



NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE

A FILM BY **THE GRANT BROTHER**

BROHAWK FILMS AND SECOND HOME PRODS. PRESENT A BROHAWK/SECOND HOME PRODUCTION A GRANT BROTHER FILM
STARRING CRYSTAL LUCAS PERRY AND INTRODUCING NOAH MOLINARI LILIANNE HAMILTON NOEL WOOD SHAUNDRRA PATTERSON MUSIC JAD JACOB
COSTUMES TAMIKA DUNCAN EDITED JOEL DOURIS DYLAN MATTHEWS PRODUCTION DESIGN Oak Laokwansathitaya DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY GEOFF
TAYLOR EXECUTIVE PROD. MONIQUE Perreault Kaream Appleton Bennie de Grasse PRODUCERS CHRIS GRANT HASH SESAY CRYSTAL LUCAS-PERRY
SCREENPLAY CHRIS GRANT DIRECTED BY CHRIS GRANT



NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE

Running Time: **18:16 minutes**

Directed By: **Christopher Grant**

Written By: **Christopher Grant**

Produced By: **Hash Sesay Crystal Lucas Perry Chris Grant**

Production Company: **Brohawk Films Second Home Pictures**

Edited by: **Dylan Matthews Joel Douris**

Cinematographer: **Geoff Taylor**

Composer: **Jad Jacob**

PRESS INQUIRIES: Brohawkfilms@gmail.com

WEB: www.nevercansaygoodbyefilm.com



LOGLINE

Inspired by a lot of people's true stories...

An African American mother, convicted and on the verge of prison, asks for one last chance to see her kids. But when her children refuse to say goodbye, she's forced to make other plans.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Shayna stands before the judge in family court, a defeated woman on the brink of losing everything she holds dear. Today is the day she will sign her Termination of Parental Rights, a death sentence for her motherhood. She's heading to prison and will most likely never lay eyes on her children again. But before the ink dries on that fateful document, she pleads with the court officer to grant her one last request, to see her children, LaShonda, Deon, and Corey, one final time, to apologize for her mistakes and say goodbye in person. The officer, her heart hardened by many years working in the system, relents, but only for a mere five minutes.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Shayna stands before the judge in family court, a defeated woman on the brink of losing everything she holds dear. Today is the day she will sign her Termination of Parental Rights, a death sentence for her motherhood.

She's heading to prison and will most likely never lay eyes on her children again. But before the ink dries on that fateful document, she pleads with the court officer to grant her one last request, to see her children, LaShonda, Deon, and Corey, one final time, to apologize for her mistakes and say goodbye in person. The officer, her heart hardened by many years working in the system, relents, but only for a mere five minutes.

But her children refuse to say goodbye. They believe that if they say goodbye to their mother, it will be forever. They plan to escape the courthouse, to run away from the pain and heartache. And Shayna, desperate for one last chance to be with her family, goes along with their plan, willing to risk everything for a moment of grace.

In that small window of time, Shayna is forced to confront the weight of her actions, the devastation she has wrought upon her children, and the overwhelming love that still burns within her family. She is a woman who has fallen from grace, but in this moment, she is given a chance to rise again, to fight for redemption, and to prove that even in the darkest of circumstances, the human spirit can still triumph.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I aim to capture the enduring strength of black families on film, inviting the world to witness their resilience and celebrate their stories. NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE is a narrative of determination, showcasing a family's unwavering commitment to unity. It's a testament to the fight for self-expression and autonomy.

For Black and Brown parents entangled in the Child Protective Services system in the U.S., the experience is marked by the harsh scrutiny of their skin color. The process is mired in bureaucracy: overwhelmed agencies, a fragmented legal system, and a family court system often skewed in judgment. Once ensnared, escape is a formidable challenge. The parents I've interviewed in my research call it institutional racism.

NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE invites you to intimately grasp this issue. I am confident that you will discern why one family's resolve to push back is, in essence, an act of genuine heroism resonating with families everywhere."



DIRECTOR, Chris Grant

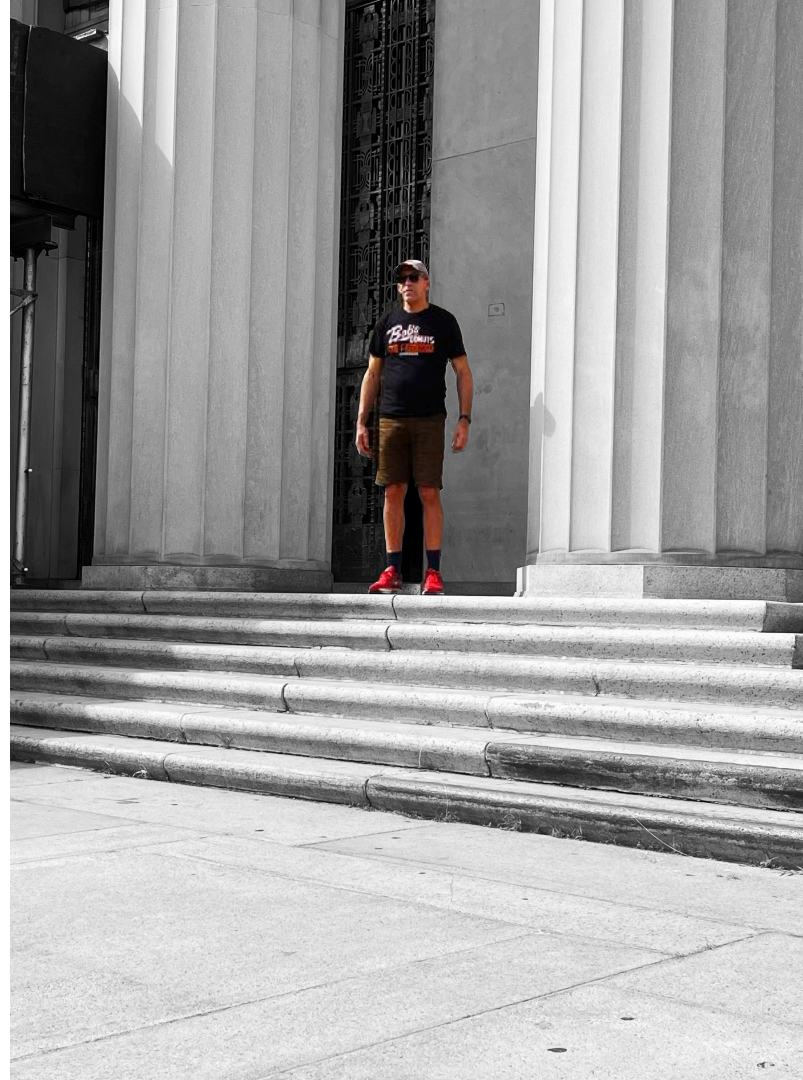
Chris Grant is a filmmaker based in New York City for the past 16 years. After attending NYU Grad film, his short films won numerous festival awards including screenings in the Showtime Black Filmmaker's Showcase, The Clark Atlanta Festival, and The Mill Valley Film Festival.

During a prolific career in television marketing, Chris was proud to become the first African American Creative Director for two of the Discovery Channel Networks - Destination America and The American Heroes Channel.

He has received multiple New York Foundation for the Arts grants for improvisational acting and directing. Never Can Say Goodbye was created via workshop using non-actors to create inform the storytelling.

Chris tells stories of the African American experience finding hope, addressing themes of justice, transformation, and complex family dynamics. He hopes to direct The Sugar Hill Express, a 2018 Sundance Labs script, as his debut feature film.

He can always be found on set wearing a Donut Shop T-Shirt



Lead Actress, Crystal Lucas Perry

Crystal Lucas-Perry is an American actress. She is known for her performances on Broadway acting in the musical revival of 1776, and the Jordan E. Cooper sketch-play Ain't No Mo', the later of which earned her a 2023 Tony Award nomination for Best Featured Actress in a Play.





PRODUCER, Hash Sesay

Hashmiru Ahamad Sesay is a Sierra Leonean-American Producer who brings life to stories that explore socio-political themes through comedy and surrealism. He received his BFA in Film and Video Production from The City College of New York and his MFA in Cinema Arts from Brooklyn College Feirstein School of Cinema.



PRODUCER, Crystal Lucas-Perry

An Award-Winning Actress, Crystal Lucas-Perry has performed and originated roles regionally and throughout New York City while continuing to workshop new works in development at various theatre companies, including The Sundance Institute, Manhattan Theater Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons and others.



PRODUCER, Chris Grant

Chris Grant is a filmmaker based in New York City and a 2018 Sundance Labs Fellow. After attending NYU Grad film, his short films won numerous festival awards including screenings in the Showtime Black Filmmaker's Showcase, The Clark Atlanta Festival, and The Mill Valley Film Festival.



SUPPORTING CAST

Noah Molinari as *Corey Nadal*

Noah Molinari just recently turned 7 years old and lives southern New Jersey. He's been acting for a little over a year, and loves to travel to NYC for shoot days, which are usually very early in the morning and include donuts! His fav! He is in 1st grade and his favorite subject is Math. He enjoys swimming and riding his bike without training wheels. He is looking forward to a career in film, becoming the next Spiderman, or a police officer when he grows up. Never Can Say Goodbye is his first short film.

Lilianne Amina Hamilton as *LaShonda Nadal*

Lilianne Amina Hamilton (nickname Lily) is an American Singer and Actress. Lilianne was born in Brooklyn, New York. She's a 4th grade student at P.S 159 Waverly for the Gifted and Talented. She was born to immigrant parents, Princess Fornah and Barrington Hamilton. Lilianne's recent credits include: JIGSAW - 2021, THA GOD'S HONEST TRUTH - 2021, and CHRISTMAS IN JULY - 2023.

Noel Wood as *Deon Nadal*

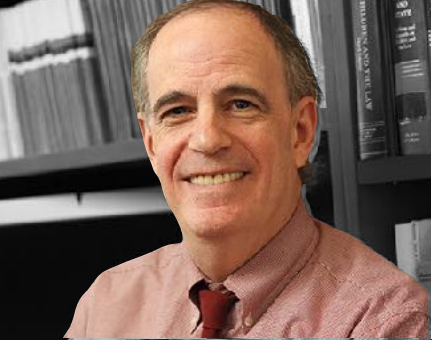
Noel Wood is 9 years of age and resides in New York City . He attends elementary school in Harlem at Sojourner Truth. He loves Anime , playing basketball and cooking with his mom . Never Can Say Goodbye is Noel's first film and he can't wait to go further in his acting career .



SUPPORTING CAST

Shaundra Patterson as the **Court Officer**

Shaundra Patterson, moved to New York in 2015 from her Virginia where she was born and raised. An alumni to Virginia Commonwealth University, she began her acting career on stage at the Firehouse Theatre in Richmond, Virginia. After starring in various stage plays, she eventually began acting in television and film, taking on different roles on projects such as the final season of Power, and Monsters Inside Me.



Martin Guggenheim as the **Judge**

Marty Guggenheim is a lawyer and law professor who started the Family Defense Clinic at NYU in 1990 and helped build the vibrant family defender legal community in New York City.



Michael Patrick Rooney as the **Lawyer**

Michael Patrick Rooney has been defending New Yorkers accused of crimes for 24 years. He is currently an anchor attorney with the Homicide Defense Task Force of The Legal Aid Society. At every opportunity, Michael endeavors to make the legal system acknowledge the humanity of the people forced into it, which is why he is so proud and grateful to work on Never Can Say Goodbye.



THE BACKGROUND CAST

The wonderful background cast of Never Can Say Goodbye were the most important members of the production.

They are all parents who have dealt with the ongoing trauma of child parent separation. By courageously coming forward to be heard, they are helping to spread the word that there is hope for every parent dealing with this problem.

Never Can Say Goodbye was created for and inspired by these brave families.

NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE - The Workshop

Never Can Say Goodbye incorporates a dedicated social justice initiative, employing drama therapy as a pivotal element in the production process.

Drama therapy leverages theatrical techniques to attain therapeutic objectives, encompassing symptom alleviation, emotional and physical integration, and personal development. It proves particularly beneficial for individuals grappling with the strain and stigma of parent-child separation.

In our three-day workshop, parents are afforded the opportunity to narrate their own experiences within a secure and inclusive community. The overarching emphasis is on the imperative of being heard.



NEVER CAN SAY GOODBYE - Ten Things to Know

- 1. Unconventional Filming Location:** The entire film was shot in the Bronx Courthouse, Bronx, New York. This deliberate choice reflects the reality that the majority of those affected by CPS interactions reside in this New York borough.
- 2. Colorization:** The colorization process serves to depict the profound impact of losing one's children on a mother's essence. When Shayna is near her children, vibrant colors emerge. In her absence, she appears in black and white, symbolizing the draining of her life force.
- 3. Authentic Casting:** The Family Court lobby is filled with parents who have experienced child/parent separation. Their authentic experiences form the core voiceover motif of the film, reflecting their interactions with the Child Protective Services system.
- 4. Unique Production Challenges:** The drama therapy workshop and film shoot were seamlessly integrated, with participants engaging in exercises on set. An entire day of shooting was dedicated to working with this group.
- 5. Casting Choice:** Crystal Lucas-Perry has demonstrated exceptional dedication to Never Can Say Goodbye. Originally attached in 2019, production was halted due to Covid. She returned immediately in 2023, recognizing the immense importance of the topic.
- 6. The Workshop:** The 3-day Never Can Say Goodbye Drama Therapy Workshop is designed as a standalone component. The goal is to replicate it in 2024 to assist up to 150 parents across the country.
- 7. Inspirations:** Never Can Say Goodbye is the result of extensive research into hundreds of stories from parents who have faced similar challenges with the family court system. This widespread issue often leaves affected individuals without an outlet for their pain.
- 8. Collaborations with Experts:** The script was rigorously reviewed by parents, advocates, and lawyers immersed in these issues. Two of them even appear in the film: Martin Guggenheim (Judge) – Head of Family Defense Clinic at NYU, and Michael Rooney (Lawyer) – attorney with the Homicide Defense Task Force of The Legal Aid Society.
- 9. Awards:** The film received a 10k grant from the Sundance Development Labs and serves as a proof-of-concept for THE SUGAR HILL EXPRESS, a longer film on the same subject.
- 10. Hidden Detail:** Keen observers will notice that the children are actually laughing in the one-shot scene at the Deli while Shayna is committing her crime.



CREDITS

Directed by: **Chris Grant**

Written by: **Christopher Grant**

Produced by: **Hash Sesay Crystal Lucas-Perry Chris Grant**

Executive Producers: **Monique Perreault Kaream Appleton
Bennie de Grasse**

Director of Photography **Geoff Taylor**

Production Designer **Oak Laokwansathitaya**

Casting Director **Aika Greenidge**

Editor **Joel Douris Dylan Matthews**

Lead Drama Therapist **Adam Stevens**

Music by **Jad Jacob**



CAST

Shayna Nadal – **Crystal Lucas-Perry**

Defense Lawyer - **Michael Rooney**

Court Officer – **Shaundra Patterson**

Deon Nadal – **Noel Woods**

Corey Nadal – **Noah Molinari**

LaShonda Nadal - **Lilianne A. Hamilton**

Kid's Lawyer – **Christina Cobb**

Brave Woman - **Ericka Brewington**



Courthouse Lobby Cast

Ericka Brewington

Manny Prince

Chaniece Trotman

Michael Adams

Zyirr Johnson

Shamara Kelly

Kmea Jones

Cassandra Gonzalez

Shakira Paige

Gelisha Paige

Ashanti Ortiz

Kenya Franklin

Loren Horton

Jahtik Hendricks

Shakira Kennedy

Katherine Gerald

Halana Richardson

Vanessa Cobbs

Katherine Gerald

Jusinta Jaggassar-Ernul

Henry Simmons



CREW

Unit Production **Manager Elizabeth Balla**

First Assistant Director **Alex Hinojosa**

Second Assistant Director **Rafael Alvarado**

Production Coordinator **Vincent Ferguson**

Script Supervisor **Amina Hamawy**

Production Assistants **Alexandra Alston Grant Moyer Rob Esther**

Production Design **Oak Laokwansathitaya**

Props Assistant **Mayra Gutierrez**

Director of Photography **Geoffrey Taylor**

1st Assistant Camera **Marcus Odom**

B Camera Operator **Lorenzo Pace**

2nd Assistant Camera / Media Manager **Cristina Gomez**

Steadicam Operator **Clarke Smith**

Crane Operator **Chuck Goslin**

BTS Videographer **Jenna Pace Elliot Guilbe**

Gaffer **Thomas Hatteau Chris Burke**

Key Grip **Akil Jones**

Best Grip **Gleydi Santana**

Best Electric **Emeka Chukwurah**





CREW

Sound Recordist **Keisha Jackson**

Boom Operator **Taiquis Hayes**

Makeup Artist **Tia Rivers**

Hair Stylist **Stacy Gray**

Wardrobe Stylist **Tamika Duncan**

Drama Therapists **Idalmis Garcia Jennifer Richards**

Post Production Services **Mattock Editorial**

Visual FX/Title Design **Ana Pinto**

Colorist **Vincent Taylor**

Title Design **Ana Pinto**

Supervising Sound Editor **Nick Ainsworth, MPSE**

Re-Recording Mixer **Nick Ainsworth, MPSE**

Foley artist **Kimberly Patrick**

Foley mixer **Frank Rinella**

Never Can Say Goodbye Workshop Coordinator **Pamela Wilks**

Never Can Say Goodbye Workshop Assistant **Beautiful Robinson**

Never Can Say Goodbye Workshop Assistant **Jezreel Managaytay**

Catering Services **Maestro's Catering Gotham Catering**

Website Design **Corey Donenfeld**

SPECIAL THANKS

Ashraf Habibullah

Asif Habibullah

Darlene Liebman - Creative Humans

Joyce MacMillan - JMACforFamilies

Ayami Hatanaka - JMACforFamilies

Emma Ketteringham - Bronx Defenders

Nila Natarajan - Brooklyn Defender Services

Tehra A. Coles - Center for Family

Representation

Shalonda Curtis-Hackett - Neighborhood

Defender Services - Harlem

Erin Miles Cloud - Movement for Family

Power

Brian Hall

David Riker

Joan Darling

Michelle Satter

Ilyse McKimmie

Shira Rockowitz

Nicole Molinari

Princess Fornah

Ebone Eanes

Liz Lewis Casting

Rebecca Edelson

Madeline Wilks

Gary Wilks

Ella Wilks

Jon Wilks

Alison Wilks

Steven Wilks

Rebecca Wilks

Pamela Wilks

Chris Ficarra

Nicole Sardone

Rebecca Dealy

Victoria Conmy

Steve Perski

Yhá Mourhia Wright

Hurriyah Muhammad

Ekwa Msangi

Giselle Modeste

Rae Dawn Brooks

Scott Terry

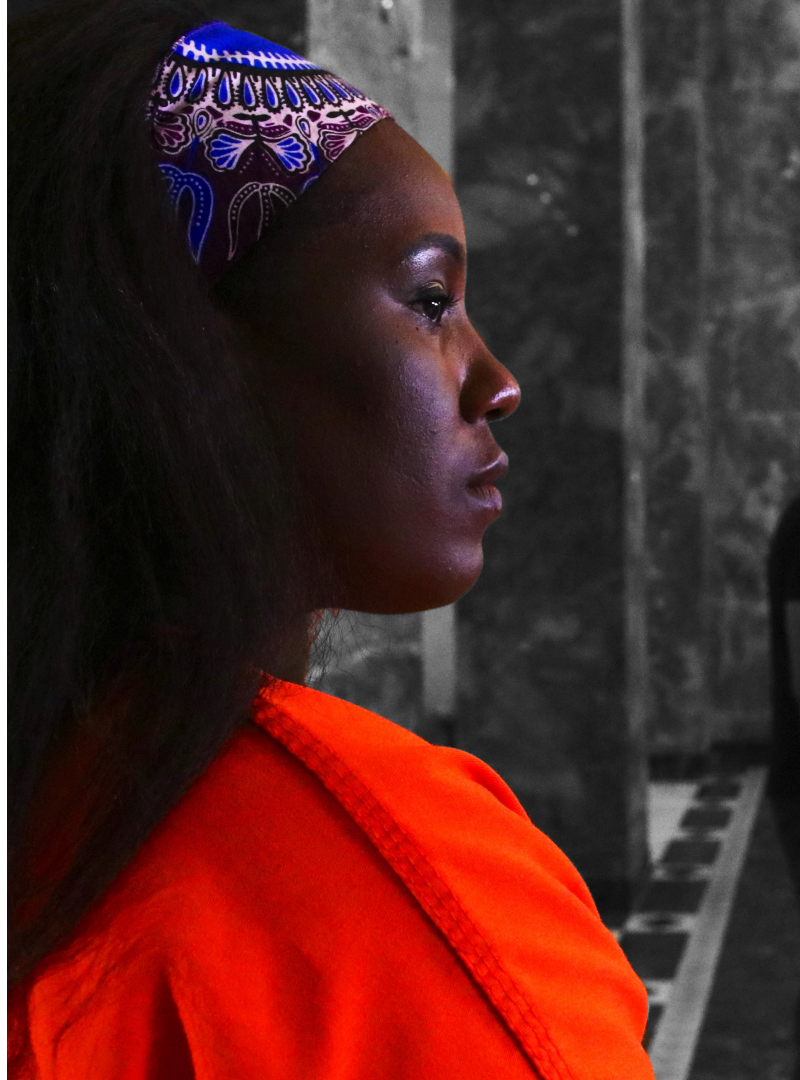
Jenna Pace

**This film was made possible in-part
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**The Sundance Institute
and
CSI Computers And Structures
Inc.**

**HELP BLACK AND BROWN FAMILIES
STAY TOGETHER!**

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