

Mothers and Daughters

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Directed by Bobby Roth

TEASER

FADE IN

EXT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT ONE - TO ESTABLISH

COLLEEN (V.O.)

There's a full moon -- perfect for a hay ride.

MIKE (V.O.)

Tonight?

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT ONE

Mike, Sully, Brian and Colleen have just finished supper. Wolf lies on the floor.

COLLEEN (nods)

Can I go?

BRIAN

Me too!

COLLEEN (gently)

Brian, you can't come along.

BRIAN

Why not? I love hayrides.

COLLEEN

I'm sorry. It's just the older kids.

MIKE

Whose wagon are they using?

COLLEEN (vague)

Umm.. Jared's.

MIKE

And will Jared be driving?

COLLEEN

I guess so.

MIKE

Will any adults be going along?

COLLEEN

I don't know.

Mike exchanges a look with Sully. It's clear that Mike is more concerned than he is.

MIKE

I see.

COLLEEN

We're supposed to meet in half an hour by the creek ...

MIKE

This is a school night. You have to be up early in the morning.

COLLEEN

Everybody else from school is going.

MIKE (lightly)

Everybody?

COLLEEN

Becky, Alice, Richard, Jared ... we'll be back before nine.

MIKE (to Sully)

What do you think?

Sully looks at Mike, then at Colleen.

SULLY

I think it'd be better if ya went on a hay ride some other night. When there's no school ...

COLLEEN

But I don't know if there's gonna be a hay ride on any other night.

SULLY (smiles)

There will be. Lots of em. I promise ya.

Colleen sighs, gets up from the table and heads upstairs to her room. Mike calls after her, solicitous.

MIKE

Goodnight, Colleen

COLLEEN (not turning around)

Goodnight.

INT. MIKE AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT ONE

Mike, still dressed, is sitting on the bed or in a chair, reading. Sully is getting ready to go to sleep. He takes off his shirt.

MIKE

Haven't you noticed? She's been acting ... different, lately?

SULLY

She's growin' up.

MIKE

She says all her friends are allowed to do things we don't permit her to do.

SULLY

Like what?

MIKE

This hay ride tonight.

He sits down beside her and starts to remove her shoes. One by one.

SULLY

Didn't you ever go on a hay ride?

MIKE

We didn't have them.

SULLY

Or somethin' like it?

He carefully takes off one of her stockings. Then the other.

MIKE (shy)

My feet are cold.

SULLY

Won't be for long.

He starts to massage her foot.

MIKE

Colleen's still young. (beat) That feels nice.

Sully puts one foot down and starts on the other. She tries to talk about her concerns for Colleen, but it's getting harder to concentrate.

MIKE

I don't think she's ready to ... be ... running about ...

SULLY

Can we talk about this some other time?

MIKE

She knows so little ...

SULLY

She's delivered a baby. Sewn up a bullet wound.

MIKE

With medicine, yes, she's competent beyond her years. But in other ... areas ... she's very naive.

Sully kisses her bare foot. He's got her now.

MIKE

As I was.

Mike relaxes as Sully moves up to her shoulder, slides the fabric of her blouse down and kisses her skin.

There's a KNOCK on the door.

MIKE

Yes? Who is it?

BRIAN (O.S.)

Me. I need ya to help me with my essay.

Sully kisses her neck tenderly.

MIKE

I'll help you in the morning. We're ... tired now.

Sully kisses her ear.

BRIAN

But, Ma ...

MIKE

I'll wake you early, and we'll get the paper done. All right?

BRIAN (O.S.) (disappointed)

All right.

SULLY

G'night, Brian.

We hear Brian's footsteps move away. Sully smiles.

MIKE

You look pleased with yourself.

SULLY

When one of the kids knocks and you don't jump right up ... I know I've got your attention.

Mike laughs softly in agreement, as Sully goes in for the kiss.

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY TWO

The sun is shining.

INT. MIKE AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - DAY TWO

Mike and Sully are nestled in each other's arms. They've slept late. Sully begins to wake first. He kisses her cheek.

SULLY

Sun's up.

MIKE

Mmmmm.

SULLY

Been up for a while.

MIKE

It's so nice and peaceful.

She snuggles close to him. Sully holds her, caresses her hair. They've had a lovely night and want to stretch it out a little longer.

INT. DINING AREA - DAY TWO

Colleen and Brian have fixed their own breakfast. Brian is struggling with his paper. Colleen is reading.

BRIAN

I can't figure out what to write in the end.

COLLEEN

Ask Ma.

Brian looks up in the direction of the bedroom, then at Colleen.

BRIAN

Would you help me?

COLLEEN

I gotta finish this chapter first.

BRIAN

She said she'd be up early ...

COLLEEN

Maybe she overslept. Why don't you go see?

BRIAN

Would you?

Colleen looks at him, sees he's apprehensive. She stands.

COLLEEN

All right.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY TWO

Colleen walks to the door, knocks once. When there's no answer, she opens it.

COLLEEN

Ma?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY TWO

Mike bolts up in bed, embarrassed. She pulls her robe on, stands and goes to Colleen. Sully stays in bed.

MIKE (flustered)

Colleen, I wish you would knock first.

COLLEEN

I did.

MIKE

Then please ... wait until we come to the door.

COLLEEN

It's almost time for school.

MIKE

It's just ... we need privacy now.

COLLEEN

All right. But you said you'd help Brian with his paper.

MIKE (glances at Sully)

Oh dear. I forgot!

She buttons up her robe and hurries past Colleen out the door.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY TWO

The Reverend is quizzing the class on Julius Caesar. Colleen sits near Brian. We also see Alice, Jared, Becky, Richard and other familiar kids.

REVEREND

What does Caesar mean when he says "Et tu, Brute?"

No hands are raised.

REVEREND

Alice?

ALICE

You're a brute?

Everyone laughs.

REVEREND

Colleen?

COLLEEN

"And you, Brutus." Caesar is shocked to see Brutus there with the others.

REVEREND

Correct. But why is he shocked?

Most of the kids look away or try to shrink in their seats so the Reverend won't call on them. Colleen raises her hand again.

REVEREND

Anybody else know this? (No one else volunteers). Colleen.

COLLEEN

Because he thought Brutus was his closest friend. But now, he's come to assassinate him.

REVEREND

Good, Colleen. (to class) The rest of you need to re-read the chapter tonight. Your test's on Caesar's life is tomorrow. You may go now.

With groans, the kids start gathering their things to leave.

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE - DAY TWO

Colleen walks past a group of kids that includes Jared, Richard and Alice.

JARED

Hey, Colleen. We're goin' down to the creek. Wanna come?

COLLEEN

I got somethin' else to do.

ALICE

What? You already know Caesar's life by heart.

COLLEEN (ignoring barb)

I gotta help Dr. Mike at the clinic.

RICHARD (to kids)

Colleen is so good.

ALICE

All she does is work and study.

COLLEEN

That's not true.

JARED

Then come to the creek with us.

ALICE

We're gonna play that game I told ya about.

RICHARD

It's really fun.

JARED (challenging)

She wouldn't like it.

RICHARD

I bet she would.

Colleen (torn)

I'll ... come by later.

ALICE (sceptical)

Sure. We'll see ya later.

Colleen walks on alone toward town.

EXT. CLINIC - DAY TWO

Mike is coming back from the telegraph office, carrying a package, as Colleen arrives from school.

COLLEEN

Dr. Mike.

MIKE

Colleen. You're just in time to help me unpack this shipment.

COLLEEN

I was wonderin' ...

Mike stops at the door, turns to face Colleen.

COLLEEN

We got a test tomorrow, and Becky wants me to help her study. She's nearly flunkin' history.

MIKE

Is that so?

COLLEEN

Would it be all right if I went to her house now?

MIKE

Yes, of course.

COLLEEN

I'll be home in time for supper.

MIKE

See you then.

Mike walks into the clinic. Colleen waits a beat, then turns and heads out of town.

INT. CLINIC - DAY TWO

Mike finishes putting the medicines away. She walks to the window, day dreaming.

INSERT SHOT: SULLY REMOVING HER SHOE.

BACK TO SCENE

She goes to her desk, picks up a rose from a vase. Takes in the luxuriant fragrance.

INSERT SHOT: SULLY KISSES HER FOOT.

BACK TO SCENE

She looks about the clinic. It's quiet -- the middle of the day. She's overtaken with longing. She shakes her head and smiles, this is ridiculous. But then she decides, it's not ridiculous -- and walks out the door.

EXT. STREET - DAY TWO

Mike walks toward the General Store, searching the street. She spots Preston.

MIKE

Mr. Lodge. Have you seen Sully?

PRESTON

Not today. Why?

MIKE

Nothing important, really. Thank you.

She continues on. Spots Horace.

MIKE

Horace, do you know where Sully is?

HORACE

I think I saw him, not too long ago.

MIKE

Where?

HORACE

Mmm. Maybe the livery?

MIKE

Thank you.

She quickens her pace and as she's about to turn the corner, she runs into Becky.

BECKY

Hey, Dr. Mike.

MIKE

Becky.

BECKY

Is Colleen at the clinic?

MIKE (suddenly focuses)

I thought she was going to your house.

BECKY

She was?

MIKE

She said you wanted to study.

BECKY (flustered, tries to cover)

Oh. Well ... Yeah. I musta got mixed up.

MIKE (puzzled)

You mean you haven't

BECKY

She's probably at my house right now.

Then Mike spots Sully, with Wolf, coming from the livery. She's so eager to see him that she lets the Colleen matter slide. Becky is relieved and walks on.

MIKE

Sully!

His face lights up when he sees her. They move toward each other and hug.

SULLY

Hey. Where ya heading'?

MIKE

I was looking for you, actually.

SULLY

Why's that?

MIKE

I was ... I just felt ... I know it's only been a few hours, but ... I missed you.

SULLY (smiles)

Glad you found me.

He puts his arm around her and leads her over to the wagon.

EXT. CREEK - DAY TWO

Colleen sits beside the creek with the gang -- Alice, Jared, Richard and about six other girls and boys. They're playing Truth or Consequences. Alice spins an old bottle and it lands on Jared. The others whistle and cheer.

ALICE:

**Here's your question. What's the one thing you like best about ... (searches the group)
Colleen?**

JARED

Her hair.

RICHARD

You're lyin'.

JARED

No, I'm not. She's got real pretty hair.

ALICE

Come on. The one thing you like best of all.

JARED

All right. It's her ... (boobs) ... her brains.

The others shake their heads and laugh. Colleen looks embarrassed.

ALICE

How many think he's tellin' the truth?

Nobody raises a hand.

RICHARD

Give him a consequence.

ALICE (thinks a moment)

Jump and croak like a frog -- all the way to that tree.

The others laugh and make room for Jared. He crouches, knees out, weight on his arms, and begins to hop like a frog.

JARED

Rivet. Rivet. Rivet.

Kids start to laugh and hoot.

RICHARD

Can't you jump any higher?

Jared jumps higher and farther -- all the way to the tree. Then bounds to his feet, comes back and picks up the bottle.

JARED

My turn.

He spins it -- the bottle lands on Colleen. Kids whistle and cry out. She blushes.

JARED

What's the most embarrassin' thing that's ever happened to you?

Colleen doesn't answer for a beat.

COLLEEN

Um ... I can't think of anything right now.

ALICE

Ya got to.

Colleen considers several incidents but can't bring herself to relate them

COLLEEN

Well ... there was ... (beat) I'll take the consequence.

The kids cry out and make noises.

JARED

Go for a swim.

COLLEEN

Now?

RICHARD

Right now.

COLLEEN

I gotta be gettin' home soon .. Please ...

But Jared and Richard take her by the arms, pull her down the bank and swing her into the creek. Colleen comes up sputtering, then starts to laugh. Richard pushes Jared in after Colleen. Before long, several others are in the creek, splashing each other and laughing.

INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY TWO

Mike and Sully come in the door and Sully starts to bolt it closed.

MIKE

No need for that.

SULLY

Just to be safe.

MIKE

Brian's playing baseball with some friends. Colleen is studying with Becky. No one will be back for hours.

Sully decides not to bolt the door, and takes her over to the fireplace.

SULLY

Let's build a fire.

MIKE

In the middle of the day?

SULLY

My favorite time ... for a fire.

He gets it going. Mike sits down. Sully joins her.

MIKE

I've never done anything like this. Just dropping everything on the spur of the moment ... to ...

SULLY

Be with your husband.

He takes her hand and kisses her fingers.

MIKE

Oh, Sully. I love being with you, more than I ever imagined.

SULLY

Not more than I love bein' with you.

MIKE

All those years I was content with my life. Work. The children. I didn't know what I was missing ...

SULLY

You're like the late bloomin' rose, that opens in September. It's the most beautiful, and the most intoxicatin'.

He takes her in his arms, and they slide down in front of the fire.

We HEAR a horse ride up, and after a few beats, the front door opens. Sully and Mike startle.

MIKE

Matthew!

Matthew walks in, stops in embarrassment.

MATTHEW

Oh, sorry. I thought you were ... at the clinic ...

MIKE (straightens up)

That's all right. We were ...

MATTHEW

I was just gonna borrow some tools. (to Sully) Your saw? You wouldn't mind?

SULLY

Nope. It's in the barn.

He and Matthew go out the door and walk to the barn. Mike adjusts her blouse, straightens her hair. Goes to the kitchen, builds a fire in the stove and puts up water for coffee.

Colleen comes in soaking wet and tries to sneak quickly up the stairs before Mike can spot her. But just as she reaches the top of the stairs, Mike hears her and turns.

MIKE

Colleen?

COLLEEN

I'll be down in a minute.

She disappears into her room.

Mike thinks a beat. Then goes up after her.

INT. COLLEEN'S ROOM - DAY TWO

Colleen is changing into dry clothes when Mike knocks, then walks in.

MIKE (gently)

Colleen, where've you been? How did you get so wet?

COLLEEN

I ... fell ... in the creek.

MIKE

The creek? What were you doing there?

Colleen doesn't answer.

MIKE

Who were you with?

COLLEEN

I don't wanna talk about it.

MIKE

You can tell me ...

COLLEEN

It's private.

MIKE

I won't be angry ..

COLLEEN

I need privacy. Just like you and Sully.

MIKE

That's different. We're married.

COLLEEN

Don't you trust me?

MIKE

I'd like to, but I'm afraid you lied to me today.

COLLEEN

I didn't lie.

MIKE

You weren't with Becky. I saw her in town.

COLLEEN

I was gonna go study with her, but I met up with Alice and Jared and those kids ...

MIKE

But ... why couldn't you tell me?

COLLEEN

I don't know. Could ya please let me finish gettin' changed?

Mike hesitates, frustrated. Then she turns and leaves the room.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

EXT TOWN - DAY THREE

Colleen and Becky are walking into town, carrying baskets to pick and press flowers. In front of the bank, they see Alice, Jared, Richard and the gang. They wave, and Alice calls out.

ALICE

Hey Colleen, Becky.

JARED (waves them over)

Come here. I want ya to see somethin'.

As Becky and Colleen start walking over to the group, Mike walks out of the clinic on her way to the telegraph office. She spots Colleen and calls to her.

MIKE

Colleen!

COLLEEN (to friends)

Be right back,

She walks toward Mike.

MIKE

Would you watch the clinic? I'm just going to post these letters.

COLLEEN

You said you didn't need me today.

MIKE

I did?

COLLEEN

I could have a free afternoon.

MIKE

Well, if that's what you'd like ...

COLLEEN

Mmm hmm.

Colleen waves and turns back to join the group. Mike stares at her a beat, then walks off in the opposite direction.

COLLEEN (to kids)

What're you doin'?

JARED

Have ya ever noticed how folks look when they walk outta the bank?

COLLEEN

No.

Becky shakes her head no.

JARED

Nervous. They either got money in their pockets and that makes 'em nervous, or they left it all in the bank and that makes 'em nervous. Sometimes they drop coins.

RICHARD

Last two did.

ALICE

Shhh.

The door to the bank opens. A man comes out, adjusts his hat, looks about and then crosses toward the saloon. When he's out of earshot ...

COLLEEN

He didn't seem nervous.

BECKY

Didn't drop anything.

ALICE

Look!

THEIR POV

The man trips on the steps to the saloon and falls against the post.

BACK TO SCENE

The kids crack up laughing. Then the bank door opens and they quiet down. Dorothy walks out, followed by Preston.

PRESTON

Always a pleasure, Miss Dorothy.

DOROTHY

Thank you, Mr. Lodge. Good day.

Preston watches form the door as Dorothy walks away. She fiddles with her pocket book and, sure enough, a coin drops out.

The kids nudge each other. Jared nonchalantly, walks up to it, squats down and puts his hand on it when ...

A shiny pump steps on his hand. Jared looks up. It's Preston.

PRESTON

I'll take that, thank you.

JARED

I was gonna give it back.

PRESTON

Of course you were.

Kids giggle. Colleen and Becky look at each other. Colleen knows they're being naughty, but she's sort of enjoying it.

JARED

I was just pickin' it up for the lady.

PRESTON

I'll save you the trouble. Miss Dorothy!

She turns around, Preston holds up the coin, and she comes back and retrieves it.

DOROTHY

Thank you.

When she leaves, Preston turns to the kids.

PRESTON

Why don't you move along now?

ALICE

It's comfortable here. Nice and shady.

PRESTON

I don't think my customers are very comfortable, when you're all entertaining yourselves at their expense. So please, find a better place to amuse yourselves.

The kids reluctantly stand and start easing off down the street.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THREE

Richard holds up an apple, shines it on his sleeve and hands it to Colleen. With a laugh, she takes it. Jared tries to juggle oranges. Alice and Becky laugh. Loren comes out of the store.

LOREN

Put those down. Unless you're plannin' on buyin' em.

JARED

Sure, I'll take the oranges (digs n his pocket). Seems like I forgot my money.

LOREN

Put all that fruit back, and get along now. Or I'll charge it to your pa's bill.

The kids put the fruit back and move on.

EXT. LIVERY - DAY THREE

The kids swarm around Robert E.

ROBERT E

Why do you want to rent a wagon?

ALICE

For a hay ride. We've done it before.

ROBERT E

Whose wagon did ya use?

JARED

My pa's.

RICHARD

But we wanna do it ourselves this time.

JARED

More fun.

ALICE

We'll pay ya, we got enough money.

Alice nudges Colleen.

COLLEEN

Please? We'll be careful, and we'll take good care of it.

ROBERT E

Does Dr. Mike know bout this?

COLLEEN

I haven't mentioned it yet.

ROBERT E

I'm sorry. But unless one of your folks is goin' along, I can't let ya have it.

With groans of disappointment, the kids turn away.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY THREE

The quilting circle is meeting out in the meadow. Mike, Dorothy, Myra, Grace and four other ladies sit around the frame, stitching.

DOROTHY

Colleen's gettin' so pretty. She always was, but she's startin' to look more like a young lady.

MIKE

She's definitely changing. It used to be easy for us to talk. Now, it seems she doesn't want to.

DOROTHY

She's at that age. Tryin' to strike out on her own. I went through it with my girls. It's hard to bear. But I know one thing: if you keep the reins too tight, they'll struggle and break 'em. But if you loosen em a little, they'll go along all right.

GRACE

Your family's been changin', too. I best she doesn't get as much of your attention as she used to.

MIKE

I'm afraid that's true. Sully and I have been rather absorbed with each other.

MYRA

There's a shine in your eyes.

GRACE

Your skin kinda glows.

DOROTHY

Bein' married clearly agrees with you.

MIKE

I'm surprised actually. I didn't have the impression that it agreed with my mother.

GRACE

How's that?

MIKE

She called it the "wifely duty." At first, I was inclined to agree, but ... things improved.

GRACE

It just gets better.

MIKE

Do you think most women find it ... agreeable?

GRACE

Sure.

MYRA

If they're in love, they do.

DOROTHY

I think women find it even more agreeable than men do. "Course the men don't want to know that. It would vex em.

The women laugh.

GRACE

You're still in the honeymoon stage. Enjoy it, because it ain't gonna last forever.

DOROTHY

I don't know bout that. It doesn't have to end.

MYRA

No, but it gets different, that's all. It sorta gets to be part of the day's routine. Like ... brushin' your teeth.

Mike shakes her head, and everyone laughs, as they continue stitching.

INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT THREE

Mike and Colleen sit at the table. Mike is helping Colleen with an essay she wrote for school.

MIKE

It's very good.

COLLEEN

Thanks.

MIKE

But I think you could make your opinions a little clearer.

COLLEEN

How do you mean?

MIKE

I'm not sure what you felt about this play. Did it inspire you, make you angry, or leave you completely unmoved?

COLLEEN

I don't have to say that. The Reverend didn't ask us to.

MIKE

But it would make your essay stronger.

COLLEEN (looks at essay)

I think it's all right. I'm gonna turn it in like this.

MIKE

That would be fine, I'm sure. But I think you could do better.

COLLEEN

It's good enough.

Colleen gathers her things, stands up and leaves the table.

EXT. BARN - DAY FOUR

Colleen, Becky, Alice, Jared and Richard are taking turns jumping off a barn onto a haystack. Alice and Jared are in the hay. Richard is balanced on the roof. He jumps, and everybody laughs and rolls about. Jared starts coaxing Colleen onto the roof.

COLLEEN

I'm scared a' heights.

JARED

It ain't that high. Come on, you'll like it.

COLLEEN

I'll just watch you.

Matthew rides up on his horse. No one spots him at first. He holds back, watching the young people.

JARED

You won't get hurt. I swear.

BECKY

You'll land real soft.

ALICE

I wanna do it again.

Colleen is now at the top, looking down.

COLLEEN

I can't.

JARED

Sure ya can. We'll go together.

He takes her hand and they jump. Matthew starts to call out, but it's too late. Colleen and Jared lands, amid much laughter and horseplay.

JARED

Was that fun?

COLLEEN

Sort of. Yeah!

MATTHEW (getting off horse)

Colleen.

She spots her brother. Scrambles down the haystack and goes to talk with him.

COLLEEN

What're you doin' here?

MATTHEW

Dr. Mike asked me to find ya.

COLLEEN

Why?

MATTHEW

She didn't know where you were. You didn't say ...

COLLEEN

Do I have to tell her what I'm doin' every minute? (points to kids). Nobody else's folks are worryin'.

MATTHEW (indicates hayloft)

This ain't real safe.

COLLEEN (frustrated)

Matthew ...

MATTHEW

I used to do things like this. Fact, I probably did worse.

COLLEEN

We're just havin' fun.

MATTHEW

I know. Ya think you'll never get hurt. But ya can ...

COLLEEN

I won't get hurt.

MATTHEW

Just because everybody's doin' it doesn't mean ya gotta go along.

COLLEEN

Would ya tell Ma we went ... for a walk? Please? I'd appreciate it.

MATTHEW

Be careful, Colleen.

COLLEEN

Thanks.

She turns and walks back to the hayloft, where the kids are now playing tag.

SULLY AND MIKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT FOUR

Mike is alone, getting ready for bed, brushing her hair. She keeps glancing anxiously at a time piece. Puts down the hairbrush, stands and turns toward the bed. There's a hush, and then the door opens. It's Sully, in his buckskins. She goes to him.

SULLY

Sorry, it took longer than I thought, comin' back.

MIKE

That's all right.

SULLY

You weren't worried?

MIKE

No, not worried. But ... when you're not here now, I think about you without ceasing. It frightens me.

SULLY

Why?

MIKE

It seems all I want is to be with you.

SULLY

I'm here.

He kisses her, and there's such intense feeling. Mike pulls back.

MIKE

How can people say this is like brushing your teeth?

SULLY (smiles, joking)

It's just like that. Isn't it?

MIKE (laughing)

Let's see.

They melt into each other's arms.

INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY FIVE

Mike is putting breakfast on the table. Sully drinks coffee, with Wolf by his feet. Brian is spreading jam on his toast. Colleen is off by herself, curled in a chair, writing in her diary.

MIKE

Colleen, come and have some cereal.

Colleen closes her diary. Puts it in a safe place, and comes to the table.

MIKE (to Brian)

Did you et your essay back yet?

BRIAN (nods)

The Reverend liked it. But Colleen got the highest grade in the class.

MIKE

I'm proud of you both.

COLLEEN

That was the paper you said wasn't good enough.

MIKE

I said it was fine. I just thought you could do even better.

COLLEEN

The Reverend gave me an A.

MIKE

Well, I know how I feel when I've reached deep inside and worked my hardest. And that feeling is worth more than any grade.

COLLEEN

For you, maybe. But I'm not like you. I don't always want to work harder than everybody else. Sometimes I just want to get things done and go be with my friends. But you don't understand that.

MIKE

I understand ...

Colleen stands and gathers her books.

COLLEEN

Come on, Brian. Let's go or we'll be late.

BRIAN

Bye Ma. Sully.

MIKE

Do you have all your homework?

COLLEEN

Yes!

The kids scramble out the door, leaving Mike and Sully at the table. Mike stands and paces about the room.

MIKE

It seems I can't say anything right. I was simply trying to encourage her, to bring out her talent.

SULLY

You gave her somethin' to think about.

MIKE

But why is she turning against me? What have I done wrong?

SULLY

Nothin'.

MIKE

We were always so close.

SULLY

Maybe that's the problem.

MIKE

I beg your pardon?

SULLY

She's gotta step outta your shadow. And it's a tall shadow.

MIKE

I'm not aware she's in my shadow.

SULLY

Well, she is, just be bein' your daughter.

MIKE

So what am I to do?

SULLY

There's nothin' to do. Cept live through it. And be patient.

Mike shakes her head. Being patient has never been her long suit.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY FIVE

Brian is sitting on the porch, feeling lonely and sad. He picks up a stone and throws it, trying to hit a target, but his heart's not in it.

He hears the sound of horses approaching.

HIS POV

Mike and Sully ride up, looking happy and exhilarated. Mike pulls up just before Sully. Wolf follows. They dismount, tie their horses and walk, with their arms around each other, to the house. Their tone is playful, teasing.

MIKE

I won.



SULLY

No, ya didn't. You cheated.

MIKE

Well, only a little. (to Brian). Hello there.

Brian doesn't respond. Looks down.

SULLY

Hey, Brian. What cha doing'?

BRIAN

Nothin'.

MIKE

Where's Colleen?

BRIAN

Off with those kids.

MIKE

Oh, have you done your schoolwork?

BRIAN

Didn't have any.

SULLY

Somethin' wrong?

BRIAN

No.

MIKE

You don't look like your usual self. (kneels down to his level). Are you sad about something?

Brian shrugs.

MIKE (gently)

Are you feeling left out?

Brian shrugs.

MIKE

I can speak to Colleen ...

BRIAN

No. I don't want to be with those kids.

BRIAN

You don't want me along.

SULLY

Sure, we do.

BRIAN

You don't care 'bout us anymore.

MIKE

What makes you say that?

BRIAN

You're always off with the door closed.

Mike and Sully exchange a look.

MIKE

Brian, I know things are different, but one thing hasn't changed and will never change. We love you and want to be with you very much.

BRIAN

Don't seem like it.

SULLY

We do. Fact, there's a new baby deer in a thicket up by the oak trees. If we're real quiet, I bet we can get a look at it.

BRIAN

I don't care.

SULLY

She's real pretty. And she ain't scared of folks yet. She might even lick your hand.

BRIAN

No, she won't.

SULLY

She might. Let's walk up there and see.

BRIAN

Now?

MIKE

May I come too?

SULLY

That's up to Brian.

They look at Brian, who looks at them resistant. Then he breaks down and smiles.

BRIAN

Let's all go.

SULLY

Good!

Sully pulls him up, and with Brian in the middle, the three start walking toward the thicket.

EXT. FIELD - DAY FIVE

Colleen, Becky, Jared, Richard and the gang come up to a fenced field in which a bull stands grazing. Some of the kids hop on the fence and makes noises at the bull.

JARED

Let's cut across that field.

BECKY

Are ya crazy?

COLLEEN

That bull's mean. I hear he gored a rider that was chasin' him.

JARED

He can't see good. If we all run at once, we'll reach that fence and be over it before he figures out which way to charge.

BECKY (reluctant)

I'm gonna walk around.

ALICE

Come on, Becky. Ya gotta stick with us.

JARED

You'll be all right. I'll protect ya.

BECKY

Colleen?

JARED

You're game, ain't ya?

COLLEEN (considers)

Let's try it.

Jared boosts Becky up onto the fence, then Colleen, and gets up beside them.

JARED

Everybody ready? Let's go!

The kids jump off and start running across the field, yipping and hollering. The bull comes alert. The kids spread out, heading for the opposite fence. Jared runs alongside Colleen and Becky. The bull starts pawing, snorting and he looks mad. The first kid reaches the fence and jumps over it. The bull starts to run. Other kids make it to the fence. Jared, Colleen and Becky are the last.

JARED

Come on! Faster! We're almost there.

Colleen springs alongside Jared and makes the fence, but Becky trips and falls.

BECKY

Help!

The bull is headed for her. She gets up but her legs give way in fear.

COLLEEN

Jared!

Jared and Richard run back, grab Becky's arms and pull her back to the fence where the other kids grab her and pull her over, just in time. The bull comes charging up to the fence. The kids retreat, laughing and squealing. But Becky is in tears.

COLLEEN

It's all right. You're safe now.

JARED

Ya did good.

BECKY

I didn't want to do that!

COLLEEN (tries to calm her)

Becky, just sit down and catch your breath. It's over.

BECKY

I'm goin' home.

ALICE

Come on, Becky, don't be a baby.

But she gets to her feet and starts hurrying off. Colleen starts to go after her, but Jared takes her arm.

COLLEEN

Becky!

JARED

Let her go.

COLLEEN

She could've been hurt bad.

RICHARD

But she wasn't.

JARED

Becky's one of those girls who's got no spunk, so she's gonna miss out on lots of things. She's not like you, Colleen. You got fire in ya.

RICHARD

I bet Colleen'd like the races.

ALICE (protests)

Richard ...

JARED

It's all right to tell her. We can trust her.

COLLEEN

Tell me what?

No one speaks for a moment.

JARED

We're havin' some races tomorrow night.

ALICE

Ya gotta swear ya won't tell nobody.

RICHARD

Chicken races. We're gonna run our horses up to a cliff and see who can get the closest to the edge before turnin' away.

COLLEEN

But why? You could fall, specially at night.

JARED

Horses don't want to fall.

COLLEEN

But they do.

JARED

Once in a while. That's what makes it fun.

COLLEEN

I don't know ...

RICHARD

Don't worry. The girls ain't racin'. Just the boys.

COLLEEN

I don't think I can come. Dr. Mike ...

RICHARD

Don't tell her.

JARED

Just sneak off.

COLLEEN

How?

JARED

You're smart. You'll think of somethin'.

Colleen nods, both intrigued and apprehensive.

INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY SIX

The kids have left for school and Mike is gather laundry in a basket. She goes into Colleen's room, pulls the sheets off the bed. Goes to the dresser to pick up some garments and spots Colleen's diary, open and face down. Mike picks it up, then quickly places it down. She starts out of the room. Stops at the door. Thinks a moment. The temptation is too great. She puts down the laundry basket, walks up to the diary, gingerly picks it up and starts reading.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY SIX

Sully is grooming his horse, getting ready to leave. Wolf is with him. Mike is pacing.

MIKE

They're going to race their horses over a cliff!

SULLY

You shouldn't 've snooped.

MIKE

I wasn't snooping. It was lying there open.

SULLY

Did you pick it up?

MIKE

Well, yes.

SULLY

A diary's private.

MIKE

This is an extreme situation. I don't care if she gets angry.

SULLY

You don't even know if it's true. It might be somethin' she was just writin'.

MIKE

It's true.

SULLY

Ya better make sure.

EXT. ROAD - DAY SIX

Colleen and Becky are walking home from school.

COLLEEN

I got a funny feelin' bout these races.

BECKY

What kind of feelin'?

COLLEEN

Somethin' ... I ain't sure what, but somethin's gonna happen. I don't want to go.

BECKY

Then don't.

COLLEEN

What'll I say?

BECKY

The truth.

COLLEEN

That I'm chicken?

BECKY

That ya think somebody's gonna get hurt.

COLLEEN

But I ain't sure.

BECKY

I wish I'd said that about the bull, stead of runnin' with the others.

COLLEEN

They'll think I'm a baby. I got no fire in me.

BECKY

What do you care? None of that's true.

Colleen walks on, considering her options, and Becky's words.

INT. COLLEEN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT SIX

Colleen is lying on her bed, writing in her diary. Mike knocks.

COLLEEN

Come in.

Mike walks in the room and sits on the edge of the bed.

MIKE

Colleen ... it's come to my attention that there're going to be some races ...

COLLEEN

Races?

MIKE

Very dangerous ones. And some of your friends will be taking part.

COLLEEN

Who told you that?

MIKE

It doesn't matter. Things have a way of getting around.

COLLEEN

I don't know what you're talkin' about.

MIKE

I hope that's true, and if it is, please forgive me. But I think you do know.

COLLEEN

What makes you say that?

MIKE (dodging the question)

I don't believe these races should take place. I have no power over your friends, but I do have authority over you, and I want this to be clear. You are not to go.

Colleen stares at her, with fury.

MIKE

Do you understand that?

COLLEEN (hard)

Yes.

Mike stands and leaves the room. Colleen stares after her.

INT. MIKE AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT SIX

Sully's asleep when Mike walks in. She goes to the bed and touches him, gently.

MIKE

Sully?

SULLY

Hmmm?

MIKE

Were you sleeping? I'm sorry.

SULLY

That's all right. What's goin' on?

MIKE (sighs)

Oh ... I don't know ... I was very stern with Colleen just now.

SULLY (yawns)

Sometimes ya gotta be.

He wakens a little more, looks at her.

SULLY

Looks like you need holdin'. C'mere.

Mike nestles gratefully into his arms.

MIKE

I do.

He holds her tight, strokes her hair or rubs her neck.

SULLY

It's gonna be all right.

MIKE

Oh, Sully! It's so comforting to have you here.

SULLY

Whenever you need holdin', or anything', just ask.

The comforting embrace starts to get more romantic.

MIKE

You don't mind?

SULLY

Mind?

MIKE

Well, I was taught that when it comes to ... certain matters, the woman shouldn't ask. She should wait for the man.

SULLY

You were taught a lot of things you never paid no attention to.

MIKE

So you truly believe ... it's all right?

SULLY

Truly. You know what the Cheyenne ask a young man who's just taken a wife?

MIKE

What?

"Does she show enthusiasm?" It's one of the finest things in a woman.

As if to prove his point, he pulls her to him and they roll about the bed, playfully.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT SIX

Colleen opens her window and sneaks out of the house.

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT SIX

Colleen is with Alice, Jared, Richard and several other kids for the races. By the light of torches, we see Jared and Richard mount up and walk their horses to the starting line. Alice is the starter. Colleen is both excited and frightened.

ALICE

Remember. First one to turn back is chicken. Last one to turn away is the winner. Ya ready?

JARED/RICHARD

Ready.

COLLEEN

Wait ...

ALICE

Go!

The boys take off and race toward the edge of the cliff.

Colleen jumps to her feet as do the others. They cheer and ad lib cries of encouragement.

ALICE

Go on Richard. Faster.

COLLEEN

Turn, please ..

ANGLE - the riders are getting closer, closer to the edge.

ANGLE - Colleen is terrified.

COLLEEN

Turn. Jared, turn! Now!

BACK TO SCENE

It's neck and neck, who's going to blink first? At the last second, Richard turns his horse and then Jared whips his horse around, but the turn is so abrupt that Jared goes flying through the air and lands badly on the rocky ground. He gives a terrible scream.

CLOSE ON COLLEEN - HORRIFIED.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

EXT. OLD HOMESTEAD (MATTHEW'S) - NIGHT SIX

Colleen bang on the door.

COLLEEN

Matthew!

After a beat, he opens, in his long johns.

MATTHEW

Colleen. What're you doin' out ...

COLLEEN

There's been an accident. Jared -- he's hurt bad.

MATTHEW

Where?

COLLEEN

Big Horn bluff. He can't walk. Ya gotta help us!

MATTHEW

All right. Take it easy. We'll get Dr. Mike ...

COLLEEN

No!

MATTHEW

Why not?

COLLEEN

I wasn't 'sposed to be there. Please, can you hitch up your wagon?

MATTHEW

If somebody's hurt, we need Dr. Mike.

COLLEEN

She told me not to go. I don't know what she'll do.

MATTHEW

She'll help Jared. Are there other kids out there?

COLLEEN

Yeah.

MATTHEW

Anybody else hurt?

COLLEEN

No. But I'm scared. When she finds out ...

MATTHEW

Look. I'll tell Dr. Mike. All right? You take the wagon back to the bluff. Have the kids help you bring Jared to the clinic.

COLLEEN

Matthew ...

MATTHEW

It's gonna be all right. Come on ...

And throwing on a jacket, he leads Colleen to the barn.

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT SIX

Matthew and Sully carry Jared into the clinic and put him on the table, directed by Mike. She immediately starts examining him. Colleen comes to the door and watches anxiously. Jared is covered with blood from cuts and gashes. His right arm is hanging strangely. Mike probes his shoulder, then picks up the arm and tries to move it. He cries out.

MIKE

I'm afraid you've dislocated your shoulder. And you've got some bad gashes ... they'll need to be stitched.

COLLEEN (quietly)

Can I help?

Mike looks at her, nods.

MIKE

Let's stop the bleeding, then we'll set the shoulder.

Colleen goes to the cupboard and brings out supplies. The two women lapse back into the wordless teamwork they've used so often. Colleen applies pressure to control the bleeding, then cleans the wounds, as Mike continues examining Jared.

MIKE

Can you bend your ankle?

He does, with a groan.

MIKE

The other one? (he does). Now lift your leg off the table. Just a little. (he does.) The other. (he does). You're lucky, Jared. Nothing seems to be broken. It's going to hurt when I set your shoulder, but it will only take a few seconds. Can you tolerate it? Otherwise we'll give you chloroform.

JARED

I'm all right.

MIKE

Sully, Matthew, I need you to hold him steady.

Mike takes off her shoe.

COLLEEN

What're ya doin'?

MIKE

The best way to realign the joint is to put your heel against his armpit.

She sits down on the table and extends her foot, so her heel is in Jared's armpit.

MIKE

Then you grasp the forearm ... (takes hold of his arm) Colleen, would you steady his other shoulder?

Colleen puts her palms on Jared's shoulder, holding it down.

MIKE

Ready, everyone?

They murmur yes.

MIKE

Jared, take a deep breath.

He does, and Mike starts to pull his arm. Steadily, with all the force she has, until the joint pops back into place. Jared lets out a groan.

MIKE

It's done.

She brings his arm up and folds it across his chest.

MIKE

We'll make you a sling. You're going to have to keep the arm quiet for about five weeks so the ligaments can heal. Colleen, would you bring the suturing thread?

Colleen gets the needles and thread.

MIKE

Why don't you do the leg. I'll do the shoulder.

Colleen and Mike set to work, sewing up the cuts. Sully and Matthew decide to leave them to their work and move outside.

HOLD ON MIKE AND COLLEEN, working together, smoothly, efficiently.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. CLINIC - DAY SEVEN

The sun has just risen. A small crowd has gathered to wait outside. The kids, Jared's parents, Sully, Matthew, a few other townsfolk.

Colleen opens the door and steps outside.

COLLEEN

We're finished now. He's gonna be all right.

The crowd murmurs sounds of relief.

COLLEEN (to Jared's parents)

He's restin' upstairs. You can take him home soon.

The parents move into the clinic and the others beginning to disperse.

MATTHEW

Guess I'll be gettin' to work.

COLLEEN

Thanks Matthew.

You were lucky.

COLLEEN

I know.

She hugs Matthew, and he starts off. Sully comes up to Colleen.

SULLY

Lemme take ya home.

COLLEEN

But ... I have school.

SULLY

You don't have to go, if you're tired.

COLLEEN

No, I want to.

SULLY

Then I'll drive ya there.

He guides her to the wagon.

SULLY

You're gonna have to talk to her.

COLLEEN

She's gotta be so mad.

SULLY

Might as well face it and get it over with.

COLLEEN

After school.

She climbs into the wagon.

INT. CLINIC - RECOVERY ROOM - DAY SEVEN

Jared has left with his parents, and Mike is straightening up the room. She's exhausted. Dorothy appears in the doorway.

DOROTHY

Michaela, there you are.

MIKE

Dorothy?

DOROTHY

I had an appointment for you to check me this morning'.

MIKE

You did?

DOROTHY

We can do it some other time

MIKE

No, I remember now.

DOROTHY

You've been up most of the night. You look bone tired.

MIKE

I'll be fine. I'll just wash my face.

DOROTHY

Why don't you lie down? Come on, you've had quite a time. There.

Dorothy coaxes Mike to lie down on the bed, and puts a quilt over her. Then she sits beside her. Mike sighs, relieved to be resting.

DOROTHY

I don't know what got into those young folks. Did you know Colleen was going?

MIKE

I expressly told her not to. She snuck out.

DOROTHY

That's just not like her.

MIKE

I'm afraid I'm to blame, partly. Sully and I were ... by ourselves.

DOROTHY

Well, you're newlyweds.

MIKE

But the others are suffering. Brian feels left out, he thinks we don't care about him. Colleen's been lying and sneaking -- things she never did before.

DOROTHY

You're going through an adjustment, that's all. But there's enough love to go around.

MIKE (softly)

Maybe there's something wrong with me.

DOROTHY

Wrong?

MIKE

The more I'm with Sully, the more I want to be. Sometimes, it's difficult to concentrate on anything else. I don't know if this is ... natural.

DOROTHY

Course it's natural.

MIKE

But where will it lead? Will it keep getting stronger until it harms us all?

DOROTHY

Michaela, you're joinin' together with a man you love -- body and soul. That's why the Almighty brought you together. There's a time for everything, and this is the time for you to find joy with each other. Don't be afraid. The flame's burnin' high, but it's a sacred flame.

MIKE

Think so?

DOROTHY

I know so.

Dorothy pats her reassuringly, and Mike's eyes beginning to close as she surrenders to sleep.

INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY SEVEN

Mike is in a chair, reading, when Colleen comes in from school. Colleen is cowed, bracing for punishment.

MIKE

Hello, Colleen.

COLLEEN

Ma.

MIKE

You must be tired. Would you like to take a nap before supper? Or perhaps a hot bath?

COLLEEN

I know you're angry with me.

MIKE

Not now.

COLLEEN (puzzled)

But ... last night?

MIKE (gently)

You made a decision -- and it proved unwise. I've made my share of decisions like that. I'm afraid that's how we learn.

COLLEEN

What are you sayin'?

MIKE

I'm saying that I think you're old enough to decide things on your own. Old enough to be trusted. I've taught you what I can, so has Sully. Now it's up to you.

COLLEEN

Oh, Ma! I only went because you told me not to.

MIKE

Mmm.

COLLEEN

I knew it wasn't right. But I didn't listen to my own judgement.

MIKE

Then you've learned something very important.

COLLEEN

Will you forgive me?

MIKE

Yes, of course. But there's something else I must tell you.

COLLEEN

What's that?

MIKE

When I was gathering laundry from your room ... I read your diary.

COLLEEN

That's how you knew about the races.

MIKE

It was wrong. I'm not very proud of myself.

COLLEEN

That's all right Ma.

Colleen goes to Mike and they hug.

COLLEEN

I love you.

MIKE

I know you do. And I love you.

They hold each other, grateful to have peace and harmony restored.

INT. MIKE AND SULLY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT SEVEN

Mike is sewing, mending clothes, when Sully walks in.

MIKE

Did you read him his book?

SULLY

A whole chapter. Put him right to sleep.

MIKE

It always does.

SULLY

Almost fell asleep myself. Been a long day. (takes off his shoes). I don't know bout you, but I could use some holdin'.

MIKE

Come here.

He goes to her and she hugs him tightly.

SULLY

You don't mind my askin', do ya?

MIKE

Mind? I appreciate your enthusiasm.

SULLY

Good. Cause the best is yet to come.

He leans over and blows out the lamp.

FADE OUT

THE END

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