



WAKEFIELD



the story

Howard Wakefield is a high-powered lawyer in New York. He's disaffected, unhappy, unfulfilled— and a bit aggressive. He's on the train heading home to his wife Diana and their twin daughters when the power goes out. Left stranded and waiting until late in the evening, he thinks about a fight he had with Diana the previous night. He was mean and antagonistic, and she was plainly tired of it and him. When he finally gets home that night, Wakefield does not enter his house but instead climbs the stairs of his carriage house-turned-garage, up to the attic space. He lives there for the next nine months.





Wakefield only emerges at night, rummaging through trash cans for food. He fashions a living space for himself in the attic and lugs a discarded futon home as a bed. All the while, he watches Diana and his daughters adjust to life without him. It happens faster than he expects.

Wakefield's only human contact is with other scavengers— who fight him for desirable items such as clothing— and with two mentally handicapped teenagers who live next door.

One day, Wakefield impulsively goes outside so Diana can see him, but he's so derelict that she doesn't even recognize him. This spurs something in Wakefield, who has fallen more deeply in love with her than he's ever been. He takes the cash he's kept in his wallet, drives into the city and gets a haircut, a shave and a suit. Wakefield enters his home and approaches the dinner table as if he'd only just left that morning.

the story



an adaptation of...



E.L. Doctorow, who passed away in July, has long been an important influence for *Wakefield* writer/director Robin Swicord. In the January 14, 2008 issue of *The New Yorker*, Doctorow published “Wakefield,” a gorgeously crafted short story that’s more or less a reply to a challenge that author Nathaniel Hawthorne offered almost 200 years prior.

In Hawthorne’s tale (by the same title) a man whimsically steps out of his life and moves into a boarding house; from this vantage point he watches as his wife pines for him. Hawthorne asks the reader to believe that this situation goes on for 20 years. For anyone who doesn’t believe it, Hawthorne invites them to write their own version of the story. Over the years, many literary writers have answered that call.

For Swicord, Hawthorne’s “Wakefield” is a curio, while Doctorow’s story is a powerful meditation on marriage, and on what it takes to become your authentic self. These themes are essential, and Doctorow gives them to us in scenes that are perverse and funny and a little harrowing.

Doctorow has allowed us the privilege of adapting his story to film. The movie will be dedicated to him.



Howard Wakefield

BRYAN CRANSTON

HBO's upcoming "All the Way"

Trumbo

"Breaking Bad"

Godzilla

Tony Award winner

best actor, 2014

All the Way

4-time Primetime Emmy winner

outstanding lead actor in a drama series, 2014, 2010, 2009, 2008

"Breaking Bad"

Golden Globe winner

best actor in a television drama, 2014

"Breaking Bad"

Diana Wakefield

JENNIFER GARNER

Dallas Buyers Club

Juno

"Alias"

Golden Globe winner

best actress in a television series, 2002

"Alias"

4- time Primetime Emmy nominee

Outstanding lead actress in a drama series

"Alias"



ROBIN SWICORD

writer/director

Robin Swicord is primarily known for her work as a screenwriter for *Memoirs Of A Geisha* (Satellite Award for best screenplay); *Little Women*, (co-producer, Writers Guild award nomination); *Matilda* (co-written and co-produced with Nicholas Kazan); and the cult comedy *Shag* (shared); *The Perez Family*; *Practical Magic* (shared). She has written two plays that were produced off-Broadway (“Last Days at the Dixie Girl Café,” “Criminal Minds,” both published by Samuel French).

In 2009 Swicord received an Oscar nomination for her contribution to *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, a project Swicord originated and worked on for more than a decade. Her original feature script *The Promise*, set during the Armenian genocide, is currently in production, with Terry George directing and Christian Bale and Oscar Isaac starring.

Swicord made her feature-directing debut with Sony Classic’s *The Jane Austen Book Club*, produced by Julie Lynn and John Calley, for which Swicord also wrote the screenplay adaptation. She adapted the E.L. Doctorow short story “Assimilation” as a series pilot for HBO. Over the last year, Swicord created limited series “Pacific Heights” for BBC Worldwide with producer Jane Tranter, which traces the ascendance of the second-generation Gold Rush scions in San Francisco, whose capital and vision created the new industries and technologies that rose to dominate the economic landscape of the U.S. and the Pacific Rim in the 20th century. No production date has yet been set.

Swicord is currently a Governor for the Writers Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, and chairs the prestigious Nicholl Fellowship. She mentors for the Sundance Screenwriting lab, and often co-leads Film Independent’s Writers Lab. In 2015 she helped create and launch the inaugural Hedgebrook Screenwriting Workshop for women writers, which will take place in October of this year. Swicord is married to writer-director Nicholas Kazan; they have two daughters, actor-writer Zoe Kazan and actor-writer Maya Kazan.



JULIE LYNN
producer



Bonnie Curtis and Julie Lynn partnered under the Mockingbird Pictures banner after their shared experience producing *Albert Nobbs* (Rodrigo Garcia's film starring Glenn Close and Janet McTeer), which was nominated for three Academy Awards.

Curtis got her start in the film business as Steven Spielberg's assistant, embarking on what would become a 15-year professional relationship with the acclaimed director. After working on *Jurassic Park* and *Schindler's List*, Curtis transitioned into a producing role with Spielberg and produced *Saving Private Ryan*, *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* and *Minority Report*.

Lynn started as a first amendment attorney and practiced at the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression in Charlottesville, Virginia. Lynn co-produced HBO's presentation of Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Wit*, served as a story consultant for Pixar Animation Studios on Pete Docter's *Up*, and worked as a Creative Executive for producer Mark Johnson. She then formed Mockingbird Pictures in 1999, producing such films as *Nine Lives*, *The Jane Austen Book Club* and *Mother and Child*.

BONNIE CURTIS
producer



Mockingbird Pictures most recently released Victor Levin's *5 to 7* through IFC Films. Mockingbird's previous release was Arie Posin's *The Face of Love* (starring Annette Bening and Ed Harris), which became IFC Films' #1 VOD title of all time. Mockingbird Pictures is currently awaiting release of *Last Days in the Desert* (written and directed by Rodrigo Garcia and starring Ewan McGregor), which premiered the opening weekend of the 2015 Sundance Film Festival. Broad Green Pictures will release the film. Mockingbird Picture's most recent film is Rob Spera's *The Sweet Life*, which is currently in post-production.

the team

Jeannine Oppewall

4- time Academy Award nominee
production designer

Catch Me if You Can, Seabiscuit, L.A. Confidential

Andrei Bowden Schwartz

director of photography
Everyday Saturday, Supermoto

Marie Claire Hannan

costume designer
The Fault in Our Stars, Paper Towns, Into the Wild

Matt Maddox

editor
Albert Nobbs, Last Days in the Desert, Face of Love

Aaron Zigman

composer
The Notebook, Akeelah and the Bee, The Jane Austen Book Club



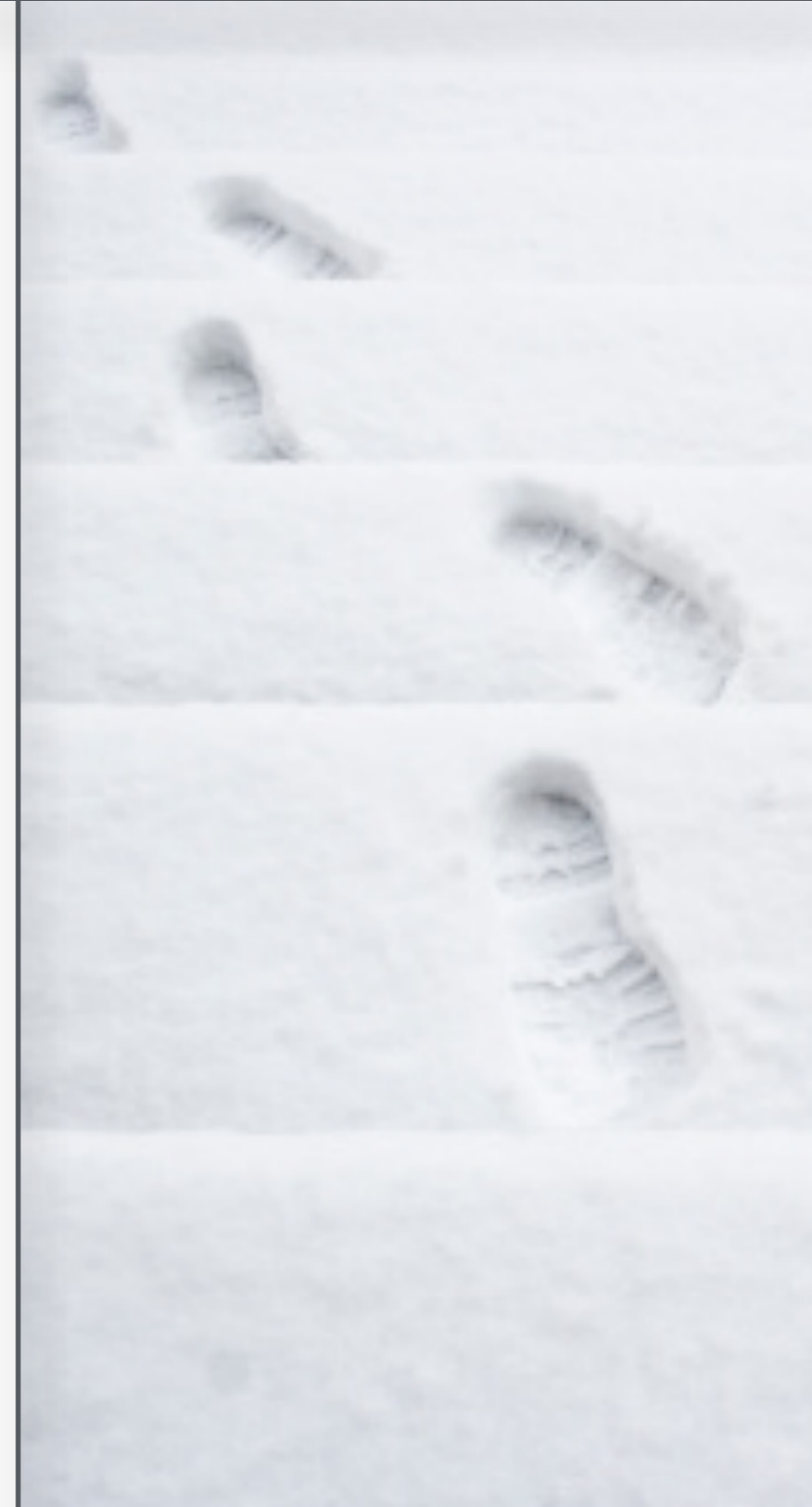
shooting locations & accommodating for the seasons



Principal photography will take place in Los Angeles in order to capitalize on both the above-the-line and below-the-line talent available locally, as well as the more controllable weather.

We plan to take a small splinter unit to New York City to shoot a few scenes that take place at the very beginning of the story, when Wakefield is leaving work and traveling home on the train; however all scenes that take place in and around Wakefield's home will be filmed in Los Angeles.

Because the story spans nine months and is set on the East Coast, we will have to account for the change of seasons— this will include everything from changing leaves to seeing snow on the ground. This challenge is one our team, which includes production designer Jeannine Oppewall, is excited and ready to tackle.



comparable films



American Beauty

5-time Academy Award winner
Best Picture, 2000
domestic gross: \$130.1M
worldwide gross: \$356.3M



Taxi Driver

4 Academy Award nominations
1976
domestic gross: \$28.3M



The Lives of Others

Academy Award winner
Best Foreign Language Film, 2007
domestic gross: \$11.2M
worldwide gross: \$77.4M



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Mockingbird Pictures

