

A woman with short, grey hair is sitting on a dark-colored couch in a room with extensive wood paneling. She is wearing a light grey cardigan over a white t-shirt. She has a somber expression and is looking directly at the camera. The room behind her features a wooden door and several drawers or cabinets.

THE FARM

Martha is a Professor Emeritus in her late seventies. She teaches law at Ohio State University. Her daughter Anna was murdered thirty years ago at the age of 19. Her body was never found.

Hugh is seventy five when he gets out of prison after doing thirty years for killing a young woman from the same university. Martha believes he also killed her daughter.



A dark, atmospheric photograph of a forest. The trees are mostly bare, with intricate branch structures silhouetted against a dim, overcast sky. A path or road winds through the center of the forest, leading the eye into the distance. The overall mood is somber and mysterious.

INSPIRATION

The story is inspired by real events that forever changed the life of my aunt and to some extent my own.

My aunt lost her nineteen years-old daughter Anna, to a gruesome murder. The person who killed her was never found. The trauma and the pursuit of justice consumed her.

The Farm is fictionalized, but the characters and their emotional depths are intimately connected to the story I witnessed as a child.



THE STORY

After his release, Martha begins stalking Hugh, and eventually kidnaps him. She imprisons him on her late mother's dormant farm, sheltered by the Appalachian woods.

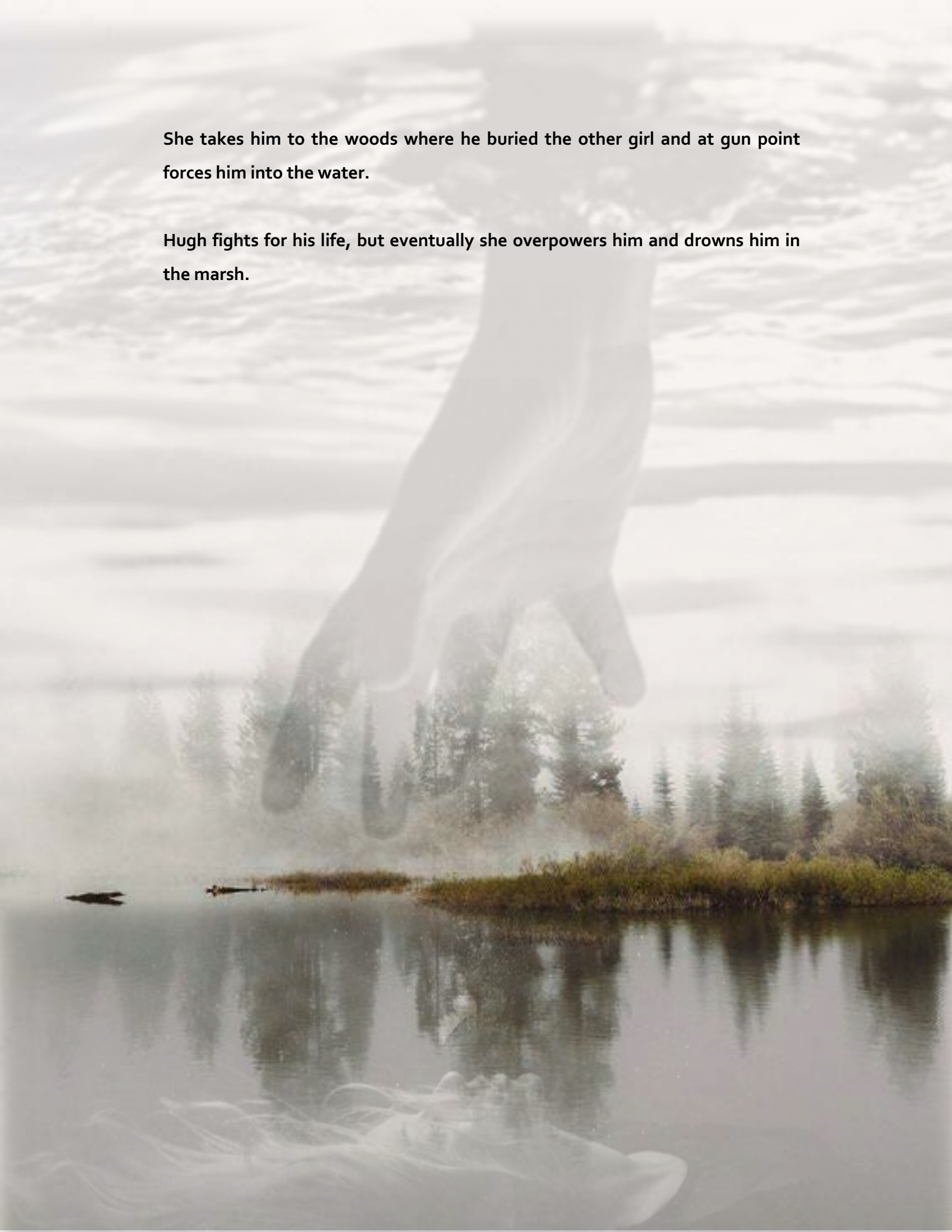
She hopes to get a confession that will lead her to the remains of her daughter.





In the old barn she subjects him to physical and emotional abuse. Hugh opens up about what he did and uses her torment to cleanse his own conscience. She can't tell whether he's innocent or a psychopath.



A misty, atmospheric landscape featuring a large, semi-transparent hand reaching down from the sky towards a body of water. The hand is positioned centrally, with fingers slightly spread. The background shows a calm lake or marsh with a line of trees and a small island in the distance. The overall tone is somber and mysterious.

She takes him to the woods where he buried the other girl and at gun point forces him into the water.

Hugh fights for his life, but eventually she overpowers him and drowns him in the marsh.



CHARACTERS

Martha is the antithesis of a kidnapper. She clings on to the wheel of her van with shaky hands. She imagined this would play out differently and is in way over her head but stopping is not an option – she'd be betraying Anna.

MARTHA

You're gonna take me there and we're gonna find her, or I'll shoot you and leave you for the animals.



Hugh gets out feeling absolved. He hopes to settle into his new life and make the best of what's left of it. He wants to reconnect with his daughter but is afraid to face her.

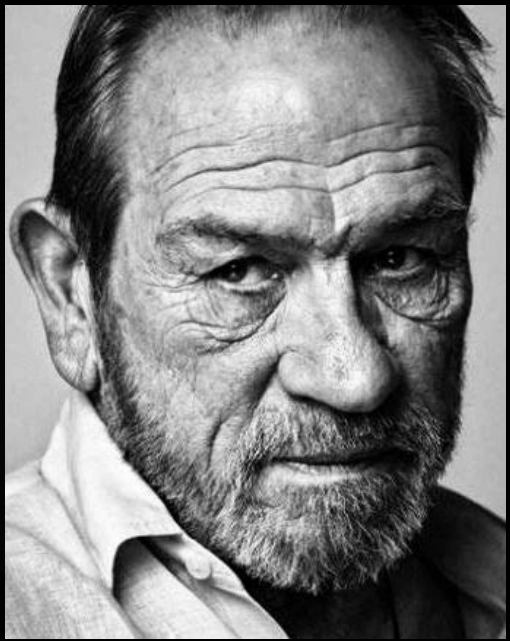
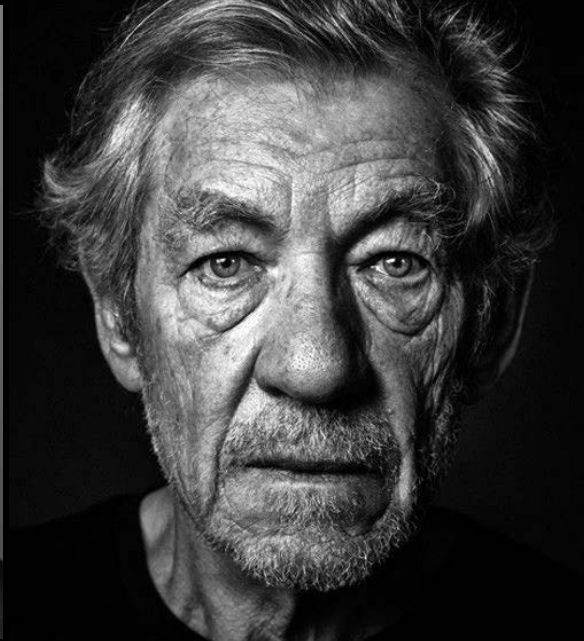
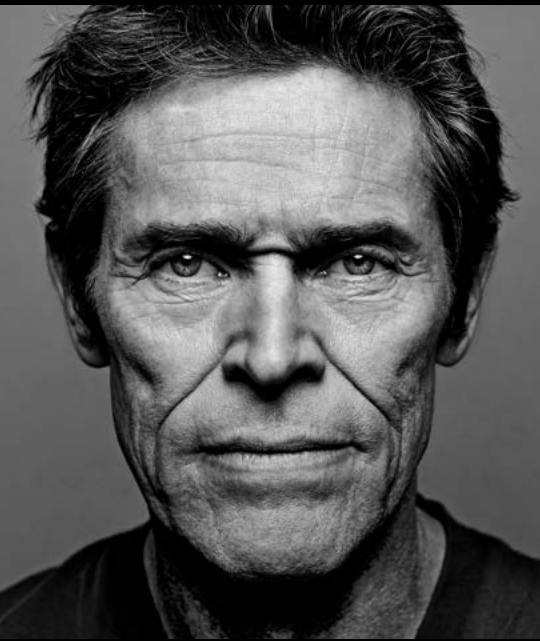
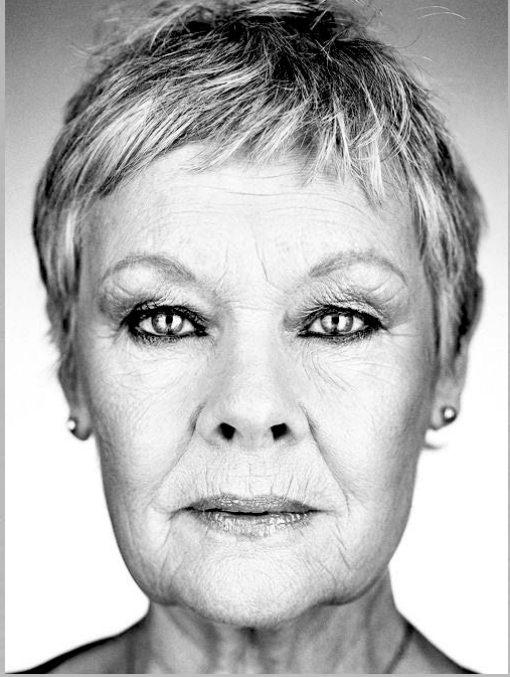
HUGH

Am I going to have scars from the whip?

She continues washing his naked body in silence.

You think you'll make that go away if you dig her out from one hole, and shove her into another?

CASTING





The story depicts an array of characters: Martha's girlfriend Irene, Kebe - a Nigerian woman who also lost her daughter, and Sgt. Matamoros, a Native American county sheriff.

Appalachian folklore is the backdrop for a cultural meeting between academia and the small townships in South-East Ohio. We glimpse into the lives of local farmers, hunters, and animal breeders, and visit their shops and live-stock auctions.





THEME

The Farm is a hypnotic portrait of Martha and her obsession. It mimics a revenge thriller, but thematically and aesthetically, subverts the genre. It's not about 'who's done it'.

It takes on a vérité point of view on aging and on the grotesque physical realities of Martha's mission. It sets the stage for her 'coming of age', at the end of her life.

In intimate close-ups and vast atmospheric shots of Appalachia, it meditates on the darker shades of human nature. It probes the trials of grief and forgiveness, aging, and passing away.

