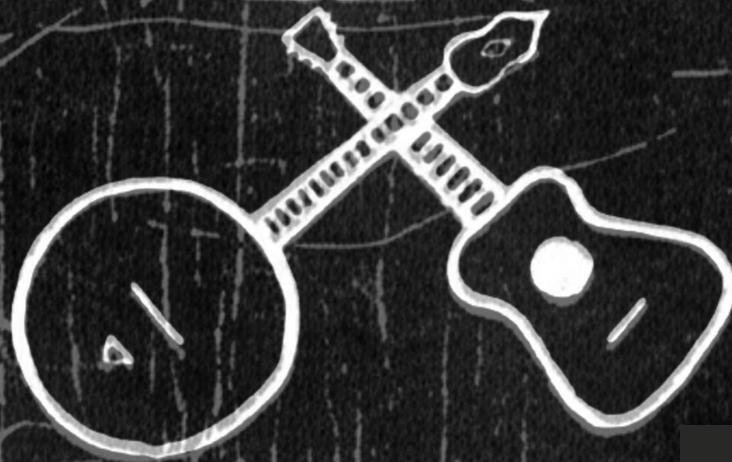


*Fire at
the*

FOUR STRONG WINDS COFFEEHOUSE

FOLK
BLUE
GRASS



JAZZ
CHAMBER

by CJ Hatch

Fire at the Four Strong Winds

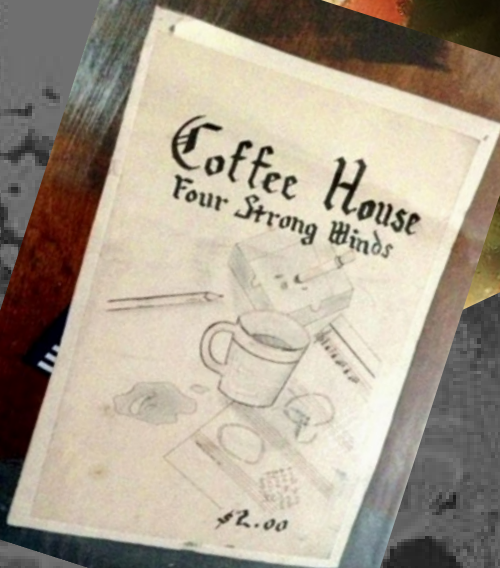
LOGLINE:

Over the course of one night, a relationship develops between a nonbinary teen and the brother of a local sports hero in a safe space for a small, conservative town's rebellious youth while, just outside, their cultures clash violently. "WHERE THE DAY TAKES YOU" meets "ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE."

SYNOPSIS:

Set to the music of the scene, the orbits of two diametrically opposed teens merge at an open-mic performance venue for "Wonderfully Weird" youth.

As the teens lose themselves in a microcosm of tolerance and self-expression, the real world comes crashing in, forcing the teens to make tough decisions that will affect everyone involved.





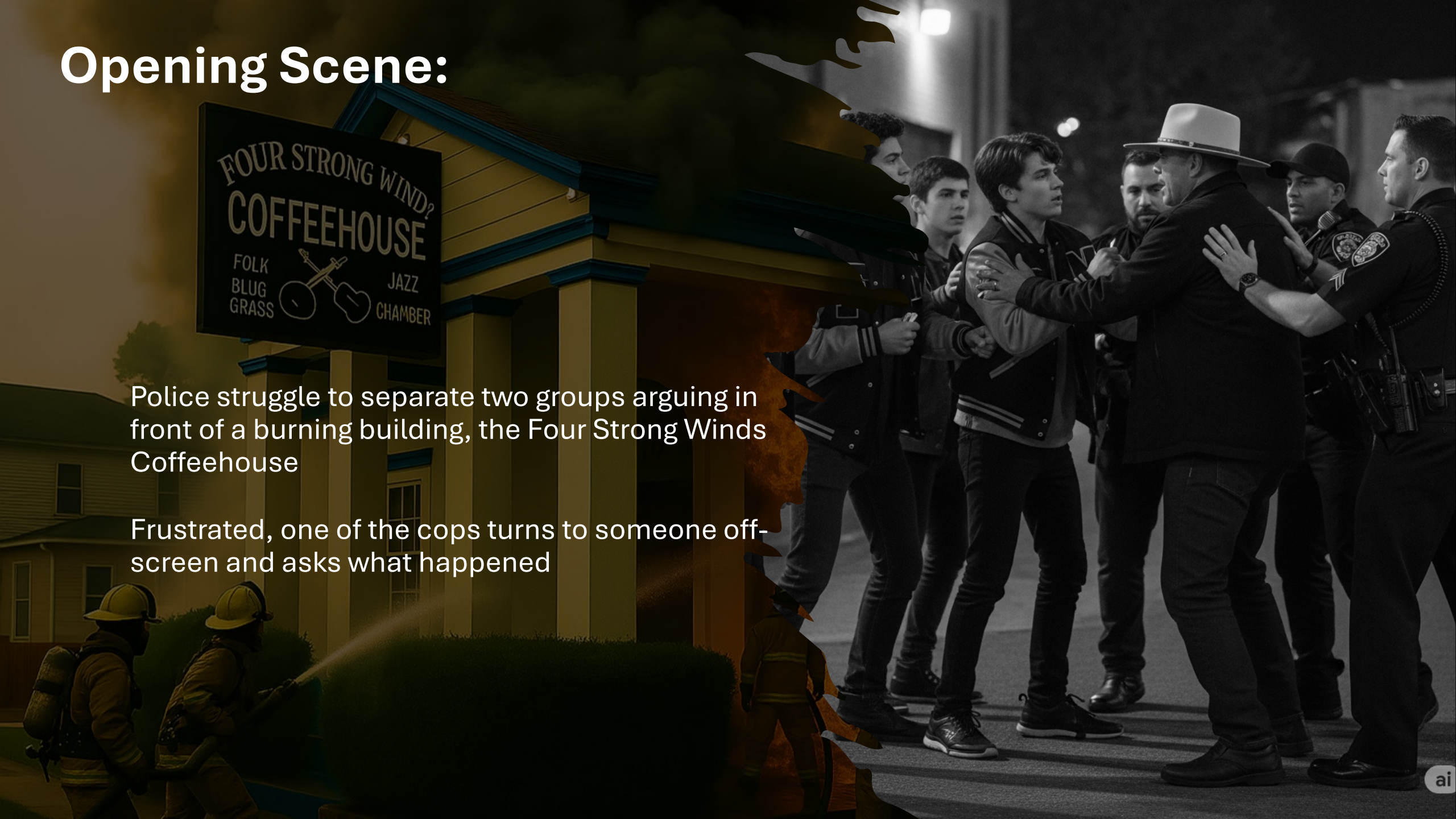
Written by CJ Hatch:

- **Published Novelist**
- **Award-winning screenwriter**
- **Former actor, TV/Radio producer, and journalist**
- **Combat Veteran**
- **Legislative & PR consultant**

Opening Scene:

Police struggle to separate two groups arguing in front of a burning building, the Four Strong Winds Coffeehouse

Frustrated, one of the cops turns to someone off-screen and asks what happened



Earlier in the evening:

Two groups of teens converge on the cultural center of the small Gulf Coast city of Mobile, Alabama – Bel-Air Mall:

- A crew of white, high school jocks led by Colt with his little brother, Terry, tagging along
- Three “alternative kids,” including Coco, a BIPOC, gender-nonconforming teen

The two groups roam about separately, each getting into mischief, until they converge at a record store:

- Coco accidentally bumps into Colt who goes nuts and puts Coco in a chokehold
- Terry stands up to Colt, warning him that mall security is on its way

Police officers eject both groups from the mall and send them off to their cars

A car chase ensues as Colt pursues Coco and their friends





Meanwhile:

At the Four Strong Winds Coffeehouse, owner Budd McLean performs Harry Chapin's "Cat's in the Cradle" to a racially diverse crowd of teen punks, hippies, etc...

Outside, Coco's group leads Colt to the Four Strong Winds where they run inside for safety

Two of the music venue's bouncers, and Budd scare off Colt and his friends

With the threat neutralized, open-mic music begins anew, ranging from punk, to indie folk, to classic rock



Racing away from the Coffeehouse, Colt and Terry argue

Colt kicks Terry out of his car and leaves him in the middle of the street

Terry finds his way back to the Four Strong Winds where he connects with Coco who shows him a different world – one where mold-breaking teens are (generally) accepted and free to experiment with art, gender, and more...



Coco performs a funny, but inspirational monologue about being trans but, after more music, the fire inspector shuts the Coffeehouse down

Budd plays and sings Donovan's "To Try for the Sun" while Terry, Coco and others help close up

Colt & friends return, and a fight breaks out before police come and arrest Budd and several employees

After arguing with Coco, Terry leaves with Colt



Colt decides Terry has “turned gay” and takes it upon himself to “beat the gay” out of his little brother

Injured, Terry escapes and is found by Coco who brings him back to their home

Coco’s disapproving mother kicks them out and they go in search of a place to sleep and have a little fun – starting with the Waffle House and a local gay bar

When police raid the bar, Coco and Terry find themselves on the run again and headed back to the Four Strong Winds



Budd and the others post bail and return to the Four Strong Winds, where they reveal how the Coffeehouse got its start and how it became a safe place for teens

Budd plays and sings Woody Guthrie's "Tom Joad" as Coco walks toward the Coffeehouse and sees Colt and crew return once more - this time to spray homophobic graffiti on the building

Meanwhile, a mysterious figure opens a Coffeehouse window and pours gasoline inside

Budd and the others confront Colt and his crew

Cops arrive again, just as fire begins to consume the Four Strong Winds





FOUR STRONG WIND?
COFFEEHOUSE
FOLK BLUG GRASS JAZZ CHAMBER

We return to the opening scene in which police struggle to separate Budd and Colt's crews who are arguing in front of the Four Strong Winds Coffeehouse – now in flames

Frustrated, one of the cops turns to an off-screen figure and asks them what happened.



Terry steps forward and tells the police that his brother Colt started the fire

The police arrest Colt

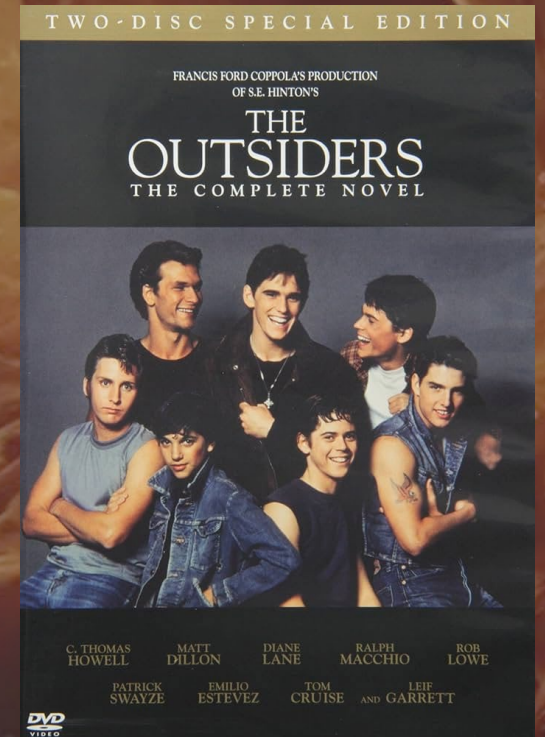
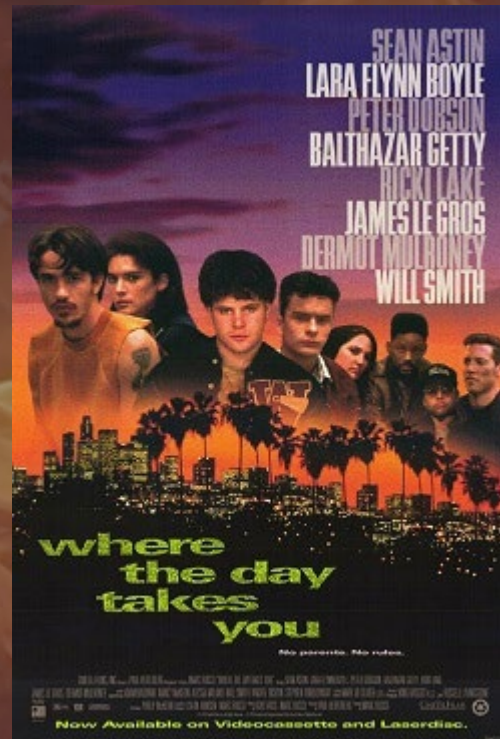
Coco confronts Terry, who admits he started the fire to keep Colt from coming back and hurting Coco and the others

Disgusted and hurt, Coco walks away

Budd sings Neil Young's "Only Love Can Break Your Heart"

The End

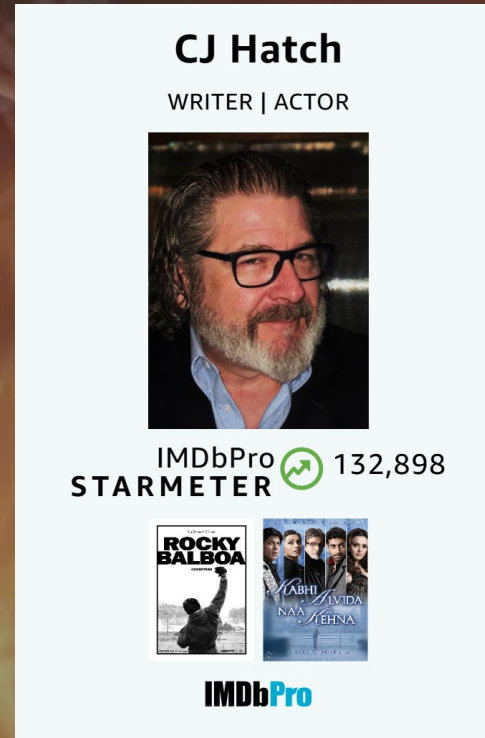
COMPS



OF NOTE:



Actor, director,
and professional musician,
Dermot Mulroney
is ready to commit to the role of
Four Strong Winds
owner and musician
Budd McLean



“Roman à clef adjacent;” Fire at
the Four Strong Winds is based
upon events experienced by the
writer – a former FSW bouncer
(the fire is fictional, though there
was always plenty of smoke)



The real FSW closed circa 1997.
Gordon “Budd” McLean passed
away March 7, 2025, at the age
of 80, surrounded by friends
and family, and remembered by
hundreds of “Coffeehouse
Kids,” who continue his legacy
across the world

THE GOUVES BROTHERS

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