



PAST DUE

A Mystery Drama Set in Atlanta

Genre:

Mystery / Psychological Drama

Format: Original Movie (85–90 mins)

Tone: Introspective, suspenseful, emotionally grounded

Setting: Atlanta, Historic West End, Downtown, and intimate residential spaces

Logline:

A successful real estate attorney returns to Atlanta after inheriting her aunt's crumbling Victorian home only to uncover clues tied to a decades-old missing girl case and a haunting revelation: she may not be who she thinks she is.

Concept:

Tiana Grant has it all: a sleek condo in Midtown Atlanta, a thriving career closing high-profile development deals, and no attachments to the West End neighborhood she left behind. Cold, pragmatic, and laser-focused, Tiana avoids mess, sentiment, and anything that reminds her of her fractured past.

So when her estranged Aunt Noreen dies and leaves Tiana her dilapidated house, Tiana plans to sell it fast. But as she begins clearing it out, strange items surface, a blood-stained baby blanket, a taped box of clippings about a missing girl named Devon Carter, and a photo of a child who looks exactly like her.

Tiana initially dismisses the connection, until an elderly neighbor cryptically warns her, *That house holds stories, and some of them are yours.*

Driven by a mixture of suspicion and buried fear, Tiana dives deeper into Devon's 1995 disappearance. Each clue unravels a new thread: falsified medical records, a sealed adoption file, and a name her mother refuses to acknowledge.

The deeper she digs, the more the pieces start to fit. Devon Carter didn't vanish. She became Tiana. And her aunt, who once seemed strict and paranoid, may have rescued her from something far more dangerous: her own biological parents.

Twist:

Devon's "disappearance" was never reported because her abusive father, a prominent local pastor, covered it up. Her aunt Noreen took her and raised her as Tiana in secret. Now, 30 years later, someone tied to that past knows she's back and wants to keep the secret buried.

Themes:

- Identity and inheritance
 - The cost of silence and survival
 - Black women reclaiming their truth
 - The intersection of trauma and legacy
 - Healing through truth, no matter how painful
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Character Breakdown:

TIANA GRANT (35)

A high-achieving real estate attorney, emotionally distant and relentlessly logical. She's proud of what she's built but unaware of the emotional costs. As the mystery unravels, so does the tightly wound version of herself.

AUNT NOREEN (60s, seen in flashbacks)

Fierce, secretive, and principled. Took Tiana to protect her but never told her the truth. Regarded as "eccentric" by the neighborhood, but her journals reveal a woman torn between survival and honesty.

MRS. FRANKLIN (70s)

Next-door neighbor. Knows more than she lets on. Her vague warnings and veiled stories push Tiana to keep digging. A mix of old-school grace and buried resentment.

GLORIA GRANT (50s)

Tiana's mother (or so she believed). Pious, sharp, and determined to keep the past buried. She holds the final piece of the puzzle and must choose between pride and truth.

DEVON CARTER (15, flashbacks)

Gentle and artistic. Victim of domestic trauma. Disappears without a trace, until Tiana realizes she *is* Devon. Her spirit guides the emotional center of the story.

Structure (Four Act Arc):

ACT I – *The Inheritance*

Tiana receives news of Aunt Noreen's death. Travels to Atlanta to clean out the house. Finds disturbing items in the attic. Receives subtle warnings from a neighbor.

ACT II – *The Investigation*

Begins researching Devon Carter. Learns she went missing the same year Tiana appeared in family photos. Her mother denies everything. Tiana uncovers a sealed adoption file and a burned photo album.

ACT III – *The Confrontation*

Tiana confronts her mother and learns the truth. Flashbacks reveal that her aunt rescued her from an abusive father. Tiana breaks down and questions her identity. She discovers Devon's backpack buried under the house.

ACT IV – *The Reclamation*

Tiana stops the sale of the house and decides to turn it into a safe haven for girls in crisis, honoring Noreen's legacy and her own truth. She tells her story publicly, reclaiming her name, past, and power.

Why It Works:

Strong, complex Black female lead

A mystery driven by personal stakes, not just crime

Twist rooted in identity, trauma, and emotional truth

Social relevance around abuse, silence, and generational survival

Culturally grounded in Atlanta with real community texture

Comparable Projects:

- *A Fall From Grace* (Netflix)
 - *Greenleaf* (OWN)
 - *Losing Isaiah* meets *The Vanishing Half*
 - *Secrets of the Summer House* (Lifetime)
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Casting Suggestions:

- Tiana Grant: Kerry Washington, Meagan Good, Simone Missick, or Sanaa Lathan
- Gloria (Mother): Vanessa Bell Calloway, Loretta Devine
- Young Devon (Flashbacks): Emerging Black teen actress
- Mrs. Franklin: Jenifer Lewis or Lynn Whitfield

PAST DUE synopsis

Genre: Mystery / Psychological Drama

Setting: Atlanta – Historic West End

Synopsis:

Tiana Grant, a high-powered real estate attorney, returns to Atlanta's West End after the death of her estranged aunt, intent on selling the rundown Victorian home she's inherited. But her plans take a dark turn when she discovers a box of old photographs, letters, and newspaper clippings tied to a decades-old missing girl case, one with eerie parallels to her own past.

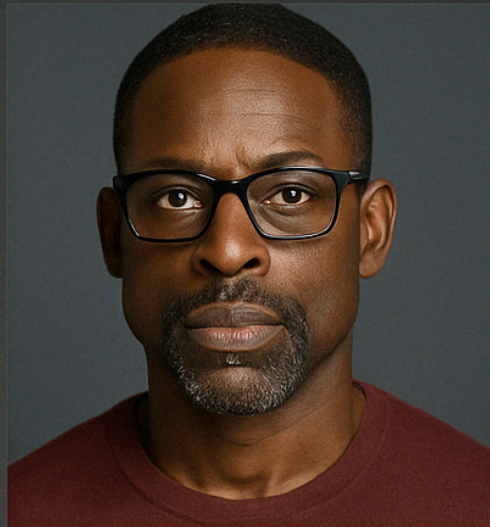
The deeper Tiana digs, the more disturbing the truth becomes. Her aunt's home was more than a shelter, it was a sanctuary for someone running from something. And the girl who disappeared all those years ago may not have vanished at all... because Tiana is that girl.

As the secrets unravel, Tiana is forced to confront her identity, her family's lies, and a legacy of survival that was never meant to be uncovered. In reclaiming her past, she discovers a purpose that's been waiting for her all along.

PAST DUE



Sanaa Lathan



Sterling K. Brown



Dewanda Wise



Jamie Hector

CASTING SUGGESTIONS