

Mr. Schittbum

Frank, a quiet, aging widower pushed into retirement, is given a crude office puppet named **Mr. Schittbum**—a joke gift that unexpectedly becomes the only voice Frank can express honestly. As Frank begins speaking through the puppet, he reconnects with his grandson, befriends a young woman in the park, and accidentally becomes a small online sensation for his blunt, funny, unexpectedly wise videos.

But when Frank tries to rebuild his old dream—a methane-powered shed—he injures himself and learns his cancer has returned. With one arm in a sling and time running short, Frank keeps making videos, keeps trying to start again, and slowly lets people into his life.

The story follows a man who spent decades invisible, now learning—through a wooden mischief-maker—to speak, to ask for help, and to matter.

The Corner of Pine and Summer

Clayton “Sparky” is a sharp but drifting 15-year-old who’s failing school, smoking daily, and pushing away anyone who tries to steer him. After a disastrous meeting with school officials—punctuated by fights, profanity, and a breakup with his manipulative girlfriend Leesa—Sparky is forced out of school and into counseling. His world shrinks to *The Corner*, a suburban hangout where teens drink, smoke, and posture their way through adolescence. Sparky plays the part of the reckless screw-up, but beneath the bravado is a kid aching for attention, belonging, and proof he matters. His therapist calls out his avoidance and fear of vulnerability, but Sparky shrugs it off, clinging to the illusion that doing nothing is freedom.

Everything shifts when Sparky meets Mindi, a perceptive, grounded girl who sees through his posturing. Their connection grows through nighttime walks, confessions, and a charged kiss in the woods. Mindi challenges him—calling out his fear, his pretending, his small-circle ambitions—and Sparky feels both exposed and alive. As he drifts deeper into the Corner crowd, he also brushes up against older, rougher influences: bikers, petty theft, and fantasies of pulling off a beer heist. The pig roast becomes a turning point—Sparky tastes adult chaos, danger, and admiration, riding home on a biker’s Harley with a sense of swagger he’s never felt before.

But the screenplay keeps reminding us that Sparky’s freedom is fragile. His bravado masks loneliness, his impulsiveness leads to fights and humiliation, and his growing attachment to Mindi exposes how badly he fears being forgotten. Their trestle-top conversation—her fear of disappearing, his insistence he’s afraid of nothing—reveals the emotional fault line beneath Sparky’s rebellion. He’s not fearless; he’s terrified of trying and failing, of caring and losing, of being seen and judged. Mindi sees it. The audience sees it. Sparky doesn’t—yet.

Across these early pages, *The Corner of Pine and Summer* builds a portrait of a boy on the edge of adulthood, teetering between self-destruction and self-discovery. The world around him is full of humor, danger, and raw teenage truth, but the emotional engine is Sparky’s slow, reluctant awakening: that doing nothing is still a choice, that pretending is its own prison, and that connection—real connection—might be the only thing that can pull him out of the corner he’s built for himself.

Becoming Gold Blind

In 1901, teenage Ceesi lives with her grandmother on an old farm, carrying the unanswered question of who she really is. When her grandmother finally gives her a wooden box filled with letters from Leadville, Ceesi discovers the truth about her birth and her father, Charlie Richards. The letters transport her back to 1882, when Charlie leaves Nova Scotia with his brothers Mortie and Vester for the booming gold-mining town of Leadville,

Colorado, chasing the promise of wealth and a better life for his family. In Leadville, Charlie encounters a wild frontier where money, violence, race, ambition, and survival collide. He befriends Jesse, a Black Civil War veteran and miner whose wisdom challenges Charlie's growing obsession with wealth, and falls in love with Arkansas, a fiercely independent woman who sees something in Charlie that gold cannot provide. As Charlie and his partners work deeper into the mountains, his dream of striking it rich gradually becomes more important than the people waiting for him back home.

Charlie eventually finds success, but his pursuit of gold comes at a devastating cost. Jesse dies and leaves Charlie a final letter reminding him that a person's worth is not what they take from the world, but what they give to others. Charlie begins to understand the lesson, yet his obsession and circumstances keep pulling him back into the mountains. When a catastrophic avalanche buries the mine and kills Mortie and Vester, Charlie is left dying beneath the snow, finally realizing that the wealth he chased cannot save him or return him to his family. Meanwhile, letters Charlie wrote home were intercepted and hidden, leaving his wife Chrissy believing he had abandoned her. After Charlie's death, the truth emerges: his daughter Aurelia Cecelia—Ceese—was born to Arkansas, who died shortly after giving birth. In 1901, Ceese finishes reading the letters and finally understands the fractured story of her family. Tear-stained but changed by what she has learned, she takes a pitchfork and disarms the mouse traps in the barn—the same traps that opened the story—suggesting that she has finally learned to see beyond the bait and recognize the trap.

American Hearts

In the summer of 1861, eleven-year-old Wally is a determined, restless boy growing up in a New England town as the Civil War tears the country apart. With little family left and his older brother Warren living in Virginia, Wally finds a surrogate family among a group of young men who enlist in the Union Army. Armed with a cigar-box mandolin, a drum, and an oversized sense of independence, Wally becomes the regiment's drummer boy, while forming a particularly strong friendship with Jesse, a Black soldier who becomes both his protector and his moral compass. As the boys march toward war, Wally's youthful ideas about freedom, loyalty, and heroism collide with the brutal reality around him. He crosses enemy lines searching for his brother, discovers that Warren has joined the Confederacy, and learns that the divisions tearing the country apart can exist even within a family. Through Jesse, Wally begins to understand that beneath the uniforms, politics, and hatred, people are fundamentally alike—and that a person needs a purpose beyond simply choosing a side.

As the war intensifies, Wally uses his natural curiosity and courage to scout enemy positions, map Confederate forces, and repeatedly risk his life to help his friends. His innocence gradually disappears as men he loves are killed and the violence becomes impossible to romanticize. When he discovers that Warren is fighting for the Confederacy, Wally refuses to abandon him, crossing the Potomac with Jesse and Theve in an attempt to bring his brother home. Warren cannot leave the cause he has chosen, forcing Wally to confront the painful truth that love does not always overcome division. Later, as the Union army marches toward Antietam, Wally's warnings about the massive Confederate force are ignored. The battle becomes a slaughter, killing nearly everyone around him, including his closest friends. Wally survives with his battered mandolin and Blue, the dog he has carried through the war. In the aftermath, the eleven-year-old who once thought war could be understood through drums, maps, and bravery stands amid the dead and finally sees its true cost. Rather than surrender to the hatred that created the war, Wally chooses a different future: to move west with Jesse, seek a peaceful purpose, and carry his music and his stories forward.

The Leatherman

In 1888 rural Connecticut, ten-year-old Jimmy becomes fascinated by a mysterious vagabond known simply as Leatherman, a silent man who walks through town at precisely the same time every month. While the adults dismiss him as a harmless “bum” who is going nowhere, Jimmy is convinced there is more to the strange traveler.

Following him one day with his dog Rusty, Jimmy discovers Leatherman's hidden cave in the woods and learns that the man isn't deaf or unintelligent—he has lost his ability to speak because of a terrible condition in his mouth and throat. Determined to help, Jimmy brings him to his Uncle Warland, a local doctor, and gives the doctor Leatherman's gold coin to pay for the treatment. When Jimmy returns months later, he discovers that the treatment has worked: Leatherman can speak again. In gratitude, the old man gives Jimmy a beautifully handcrafted slingshot and finally tells him the story behind his wandering life.