



the LIVING WOOD

A mother's faith that
reshaped an empire.

Feature Film Pitch Presentation

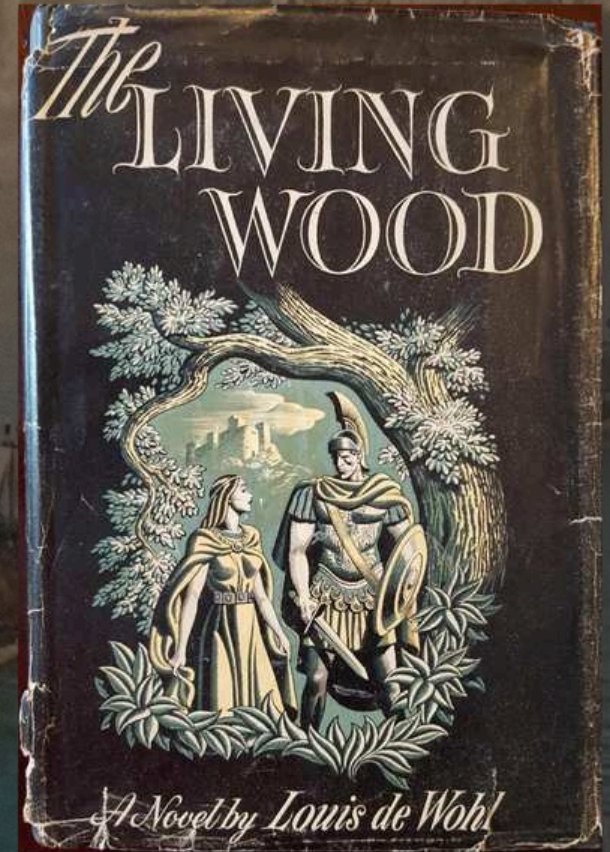
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY LOUIS DE WOHL



1903-1961

Louis de Wohl was a best-selling author and screenwriter who sold over one million copies across 60+ books and was translated into 12 languages. More than 15 of his works became movies, including the film “Francis of Assisi” (1961). He also served England with MI5 during World War II.

When “THE LIVING WOOD” was published in 1947, J. Arthur Rank (founder of the famous Pinewood Studios) acquired the screen rights to the novel, although it never came to fruition.



LOGLINE

A Celtic princess is abandoned by her Roman husband as ambition pulls him toward power, forcing her into exile, where she raises her son amid political chaos and religious persecution. As Rome fractures and her son rises to become Emperor, her quiet faith shapes the course of his destiny - leading to a divine turning point that transforms the empire and her final journey to uncover the True Cross itself.

DEVELOPMENT STATUS

Rights secured, treatment and
screenplay available

GENRE

Historical Epic

ESTIMATED RUN TIME

One hour, 55 minutes



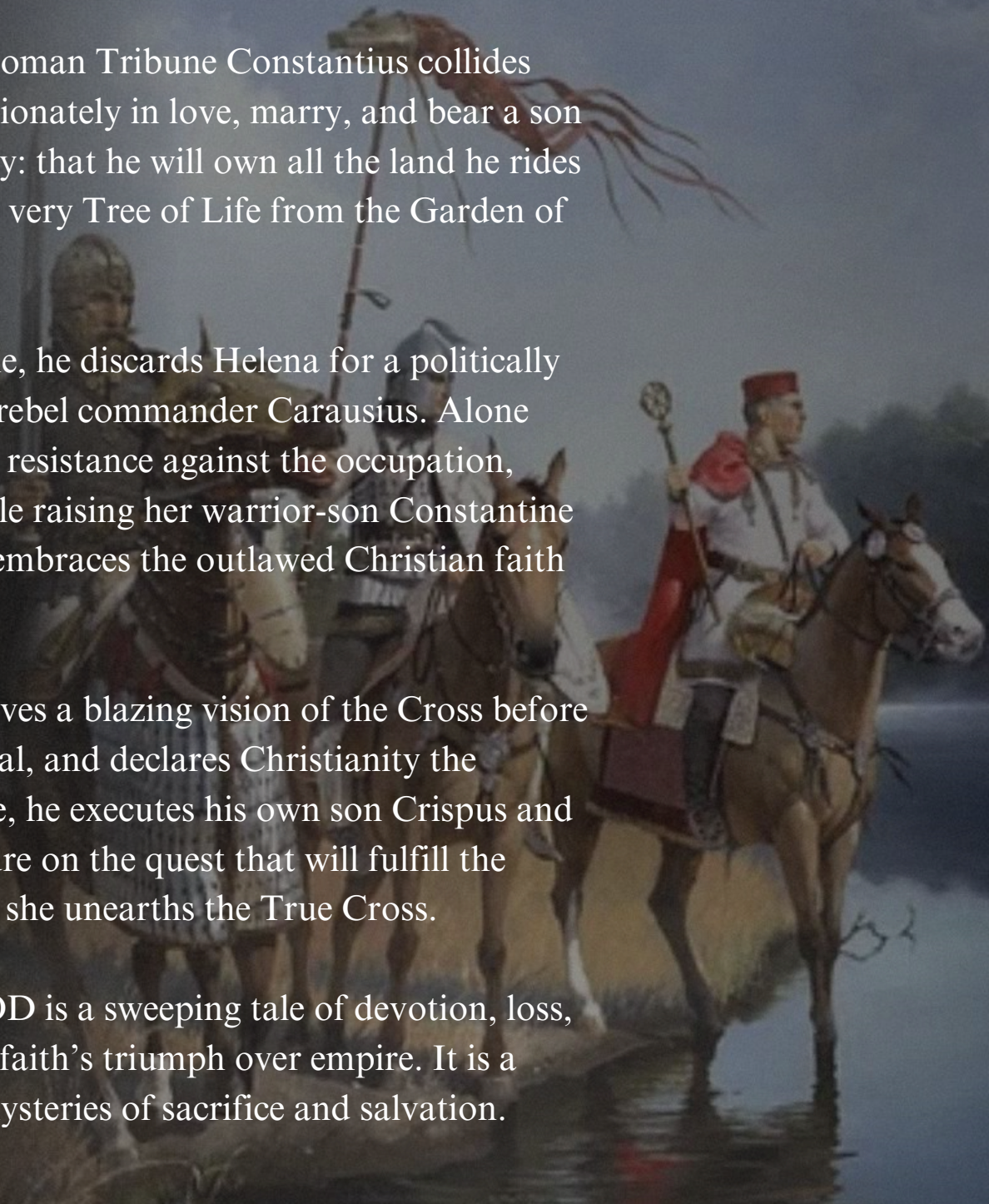
PREMISE

In the foggy cliffs of Britain in 272 A.D., lost Roman Tribune Constantius collides with fiery Celtic princess Helena. They fall passionately in love, marry, and bear a son whom Helen's mystical father makes a prophecy: that he will own all the land he rides on, and she will discover "the living wood", the very Tree of Life from the Garden of Eden.

When ambition pulls Constantius back to Rome, he discards Helena for a politically powerful new wife, and Britain is seized by the rebel commander Carausius. Alone and hunted, Helena wages a desperate guerrilla resistance against the occupation, fighting back with a small band of loyalists while raising her warrior-son Constantine in hiding. Amid brutal persecution, she slowly embraces the outlawed Christian faith that becomes her unbreakable anchor.

Decades later, now Emperor, Constantine receives a blazing vision of the Cross before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, crushes his rival, and declares Christianity the empire's future. Yet in one blood-soaked stroke, he executes his own son Crispus and second wife Fausta - compelling Helen to venture on the quest that will fulfill the prophecy: her epic journey to Jerusalem, where she unearths the True Cross.

Spanning several decades, THE LIVING WOOD is a sweeping tale of devotion, loss, and heartbreak; but above all, redemption and faith's triumph over empire. It is a historical drama intertwined with the timeless mysteries of sacrifice and salvation.



KEY CHARACTERS

HELEN

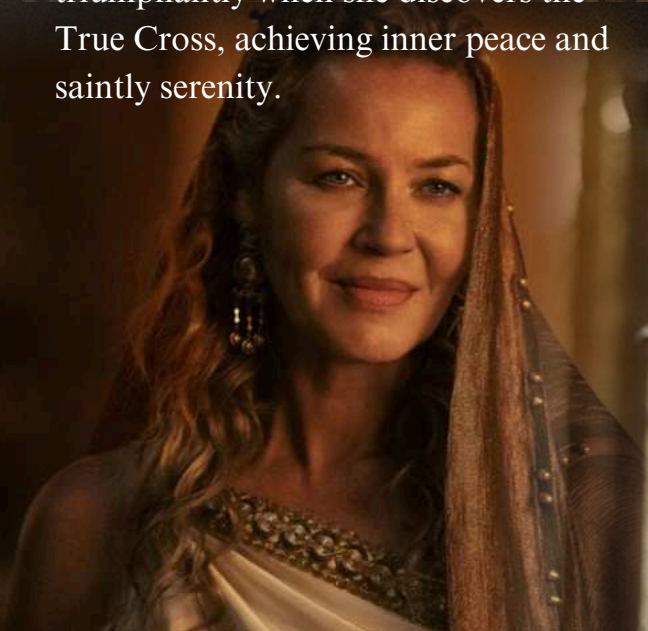
Helen begins as a young druidic princess wary of Roman occupation, yet falls in love with the Roman tribune, Constantinus. When he abandons her for power, she struggles with bitterness, loneliness, and a growing spiritual hunger while becoming more in tune with her father's mystical prophecy. Forced to grow up quickly, she develops a strong maternal devotion to her son, Constantine, and comes to embrace the faith of her Christian friends. She navigates her son through his own crises, and her story culminates triumphantly when she discovers the True Cross, achieving inner peace and saintly serenity.

CONSTANTINE

Constantine starts as a sensitive, observant boy influenced by his mother's devotion and becomes hardened when his parents separate. He wrestles with abandonment and the pressure to prove himself. He grows into a cunning leader with great survival and political instincts and his arc reaches an emotional peak with the vision prior to the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, giving way to faith. Fear overtakes him, however, when upon hearing rumors of conspiracy, he orders the death of his wife and son. Ultimately, his faith and confidence returns when his mother restores his calm.

CONSTANTINUS

Constantinus is ambitious, intelligent, and witty. Despite being a disciplined Roman Tribune, he is drawn towards the mystique of Helena and her father, demonstrating fleeting moments of tenderness and self-doubt. When he leaves Helena, he marries another for power and becomes wholly focused and hardened on matters of the Roman Empire, while still feeling guilt over his former life. In his last days, he reconciles with his past and reunites with Helen and Constantine in a dramatic scene, and names Constantine his successor, ultimately securing his own redemption and family legacy.



SUPPORTING CHARACTERS



KING COEL

Helen's wise, mystical father who delivers the prophecy of the Living Wood.



FAVONIUS

Loyal Roman Centurion, ally to Helen and mentor to Constantine, embodying honor through turmoil.



ALLECTUS

Cunning usurper who captures Britain, forcing our heroes into survival and resistance.



HILARY

Once a servant of King Coel, Hilary is a close friend, advisor to Helen - and a priest.



RUFUS

A devoted and loyal auxillary soldier who stands by Helen and Constantine.

An illustration in a dark, moody style. A Roman soldier in full armor, including a plumed helmet and a cape, stands on the right, looking towards the left. A woman in a simple tunic and headscarf stands on the left, looking up at him. They are in a forest with large, gnarled trees. In the background, a Roman city with a prominent tower is visible under a dark sky.

FILM TONE

SPIRITUAL & MYSTERIOUS

A strong mystical and mysterious current overlays the movie as Helen is exposed to the religion known as Christians and seeks the legend of the Living Wood

EPIC & SWEEPING

Set against the backdrop of a collapsing Roman Empire and persecution, the settings are built for scale

HEROIC & NOBLE

Constantine's path to becoming Emperor, his transformation of the Empire, and Helen's quest is akin to a classic "Hero's Journey" story

PERSEVERANCE

Helen faces dramatic adversity through personal loss throughout but still clings to hope and faith

VISUAL REFERENCE

GLADIATOR
I & II



KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN



LORD OF THE
RINGS



HOUSE OF
DAVID

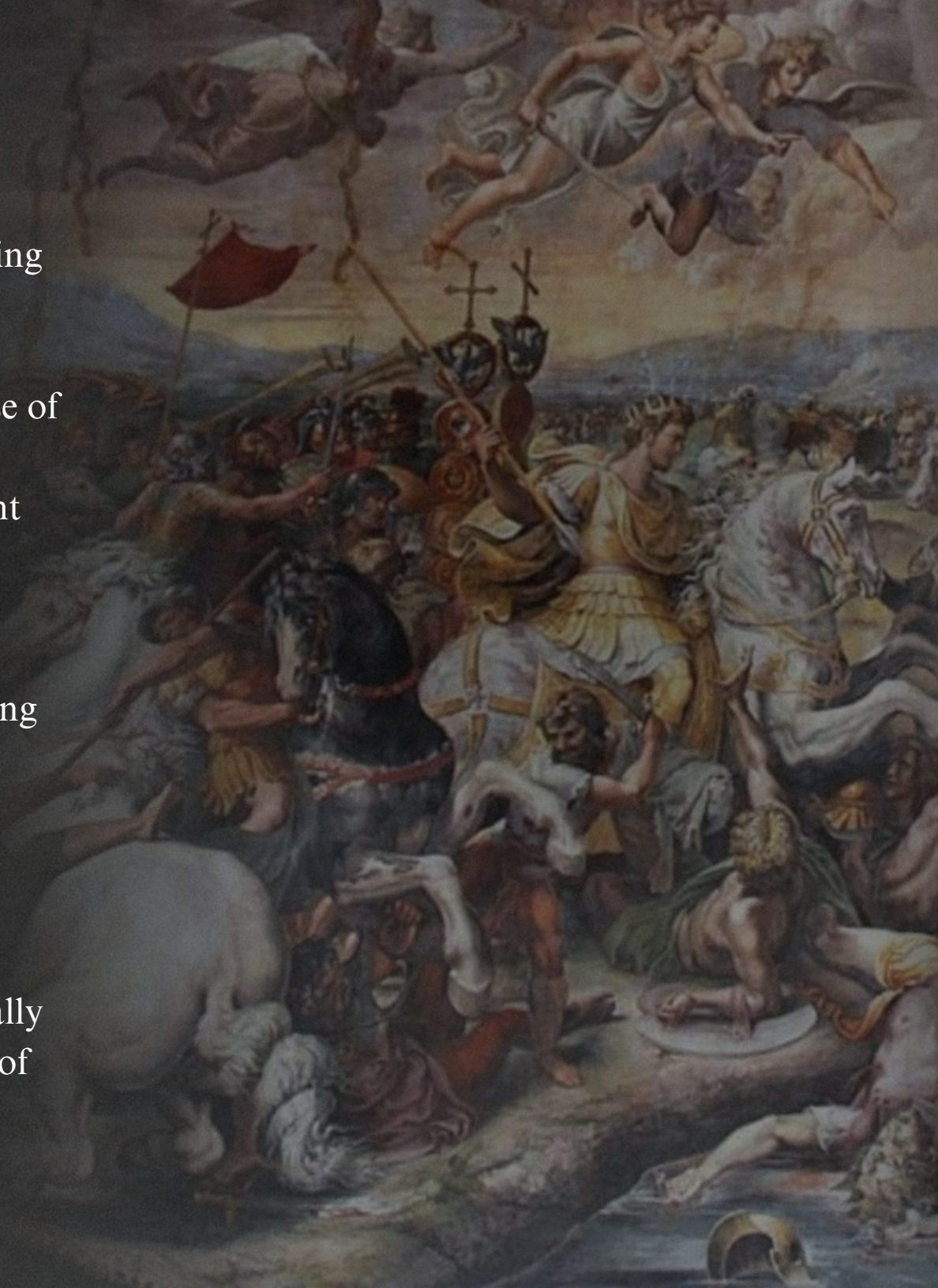


WHY NOW?

In today's market, there is strong and growing demand for meaningful, faith-driven storytelling with broad audience appeal. Recent successes such as *The Chosen*, *House of David*, and faith-based theatrical releases demonstrate consistent audience engagement and high return on investment.

The Living Wood sits at the intersection of historical epic and spiritual narrative, offering a large-scale cinematic story grounded in recognizable history while appealing to a global audience seeking purpose-driven content.

This is a timely opportunity to bring a visually compelling and emotionally resonant story of faith, power, and redemption to an underserved but highly engaged audience.



A WORD FROM THE WRITER

A man with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue polo shirt, stands outdoors. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a soft-focus view of trees and foliage, suggesting a park or wooded area. The lighting is warm, possibly from the setting or rising sun.

A few years ago, I stumbled upon Louis de Wohl's novel and was immediately captivated by Helen's quest to discover the True Cross and her son's adventures to reclaim Rome for Christ. I've always been fascinated by how tangible objects and symbols can move people and spark imagination. After all, it was the Shroud of Turin that led to my own conversion in the first place. I have also always been in awe of the grandeur of cinema and storytelling. Sitting in the movie theater with the community experiencing larger-than-life movies became memories as much as any other significant life events. From this book, I imagine the two colossal historical figures in - Helen and Constantine - on the big screen, inviting audiences to experience their own pain, loss and triumphant discovery of the Cross with them.

The Living Wood re-imagines the familiar settings of the Roman Empire and Jerusalem three hundred years following Christ's sacrifice. I want audiences to emotionally invest in the journeys of Helen and Constantine as they experience growth through pain, loss, and triumph. I want parents to relate to Helen as a mother and people of faith to experience her elation when finally discovering the True Cross and pulling it out of the dirt. Perhaps the movie will draw audiences towards biblical archeology the same way Jurassic Park drew them towards paleontology. I want audiences to be captivated by Constantine as he overcomes his foes - both self-inflicted ones and his rivals. And ultimately, for the audience to walk away inspired with a new rigor towards their own faith, goals and dreams.

MIKE PETERSON

The background of the image features two prominent classical statues. On the left, a seated female figure, possibly a personification of Liberty or Justice, is shown in a light-colored marble. On the right, a standing male figure, likely a Roman emperor or deity, is depicted in a darker, more weathered stone, holding a scepter. The setting appears to be an ornate interior space with arched windows and classical architectural details.

THANK YOU!

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