

THE DEVON HOUSE

A PRESTIGE LEGAL & SOCIAL DRAMA

The city's most ruthless gentrification attorney inherits her dead aunt's crumbling house — and finds, in its attic, the secret of her own erased childhood: she is a girl who was made to vanish thirty years ago to survive a beloved pastor. Now she must choose between the armored life she built on forgetting and the truth that can finally bring him down.

THE STORY

TIANA GRANT is Atlanta's most feared land-use attorney — the closer who makes historic Black neighborhoods disappear beneath glass towers. When her estranged aunt Noreen dies, Tiana returns to a sagging West End Victorian to liquidate one more property. In the attic she finds a box with a stranger's name on her own baby photo: *Devon Carter*, a fifteen-year-old girl reported missing in 1995 and never found.

The girl was her. Her aunt ran a one-woman underground railroad for girls escaping a pastor no one would ever believe — Devon's own father, the Reverend Samuel Carter, thirty-five years beloved and untouchable. Noreen hid the child, remade her on paper, and spent a life in the crack between the right thing and the legal thing.

As a haunted detective, a runaway squatter, and a neighborhood full of kept secrets pull her deeper, Carter's machine moves to bury the evidence and the woman carrying it. Tiana stops bringing him a case and brings him a room he cannot clear: a citywide gala, a live mic, and a thirty-year-old tape of a fifteen-year-old's voice. Exposure costs her the career she built on silence — and turns her aunt's house into a sanctuary with the lights finally on.

"You don't have to pick anymore. You get to be the whole thing."

TIANA & DEVON • ONE WOMAN, TWO NAMES

FORMAT

Feature • ~90 pages

GENRE

Legal / social drama; identity thriller

TARGET PLATFORMS

OWN • BET+ • Lifetime
(Netflix prestige crossover)

COMPARABLES

Just Mercy • *Erin Brockovich* • *Spotlight*

SETTING

Atlanta — the historic West End

WRITTEN BY

Kelly R. Tenney

THEMES

Identity

Generational trauma

The cost of silence

Community

Faith & power

Reclamation

THE HOOK

A high-concept identity mystery fused with a systemic-accountability drama, anchored by a fierce female lead and a monster the whole city loves. Prestige feel, broad emotional payoff, and a real-world engine — gentrification turned against the very woman who wielded it.

Casting Breakdown

PRINCIPAL CAST • FEATURE • ALL ROLES BLACK / AFRICAN-AMERICAN UNLESS NOTED

LEADS

TIANA GRANT — a.k.a. DEVON ANNE CARTER

Female • 45 • LEAD • heavy dramatic range

Atlanta’s most feared gentrification attorney; beneath the armor, the girl who vanished. Must travel from ice-cold, weaponized charm to shattered survivor to a woman rebuilt around purpose. Carries the film. A tour-de-force role: courtroom steel and buried grief in the same breath.

In the vein of: Danielle Deadwyler • Kerry Washington • Nicole Beharie

REV. SAMUEL CARTER

Male • 60s • ANTAGONIST

A beloved megachurch pastor of thirty-five years — genuinely magnetic, generous, adored — and a predator who has never once believed he is the villain. The role lives in the gap between the miracle and the alibi; the charm must be real enough that the audience understands three decades of silence.

In the vein of: Courtney B. Vance • Delroy Lindo • Glynn Turman

FEATURED SUPPORTING

GLORIA GRANT

Female • 60s • Tiana’s mother

The mother who ran and left her daughter behind, then took the pastor’s hush money for thirty years. Complicit, bought, and broken — with the film’s hardest redemption: she must choose her daughter over her own survival, out loud, in public.

In the vein of: Lynn Whitfield • Alfre Woodard • Loretta Devine

KAYLA

Female • 19 • the B-story heart • breakout role

A sharp, guarded runaway squatting in Noreen’s house — one of the aunt’s girls. Gen-Z grit and wit; the mirror that forces Tiana’s humanity back online. Ends the film as the one who answers the door for the next girl. Ideal newcomer / discovery role.

In the vein of: Marsai Martin (aged up) • a fresh discovery

DETECTIVE YVONNE MARSH

Female • 45 • ally / investigator

Atlanta PD, sharp and weary. One of Noreen’s rescued girls herself, holding an eleven-year-old promise. The steady spine of the investigation and its emotional witness.

In the vein of: Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor • Pauletta Washington

Casting Breakdown

SUPPORTING & DAY PLAYERS

SUPPORTING

NOREEN GRANT

Female • 60s–70s • flashback, photographs & voice-over

The late aunt — a church secretary who ran an underground railroad of one, hiding and remaking abused girls. Seen young in a 1995 rescue; heard throughout in journals and letters. The moral center; legacy casting.

In the vein of: Phylicia Rashad • the Cicely Tyson tradition

MRS. FRANKLIN (“Ida”)

Female • 70s • neighborhood matriarch / griot

The keeper of the street’s memory, forty years back-fence with Noreen. Cryptic, regal, unimpressed — the one who first tells Tiana she is going to change everything.

In the vein of: Beah Richards tradition • L. Scott Caldwell

DENISE

Female • 40s • survivor

A wife and mother who buried her past to keep her family. The witness who wavers, recants under pressure, and finally stands — the first domino at the gala. A quiet, devastating arc.

In the vein of: Tika Sumpter • Nicole Ari Parker

MARIE

Female • 40s • West End neighbor

Warm, plainspoken community anchor who confirms Noreen’s legacy and warns Tiana the block is split — some loved her aunt, some owe the church.

In the vein of: Yvette Nicole Brown • Adrienne C. Moore

DEACON ELIAS WHITFIELD

Male • 70s–80s • complicit elder

Signed the hush-money disbursements, prayed he was wrong about why. Repents publicly at the eleventh hour — a small, powerful arc.

In the vein of: Bill Cobbs tradition • John Amos tradition

DAY PLAYERS & FEATURED

THE FIXER

Male • 40s • Carter’s muscle • near-silent menace

The quiet man in the idling sedan. Surveillance, intimidation, a wolf who knocks. Physical presence over dialogue.

DEVON CARTER (age 15)

Female • 15 • flashback / the voice on the tape

Young Tiana in the 1995 rescue and the recorded testimony that detonates the third act. Terror, courage, and a whole person underneath. Also cast: DEVON at 6 (photo).

Also casting: Managing Partner • Councilman Reese • Prosecutor • Journalist • Carter’s Lawyer • Church Administrator • the Mayor • West End residents, congregants, survivors & shelter residents.