one of the cell lockers at the station and she heads over to Doug's house to get some straight answers. He's not home but his front door is open. She goes inside, stomps the snow off her boots and walks over to the kitchen table. There's a clunky old computer and it's open to an online gambling website. Doug's account balance is five figures in the hole.

EPISODE 6: RECONCILIATION

Frank arrives at the motel in the morning to pick up last night's cash but the front desk is empty. It's rare for Jeremiah to skip work. Carter stumbles into the lobby hungover from partying. He overhears Frank talking to Jeremiah's mother who hasn't seen Jeremiah since yesterday. Frank doesn't have time to share her concern and he starts calling backup staff to cover the shift.

Amy goes to visit Chelene but only Norma is home. They sit and drink tea while Norma reflects on the nature of change and how tides are turning again. She is endorsing Chelene's bid for Chief and hopeful the community can rekindle moving forward. Amy heads back to the office where she listens to a message from police headquarters, intended for Doug. They are reluctant to remunerate him for his excessive overtime in addition to his pension payout. Amy considers how the gravity of Doug's gambling debts and impending retirement could compromise his position. She heads out to find him.

Chelene goes to the government office to submit her nomination forms for Chief. She encounters Raymond in the entrance where they have an awkward conversation. He tells her won't be running for another term and she will likely win uncontested. He is apologetic and somewhat soothing, telling her he will support her vision moving forward. He leaves and drives over to Norma's, sure the kettle is on.

Jeremiah is in an old cabin tied up to a chair, silent in the hoodie. Doug is pacing on the other side of the room, heedless in a confession. Since his wife died, he has been exploiting Shelly to run a boot-legging scheme from the bar. Frank found out but let it slide as long as Doug was good for his debt at the poker table. When Freddy Ravenstone returned to Gladstone, he urged Shelly to make another attempt at sobriety. Shelly asked Doug to meet her at the lake where she told him she was getting clean and getting out. They had a screaming match and Shelly tripped on a chainsaw and fell in the lake...

Jeremiah is still sitting in stony silence, untying the knots behind the chair. Doug rambles on...

Shelly struggled to pull herself out of the ice while Doug stood frozen watching her drown. He was horrified when Freddy arrived at the lake and clearly suspected foul play. Freddy charged away on his snowmobile and then (accidentally) ran off a small cliff, breaking his neck. A second body was too much to explain so Doug planted a bottle of vodka beside Freddy's Skidoo. He decided to leave the scene unreported and take the chainsaw to Joe Cleary's junkyard to eliminate all evidence. Eventually they would be discovered and Doug presumed he could frame it as a party-gone-wrong.

Jeremiah rattles the chair against the cabin floor. Doug removes his cap and addresses with a blank stare. He tells Jeremiah he's going home to pack a bag and he'll decide what to do with him later. As soon as Doug leaves, Jeremiah frees himself from the pathetic restraints and steps out into a snowstorm.

Carter wakes up from a nap and goes downstairs to see if Jeremiah has shown up for work — Jeremiah hasn't. He calls Amy but she is unreachable. Since last week's hunting experience with the boy and his uncle, Carter is feeling more at home in the community (and more distant from his wife). He goes to the rec centre where the community is assembling a caravan of snow machines to find Jeremiah. He joins them. The lake is beginning to thaw so they stick close to the trails. In the twilight blizzard, they see Jeremiah's hoodie strobing orange. They scramble to bundle Jeremiah with blankets and Jeremiah tells them that Doug is in trouble. Racing back to town, the group intersects with Amy's truck and they flag her down to help.

When Doug gets home, the door is open and there are muddy boot prints around the kitchen table. He realizes he has been found out. He shuts down his computer, changes out of his uniform and resigns himself to save face. On his way out of town, he passes a spectacle of lights. With Amy and her sirens in his rear view, he accelerates towards the bridge, smashes the rails and plunges toward the ice. The snowmobiles rush down to the water and manage to pluck him out alive. Standing on the side of the highway, Carter leans into Amy. They will all have to reckon with the rescue.

TONE & STYLE

Shot on location in the Yukon, the austere lighting and frozen scenery reflect the beauty of the harsh, desolate, and sometimes claustrophobic world Amy faces in Gladstone. The show is framed and filmed in contrasts. Wide-angle shots of the expanse of frozen lake, the tiny town clinging to the endless highway alternate with narrow macro-view scenes: cracks splintering across a frozen lake, blowing snow on the surface of the highway, frost on a window, to emphasize the claustrophobic nature of the town.

There are moments of dark humour: the grocery store's odd provisions, stocked with apparent cruelty by the owner; the half-sinister acts of local misfit Joe Cleary; strangers' double takes at Jeremiah's gender tricks. The characters are compelling because they don't do what you expect; yet their actions are real and raw. Amy is smart and knows what's right and wrong, but when faced with the safe and the sinister, she's never trusted herself enough to know the difference. In Gladstone she can't lean on anyone really, not even her own husband.

With the regional quirk of Fargo and the unforgettably strong characters of The Killing, Thin Ice is a riveting study of the lengths that a person can go to keep themselves hidden and the tragic consequences when a community buries their secrets. It's the characters that will grip you: Amy, consumed by the desire to do the right thing, terrified of being exposed as flawed, or worse, as broken.





THE YUKON/DYNAMICS

There is something about the North that captures people's imagination. It's remote. It's wild. It is exotic. Setting Thin Ice in a small Yukon community is an essential element to the story – especially as it relates to the current struggle in Canada to reconcile with Indigenous communities.

The Yukon is at the forefront of this conversation. First Nations never lived on reserves and the Yukon was one of the first places to negotiate a comprehensive Land Claim agreement with Canada. It gave 14 First Nation groups ownership over their own land and the power to govern themselves.

Unlike other parts of the North, the Yukon also has a long history of non-Indigenous settlement. The Klondike Gold Rush brought many settlers north and a number of them stayed. The construction of the Alaska Highway during World War II connected the Yukon to the rest of North America and the road network allowed easy travel between isolated communities.

The Yukon now has, in some places, Indigenous and non-Indigenous families who have lived together in communities for multiple generations. They are neighbours, friends and co-workers. It's not to say that there aren't problems – racism and segregation are part of these communities as well. But the proximity and integration of cultures has been a defining feature of Yukon communities for the past 130 years.

Over the past few decades, the territory has been exploring what this new arrangement – government to government conversations with self-governing First Nations – means and how to address this new sharing of power at a community level. It's been hard and messy at times, but many of the discussions that are just starting in other parts of Canada have been playing out for decades now in this far corner of the country and we are starting to find the path forward.

At heart, the Yukon is integral to this story – this region at the northern corner of our country is an authentic backdrop and foundation for gripping stories that weave a larger narrative of the possible futures of Canada.



THEMES

THE YUKON/NORTH: The location of this story is an important component and has its own mystique and “fan” club. There are many people who are drawn to the romance of the region and its representation of ruggedness, true wilderness, adventure.

IDENTITY: All our characters struggle with defining their own identities and how to come to terms with being comfortable with themselves. The community itself is struggling with identity as it relates to colonial North versus autonomous North against the backdrop of the culture and landscape of the North that has always been there

ESCAPE: This is related to some of the elements of the “Yukon” theme, but more around people who are looking for new beginnings, redefining themselves, challenging their existing framework. It used to be hippies. Now it is represented in segments of society like the recent “van” culture, “back-to-the-landers”, homesteaders, etc...

POWER: People interested in challenging traditional gender roles and expectations around work, sexuality, power dynamics.

RECONCILIATION: This is a major topic in Canadian society today, exploring how to come to terms with our country’s treatment of indigenous people and find ways of moving forward together in meaningful and respectful ways.



AUDIENCES

YUKONPHILES: Many people love the North and many are attracted to both the idea and the reality of the Yukon. The place lives large in the imagination of many due to the known history – the gold rush, the Alaska Highway, the Klondike days and the RCMP on dog team and the Mad Trapper – but also the deeper history and the remarkable present: vibrant and re-emerging Indigenous cultures and settled land claims and established First Nations governments that are ushering in a new north that will inspire and lead. These can be people who live or have lived in the Yukon. They are often educated, mid-to-high income earners who may now be living in major cities like Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal. Germans love the Yukon, Quebecois are fascinated by the Yukon, people from Ontario move to the Yukon in droves.

UPRISERS: People interested in Indigenous autonomy, human rights, Canada and colonialism, truth and reconciliation. These are people fascinated by the story of communities with long-standing Self-Governing First Nations and how that new relationship between governments plays out. These are predominantly Canadian, but there is growing interest in other countries such as the United States, Australia, and New Zealand where similar issues are at play. Additional interest from countries such as Germany, Scandinavian countries, and China.

CHANGE MAKERS: This audience is interested in women's and gender issues and reexamining traditional roles and expectations. People who are questioning patriarchal ways and seeing how women in the North have always played a wider, wilder role. Amy's role – as a woman cop, as a hockey player, as a feminist struggling to conform in a patriarchal institution – the police service – and as a wife in a new marriage, neither of which easily fit and both of which she questions.



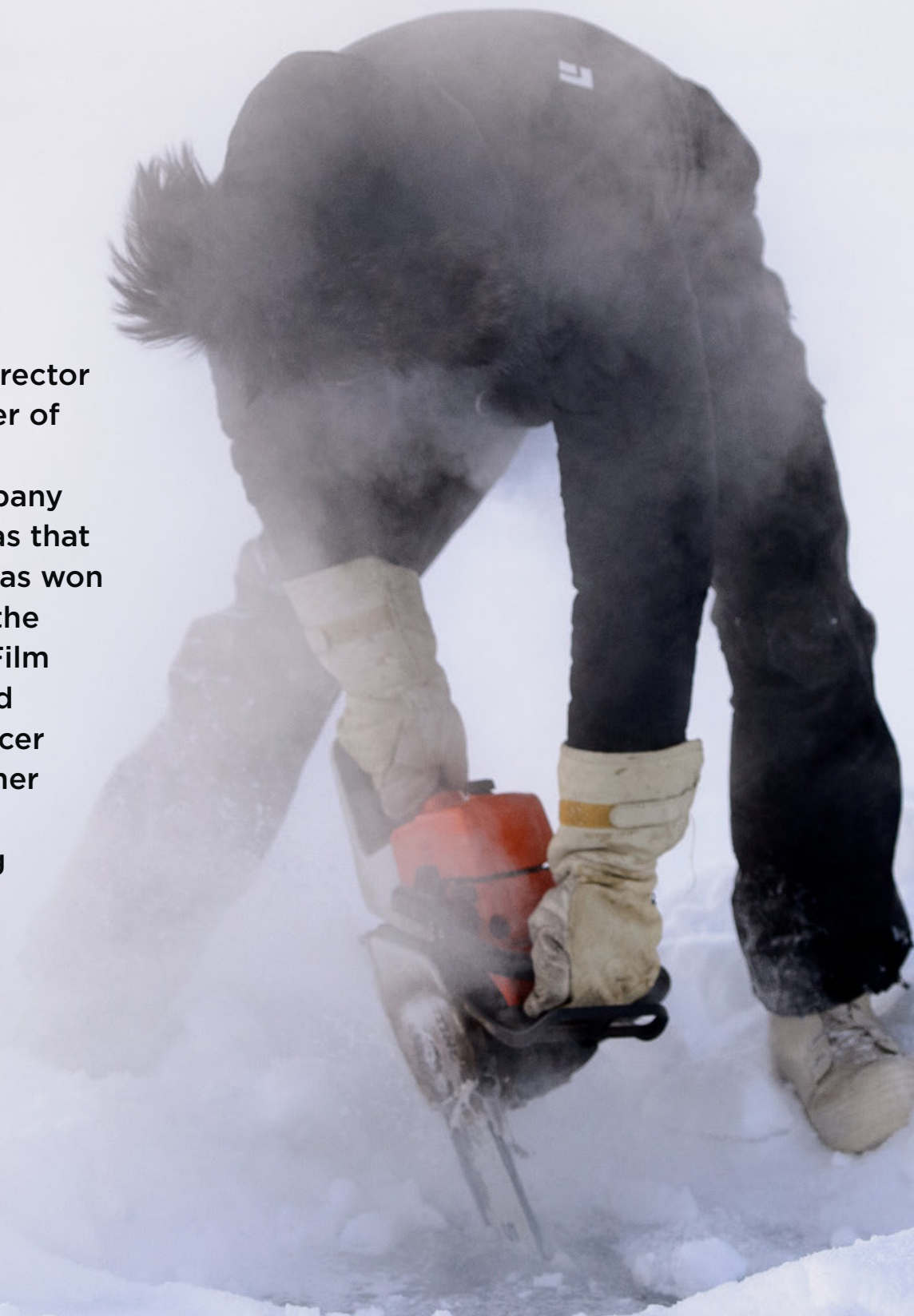


CREATORS

Kelly Milner - Producer

Kelly Milner is an award-winning producer, director and writer from Northern Canada and founder of Shot in the Dark Productions, a Yukon-based communications and media production company that tells stories and explores issues and ideas that matter. Her first short documentary, *SHIFT*, has won several awards including People's Choice at the 2016 Banff Mountain Film Festival and Best Film on Mountain Culture at the 2017 New Zealand Mountain Film Festival. She is also the producer of *Camera Trap*, which won the Best Newcomer Award at 2018 International Wildlife Film Festival. She is currently putting the finishing touches on her first feature documentary, *Not About Me*, that explores the impacts of Haiti's unregulated orphanage industry.

www.shotinthedarkmedia.com



Kirsten Madsen - Writer

Kirsten Madsen's fiction has been published in *The Walrus*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Prairie Fire*, *The New Quarterly*, and elsewhere. She was runner-up for the CBC Short Story Prize in 2015, and longlisted for the CBC Nonfiction prize in 2020. As a screenwriter, Kirsten participated in NSI's Totally Television program and was an inaugural recipient in Telefilm's Talent to Watch in 2018. Kirsten has an MFA in creative writing from the University of British Columbia, where she studied fiction and screenwriting. Her thesis novel was shortlisted for the 2013 HarperCollins Canada /UBC Prize for Best New Fiction. She lives in the Yukon on the traditional territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwach'an Council, and worked for many years in the area of gender equality.



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