

Uwharrie (Sample)

Written by

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Logline:

After suffering life-altering tragedies, three women—one African, one Scots-Irish, and one Native American, build a life together in the frontier lands of colonial North Carolina.

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EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE. DAWN.

It's still dark and the village is sleeping. Birds are singing in the trees.

Eswa, May, and Ayo walk through the village. Eswa leads the way, pulling a small travois made of wooden poles and deerskin.

EXT. CORNFIELDS, FOREST. DAWN.

Eswa, Ayo, and May make their way through the dark corn field.

They walk through the forest as night fades into day.

EXT. RIVER. MORNING.

Eswa, Ayo, and May walk along the riverbank.

Eswa stops at a wide, flat area along the bank. She digs her hand into the ground by the water's edge.

May and Ayo watch as Eswa rolls the wet clay in her hands. She shapes it into a long, thin cylinder.

Eswa notices their quizzical expressions.

                                ESWA  
I do not know English word...  
                                (in Catawba language,  
                                subtitled)  
Clay.

She points to the ground.

                                ESWA (cont'd)  
We dig here.

LATER:

All three women are digging clay from the bank of the river. Their arms and legs are smeared with mud.

The sun is up now, dappling the river water and the women's faces.

Ayo carries a ball of dripping clay to the travois and places it on a larger mound accumulating on the deerskin.

A distant KEENING pierces the quiet.

Ayo freezes. More CRIES join the first in a hair-raising cacophony from across the forest.

May and Eswa hear it too. Eswa stands, confused. She looks in the direction of the sound.

More SCREAMS now. Screams of women and children. More BATTLE CRIES.

Eswa lunges in the direction of the sounds, the terror of realization on her face.

May realizes what's happening. She grabs Eswa and tries to hold her back, but Eswa is stronger than May.

Ayo wraps her arms around Eswa and sinks to the ground, anchoring her in place.

Eswa struggles and SCREAMS. May holds her hand over Eswa's mouth, muffling her screams.

Ayo and May do their best to restrain Eswa, who tries desperately to twist free. Blood trickles through May's fingers, still clamped tightly over Eswa's mouth.

Smoke rises from the horizon.

Eswa collapses to her knees, but still May and Ayo don't let go. They hold her tight as the air fills with smoke and her tears mix with the blood and clay on May's hand.

EXT. RIVERBANK. EVENING.

Dusk is falling over the river. Ayo, May and Eswa are a tragic tableau, still clinging to each other.

Eswa is quiet now, but her eyes are still fixated on the horizon.

The forest is quiet too. Only the sound of the river behind them. A breeze carries smoke through the trees.

May looks at Ayo, a question in her eyes. Ayo nods. They stand and help Eswa to her feet.

Eswa takes off running. May and Ayo follow.