

A HOUSE DIVIDED (BETWEEN FRIENDS)

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Directed by James Keach

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAWN - DAY ONE - FEBRUARY 1872

Establishing, at sunrise. Sully's horse is tethered to the hitching post.

INT. MIKE AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - DAY ONE

MIKE is asleep, alone in bed. The door opens. SULLY quietly comes in, wearing his coat and carrying a pack. He looks over at Mike, happy to see her, then turns to get settled.

Mike stirs. Groggy, she sees Sully from behind.

MIKE
Sully...?

He turns. Mike smiles and props up, surprised and delighted.

MIKE
You're home.

Sully smiles and moves to the bed. They embrace.

MIKE
I wasn't expecting you until this afternoon.

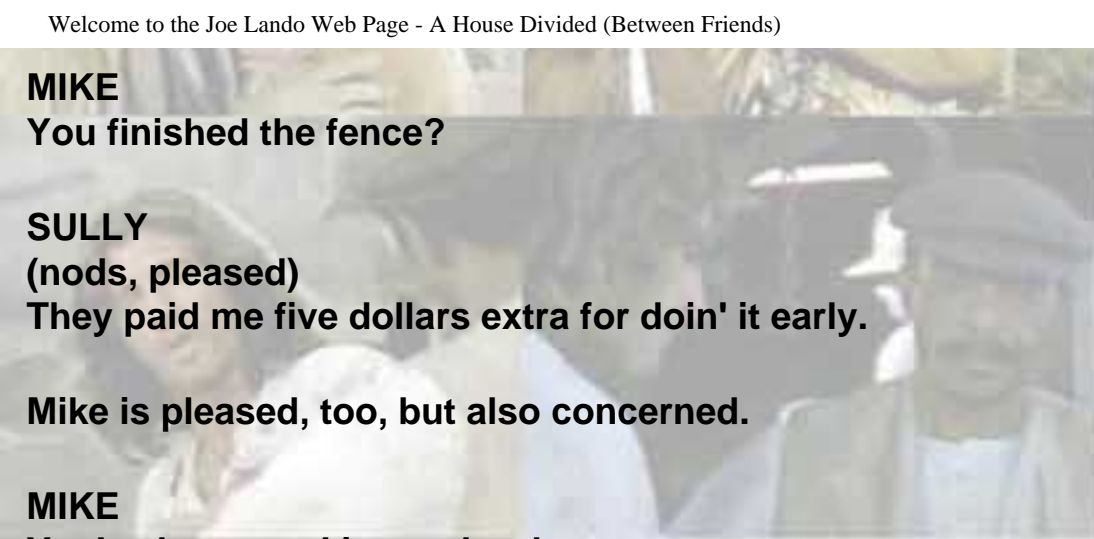
SULLY
Rode all night. Didn't wanna spend another night sleepin' in Manitou.



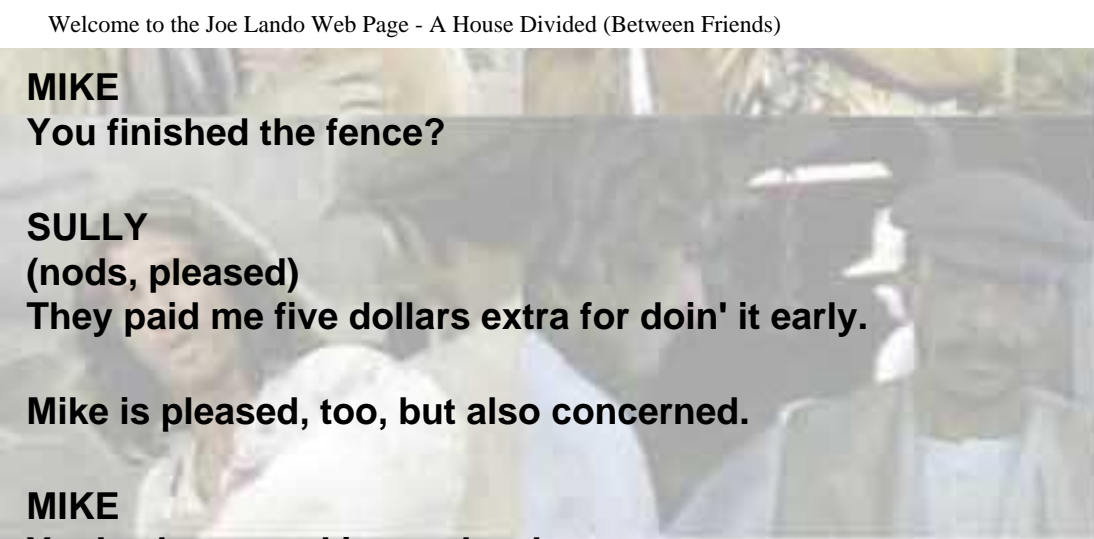
MIKE
You finished the fence?



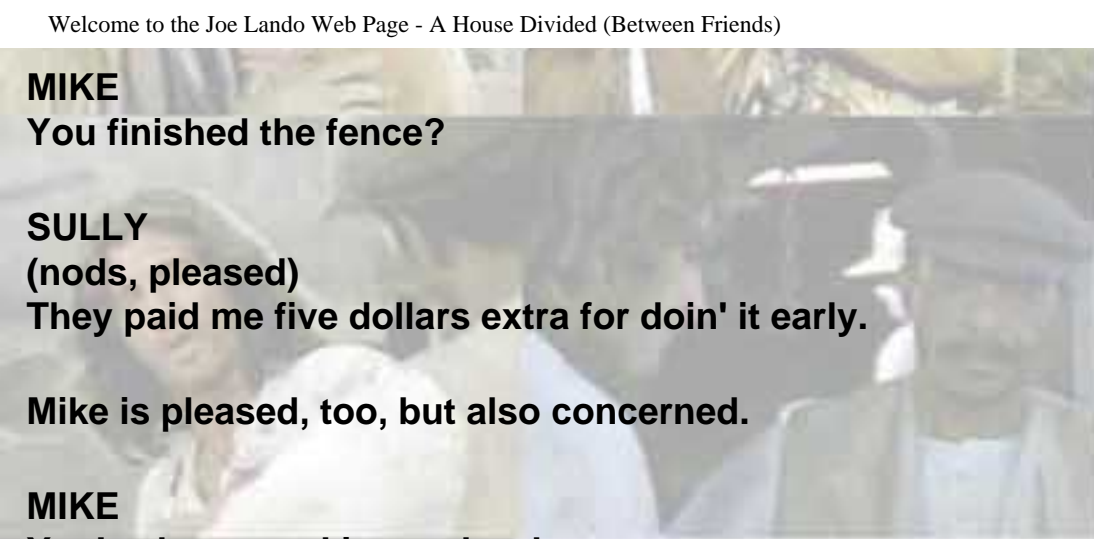
SULLY
(nods, pleased)
They paid me five dollars extra for doin' it early.



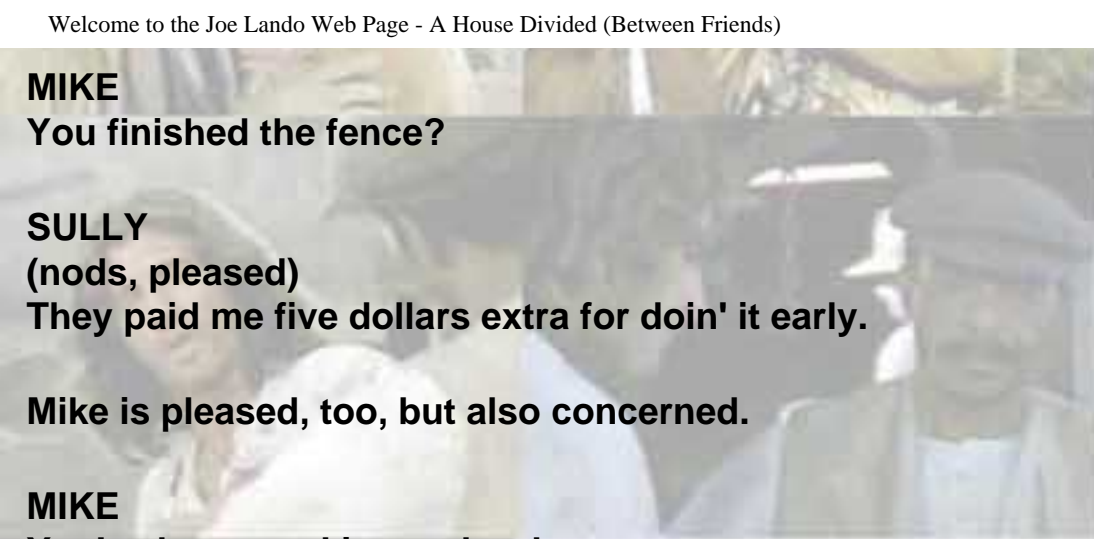
Mike is pleased, too, but also concerned.



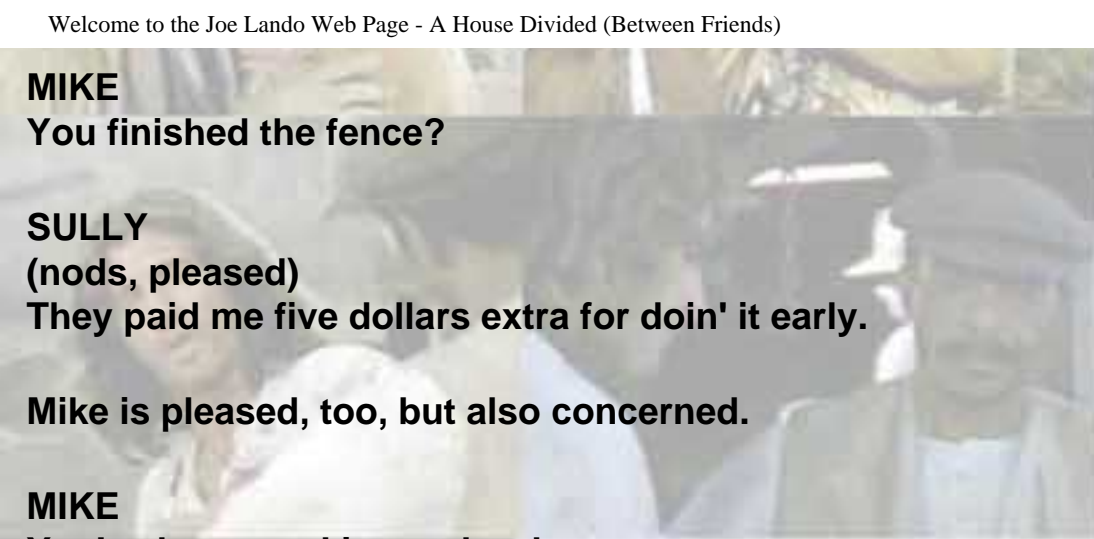
MIKE
You've been working so hard.



SULLY
Look who's talkin'.



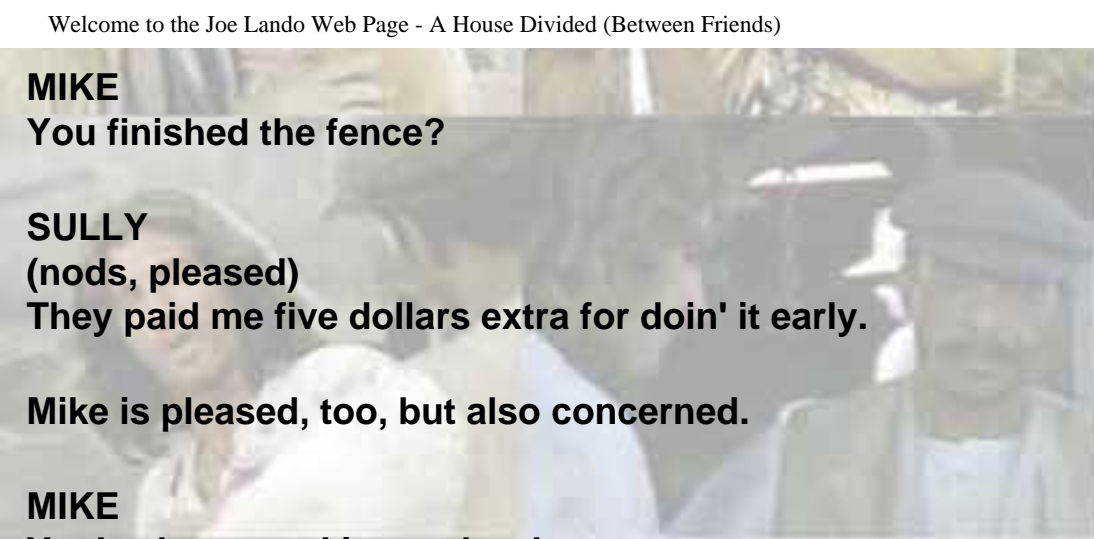
MIKE
Yes, but I don't have to leave home when I do.



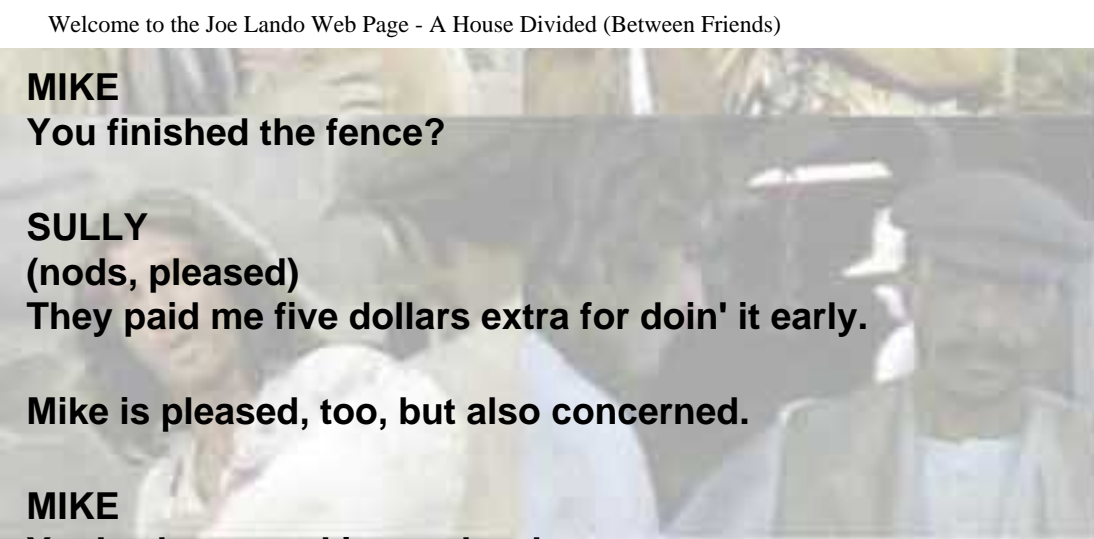
SULLY
Gotta go where the work is, Michaela. We got a mortgage to cover.



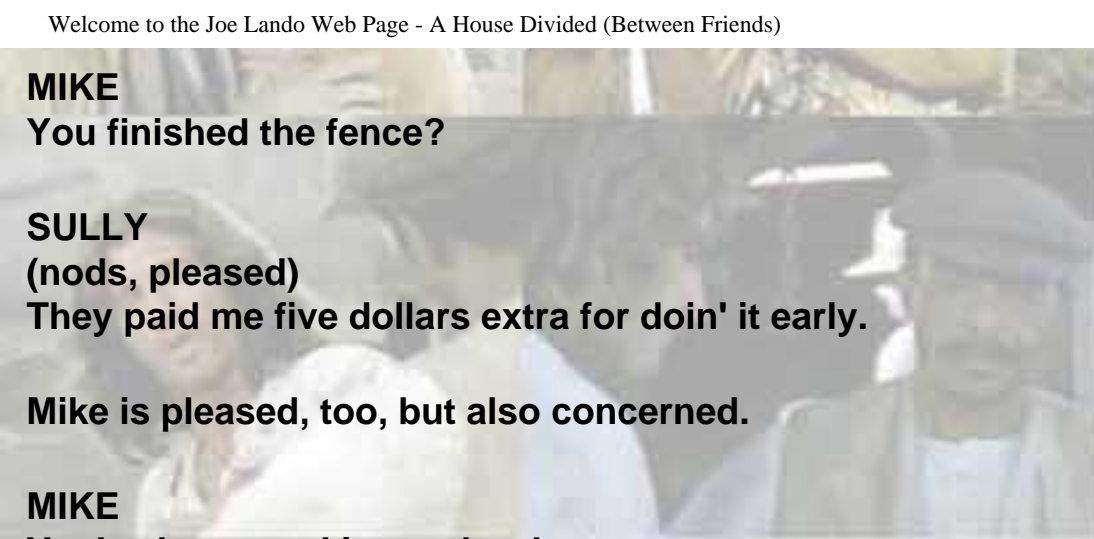
MIKE
I know ...
(perturbed)
And I feel so guilty about it, Sully. If I hadn't burned everything at the clinic --



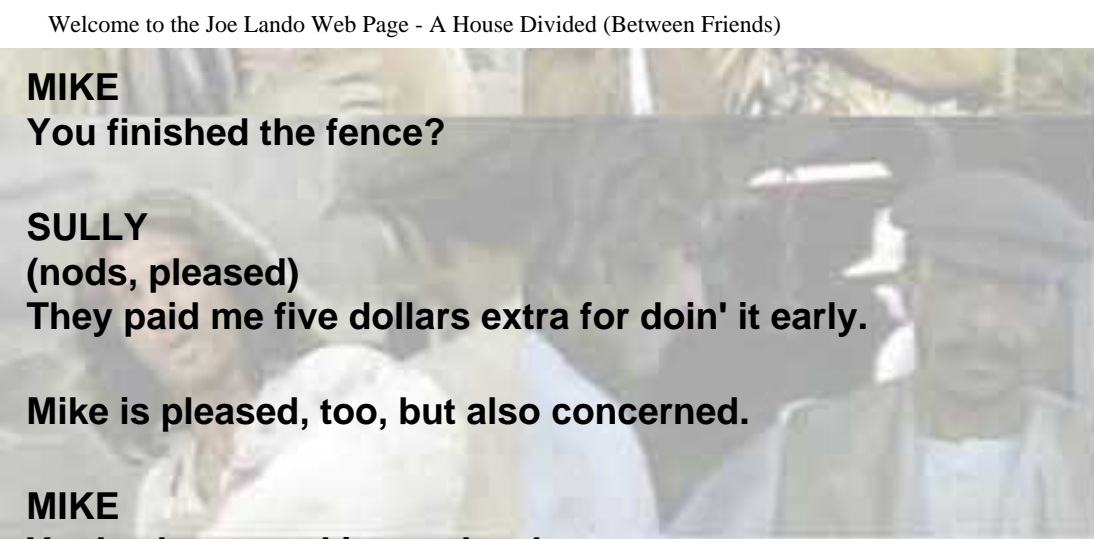
SULLY
Ya had to. It was the only way to get rid a the source of the infection.



MIKE
Yes, at my clinic. But now we both have this loan --



SULLY
Hey, whatever happens to you, happens to me. We're in this together.



Mike is appreciative, but she still feels responsible.



SULLY
'Sides, I don't mind the hard work. It's the sleepin' apart I can't get used to.



MIKE
(smiles softly)

I'm just glad that you're home.

SULLY
Only place I wanna be.

They kiss. Then, to Sully's surprise and disappointment, Mike gets out of bed.

SULLY
Where ya goin'?

MIKE
I have to bake.

SULLY
Bake?

MIKE
And straighten the house.
(reminding him)
Our guest is coming today.

SULLY
Daniel? You don't have to make a fuss over him.

MIKE
Sully, he's your oldest and dearest friend. I want to make a good impression.

SULLY
But ya don't have to worry 'bout that. Daniel's like family.

MIKE
Exactly.

Sully surrenders, watching Mike start her day as we --

CUT TO:

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY ONE

JAKE is stropping his razor. His reclining CUSTOMER's face is wrapped in a hot towel.

LOREN waits his turn, reading the **Gazette**. The headline: **Stock Market Slides**. He gripes:

LOREN
Why's Dorothy wastin' space printin' stories like this? I want local news. Local. Who cares what's goin' on in New York?

The customer raises his hand. Jake starts removing the towel, preparing to shave him.

LOREN
So what if the **Stock Market's** slipped?

The customer abruptly sits up, making Jake jerk his razor back. It's **PRESTON**.

PRESTON
Slipped?

JAKE
Yeah, ya almost lost an ear.

PRESTON
(waving for the paper)
The last I read in the **Denver Post**, the market was stable.

LOREN
(handing it over)
Well, it says here all a those blue bloods're runnin' scared, cashin' in their investments.

PRESTON
They're fools then. Alarmists.
(reassuring himself)
The market fluctuates. One must be prepared to weather the ups and downs.

Loren and Jake share a look as Preston voraciously reads the article.

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY ONE

MATTHEW comes outside and joins Mike (holding **KATIE**), Sully, and **BRIAN**. Mike looks especially beautiful.

MATTHEW
Been about a year since ya went to Virginia City, Sully. Bet Daniel's mine's grown a lot

since then.

BRIAN

(wide-eyed enthusiasm)

Yeah. How much gold do ya think Daniel's got?

MIKE

Well, we're certainly not going to ask him, Brian. It's not polite to question people about money.

Brian looks abashed, but Sully is amused.

SULLY

Bet Daniel wouldn't mind if ya asked 'im about searchin' for gold, Brian. He's got a real way with words.

Brian smiles.

The family turns toward the train station, but Preston hurries over from the barbershop and stops them. The Gazette is tucked under his arm.

PRESTON

Sully... Michaela?

Sully and Mike exchange glances, expecting to be annoyed.

PRESTON

Just a friendly reminder -- as of today, you are three weeks late on your mortgage payment.

Sully surprises Preston with an envelope. Preston peeks inside and fingers the cash. His smile slips.

PRESTON

I'm afraid you must've miscounted.

SULLY

You'll get the rest. You got my word.

PRESTON

I have more than that, Sully -- I have your signature. On loan papers. Binding documents. And those deadlines are there for a reason.

Brian watches his parents, worried. Mike gives Sully a calming look.

MIKE
We appreciate your patience, Mr. Lodge.

PRESTON
You do understand there are late fees. Penalties. And your next payment is due in a week.

MATTHEW
Another "friendly reminder"?

PRESTON
(sliding on a smile)
Precisely.

There's a distant TRAIN WHISTLE.

SULLY
We got a train to meet.

Sully turns the family toward the station, leaving Preston disgruntled...

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY ONE

The train arrives.

ANGLE - THE DOORWAY OF THE TRAIN

Steam billows as the CONDUCTOR steps down, followed by the PASSENGERS.

ON THE PLATFORM

Sully looks up at the doorway, his grin poised to break in anticipation.

Further behind him, Matthew gathers with Brian and Mike lifts Katie out of her carriage. She smooths the baby's collar, then turns toward the train, quickly primping her own hair.

ANGLE ON - DANIEL SIMON

as he emerges from the car, dressed in a stylish but understated suit, carrying luggage. He is a charismatic, ruggedly handsome man. Warm, personable, with a rich sense of humor.

SULLY AND DANIEL

Spot each other and move closer, kidding each other like comfortable old friends:

DANIEL

Well, will ya look at you...

SULLY

(re: Daniel's clothes)

What's this?

DANIEL

It's called a suit, Sully.

They grin and embrace, slapping each other's backs.

ANGLE ON - MIKE

As she curiously observes Daniel, weighing her first impression.

RESUME

Daniel looks toward the family, explaining:

DANIEL

Sully ain't used to seein' me like this.

SULLY

Ya look good.

Daniel and Sully trade smiles, excited to be reunited.

SULLY
Now c'mon, meet ev'rybody...

Matthew steps forward and shakes Daniel's hand.

MATTHEW
Matthew Cooper.

SULLY
Our sheriff.

DANIEL
I see. Has Sully told ya 'bout all the trouble we used to cause?

MATTHEW
Musta slipped 'is mind.

Matthew glances curiously at Sully, who quickly moves Daniel over to Brian. Daniel shakes his hand.

DANIEL
You must be Brian.

BRIAN
Hello, sir.

There is a subtle, unspoken connection between them, as if they share a secret.

DANIEL
Daniel, Brian. Y'know, your pa wrote me all 'bout ya. Even got 'im to send me some a your articles.

BRIAN
Ya did?

DANIEL
Yep. 'Specially liked that one 'bout your friend Anthony goin' to the town school.

Brian looks touched. Sully brings over Katie.

SULLY

Colleen's at school, but here's her baby sister.

Daniel holds her little hand.

DANIEL
Katie... an angel, Sully...

Sully beams. The next is a big moment for him:

SULLY
Daniel? This is Michaela...

Daniel follows Sully's glance as Mike moves forward and graciously extends her hand.

MIKE
It's a pleasure to meet you, Daniel.

Daniel shakes Mike's hand, genuinely struck by her beauty. He regains his composure and smiles sweetly.

DANIEL
The pleasure's all mine.

Mike smiles. Sully comes over, delighted.

SULLY
Waited a long time for the two of you to meet. Let's go home.

Mike nods in agreement, beaming between Sully and Daniel as we slowly...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY ONE

Sully drives up. Mike sits beside him, holding Katie. In the back, Brian is enraptured by Daniel's story.

DANIEL

(with hushed intensity)

The boards creaked, then started to crack an' splinter... when all of a sudden -- (makes the sound of a crash)

The mine collapsed! An' two tons a rock came tumblin' past me, stoppin' just inches over Sully.

Brian gapes at Sully, then looks back at Daniel, eager to hear more. Mike and Sully exchange amused looks, climbing down from the wagon.

DANIEL

But d'ya think he panicked, Brian? No, sir. Sully just waited. Didn't move.

SULLY

My leg was caught. I couldn't.

Everyone smiles. Sully looks at Daniel with heartfelt appreciation.

SULLY

It was Daniel dug me out. Coulda got 'imself killed, but he kept diggin', kept on goin' 'til he reached me.

BRIAN

**(turns to Daniel, awed)
You saved Sully's life.**

DANIEL

Sully woulda done the same for me.

Daniel and Sully share a look -- we sense the strong bond of friendship between them.

Mike is pleased to see their regard for each other.

Daniel and Brian climb down.

MIKE

We're all eternally grateful for your actions, Daniel. How will I ever repay you?

DANIEL

How 'bout dinner, Michaela? I'm starvin'.

Mike smiles agreeably. Brian excitedly helps Daniel with his bags.

BRIAN

You're in Colleen's room. But don't worry, she took most a her girl things with her to school.

DANIEL

Well, that's a relief.

Sully and Mike linger behind, watching them go inside. Sully turns to Mike, waiting for her opinion.

MIKE

He's wonderful, Sully. Warm and charming...

SULLY

(sensing her hesitation)

But...?

MIKE

Well -- I don't know... I suppose I expected your best friend to be someone like you.

SULLY

Daniel 'n me think the same way 'bout most things.

MIKE

Yes, but even so, what was I thinking?

(looks at Sully)

There's no one like you.

Sully smiles.

EXT. GAZETTE - DAY ONE

HANK takes a Gazette out of the bin and waves Jake over to show him the paper.

HANK

Look. Did ya see? Our new advertisement --

(showing him)

"Weekend Special. Free Drinks for Guests of The Gold Nugget."

JAKE

(aghast)

Free drinks?

HANK

But look at, the fine print? "A two-week stay is required."

Jake holds the paper closer, squinching his eyes.

INSERT -- THE ADVERTISEMENT.

It reads: "Weekend Special, Free Drinks for Guests of the Gold Nugget." The print underneath is barely legible.

JAKE

A two-week stay...

(grins)

I like it.

Hank nods. They're about to return to The Gold Nugget when DOROTHY's laughter inside the Gazette draws their attention.

DOROTHY and CLOUD DANCING come to the door, clearly enjoying each other's company, not yet noticing Jake and Hank.

CLOUD DANCING

That is a true story.

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin', I never know when you're teasin' me...

Dorothy grins, putting her hand on Cloud Dancing's arm. Then she spots Jake and Hank staring at her with their eyebrows raised, and quickly pulls her hand back.

Cloud Dancing responds to her uneasiness by making a quick, polite exit, smiling at Dorothy and nodding at Hank and Jake.

CLOUD DANCING

Good afternoon.

Hank and Jake watch Cloud Dancing leave, then turn their wary gaze on Dorothy.

JAKE

You two been spendin' an awful lotta time together.

DOROTHY

Well, I'm writin' a book about 'im, Jake, I've gotta do the proper research.

HANK

What kinda "research"?

DOROTHY

(frowns, a tad defensive)

Well, next time, for instance, Cloud Dancin's gonna show me 'bout gatherin' herbs.

HANK

You goin' out there with 'im? Alone in the woods?

DOROTHY

That is where herbs grow.

Hank and Jake trade derisive looks, then head for their hotel.

DOROTHY

Hey!

They turn. Dorothy holds out her hand.

DOROTHY

A penny.

She motions to their Gazette. Hank pays up.

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT ONE

Mike, Sully, Daniel and Brian enjoy dessert. Daniel finishes his slice of pie.

DANIEL

Second piece was even better. You're a fine cook, Michaela.

Mike grins, unaccustomed to this kind of praise.

MIKE
Daniel, I don't know what you're used to eating, but I thank you. Sincerely.

Daniel smiles. Sully glances at the hearth.

SULLY
Fire's dyin'. Gotta get some more wood.

Sully stands. Daniel sees an opportunity for them to talk privately and stands up, too.

DANIEL
I'll help ya.

BRIAN
But ya gotta finish tellin' how you --

MIKE
Brian, you've barely given Daniel a moment to breathe.

DANIEL
Oh I don't mind. Brian? Be back in a minute.

Brian nods.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT ONE

Sully and Daniel come outside.

DANIEL
He's a good boy, Sully. A good son.

SULLY
(with pride)
Yeah, he is.

As they head for the woodpile, Daniel looks around, clearly impressed with the homestead.

DANIEL

Shoulda known you were bein' modest with me.

SULLY

Huh?

DANIEL

This house. You been describin' some nothin' little lean-to in the woods, but this...

Daniel pauses to admire the house and the setting.

SULLY

Yeah, well... I wanted to give Michaela somethin' special. Build a good home for her 'n the kids.

DANIEL

(looks at Sully with esteem)

Ya sure did.

Sully looks pleased. He and Daniel start collecting logs.

SULLY

So when're you gonna be settlin' down?

DANIEL

Soon as I find the right girl. An' now that I sold the mine, I got plenty a time to look.

Sully stops, stunned, not sure what he heard.

SULLY

Sold it?

Daniel laughs, amused by his reaction. Then, more seriously:


DANIEL

All those years I was wanderin' around, explorin', hopin' to strike gold? The strange thing is, soon as I did, felt like the best part was over. I mean, it was excitin' to find gold 'n all, but --

(shrugs)

Guess what I really liked was all that wanderin' 'n explorin'.

Daniel and Sully share a smile of perfect understanding.



SULLY
So whad'ya gonna do?

DANIEL
I dunno exactly. But I made my money, now I wanna do... somethin' important, y'know?
(beat)
The first thing I wanna do is make sure ya get your fair share a the profits.

Sully knits his brow.

SULLY
What profits?

DANIEL
From the mine, Sully. All that time and hard work ya put in, helpin' me get it started?

SULLY
But I didn't do it for money, Daniel. I did it 'cause ya needed my help.

DANIEL
I know. An' I never coulda done it without ya.

Daniel hands over an envelope. Sully is caught completely off-guard by this.

DANIEL
That's your piece.

Sully looks inside at the cash.

SULLY
Mighty big piece.

DANIEL
Well, you earned it.

After a beat, Sully looks at Daniel, unwavering.

SULLY
I'm real glad for your success, Daniel. An' I thank you, I do. But I can't take this...

Sully hands back the envelope. Daniel sighs knowingly.

DANIEL

You're just as stubborn 'n prideful as you ever were.

SULLY

Guess so.

DANIEL

Well, I'm gonna stick aroun' for awhile. I hope you'll reconsider.

For Sully, there's little chance of that. But he smiles politely and turns away to gather more logs.

INT. MIKE'S AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT ONE

Mike and Sully get ready for bed. Mike brushes her hair. Sully takes off his shirt.

MIKE

It was very decent and generous of him to offer.

Mike is appreciative, but troubled. Sully knows what she's thinking -- the money would have cleared their debt.

SULLY

Robert E's got more work for me, Michaela -- an' I'll keep checkin' around.

MIKE

(nods, smiles)

We're fine.

They continue undressing.

EXT. GRACE'S CAFE - DAY TWO

Daniel and Sully eat, surrounded by interested listeners Dorothy, ROBERT E, GRACE, and Brian. Hank and Jake, eavesdrop from another table. Preston sits at another.

DANIEL

The first time I met Sully?

SULLY
Now don't get into that.

Daniel playfully ignores him.

DANIEL
It was back in New York. We were younger'n you, Brian. Sully was busy introducin' me to 'is left fist.

Everyone reacts.

SULLY
I met Daniel's right one directly after.

BRIAN
Ya mean you two were fightin'?

DANIEL
'Fraid so. Over a game a marbles.

SULLY
We had a "difference of opinion."

DANIEL
But things worked out somehow, an' me 'n Sully been on the same side ever since.

Sully and Daniel trade looks.

BRIAN
Then ya met up out West again.

DANIEL
That's right. Just the two of us, barely in our teens, 'n ready to take on the frontier.

HANK
(pipes in, insinuating)
You fellas musta blazed a few trails along the way, huh?

DANIEL
(aware of Brian's presence)
We got into a scrape or two.

At his table, Preston needs more coffee, trying to get Grace's attention.

PRESTON
Grace?

GRACE
(focused on Daniel)
That was real brave, two boys travelin' all alone like that.

DANIEL
No braver than you 'n Robert E, Grace. Movin' out here to a strange new place? An' now look at ya, ya both got your own businesses.

Grace and Robert E smile, flattered. Preston heads over with his empty cup, annoyed.

GRACE
Well... we do work hard...

PRESTON
(pouring his own coffee)
Not hard enough.

Grace gives him a look.

DANIEL
An' you Dorothy, runnin' the newspaper? I do so admire what you folks've done here in town...

Dorothy enjoys Daniel's praise, too.

DOROTHY
What kinda work do you do, Daniel?

DANIEL
I was in the minin' business.

ROBERT E
Coal?

BRIAN
Gold.



PRESTON
(now he's interested)
Gold?

Jake and Hank shift closer, too.

Sully is pleased that everyone is taken with Daniel, but he suddenly feels forgotten, inadequate.

JAKE
How'd ya make out?

DANIEL
Got lucky. I found some.

JAKE
How much exactly?

Daniel is too modest to respond, but Brian chimes in:

BRIAN
It ain't polite to question people 'bout money.

Jake frowns.

PRESTON
Sully, perhaps you should take a few pointers from your accomplished friend here.

Daniel looks up at Preston -- who is this guy?

DANIEL
Beg your pardon, sir, but p'haps you should take a few pointers from Sully.

This stifles Preston. Sully looks at Daniel appreciatively.

INT. CLINIC - DAY TWO

Mike takes the last stitch out of MR. SIMKIN's hand.

MIKE

There. Your hand has healed beautifully, Mr. Simkin.

MR. SIMKIN

Yeah, an' next time I won't use it to stop my saw.

Mike smiles. There's a knock on the door. Daniel pokes in.

DANIEL

Oh, 'scuse me. I'll come back.

MIKE

That's alright, Daniel. Why don't you wait outside for a moment? We've just finished.

MR. SIMKIN

C'mon in, if ya like. Doc just took out my stitches.

DANIEL

Oh, sure, if you don't mind.

Daniel steps inside and looks around with interest.

Mr. Simkin reaches into his sack and presents Mike with three jars of preserves.

MR. SIMKIN

These oughta cover it.

MIKE

(hesitates, disappointed)

Peaches...

Daniel glances over, watching their interaction.

MR. SIMKIN

That's alright, ain't it?

Mike snaps out of her dismay and smiles graciously.

MIKE

Of course. Your preserves have always been delicious. Thank you.

Mr. Simkin nods at Mike and Daniel, then leaves.

Daniel looks at Mike with an admiring smile.

DANIEL

Sully told me all 'bout your kindness, now I seen it for m'self.

Daniel indicates the preserves.

MIKE

(matter-of-fact, a little embarrassed)

Oh, well, many of my patients pay me in kind, and normally I wouldn't think twice about it, but now...

(beat)

Unfortunately, they don't accept peaches at the bank.

Daniel doesn't want Mike to feel uncomfortable.

DANIEL

Too bad. Be nice to do all your shoppin' 'n bankin' at the same place.

Mike smiles, grateful for his tact.

MIKE

It would, now wouldn't it?

OFF Daniel and Mike enjoying their friendly moment...

INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY TWO

Her brow furrowed, Mike writes on a pad at the table. Sully comes inside. His spirits seem bright and optimistic.

SULLY

Hey.

Mike glances up with a weak smile.

SULLY

Daniel back from town?

MIKE

Not yet.

SULLY
(looking over her shoulder)
What's that?

MIKE
A budget.

SULLY
A budget? Michaela --

He has something positive to tell her, but she's distracted.

MIKE
I don't see how we'll ever be able to conserve enough, Sully. We have the loan, and Colleen's tuition...
(beat)
Perhaps we should wire Mother.

SULLY
(no way)
We ain't borrowin' another cent from your mother.

MIKE
But --

SULLY
Michaela, I got a job.

MIKE
(reacts)
You did?

SULLY
On a cattle drive. A rancher stopped by Robert E's, hirin' men.

MIKE
But -- a cattle drive? That means you'll have to leave home again.

BRIAN (O.S.)
How long this time?

Sully and Mike look toward the stairs. Brian is there, dismayed.

SULLY
Few days.

BRIAN
Maybe ya don't have to go.

SULLY
I got to, Brian.

BRIAN
But Daniel just got here. Maybe --

SULLY
Brian, I don't like leavin' ya --
(turns to Mike)
But this is our best chance at makin' a good chunk a money. It'll cover our mortgage for the next three months.

MIKE
When do you go?

SULLY
Day after tomorrow.

Mike nods, but she shares Brian's sentiments. Sully reaches out to reassure her.

SULLY
It ain't been easy, but we're gonna get this loan off our back, Michaela.
(beat)
I'll never let us lose the homestead. That's a promise.

Mike musters a comforted smile, as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THREE - TO ESTABLISH

LOREN (V.O.)

Four ... five ... six ...

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THREE

CLOSE ON MONEY being counted at the register. **REVEAL Loren** paying **CLOUD DANCING**. The **REVEREND** sits nearby.

LOREN

Seven... eight... and a lady bought two a your watchamacallits.

Loren holds up a beautiful piece of Indian jewelry.

CLOUD DANCING

Bracelets.

LOREN

Bracelets, yeah. So that makes nine.

CLOUD DANCING

Ten. One dollar for each. We agreed.

LOREN

On fifty cents.

REVEREND

On a dollar. I remember.

Loren shoots the Reverend a look.

LOREN

Why don't ya sit outside for a change? Fresh air'll do ya good.

REVEREND

(with a smile)

I'm comfortable.

LOREN
(sighs, pays Cloud Dancing)
Two makes ten.

Cloud Dancing nods his thanks, then moves to the door, running into Mike on her way in. They're happy to see each other.

MIKE
Cloud Dancing. I didn't know you were in town today. Can you stay for lunch?

CLOUD DANCING
I am sorry, Michaela. I have -- an appointment... with Dorothy.

MIKE
(hesitates, then smiles)
Oh.

At this, Loren perks up and looks over with a scowl. Cloud Dancing nods to Mike, then leaves.

Mike moves inside.

MIKE
Good morning, Reverend. Loren.

REVEREND
Michaela.

MIKE
(uncomfortable)
Loren, I need to buy a few things. And I'll need to charge them to my account.

Loren flips to Mike's page in his ledger.

LOREN
Well, I s'pose I could --
(looks at Mike pointedly)
Start another page.

MIKE

(reacts)
I appreciate it.

Mike proceeds to shop.

EXT. WOODS - DAY THREE

Through a thicket of trees, we see Dorothy, holding her parasol, following a few feet behind Cloud Dancing. The image should be lovely and lyrical -- an unusual couple out for a stroll in the peaceful forest setting.

Cloud Dancing stoops by the base of a tree and digs up some roots. Dorothy cranes her neck to observe.

CLOUD DANCING
(TBA: in Cheyenne)
Valerian and Black Cohosh ...
(beat)
In English, Valerian and Black Cohosh.

Dorothy nods, learning, writing it down. Cloud Dancing gets up and shows her the herbs.

CLOUD DANCING
Both can be brewed as tea for a deep healing sleep.

DOROTHY
(intrigued)
The tea helps ya to sleep.

Cloud Dancing nods and they keep walking.

DOROTHY
How'd ya learn about all a these herbs?

CLOUD DANCING
I was taught by my father, who was taught by his...

DOROTHY
(taking notes)
Passed on through the generations...

CLOUD DANCING

Yes. It was a great honor to receive this knowledge, but now my family, my son, is gone... and the tribes, they are scattered.

(disturbed)

I ask myself... who will be taught now? Now, who will know?

DOROTHY

You're teachin' me, Cloud Dancin', and I'm writing it all down. So more people will be able to learn...

Cloud Dancing nods appreciatively. He spots a bush.

CLOUD DANCING

Lavender...

He clips off a sprig and holds it out for Dorothy to smell.

Dorothy smiles and steps closer. As she inhales the heady scent, she meets Cloud Dancing's close steady gaze -- and gets slightly mesmerized.

DOROTHY

And -- what's lavender used for?

CLOUD DANCING

Nothing. It smells good.

Dorothy looks at Cloud Dancing. He smiles beguilingly. She smiles back. A beat. They stare into each other's eyes. She lifts her face toward his. He leans closer. But at the last instant, Dorothy gets nervous -- and moves away toward more greenery.

DOROTHY

What's this ... ?

CLOUD DANCING

(composing himself)

Let me see.

They continue hiking together.

EXT. LIVERY - DAY THREE

Sully and Daniel walk over.

DANIEL
So what time do ya leave tomorrow?

SULLY
'Round eight.

Robert E leads over Sully's horse.

ROBERT E
Got 'im all set for your trip, Sully. Took the liberty a puttin' on a new set a shoes.

Sully hesitates -- this means another expense.

SULLY
Four shoes...

ROBERT E
I didn't want ya to run into any trouble out there.

SULLY
Yeah -- thanks, Robert E...

Sully reaches into his pocket. Robert E realizes Sully's concern and leans closer to stop him without fuss.

ROBERT E
Forget about it.

Sully nods, grateful. Daniel looks on, admiring Robert E's unpretentious compassion.

As Robert E returns to work, Matthew approaches on his horse.

DANIEL
Hey, Sheriff.

MATTHEW
Hey, Daniel. Sully? I got somethin' to tell ya, I thought you should know.

Matthew climbs off his horse.

SULLY
What is it?

MATTHEW
It might just be rumors an' all, but the word is... that rancher who hired ya?
(Sully nods)
Heard if his cattle don't sell at the right price, he don't pay 'is men what's been promised.

SULLY
That so?

MATTHEW
Like I said, I only heard it. But it's a risk.
(beat)
Maybe you shouldn't go.

SULLY
I got to, Matthew. If he pays like he should that's a big pot a money.

MATTHEW
I know.

Matthew takes Sully aside for a private moment.

MATTHEW
But I been thinkin'... I could sell my homestead. After all, you gave it to me --

Sully lets this kind gesture register -- but cannot accept it.

SULLY
That's right, Matthew, I gave it to ya.

MATTHEW
But I wanna help --

SULLY
I know, an' I 'preciate it. But you keep your house. Ev'rythin's gonna work out fine.

Grateful, Sully puts his hand on Matthew's shoulder. Matthew nods, glances at Daniel, then walks his horse toward his office.

DANIEL
You got a lot a people that care about ya.

Sully nods. Daniel proceeds carefully:

DANIEL
Sully, look -- it seems a real shame you havin' to leave your family for some job that may not pay off -- and all so's you can hand whatever money ya make over to him?

Daniel glances scornfully at Preston's bank.

SULLY
I got no choice, Daniel. I borrowed money from the bank, I gotta pay it back.

DANIEL
But s'pose ya forget that cattle drive. S'pose ya borrow the money from me.

Sully is ready to balk, but Daniel cuts him off.

DANIEL
Hear me out. Let me lend ya the money. Then ya can pay that banker off and owe the money to me.

SULLY
No. Lettin' money come b'tween friends ain't good.

DANIEL
Well, I ain't takin' "no" for an answer just yet. You think about it, an' I'll ask ya again.

Sully sighs, then nods, agreeing to consider the offer.

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT THREE

Brian and Mike, who holds Katie in her lap, watch Daniel skillfully move a quarter around his fingers.

ANGLE ON - SULLY

He sharpens his knife at the fire. His pack is beside him, ready for the trip. He glances

over, glad to see Daniel entertaining the family.

RESUME

Daniel suddenly pops open his hand -- the coin is gone.

BRIAN
Where is it?

DANIEL
Right here --

With his other hand, Daniel "magically" pulls the coin out of Katie's ear. Brian and Mike grin. Daniel takes the baby.

DANIEL
You c'mere now, sweet girl -- let's see if I can shake any more change outta ya...

To Katie's delight, Daniel bounces her on his knee.

Brian looks at Sully and sees him tying up his pack. Brian's smile fades. He approaches Sully, troubled.

SULLY
Daniel showin' you all a his tricks?

BRIAN
Yeah.
(beat)
I like havin' an Uncle.

Sully is pleased that Brian feels this way about Daniel.

BRIAN
Wish you could be aroun' while he's here.

SULLY
Brian, we talked about this --

BRIAN

**I know. But Daniel's your friend, Pa.
(blurts it out)
Why won't ya just take the money?**

Sully looks at him quizzically. Daniel and Mike glance over.

**SULLY
How'd you know 'bout that?**

Brian pales, realizing his flub.

**BRIAN
I...**

Brian trades awkward glances with Daniel.

**MIKE
Brian?**

Daniel gets up. He doesn't want Brian to take the heat.

**DANIEL
Sully -- Brian wrote me a letter.**

**SULLY
A letter?**

**DANIEL
(no big deal)
He just wrote that times were tough.**

Sully and Mike look at Brian for an explanation.

**BRIAN
When I saw how much you 'n Ma were worryin' -- an' you havin' to leave home all the time
-- I didn't know what else to do...**

Sully is steamed, feeling duped. Brian feels terrible.

**BRIAN
'Til I remembered how you went to help Daniel when he needed ya.**

(beat)
I'm sorry, Pa.

Mike puts her arm on Brian's shoulder and gives Sully a look -- don't be too hard on him.

SULLY
I know ya meant well, Brian, but --
(turns to Daniel)
You knew when ya came that we needed the money.

DANIEL
Yeah, I did.

SULLY
That makes it charity, Daniel.

DANIEL
It ain't charity.

MIKE
Sully, I'm sure Daniel meant --

SULLY
It's charity, Michaela, pure 'n simple.

Sully turns away to secure his pack. Case closed. Mike gives Daniel a sympathetic look.

EXT. HOMESTEAD -- MORNING - DAY FOUR

Sully takes his pack off a fence post, slings it over his shoulder, then turns to Mike, Brian, and Katie to say his goodbyes.

SULLY
Be back 'fore ya know it.

Sully kisses Mike, then glances toward the porch as Daniel steps outside. He goes over to him.

SULLY
Look. I 'preciate what ya tried to do. Still, --

DANIEL

I understand. You gotta take care a this thing on your own.

Sully nods, happy that Daniel understands him.

SULLY

I'm grateful you're stickin' aroun' while I'm gone to look after things.

DANIEL

'Course, Sully. Glad to.

SULLY

Be good to see ya when I get back.

Daniel smiles. Sully climbs onto his horse, which is saddled in preparation for the cattle drive.

BRIAN

Bye, Sully.

SULLY

See ya soon.

Sully exchanges another look with Mike, then gallops off.

CLOSE ON - MIKE

Watching him, missing him already.

CLOSE ON - SULLY

As he pauses at the top of the drive and looks back.

SULLY'S POV

Daniel waves beside Mike, Brian, and Katie. They look like a family.

SULLY

Waves back, comforted by the sight of his old friend staying in his absence. He gallops away.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. CLINIC - DAY FIVE

Mike lifts her new microscope out of its packing crate. She admires it, then notices the invoice and puts the scope down with a perturbed sigh.

Mike glances over at her new instruments, touching them with fond regret. She sits at her desk, takes a breath, and jots down some notes.

There's a knock on the door. Mike looks up.

MIKE
Come in.

Mike is surprised to see Daniel enter.

MIKE
Daniel.

DANIEL
Don't mean to intrude. Thought ya might like to stop for lunch.

MIKE
Oh, I'd love to, Daniel, but I can't, I'm too busy.

Daniel glances around the empty office, raising an eyebrow.

MIKE
(smiles slightly)
Not with my patients, I'm -- well, I've decided to sell a few of my supplies.

DANIEL
But I thought ya just bought 'em.

MIKE
I did. -- in fact, my microscope just came today -- but I have to contribute something. Sully's away, working so hard, and my supplies are brand new -- I'm sure I could get a good price for them.

DANIEL
Michaela, I'm afraid your supplies stopped bein' "brand new" the second ya opened the package. Prob'ly worth sixty, maybe seventy percent a what ya paid for 'im. 'Sides, someday you're just gonna have to buy new ones.

Mike sighs, not pleased to be reminded of all this.

MIKE
If only more of my patients paid me in cash.

DANIEL
Have ya asked 'em to?

MIKE
I assumed if they could that they would.
(beat)
Wouldn't they?

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL
Seems to me, most folks could afford to pay ya somethin'. But the first thing ya gotta do --

Daniel stops, not wanting to impose his ideas. But Mike wants to hear them.

MIKE
Go on, Daniel, please.

DANIEL
(simply)

Set your prices.

MIKE
(a new concept)
Prices?

DANIEL
Sure. Ya gotta set 'em just like Grace does at the cafe, or Robert E at the livery, or Hank and Jake over at their hotel.

MIKE
But I'm treating illness and injury, I'm not selling soup or renting rooms.

DANIEL
(gently)
You're a fine doctor, Michaela, 'n that's most important, but I think ya got a right to get paid for your services, just like ev'rybody else.

Mike can't argue with that, but --

MIKE
Most of the people in this town are poor.

DANIEL
Then lemme ask ya somethin' -- if you were workin' back in Boston now, treatin' folks in some fancy office, you'd have no trouble chargin' 'em?

MIKE
I suppose not.

DANIEL
Good. So if somebody back in Boston cut his finger, what would ya charge 'im to stitch it up?

MIKE
A simple cut? I'm not sure. One dollar, perhaps?

DANIEL
Then charge the folks here fifty cents.

Mike absorbs this. Daniel continues.

DANIEL

Two bits to treat a catarrh? Two dollars to set a broken bone?

Mike listens, warming to Daniel's suggestions.

DANIEL

An appendix -- how much would that cost to take out?

MIKE

(thinking fast)

Five dollars?

DANIEL

That's worth two-and-a-half broken bones right there.

Mike smiles.

DANIEL

A carbuncle. Now what would ya charge for a carbuncle?

MIKE

(in the spirit)

Hmm ... Large or small?

They share a smile.

EXT. GRACE'S CAFE - DAY FIVE

Jake, Hank, Loren and the Reverend enjoy their dessert.

JAKE

Best pie west a the Mississippi.

The others agree, eating it. Hank signals Grace.

HANK

Grace? 'Nother piece a your pumpkin pie.

Grace sweeps by.

GRACE

Sorry. Just sold the last of it.

Hank mournfully watches her serve the slice to another table.

HANK

That was my pie...

Hank slumps, then notices -- the Reverend is innocently sipping his coffee, leaving his pie exposed.

Hank slyly moves his fork toward the Reverend's plate. Jake and Loren grow silent, watching him. The Reverend reacts to the sudden quiet, catching on just in time.

REVEREND

(protecting his pie)

Don't even think about it.

LOREN

(to Hank with disdain)

Tryin' ta steal food from a blind man. A blind Reverend.

ANGLE ON - DOROTHY

She pleasantly approaches the men's table, holding some notebooks.

DOROTHY

Afternoon, gentlemen.

REVEREND

Dorothy. Won't you join us?

Dorothy smiles, about to take a seat beside him, when --

JAKE

She won't like it here, Reverend. No Injuns.

Dorothy frowns and stays standing.

HANK

Hey, Dorothy, gotta warn ya -- some folks say ya spend too much time with their kind an'

your skin'll turn as red as your hair.

Dorothy gets flustered as Jake and Hank chortle. Loren looks torn, both critical and protective of her.

REVEREND

Hank --

DOROTHY

Never mind, Reverend. I could use the quiet. I got work to do.

Dorothy looks sharply at Jake and Hank, exchanges troubled glances with Loren, then moves to another table.

LOREN

(to Jake and Hank)

Whatcha sayin' all that for?

JAKE

Word's gettin' 'round 'bout her 'n her Injun "research." Folks don't like it.

Loren, distressed by this, gets up and heads for Dorothy.

ANGLE ON - DOROTHY

Smiling up at Grace, who pours her coffee.

GRACE

Food'll just be a minute.

DOROTHY

Thank you, Grace.

Grace moves away. Dorothy flips open her notebook. Loren comes up behind her, with disapproval.

LOREN

How many notebooks ya gonna fill 'bout that Injun?

Dorothy stops and looks at him -- suddenly Cloud Dancing is "that Injun"?

DOROTHY
Who?

LOREN
You know who I mean. **Cloud Dancin'**.

DOROTHY
I thought ya knew 'is name.
(beat)
I'll finish when I'm finished, Loren. I still got more to learn about **Cloud Dancin's** customs an' ways. They're all so different than our own. They're fascinatin'.

LOREN
They're fascinatin'? Or he is?

Dorothy hesitates -- and her hesitation disturbs her.

LOREN
Here I let you go an' do this --

DOROTHY
You let me?

LOREN
But you just gone too far. People are startin' to talk.

DOROTHY
What people?

Dorothy looks around, chuckling, not expecting any attention.

DOROTHY'S POV

SEVERAL DINERS are in fact staring at her, whispering.

BACK TO DOROTHY

Thrown. Stunned to be the object of scorn.

LOREN

(more of an appeal than an order)
You gotta stop seein' 'im.

DOROTHY
But Loren -- my book...

LOREN
This ain't about your book anymore. You been a respectable lady in this town, an' what you're doin' now -- well, it just ain't right.

Dorothy glances around self-consciously and catches more TOWNSFOLK staring. She shrinks in her seat as we --

CUT TO:

INT. CLINIC - DAY FIVE

Mike inspects elderly MRS. CRAIG'S arthritic hands, gently moving the knuckles.

MRS. CRAIG
Seems like I just looked down one day and there they were -- my Grandma's hands. 'Cept they're mine.

MIKE
(smiles respectfully)
They're the strong, proud hands of a woman who's worked hard all her life.

MRS. CRAIG
Did what I had to do.

MIKE
Did the juniper and warm soaks relieve any of the stiffness?

MRS. CRAIG
It did, some.

MIKE
(giving her a packet)
I'd like you to try adding a spoonful of these yew leaves next time. Let them steep. The combination has proven effective.

MRS. CRAIG

Alright, Dr. Mike.

MIKE

I'm here if you need me. Otherwise, I'll see you again in six weeks.

MRS. CRAIG

That it then?

Mike hesitates and smiles nervously.

MIKE

Well, there is the matter of -- payment.

MRS. CRAIG

Oh, yeah, I'm glad ya reminded me...

Mrs. Craig happily reaches into her bag. Mike looks on, surprised and relieved.

Mrs. Craig smiles, pulling out two embroidered napkins. Mike sees them and sags. Mrs. Craig is puzzled by Mike's dismay.

MRS. CRAIG

They're napkins. I embroidered 'em myself 'fore my arthritis got so bad.

MIKE

Yes, they're very beautiful. It's just that -- well, I was speaking of --
(clears her throat, steeling herself)
It's fifty cents for your visit.

MRS. CRAIG

Fifty cents...?

MIKE

A quarter. I mean a quarter.

MRS. CRAIG

But -- I was hopin'...

Mrs. Craig looks down at her napkins. Mike weakens. She takes them with a smile.

MIKE

These will look lovely on my table, Mrs. Craig. Thank you.

Mrs. Craig looks pleased, but Mike turns away, discouraged and disappointed in herself.

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT FIVE

Brian and Daniel are engrossed in a game of checkers. Mike comes out of the kitchen, carrying a tray of coffee and cake.

Daniel looks away from the board to inspect the dessert.

DANIEL

Whatcha got there?

Brian seizes this moment to jump Daniel's checkers all over the board for the win. Daniel turns back, mouth agape.

DANIEL

Best outta seven?

MIKE

It's getting late.

BRIAN

I gotta give Daniel another chance, Ma.

DANIEL

Actually, Brian, I'm all checkered out. You can consider yourself the true champion.

BRIAN

Alright, but tomorrow then.

DANIEL

You're on.

Everyone exchanges "good nights" and Brian goes upstairs.

Left alone, Mike and Daniel smile awkwardly. Mike looks for a distraction -- she prepares the coffee.

DANIEL
So how'd it go today?

Mike hesitates -- she knows what Daniel's really asking.

MIKE
Well -- I billed all of my patients.

DANIEL
Good, good.

MIKE
(glances up, abashed)
I didn't say they paid me.

They share a smile.

DANIEL
At least ya tried.

Mike nods, encouraged. They sip their coffee. A beat. Daniel glances at the checkerboard.

DANIEL
You wanna go a round?

MIKE
Oh, no, thank you. Chess is my game.

DANIEL
(perking up)
Chess? You play?

MIKE
Well, I love to, but I haven't played in years.

DANIEL
(smiles)
My kind a opponent.

Mike gets excited by the prospect of a game.

MIKE

We'll see about that, now won't we?

Daniel watches Mike go to a cabinet and take out a chess set. He sits up, eager to play.

DANIEL

I ain't gonna go easy on ya now, just cause you're Sully's wife.

MIKE

Fine. That means you'll have no excuses later when you lose.

Mike opens the case of chess pieces. They set up the board together.

DANIEL

Ya think you'll be a challenge then?

MIKE

I don't want to alarm you, Daniel, but I have won a trophy or two --
(glancing up slyly)
Or six in my day.

DANIEL

(suddenly less confident)
Six?

Mike smiles, glowing with playful enthusiasm. They finish arranging the chess pieces.

MIKE

There now. You're white --
(looks up at him with a smile)
Your move.

Daniel grins and slides his pawn forward. Mike smiles, moving one of hers. As they continue, he watches her between moves.

DANIEL'S POV

SLOWLY PUSH IN ON MIKE as she plays with delight.

MIKE

I remember, even when I was a child, my mother and sisters would refuse to play with me. Only my father enjoyed our games -- though less so once I started winning.

Mike hesitates, then captures Daniel's knight and looks up at him with an admonishing smile. By now we're in CLOSE UP, and Mike looks radiant, beautiful.

BACK TO DANIEL

Staring at Mike, starry-eyed, he snaps out of his gaze.

DANIEL

Well, now. I better watch out for you, huh?

MIKE

(smiles)

You'd better.

Daniel takes a breath and focuses on the game.

OFF Mike and Daniel playing chess by the fire as we slowly...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. GAZETTE - DAY SIX

Dorothy slips new copies of the Gazette into the bin outside her door. She smiles at the **TWO TOWNSWOMEN** strolling by.

DOROTHY

Mornin', Miz Crawford, Miz Lipton. Got your fresh copies of the paper...

Dorothy holds out two Gazettes, but the women purposefully turn away and keep walking.

Dorothy's smile and shoulders droop. She turns. Preston is standing there, having witnessed the snub.

PRESTON

I've always found Cloud Dancing to be a rather intriguing if oddly reticent fellow myself -- but if my association with him started costing me business? Well, I'd sever all contact with him in an instant.

DOROTHY

Well, thank you for sharin' that very tellin' remark with me, Preston --

Dorothy moves to go inside, but Preston steps in her way.

PRESTON

It would be wise to discontinue your relationship with him.

DOROTHY

I'm afraid that's none a your business.

PRESTON

Well, I'm afraid that it is. It's exactly forty-nine percent of my business. Or did you forget that we're co-owners of this Gazette?

Dorothy swallows, remembering.

PRESTON

That's right. And I am not about to stand by and lose customers because of your foolish indiscretions.

Dorothy glares at Preston coldly.

DOROTHY

I will be conductin' an interview with Cloud Dancin' at three o'clock this afternoon.

(beat)

Now step outta my way.

There's a tense beat, then Preston moves aside. Dorothy moves past him into the Gazette. Preston calls after her:

PRESTON

You've worked too hard for this, Dorothy. Do you really want to lose everything over

some Indian?

Dorothy hesitates, then slams the door behind her. Preston looks pleased that he's touched a nerve.

INT. GAZETTE - CONTINUOUS - DAY SIX

Dorothy slumps back against the closed door. She sweeps her eyes over her cherished work-space, troubled by Preston's words.

INT. CLINIC - DAY SIX

Mike is aglow with positive energy, explaining her new office procedure to Daniel. He listens with interest, but he looks uncomfortable, standoffish.

MIKE

I've always kept very thorough medical records, of course, but I never paid much attention to bookkeeping before.

Mike holds up items, demonstrating as she continues:

MIKE

Now, each of my patients will receive a bill, and a receipt -- if they pay me -- and then every transaction will be recorded...

Excited, Mike sits behind her desk and flips open a ledger.

MIKE

Here.

DANIEL

Ya done good, Michaela.

MIKE

Well, you inspired me.

Mike looks up and smiles at him. Daniel nearly melts.

MIKE

(waving him over to her ledger)

Look ...

Daniel hesitates -- getting closer is just what he's been trying to avoid. Mike gets up and moves him into her chair.

MIKE

I have to make certain that I record everything correctly.

DANIEL

I'm sure that ya will...

Mike leans over him. He's uneasy, close enough to smell her hair.

Mike stays focused on her ledger, but Daniel's eyes wander from the ledger to Mike.

MIKE

These columns are for my Cash Disbursements -- supplies and such -- and these are for Cash Receipts.

Mike turns her head toward Daniel, looking for his approval. He snaps his attention back to the ledger.

DANIEL

Exactly right.

(looks at the ledger, can't help smiling)

An' ev'rythin's so straight an' neat. I mighta expected that from you.

MIKE

I want to thank you, Daniel, for all your advice.

Too close for comfort, Daniel smiles stiffly.

DANIEL

Glad to help.

(uneasy, shifts back)

Is it time for lunch?

MIKE

Why yes, I suppose it is.

Pleased, Mike moves for the door. Daniel is relieved that she's out of close range. He

follows Mike out.

EXT. WOODS - DAY SIX

Cloud Dancing paces by the bank of a small stream. He hears a crackling noise behind him and turns around with a smile.

CLOUD DANCING
Dorothy?

CLOUD DANCING'S POV -- STOCK FOOTAGE

A deer darts away through the brush.

BACK TO CLOUD DANCING

As his smile fades. He waits for Dorothy with a sigh.

INT. GAZETTE - DAY SIX

Dorothy glances at the clock, conflicted -- it's just after three. She looks at her desk and sees:

A small vase containing the sprig of lavender that Cloud Dancing clipped for her.

Dorothy lifts the vase and wistfully inhales the pretty scent. A beat. She decisively gathers her things.

EXT. PORCH OF THE GOLD NUGGET - SAME TIME - DAY SIX

Hank, Jake, and Loren shoot the breeze. Hank looks across the street, nudging the others.

THEIR POV

Dorothy comes out of the Gazette, wearing her cowboy hat.

BACK TO THE MEN

Hank and Jake look eager to start jeering, but Loren is disturbed that Dorothy is seemingly out for another "date."

RESUME

Dorothy looks defiantly at the men.

JAKE
'Nother "interview" with the Injun?

DOROTHY
That's right.

HANK
Dressed like that?

Dorothy can't help glancing at her clothes. Hank explains:

HANK
No feathers. Them Injuns like their ladies with feathers.

Dorothy narrows her eyes at him.

A few TOWNSPEOPLE stop to observe, which only encourages Hank and Jake to continue.

JAKE
So what's the inside a Cloud Dancin's teepee look like?

Dorothy fights to stay composed.

DOROTHY
He doesn't have a teepee, Jake. He's been forced to live in a shack.

JAKE
Oh.
(beat)

What's the inside a his shack look like?

A few people cackle. Dorothy glances around, feeling the sting of their ridicule. Still, she straightens her spine.

DOROTHY

You'll have to read my book to find out.

This gets Loren's dander up. He steps forward.

LOREN

Ya mean ya really been inside with 'im?

Dorothy looks at Loren, appealing to him, wishing they could talk in private.

DOROTHY

Loren...

HANK

Hey, Dorothy, I think I hear 'im callin' ya --

Hank puts his hand to his ear, but Dorothy hears nothing. Then Hank smiles and pats his hand to his mouth, making the Indian war call. A few townsfolk join in.

Dorothy sags and glances around. The tears well in her throat.

The taunting continues until Loren angrily steps forward.

LOREN

Alright, that's enough.

Hank and the townsfolk stop. Loren looks at Dorothy.

Dorothy struggles against her tears. She rushes back into the Gazette.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY SIX 52

Holding Katie near the bottom step, Mike reacts to Preston with confusion and alarm.

MIKE

Foreclose?

PRESTON

If I had any other options, Michaela --

MIKE

Sully will be home in a few days --

PRESTON

I'm afraid I can't wait that long. Several of my hotel's investors have lost money in the stock market, and two of them have already called in their loans.

MIKE

But what does that have to do with my home?

PRESTON

I need funds. And your homestead is a very desirable property. I'm sure it will yield a handsome profit for the bank, and quickly.

MIKE

Well, I would expect a very difficult time selling it, Mr. Lodge, since its current owners have absolutely no intention of leaving.

PRESTON

Michaela --

MIKE

And how convenient that you're taking advantage of a time when Sully is away.

Preston glances behind her. He sees:

PRESTON'S POV

Daniel is at the window, observing them with curious concern from inside the house. He cannot hear their discussion.

PRESTON

Reacts slightly -- Sully's best friend is home alone with Michaela? He looks back at Mike.

PRESTON

I'd truly hoped to settle this matter without rancor, but -- unless you're prepared to pay all of your debts as soon as I open my bank in the morning, I have no choice left but to foreclose on your home and to legally -- and with force if necessary -- evict you.

Mike is staggered and upset as Preston climbs onto his horse and rides off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT SIX

Mike returns from a walk, steeped in worry. She pauses near the barn, looking ahead.

MIKE'S POV

The house. Its windows glow in the darkness. The home's cozy charm has never looked warmer or more inviting.

BACK TO MIKE

As she hugs her coat closer, her eyes mist at the thought of losing something so precious. She lowers her head and walks on.

ANGLE ON - DANIEL

He steps outside onto the porch and looks down the road.

DANIEL'S POV

Mike moves pensively through the moonlight.

BACK TO DANIEL

He leans against the rail, quietly watching her, entranced.

RESUME

Mike comes closer and sees Daniel. He straightens out of his gaze. Mike hides her distress and musters a smile.

MIKE

Don't tell me tonight's checkers tournament is over.

DANIEL

'Fraid I ain't much competition for 'im.

Mike heads up the steps and stops beside Daniel.

DANIEL

Can't seem to win a game in this house.

Mike smiles softly.

MIKE

Would you mind if we don't play ours tonight?

Daniel senses her troubled mood.

DANIEL

Michaela, is ev'rythin' alright?

MIKE

Of course, everything's fine. I'm just rather tired.

Mike manages a reassuring smile.

DANIEL

Fact is... I'm kinda tired, too.

MIKE

Good night then, Daniel.

DANIEL

'Night.

Mike goes inside. OFF Daniel, watching her with concern...

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT SIX

It's late at night. Daniel comes downstairs and peeks around the kitchen for a snack. He finds something and heads back to bed. Glancing into the living room, he suddenly stops.

+DANIEL'S POV

Mike is asleep in a chair by the dying fire. Her blanket has slipped to the floor. A notebook is still clutched in her fingers.

ANGLE ON - DANIEL

He quietly approaches Mike and stops to look at her with great tenderness.

RESUME

Daniel tentatively and gently lifts the blanket over Mike's shoulders. Mike stirs, startled to see him. He backs off.

DANIEL
I'm sorry, Michaela...

MIKE
(groggy)
I fell asleep...

DANIEL
It's real cold...

Daniel awkwardly turns and puts another log on the fire. He looks back at Mike. She's holding her forehead, clearly distraught.

DANIEL
What's wrong?

Mike shakes her head -- she doesn't want to burden him.

DANIEL

Somethin's happened. Tell me.

Mike looks away, weary, anguished, vulnerable. The weight of her predicament bears down on her.

MIKE

Daniel, the --

Mike stops, fighting her rising tears. Daniel shifts closer.

DANIEL

What? What is it?

Mike looks into Daniel's caring eyes.

MIKE

The homestead. Preston -- the banker -- first thing in the morning ... he's going to foreclose.

DANIEL

Foreclose? He can't do that.

MIKE

Apparently, he can and he will. And Sully won't be home in time to pay him.

Daniel sighs in frustration, wishing he could assist.

MIKE

I was trying to figure out a way... something... but there's nothing I can do... nothing...

Mike's emotions overtake her and she turns away, crying.

MIKE

We're going to lose our home...

Daniel watches, desperate to comfort her.

DANIEL

No.

Mike turns to him.

DANIEL

I won't let ya.

(emphatic)

I'm payin' off that loan.

MIKE

No.

DANIEL

Yes. The way I see it, Sully earned that money, Michaela. Now I know he doesn't see it like that, but Sully sure wouldn't want ya to lose your home. He built this place outta love for you 'n 'is family. You can't let that banker just up 'n take it.

Mike is torn.

DANIEL

Michaela, I'm Sully's oldest friend. I'm your friend now, too. Let me do this -- for all a you.

Mike searches Daniel's eyes. She nods.

INT. BANK - MORNING - DAY SEVEN

The clock strikes *ten. Preston strides to the front door, unlocks, and opens it. He is stunned to find:

Mike standing on the threshold with Daniel beside her. She gives him a businesslike smile.

MIKE

Good morning, Mr. Lodge.

DANIEL

Mornin'.

Preston steps aside, shocked, as Mike and Daniel brush past him into the bank.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD LEADING TO THE HOMESTEAD - DAY EIGHT

Sully gallops toward the house.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS - DAY EIGHT

Mike and Daniel step down from the porch, happy to see him.

MIKE
Sully!

Sully rides over and climbs off his horse. Mike welcomes him with a hug. Daniel trails behind her.

DANIEL
How was the cattle drive?

SULLY
Went fine.
(smiles at Mike)
Paid me just what he promised.

MIKE
That's wonderful.

SULLY
Yep. I wanna ride straight into town. Pay Preston what we owe.

MIKE
You -- don't have to do that now.

Sully looks at her, confused. Mike trades an uneasy glance with Daniel. Sully sees it, and is puzzled by the exchange.

MIKE
I paid off our mortgage, Sully.

Sully is bewildered.

SULLY

Where'd ya get the money?

Mike hesitates and casts her eyes toward Daniel. Sully turns to him incredulously.

SULLY
You gave it to her?

DANIEL
That banker was gonna foreclose.

This is a big surprise for Sully. He looks at Mike.

MIKE
Preston called in our loan.

SULLY
But I was comin' back with the money.

MIKE
Not enough. He demanded payment in full.

SULLY
Did ya stall 'im? Call 'is bluff?

Mike falters.

SULLY
Did ya even try?

Mike shares a look with Daniel -- in truth ... no, they didn't. Daniel steps forward to support Mike, to give her a way out.

DANIEL
Sully, there was nothin' we could do.

SULLY
We? This is about my family. It's got nothin' to do with you. I thought ya understood that.

Daniel falls silent.

Sully looks at him and Mike, feeling undermined, betrayed. Controlling his anger, he

strides past them into the barn.

Mike and Daniel look at each other, stung.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

END OF PART ONE

PART TWO

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT BARN - DAY EIGHT

MIKE moves anxiously toward **SULLY**, who seethes in frustration and resentment.

SULLY
You knew, Michaela -- you knew how I felt about it.

MIKE
Sully, what was I supposed to do?

SULLY
You shoulda waited for me to get back.

MIKE
But we would have lost our home.

SULLY
You don't know that.

MIKE
Sully... you made a promise to me -- you said you'd never let us lose the homestead. Why don't I owe that same promise to you?

SULLY
'Cause it's different.

MIKE
Why?

SULLY
'Cause I'm s'posed to take care a things.

MIKE
Why? Because you're the man? The husband? That makes you more responsible than I? Sully, you've said yourself, whatever happens to you, happens to me. We face everything together.

SULLY
Ya just shouldn'ta done it, that's all. Now we're still in debt, an' in debt to a friend.

MIKE
Which is better than Preston.

Sully quiets, then angrily walks out.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS - DAY EIGHT

Sully comes outside and heads for his horse. Daniel stops him.

DANIEL
Sully, don't blame Michaela. She didn't wanna take the money. I insisted.

SULLY
Why? I told ya I was handlin' things.

DANIEL
I know. But if you coulda seen how I found her. In the middle a the night --

At this, Sully perks up, but Daniel quickly clarifies:

DANIEL
Downstairs, by the fire -- sick with worry.
(beat)

Can't ya understand? I had to do somethin'.

Sully looks at Daniel for a long beat.

SULLY
(resolved)
I'm payin' ya back. Ev'ry cent.

Sully pulls out his salary from the cattle drive and hands it over.

SULLY
Consider that your first payment.

Daniel swallows. Sully gets on his horse. Mike comes to the barn doorway as he rides off. Mike and Daniel watch him, then share a look.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY EIGHT

CLOUD DANCING enters. He notices the REVEREND sitting off-to-the side and alone. The Reverend looks vulnerable and bored. Cloud Dancing feels for him.

CLOUD DANCING
It is a beautiful day today, Reverend.

The Reverend looks toward his voice.

REVEREND
Cloud Dancin'?

CLOUD DANCING
Yes. Perhaps you would enjoy a short walk outside.

REVEREND
Loren stays real busy 'til the afternoon.

CLOUD DANCING
By yourself.

The Reverend smiles awkwardly, instantly anxious.

REVEREND

Oh. Yes, well, I have been out by myself before ...

CLOUD DANCING

Reverend, you have lived in this town for many years. Your mind will see what your eyes cannot.

REVEREND

I s'pose ...

CLOUD DANCING

And should you lose your way, surely your friends and neighbors will guide you home.

The Reverend nods vaguely, considering this.

LOREN interrupts, shoving a box toward Cloud Dancing.

LOREN

Your things ain't sellin' anymore.

CLOUD DANCING

Not selling?

REVEREND

But somebody bought --

LOREN

(stifling him)

They ain't sellin'. An' they take up too much room in my store.

(to Cloud Dancing)

So I s'pose now ya ain't got much reason to come aroun' town anymore.

Loren stares at Cloud Dancing meaningfully.

Before Cloud Dancing can respond, DOROTHY comes in. She is flustered to see Cloud Dancing, even more so in front of Loren and his CUSTOMERS, who watch from the aisles.

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin' ... I ... you gotta forgive me for the other day, I -- had a ... an unexpected deadline.

CLOUD DANCING

Deadline.

DOROTHY

Yes. Work to finish by a certain time? I hope you can understand.

Cloud Dancing looks at Dorothy, glances at Loren, registers the disapproving townsfolk, then looks back at Dorothy.

CLOUD DANCING

I do understand.

Dorothy knows that he indeed understands fully. She looks at him, pained. Cloud Dancing nods sadly, respectfully, to her, then walks out with his box of merchandise.

Dorothy casts her eyes down. The Reverend senses her distress, but Loren nods, satisfied.

EXT. LIVERY - DAY EIGHT

Sully repairs a wheel, pounding at the anvil, releasing tension with each blow.

ROBERT E approaches him with a slight smile, puzzled by Sully's intensity.

ROBERT E

Sully, that's fine work, but slow down a bit. Mr. James ain't pickin' up that wheel 'til tomorrow.

SULLY

Just tryin' ta get it done.

Sully keeps working. Robert E watches his friend, growing concerned.

ROBERT E

Cattle drive turn out alright?

SULLY

Yep. Rancher kept 'is word.

ROBERT E

Good. That should put ya ahead for awhile.

Sully nods.

ROBERT E

An' ya won't need to be takin' on so much work.

Sully hesitates and looks at Robert E, misinterpreting.

SULLY

Robert E, if you don't need my help around here --

ROBERT E

I do, Sully, sure I do.

SULLY

'Cause I don't want you just findin' things for me.

ROBERT E

I got plenty for ya to do. All I'm sayin' is ya just got back.

SULLY

Yeah?

ROBERT E

Well, ya hardly seen your family, an' here ya are, workin' like there's a fire under ya.

SULLY

I'm alright.

ROBERT E

I know, but if ya wanna spend some time at home now, 'specially since ya got Daniel visitin'...

Sully sighs and shakes his head, not willing to share his situation with Daniel.

SULLY

I got debts to pay.

ROBERT E

(backs off)

Well, when ya finish up here, I could use a hand with the horses.

SULLY
Sure thing.

Robert E nods and turns away.

SULLY
Robert E?

Robert E turns.

SULLY
Thank you.

Robert E and Sully share a small smile of understanding, then Sully gets back to work.

INT. *COLLEEN'S ROOM - DAY EIGHT

Mike passes by in the hall and glances into the room.

MIKE
Daniel?

REVEAL

Daniel packing his bags. Bare-chested, he sees Mike and quickly covers up with a shirt.

MIKE
(re: his packing)
What are you doing?

DANIEL
(regretful)
I came here to help Sully. All I did was bring 'im trouble.

MIKE
You acted with the best of intentions.

DANIEL
But they didn't work out.

Mike enters the room.

MIKE

So you've had a disagreement, some contention with your dearest friend. You can't just pack up and go.

DANIEL

Don't think Sully wants me stickin' aroun'.

MIKE

Yes, he does. Your friendship is very important to him.

DANIEL

It's important to me, too.

MIKE

Then all the more reason for you to stay.

Daniel looks at Mike, reminded of another reason for him to leave -- he's falling in love with her.

DANIEL

I should go.

MIKE

But I feel responsible for this --

DANIEL

Ain't your fault, Michaela.

MIKE

But this never would've happened if I hadn't taken the money. I feel as though I've come between the two of you, and I couldn't bear that, please -- stay and talk to Sully. Do it for me.

Daniel looks into Mike's imploring eyes -- and surrenders.

EXT. LIVERY - DAY EIGHT

Sully adjusts a horse's bridle. PRESTON approaches with curious amusement.

PRESTON

Still lingering around the livery?

SULLY
It's called workin'.

PRESTON
But why? Your debt has been paid. You can go back to doing whatever it is that you normally do.

Sully turns to face Preston with an icy stare.

PRESTON
Now, don't be so sensitive, Sully. I'm just wondering why you're still doing Robert E's scrap work. You must really need the money.

SULLY
That's right.

PRESTON
Why not just ask your rich friend for some more?

Sully bristles.

SULLY
I'm payin' 'im back.

Sully returns to work. Preston smiles to himself.

PRESTON
It's just wounded pride then, is it?

PRESTON (CONT'D)
(needling Sully)
You left home to provide for your wife and family, only to find that your best friend stepped in and took your place.

SULLY
(hotly)
Nobody took my place.

Sully steps toward Preston, who pales.

PRESTON

A poor choice of words. Forgive me.

Sully glares at Preston for a beat, then lets it go and gets back to work.

Preston watches Sully thoughtfully.

PRESTON

Sully -- I'm just thinking... why should you waste your time and skill here, working for pennies?

SULLY

(agitated)

You got somethin' to say? Say it.

PRESTON

Alright. How would you like to build an entire house -- create the design, use the finest materials, be completely in charge, and earn all the money that you need to repay your friend in one lump sum?

Sully can't help but be interested, but he's wary.

SULLY

Who's hirin'?

PRESTON

(smiles)

I'd like to move in by the Summer.

Sully sighs -- he wishes he could reject Preston's offer, but the money is just too good ...

INT. BANK - DAY EIGHT

Sully stands at Preston's desk, uneasy in Preston's domain. Preston draws on a pad.

PRESTON

I'm not an artist, Sully, you're the craftsman. Just indulge me and take these thoughts into consideration. We can discuss the final floor plan after you've had a look.

SULLY

Alright.

Sully takes the sketches. Preston extends his hand. Sully hesitates, then shakes it.

PRESTON

I'm so pleased that you'll be --
(relishing the words)
Working for me.

DANIEL (O.S.)

You workin' for him?

Daniel steps inside, surprising Sully.

DANIEL

Robert E told me you were here. Why ya doin' this?

SULLY

(cuts to the chase)
I build his house, you get your money.

PRESTON

Yes, and I will finally be the proud owner of an original Byron Sully.

Daniel takes this in for a beat. He looks at Sully.

DANIEL

You dead set on this?

SULLY

I am.

DANIEL

(beat)
Then I'm helpin' ya.

SULLY

No.

DANIEL

Yes, Sully, I'm stayin', no arguments. We're gonna finish this thing together.

Sully hesitates.

DANIEL

An' then ya can pay me back what ya owe me.

Preston is completely befuddled.

PRESTON

Excuse me. You want to help him build my house so that he can pay you back?

DANIEL

That's right.

Daniel stares at Sully, waiting for his response.

PRESTON

What kind of people are you?

Sully turns to Daniel. They share a look.

DANIEL

Friends.

This concept is clearly bewildering for Preston, but Sully starts to yield and Daniel smiles with relief. Their friendship is on the mend.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. PRESTON'S HOMESTEAD - DAY NINE

Sully uses a spade to remove rocks from the plot of land. Daniel digs around a tree stump, preparing to uproot it.

They're still tentative in each other's company. Daniel glances around.

DANIEL

Nice piece a land.

SULLY

Yeah.

Sully looks over at Daniel. He realizes that Daniel is trying to make conversation, to reconnect -- and meets him halfway.

SULLY

Preston came to town, found out where the best spot was, then made sure he owned it.

DANIEL

The view sure is pretty.

Daniel struggles with the stump. Sully heads over.

SULLY

Lotta folks used to come up here to enjoy it.

Sully helps Daniel chop and dig around the base of the stump.

SULLY

Fact, they 'specially liked to sit under this tree.

(beat)

Preston cut it down.

DANIEL

You got a long list a grievances 'gainst that fella, now don't ya?

SULLY

(small smile)

It ain't like I'm keepin' track.

DANIEL

'Course not.

The ice between them is starting to melt.

Working together, Sully and Daniel wrench the stump out of the ground, then look at each other with satisfaction.

INT. CLINIC - DAY NINE

Mike examines MR. PERKINS' forearm, gently feeling the bone, rotating it, inspecting the scar. She looks pleased.

MR. PERKINS

Bone feels strong, Dr. Mike. An' hardly any scar. Ya done some real fine stitchin'.

MIKE

Thank you. Now, I don't want you to do any heavy lifting for six weeks, but after that you can do everything normally. Although you may experience a dull ache when it rains.

MR. PERKINS

Ya mean my arm's gonna tell me 'bout the weather?

MIKE

(smiles)

That's right.

Mike goes to her desk.

Mr. Perkins puts on his jacket and plucks one of the four new cigars out of his breast pocket.

Mike glances up from her paperwork and sees him unwrap the cigar and stick it in his mouth. Then, steeling her resolve, she brings a page over to Mr. Perkins.

MR. PERKINS

(looks at the paper, caught off-guard)

What's this?

MIKE

(smiles nervously)

It's a bill. For my services.

MR. PERKINS

(reading down the list)

A bill ... ?

MIKE

Yes, I think you'll find everything in order.

(pointing them out)

A compound fracture. Setting the bone, closing the wound, and all of your follow-up visits, including today's,

Mr. Perkins' eyes bulge at the grand total.

MR. PERKINS
Three dollars?

Mike swallows hard, but holds her ground.

MIKE
I do believe I've charged you a fair price.

MR. PERKINS
But I was hopin' -- I mean, my wife was plannin' to bake you some a her apple pies.

MIKE
That would be very kind of her, and my family has always enjoyed them --
(bracing herself)
But from now on, I really must require payment in cash for my work.

MR. PERKINS
But three dollars, Dr. Mike ... I can't afford to pay ya that now.

MIKE
(sighs softly, nods)
I understand.

Mr. Perkins feels relieved, not expecting:

MIKE
What can you afford to pay now?

Mr. Perkins gapes at her.

MIKE
Mr. Perkins, forgive me, but surely the price of your healed arm is worth at least as much as a new cigar.

Mr. Perkins reacts. Mike waits. He reaches into his pocket.

MR. PERKINS

I got about a dollar on me. That gonna do it for now?

MIKE

That will be fine. I'll give you a receipt.

Mr. Perkins nods, rustling for change. Mike turns away and returns to her desk, pleased with herself.

EXT. PRESTON'S HOMESTEAD - DAY NINE

Preston stands between Sully and Daniel, surveying their work, holding a rolled-up poster.

THEIR POV

The plot of land looks level, smoothly raked. Cord is strung between markers to indicate the outline of the house.

BACK TO PRESTON

As he takes in the layout.

PRESTON

You're placing the bay window over there?

SULLY

That's what we talked about. Said ya wanted to see the sun come up.

PRESTON

Well, I put some more thought into that and, you know, I think I'd really prefer to see the sun set.

Sully and Daniel trade looks.

SULLY

Then the bay window'll face West.

Preston smiles. Sully starts back to work with Daniel, but Preston stops him.

PRESTON

Just a few more minor changes ...

Preston unfurls a large drawing of his floor-plan.

PRESTON

Perhaps you should follow me.

Sully takes a calming breath and moves off to tour the site with Preston.

Daniel gets back to work, surprised when Mike rides up.

DANIEL

Michaela.

MIKE

Daniel ...

Mike climbs off her horse, in high spirits.

MIKE

I couldn't wait to tell you and Sully.

(proud)

I was paid today. In cash money.

DANIEL

Congratulations.

MIKE

It was difficult for me to insist, I didn't enjoy it, but ...

DANIEL

It feels good to be paid for your work.

MIKE

(beat)

Yes. Yes, it does.

ANGLE ON - SULLY AND PRESTON

They stop some distance away.

PRESTON

What I'd really like is an entirely separate room -- with cabinets and shelves, room for a desk. A study.

SULLY

(getting annoyed)

'Nother room ...

PRESTON

Yes, and I think now is a good time to discuss the scheduling change.

SULLY

Schedulin' change?

PRESTON

I want my house completed in four months.

SULLY

Four months?

PRESTON

Don't be alarmed, Sully. I'm offering you a ten percent bonus, a little incentive, if you finish the work in time.

Sully relaxes for a moment, then:

PRESTON

And if you don't...?

Sully looks at him.

PRESTON

Then I'll begin deducting wages with each day you run late.

SULLY

That ain't what we agreed.

PRESTON

But surely this deadline won't be a problem for you. After all, you have your friend's help now.

Preston glances off.

PRESTON'S POV

Mike and Daniel chat and laugh together.

BACK TO PRESTON

As he observes them curiously.

PRESTON

Well, now. That must warm your heart, Sully. To see your wife and your best friend enjoying each other's company.

Confused, Sully looks up and notices Mike and Daniel for the first time.

SULLY'S POV

Mike enjoys her conversation with Daniel. She glances over at Sully, smiles and waves brightly, but doesn't head over -- she turns back to Daniel.

BACK TO SULLY AND PRESTON

Preston is primed to push Sully's buttons.

PRESTON

I imagine they got to know each other quite well while you were away.

Sully gives Preston a sizzling look. Preston backs off, but Sully looks back at Mike and Daniel, growing troubled.

CLOSE ON - MIKE AND DANIEL

Mike is warm and friendly. Daniel is cordial but uncomfortable, aware of Sully's presence.

MIKE

I want to thank you, Daniel, for staying here and making things right with Sully.

DANIEL

Sure thing.

Mike smiles gratefully and puts her hand on Daniel's arm. Daniel reacts to her touch, glancing at Sully. Mike doesn't notice.

ANGLE ON - SULLY

He watches Daniel with alert, suspicious eyes ...

EXT. GAZETTE - DAY NINE

Dorothy sweeps dust out the front door. She starts to smile at a passing TOWNSMAN, but he turns up his nose and moves on.

Dorothy sinks briefly, then calls out in frustration, refusing to be ignored:

DOROTHY

Hey there, Mr. Harriman! Ya haven't bought your paper this week!

The man keeps walking. Dorothy frowns. She turns and sees ...

DOROTHY'S POV

From the direction of the church, the Reverend carefully heads up the street, using his cane to guide him.

BACK TO DOROTHY

Astonished and concerned to see him out walking on his own.

DOROTHY
Reverend ... ?

BACK TO SCENE

The Reverend smiles at the sound of her voice.

REVEREND
Afternoon, Dorothy.

DOROTHY
Are you -- you're alright to be ...

REVEREND
I'm fine. I've walked this road so many times, I could do it blind.

Dorothy pauses, unprepared for his black humor. He smiles, then she lightens up and laughs.

DOROTHY
Well, it's good to see -- I mean, it's nice that you're out enjoyin' the day.

REVEREND
Can't spend every hour just sittin' in Loren's store.

DOROTHY
Yes, I remember how that can be.

They share a knowing smile.

REVEREND
Would ya care to join me for a bit? Keep the horses outta my way?

DOROTHY
Well, sure.

Dorothy accompanies the Reverend toward the General Store. They stroll quietly for a few beats.

REVEREND

Sounded like ol' Mr. Harriman wasn't in a friendly mood today.

Dorothy pauses, realizing that the Reverend overheard her.

DOROTHY

Yes, well ... he sure wasn't.

The Reverend wants to offer his counsel gingerly.

REVEREND

Dorothy ... bein' blind doesn't keep me from knowin' what goes on in this town.

DOROTHY

Reverend, whatever folks've been sayin' or thinkin', it just isn't true.

REVEREND

I'm not askin' if it's true.

The Reverend tries another tack. He wants to bolster Dorothy, not make her uneasy or defensive.

REVEREND

Y'know, it's a strange thing 'bout my blindness ... sometimes I think it's helped me to "see" things more clearly than ever.

DOROTHY

Whad'ya mean?

REVEREND

Well, since I can't see how a person looks anymore -- what he's wearin' or the color of his skin -- nothin' on the outside much matters to me.

(beat)

Now it seems like I can see right past all that ... kinda like inside people -- to their very heart and soul ...

DOROTHY

That sounds like a lovely thing.

REVEREND

It can be. With a man like Cloud Dancin', for instance ...

Dorothy freezes at the mention of his name.

REVEREND

It was him suggested I start takin' these walks more often.

DOROTHY

Was it?

REVEREND

That's right. I never took much time to know 'im before, but now I can see ... Cloud Dancin's a very kind 'n lovin' soul ... an' I feel lucky just knowin' 'im.

Dorothy smiles softly, reflective. The Reverend taps the front step of the store with his cane.

REVEREND

Thanks for walkin' with me, Dorothy.

He holds out his hand. She grasps it.

DOROTHY

Happy to, Reverend. Thank you.

The Reverend nods and makes his way back into the store, leaving Dorothy to ponder.

EXT. CLINIC - SAME TIME - DAY NINE

Sully and Daniel drive the buckboard wagon up to Mike's porch. Mike comes outside, smiling at both of them.

MIKE

You're early.

Daniel hops out of the front seat. Sully guardedly watches Daniel's behavior toward Mike.

DANIEL

How was the rest of your day?

MIKE

I just put twenty-three stitches in Mr. Bailey's leg. At three cents a stitch, that's ...



Mike smiles at Daniel, but his smile is forced. Briefly puzzled by this, Mike smiles at Sully.

MIKE
I'll get my things.

Sully nods. Mike goes inside. Daniel and Sully share an uneasy look.

Dorothy heads back to the Gazette from her walk with the Reverend.

DOROTHY
Afternoon, gentlemen ... almost evenin', I suppose.

SULLY
H'lo, Dorothy.

DANIEL
Dorothy, nice to see ya.

Dorothy senses the tension between them and tries to make light conversation.

DOROTHY
Sully, I understand you two're buildin' Preston's house.

SULLY
That's right.

DOROTHY
Would ya consider fixin' a special lock on it? So we can keep Preston inside now 'n then?

She smiles. Sully returns it.

SULLY
Long as I get to keep the key.

Mike comes outside, carrying her medical bag, pulling on her coat. She misses the arm hole and the coat slips down. She looks to Daniel for help.

MIKE
Daniel? Would you ...

Dorothy watches as Daniel hesitates, glancing uncomfortably at Sully. Then Daniel moves to Mike and slips the coat over her shoulders.

MIKE
Thank you.

Mike and Daniel move to the wagon. She looks at him and smiles, waiting for a hand-up, but Daniel hesitates again, awkwardly glancing at Sully.

Sully comes around and helps Mike into the wagon.

Dorothy takes all of this in.

MIKE
I'll see you in the morning, Dorothy.

DOROTHY
'Night, Michaela. Gentlemen.

Sully and Daniel nod at her. Mike turns to Sully.

MIKE
Ready?

Sully snaps the reins. Mike waves to Dorothy as they drive away.

OFF Dorothy watching the trio, wondering ...

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT NINE

The fire roars. Mike sits between Sully and Daniel, listening intently to BRIAN read his short story. Sully and Daniel are distracted, gauging each other.

BRIAN
(reading from his notebook)
"The battle wore on, long after the moonlight first danced across the silvery lake ... "

Sully looks at Daniel. Daniel meets his glance.

BRIAN
"But in the end, only one man stood ... "

Sully puts his arm around Mike and gently pulls her closer. Daniel looks away.

BRIAN
"The wise and noble Knight. With a bow to his countrymen, he climbed onto his white horse and rode off silently into the night."
(looks up, smiles)
That's it.

Mike grins and applauds, jarring Sully and Daniel.

MIKE
Brian, that was wonderful. So descriptive.

DANIEL
Real excitin'.

SULLY
Your best story yet.

BRIAN
(grins)
Thanks.

MIKE
Well ... you do have school in the morning.

BRIAN
I know, I know. G'night.

They all exchange "good nights" and Brian heads upstairs.

For a moment, Mike, Sully and Daniel sit in silence, then Mike looks at the chess board and turns eagerly to Daniel.

MIKE
Would you like to play?

Daniel hesitates.

SULLY

I'll play with ya.

Mike turns to Sully, stunned.

SULLY
I know how.

MIKE
I know, you're a good player, but...

SULLY
Ya just gotta keep the board out from now on, else I never think to ask ya.

MIKE
(smiles)
I'd love to play chess with you.

Sully returns her smile and they move to the chess board. Feeling out-of-place, Daniel stands up.

DANIEL
I think I'll turn in.

MIKE
But it's so early. Daniel, you should wait around. Sully hasn't played in awhile.
(smiles at Sully)
This game may not last very long.

SULLY
Don't be so sure.

Daniel sees their playful, loving interaction -- and feels like the proverbial third wheel.

DANIEL
I'm tired.

He heads for the stairs.

MIKE
Good night then.

DANIEL
(pauses, looks back)
'Night, Michaela.

Mike nods, then smiles at Sully.

MIKE
I'll get us some coffee.

As Mike goes into the kitchen, Sully glances at Daniel.

Their eyes lock, and in that chilling instant, the tension brewing at the homestead is undeniable.

Daniel goes upstairs, leaving Sully very disturbed by the turn of events as we slowly...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. HOMESTEAD - MORNING - DAY TEN

Mike brings biscuits to the table, where Sully, Daniel, and Brian eat breakfast. KATIE is in her high-chair.

MIKE
Careful now, they're hot.

BRIAN
Smells good, Ma.

Mike smiles at him, then looks at Sully and Daniel. The men are both somber and distracted.

Mike sits, puzzled. She looks to Brian for conversation.

MIKE

Are you doing anything special in school today?

BRIAN

We're startin' a new chapter on Explorers.

MIKE

Explorers. That should be very interesting.

Brian nods, glancing at the men, confused by their silence, too. He tries to break the ice:

BRIAN

How long's it gonna take you to build Mr. Lodge's house, Sully?

SULLY

Few months.

Brian smiles at Daniel, delighted.

BRIAN

Then that means you'll be stayin' here for awhile.

Daniel exchanges tense glances with Sully. Mike notices, growing more concerned.

DANIEL

Long time for a visit, Brian. Think I best find a place to stay in town.

SULLY

I can manage the house by m'self if ya wanna go.

DANIEL

No, I wanna help, Sully. I promised ya.

Mike listens, perplexed by their strained interaction.

MIKE

Well, you can stay here as long as you like, Daniel. You're a wonderful house guest. Like family.

DANIEL

(smiles appreciatively)

Thank you, Michaela.

Mike prompts Sully, expecting him to reassure Daniel, too.

SULLY

(flat)

Sure. Stay as long as ya like.

Not very reassured, Daniel smiles weakly and keeps eating.

Mike looks at Sully, hoping for an explanation of his mood, but his expression is tight and unreadable.

**OFF Mike's increasing worry, we
CUT TO:**

INT. GAZETTE - DAY TEN

Dorothy stops working her press and gives Mike her full attention.

DOROTHY

How do ya mean -- tense?

Mike feels awkward discussing the breakfast scene, but she needs her good friend's feedback.

MIKE

Well ... Sully and Daniel were both very quiet.

DOROTHY

Quiet's not unusual for Sully.

MIKE

(smiles slightly)

No -- I mean especially quiet.

(troubled)

I thought this whole fuss about the money was over, but obviously it's not for Sully. I felt such ... an anger brewing in him.

DOROTHY

Toward you?

MIKE

No, no, toward Daniel. If anything, Sully's been more attentive to me. Last night, he asked me to play chess.

DOROTHY

Chess?

MIKE

Yes, he was so eager to play, and he's never shown much interest before.

DOROTHY

(confirming her suspicions)

Before Daniel arrived, ya mean.

Mike looks at her, puzzled by her line of thought.

DOROTHY

Michaela, I think Sully's jealous.

MIKE

Jealous?

DOROTHY

Of you 'n Daniel.

MIKE

Dorothy.

DOROTHY

I think Daniel's fallin' in love with you.

MIKE

Oh, don't be ridiculous.

DOROTHY

Well, maybe you don't see it, but Sully's clearly seen somethin'. An' I did, too.

Mike looks at her.

DOROTHY

When they picked ya up yesterday? A simple thing like helpin' ya on with your coat -- it made Daniel so uncomfortable.

MIKE
That's nonsense.

DOROTHY
An' when you got into the wagon? The way he looked at Sully? Afraid to touch your hand ...

MIKE
(pondering, then dismisses the notion)
No. Absolutely not. Daniel is Sully's best friend, it's not possible.

DOROTHY
Michaela, sometimes, when you're right in the middle of a situation, you can't see how it's comin' across --

Dorothy glances at something and falters -- she sees the lavender sprig from Cloud Dancing on her desk. Her words and thoughts now take on a more personal meaning.

MIKE
You may perceive what you like, that does not make it true.

DOROTHY
Yes, I suppose you're right... but maybe...

Thinking this through for herself, Dorothy reaches out and touches the lavender.

DOROTHY
... what folks see is true ... an' you just don't wanna accept it.

Mike shakes her head, too overwhelmed to consider the possibility of Daniel being in love with her.

MIKE
I have patients to see.

Dorothy nods, distracted. Mike walks out.

EXT. GAZETTE - CONTINUOUS - DAY TEN

Mike leaves, her mind reeling. She heads for the clinic and stops short, flustered to see:

Daniel driving the buckboard wagon toward her. He spots Mike and slows.

Mike and Daniel smile awkwardly.

MIKE
Daniel. I wasn't expecting to see you.

DANIEL
Sully sent me into town to buy lumber.

Mike nods. A beat.

DANIEL
Michaela? Can I talk to ya for a minute?

MIKE
(smiles tensely)
Certainly.

Daniel takes a breath, not certain how to proceed.

DANIEL
Ain't sure how to say this...

MIKE
(nervously interrupts)
Daniel, I just remembered. I need to prepare for an appointment. Perhaps we can talk later?

Mike musters a shaky smile. Daniel nods sadly, aware of her discomfort.

DANIEL
Sure. See ya at the house then.

MIKE
Yes.

They exchange taut smiles, then Daniel drives on.

Mike anxiously watches him.

EXT. RESERVATION - DAY TEN

Near some shacks, Cloud Dancing chats with TWO INDIANS, who glance over his shoulder and stop talking with a frown. Cloud Dancing turns to see the object of their disapproval.

CLOUD DANCING'S POV

It's Dorothy, riding up on her horse. She looks toward Cloud Dancing, apprehensive and uncertain.

BACK TO CLOUD DANCING

As he nods to Dorothy, surprised by her visit. He steps away from his disgruntled friends to meet her.

BACK TO SCENE

Dorothy climbs off her horse and moves toward Cloud Dancing.

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin', I hope I'm not intrudin' ...

CLOUD DANCING

As you see, I am very busy.

Dorothy allows a slight smile -- but she's nervous, here with a purpose.

DOROTHY

I -- well, I want to apologize again -- for not meetin' ya that day.

CLOUD DANCING

You had a -- deadline.

DOROTHY

No. No, I didn't, Cloud Dancin', that was just an excuse.

(beat)
I chose not to come.

Cloud Dancing is surprised by and curious about her candor.

DOROTHY
The folks in town -- well, they don't understand how I -- I mean, they don't think it's right that you 'n me are spendin' time together ...
(quickly qualifying)
For my book.

CLOUD DANCING
My people also do not approve.

Dorothy glances behind Cloud Dancing.

DOROTHY'S POV

Several Indians watch them scornfully.

BACK TO DOROTHY AND CLOUD DANCING

As she realizes that he has been facing the same prejudice.

DOROTHY
Then you understand.

CLOUD DANCING
That we both live among foolish people?

Again, a smile sneaks across Dorothy's face.

DOROTHY
It's just that I, well, I've enjoyed doin' our interviews --
(stops, frustrated)
Our talks. I've enjoyed havin' our talks very much.

CLOUD DANCING
So have I.

Dorothy pauses briefly to absorb this, very pleased.

DOROTHY

When I think about 'em bein' over ...

Cloud Dancing knits his brow. Dorothy explains:

DOROTHY

Well, I'm almost done with my research.

CLOUD DANCING

And then, we will no longer speak?

DOROTHY

Yes, Cloud Dancin', we'll speak, surely -- when I see ya.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

(sighs)

I guess that's what's been truly botherin' me. Not the town's gossip, but -- when my research is over, and I'm ready to start writin', there won't be any real reason to see ya anymore.

Cloud Dancing looks troubled.

DOROTHY

I mean -- is there?

Dorothy and Cloud Dancing search each other's eyes.

DOROTHY

Have folks've been seein' somethin' we don't? 'Bout us ...

Cloud Dancing raises his eyebrow.

DOROTHY

(embarrassed)

Oh, this is nonsense ...

CLOUD DANCING

No. We must consider -- about us.

Dorothy proceeds tentatively, but she's desperate to know.

DOROTHY

Yes, what are we -- to each other -- exactly?

Cloud Dancing thinks about this for a long beat. He looks at Dorothy, with great affection and simplicity:

CLOUD DANCING

We are ... friends.

Dorothy mulls his answer and decides that ... yes, this is indeed the perfect label for them now. She smiles.

DOROTHY

Friends.

OFF Dorothy and Cloud Dancing, two friends regarding each other with warm appreciation ...

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT TEN

Dinner time. Mike, Sully, and Daniel eat quietly, occasionally looking up from their plates to exchange hesitant glances.

MATTHEW sits opposite Brian. Both are puzzled by the silence.

MATTHEW

Dinner's real good tonight, Dr. Mike.

Mike looks up and smiles wanly.

MIKE

Thank you, Matthew. I'm glad you could join us.

Matthew nods, glancing around the dreary table.

MATTHEW

Wouldn't miss it.

Mike smiles at him awkwardly, then looks down at her plate.

Matthew looks at Brian -- what's going on? Brian shrugs, equally mystified.

More silence. Matthew thinks of a topic.

MATTHEW
Saw Ben Marcus in town today.

Mike perks up.

MIKE
Ben Marcus? How is he?

MATTHEW
Oh, real good.

MIKE
And his family?

MATTHEW
Real good, too.

Mike nods, hoping for more. Matthew thinks of something:

MATTHEW
He said to send 'is regards.

Mike smiles. Matthew smiles. End of conversation.

It's Brian's turn. He interrupts another long pause:

BRIAN
Mr. Bray's been talkin' 'bout makin' some big changes at the store.

MATTHEW
Yeah? What kinda big changes?

BRIAN
Oh, movin' stuff aroun'.

MATTHEW
What kinda stuff?

BRIAN
Y'know -- stuff.

Brian and Matthew look at each other, glance around, and give up.

Everyone eats in silence.

INT. MIKE AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT TEN

It's very late, but Mike is awake in bed, worrying. Sully is asleep, turned away from her.

Mike watches his steady breathing for a moment. She slides closer, needing to talk. She's just about to wake him when the floorboards creak outside their door.

Mike reacts, sitting up. She listens to the footsteps pass by then tread quietly downstairs.

INT. HOMESTEAD - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT TEN

Daniel, wearing his coat, places his bags by the front door. He turns to scribble a note at the table.

MIKE (O.S.)
Daniel?

Daniel looks over at Mike. She comes downstairs, pulling a robe over her nightgown. Daniel sighs.

DANIEL
I didn't wanna wake ya.

MIKE
What are you doing?

DANIEL
Figure it's time I move on now, Michaela.

MIKE
You're leaving?

DANIEL
I think it's best.

MIKE
In the middle of the night? But you have to say goodbye to Sully. You can't go now, Daniel. Please don't go.

SULLY (O.S.)
What's goin' on?

Mike jolts and Daniel turns, both surprised to see Sully on the stairs.

SULLY
What're you two doin' down there?

DANIEL
I was just leavin'.

SULLY
Good.

MIKE
(shocked)
Sully. You don't mean that.

SULLY
Yeah, I do.

Sully strides aggressively toward Daniel. He stops in front of him, glaring.

SULLY
I see the way ya been lookin' at her.

Daniel says nothing.

MIKE
(shaken)
Sully...

SULLY
(to Daniel)
Go ahead. Tell her.

Still, Daniel keeps quiet.

SULLY
Ya denyin' it?

Daniel shifts awkwardly. Sully goes to the door, opens it, then looks coldly at Daniel.

SULLY
Whatcha waitin' for?

Daniel picks up his bags and hesitates, looking at Sully.

DANIEL
Sully, I...

SULLY
(with an indignant shove)
Go.

Daniel halts and glares at Sully, but restrains himself. Mike steps between them.

MIKE
(anguished)
Sully, he's your friend.

SULLY
Used to be.

Daniel swallows, wounded. He shares a look with Sully, then leaves.

Mike turns to Sully, but he brushes past her, grabs his coat, and walks out the side door.

OFF Mike, shattered and alone.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. PRESTON'S HOMESTEAD - MORNING - DAY ELEVEN

Mike rides up on Flash. She looks like she's been agonizing all night.

Mike looks around. There are some stacks of lumber, but the site is empty -- Sully is not there.

Distressed, Mike rides off.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY ELEVEN

Loren tallies HANK's purchases. The Reverend sits near the door. Several CUSTOMERS browse the shelves and racks.

Dorothy comes in and greets the Reverend warmly.

DOROTHY
Mornin', Reverend.

REVEREND
Dorothy.

Loren and Hank look over. Dorothy nods politely.

DOROTHY
Gentlemen.

She moves inside to shop, acknowledging other CUSTOMERS even while some of them ignore her.

DOROTHY
Miz Fowler ... 'mornin, Miz Davis ...

Hank watches Dorothy. Loren finishes packing Hank's items.

LOREN
That it?

HANK
Well, lemme see now ...

Hank pretends to scan a display, loud enough to be overheard:

HANK
Where can I find me some a that Injun-made stuff?

Hearing this, Dorothy halts, her back to Hank. The Reverend perks up. The surrounding customers pause to listen.

LOREN
(frowns)
I told ya, I stopped sellin' 'it.

HANK
But I want a pair a those soft moccasins.
(looks at Dorothy, as if just remembering)
Say, Dorothy ...

Dorothy steels herself as Hank approaches her.

HANK
You got some sort a "personal" connection with them Injuns, don't ya? Maybe you can get me a good deal on some moccasins.

Dorothy turns to face him.

DOROTHY
I'm a journalist, Hank, I'm not in the shoe business.

HANK
Then how 'bout that Cloud Dancin' fella? Maybe he could help.

DOROTHY
I'm sure Cloud Dancin' would be very happy to assist you.

HANK

Oh, you're "sure" now, huh? Well, you must know 'im real well then.

Dorothy glances around, feeling everyone's stare.

Loren and the Reverend listen closely for her response.

DOROTHY

As a matter of fact -- I do.

Loren reacts and people murmur at the scandal, but the Reverend smiles to himself, proud of Dorothy.

DOROTHY

Cloud Dancin' is a gentleman. I'm real proud to call him my friend, an' I'm gonna keep seein' 'im, when I like an' where I like. An' if anybody don't approve?
(MORE)

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

(glancing at Loren)

And I mean anybody ...

(determined to all)

Then that's just too bad.

Everyone quiets, stunned, the wind taken out of their sails. Hank turns away from Dorothy, defeated.

Dorothy turns, head held high, and proceeds to shop. After a beat, all normal activity in the store resumes.

EXT. TOWN - JUST LATER - DAY ELEVEN

Mike rides into town, looking distraught. She sees Dorothy leaving the store, and trots over. Dorothy is carrying her groceries in a basket.

MIKE

Dorothy ... have you seen Sully this morning? I've been looking all over for him.

DOROTHY

(sees her distress)

No, I haven't, Michaela. What's wrong?

MIKE

Oh Dorothy ... something terrible happened last night.
(looks at her, still reeling)
You were right. Sully thinks Daniel -- has feelings for me.

DOROTHY

Oh dear ...

MIKE

Sully was so upset. He walked out.

DOROTHY

He just needs some time to cool off.

MIKE

But I can't find him anywhere. What must he be thinking?

DOROTHY

Sully loves you, Michaela. I never seen a man so devoted to his wife.
(beat)
He'll be home. Don't you worry.

Mike looks at Dorothy, wanting to believe her, then rides off ...

EXT. TRAIN STATION -- DAY ELEVEN

The train approaches as Mike rides up. She glances toward the platform and slows her horse

MIKE'S POV

Daniel stares off pensively, his luggage beside him. He senses Mike's gaze and turns to her. He looks apologetic.

MIKE

She's glad to find him, but very uneasy. She rides across the tracks.



BACK TO SCENE

Mike climbs off Flash and meets Daniel on the platform. It's awkward. Neither knows where to begin or what to say.

Mike glances at the hard benches behind him.

MIKE
Those benches must've been very uncomfortable.

DANIEL
I slept at the Gold Nugget.

MIKE
You didn't happen to find Sully there?

DANIEL
He left home?

Mike nods and glances down, fighting her tears. Daniel looks on in distress, feeling responsible, wishing he could comfort her.

DANIEL
Michaela -- I'm so sorry for all this. Last thing I wanna do is make trouble for you 'n Sully

MIKE
(composing herself, with renewed urgency)
Then let's go find him. Let's tell him what nonsense he's been thinking, how absurd that is.

DANIEL
(beat)
I can't do that.

MIKE
Why?

Daniel looks at Mike, his emotions surging.

DANIEL

Michaela ... it ain't nonsense.

Mike goes numb.

DANIEL

What Sully's been thinkin' -- it's true.

Mike shakes her head, wishing the truth away.

MIKE

No ...

DANIEL

You're the finest woman I ever met --

MIKE

Don't -- Daniel, please...

DANIEL

An Sully's the best friend I ever had.

(beat)

An' that's why I gotta go.

Mike looks at him, floored, but not without compassion.

MIKE

Yes -- you should.

Daniel nods sadly. Tentatively at first, Mike holds out her hand.

MIKE

Goodbye, Daniel.

Daniel looks at her, his heart aching. He shakes her hand.

SULLY (O.S.)

Michaela?

Mike and Daniel turn, surprised to see Sully solemnly approach.

Mike is relieved to see him, but apprehensive about the situation. Sully comes over to them. It's very tense.

Sully looks at Daniel.

SULLY
Wanted to catch ya 'fore ya left.

Daniel nods. An awkward beat. Mike turns to Sully.

MIKE
I'll be at home.

Sully nods. Mike glances at Daniel with a small, sorrowful smile, then gets on her horse and rides off.

Sully and Daniel stand in strained silence, watching her.

THEIR POV

Mike gallops away from the tracks.

BACK TO SULLY AND DANIEL

They keep their eyes on Mike.

DANIEL
(gently, genuine)
You're the luckiest man in the world.

Sully stays silent, but he knows that Daniel is right.

DANIEL
An' I wish nothin' but ev'ry happiness for you both.

Sully nods slightly. Daniel struggles to find the words.

DANIEL
I never meant for this to happen, Sully. I just couldn't help my feelin's.

(heartfelt)
I'm sorry.

SULLY
(nods)
Me, too.

Daniel glances forlornly at the train.

DANIEL
Well. Seems like we're always puttin' so many miles between us.

Sully looks at his oldest and closest friend, letting go of his anger and mistrust ...

SULLY
Miles don't matter.

Daniel reacts, moved and relieved. He and Sully exchange warm, bittersweet looks that are rich with shared history.

DANIEL
Say g'bye to Matthew for me. Katie 'n Brian. I'm really gonna miss 'em.

Sully looks at Daniel.

SULLY
They're gonna miss you.

Daniel nods. Sully sticks out his hand. Daniel takes it. They hold their firm handshake for a beat.

Daniel climbs aboard the train, turning to Sully:

DANIEL
I'll let ya know where I am.

SULLY
Ya better.
(beat)
'Cause I'm payin' ya back.

DANIEL
(smiles)

You bet ya are. Ev'ry last cent.

They trade final looks, then Daniel moves onto the train.

OFF Sully watching the train carry his friend out of the station ...

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY ELEVEN

Alone on the porch, Mike sits despondently, staring out at the road.

MIKE'S POV

The road is empty.

BACK TO MIKE

As she lowers her eyes with a disheartened sigh. A beat. Mike gets up and moves toward the door. Just before she goes inside, she hears an approaching rider and turns.

MIKE'S POV

Sully gallops her way.

ANGLE ON - MIKE

Her face floods with relief. She heads down the steps.

ANGLE ON - SULLY

He climbs off his horse at the corral and turns toward Mike, regretful, hopeful.

ANGLE ON - MIKE

She stops and smiles at Sully uncertainly, with apprehension.

RESUME

Mike and Sully stand apart, neither sure how to relieve the pain of the night before.

They slowly move toward each other, their eyes locked. They stop.

MIKE
You're home.

SULLY
Only place I wanna be.

Mike smiles softly. They kiss and Sully takes her in his arms and she snuggles against him, secure in his loving embrace as we slowly...

FADE OUT.

THE END

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