

A proposal for a feature film

'*PRIVATE DANCER*'

Based on [the book](#) by Stephen
Leather of the same name.





- Form: Feature film
- Genre: Thriller
- Location: Thailand
- Budget range: \$100k-\$200k
- Pitch: The Bangkok's sex trade, where do you draw the line?
- Logline: Driven to avenge and find the daughter he lost in Bangkok's neon underbelly, a vice cop finds the chance for redemption in hell and must pay the ultimate price for it.
- Status: Screenplay to follow.

Synopsis...



Divorced, ex pat Brit and Bangkok vice cop PETE (36) roams Bangkok Go-Go bars at night. He is a good, ex-family man turned night crawler. A hunter seeking vengeance - but for what? A guardian angel for teenage girls exploited by predatory men, one of whom feels Pete's rage when the slob mistreats a teenage good time girl. Triple JDs do little to heal Pete's emotional wounds. Phone conversation with his vice cop partner SAELIM (40s) 'to go home and get some sleep'. Maybe later. Pete heads into the Zombie Club. The usual Go-Go shit. Most of the girls look very young, and that's why this place is so popular with farangs, hatred of whom seems to burn in Pete's bloodshot and insomniac eyes. Another triple JD. Through the haze of booze and lethal levels of burn-out he sees good time JOY (16).

Nothing will ever be the same.

Pete approaches Joy. Chemistry. Mutual need. Lost souls. She tells him the price 'but anal only.' He says no thanks. Flashes his badge. That focusses her, but she thinks she's in trouble for being under age working sex trade. She shows him her dubious ID, which tells him she's 18. Zombie club owner KUSA (50) muscles in. A beast. Fuck off, cop. Pete locks eyes with him. Flashes his side arm and badge. Kusa backs off, but Pete has made a new enemy in hell.

Pete takes Joy out of there to a bar, which really pisses Kusa off.

They talk. Chemistry.

Pete's conflicted desire.

Next day Pete goes to work in at the PD. He and Saelim working on various vice cases. They are not getting far, which pisses their boss Captain JONES (55) off but is no surprise because Pete is an alcoholic burn-out who is obsessed with 'what might have been' if everything were different. Friction. But Saelim is a good man, if somewhat tatty around the edges. They go work in the city. But Pete's mind is elsewhere. It always is. Pete goes back to his shitty apartment. A 10-year-old photo of him with his Thai ex-wife and daughter BO (7), who looks like Joy. Pete can't sleep. Goes back to the Zombie bar. Finds Joy when she finishes a trick with a slob. Pete is violent with the slob, who exits in fear. This makes Kusa angry. Bad for business. Kusa tells Joy to stay away from Pete. Already. Kusa has Pete muscled out of there despite Pete being a cop. Kusa bans Pete from the club despite Pete threatening to have the place closed down for running underage girls. Pete gives Joy his card on the way out.

Kusa rages at Joy for talking to Pete. Beats her armpits (so bruises not visible) and makes her suck his cock in the back office. Weeping, Joy stumbles out into the night, a broken doll.

That night Pete can't sleep. He never can.

Next day Joy is in a state of absolute despair. She finds scant comfort in the arms of her sex trade sisters SUNAN (26) and BOONSRI (19) in the small apartment they share. Why don't they run away together - maybe the UK or America!?! But it's a broken dream. Meanwhile at the PD, Saelim makes Pete drink a vitamin smoothie and take mega-vitamins and eat fruit at gunpoint in the canteen. It's a bromance thing. Pete takes a caffeine pill, too. He's a zombie. Pete runs facial recognition software when he should be working with Saelim on a drug case. Faces of teenage good time girls (some deceased or classed as 'off-system') flicker on the screen in front of his ruined eyes. To him, they all look like his daughter in the photo. One of the flickering digital faces is Joy. Her date of birth tells him she's 16. Captain Jones finds him doing it and rages at him in front of Saelim and colleagues. Tells Pete to shape up asap, and that Pete finding the person who murdered his daughter won't make anything right. Pete knows he's right, but he's obsessed. Out of control. Saelim knows it too.

Later Pete gets a call from Joy. They meet, though Pete should be working. Pete senses she's broken. Senses physical damage. Pete asks about Kusa. She won't say anything. He tells her he knows she's 16 and so illegal as a good time girl. She breaks down, begging him not to arrest her because Kusa will kill her. He pushes her on Kusa. 'He's my father.' Pete wishes more than anything in the world that he was surprised or shocked. That would be nice. Exhausted emotion overwhelms him. On the edge of a nervous breakdown. She comforts him. He warns her to get the hell out of the sex trade because, because ... Pete shows her a photo of Bo on his smartphone. Bo looks like Joy's reflection in the phone glass.

That night Pete can't sleep. He goes to the Zombie club. Pete tells Kusa he's closing the Zombie down for tricking underage girls. Kusa thus realises Pete knows Joy is 16. Kusa blames Joy for this, though she denies it. A violent altercation with Kusa and his thugs. Pete's cop badge and gun save him. Punters scatter. The night's trade is ruined. Kusa rages. Pete and Joy take refuge in Pete's apartment - two broken souls. Against Pete's every ethical impulse, they make love. Joy's virginity blood stains Pete's bed linen. A sacred, almost holy stain. He has just devalued her dowry value to Kusa because she is no longer a virgin.

Next day Pete is fired as a cop by Captain Jones because he is out of control/FUBAR.

Liberated and inspired by Pete's touch and given hope, Joy stands up to Kusa and tells him: 'Me no more virgin.' Kusa beats her badly. Sunan and Boonsri help her escape, at the cost of Kusa's rage to themselves. Joy goes to Pete. He sees her wounds and readies to kill Kusa. She talks him out of it. Tells him let's go away 'somewhere beautiful.' They go a gorgeous beach location. They make love. For the first time in years, Pete sleeps. And the next day the light has returned to their eyes. Joy's smile becomes his universe. They plan to get out of the country. Joy says she cannot leave Sunan and Boonsri behind. OK...

They go back to Bangkok and plan and prepare to go to Singapore. But now, Joy learns that Sunan has killed herself after Kusa raped her as punishment for helping Joy escape. Pete vows and prepares to kill Kusa. Joy begs him not to - not because Kusa is her father but because she fears for Pete's life. Pete cannot be dissuaded, however. It's the only way to finally free Joy. He convinces her he can get away with it in collusion with Saelim.

They need money to get he, Joy, and Boonsri out of the country to the UK. Pete steals from the PD cash reclaim lock-up. Saelim finds him doing it. Saelim 'looks the other way' out of love for his old friend and partner. Pete tells him he has 'found Bo.' They both know the sex trade 'ate Bo' and she is presumed dead. Pete says Kusa is going to die. They both know what he means: Pete is going to kill Kusa. Saelim tells him sorry - he has a family and a job to do, and won't help him get away with it. The men part after 12 years working together.

Pete books flights to Singapore for him, Joy, and Boonsri online. He and Joy go out and buy a huge diamond ring for Joy with cash. They go back to Boonsri with the remainder of the cash. But Kusa is waiting for Pete at Joy's apartment. Pete no longer has his cop gun.

Kusa shoots Pete dead, but Pete wounds Kusa badly before he dies.

With Boonsri's help and out of control with grief, **Joy stabs and kills the wounded and bleeding Kusa with a kitchen knife.**


Knowing it's what Pete would have wanted,
Joy and Boonsri take the remainder of the
drug cash that Pete stole from the PD.
They get on a flight to Singapore.

Two weeks later...

A pregnancy test. Positive. Joy's sad
smile. Her hand on her belly.

She and Boonsri sell the diamond ring as
Pete intended.

Then, with £35k cash, the girls turn to
face an uncertain future.

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair and a man with red hair in a close embrace. The woman is in the foreground, her back to the camera, wearing a light-colored top. The man is behind her, his face partially visible as he looks towards her. The lighting is soft and intimate. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing the text "The principal characters...".

The principal
characters...

JOY (16)

The spirit of a child in the premature armour of an adult. Misses her mother terribly, and is extremely close to her sister Boonsri (19) and half sister Sunan (26). A genius artists. Loves to learn, and studies geology online. Yearns to spread her wings and fly away.

PETE (36)

Ex pat Brit. A good man at war with the dark world he inhabits, and himself. Haunted by the death of his 7 year old daughter Bo - a death Pete's ex wife blamed him for, and thus left him. Sees being a cop as a messianic calling, but knows that calling is hollow and pointless. Joy makes him realise, in the end, that it was all worth it.

KUSA (51)

Ex military and war scarred. Violent, incestuous rapist and creature of the night. Will deal anything that he can profit from - his daughters included. Killed his wife when 'she was no longer any use'.



Look, feel, music
and comps...



Look and feel:

Broken hearted - big hearted - dark - furtive - neon - shock - ambient - kinetic - lingering - lost in time - blown out colours - Blade Runner - tripped - sexual - taboo - addictive - fragile - short-focus - cosmic

Cinematographic refs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gY01uk7vIcc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=up5m8mRq6EU>

Comps:

ONLY GOD FORGIVES - HEAD ON (2004, Fatih Akin) - A PRAYER BEFORE DAWN

Music:

Tech bass juxtaposed with sacred choral like

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RI_U6o7tAzk [open the film with this as Pete trawls the broken sex doll world of Bangkok's neon Go-Go bars.]



Casting
References...

PETE:

Joe Cole

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3771184/?ref=tt_ov_st

Jonathan Rees-Meyers

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001667/?ref=nmls_hd

Max Irons

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1796057/?ref=nmls_hd

Tom Hughes

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3433735/?ref=nmls_hd

Harry Lloyd

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0516003/?ref=nmls_hd

Sam Claflin

https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3510471/?ref=fn_al_nm_1

JOY: TBC

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