

THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT



Miles is the only working class kid on a tropical island full of wealthy families. When the adults disappear in a devastating rapture, he must lead the surviving kids to safety...from the dangerous power struggle within the group, and from an onslaught of apocalyptic hell beasts.

Every year since they can remember, a group of privileged kids have been taken to the same luxury holiday on a tropical South Pacific island. Their parents: wealthy businessmen, entrepreneurs and socialites. The kids are getting a little too old and a little too self-aware to enjoying the yearly reunions with the others, who are growing up at different rates and maturity levels.

MILES (15) is the son of the ferry captain who takes the families to the island. He's the only child among them who doesn't stand to inherit wealth, and he's bullied by a moody trust fund brat, ZEKE. On their annual trip to the island, Miles notices a small boat of Polynesian fishermen's boys and locks eyes with one of them, feeling a mutual sense of belonging nowhere.

Shortly after arriving, an announcement is made: there has been a sinkhole beneath the resort, rendering their usual accommodation uninhabitable. While everyone is gathered on the beach, the sky goes dark and a horrifying event begins — adults start disappearing. Taken upwards or ripped violently down into the earth. The kids realise only the adults are being taken.

When the dust settles, the kids notice that entire horizon - the rest of the world - is on fire. They debate what happened, and are shaken by the lava-coloured glow emanating from the new holes in the ground. Soon they're attacked by a magma-encrusted, fire-blooded HELL BEAST that emerges and violently picks apart kids one by one. Led by Miles, and with the help of brave older kid BAXTER, the survivors retreat to the jungle, hiding out in an old treehouse that some of the boys had started building when they were younger.

Tensions arise as Zeke competes with Miles for the group's leadership. It's a clash of ideals — Miles wants to find a way off the island, believing his Dad is still out there on his yacht beyond the wall of fire; Zeke believes they're the last survivors in the world, and that the island is theirs to rule. When Zeke is attacked by a hell beast again, he manages to scare it off, thereby earning the group's respect. A small group of level-headed kids (Baxter, his brother Dicky, and kind-hearted ANNIE) sense Zeke's instability, banding together with Miles to try and maintain some sanity in the chaos.

Miles sneaks away to the beach to try and spot his father's ferry, but sees thousands of adults beyond the wall of fire rising into the heavens. He realises that this event is worldwide, but decides to keep it a secret from the group. When he's attacked by a hell beast, Annie rescues him by pushing the beast into the water, snuffing out its fiery life blood like a candle. They realise two things: there are many more of these beasts... and they can be killed.

The larger group finds more shelter at an unfinished adventure park, holing up inside a gymnasium, which they soon realise has become a creature nest. They are ambushed, but Annie and Miles arrive just in time to show how they can be killed. Overcoming the beasts, they're not out of danger yet... Zeke has become more of a monster than the monsters themselves, demanding everyone swear allegiance to him. After a tense fight, Baxter defeats Zeke, who is dragged away screaming by a lone beast.

At dawn, Miles leads the remaining survivors to a dock on the other side of the island, hoping to find a boat. But Zeke returns from apparent death. He attempts to destroy the boat, but is overcome by a pack of beasts who emerge from underground. Battle worn, the survivors take the boat and flee towards the burning horizon, determined to make it out even if they die trying.

Floating aimlessly, they discover the ferry with a hole in its roof, indicating Miles' father went to heaven. Miles admits that he knew the rest of the world was gone — he just didn't feel like he belonged on the island, and selfishly hoped his father was out there somewhere. But the others praise him for giving them hope. When that hope is almost gone, they're met by a large boat, decorated with several bodies of defeated hell creatures, and captained by another group: the Polynesian fishermen's boys. There's nothing beyond the wall of fire except the end of the world — but the survivors have lived to see it, and it's theirs.



THE INFLUENCES



There's something relatable about a group of kids having to deal with major challenges, whether it's an alien invasion (*Attack the Block*, *Super 8*), primal survival (*Lord of the Flies*) or a call to adventure (*The Goonies*, *Stand by Me*).

But what all these films have in common beyond their premise is a strong, relatable theme. In *Super 8*, a boy struggles with the loss of his mother. *The Goonies* know their town is about to be developed, and they'll never call it home again. In *Stand by Me*, all four boys have their own demons they must face before coming of age.



This is the story of a group of boys and girls who haven't yet figured out their place in the world - most of them are set to inherit incredible wealth, along with all the expectations and pressure that comes with it. Many of them are spoiled and don't know what it's like to face any real consequences.

When the world ends, the adults are judged by being taken to heaven or hell, and the kids are left to wonder why they weren't taken. Are they too innocent to be held accountable? Too inexperienced to be judged? Or are they simply meant to inherit what their parents left behind, becoming forefathers of humanity's next chapter?

And if they can't survive the vicious beasts that emerge from hellish cracks in the ground, does any of it matter?



THE SETTING



The luxury holiday resort

The story is set on an unnamed South Pacific/Polynesian island. It calls for a beautiful, lush landscape with pristine beaches, thick vibrant jungle, and a luxury resort that crumbles under a sinkhole just before our visitors arrive for the season.

There is also an abandoned side of the island, where the kids take refuge. They remember it from their younger years, but it has since disappeared into decay. An abandoned adventure park, a rusty waterslide leading to a river, and an unfinished tree house; all perfect places to escape or turn into makeshift battle stations against hell's attackers.



The entrance to the abandoned adventure park



The waterslide, a daring escape route



The treehouse, later fortified as a battle station



A waterfall where Miles and others hide



The beach, where the adults are taken



THE MONSTERS



The creatures that rise out of the fiery depths of hell are the organic embodiment of hell itself; their veins are lava, their breath is flame and their tough skin is like molten earth crust.

They're not intelligent beings - they don't speak and can't be reasoned with. They just hunt.

Fire doesn't destroy them, it only gives them more life force - and it takes a lot of dangerous trial and error before the kids discover their true weakness.





Jesse O'Brien's first feature film was *Arrowhead*, a science fiction adventure filmed in the South Australian desert in which a mercenary becomes marooned on a barren planet. *Arrowhead* was awarded Best Feature at Sydney's SciFi Film Festival in October 2015, and will be released in 2016 through StudioCanal. The screenplay was the recipient of the John Hinde Award for Science Fiction (Best Produced Screenplay) by the Australian Writer's Guild.

Jesse has a passion for the popcorn cinema of the 70s and 80s, including the early work of Spielberg, John Carpenter and James Cameron. A love of these movies, which embrace practical effects work and traditional cinematic techniques, have given Jesse a desire to achieve dramatic naturalism.

Jesse has a background in motion graphics and editing. He managed the television campaigns for the Australian releases of *Up*, *Toy Story 3*, *Prince of Persia*, and *Alice in Wonderland* among others, forming a solid background in marketing, motion graphics and visual effects.

Recently he directed two live action TV commercials for Walt Disney entitled *A Life More Magical* and *Celebrate a Life More Magical*.



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