

DR. QUINN, MEDICINE WOMAN

"A Place Called Home"

Written

by

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REPRESENTED BY

**apa.**

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TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY ONE - NOVEMBER, EIGHTEEN SEVENTY-TWO

The sun shines down on a lunchtime baseball game. BRIAN and ANTHONY (wearing the cap Robert E gave him) kneel along the third base line waiting for their turn at bat. (In the b.g. the BATTER swings and misses at two straight pitches.)

BRIAN

You finish writin' the essay for  
Parent's Day?

ANTHONY

I been workin' on it...

BRIAN

What's yours about?

ANTHONY

I ain't quite figured it out  
yet... I want it to be great.

BRIAN

It will.

The CRACK of the ball off the Batter's bat draws the boys' attention back to the game. The easy fly ball is caught and the Batter walks over to Brian and hands him the bat.

Brian steps to the plate and swings at the first pitch, sending a slow roller down the third base line just beyond the THIRD BASEMAN. Brian rounds the bases, as the ball continues into left field, and stops at third base just ahead of the tag.

Anthony stands up a little stiffly and steps into the batter's box.

Brian edges off third base. The PITCHER looks into the plate, considers, then delivers the pitch. Anthony swings and misses.

The Catcher smiles at Anthony, then stands and tosses the ball back to the Pitcher. Anthony steps out of the batter's box and looks down the third base line to Brian.

BRIAN

C'mon Anthony.

Anthony nods, the pressure mounting. He steps back into the box, digs in and stares back at the Pitcher.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Pitcher nods and delivers a pitch to the plate. THWACK. Anthony smacks a sharp line drive over the SHORTSTOP'S head and takes off for first base.

Brian races home from third base, crossing the plate to the cheers of his teammates. He quickly looks to:

ANTHONY

running slowly toward the first base bag. As the throw comes in to the FIRST BASEMAN, Anthony lunges for the base, but he's tagged out.

ANGLE ON THE SCHOOLHOUSE PORCH

as TERESA rings the school bell.

TERESA  
Children! It is time to return  
to class.

RESUME THE FIELD

Anthony stands bent over the base, trying to catch his breath. His teammates surround him and offer congratulations, before they head toward the schoolroom. Brian runs over to him:

BRIAN  
You really pounded that ball.

Anthony gasps for breath, unable to reply. Brian sees that he's more out of breath than he should be.

BRIAN  
Hey, you alright?

Anthony nods, as he rubs his knees, trying to work out the pain.

Brian gives him a look, not convinced and concerned for his friend.

BRIAN  
You sure?

ANTHONY  
Yeah.

The boys start to walk toward the school, but Anthony's right leg gives way beneath him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN  
 You're hurtin'.  
 (not taking no for an  
 answer)  
 I'm takin' you to Ma.

Anthony nods, disappointed that his body has once again betrayed him. Brian helps Anthony to his feet, then shouldering most of his weight they begin to walk toward the clinic.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY ONE

Anthony sits up in bed while MIKE palpates his lower back. Anthony winces when she percusses the area above his kidneys.

GRACE and ROBERT E look on from the other side of the bed -- contending with Anthony's attacks has now almost become routine. Brian is there, too, concerned.

Mike looks up, trying to hide her distress. She takes a glass of water and laudanum powder from the nightstand tray and mixes a solution. She hands Anthony the glass. He drinks it.

MIKE  
 This should ease the pain.

Grace sits beside Anthony and takes his hand.

GRACE  
 It's just another one of your attacks. You rest awhile, then me and your pa'll take you home.

Anthony nods, relaxing. Mike smiles at him and smooths his brow.

MIKE  
 I'll be right back.

She leads Grace and Robert E out of the room --

INT. CLINIC HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - DAY ONE

Mike, Grace and Robert E come out of the Recovery Room. Grace and Robert E start to head downstairs:

GRACE  
 I'm gonna bring Anthony some of my tomato soup. He always likes that when he's feelin' poorly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Please, Grace, wait a moment.

Grace and Robert E turn to Mike. She shifts uncomfortably, this is difficult news.

MIKE

Anthony's condition... this last attack, the fever... I believe it may have damaged his kidneys.

ROBERT E

His kidneys?

GRACE

What's wrong with his kidneys?

MIKE

They're enlarged and painful to the touch.

ROBERT E

That's never happened before.

MIKE

No. It hasn't...

Robert E reads the great concern on Mike's face, but Grace only hears another symptom that they'll have to adjust to.

GRACE

We've learned to deal with this sickness as it comes. There's no predictin' it. But I 'preciate your telling us, Dr. Mike.

Grace holds Mike's look a moment, grateful.

GRACE

I'll be gettin' him that soup now.

She turns and leaves. Robert E watches her go then turns to Mike, worried. OFF Mike's apprehension -- Anthony's latest symptom is definitely a sign of something more serious.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. HOMESTEAD BARN - NIGHT ONE

Mike brushes down FLASH, trying to forget her troubles in the easy rhythm of her task. SULLY silently enters (looking like he's been on the road for a while) and lingers a moment, taking her in, watching his wife. Then:

SULLY  
Michaela.

Mike turns around at the sound of his voice. She's thrilled to see him, and rushes to him:

MIKE  
You're back! Thank goodness...

He enfolds her in his arms, and they kiss.

Mike takes in his road-weary condition, and can't help but worry. Her concern rushes out in a torrent:

MIKE  
Are you alright?

SULLY  
I'm fine --

MIKE  
It's not safe for you to be here...

SULLY  
I been keepin' watch for soldiers --  
I got a few minutes.

She holds him to her -- she can't help being in an emotional turmoil: so much has happened since she last saw him that she needs to tell him: Sgt. McKay's wire, the miscarriage...

MIKE  
I can't tell you how good it is  
to have you home...  
(releasing him)  
How did it go? Were you and  
Cloud Dancing able to speak with  
the Indian elders?

SULLY  
We tried, but Black Moon got to  
'em first.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Oh, Sully...

SULLY

An' other tribes are joinin' him --  
Apache, Kiowa. He's tellin' 'em  
the army plans on killin' every  
Indian in the territory.

Sully looks at her and sees the concern in her eyes. He pulls her closer.

SULLY

Michaela, it ain't over. We're  
not givin' up.

Mike nods and smiles thinly, wanting to believe him.

SULLY

What about you? How're you  
holdin' up?

MIKE

I'm fine. But...  
(this is difficult  
news).  
I received an answer from Sgt.  
McKay.

Sully reads the news in her eyes:

SULLY

The army turned down our appeal.

She nods, sadly, then glances away, quiet.

Sully sees that she needs reassuring. He takes her hand:

SULLY

Like I said... we're not givin'  
up.

Mike nods. She knows that this is the moment to tell him about the miscarriage...

She looks at him, almost ready to tell him -- but her feelings betray her and she can't. She looks away.

Sully reads that there's something else wrong:

SULLY

What is it? Somethin' else  
happen?

Mike struggles with her emotions. She can't tell him:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE  
 No -- I've just missed you so  
 much...  
 (drawing herself into  
 his embrace)  
 Just hold me, Sully...

Sully holds her tight.

OFF Mike, worried about the secret that now lies between them.

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY TWO

DOROTHY and Mike walk from the store towards the Gazette, talking in hushed tones.

MIKE  
 Cloud Dancing stayed behind to  
 try and reason with Black Moon  
 again.

DOROTHY  
 Does Sully think Cloud Dancin'  
 can convince him to stop the  
 raids?

MIKE  
 Apparently Black Moon seems set  
 against peace with the army --  
 but Sully's determined to keep  
 trying to convince him.

DOROTHY  
 How is Sully?

MIKE  
 (evasively)  
 He seems alright...

That's not what Dorothy means:

DOROTHY  
 No, I mean how'd he take the news  
 about the miscarriage?

They stop in front of the alley between the Gazette and the clinic. A beat, then:

MIKE  
 I couldn't tell him.  
 (before Dorothy can  
 respond)  
 I wanted to, but I couldn't -- I  
 couldn't add to his burdens.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Dorothy sees that this is an excuse; she understands how difficult it is for Mike to deal with this:

DOROTHY  
(gently)  
You gotta tell him, Michaela --  
for both your sakes.

MIKE  
(nods)  
You're right... I will.

Dorothy takes her hand, squeezes it encouragingly. Mike smiles back her gratitude...

EXT. CAFE - DAY TWO

Robert E sits across from Anthony, who's busy snapping the ends off a pile of green beans. Anthony stops a moment, rubs the pain from his fingers. Robert E is watching him carefully, but tries to be casual:

ROBERT E  
You just let us know when you're  
feelin' tired...

ANTHONY  
I'm alright.

He resumes snapping the beans. Grace sits down next to Anthony and sets a bowl for the beans in front of them. Anthony and Grace work quietly a moment, before:

ANTHONY  
What's your favorite thing 'bout  
Colorado Springs?

GRACE  
Hmmm. That's not an easy  
question.

ANTHONY  
I know. Miss Teresa told us to  
write an essay about our favorite  
thing, and then she's gonna pick  
the best one to read at Parent's  
Day.

Grace and Robert E share a smile -- they can see he wants to win that contest.

ROBERT E  
Well, you just figure it out one  
step at a time --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

That's right -- what things make you feel good?

ANTHONY

I like the fishin'...

ROBERT E

That's good --

ANTHONY

And the library -- it's got books all the way from Boston...

GRACE

You could write about what those books mean to you --

ANTHONY

And the hot springs, and the newspaper -- not many other places got those --

ROBERT E

You sure got plenty of things to pick from. .

ANTHONY

That's my problem -- what's my favorite?

Grace and Robert E exchange a look -- they see his problem:

GRACE

I see what you mean...

ROBERT E

Guess that's what makes our town special --

Mike approaches them:

ROBERT E

Dr. Mike.

MIKE

Robert E. Grace.

(to Anthony)

I thought I'd come and see how my patient's doing.

(smiling)

How are you feeling, Anthony?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

(before Anthony can  
answer)

He's better. That attack passed,

Anthony looks at Grace, surprised. It's not like her to speak for him. But he can see that it's important to Grace for him to agree:

ANTHONY

Yeah, I'm better.

Mike doesn't miss the exchange between mother and son. She looks to Grace a moment, then back to Anthony.

MIKE

Well, I'm glad to hear it.

Grace stands up.

GRACE

C'mon Anthony, let's get these  
beans on the stove.

Grace takes the bowl over to the stove. Anthony follows. Robert E looks to Mike.

ROBERT E

Dr. Mike, he's tryin' to hide it,  
but I can tell he's still in  
pain.

(a beat)

It's never lasted this long.

MIKE

No. It hasn't.

Robert E and Mike trade an uneasy look, then turn to watch Anthony and Grace working quietly by the stove.

INT. CAVE - DAY TWO

Sully and Cloud Dancing are looking at a map of Indian Territory.

CLOUD DANCING

Many more Apache and Kiowa have  
come from the east to join Black  
Moon.

SULLY

Is he gonna attack?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOUD DANCING

For now he waits and gathers strength.

SULLY

That buys us some time. If we talk to the Apache and Kiowa ourselves, maybe we can convince 'em to move north where they can live free.

Cloud Dancing folds the map.

CLOUD DANCING

Yes, but we will also need to convince the army to allow them free passage.

SULLY

You and me ain't exactly welcome guests.

CLOUD DANCING

This is true, but we are not the only voice.

SULLY

Michaela tried. Daniel tried. The army wouldn't listen.

CLOUD DANCING

Perhaps Dorothy could help.

SULLY

(surprised)  
Dorothy?

CLOUD DANCING

I believe the Gazette might help people see the justice in our cause -- perhaps then they will help convince the army.

Sully considers his words, sensing that there's more to this connection than Cloud Dancing's willing to admit.

SULLY

You should talk to her.

OFF Cloud Dancing, looking forward to that...

INT. SCHOOL - DAY THREE

The children in the class work quietly, writing their Colorado Springs essays. Anthony, looking a little feverish, writes quickly. Brian sits beside him proofing his own essay. Teresa walks down the aisle checking the children's work.

TERESA

I am pleased to see that your essays are progressing so well. I will collect them on Friday.

Brian leans over to Anthony and whispers:

BRIAN

Thought you couldn't decide what to write 'bout.

ANTHONY

Somethin' my Ma and Pa said gave me an idea.

Brian nods, goes back to his work.

Anthony continues to write quickly, then stops and holds his stomach as a wave of nausea hits him. He whispers to Brian:

ANTHONY

Brian -- I think I'm gonna be sick...

BRIAN

Miss Teresa, Anthony's sick --

Teresa walks over, feels Anthony's forehead.

TERESA

You do feel a little warm. Perhaps it would be best if you go home.

Anthony nods, rises stiffly.

TERESA

Brian, will you go with him?

BRIAN

Sure.

Brian picks up their schoolwork, and follows Anthony to the door. Teresa watches, concerned...

EXT. ROAD THROUGH THE WOODS - DAY THREE

Dorothy is riding along a road through the woods, when suddenly:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cloud Dancing steps out from behind a tree up ahead.

Dorothy pulls the reins of her horse, stopping, a rush of emotions overwhelming her: she's surprised, thrilled to see him...

They lock eyes, as he walks over to her to help her off the horse.

CLOUD DANCING

It is good to see you.

He clasps her waist and gently lowers her to the ground.

They stand silently, his hands still on her waist, only inches apart, and once again feel the pull of their attraction... They look as if they might kiss, as if they both want to kiss --

But there's something different added to it: a shyness on both their parts --

And on Dorothy's part, a hesitation, her feelings overwhelming her.

Cloud Dancing reads her hesitation, lets his arms drop from her waist. Dorothy speaks, nervously, about everything except what she feels:

DOROTHY

You look...  
 (she wants to say,  
 wonderful, but she  
 says:)  
 well.

CLOUD DANCING

And you.

DOROTHY

Michaela said you were going to --  
 have you been able to reason with  
 Black Moon?

Cloud Dancing looks into her eyes. He sees that she needs to keep this on a non-intimate level, and responds accordingly -- but throughout this, while they're talking business, they're staying physically close to each other, talking above their attraction to each other:

CLOUD DANCING

He sees the white man as his  
 enemy -- just as the white man  
 sees him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dorothy hears that -- the air goes out of her. Will this dictate their fate?

CLOUD DANCING

But there is something we can do to help -- something you can do.

DOROTHY

Me? What can I do?

CLOUD DANCING

What you do so well... Write about it -- make your people understand that we are not their enemy.

DOROTHY

Why would they listen to me?

CLOUD DANCING

You once thought as they do...

DOROTHY

That was before...

(she means, before them, but says:)

Before the raids, before folks lost their homes...

CLOUD DANCING

You had great faith in your book, as did I. I believe you can do the same with the Gazette.

(seeing she's not convinced)

Their hearts will hear what your heart has.

Dorothy nods. There is a CRACK from the woods. Cloud Dancing whips his head, peering into the woods. Nobody's there. But it's still dangerous for him to be out in the open, and they both know it:

CLOUD DANCING

I must go.

Dorothy nods. They drink in each other, and again almost kiss. But don't.

Cloud Dancing turns to go.

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin'...

He turns back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOROTHY

Be safe.

He nods, and disappears into the woods.

OFF Dorothy, emotions running through her --

EXT. ROBERT E'S PORCH -- DAY THREE

Grace, Robert E and Mike come out of the house.

GRACE

(matter of fact)

Thanks for comin', Dr. Mike.  
We'll keep him quiet 'til his  
stomach settles.

MIKE

Grace...

GRACE

A nice little nap'll do him good --  
maybe I'll make him some puddin',  
that always seems to settle  
him...

MIKE

Grace -- I believe Anthony's  
nausea and fatigue are symptoms  
that may be related to his  
kidneys.

GRACE

His kidneys...?

ROBERT E

You still think there's somethin'  
wrong with 'em?

Mike reads the confusion and fear in their eyes. This is  
difficult, as she searches for the words to explain.

MIKE

With each attack, the pain and  
swelling seem to last much  
longer. And now, his kidneys are  
showing clear signs of  
deterioration.

GRACE

But what's that mean?

This is the hardest thing she's ever had to say to her friends --  
but they deserve the complete truth.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MIKE

One can't survive without one's kidneys.

They get it: she's saying that he's dying. Robert E looks away, fighting back tears.

But Grace is still in denial:

GRACE

(hopefully)

Are you sure you're readin' the symptoms right, Dr. Mike?

Mike doesn't take offense; she knows the strain Grace is under:

MIKE

Perhaps we should get another opinion.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE - DAY FOUR

ANDREW examines Anthony's eyes for signs of jaundice, as Mike, Grace and Robert E look on.

Andrew steps back, makes a notation on Anthony's chart. He then takes Anthony's wrists in his hands, carefully checking them again for signs of edema.

Andrew looks up and smiles at Anthony.

ANDREW

There. All done.

Anthony nods nervously. Grace and Robert E trade a tense look. Andrew glances at Mike, who reads his look -- the news isn't good. She nods slightly, then turns to Anthony:

MIKE

Anthony, why don't you come out and see the roses with me? They're particularly beautiful right now --

Anthony nods and she helps him down from the table. They go outside.

A difficult moment as the others wait for them to leave.

Then Andrew turns to Grace and Robert E:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDREW

Grace, Robert E -- I'm afraid I must concur with Michaela's diagnosis. Anthony's condition is very grave.

OFF Grace and Robert E --

EXT. SPRINGS CHATEAU - CONTINUOUS - DAY FOUR

MIKE

How about here?

Mike guides Anthony to a bench and they sit down. Anthony stares out at the horizon.

ANTHONY

I'm sick aren't I?

Anthony turns to Mike, his simple question unsettling her.

MIKE

Well, yes, you know that -- you've had these attacks for a very long time.

ANTHONY

I mean, really sick.

Mike is torn: it's not her place to answer. She puts her arm around him, drawing him close.

MIKE

We should wait and hear what Dr. Cook has to say.

INT. ANDREW'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - DAY FOUR

Grace has gone silent, inward, summoning a way to deal with this news. Robert E is grasping at straws, asking Andrew:

ROBERT E

Isn't there anythin' you can do for him?

ANDREW

The cause of his illness is still unknown -- Michaela has done everything possible to treat his symptoms, but -- he does seem to be moving into a... less hopeful state.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDREW (CONT'D)  
 (a beat, then)  
 I'm truly sorry. I wish I could  
 offer you better news.

Robert E stares back at him, absorbing the words.

A beat, then Grace walks out of the room. Robert E shoots a worried look to Andrew, then gets up to follow Grace.

EXT. SPRINGS CHATEAU - CONTINUOUS - DAY FOUR

Mike and Anthony sit together on the bench. They look up to see Grace approach, followed by Robert E and Andrew.

ANTHONY  
 What'd the doctor say, Ma?

Grace looks to Mike a moment, then turns and smiles at Anthony, stepping closer.

GRACE  
 (with conviction)  
 Dr. Cook says you're gonna be  
 just fine..

Mike shoots a questioning look to Andrew. He grimly shakes his head, no.

Anthony looks to Mike, not sure Grace is telling him the truth. Mike gives nothing away in her look, and Anthony turns back to Grace. He smiles and takes her hand.

GRACE  
 Now, c'mon, let's go home. I got  
 an order of apple pies to fill  
 this afternoon, and you're my  
 official taster.

Grace and Anthony head toward the wagon.

Robert E looks to Mike, confused -- what should he do? Mike returns his look, at a loss. Robert E turns to follow Grace and Anthony.

Mike watches them climb into the wagon, then turns back to Andrew, deeply troubled by the lie now standing between Grace and Anthony. As we slowly...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. CAVE - DAY FIVE

Sully holds Katie up in the air, beaming.

SULLY  
Hey there, sweet girl, how'd you  
get so big, huh?

Mike smiles, watching them, but she's anxious to tell Sully about her miscarriage.

MIKE  
Sully...?

Sully is focused on Katie, holding her hands, guiding her as she walks.

SULLY  
Michaela, look she's gonna be  
runnin' pretty soon...

MIKE  
I know, we won't be able to keep  
up with her.  
(beat)  
Sully? I need to talk to you  
about something.

He picks Katie up and turns his attention to Mike.

MIKE  
While you were away --

KATIE  
Pa...

Sully looks at Katie, thrilled.

SULLY  
Did ya hear that? She said Pa.

Mike can't help smiling.

MIKE  
I heard.

Sully beams at his daughter.

SULLY  
Katie, you said Pa.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike watches them, seeing Sully's pride in their child.

SULLY  
(turns to Mike)  
I'm sorry. What were you sayin'?

MIKE  
I...

SULLY  
You said -- while I was away...?

Mike decides that her moment is lost -- this is a bad time to tell him about her miscarriage.

MIKE  
Yes, it's Anthony. He's become very ill.

Sully looks stricken.

SULLY  
How bad is it?

MIKE  
I don't believe he'll recover.

Sully absorbs the terrible news. He holds Katie close.

SULLY  
Nothin' harder than losin' a child. I thought I'd never get over it.

OFF Mike realizing that telling Sully will be more difficult than she ever imagined.

EXT. CAFE - DAY FIVE

Robert E watches Grace vigorously chop a bunch of carrots. She stays focused on her task, not acknowledging him.

ROBERT E  
You're gonna have to talk to me sometime.

GRACE  
(not looking up)  
I got nothin' to say.

ROBERT E  
Well, maybe I do.

He reaches out and stops her hands. She looks at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE  
I'm listenin'.

Robert E chooses his words carefully, delicately.

ROBERT E  
Grace... Dr. Mike and Andrew  
wouldn't lie to us.

Grace remains cool and quiet.

ROBERT E  
We need to face it now... for  
Anthony.

Grace takes a deep breath, resolved.

GRACE  
I know what they said -- but  
they're doctors, Robert E, I'm  
his mother.  
(forcing herself to say  
the words)  
An' if Anthony was dyin', I'd  
know it... I'd feel it...  
(putting her hand to  
her heart)  
Right here.

Grace looks at Robert E, pleading for his understanding. At  
this moment, he'd give his life to have her conviction.

ROBERT E  
I wanna believe that --

GRACE  
Then believe it.

She stares at him, greatly determined. After a beat, Robert E  
nods, not wanting to dispute her. He walks away.

Grace gets back to work. She falters for a moment, leaning  
heavily on the table, then composes herself and resumes  
chopping.

EXT. GRACE AND ROBERT E'S HOUSE - DAY FIVE

Anthony sits on the porch steps, writing his essay. He stops  
and flexes his fingers, rubbing the joints, trying to ease the  
pain.

Turning back to the essay, he crosses out a few lines, then  
starts again.

BRIAN

rides over on his bicycle.

BRIAN

Hey, Anthony.

RESUME

Anthony looks up from his notebook and smiles.

ANTHONY

Hey, Brian.

BRIAN

Thought if you were feelin'  
better, you'd wanna come ridin'  
with me.

Anthony sits up, briefly considering the offer, then shakes his head, thinking better of it.

ANTHONY

My legs're still hurtin' me.

BRIAN

You could ride on the handlebars.

ANTHONY

I don't think so. I might fall.

Brian nods and, respecting Anthony's privacy, starts to pedal away. But Anthony stops him, troubled, needing to talk:

ANTHONY

Brian?

BRIAN

Yeah?

ANTHONY

I think there's somethin' they're  
not tellin' me.

BRIAN

Whad'ya mean?

ANTHONY

Well, my ma says I'm gonna be  
fine, but -- I don't know... this  
time, somethin' feels different.

Brian listens, concerned.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

Maybe you could ask your ma  
what's wrong with me?

Brian responds to the sadness and confusion in Anthony's eyes.

BRIAN

Sure, I'll ask her.

Anthony smiles, relieved and grateful.

ANTHONY

Thanks.

Brian nods, worried about his friend.

INT. GAZETTE - DAY FIVE

Dorothy's at her desk working on her editorial, as Mike reads over her shoulder.

DOROTHY

I've detailed all the abuses at  
the reservation, includin' the  
lack of food and the beatin's.

Dorothy looks up anxiously to Mike.

MIKE

That's a good idea. Perhaps you  
should also include information  
about the treaties.

DOROTHY

Yes. I could tell how the  
government broke all their  
promises 'bout givin' the Indians  
land.

(a beat)

Maybe I should start with that.

Dorothy turns back to her editorial and begins to write. She stops, sagging back into her chair, and looks up at Mike.

DOROTHY

Oh, Michaela... are we just  
foolin' ourselves? I mean, is  
this really gonna make any  
difference?

MIKE

Yes, I believe that it will  
educate some people, perhaps  
change their opinions.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Dorothy appreciates this, but she's troubled, wondering about her future with Cloud Dancing.

DOROTHY

But will there ever come a time  
when folks'll just accept the  
Indians? When we can all live in  
peace an' be free to -- to see  
one another as friends?

Mike takes a moment to consider the reality of their times. She looks at Dorothy.

MIKE

I hope so.

Dorothy nods. The two friends are quiet and wistful.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT FIVE - ESTABLISHING

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT FIVE

Pensive, Brian dries the dishes, handing them one-by-one to Mike, who stacks them in the cabinet.

Brian wipes the last dish. Mike puts it away.

MIKE

Thank you, Brian.

BRIAN

Sure thing.

Mike smiles warmly at him, then moves away.

BRIAN

Ma?

MIKE

(pauses, turning back)  
Hmm?

BRIAN

What's wrong with Anthony?

Mike stiffens, unprepared for his direct question and unwavering stare. She composes herself.

MIKE

You know that Anthony is very  
sick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

Yeah. And he seemed real worried when I saw him today. He said somethin' feels different this time.

MIKE

(with difficulty)  
I'm afraid that it is.

Brian stares at her, needing to know more.

MIKE

Anthony's condition -- is very serious.

Brian swallows, seeing the gravity in Mike's expression.

BRIAN

Ya mean -- he's gonna die?

Mike looks at Brian, wanting to protect him, but knowing his need for the truth.

MIKE

I'm sorry, Brian.

Brian shifts back, struck by her answer.

BRIAN

There's gotta be somethin' you can do for 'im.

MIKE

(pained)  
I wish that there were.

Brian sinks into a chair, trying to process the information. Tears well in his eyes at the thought of losing his best friend.

Mike moves closer to comfort him.

MIKE

I'm so sorry.

Brian looks up at her.

BRIAN

Ma, he wants to know the truth. Ya gotta tell 'im.

MIKE

I can't, Brian.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN  
Why can't ya?

MIKE  
Grace and Robert E are his  
parents. It's their place to  
tell Anthony, and they don't want  
me to do it.

BRIAN  
But you're his doctor.

MIKE  
I'm also their friend, and I must  
respect their wishes.

Brian understands, but he's still distressed.

BRIAN  
What about Anthony's wishes?

Mike reacts, as troubled as Brian. She looks at him, wanting  
to offer some reason and consolation as we

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY SIX

Sully and Mike are eating lunch. The mood is somber and  
reflective.

SULLY  
Brian's right. It's best for  
Anthony to know the truth.

MIKE  
I agree. Robert E feels the same  
way, but Grace sees things  
differently.

(beat)  
I can't imagine, Sully, what they  
must be feeling now.

SULLY  
(nods)  
They'll get through it, Michaela.  
Just like you 'n me've made it  
through all the tough times in  
our lives. They'll get through  
it together.

Mike nods thoughtfully as Sully embraces her, but when he lifts  
her chin to kiss her, she hesitates and draws back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE  
Sully... I need to tell you  
something.

Sully sees her seriousness and listens intently.

MIKE  
I tried to tell you before...  
(beat)  
While you were away... I had a  
miscarriage.

He stares at her, caught off-guard.

SULLY  
You were pregnant?

Mike nods sadly.

MIKE  
I lost our baby, Sully.

For a moment, Sully just stares, in shock. Then he shifts  
closer and tenderly rubs Mike's back.

SULLY  
You alright?

MIKE  
I'm feeling well now.

SULLY  
When did it happen?

MIKE  
A few weeks ago, before Founders  
Day.

Sully looks confused.

SULLY  
Ya didn't tell me?

MIKE  
I know, I should have told you  
right away, but I wanted to  
protect you.

Sully takes this in, feeling great frustration and guilt.

SULLY  
I shoulda been here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

There was nothing you could have done.

SULLY

I shoulda been here with you, Michaela.

MIKE

You're here now. That's all that matters.

But Sully is distracted, disturbed. Mike leans into him and he puts his arm around her.

ON SULLY

holding Mike, keeping the pain of his loss tightly inside.

ON MIKE

snuggled close against Sully's chest, yet feeling the distance between them.

EXT. CAFE - DAY SIX

The cafe is closed. Anthony sits at a table, tired and drawn, putting the final touches on his essay.

Grace heads over. He glances up and smiles at her.

ANTHONY

Almost done.

GRACE

That's wonderful.

She leans over his shoulder to see his work, but he quickly moves his arm to hide it.

GRACE

Don't I get to read it?

ANTHONY

Not yet. It's a surprise.

Grace smiles, intrigued.

ANTHONY

I've still gotta look it over, check the spellin'...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Anthony proofreads his essay, Grace admires him thoughtfully.

GRACE  
Anthony? I been thinkin'... how  
would you like to go to New  
Orleans?

Anthony brightens, despite his fatigue.

ANTHONY  
New Orleans?

GRACE  
Sure. Wouldn't ya like to see  
where your ma grew up?

ANTHONY  
(grins)  
When can we go?

GRACE  
Well, we'll have to start  
watchin' our pennies, but I bet  
me 'n your pa can save up enough  
money to take the train there  
this Christmas.

ANTHONY  
(excited)  
Christmas. Wait till I tell  
Brian.

Anthony gets up, still weak but with new enthusiasm. He takes his essay and heads out, favoring one leg, pausing near

MIKE

who's on her way in.

ANTHONY  
Dr. Mike, we're goin' to New  
Orleans for Christmas.

Mike gives Grace an uneasy glance, then smiles brightly at Anthony.

MIKE  
Won't that be lovely?

Anthony beams and nods, then leaves.

Mike turns to Grace. They share a look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Grace...

GRACE

I know, Dr. Mike. He's dyin'.

Mike moves closer, with compassion:

MIKE

Then why are you planning a trip to New Orleans?

GRACE

Because I want the rest of my boy's days to be filled with hope 'n happiness.

MIKE

I want that for Anthony, too, Grace -- but he's feeling weaker every day. He knows that he's sick. Planning a trip now will only confuse him.

GRACE

But didn't ya see 'im just now, smilin' like that?

MIKE

Grace... he needs to hear the truth from his mother.

GRACE

(firmly)

No. I ain't tellin' that child that he's dyin'.

This quiets Mike.

GRACE

(resolved)

I'm gonna tell 'im whatever it takes to keep that smile on his face, ev'ry precious day that he's alive.

Grace holds Mike's look, fiercely determined, then she turns and walks away.

OFF Mike, silenced by Grace's conviction as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. GAZETTE - DAY SEVEN - ESTABLISHING

DOROTHY (V.O.)  
Sully's gone?

INT. GAZETTE - DAY SEVEN

Dorothy is printing up the latest edition of the Gazette as Mike watches. They're in mid-conversation:

MIKE  
I rode out to the cave last night to bring him some food supplies, and I couldn't find him anywhere.

DOROTHY  
(beat, then:)  
Maybe he was with Cloud Dancin', tryin' to talk to some of the Indians.

MIKE  
(unconvinced)  
Yes... Yes, I'm sure that's where he was.

But something's still troubling her, and Dorothy sees it.

DOROTHY  
What is it, Michaela?

Off Mike's hesitation, Dorothy stops working and turns to her.

DOROTHY  
Did you tell Sully about the baby?

MIKE  
Yes.

DOROTHY  
How'd he take it?

MIKE  
(after a beat)  
He was saddened by it... and concerned for me...  
(another beat)  
But there was something else...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DOROTHY

What?

Mike thinks about this a moment, as if trying to figure it out for herself.

MIKE

I sensed something in him. The way he held me...

(beat)

It's as if... something changed between us...

DOROTHY

Michaela, you've both suffered a great loss. Sully'll get through this... and you will, too. Together.

Mike nods, grateful for this heartfelt encouragement... but still clearly troubled.

MIKE

I only wish I'd told him sooner.

Dorothy puts a reassuring hand on her shoulder as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LIVERY - NIGHT SEVEN

Robert E works late at the forge, pounding a piece of metal into shape, striking it over and over. Each blow he strikes is a blow against the disease now killing his son.

The metal snaps. Robert E stops, looks down at the broken pieces, then throws them into the water bucket, the steam HISSING.

Then, from the darkness, a whispered voice:

SULLY (O.S)

Robert E.

Startled, Robert E turns. At first, he sees nothing but shadows.

ROBERT E

Sully...?

He steps toward the darkness, suddenly discovering Sully standing there, out of view of the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Robert E hugs him -- two friends together again. He steps back. The sadness returns to Robert E's eyes, his pain too naked and raw to hide.

ROBERT E  
I'm losin' my son, Sully...

Sully, feeling his own pain as well as Robert E's, tries to make sense of it.

SULLY  
A child dyin' 'fore the  
parents... It ain't right.

Robert E shakes his head in frustration.

ROBERT E  
There's nothin' I can do to stop  
it.

SULLY  
You can be there with him...  
(remembering when he  
wasn't with Mike)  
...make sure he ain't alone.

This hits Robert E hard.

ROBERT E  
That's just it, Sully. Even when  
I'm with him... I still feel like  
he's alone in this.  
(struggling with his  
emotions)  
I mean... we're there by his  
side, tryin' to ease his pain.  
We tell him we love him, but  
still...

Robert E falls silent, unable to continue.

SULLY  
It's good that you're tellin' him  
those things, Robert E...  
(beat, gently)  
...but sometimes it's the things  
we don't tell each other that  
keep us apart.

Robert E looks at Sully, the pain of keeping the truth from Anthony evident in his eyes.

EXT. CREEK - EARLY MORNING - DAY EIGHT

Dorothy sits beside the creek, waiting for Cloud Dancing, deep in troubled thought. She takes the Gazette, which includes her recent editorial, out of her saddle bag.

She hears LEAVES RUSTLE and looks up to see Cloud Dancing emerging from the woods.

CLOUD DANCING

Ha-ho.

He steps over and sits down beside her, noticing the Gazette in Dorothy's hands.

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin', I finished the editorial. I wrote about the terrible treatment at the reservation, and how the army's violatin' the Indian treaties.

(holds it out to him)

You wanna read it?

Cloud Dancing shakes his head.

CLOUD DANCING

Because you have written it, I know it is the truth.

DOROTHY

(a beat, moved by this)

Thank you.

They sit in silence a moment, watching the sunlight dance off the water. Dorothy finally turns back to him, trying to find the words for what's been troubling her:

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin'?

He turns to face her.

DOROTHY

I keep thinkin'... 'bout that time when you and me...

(beat)

...That time we kissed.

Dorothy glances away, her nervousness showing. Cloud Dancing gently tips her face up to his.

CLOUD DANCING

(warmly)

I too have thought of it often.

Dorothy looks at him, finally admitting:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOROTHY  
It frightens me...

CLOUD DANCING  
Frightens you?

DOROTHY  
I mean... with times the way they  
are...

Cloud Dancing nods, understanding.

CLOUD DANCING  
Yes... there are many  
difficulties... many questions.

DOROTHY  
And no answers.

CLOUD DANCING  
Not yet.  
(after a beat)  
But there will be.

He gently takes her hand in his. She looks down at their joined hands, then back up to him, realizing that perhaps they will be able to discover those answers together.

This realization gives Dorothy hope, renewing her optimism.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING - DAY EIGHT

It's early morning, before school. Anthony sits, wrapped in a warm coat and red scarf, at the picnic table watching the children play baseball. He looks weak and drawn.

Brian approaches the school, spots Anthony, and hurries over to join him.

BRIAN  
(pleasantly surprised)  
Hey Anthony, you're back!

ANTHONY  
I wanted to come, and my ma said  
I could.

Brian sees that Anthony doesn't look well, but tries to offer encouragement.

BRIAN  
That's good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

(a beat)

Did you talk to Dr. Mike for me?

Brian has dreaded this question, but won't lie to his friend.

BRIAN

Yeah.

ANTHONY

What'd she say?

Brian hesitates, unsure of what to tell him. Finally:

BRIAN

She thinks you should talk to  
your ma.

Anthony holds Brian's look a moment, sensing the words he hasn't spoken. Anthony nods. He knows the truth.

ANTHONY

Naw. I don't wanna make her sad.

Brian looks at him, and nods.

BRIAN

Yeah. Maybe you're right.

Brian sits beside Anthony. The weight of their unspoken words rests heavily on their shoulders, as they quietly turn back to watch the game.

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY EIGHT

The children are all in their seats, giving Teresa their full attention. She stands at the front of the class, proudly surveying her pupils. She holds the winning essay in her hand.

TERESA

This was a most difficult  
decision. Each one of your  
essays was deserving of a prize.  
However, there was one that stood  
above all others.

Brian and Anthony sit nervously in their seats, hanging on her every word.

TERESA

I am very happy and proud to  
announce that the winning essay,  
to be read at Parent's Day, was  
written by Anthony.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The class reacts, at first surprised, then with scattered applause. Anthony is stunned. Brian nudges him.

BRIAN

You won!

Teresa holds out his essay and waits for him to come forward. Anthony shakes himself out of his reverie. He gets up and walks slowly to the front of the class. As he walks, he becomes disoriented and unsteady.

Teresa and Brian react, alarmed.

TERESA

Anthony?

She steps toward him, and he suddenly collapses in her arms. Brian is instantly at her side. The rest of the children react, startled and uneasy.

TERESA

Brian, quickly. Help me take him to the clinic.

Teresa and Brian hurriedly carry an unconscious Anthony out of the schoolhouse.

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY EIGHT

Mike is all business, as she examines the now-conscious Anthony. She checks his pulse, respiration and pupils.

MIKE

Anthony, can you hear me?

Anthony nods slightly, still somewhat disoriented.

MIKE

Can you speak?

No answer. Mike gently lifts his left hand.

MIKE

Anthony, squeeze my hand?

He squeezes her hand softly. She then lifts his right hand.

MIKE

Now, one more time.

CLOSE ON ANTHONY'S HAND

No response.

## RESUME

as Mike lowers his hand to the bed. She looks down at him, concerned. A beat, then:

Grace and Robert E burst through the door.

GRACE

Mrs. Morales said he collapsed.

Grace rushes to Anthony's side.

ROBERT E

Is he alright?

They look to Mike for the answers.

MIKE

It appears as if Anthony has suffered a slight stroke.

Grace and Robert E react, alarmed.

MIKE

There's some weakness on the right side, and his speech has been affected.

Grace leans in close and strokes Anthony's forehead. Anthony struggles to talk.

ANTHONY

(slurred)

What's wrong?

Mike shoots Grace a look -- Please tell him. Grace looks to Robert E. She falters a moment, another crack in her resolve. Then, she regains her composure.

GRACE

Hush now, I'm here.

Robert E holds her look a moment, but relents and steps closer, taking Anthony's hand.

ROBERT E

We're both here, son.

He looks up to Mike, somber, the grim reality of Anthony's death now looming before them.

INT. CLINIC - LATER - DAY EIGHT

Mike is making notations on Anthony's chart. Grace enters from the recovery room. Mike looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Grace glances away and sees Anthony's red scarf laying on the examining table. She picks it up, holding the soft wool in her hands.

Mike watches in silence, saddened for Grace, who is desperately trying to find the strength to face her son's imminent death.

A long silence hangs between them. Then Grace looks to Mike, tears brimming in her eyes.

GRACE

I don't know how to say goodbye  
to my son.

Mike moves to her, taking Grace in her arms. Grace allows the first waves of grief to wash over her, and cries in Mike's embrace.

OFF Mike, holding her silently, her own heart breaking for her dear friend. As we slowly...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE



ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. RECOVERY ROOM - DAY EIGHT

Mike sits quietly beside Anthony's bed. Robert E and Grace enter the room. Anthony opens his eyes at the sound. Mike stands to let Robert E and Grace sit down on the bed beside Anthony. Grace looks down at him and smiles.

GRACE  
Hey, sleepyhead.

Anthony struggles to sit up. Robert E quickly helps him.

ANTHONY  
(weakly)  
Hey, Ma.

Grace looks at Mike. She wants very much to do right by Anthony, but it's so hard to know what to say. Mike puts her hand on Grace's shoulder. Grace draws strength from the support of her friend.

Mike moves back just a bit as Grace turns back to Anthony.

GRACE  
(to Anthony, quiet  
dignity)  
Anthony -- I know you been  
wantin' to talk to me -- 'bout  
things --

He's relieved to hear that she knew of his desire.

GRACE  
But I was so afraid I'd say the  
wrong thing -- I made the mistake  
of not sayin' anything.

ANTHONY  
That's all right, Ma.

GRACE  
No it ain't. But we're here now.  
Me 'n your pa. To talk about  
anything you want.

Anthony hopes he can speak completely candidly, but he's not quite sure.

ANTHONY  
(quietly)  
Anythin'?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT E

Anythin'.

Anthony takes them at their word. He dives in.

ANTHONY

What's gonna happen to me? When I die?

GRACE

(a beat; it's still  
hard for her)

Your soul is gonna fly straight  
up to Heaven where God's waitin'  
for you.

ANTHONY

(to Mike)

Will it hurt?

MIKE

No. There'll be no more pain,  
Anthony.

Anthony turns back to Grace and Robert E.

ANTHONY

Will I ever see you again?

GRACE

Of course you will. You'll see  
us in Heaven.

ANTHONY

How long will I have to wait?

ROBERT E

(shrugs, thinking)

In heaven, years seem like  
seconds. Hardly 'fore you can  
even turn around, there we'll be.  
Me 'n your ma.

ANTHONY

(relieved, happy)

You mean it?

ROBERT E

(passionately)

You know I do.

Grace and Robert E enfold Anthony in a warm hug.

MIKE

moves away, slightly. She wants to give the three of them this personal moment.

EXT. BARN - DAY NINE

Matthew comes out of the house, sees Brian in the corral. He walks over.

MATTHEW

I thought you'd left to go see Anthony.

Brian looks up at him, looks away.

MATTHEW

Brian?

BRIAN

(building emotion)

I don't know what to say to him, Matthew. I don't know what to do. He's the best friend I ever had -- and he's goin' away and he ain't never comin' back -- and I don't know how to tell him that I don't want him to die.

MATTHEW

(gently)

You think he doesn't know that?

Brian looks at him, close to breaking. Matthew hugs him, tight.

MATTHEW

I'll tell you somethin' else he knows. He knows you're hurtin' for him.

BRIAN

(torn up)

What am I supposed to say?

MATTHEW

You don't have to say anythin'. Just bein' with him is all he needs right now.

EXT. RECOVERY ROOM BALCONY - DAY NINE

Anthony sits in a make-shift reclining chair, enjoying the feel of the sun on his face and the sound of the bustle of the town below. The cap Robert E gave him rests on his lap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brian comes out onto the balcony. Brian's mood is subdued, but there is a peacefulness that settles over him as soon as he sees his friend.

BRIAN  
Hey, Anthony.

ANTHONY  
Hey, Brian.

Brian sits down in the chair next to Anthony. Anthony looks over to Brian, visibly weakened since the last time Brian saw him. He smiles at Brian.

BRIAN  
I wake you?

ANTHONY  
Naw. I was just thinkin'.

Brian nods. Anthony looks at him again.

ANTHONY  
Remember how you used ta read to me from Robinson Crusoe -- when I first came to town?

BRIAN  
Yeah -- ?

ANTHONY  
You were always wantin' to go on an adventure -- to far off places --

Brian smiles, nods.

ANTHONY  
Ya even got me to hop the train with you -- remember?

BRIAN  
I'll never forget that day.

They both laugh remembering the ill-fated trip.

BRIAN  
That was a really stupid idea.

ANTHONY  
Naw. It was fun.

Then they sit in silence a beat, considering the adventure Anthony's about to undertake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anthony takes the cap from his lap with his left hand and gives it to Brian.

ANTHONY

I'd like you to have this.

Brian takes the cap, reverently turning it over in his hands. Tears well in Brian's eyes.

Anthony sees Brian's discomfort, but continues, not giving into his feelings, all business.

ANTHONY

But you gotta promise you'll take good care of it. Don't mess up the bill, keep it straight, and smooth it down nice and flat when you take it off at night.

BRIAN

(very quietly)

I will.

ANTHONY

And don't go lettin' some girl wear it or it'll smell like perfume.

BRIAN

I won't.

ANTHONY

Good. I feel better, then.

Anthony smiles, then eases back into his chair. He's tired. Brian sits quietly beside him, composing himself. Then he scoots his chair right next to Anthony's and puts his arm around his shoulders. A quiet moment, and then:

BRIAN

Anthony?

ANTHONY

Mmmm?

BRIAN

Are ya scared?

ANTHONY

A little.

They sit, comfortable with each other, their friendship sealed for eternity.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY NINE

Mike kneels beside her garden, tilling the soil with a small spade. Mike looks up and sees:

TWO SOLDIERS

ride by on the road past the homestead. She watches them pass by.

RESUME

as she turns back to her garden. Mike hears a whistle. She sits up, listens for it again. It comes again.

MIKE

Sully -- !

She jumps up and hurries off in the direction of the whistle.

EXT. WOODS - DAY NINE - CONTINUOUS

Sully smiles as Michaela comes running into his arms. They hold each other tight during this entire exchange.

MIKE

Sully! Oh, Sully! I've been so worried --

SULLY

I know. I'm sorry.

MIKE

No -- I'm sorry. I'm so sorry I didn't tell you about the baby when you first came home.

SULLY

You told me as soon as you could.

MIKE

But then I couldn't find you and I was so afraid --

SULLY

No, no. It's all right. I just had to go away and think about it. I was feelin' like -- I shoulda been here. I coulda done somethin'. You're everything to me -- you and the children. If anythin' happens to you -- I need to be here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike understands. She holds him tight, struggling with the tears.

MIKE

But you were here. As soon as you could be.

He smiles a little, recognizing that she's paraphrasing what he just told her. He takes her hand, sits her down beside him.

SULLY

I need you to tell me about it. Everythin'.

She leans up against him, overwhelmed with feelings of love for him, secure again in his love for her. As he holds her:

MIKE

Shortly after you left, I started feeling so tired. I didn't think much of it, with all that had been going on --

CAMERA STARTS TO PULL AWAY from them...

MIKE

But then one morning at Grace's, I felt sick. And I knew. There was only one other time in my life I'd felt like that. I was so excited -- and frightened -- and -- thrilled.

CAMERA continues to pull away and we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROBERT E AND GRACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anthony is asleep on Robert E and Grace's bed. Grace is sitting on the bed lightly rubbing his arm. Robert E comes into the room. Grace looks up at him.

GRACE

(quietly)

He just fell asleep.

Robert E moves over closer to Grace. He puts his hand on her shoulder. She reaches up and puts her hand over his.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

When he first came to stay with us -- some nights I'd get up and sneak into his room just to make sure he was all right.

ROBERT E

I know.  
(a smile)  
I used to follow you.

Grace smiles.

GRACE

Remember that first day -- when he stole the apple pie I had out coolin' --

ROBERT E

(remembering, smiling)  
Ended up with pie all over his face --

GRACE

An' all over Dr. Mike's dress.

They both smile at the memory of it.

GRACE

(loving Robert E for it  
in hindsight)  
An' you were so determined he was gonna come live with us.

ROBERT E

But you were the one smart enough to insist on adoptin' him.

GRACE

(simple truth)  
We had to. He's our son.

Robert E nods.

ROBERT E

(almost to himself)  
That he is. Our son.

They stay where they are, not wanting to miss one precious second of whatever time they have left with Anthony.



EXT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY TEN - ESTABLISHING

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY TEN

The children are all in their seats. Anthony and Brian sit side by side, dressed in their Sunday best. The parents all stand along the back wall. Mike is there, along with Grace and Robert E.

Teresa stands in front of the class. WELCOME PARENTS is written on the chalkboard. A podium sits in front of the class.

Teresa steps forward.

TERESA

I'd like to welcome all of you to Parent's Day - the first of what we hope will be many celebrations of our students' accomplishments this year. We'll begin our program today with a presentation by one of our brightest students.

Teresa looks to Grace and Robert E, who nod, putting their past disputes to rest.

TERESA

He will read you his winning essay, "A Place Called Home." Anthony?

The parents and children applaud as Anthony stands up. He holds his essay in his left hand. He leans on the desk for support. He looks back to:

ROBERT E AND GRACE

smiling at him, trying to maintain their composure.

RESUME

Anthony takes slow, tentative steps, limping because of his weakened right side. He falters. He looks to Brian for help. Brian stands and offers his arm for support.

TERESA

steps aside as they pass her, tears brimming in her eyes.

## RESUME ANGLE

Anthony and Brian reach the podium in the front of the class. They turn to face the crowd -- a sea of smiling, warm supportive faces. Anthony leans on the podium. Brian sits to give Anthony his moment in the sun.

ANTHONY

(his voice steady and clear)

Miss Teresa asked us to write what our favorite thing about Colorado Springs was. But I don't have one.

(beat)

I have a hundred...

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY ELEVEN (MONTAGE)

We see Anthony, healthy, full of energy, a big smile, sweeping off the porch of the General Store.

ANTHONY (V.O.)

One of 'em is sweepin' off the porch for Mr. Bray, who gives me a piece of hard candy if I do a good job...

LOREN comes out onto the porch and inspects the work. He smiles, satisfied, then gives Anthony a piece of hard candy as we:

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. CHURCH - DAY TWELVE (MONTAGE)

Anthony rings the church bell for the REVEREND as townsfolk head into the church for the Sunday service.

ANTHONY (V.O.)

One of 'em is going down to our church, and visitin' our Reverend, who can see what you're thinkin' without usin' his eyes...

DISSOLVE TO:

## EXT. GAZETTE - DAY THIRTEEN (MONTAGE)

Anthony picks up a stack of Gazette's from Dorothy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY (V.O.)

One of 'em is deliverin' the Gazette for Miss Dorothy, who gives me newspapers from all over the country to read, so I can learn what's goin' on in other places...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLINIC - DAY FOURTEENN (MONTAGE)

Mike uses a tongue depressor to look into Anthony's throat. She smiles -- he gets a clean bill of health on this visit.

ANTHONY (V.O.)

One of 'em is goin' to see our very own lady doctor, who takes care of you without makin' it hurt more...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE THE MEADOW - DAY FIFTEEN (MONTAGE)

Anthony rides the bicycle, as Brian and other kids, including several kids from Shanty Town, cheer him on. Anthony and Brian are both laughing, full of life.

ANTHONY (V.O.)

One of my very favorite things is havin' a best friend who makes ya feel like you can do anythin' you want -- if you try...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY TEN (BACK TO THE PRESENT)

...as Anthony continues reading his essay.

ANTHONY

But my most favorite thing about Colorado Springs is my ma and pa, who took me in when I had no family, and gave me a home:..

CLOSE ON ROBERT E AND GRACE

almost undone by this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY (O.S.)  
They loved me all the time no  
matter what, and even went to the  
Judge and asked him to make me  
their son...

Off Robert E and Grace struggling to hold back their emotions:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY SIXTEEN

The REVEREND presides over Anthony's burial service. Mike stands with her arms around Brian, who holds Anthony's cap. The mourners include Dorothy, Loren, Matthew (holding Katie), Teresa and Andrew. Some of the Shanty Town residents are here also.

ANTHONY (V.O.)  
I lived in a lot of towns in my  
life, but Colorado Springs is the  
best place I've ever known...  
'cause that's where I found my ma  
and pa...

The mourners begin to leave. Mike and Brian stay with Robert E and Grace, holding onto each other for support.

ANTHONY (V.O.)  
...and no matter how far I travel  
or where I might go, I can always  
close my eyes, and I'll see  
them...  
(beat)  
...and know that I am home again.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR