

LADS
Treatment
By Chuck Malkus
WGA Registered by Malkus Group

LOGLINE:

LADS follows the antics of four college students in the early 80s who seized the opportunity of a lifetime by driving themselves into the inner circle of Kentucky's (and Thoroughbred Racing's) scandalous upper crust. The country's first ride share service was born.

THE WORLD:

Long before Ubers and Lyfts could pick you up at the push of a button, there was LADS.

In 1981, two things were unavoidable in the elite world of Kentucky horse racing; whiskey and gossip. And if you had too much of the first, you could expect to be the subject of the second. Especially since the city had recently tightened up their enforcement of drinking and driving.

Which is how four intrepid college buddies seized on the opportunity of a lifetime by creating a service fueled by those two very same vices. LADS is the true story of the world's first ride-share service that transported the wealthy movers and shakers of the secretive and outrageous Kentucky horse-racing social circuit.

And it all went down during the scandalous early 80s. We all know the tales of the Sunset Strip and Studio 54 during this seductive era, but what about the South? Booze and drugs had just as much of a place amongst the conservatively wealthy but it was used and abused far more secretively. This series will shine a light on many a backdoor dealing and salacious affairs born of the greed-drenched glamorous 80s.

This half-hour scripted comedy series will source real stories of what went down in those debauchorous years that LADS was in operation. But at its core, it's also the story of four college grads looking to make their place in the world, fresh out of school and thrown into a community ripe for exploitation. Their relatable camaraderie and entrepreneurial spirit grounds the show in inspirational humor set amidst a salacious and little-known moment in history just waiting to be exposed.

CHARACTERS:

Chuck - Proprietor of LADS, idea guy, ready to seize an opportunity even if he might not know how. He grew up with very little and has made a life for himself by breaking a few rules and charming his way through the tough spots. Street smart and charismatic. LADS is just the beginning of a much larger plan to take over Kentucky's social scene (and be a major player in the country's thoroughbred lifestyle.)

Larry - Chuck's right hand man, reliable, by-the-book. Business-minded and all about the bottom line. He wants to make sure they follow the rules which constantly bumps up against Chuck's fake-it-til-you-make-it approach. Larry's father is a high-ranking university official and prominent in the community. He has high hopes for Larry to go to law school and hates the temptation that Chuck has put between him and further academia.

Alicia - A star flag football player and horse rider. Beautiful blonde with a wild side. Debbie led her campus champion team to the Sugar Bowl National Flag Football Championship in New Orleans. She is the first female LADS drivers who is up for all extracurricular activities that are part of the business. As the only daughter of a wealthy whiskey distillery family, she has always been a socialite and spent every summer with horse riding lessons.

Doug - Chuck's cousin and oldest friend. Handsome, slick and living for today. They grew up together and know where the respective bodies are buried. Doug is hopelessly flirtatious and the most likely to get caught with his hand in the cookie jar. But he's loyal to Chuck and his family and is committed to helping hooking the millionaires, and the prominent ladies, into becoming lifetime LADS clients.

Support Staff:

Debbie - Lover of wilderness and adventure. Passionate about backcountry roads, along with the horse farms found throughout the city. Perfect as the LADS dispatcher and office manager. She's been known at her sorority as the smartest kid in just about every class. With her degree in psychology, perfect fit for handling the unknown, not to mention the landscape and geography of the thoroughbred farms regional map.

Andy - In a word, trouble. But trouble with the best intentions. Andy is the life of the party even if the party ended two days ago which makes him a great lead driver. Larger-than-life in every sense of the phrase, he's a drinker but like any good ole' Southern Boy he's always been able to talk his way out of real danger. He's just completed the five-year plan although no one has seen the actual diploma so helping out with LADS seems like a great professional position.

University of Kentucky, graduation day, 1981

Chuck, Larry and Alicia, barely making it into their caps and gowns hustle to the school arena, still hungover from a night of partying. They suffer through a typically long-winded speech about their futures and responsibility and Chuck's attention wanders to the parents amongst the crowd, decked in their finest Southern attire. They're dripping with money and he's got his sights on figuring out how to be a beneficiary.

Later that night, the three friends meet up with Chuck's cousin, Doug, who lives in the area and they hit the town looking for graduation parties. Each one is more boring than the last with most of the students talking about down payments on houses, grad school or moving to New York City to follow the boom in investment jobs. Larry admits it's the sensible thing to do and he argues with Chuck, who doesn't know why anyone in their 20s with the world at their fingertips should ever be "sensible."

Inspired by Chuck's speech, Doug proposes that they do something that doesn't make sense. He's heard about a late night horse track party at Keeneland, the local horse track. They should all get dressed up and crash the party pretending to be wealthy. Everyone but Larry thinks it's a brilliant idea, so he gets outvoted and they set off with the plan. Larry makes them agree to at least take a cab so they can be responsibly irresponsible.

They arrive at the party to find that the crappy cab cost a small fortune but look past it when they realize they'll make their money back on bets the next day. Dripping in freshly-graduated confidence, they stroll into the party by the skin of their teeth (and Alicia's quick thinking and creative maneuvers).

Kentucky whiskey being the great equalizer that it is, the guys handle themselves pretty well, winning some big bets and becoming friendly with the partygoers. Chuck is making the rounds with ease when he spots a beautiful woman he can't resist. They strike up an intoxicating tete-a-tete but before he can move any further, the woman's boyfriend swoops in, dismissing Chuck and stealing her away. The moment stings Chuck and he decides to round up the guys and leave.

They make their way to the parking lot where Chuck sees the woman and her boyfriend step into a stretch limo. Cue: Chuck's breakdown. No matter how much they fake it, at the end of the day, they'll always get caught trying to pretend they're more than they are. This group of privileged jerks will never see them as equal and he wonders why it's even worth bothering shooting for more. Larry of all people is able to reason with him; despite the trouble they often almost got into, after all, Chuck had a slew of wild ideas in college that paid off.

Feeling better, they decide to head home. Unfortunately, this is 1981 which means no Ubers, much less, cabs! Drunk patrons stumble to their cars, tripping over themselves.

The guys, along with Alicia, start walking the long dirt road back to campus recounting old memories and laughing when from out of nowhere, a sports car blows past them at 80 miles per hour. Not more than three seconds later, blue lights flare in the distance and a cop is in high pursuit. Chuck smiles - it's his eureka moment. Alicia asks what is your big grin about?

They continue to walk down the road and eventually make their way to the car. Pinned up against the side of the cop car is one of the partygoers, Randolph Stanville, a local millionaire. He looks miserable, drunk and dejected. As they continue on, they see inside his own car where

a MUCH younger woman who is definitely not his wife is tapping her heel impatiently. She asks them how she's going to get home. Chuck smiles knowingly - and LADS is officially born.

More info...

The ambitious 20-somethings and the upper crust living and working in 1980's Kentucky share two things in common: Kentucky Whiskey and Horse Racing.

During the race season, almost every night, female socialites leave parties early when they see their husbands sneak away to the restroom with a younger woman. Frustrated, the women know when they call a LADS driver, the odds are a handsome stud will arrive to take them away. Along the nightly routes, it is common for the socialities to request off the road paths where celebrations took place with the drives.

One night, driver Doug is called to provide a ride for socialite Melissa and after celebrating independence with a driver at a "hole in the wall pub" and then Melissa thanks him for the attention. As she's about to leave, a woman from the party who was seen with her husband, enters the bar in a waitress outfit. And in one moment of perfect revenge, she decides to make one more purchase; the bar itself. First order of business? That perky little waitress who is going to be looking for a new job.

Andy starts to develop a reputation with the LADS riders after a husband complains about his flirtatiousness. The other guys ask him to tone it down. However, one night, it just so happens that a married couple decides to stoke the fire, so to speak. The couple explains to Andy, still trying to be on his best behavior, that they have an open relationship. They demand that Andy pulls over so that the wife can come join him in the front seat. Torn between the request of his LADDS principles and making the client happy, Andy allows the woman to crawl over him and straddle him while still driving. He ends up nearly totalling the couple's car outside of a horse farm (well known for its stud breeding capabilities) and Andy is given a chastity suspension.

The local cab companies do not take kindly to the arrival of LADS. So much so that the head of the local cab union decides to show up at Chuck's front door one night with a warning; shut down LADS or pay the consequences. Not one to back down from a threat, Chuck rallies the guys and they make a plan.

They've decided to adjust the business by adding incentives that make the rides more alluring than just pickup and dropoff. This includes amenities in the car, two driver pickups so that both the driver and their car can be returned home safely and curated cassette tape music to be chosen by the rider. The new changes bring a new brand name, LADDS, along with a boom in business but at what cost?

The head of the local cab union stands in front of a room of cab drivers from all over Kentucky. Game on, college kids. There's no such thing as messin' around with our transportation business in the south.

Debbie and Larry are dutifully keeping track of the books for LADDS. Family challenges set in for both, beginning when Larry faces his demanding father and must keep him at bay with explanations about entrepreneurship. Larry has been accepted to law school, set to begin in the fall but Chuck is pressuring him to defer a semester. Debbie's best friend and sorority sister begins working at a hospital which leads to discussions of what in life really makes a difference for others. Debbie responds she is making a huge difference, saving the lives and families by providing safe rides.

On one fateful ride, Larry picks up a local politician and well-known lobbyist, overhearing potentially criminal bribery taking place in the back seat. The moment further compounds his quandary of leaving the business and the access to high level intel or work his way up through the system and play by the rules. Torn in two, Larry hits the road after a late night drop-off and finds himself at a local watering hole where he meets a beautiful and compassionate bartender. She hits the nail on the head giving Larry some crucial advice to follow his heart and stop trying to make other people happy.

The biggest challenge for LADDS comes when word spreads that local law enforcement was about to enforce a seldom-used law about picking up passengers at non-designated waiting areas. This takes place at LADDS pickups: the Keeneland Race Track; Red Mile Race Track and Lexington airport. The four business partners decide to proceed by offering concierge services, undercover, for an elite circle attending major sporting events; festivals and concerts around the U.S. The high-end clients hear of the rebranded LADS (reverted back to original name) through their ticket brokers, now, new LADS partners.

Producer: Chuck Malkus
 Malkus Group
 cmalkus@malkus.com
 (954) 523-4200