

# REBEL

Based On A True Story

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## FILM TREATMENT

When a daring patriot's horse escapes to a spirited young girl, they must form a bond of trust and friendship to evade a vengeful British loyalist and warn the patriots that the British are coming.

### BACKGROUND:

The film takes place in 1776, during the American Revolutionary War. The American colonies are fighting for independence from British rule, just a few months after signing the Declaration of Independence in July.

British forces have control over New York City, which is a key stronghold, while the Continental Army, led by General George Washington, is trying to hold its ground in the area. This time is marked by heavy espionage, with both British and American sides seeking information about each other's movements. Spies and informants are crucial, risking their lives to gather intelligence that could change the course of the war. Many colonists are divided—Loyalists support the British, while Patriots push for independence—creating an environment of suspicion, betrayal, and covert operations.

### OVERVIEW:

REBEL is a gripping, historical drama that plunges us into the gritty turmoil of the American Revolution.

The story jumps into action with Nathan Hale, a young spy for the Continental Army, who infiltrates enemy lines, only to be captured and hanged by the British. His loyal horse, Rebel, witnesses the betrayal and sets off on a perilous journey of his own. Rebel's path crosses with Sybil Ludington, a fiercely spirited young woman who longs to join the fight for freedom despite societal expectations.

With the help of Caleb, an older, wise former slave, Sybil tames Rebel and forges a deep bond with him as they both navigate their trauma and find their place in the fight for independence.

Through cunning, courage, and friendship, they evade capture by the ruthless Dr. Prosser, who is determined to recapture Rebel for his own sinister purposes.

The film weaves together Sybil's coming-of-age story and Rebel's transformation from a lost horse to a symbol of resilience and freedom.

With a blend of action, drama, and historical authenticity, REBEL explores themes of loyalty, sacrifice, and the defiance that fuels revolutions.

This film is a raw, evocative journey into the heart of America's fight for liberty, where every battle is personal, and even a horse can be a hero.

#### CHARACTER SET-

#### UP:

Nathan Hale, (20s), is a young, idealistic patriot who is brave yet naive. He wishes to serve his country and is dedicated to the revolutionary cause, though his trust ultimately leads to his downfall. His journey is short but pivotal, as his tragic end becomes a rallying point for other patriots.

Ichabod Prosser, (30s-40s), is a cunning, loyalist doctor who relishes his role as a spy hunter. He is ruthless, sharp, and enjoys manipulating others. Throughout the story, his cruelty hardens further, and he becomes more vindictive, especially in his pursuit of Rebel, Nathan Hale's horse.

Sybil Ludington, (16) is a spirited and rebellious young woman who longs to break free from societal expectations. She wants to join the fight for independence and prove her worth. Over her journey, Sybil transforms from a curious girl into a determined and resilient young woman who is willing to take risks for what she believes in.

Rebel is Nathan Hale's loyal horse, symbolic of freedom and defiance. He initially seeks safety but grows into a symbol of resilience and rebellion, especially as he connects with Sybil. Rebel's journey sees him overcome fear and adversity, ultimately inspiring those around him.

Caleb, (50s-60s), is an elderly, wise former slave with a deep understanding of resilience. He wants to assist the patriots and protect Sybil. As a mentor figure, he imparts wisdom about trust and freedom, though he too faces dangers. His strength of spirit is a steadying force throughout the narrative.

Arnold "Scruffy" Tuffy, (30s), Owner of Tuffy's Tavern and right hand man to Ichabod Prosser. A man of low cunning and cruelty.

Rebecca Ludington, (14) Sybil's adorable, sometimes bratty, younger sister.

Colonel Henry Ludington, (30s) Sybil's father and leader of the local militia. He is tasked by George Washington to gather intelligence and to subdue the local British loyalists.

Abigail Ludington, (30s) Sybil's mother. She demands that Sybil act like a lady and conform with societal expectations.

#### STORY:

In 1776, Lieutenant Nathan Hale arrives at Tuffy's Tavern in New York, dressed as a civilian. He ties up his horse, Rebel, and goes inside. Dr. Ichabod Prosser and Arnold Tuffy notice him and exchange glances. Soon after, Robert Rogers enters and briefly looks at Prosser. Rogers introduces himself to Hale as "Mr. Sumner" and engages him in conversation.

Hale starts to trust him, unaware of the trap. When Rebel neighs outside, Hale tries to leave. Rogers blocks him and reveals his identity as a British officer. Hale is arrested as British soldiers arrive to shackle him. Rebel, tied outside, watches in distress.

Later, Hale is executed in Manhattan. He calmly declares that his only regret is having just one life to give for his country. Rebel, restrained by Prosser and Tuffy, struggles against his ties. Prosser and Tuffy later lead Rebel to a river ferry, making dark jokes about Hale. Rebel reacts by injuring Prosser and escaping into the river. The next morning, an elderly man named Caleb finds Rebel on the riverbank and takes him in.

At the Ludington home, Sybil Ludington and her siblings listen as General George Washington toasts Nathan Hale. Sybil, excited, shares her wish to fight like her father. She takes supper to Caleb in the barn and meets Rebel for the first time. Sybil admires the horse and tries to grab his halter, but Rebel backs away. Caleb explains that Rebel, like him, doesn't trust strangers.

Inside, Washington and Henry Ludington discuss intelligence efforts. They consider moving spies through the area, but Ludington warns that Westchester County is full of outlaws. Washington decides they need to infiltrate local Tory groups. Later, Abigail Ludington checks on Rebel, and Caleb remarks that the horse likely belonged to another patriot.

At dawn, Washington thanks the Ludingtons and leaves. Henry later teaches Sybil how to shoot a musket. He tells her she must ride Rebel to check their land while he's away. Sybil saddles Rebel, but she struggles with the sidesaddle.

Rebel repeatedly scrapes her off and even rolls over to dislodge her. Caleb gently suggests she try again another day.

That night, Rebel dreams of Hale's capture and wakes up uneasy. He roams the barn, drinks ale from a keg, and overeats on corn and oats. Sybil finds him drunk in the morning, and Caleb helps her walk him around to prevent colic. Later, Sybil sits beside Rebel, frustrated that he doesn't trust her. Caleb reassures her. He explains that Rebel has faced hardships and needs time, just like Caleb did.

Colonel Henry Ludington meets with prisoners at Van Wyck headquarters, among them Enoch Crosby, who is disguised. They confirm Enoch's identity with a code phrase, and after a mock interrogation, Henry frees him. Enoch then departs with Caleb, discussing espionage risks as they go.

Back at the Ludington barn, Sybil finds Rebel has escaped again and is wreaking havoc among the chickens. Abigail, Caleb, and Enoch arrive to see the chaos. Abigail scolds Rebel, while Caleb gives Abigail letters from her husband, and the children gather the chickens.

Later, Sybil finds Rebel back in his stall and, exhausted, shares a quiet moment with him. She realizes he is also grieving. Caleb reassures her, advising patience and understanding.

The next morning, Sybil confidently rides Rebel, showing her bond with him has grown. She eagerly invites Caleb to join her, but he declines, hinting at duties with her father. Sybil and Rebel then start their day, inspecting the pasture fence.

At a muddy pond, Rebel refuses to go near the water. Sybil tries to push him forward but ends up flying into the mud. As she heads home, she encounters Dr. Prosser, who notices her muddy state and questions her about a runaway grey horse. Sybil deflects his questions, but Prosser hints at suspicion before leaving.

Back at home, Sybil complains to her mother about Rebel's fear of water. Over time, she works with Rebel to overcome it, using carrots to coax him. Eventually, inspired by Pumpkin, Rebel cautiously enters the pond, earning Sybil's praise.

Sybil sees Caleb talking with Enoch Crosby. Caleb suggests she carry pistols when checking fences due to outlaws nearby, and Sybil agrees to stay alert.

At Tuffy's Tavern, Prosser, in a cast, observes Caleb talking to Miles and orders Tuffy to follow him. Meanwhile, Abigail, Sybil, and Rebecca sew at home. Abigail dismisses Sybil's ambition to fight for freedom, saying it's for men, not women. Disheartened, Sybil returns to sewing as Abigail deals with her sons playing soldier outside.

Across Long Island Sound, Caleb rows a whaleboat with Continental Marines under British fire. He narrowly avoids injury and helps his comrades escape, taunting the British as they row to safety. They reach the Connecticut shore at sunset, where Caleb sets off on his mission.

Caleb travels through the forest by night and, reaching a dirt road, is suddenly surrounded by Skinners. Arnold Tuffy appears, knocks him down, and orders the Skinners to search him.

Before dawn, Sybil sneaks into the barn, bypasses her sidesaddle, and uses Caleb's saddle on Rebel. She mounts him and quietly rides away as the sky lightens.

Later, Abigail sends Rebecca to find Sybil, but she returns saying Sybil and Rebel are gone. Abigail checks the barn and notices Caleb's saddle is missing, becoming upset.

Meanwhile, Sybil rides Rebel at full gallop across an open field, enjoying the freedom. She stops on a dirt road and meets Miles, who teases her for riding without a sidesaddle. They talk spiritedly about freedom and women's roles.

Their conversation is cut short by the sound of Doctor Prosser's approaching wagon. Sybil quickly hides behind a stone wall with Miles and Rebel. Prosser, annoyed and muttering, passes by, suspiciously sniffing the air when Rebel snorts. After a tense pause, Prosser continues on his way.

At dusk, Sybil sneaks Rebel back into the barn but is caught by Abigail, who scolds her for sneaking out and lying. Sybil argues back, saying she wants to fight. In anger, Abigail slaps her, accusing her of disregarding family sacrifices. Heartbroken, Sybil runs to the barn and collapses beside Rebel, seeking comfort.

As Rebel grazes nearby, Miles arrives with Caleb's wagon, explaining that Caleb instructed him to return it if he didn't reappear within three days. He mentions that Tuffy may have been following Caleb. Sybil wants to investigate, but Abigail forbids her from going near the tavern.

That night, Sybil sneaks out, saddles Rebel with Caleb's gear, and heads to town. She finds Enoch Crosby at the livery stable, telling him she's looking for Caleb.

Crosby admits Prosser has captured Caleb and warns her of the danger, but Sybil insists on helping. Crosby agrees and instructs her to wait by the tavern.

Sybil hides near Tuffy's Tavern and watches as it closes. She is soon confronted by Tuffy and two skinners, with Crosby pretending to join them and holding a gun to her neck for reward money.

At Prosser's barn, Caleb is hanging unconscious, battered. Tuffy drags Sybil in, and Prosser is delighted at capturing her and Rebel. He threatens to torture her in front of Caleb to make him reveal Continental Army secrets, then orders Tuffy to lock her up for further interrogation the next day.

Crosby returns under cover of darkness, revealing his ruse to Sybil and freeing her. Together, they lower Caleb to the ground. Sybil fetches water, reviving Caleb just enough for him to warn of an impending British attack on the supply depot at Danbury. Realizing the urgency, Crosby helps Caleb onto Rebel and instructs Sybil to take him home, while he goes to warn her father. They exchange thanks and separate into the night.

At dawn, Sybil arrives at the Ludington house with Caleb, who is weak and barely conscious. He asks her to stop by an old oak tree, where he quietly passes away as they watch the sunrise. Rebel stands beside them, mourning.

The family later gathers at Caleb's grave. Abigail reads from the Bible, while Rebel gazes at a puddle, as if shedding tears. Sybil vows that Caleb's sacrifice will not be forgotten.

The next day, Sybil sits on the porch with a musket, Rebecca by her side holding a pistol. They react to hoofbeats, only to realize it's Miles. Sybil scolds him for nearly getting shot, and Abigail teases him about his readiness. Miles explains that Enoch Crosby warned of an attack and has come to help defend their home.

That night, Sybil and Miles stand guard, discussing Caleb. Sybil reveals Caleb's past escape from slavery. Miles shyly asks to court her, and Sybil humorously suggests he'll need to woo her with poetry, though she prefers musket fire.

Later, Rebecca wakes them, spotting movement in the woods. Tuffy and his skinners approach, intent on taking Rebel. Sybil fires, briefly illuminating the woods and calling out Tuffy's name.

Abigail rouses the younger boys, preparing everyone for a fight. The family, joined by Miles, readies to defend their home as the skinners advance.

Under heavy musket fire, Sybil and Miles take cover on the porch, defending the Ludington home. Rebecca, frightened, hides behind a water barrel, but Sybil reassures her and keeps firing. Inside, Abigail helps the boys, giving them toy muskets and lining them up to create the illusion of a larger militia. Tuffy spots their shadows and mistakes them for soldiers, ordering his men to retreat.

As they pull back, a skinner runs from the barn with Rebel chasing him. Disgusted, Tuffy retreats, vowing revenge. Rebel returns to Sybil, who shouts a defiant farewell to Tuffy. Upstairs, Abigail realizes she's in labor and calls for Sybil and Rebecca, who help her to bed. They assist through a difficult breech birth, but by dawn, Abigail delivers a healthy baby girl.

Later, Henry Ludington returns home, relieved to find his family safe. Sybil tells him about Caleb's death and the new baby. Henry, deeply moved, thanks her for all she's done. Inside, he shares a quiet moment with Abigail, who forgives him for missing the birth.

Their relief is brief, as Henry announces that the British are advancing on Danbury. Sybil volunteers to raise the alarm, and Abigail gives her blessing, urging her to "ride like a rebel." Sybil gathers her gear, mounts Rebel, and charges into the rainy night.

Sybil and Rebel ride through the storm, stopping at each house to warn of the British threat. She rallies local militia, her calls echoing through the dark roads. Despite fear, she presses on, determined to alert everyone before the battle begins.

Rebel runs tirelessly, but both he and Sybil face hardships. Rebel stumbles in the mud, sending Sybil to the ground. She pushes through, remounts, and they continue. At a fork, unsure which way to go, Sybil trusts Rebel's instincts, and they choose the right path.

In Carmel, Sybil bursts into a tavern, warning the men of the attack. They laugh, but when Rebel kicks the door open, silence falls. She commands their attention, and after she leaves, they scramble into action.

Sybil pushes Rebel through the storm, stopping at homes to spread the warning. By dawn, exhausted but triumphant, she heads home as the militia gathers.

Meanwhile, British troops prepare to march on Danbury. Sybil and Rebel encounter Prosser and Tuffy blocking their path. Sybil's pistol misfires, and they flee as Tuffy and his men pursue. They evade capture, bolting through the woods, staying ahead of the skinners.

In Danbury, British forces wreak havoc, setting fires and attacking civilians. Colonel Ludington's militia, including Miles, marches to meet them, leading to a fierce skirmish in the streets of Fairfield.

Sybil and Rebel continue their escape, outsmarting Tuffy and his men through the forest. As they near home, Rebel's resolve mirrors Sybil's, both determined to complete their mission.

Henry Ludington's regiment moves closer to Danbury, ready to defend. Back at home, Abigail and Rebecca listen to the distant sounds of battle, standing firm as they brace for what may come.

Despite the rain and darkness, Sybil rides Rebel to the homes of farmers and taverns, waking residents and urging them to gather at her father's house. Though some doubt her, her determination convinces them. She endures harsh weather, difficult terrain, and even a dangerous encounter with Tuffy. Cornered, she dives into a river to escape, with Rebel carrying her safely across, both cleansed of their journey's grime.

Meanwhile, the Ludington militia fights British troops in Fairfield. Henry and his men eventually drive them back, though not without losses—Miles is injured. At home, Abigail gives birth as Sybil completes her mission. Exhausted, Sybil returns, finding rest before sharing a tender moment with Henry and a recovering Miles, now fully aware of the sacrifices involved.

With spring's arrival, General Washington visits the Ludingtons, awarding Sybil a Badge of Military Merit for her bravery. He assures her that Rebel will remain with her, despite Prosser's claims.

In the final scenes, Enoch Crosby arrives at Prosser's door with soldiers, signaling Prosser's downfall. Sybil and Miles reflect at Caleb's grave, with Rebel and Pumpkin grazing nearby.

"To muster the militia that stormy night, sixteen-year-old Sybil Ludington rode over forty miles".

"Paul Revere's famous ride was twelve."



END