

In mainstream Hollywood, certain social topics are almost taboo. They struggle to receive feature film treatment. But writer and director Chyna Robinson's *No Ordinary Love* is a powerful reminder that the movie industry shouldn't shy away from tackling complex and significant subjects.

Starring DeAna Davis, Lynn Andrews III, April Hartman, and Eric Hanson, *No Ordinary Love* centers on two women experiencing betrayal and manipulation by their husbands. Eventually, they begin plotting to find a way out. Robinson delicately captures the slow-burn destruction relationships plagued by domestic abuse experience and how coercive control can be just as damaging as physical attacks.

"We very intentionally describe this film as a romantic thriller," Robinson explains. "It was essential that there be an authenticity to telling the stories of these women and display the emotional roller coasters they're on as they both experience these relationships with men they love. This film is very different from a documentary in that we're telling two compelling narrative stories that intertwine. It's also much more complex than previous Hollywood big-screen treatments where there's a 'monster' physical abuser, and she needs to escape or fight back. Through my research to write this film, I came to understand just how complicated domestic abuse truly is."

After college, Robinson began writing and directing for stage productions. During a touring stop in Tulsa, Oklahoma, for one of her shows, she learned of the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921. Up to that point, Robinson had never heard the story. Her inner instincts screamed a film needed to be made, although well-intentioned colleagues advised against it. Period films are notoriously challenging to make, but Robinson was undeterred.

Her efforts became the short *Greenwood: 13 Hours*. It focuses on a WWI veteran and his teenage son who risk everything to defend their home while desperately trying to stay alive during the deadly onslaught on Black Wall Street. During production for Greenwood, Robinson searched for a house built in the early 1900s. One that was still in good shape to use for scenes. A chance encounter through Zillow introduced her to Tracy Rector, whose home was perfect. Unbeknownst to either of them, this connection laid the groundwork for what would become *No Ordinary Love*.