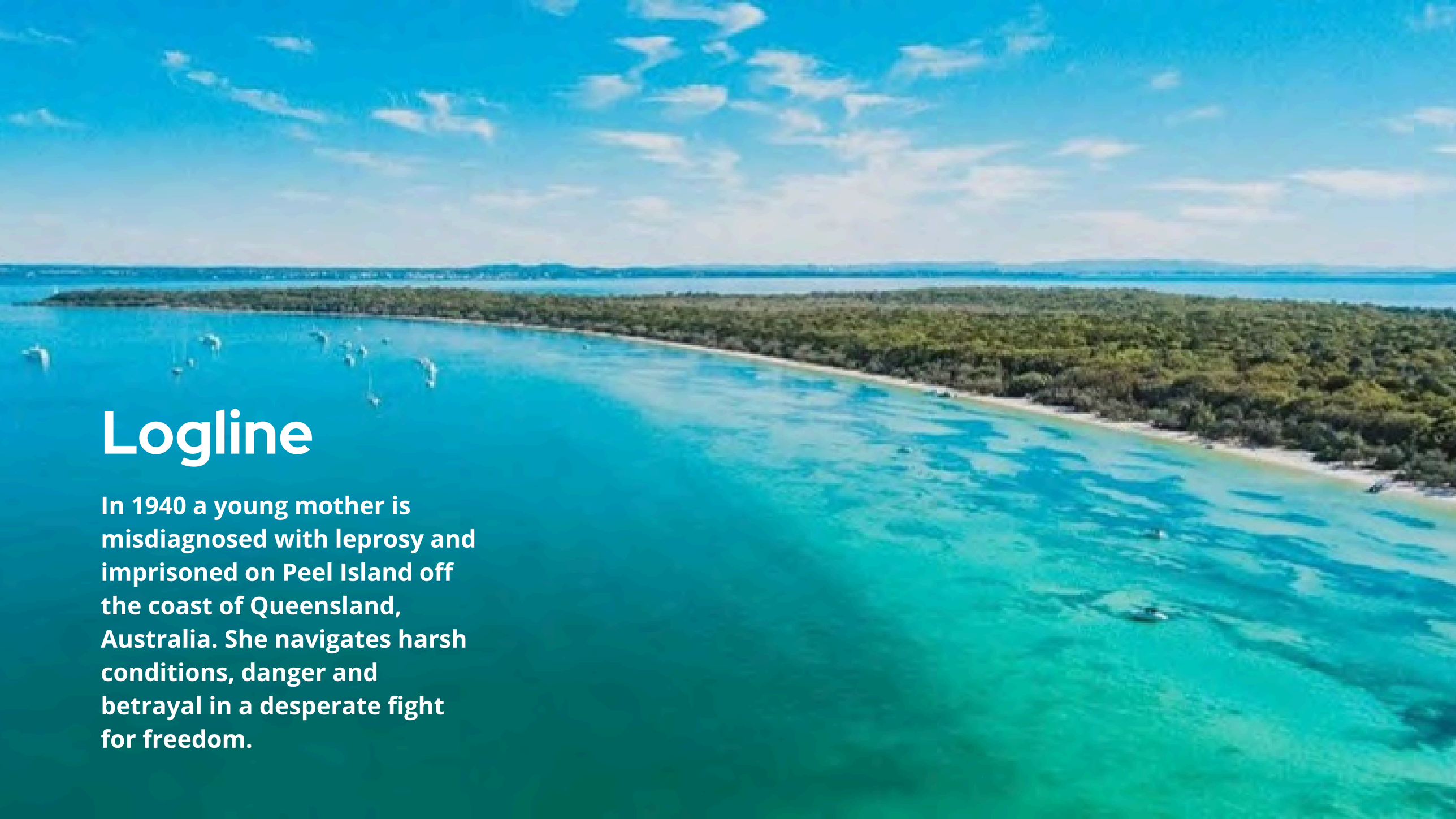
Peel Island
Injustice • Betrayal • Love
Jenny Mansell-Black



Logline

In 1940 a young mother is misdiagnosed with leprosy and imprisoned on Peel Island off the coast of Queensland, Australia. She navigates harsh conditions, danger and betrayal in a desperate fight for freedom.

Synopsis

On this island of historical tragedy is a story inspired by people who existed and events that occurred; a story of injustice, betrayal and love.

It's January, 1940. Kate Farrell, suspected of having Hansen's disease, is a mother of two young girls when she is arrested in Ayr, Queensland, and transported to Peel Island, a leper colony. Her husband, Fred, tries to get her off the island where she is beset by bushfires, sharks, snakes, treatments, being shipwrecked, a treacherous returned soldier from the war and the loss of not seeing her daughters grow up. Despite testing negative for the disease, Kate is thwarted by the authorities and staff, determined to keep her there. Set in the background of World War II, she meets an American soldier who falls in love with her, but Kate is consumed by Catholic guilt and her longing for her previous life with her husband and girls.

Characters

Kate starts out as a naive 1930's housewife and slowly transforms as she faces all the challenges on Peel Island.

Fred loves his wife, Kate, but his personality reveals signs of weakness.

Peter pursues his love for Kate, but he has a past to reveal.

Johnny knows the land and how to take revenge for the death of his niece.

Joan helps Kate face the reality of life both on the island and with men.

Kate’s daughters, Mary & Lola, have to learn to grow up without her.

Matron Joyce is not to be messed with.

Places

The movie will be inexpensive to produce as all the settings still exist.

Queensland Parliament

Pineapple Hotel

Boggo Road Gaol

Carville Leprosarium, Louisiana

Music

The most powerful theme for the Peel Island movie would be:
Rachmaninov Piano Concerto 2 3rd Movement.
As well as:
Full Moon and Empty Arms (Ray Conniff)
as a modern version.

The music of the era would add to the vibe:
The Man I Love (Artie Shaw)
Always (Benny Goodman)
Moonglow (Benny Goodman)
Time on My Hands (Benny Goodman)
Stardust
Dancing in the Dark (Artie Shaw)
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

A couple of more modern tunes would suit certain scenes:
Summer Rain (Belinda Carlisle)
Poinciana (Manhattan Transfer)

Market Appeal

The story of Peel Island is both a love story and one of injustice, but it’s also an example of how governments and society treat people with an illness during what they believe to be a pandemic, as we have recently experienced with covid. The fear of leprosy in people’s minds in the 1940's due to biblical connotations was worse than the actual disease.

People will relate to the story with empathy for the main character, while the younger generation will also be introduced to the wonderful music of that era. The cinematography will add to the beauty of the story.

Movies that span multiple years

- Forrest Gump
- The Godfather Part II
- The Curious Case of Benjamin Button
- 12 Years a Slave
- Boyhood
- Interstellar
- The Beast

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