

A Merrell "It Starts Outside"
Narrative Brief Submission

Of the World

Once upon a time, the protagonist was overwhelmed by the mere thought of stepping outside of their home, but through shadow work and immersive therapy for agoraphobia, they now live outside. For them recovery started outside.

Visual Concept: Full-bleed 9:16 image of a character framed in a doorway, half in fluorescent shadow and half in a light blanket of fog.



Director's Statement & Brand Alignment

Director's Statement: "The outdoors isn't only defined as the wilderness; instead, it is accessible the moment we walk through an exit. This film explores how stepping outside of limiting beliefs acts as an immediate catalyst for healing and personal growth."

Brand Alignment:

- Deeply Attuned: Observing real human burnout and the physical release of taking a breath outdoors.
- Infectiously Optimistic: Highlighting the subtle, immediate possibility of emotional renewal.

Psychological Profile & Meaning

Character Profile: A person who has recovered from agoraphobia after intense shadow work and awakening, who now feels most free outside.

Human Truth: We all spend too much time locked inside: The lock on our front doors, building access cards, and elevators. We self-isolate behind our screens, absorbing massive amounts of blue light. Stepping outside can heal and bring hope by breaking mental inertia and reconnecting us to ourselves.

Narrative Arch (60–90 Seconds)

- **The Tension (0:00–0:20):** Tight, claustrophobic 9:16 framing inside a dimly lit bedroom early in the morning. They are putting on their Merrell gear, preparing to go outside. There is voiceover simply saying, “I remember when I couldn’t go out. Outside was just too big. Too scary. Now, I can’t stay in.”
- **The Catalyst (0:20–0:50):** They step outside. They open the front door and the fog of the cool morning embraces them. They stop to survey the sky, taking measured deep breaths, eyes wide with admiration and appreciation. They do a few quick stretches, touching the dewy grass. As they take off running, the camera opens up, capturing the unexpected beauty of the horizon and the skyline.
- **The Shift (0:50–1:20):** Their physical pause induces an internal shift. We hear the chirping of birds and see a kayak being pushed into a body of water by them. We see them climb into the kayak and begin paddling slowly. They are reconnected with the nature surrounding them and we their sense of peaceful joy, having returned to themselves.

Visual Language & 9:16 Framing



- **Vertical Framing:** Designed natively for 9:16 mobile screens. Uses vertical lines (doorways, trees, skyline) to emphasize depth.
- **Lighting & Color:**
 - *Indoors:* Shadowy glow of musty amber, diffused light.
 - *Outdoors:* Vibrant organic greens and warm natural light.
- **Camera Movement:** Static handheld shots with an indoor transition into fluid camera motion outdoors.



Audio & Tactile Sound Design

Indoor Soundscape: A sparse, suffocating absence of a variety of sounds, a coffeemaker percolating, and muffled morning news.

The Outdoor Shift: Sudden acoustic drop into crisp, immersive audio of the location with the sound of their footsteps and a grounding exhale.

Cutdown Strategy (:06, :15, :30)

Designed so that individual beats of the indoor tension (:06), the step outside (:15), and the emotional reconnection (:30) will serve as standalone cutdown spots.

:06 Bumper: 2s Indoor bed, 2s Step outside, and 2s Satisfied exhale.

:15 Social Spot: 3s Indoor tension, 7s Sensory engagement with stretching/grass, 5s Takeoff running.

:30 Mid-Length: A condensed 3-act narrative that highlights the contrast between the character's beginning and end states, of pensiveness to confidence.

Budget, Timeline & Team

Timeline (Oct–Dec): Pre-pro/Shoot in October, Editing/Color/Sound in November, Final Assets delivered by Dec 14.

Budget (\$20,000 USD Breakdown):

- Talent & Crew: \$6,000 (30%)
- Equipment & Logistics: \$3,000 (15%)
- Post-Production (Editor, Color, Mix): \$5,500 (27.5%)
- Director & Producer Fees: \$3,500 (17.5%)
- Contingency: \$2,000 (10%)

Team: Director, Producer, Cinematographer, Field Sound Recordist, Editor.