

# The Secret

Written by Toni Graphia

Directed by Jerry London

Rev. Blue, April 6, 1993

## Cast List


**MICHAELA QUINN**  
**BYRON SULLY**  
**MATTHEW COOPER**  
**COLLEEN COOPER**  
**BRIAN COOPER**  
**LOREN BRAY**  
**OLIVE**  
**JAKE SLICKER**  
**HORACE**  
**MYRA**  
**HANK**  
**ROBERT E**  
**GRACE**  
**THE REVEREND**  
**ZACK**  
**ALICE**  
**MISSY**  
**BOY**  
**2 DRUNK COWBOYS\***

**WOLF**

**TOWNSFOLK, SCHOOLKIDS, RUBY JOHNSON'S CORPSE\***

## Set List

**INTERIORS: RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN\***



**CLINIC  
GENERAL STORE  
HOMESTEAD  
BARBERSHOP  
SCHOOL  
TELEGRAPH OFFICE  
SALOON  
BACK ROOM OF SALOON**



**EXTERIORS: COUNTRY ROAD  
GRAVEYARD  
RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN\*  
GENERAL STORE  
CLINIC  
SCHOOLYARD  
TELEGRAPH OFFICE  
SALOON  
HOMESTEAD**

**TEASER**

**FADE IN:**

**1 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY - ONE**




**MIKE and SULLY ride in the wagon, medical supplies piled in the back. The air is still crisp. The two of them bundled up. Mike's at the reins. Sully sighs, frustrated. Mike senses he wants to say something.**

**MIKE  
What?**

**SULLY  
Nothin'.**



**MIKE  
Tell me.**



**SULLY**  
Well... Your drivin'.

**MIKE**  
What's wrong with my driving?

**SULLY**  
You could give the horses more rein.

**MIKE**  
Are you saying I'm driving too slow?

**SULLY**  
No, just that you could let them go at their own pace. If you wanted to.

**MIKE**  
I don't.

**SULLY**  
Figures. You're not a woman that likes to be told. I knew that the first time I saw you.

Mike throws it back at him.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**1 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**  
When was the first time you saw me?  
(off his look)

You don't remember.

Sully looks at her curiously. Surprised by her interest.

**SULLY**  
You were face down in the mud.

**MIKE**  
(smiling)  
I'd forgotten that.

**SULLY**  
You'd hardly talk to me.

**MIKE**  
I didn't know you.

**SULLY**  
You do now.

A look between them. An unexpected moment of intimacy. Sully changes the subject.

**SULLY**  
It's nice of you to make these trips out to the reservation.

**MIKE**  
I'm not being nice, I'm doing my job. It's what a doctor does.

**SULLY**  
Not every doctor.

They come to a turn off in the road. Mike pulls the horses up and slows down.

**MIKE**  
Would you mind if we stopped to check on Ruby Johnson? It's out of the way, but...

**SULLY**  
I don't mind.

Mike steers the wagon down the side road --

**DISSOLVE TO:**

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**2 EXT. RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN - DAY - ONE**

**Mike stops the wagon in front of a run down cabin out in the middle of nowhere. The front door is ajar.**

**MIKE**  
**Ruby...?**

**No response. Sully pulls Mike aside and goes in first --**

**3 INT. RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS**

**Sully enters and looks around, followed by Mike.**

**MIKE**  
**Miss Ruby?**

**No answer. Mike looks around and sees the old woman laying on the floor. Mike rushes to her side. Wants to do something to help. But it's too late. She looks up at Sully, who tries to comfort Mike.**

**SULLY**  
**(simply)**  
**It was her time.**

**Mike gets up and looks around in despair.**

**MIKE**  
**How sad that she lived so alone. So far out here. She had no one.**

**Sully gets a blanket and wraps it around the old woman.**

**MIKE**  
**I just wish there was something I could do for her.**

**SULLY**  
**There is.**  
**(beat)**  
**You can get her nicest dress.**

**Sully carries the body outside as Mike goes to the closet. She opens it and gazes for a beat at the small array of modest dresses hanging there. Suddenly, she hears a RUSTLE. She jumps back, startled. The dresses waver and part as something moves behind them. She gasps as she catches a glimpse of --**

#### **4 A YOUNG BOY**

of about 12 hiding there. His hair is matted, his face dirty, his clothes disheveled.

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#### **5 BACK ON MIKE**

shocked at what she's discovered. She pushes the dresses aside, trying to get a better view of him. But the boy, frightened, ducks and cowers deep into the corner.

#### **6 BACK ON THE DOOR**

where Sully comes back in and sees the two of them staring at each other in mutual wonder. As Mike shoots him a look and then gazes back at the terrified child...

**FADE OUT:**

**END OF TEASER**

#### **ACT ONE**

**FADE IN:**

#### **7 INT. CLINIC - DAY - ONE**

Sully, COLLEEN and BRIAN watch as Mike tries to coax the boy up onto the examining table.

**MIKE**

Sit right up here, that's it. Don't worry. I won't hurt you.

**She gently helps him up onto the table. He's shaking with fear. Mike takes a stethoscope and puts it to his chest.**

**MIKE**  
**This lets me listen to your heart...**

**She does.**

**MIKE**  
**Sounds pretty good in there.**  
**(then)**  
**Would you like to hear?**

**The boy doesn't answer, but she puts the earpiece up to his ear anyhow. The boy jumps a bit at the sound.**

**MIKE**  
**That's your heartbeat. Nice and strong.**

**She looks in her ophthalmoscope at his eyes.**

**MIKE**  
**(to Sully)**  
**He can see alright. And he can hear...**

**SULLY**  
**Can he talk?**

**MIKE**  
**(to boy)**  
**What's your name? Can you tell me?**

**No answer.**

**COLLEEN**  
**I don't think he understands you, Dr. Mike.**

**BRIAN**  
**Maybe he speaks Cheyenne.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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7 CONTINUED:

**COLLEEN**

Brian, he's no Cheyenne.

**MIKE**

Alright, open your mouth. Like this.

Mike shows him how and he opens up. She uses a spoon as a tongue depressor and looks down his throat. His eyes go wide, not understanding her actions. Yet staring at her face, a primitive trust strung delicately between them.

**MIKE**

His throat looks fine.

**COLLEEN**

What's wrong with him, Dr. Mike?

**MIKE**

I don't know exactly.

**BRIAN**

Maybe he's just sad about his ma dying.

**MIKE**

Miss Ruby was too old to be his mother, Brian.

**COLLEEN**

I didn't know Miss Ruby had any grandchildren.

**MIKE**

(to Sully)

I've been out to her place at least a dozen times. I never saw the boy once.

**SULLY**

Neither did I.

**MIKE**

I should have gone out there sooner. Who knows how long she was laying there sick? He must have been on his own for days.

Sully puts a hand on her shoulder to comfort her. Brian goes and stands next

to the boy.

**BRIAN**

Don't worry. Dr. Mike's the best doctor there is.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**7 CONTINUED: (2)**

The boy looks at Brian. Somehow, he seems comforted. Just then **ROBERT E** leans in the door.

**ROBERT E**

(gently)

Coffin's ready.

On the boy's face, confused. Afraid. Brian touches his arm gently.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**8 EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY - ONE**

Most of the town, including **LOREN, OLIVE, JAKE, HANK, HORACE, MYRA, GRACE** and **Robert E** are gathered around the crude gravesite. As **Mike** arrives from across the bridge with the strange looking child, heads turn to stare at him. Whispers ripple through the crowd. **Mike** marvels at the large turnout as she takes her place next to the grave, flanked by **Sully, Colleen, MATTHEW** and **Brian**. The **REVEREND** begins the service.

**REVEREND**

What the Lord says to us is sharper than the sharpest dagger, cutting swift and deep into our innermost thoughts, exposing us. There are no secrets from God. Nothing can be hidden from Him to whom we must account on judgement day.

**Mike** glances from face to face. An unspoken undercurrent passes among the

crowd. Mike wonders what it means. Knows there's more to this story. She puts her arm around the boy.

**REVEREND**

Ruby Johnson stands before Him. And He knows that she has followed His word. That she has loved her neighbor as she loved herself. That she took in the sheep. The one that was lost.

Mike looks around again, feeling the conspiracy of eyes. The boy stares at the grave, stunned. He doesn't cry. Even when the Reverend takes a handful of dirt and throws it on the pine coffin. The Reverend then hands another scoop of dirt to the boy who stands, unsure of what to do. He looks up to Mike who gives him a reassuring nod. As the boy tosses his dirt onto the coffin...

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**9 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY - ONE**

Mike strides into the post-funeral gathering which includes Loren, Olive, Jake, the Reverend, Horace and Hank.

**MIKE**

Will someone please tell me what's going on?

**LOREN**

What do you mean?

**MIKE**

All those looks out there, all that whispering.

**JAKE**

I didn't hear no whisperin'.


**MIKE**

Ruby Johnson lived six miles from town. I never saw any of you visit her once. I never even heard her name mentioned. Yet every one of you was at that funeral.

A beat. Looks are exchanged.

**OLIVE**

We all knew Ruby.



**MIKE**  
And the boy?

Olive takes a deep breath and finally admits --

**OLIVE**  
His name is Zack.

Mike reacts. Loren shakes his head in disapproval of Olive's revelation.

**MIKE**  
Why did everyone know about this except me?

**JAKE**  
You just got here.

**MIKE**  
I've been in this town nearly a year.

**JAKE**  
You're still more Boston than Colorado.

(CONTINUED)

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9 CONTINUED:

**MIKE**  
What does that have to do with it? Why all the secrecy?

Another beat. Should they tell her? Finally --

**OLIVE**  
He wasn't Ruby's grandchild. Fact is, he was no relation at all.

**MIKE**

**(surprised)**  
**Whose child is he?**

**A long beat. This is like pulling teeth.**

**REVEREND**  
**The woman who gave birth to him... his mother... worked at the saloon.**

**LOREN**  
**Wasn't no "mother." Was a whore.**

**JAKE**  
**Same as Ruby was.**

**Hank, whose been surprisingly silent, shoots him a look.**

**OLIVE**  
**He lived in the saloon with his ma until he was five. Then she took sick and died. That's when he went to live with Ruby.**

**MIKE**  
**Why did she hide him? Why didn't anyone ever mention it?**

**Mike looks around and since no one offers an answer, she directs it at Horace.**

**MIKE**  
**Horace?**

**HORACE**  
**We made a promise.**

**MIKE**  
**A promise?**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**9 CONTINUED: (2)**

**LOREN**

The boy's not right. That's plain as day. Something had to be done. So it was done. Quietly.

**REVEREND**

Miss Ruby was kind enough to take him in.

End of story. Mike reacts.

**MIKE**

What about the welfare of the boy? I found him locked away...

**LOREN**

Now hold on. He wasn't locked away...

**MIKE**

He was in a closet.

**JAKE**

He hid from strangers 'cause that's what he learned when he lived at the saloon.

He throws a look at Hank who finally speaks up.

**HANK**

Can't hardly conduct business with a kid standin' there gawkin'.

**MIKE**

I see. So it was either that, or the closet.

Mike shakes her head. Walks out.

**10 EXT. RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN - DAY - ONE**

Sully, Matthew and Brian are there, carrying the old woman's meager belongings out to the wagon.

**BRIAN**

What's gonna happen to this stuff?

**SULLY**

Give it to the church. The Reverend'll decide who needs it.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**10 CONTINUED:**

**MATTHEW**

**She didn't have much.**

**SULLY**

**No, she didn't.**

**Matthew comes out with a handful of papers.**

**MATTHEW**

**Here's a bunch of letters.**

**SULLY**

**Bring 'em. Dr. Mike'll want to see 'em.**

**BRIAN**

**Maybe she can find some family for Zack.**

**SULLY**

**Maybe.**

**Matthew goes back inside. Brian is quiet for a moment. Then --**

**BRIAN**

**He didn't even cry.**

**Sully looks at him.**

**BRIAN**

**We all cried when our ma died.**

**SULLY**

**Not everybody's the same.**

**BRIAN**

**Did you cry, Sully? When Abigail died.**

**A long beat.**

**SULLY**

Yes.

Brian looks compassionately at Sully, goes over and hugs him. Sully resists for a moment, then hugs him back. Matthew comes out with one last crate.

**MATTHEW**

That's all of it.

As Matthew hands it to Sully, a paper that's on top blows off across the grass in the yard. Brian goes after it. Catches it up from the drift of wind.

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**11 INSERT - PENCIL SKETCH**

of a band of horses running through clouds. It's strikingly good.

**12 BACK ON BRIAN**

who stares at it a long beat. He likes it. He rolls it up and slips it into his pocket.

Sully sees him, but Brian doesn't know he's watching. Matthew climbs back into the wagon, as Sully crosses over to where Brian stands in the doorway, looking into the now empty cabin.

**SULLY**

(gently)

We gotta go, Brian.

**BRIAN**

I'm just thinkin'.

**SULLY**

What're you thinkin'?

**BRIAN**

What if Dr. Mike hadn't told ma she'd take us?

**SULLY**

**But she did.**

**Sully pulls the cabin door closed, puts an arm around Brian and steers him back to the wagon...**

**13 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY - ONE**

**The crowd has dispersed now. Olive comes out, Mike close on her heels. She catches up to her as they walk back toward the church.**

**MIKE**

**Olive, I thought you, of all people, would have told me.**

**OLIVE**

**It just never came up.**

**Mike stares at her.**

**OLIVE**

**Contrary to what you may believe, this whole thing was not dreamed up to make you look like a fool.**

**MIKE**

**What does that mean?**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**13 CONTINUED:**

**OLIVE**

**What's really bothering you, Dr. Mike? The boy? Or the secret?**

**Olive has nailed her.**

**MIKE**

**This is my home now, too. But I'm still being treated like an outsider.**

**OLIVE**

**In a lot of ways, you still are.**

**MIKE**

**And I'll always be. Is that what you're saying?**

**OLIVE**

**I'm just saying these things take time.**

**We follow their gaze toward the graveyard. The boy is sitting all alone next to the grave like he never wants to leave.**

**MIKE**

**He doesn't understand what's happening.**

**OLIVE**

**Maybe that's a blessing.**

**MIKE**

**You don't believe that.**

**OLIVE**

**I saw Charlotte, right after she helped that whore give birth. She said something wasn't right with that boy from the start. But I could have told her that.**

**MIKE**

**How did you know?**

**OLIVE**

**Babies should be brought to this earth out of love. Not business.**

**MIKE**

**That's not the child's fault.**

**OLIVE**

**That's true. But it's him who's paying, ain't it?**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**13 CONTINUED: (2)**

**They look back over at Zack. He hasn't moved from the grave.**

## 14 INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT - ONE

Zack is seated at the dinner table with the rest of the family and Mike is trying valiantly to make him fit in.

**MIKE**

I made this roast beef especially for you, tonight, Zack.

She carves some and puts it on his plate. Matthew and Colleen try to be cordial.

**COLLEEN**

Dr. Mike serves some pretty good roast beef.

**MATTHEW**

(joking)

When Colleen cooks it for her.

A little chuckle from Mike. Zack watches the other kids start to eat, but he doesn't know how to use a knife and fork. He starts digging in with his hands. Matthew and Colleen try not to stare.

**MIKE**

(delicately)

Here...

(demonstrating)

Like this.

She tries to show him how to use the utensils. He fumbles as he tries to imitate her. Suddenly, there's a knock at the door. Zack reacts to it like a gunshot -- he ducks out of the chair and races to Colleen's alcove, dives deep into the corner. Mike is up and after him in a second.

**MIKE**

Zack, Zack... it's alright...

Sully comes in. He sees Mike coaxing Zack out of the corner of the alcove -- a frightened, lonely child in a unfamiliar world. Mike leads him, shaking, back to the table and sits him back down. She nods to Sully who sits down and joins them.

**MIKE**

(to Zack)

**Sully's our friend. He's just going to have dinner with us.**

**Brian passes a tray of biscuits to Zack.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**14 CONTINUED:**

**BRIAN**

**Here, you can eat these with your hands.**

**Brian holds it there. After a beat, Zack finally takes the biscuit. He eats like a starving animal. As Mike looks to Sully across the table, together they wonder what's to come of the boy.**

**FADE OUT:**

**END OF ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

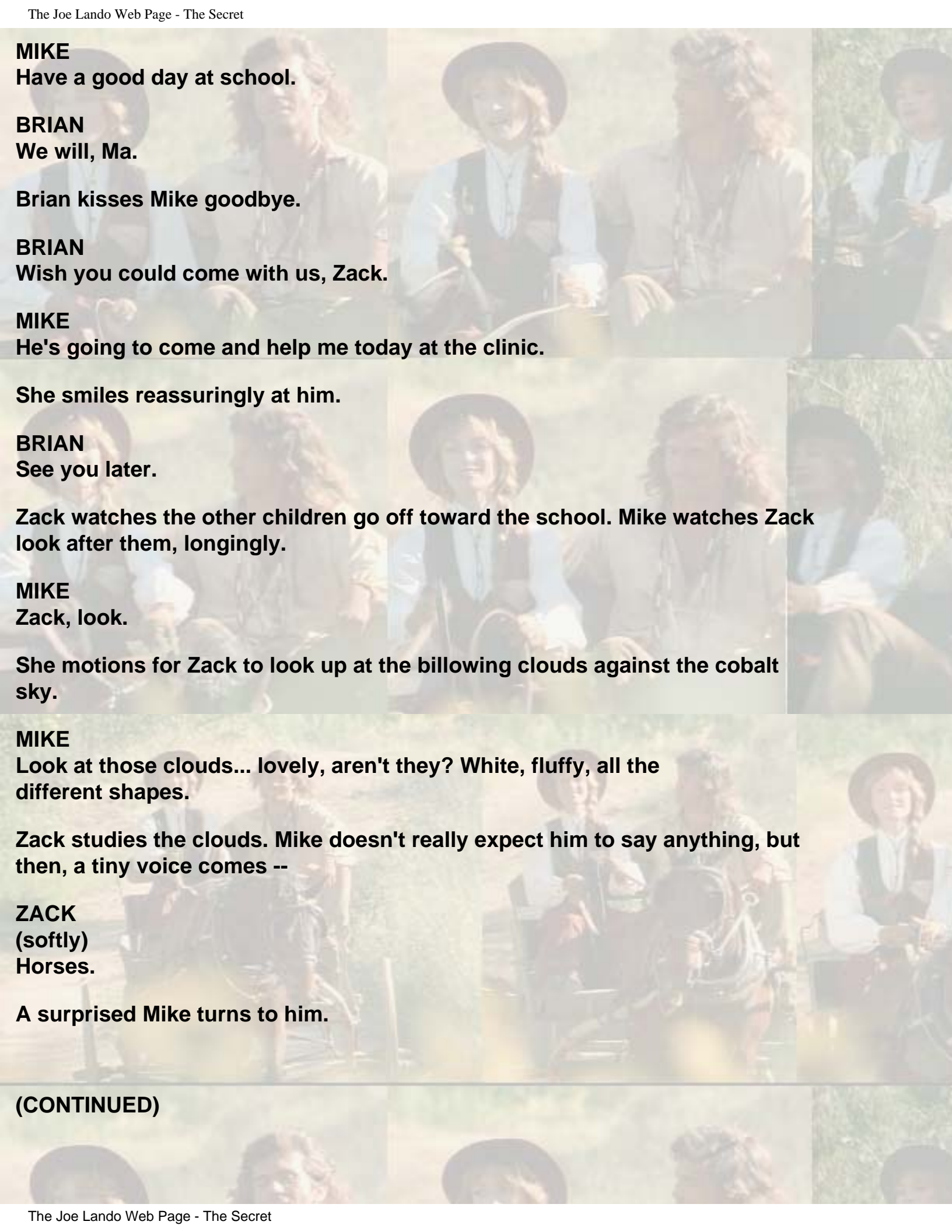
**FADE IN:**

**15 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - TWO**

**Mike pulls the wagon up near the schoolhouse. Zack, sitting next to her, watches as Brian and Colleen get out.**

**COLLEEN**

**Bye, Dr. Mike.**



**MIKE**  
Have a good day at school.

**BRIAN**  
We will, Ma.

Brian kisses Mike goodbye.

**BRIAN**  
Wish you could come with us, Zack.

**MIKE**  
He's going to come and help me today at the clinic.

She smiles reassuringly at him.

**BRIAN**  
See you later.

Zack watches the other children go off toward the school. Mike watches Zack look after them, longingly.

**MIKE**  
Zack, look.

She motions for Zack to look up at the billowing clouds against the cobalt sky.

**MIKE**  
Look at those clouds... lovely, aren't they? White, fluffy, all the different shapes.

Zack studies the clouds. Mike doesn't really expect him to say anything, but then, a tiny voice comes --

**ZACK**  
(softly)  
Horses.

A surprised Mike turns to him.

**(CONTINUED)**

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15 CONTINUED:

**MIKE**  
What?

Zack who's still mesmerized by the clouds, points up.

**ZACK**  
Horses.

**MIKE**  
(looks)  
Indeed... They do look like horses.

Mike nods, then smiles at Zack.

16 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY - TWO

Mike strides in with Zack in tow and goes up to Loren.

**MIKE**  
This young man needs some school clothes.

**LOREN**  
(whispers)  
He can't go to school. He's a simpleton.

Mike goes straight to the clothes stacks and pulls out a shirt.

**MIKE**  
Let's see... this one should fit nicely.

**LOREN**  
I'm telling you, he can't learn.

**MIKE**  
I wouldn't be so sure of that.

Next, Mike picks out a pair of pants. Other customers look on, both curious and repelled by the strange boy.

**LOREN**

You can parade him around all you want, and try to do things for him, but truth is, I don't sell what that boy needs.

Mike walks through the aisles, picking up things as she goes...

**MIKE**

Do you sell shoes, shirts, pants and socks, Mr. Bray? Do you sell suspenders, bandannas, hats?

**(CONTINUED)**

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**16 CONTINUED:**

Loren watches her as she snatches up more items.

**MIKE**

Do you sell pencils and writing tablets?

**LOREN**

'Course I do. All of it.

**MIKE**

Then you sell what he needs.

Mike puts all the merchandise on the counter and plucks a single stick of licorice from a candy jar, hands it to Zack. As Loren starts to ring it up, Mike smiles and Zack tastes his licorice.

**17 INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY - TWO**

Jake's finishing up someone in the chair. He looks up and sees standing in the doorway -- Mike and Zack. The other customers, including Hank, stare at her and the boy.

**MIKE**

**(pleasantly)**  
**Good morning, Jake.**

**JAKE**  
**Mornin'.**

**MIKE**  
**Zack needs a haircut.**

**JAKE**  
**You can say that again.**

**Snickers from the others. Mike fishes in her purse for coins as she takes a seat with Zack on the bench with the others.**

**JAKE**  
**Keep your money.**

**MIKE**  
**Free haircuts today?**

**JAKE**  
**I'm busy.**

**MIKE**  
**We'll wait.**

**Jake leans to her and whispers.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**17 CONTINUED:**

**JAKE**  
**Look, people don't like being around imbeciles.**

**MIKE**  
**I beg your pardon?**

**Hank speaks up.**

**HANK**  
Causing trouble, Michaela?

**MIKE**  
Jake can't refuse a paying customer.

**HANK**  
(smiles)  
It'd be a first.

**MIKE**  
It's unprofessional. Not to mention rude.

**HANK**  
Jake's the proprietor here.

Mike glares at Hank, who glances at Zack. Then, unexpectedly -

**HANK**  
On the other hand, if we gotta look at the kid, somebody oughta clean him up.

Jake regards Hank for a moment. Hank gives him a look.

**HANK**  
I ain't in no hurry. He can go next.

Zack watches Hank -- a mixture of fear and curiosity. Jake grudgingly gestures toward the chair. The boy is unsure, but Hank steers him up to take a seat. As Jake sharpens his scissors...

**18 INT. SCHOOL - DAY - TWO**

Olive stands in front of the class pointing to arithmetic chalked out on the board.

**OLIVE**  
If you have ten cows in your pasture, and two of them stray, how many cows do you have left?

**(CONTINUED)**

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**18 CONTINUED:**

**But Brian's not listening. He reaches in his pocket. Takes out the picture and unrolls it. The horses running across a field of clouds. He stares at it, gets lost in it, as Olive drones on. Suddenly, a hand reaches in and takes the picture.**

**OLIVE**  
**This doesn't look like arithmetic.**

**BRIAN**  
**No, ma'am.**

**OLIVE**  
**It doesn't even look like cows.**

**BRIAN**  
**No. It's horses, Miss Olive.**

**OLIVE**  
**I can see that.**

**BRIAN**  
**Sorry, I didn't mean to...**


**OLIVE**  
**Why, they're beautiful.**

**Olive's really taken by the drawing.**

**BRIAN**  
**(agreeing)**  
**Aren't they?**

**OLIVE**  
**Did you draw it from memory?**

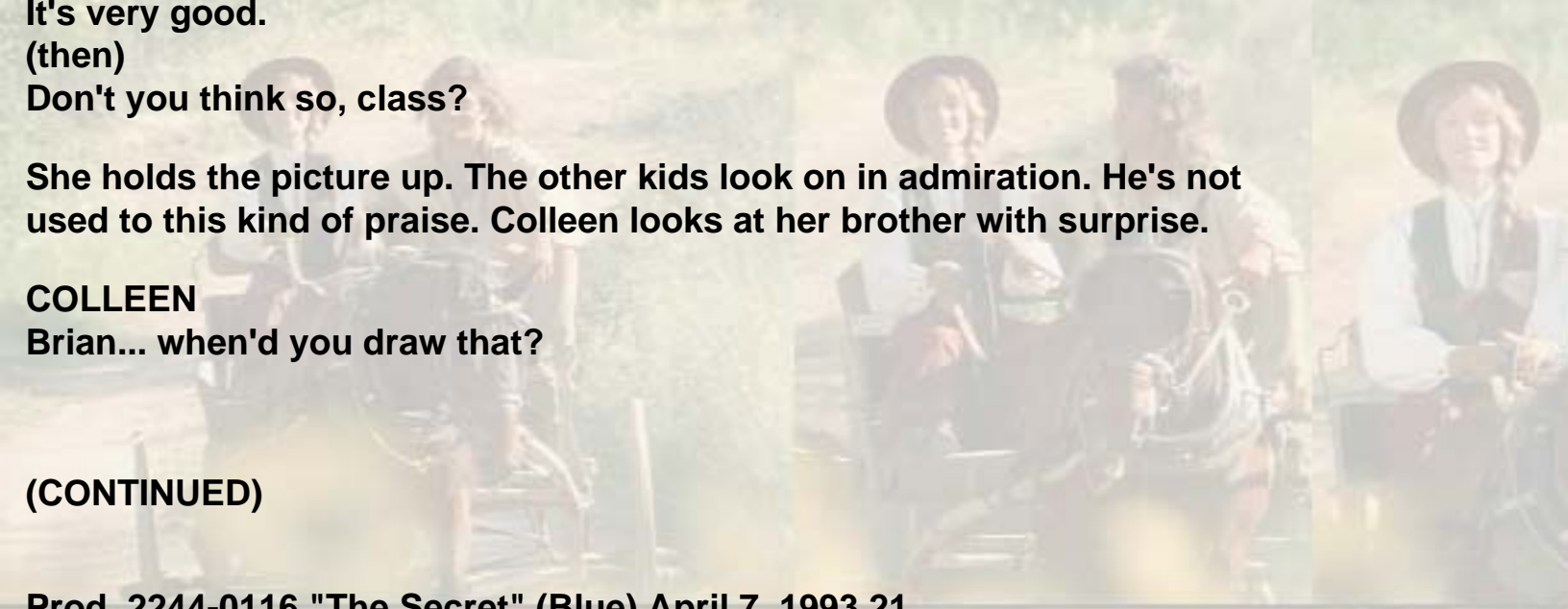
**BRIAN**  
**No... I...**



**OLIVE**  
Oh, then you drew it from real horses.

**BRIAN**  
Well... I...

**OLIVE**  
It's very good.  
(then)  
Don't you think so, class?



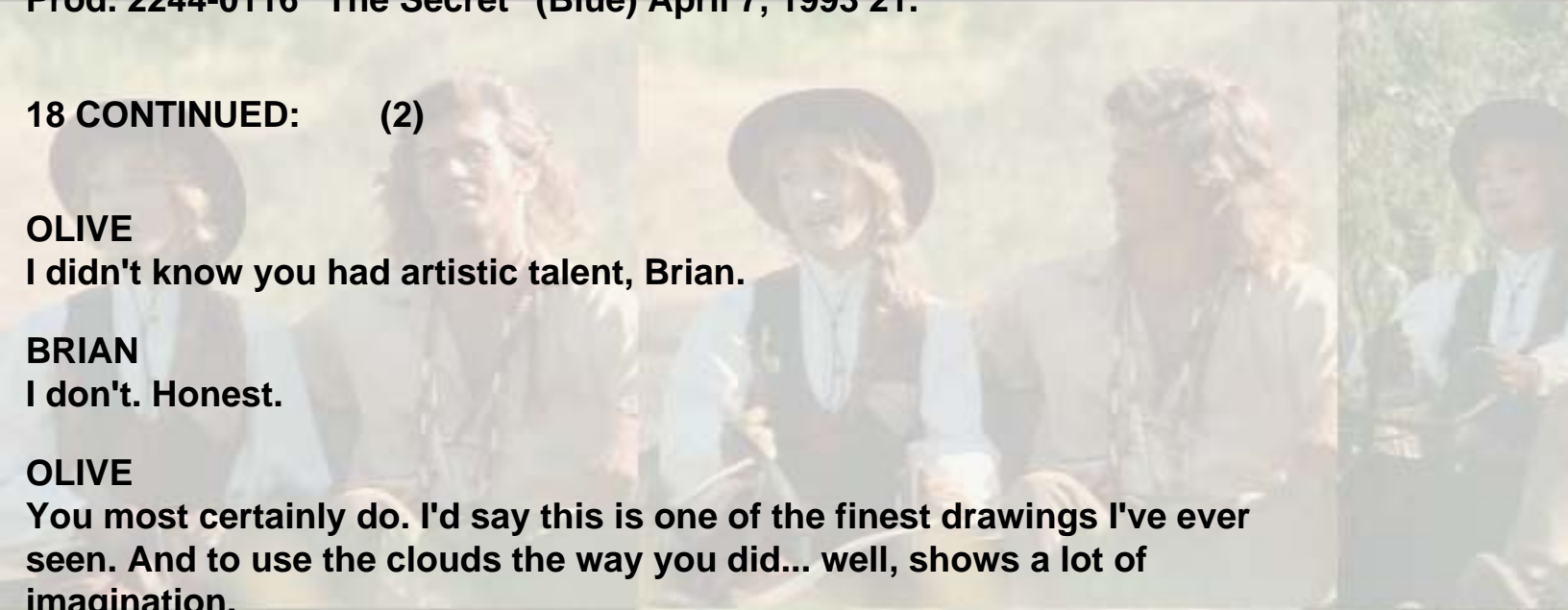
She holds the picture up. The other kids look on in admiration. He's not used to this kind of praise. Colleen looks at her brother with surprise.

**COLLEEN**  
Brian... when'd you draw that?

**(CONTINUED)**

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**18 CONTINUED: (2)**



**OLIVE**  
I didn't know you had artistic talent, Brian.

**BRIAN**  
I don't. Honest.

**OLIVE**  
You most certainly do. I'd say this is one of the finest drawings I've ever seen. And to use the clouds the way you did... well, shows a lot of imagination.

**BRIAN**  
(pronouncing the new word)  
Imagination.

Olive hands the drawing back.

**OLIVE**

**You're mighty talented, Brian.**

**(hands it back)**

**But for now, I want you to learn your arithmetic.**

**BRIAN**

**Yes, ma'am.**

**He rolls up the picture and puts it back in his pocket.**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**19 EXT. SCHOOLYARD - (MEADOW) - DAY - TWO**

**It's recess. The kids are playing when Mike comes up with Zack -- sporting his new haircut and clothes. Olive glances at Zack.**

**MIKE**

**(to Zack)**

**Wait right here.**

**Mike leaves Zack standing nearby as she crosses to have a private word with Olive.**

**MIKE**

**I thought it would be a good idea to bring Zack here.**

**OLIVE**

**What for?**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**19 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**

**To learn.**

**(off Olive's look)**

**He can. He understands words. Images. He just hasn't been taught.**

**OLIVE**

**Just like you to go getting your hopes up about something like this.**

**MIKE**

**Olive, I'm asking you. You could help him.**

**OLIVE**

**Look, I'm no school teacher, never claimed to be. I'm only here temporary...**

**MIKE**

**Please. Just let him sit and watch.**

**Olive softens.**

**OLIVE**

**Alright. But just until we get a real teacher hired. Then, it's up to her.**

**MIKE**

**Thank you.**

**(looking toward Zack)**

**Who knows? Maybe by then, he'll be able to stay on.**

**Mike gives her a grateful look and motions Zack over. He comes shyly toward them. Mike pats his shoulder.**

**MIKE**

**(whispering)**

**You're going to be just fine.**

**Mike throws a smile toward Brian, who's playing nearby. Brian comes over with Colleen as Mike leaves.**

**BRIAN**

**Hey, Zack.**

**COLLEEN**

**(pats him)**

**You look real nice, Zack.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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19 CONTINUED: (2)

**OLIVE**

Five more minutes of recess, then back to class.

Brian takes his hand and pulls him toward the kids, including ALICE and MISSY. But the others back away from him. Zack feels all the eyes on him. A BOY comes up.

**BOY**

I think he still looks funny.

**COLLEEN**

He looks fine.

**BOY**

What do you get when you dress up an idiot?

(beat)

An idiot!

The children laugh.

**BRIAN**

He's not an idiot!

**ALICE**

Well, I don't want him around me.

**MISSY**

Me neither.

**BOY**

I saw him at the funeral. My ma says he's a bastard.

**BRIAN**

He is not!

**BOY**

Yeah, he is. He's got no pa. So he's a bastard.

**Zack may not understand the words, but he feels the weight of the other children's cruelty. Olive steps in.**

**OLIVE**

**That's enough. Recess is over. Everyone back inside.**

**The kids shuffle back in the schoolhouse, angry that Zack has ruined their play time. Brian turns around in time to see that Zack has slipped quickly and quietly to the edge of the woods. In a second, he's gone.**

**BRIAN**

**Miss Olive! Miss Olive!**

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**20 INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY - TWO**

**Mike is at the counter showing Horace the letters found at Ruby Johnson's.**

**MIKE**

**According to these letters, Zack may have some relatives.**

**HORACE**

**This one sounds like a cousin.**

**MIKE**

**If they're any relation at all, I'd like to find them.**

**HORACE**

**Ain't got a return address.**

**MIKE**

**But it's postmarked St. Louis. We can put a notice in the paper there.**

**HORACE**

**That's a good idea.**

**Just then Sully comes in.**

**SULLY**

**You better come quick.**

**Mike and Horace follow Sully outside to --**

**21 EXT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY TWO - CONTINUOUS**

**Olive is there with Matthew, Colleen and Brian.**

**SULLY**  
**Zack ran away.**

**MIKE**  
**What do you mean, ran away?**

**BRIAN**  
**They were teasin' him, Ma.**

**COLLEEN**  
**We had our backs turned for a second and he just disappeared...**

**OLIVE**  
**It was my fault...**

**MIKE**  
**No, it's my fault, I thought he was ready...**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**21 CONTINUED:**

**Sully sees how upset Mike is.**

**SULLY**  
**We'll find him.**

**Meanwhile, Robert E and Grace have come up and overheard.**

**ROBERT E**  
**I'll help.**

**GRACE**

**Me, too. The stew'll cook itself for awhile.**

**SULLY**

**(to Robert E and Grace)**

**Check the immigrant camp. Colleen and Brian look around the edge of the meadow. Matthew, take the woods behind the church.**

**MIKE**

**(to Sully)**

**I'll come with you.**

**SULLY**

**You should stay here. In case he comes back.**

**Hank and Myra come out of the saloon to see what the commotion is about.**

**HANK**

**What's going on?**

**OLIVE**

**Zack's run off.**

**MYRA**

**Run off?**

**Brian tugs Sully's sleeve. Whispers something to him.**

**SULLY**

**(to Mike)**

**Mind if I borrow your wagon?**

**MIKE**

**Surely. Go ahead.**

**Sully gets into the wagon.**

**BRIAN**

**I want to come.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**21 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Mike gives Sully a nod and he pulls Brian up in with him. Brian and Sully ride off in one direction. Hank turns back to Mike.**

**HANK**  
**(casually)**  
**He probably didn't go far.**

**Hank strolls over and takes the reins of his own horse parked in front of the saloon.**

**MYRA**  
**(to Hank)**  
**You gonna go look for him?**

**HANK**  
**Hell no, I ain't got time for some wild goose chase. I've got business.**

**MYRA**  
**What business?**

**HANK**  
**None of your business.**

**He rides off in the opposite direction. Mike watches him go, curious...**

**22 EXT. RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN - DAY - TWO**

**Brian and Sully arrive, get down from the wagon, and go to the front door.**

**23 INT. RUBY JOHNSON'S CABIN - DAY - TWO**

**Sully opens the door. It's dim and dusty inside -- empty like they left it.**

**BRIAN**  
**Zack?**

**No answer. Brian then notices the closet is open slightly. Zack is sitting inside.**

**BRIAN**  
Everybody's lookin' for you.

But Zack makes no move to come out. Brian looks to Sully, who nods for Brian to go ahead and talk to him. Brian goes to Zack, who is sitting with a pad of paper on his lap. A crude pencil in his hand. And a beautiful picture he's just finished. Brian stares at him in awe.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**22 CONTINUED:**

**BRIAN**  
You can draw.

Zack stands up quickly, dropping the pad. Brian bends to pick it up and sees a tattered edge of paper sticking out from beneath a bench. He pulls it out. It's another drawing. Brian reaches under and pulls out about twenty more drawings, stashed away in this secret place.

**BRIAN**  
You did 'em all, didn't you?

Zack looks more frightened than anything.

**BRIAN**  
They're beautiful.

Zack shakes his head and surprises Brian with a word.

**ZACK**  
(modestly)  
No.

**BRIAN**  
Yeah, they are.

But Zack can't accept the praise. Instead, he mimics what he's heard from

the children.

**ZACK**  
(softly)  
Idiot.

**BRIAN**  
No, you're not. You got...  
(pronounces)  
... imagination.

Brian shuffles through the pages --

**BRIAN**  
Look at these trees... and the sun and... this lion...  
(beat)  
Bet you never seen a real lion, did you?

Zack shakes his head again.

**BRIAN**  
See there?

Zack shrugs. Then Brian studies the one on the pad that Zack was just working on. It's dark and gloomy -- rain and lightning bolts on a graveyard.

(CONTINUED)

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23 CONTINUED: (2)

**BRIAN**  
This one's sad.  
(beat)  
You're sad, huh?

Zack just looks at him.

**BRIAN**  
I was sad, too, when I lost my ma.

**Zack looks away, his eyes filling with tears.**

**BRIAN**

**I cried and cried. Even Sully cries when he's sad.**

**Brian leans around and tries to look Zack in the eyes.**

**BRIAN**

**You can cry, too, if you want.**

**Zack's face clouds with sadness. He reaches for the drawings -- grabs the whole bunch of them and tears them in a million pieces, then falls to the ground -- crying finally, with all his might. Brian wraos his arts around the bcy.**

**24 REVEAL SULLY**

**has been watching from the doorway --**

**25 BACK ON BRIAN**

**rocking the crying boy in his arms.**

**FADE OUT:**

**END OF ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

**FADE IN:**

**26 INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY - THREE**

**It's morning. Colleen awakens and looks over to see Mike sitting at the table asleep over her medical books. She goes over to her and gently wakes her up.**

**COLLEEN**  
**Dr. Mike? Wake up. You been here all night.**

**MIKE**  
**I suppose I was.**

**COLLEEN**  
**What were you readin'?**

**MIKE**  
**I'm trying to figure out how I can help Zack.**

**COLLEEN**  
**What exactly is wrong with him?**

**MIKE**  
**That's just it. I don't know. No one seems to know.**

**Mike closes the books spread out on the table one by one.**

**COLLEEN**  
**There's got to be something.**

**MIKE**  
**Well, there isn't.**

**Colleen looks on like she wishes she could help.**

**COLLEEN**  
**Is there anything I can do?**

**MIKE**  
**There's nothing to do. If he was sick, I could give him medication. If he was cut, I could suture him.**  
**(slams last book shut)**  
**I hate feeling this way. Feeling helpless.**

**Colleen puts a hand on Mike's shoulder. Mike gets up to put the books away on a nearby shelf. Something catches her eye. The picture of the cloud horses. She picks it up.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**26 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**  
**What's this?**

**COLLEEN**  
**Brian drew it.**

**MIKE**  
**(surprised)**  
**Brian... It's very good.**

**There's a knock at the door. Mike goes and opens it. It's Myra. Mike steps out and joins her on the porch.**

**26A EXT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

**MYRA**  
**Mornin' Dr. Mike.**

**MIKE**  
**(surprised)**  
**Myra.**

**MYRA**  
**I came to see about Zack.**

**MIKE**  
**You rode all the way out here?**

**MYRA**  
**Well, I was thinking... maybe I could help y'all out and take him for awhile.**

**MIKE**

**At the saloon?**

**MYRA**  
I talked to Hank about it and he says maybe he could find some things the boy could do to make himself useful. Said he could always use another pair of hands.

The barn door opens and the two sleepy boys emerge -- Zack and Brian.

**BRIAN**  
Mornin', Miss Myra.

**MYRA**  
Mornin' boys.

Mike takes a step back toward the house, wanting to continue the conversation privately.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**26A CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**  
I don't know, Myra... Why don't you come inside and we'll talk about it?

**MYRA**  
Naw, gotta get back. I just thought that since school didn't turn out and all... maybe a little work would do him some good.

**MIKE**  
I can't see how that would solve anything.

**MYRA**  
He'd earn his keep, feel like he was worth something. Maybe what he needs is to be out in the town. Where he can learn to fit in.

Mike looks to Zack, who's been staring at Myra, taken by her prettiness.

**MIKE**  
Would you like that, Zack?

Myra smiles at him sweetly. He nods.

**27 INT. SALOON - DAY - THREE**

Loren and Jake sit at a table. Loren's reading the newspaper. In mid-conversation --

**JAKE**  
Alaska? That's what it's called?

**LOREN**  
Yep. Bought the whole shooting match from the Russians for seven million dollars.

**JAKE**  
I'd like to see a piece of land worth that kinda money.

**LOREN**  
It's a pretty penny if you ask me. President Johnson oughta fire that secretary of state.

The swinging doors part as Hank strides in with Zack close on his heels, and Myra, too.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**27 CONTINUED:**

**HANK**  
I dont want any whinin' and moanin', I just want the job done. That clear?

Zack nods. Hank gestures around the place.

**HANK**  
You sweep, you wipe down the tables, you dry the glasses, you take out the trash, and you clean the spittoons. When you're all done with that, you

**sweep some more.**

**With that he hands the kid a broom that's taller than he is. Zack starts to sweep right there in the middle of the room. Hank heads over to the bar. Loren and Jake stare at the kid, as do the other customers. Hank turns back around.**

**HANK**  
**What're y'all lookin' at?**

**They all turn back to their whiskeys.**

**28 INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY - THREE**

**Mike comes in and up to the counter to see Horace.**

**MIKE**  
**Any word from St. Louis?**

**HORACE**  
**Not yet.**

**MIKE**  
**Will you let me know as soon as you hear something?**

**HORACE**  
**I sure will. From St. Louis or Jefferson City or Springfield.**

**MIKE**  
**But I didn't wire...**

**HORACE**  
**I did.**

**Mike looks at him with surprise.**

**HORACE**  
**I figure the wider you throw the net, the bigger chance to catch your fish.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**28 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**

That's very thoughtful of you, Horace.

**HORACE**

If there's anything else I can do...

Mike pulls something out of her bag.

**MIKE**

Actually... I want to send a package out.

**HORACE**

Sure thing.

**MIKE**

To Miss Mary Wellman, The Wellman School for the Arts, Denver Colorado...

Off Mike.

**29 EXT. CLINIC - DAY - THREE**

Mike talks to Brian and Sully on the front porch.

**MIKE**

It's a school for gifted children.

**BRIAN**

But I don't want to go away to school, Ma.


**MIKE**

Maybe not this year, but I certainly want Miss Wellman to be aware of your talent.

Brian has the chance to speak up and tell the truth, but he sees how excited D. Mike is. Sully watches him.

**MIKE**

I'm very proud of you, Brian. I always wished that I possessed some artistic flair.



**BRIAN**  
I bet you could draw, too.

**MIKE**  
Not like you. You have a special gift.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**29 CONTINUED:**



Sully knows the truth, yet watches as Brian struggles with his lie of omission. He looks across the street and sees Zack through the saloon window.

**30 EXT. SALOON - DAY - THREE - CONTINUOUS**

Brian comes to see Zack. He watches him clear tables through the window, then catches his eye and motions for him. Zack comes out onto the front porch to talk to Brian.

**BRIAN**  
You like it here?

Zack looks at him. Nods his head yes. A beat.

**BRIAN**  
Myra's real pretty, don'tcha think?

Zack nods again. Brian digs in his pockets and pulls out a handful of gumdrops.

**BRIAN**  
Want a gumdrop?

He gives one to Zack, who looks at it, then eats it. Brian eats one, too. Then looks back down at his handful. He gives Zack the rest of them.

**BRIAN**

Here...

Zack takes them and tucks them in his pocket.

**BRIAN**

Bye.

Brian watches as Zack goes back inside.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**31 INT. SALOON - DAY THREE - LATER**

Two drunk cowboys nurse whiskeys at one of the tables as Zack sweeps nearby. They don't pay him much attention until -- Zack accidentally sweeps a cloud of dust too close to one of them.

**COWBOY #1**

Hey, watch my boots, you dumb idiot!

The other cowboy gets in on the fun.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**31 CONTINUED:**

**COWBOY #2**

You gonna let him talk to you that way, boy?

Zack doesn't answer.

**COWBOY #2**

(pressing)

Huh? Are ya?

**COWBOY #1**

**I think he is a dumb idiot. Are you an idiot boy?**

**Zack stands there helplessly. Hank's aware from behind the bar.**

**COWBOY #2**

**Idiots can't talk. They can't do nothin'.**

**COWBOY #1**

**They must be able to do somethin'.**

**The men look at Zack and laugh. One of them grabs Zack roughly by the collar and drags him toward the door.**

**COWBOY #1**

**Let's see if he can ride a horse.**

**HANK (O.S.)**

**Let's not.**

**Hank's come out from behind the bar now. He gets into the face of the biggest cowboy.**

**HANK**

**Get out.**

**COWBOY #2**

**Just wanted to take the idiot for a ride, that's all.**

**HANK**

**Only idiot goin' for a ride is you.**

**Hank grabs the cowboy and hauls him toward the door. Literally tosses him out --**

**32 EXT. SALOON - DAY - CONTINUOUS - THREE**

**As Hank watches, the cowboy lands with a thud, then leaps back to his feet to take on Hank. The fight moves into the street.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**Prod. 2244-0116 "The Secret" (Blue) April 7, 1993 36.**

**32 CONTINUED:**

Olive, Jake, Loren and Horace come out to see what the commotion is. Mike, Brian and Colleen watch from their porch across the way. Myra comes out of the saloon and hugs Zack close into her skirt so he can't see what's happening.

The other cowboy comes out with a whiskey bottle. Breaks it against a post and raises the jagged glass edge to hit Hank. A tomahawk spins through the air and knocks the bottle away. Hank looks over and sees that it's Sully.

Off his nod of appreciation.

**33 INT. CLINIC - DAY - THREE**

Mike tenderly wipes Hank's bruised face, doctoring a cut over his brow. As she looks straight into his eyes...

**MIKE**

It was very kind of you to defend Zack that way.

Hank shrugs.

**MIKE**

Why did you?

**HANK**

Mind you own business and stick to doctorin', Michaela.

Mike finishes up. Stands there and looks at him. Then --

**MIKE**

(quietly)

You're his father, aren't you?

**HANK**

What the hell're you talkin' about?

**MIKE**

I'm talking about the way you took up for him at the barbershop, the way you gave him that job, the way you rode off when he was lost -- and don't tell

me it was business, because it wasn't. You went looking for him, didn't you?

Hank stands up. Throws a bill on the table for payment.

**HANK**  
That oughta cover it.

**(CONTINUED)**

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**33 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**  
Why did you leave him alone out there for so long?

Hank finally stops at the door. Turns around. Faces the truth.

**HANK**  
He wasn't alone. It was me that found a place for him. It was me that paid every week for twelve years to make sure he had food and clothes...


**MIKE**  
He didn't need money. He needed his father. He needed to be here with you.

**HANK**  
(anger rising)  
You saw how they treated him here. Teasin' him, pushin' him around. You think I wanted him to go through that? Everyone laughin' because he's different. Thinkin' he's not normal.

**MIKE**  
Not to mention what they'd think of you.

**HANK**  
I was protectin' him!

**MIKE**  
You were protecting yourself.



**HANK**  
Who do you think you are judgin' me, lady?


**MIKE**  
(appealing to him)  
Hank, there has to be better places for children like Zack. Why didn't you try to find out what would be best for him? Why didn't...

**HANK**  
You weren't here! You don't know!

**(CONTINUED)**

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**33 CONTINUED: (2)**



**MIKE**  
I know I wouldn't have done that to a boy of mine!

Hank glares at Mike. All his guilt and frustration focused on her.

**HANK**  
(cold as ice)  
What's it like to walk on water, Michaela?

He turns and leaves. Hold on Mike.

**FADE OUT:**

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**



**FADE IN:**

**34 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY - FOUR**

**Mike is shopping for vegetables with Brian. The Reverend is there, too. Loren comes out on the front landing, looks across the way at Zack, sweeping the porch of the saloon.**

**LOREN**  
**Something's got to be done.**

**Jake comes over from the barber shop to put his two cents in.**

**JAKE**  
**Loren's right. He's just gonna 'cause more trouble.**

**REVEREND**  
**I've prayed about it, but...**

**LOREN**  
**(to Mike)**  
**He don't need prayin' he needs fixin' and if you can't fix him, then we've got no choice.**

**JAKE**  
**The boy don't belong here.**

**Mike reacts. Brian listens. Olive comes out and joins them.**

**MIKE**  
**Is that all that concerns you?**

**LOREN**  
**It's just a matter of time 'fore someone else gets hurt.**

**OLIVE**  
**(a softer approach)**  
**Before he gets himself hurt.**

**JAKE**  
**Ain't there places for such types? Asylums?**

**MIKE**  
**Have you ever visited an asylum, Jake?**  
**(no answer)**

**I have. They're filthy, cramped... People -- human beings -- chained to walls. Crying, wailing.**  
**(more)**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**34 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE (Cont'd)**

**Believe me, it's no place for a child. Besides, he's not insane.**

**The group glances again up the street to where Zack is sweeping. Mike can't speak up and break the confidence and tell everyone that he's Hank's son.**

**LOREN**

**He doesn't know how to do anything but sweep. He's got to be sent away.**

**Brian can't stand it. He speaks up.**

**BRIAN**

**That's not true! He can do something.**

**Surprised by his outburst, everyone turns to look at him.**

**BRIAN**

**He can draw.**

**LOREN**

**What're you talking about?**

**BRIAN**

**He draws real pretty. He drew that picture Miss Olive liked.**

**MIKE**

**You drew that picture, Brian.**

**BRIAN**

**No, it wasn't me. I just found the picture. Everybody thought it was me who done it, but it was him.**

**For a moment no one says anything.**

**OLIVE**

**That's awful nice of you, Brian, to stick up for him. I know he's your little friend, but... you shouldn't lie...**

**No one believes Brian. Even Mike puts a hand on his shoulder and gives him a grateful smile for trying. Brian breaks from her and runs down the street toward --**

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**35 OMITTED**

**36 EXT. SALOON - DAY FOUR - CONTINUOUS**

**where Zack's still sweeping the front porch.**

**BRIAN**

**Zack...**

**Zack looks up.**

**BRIAN**

**Zack, you gotta do somethin' for me.**

**Zack gazes at him questioningly.**

**BRIAN**

**You gotta draw somethin' . Like you did the other day.**

**Zack shakes his head. Keeps sweeping.**

**BRIAN**

**You gotta show 'em. Or else they're gonna send you away!**

**Zack stops. Looks frightened.**

**BRIAN**

**Please, Zack. Draw just one thing. Your favourite thing. Do it for me.**

**Brian's pleading doesn't do any good. Brian finally pulls the broom away**

from him in frustration.

**BRIAN**  
Please!

The two boys stand looking at each other. Just then Hank comes to the door and looks out.

**HANK**  
(to Brian)  
Hey, can't you see the boy's workin'?

Brian hands the broom back. Zack starts sweeping again. Just then, Hank and Brian look up to see Jake, Loren, Mike and the Reverend headed over toward the saloon. Hank stands his ground.

**HANK**  
What can I do for you folks?

(CONTINUED)

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36 CONTINUED:

**LOREN**  
It's about the boy.

**HANK**  
What about him?

**LOREN**  
We've discussed it for a while now... and we've come to a decision.

Loren indicates his backers, gathered behind him.

**LOREN**  
Zack'd be better off somewhere else.

**HANK**

**Well, thing is, he's working for me.**

**JAKE**  
**The boy's gonna cause nothing but trouble around here. You know that, Hank.**

**HANK**  
**I don't see him causing no trouble.**  
**(beat)**  
**Or maybe he just troubles you.**

**Olive tries a different approach.**

**OLIVE**  
**Well, now, Hank, it ain't right keeping a child in a saloon. Around liquor... and whores. It just ain't fittin'.**  
**(beat)**  
**Even Dr. Mike here, agrees.**

**Hank's eyes turn to Mike.**

**MIKE**  
**Well, it is clear that... it's hardly a proper home for a young boy.**

**HANK**  
**That right?**

**MIKE**  
**Well... I...**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**36 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Everyone looks at Mike, surprised she doesn't take a bigger stand. Hank watches her a moment, then turns back to the others.**

**HANK**  
**The boy's staying right where he is.**

**Loren challenges Hank.**

**LOREN**  
**Who are you to decide?**

**A beat.**

**HANK**  
**I'm his pa. That's who.**

**The crowd is stunned. Mike gazes at him, her eyes shining with pride at his courage. Hank looks over at Zack who is gazing up at him. Hank takes the broom in one hand, puts his other hand on the boy's shoulder and takes him back inside.**

**The crowd whispers amongst themselves as they disperse. Mike makes her way over to Myra and the two of them walk and talk.**

**37 ON MIKE AND MYRA**

**MIKE**  
**(amazed)**  
**He admitted it.**

**MYRA**  
**You knew?**

**MIKE**  
**Didn't you?**

**MYRA**  
**Sure, all the girls knew. Clarice was before my time, but...**

**MIKE**  
**Clarice?**

**MYRA**  
**Zack's ma.**

**MIKE**  
**Was she...?**

**MYRA**  
**One of us whores?**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**37 CONTINUED:**

**MIKE**

**Myra...**

**Myra smiles and nods that it's alright.**

**MYRA**

**Yeah, she was one of us.**

**(quietly)**

**But he loved her.**

**A beat.**

**MIKE**

**Myra... do you think he can be a good father?**

**MYRA**

**Somethin's changed in him, Dr. Mike. When I see Hank look at Zack. There's something there I never seen before.**

**The two women hold their look for a beat. Then Myra goes back inside and leaves Mike standing there.**

**38 EXT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT - FOUR**

**Brian wanders outside under the glare of the moon. There's someone sitting on the porch. It's Sully.**

**Sully pulls Brian to him and they sit down together.**

**BRIAN**

**What I said today... it's true. I didn't draw that picture. Zack did. I didn't know he did it when Miss Olive said it was pretty. So when she thought it**

was me, I just let her think it.

**SULLY**

You know that wasn't right.

**BRIAN**

Yeah. It wasn't right.

(beat)

Sometimes I think I'm not really good at anything. I can't track a deer or ride a horse or build things...

**SULLY**

You got a good ear for music... played that harmonica nice.

(CONTINUED)

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38 CONTINUED:

**BRIAN**

Think so?

**SULLY**

Yeah. And somethin' else, Brian. Somethin' else that you're real good at. Talkin' to people.

Brian looks up at him questioningly.

**SULLY**

You made friends with Zack and you talked to him when nobody else could.

Brian thinks about this for a moment. Then a sadness comes over him.

**BRIAN**

But I couldn't get him to draw another picture.

HOLD on Brian pondering his feelings in the dark.

DISSOLVE TO:

### **38A CLOSE ON A DRAWING**

**Pencil strokes shape and blend into a picture, but we can't quite tell yet what it is.**

**Pull back to REVEAL --**

### **39 INT. SALOON - DAY - FIVE**

**It's Zack, sitting alone at one of the corner tables, drawing. It's early morning and the place is empty except for --**

**A tormented Hank sitting at the bar, a half-empty bottle of whiskey in front of him. He runs his finger around the rim of his shot glass. After a beat, he feels a tug on his sleeve. He looks down to see Zack standing at his side.**

**HANK**  
**Whattaya want?**

**Zack hands him the drawing he was just working on.**

**ZACK**  
**For you, Pa.**

**As Hank studies the picture, it almost takes his breath away.**

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### **39A INSERT - DRAWING**

**The face of a beautiful woman.**

### **39B BACK ON HANK**

**The glint of tears shine in his eyes. He looks at Zack, then looks away, before they fall...**

thru **OMITTED**  
42

**43 INT. CLINIC - DAY - FIVE**

**Brian helps Mike fold bandages when they hear a knock on the door and look up to see Hank, there with Zack.**

**HANK**  
**Mornin'.**

**MIKE**  
**(surprised)**  
**Is something wrong with Zack?**

**HANK**  
**No. Nothin's wrong with him.**

**Hank walks over to them.**

**HANK**  
**Your boy was right. Zack can draw.**

**Hank hands Mike the drawing. She studies it.**

**MIKE**  
**How do you know he drew it?**

**HANK**  
**Because it's his ma.**

**Mike looks back at the picture, then again at Hank. Hands the picture back.**

**MIKE**  
**She was beautiful.**

**HANK**  
**She was.**

**Hank looks away. Then over at Zack.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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43 CONTINUED:

**HANK**  
Now, I ain't gonna be the best father, I can tell you that straight out. I like my whiskey and my women. Sometimes I ain't too polite. Fact is, I got a downright nasty temper.

Mike stifles a smile.

**HANK**  
I'd like to try to give him a home. But I know he deserves better than sweeping the saloon.

Hank stands there, clutching the drawing.

**HANK**  
What do you suggest, Michaela?

**MIKE**  
Well, Hank, there may be something we can do for him.

HOLD on the new-found alliance between she and Hank.

DISSOLVE TO:

44 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY - SIX

The stagecoach is being loaded out front. Hank stands dressed in his Sunday best, Zack at his side, when Mike walks up with the rest of the family, including Sully. Olive, Loren, Jake, Horace and Myra are there, too. Mike gives Zack a warm hug. Then turns to Hank.

**MIKE**  
Hank... you look... almost...

**HANK**  
Wouldn't kill you to say it.

**MIKE**

**Alright I will. Handsome.**

**HANK**

**(grinning)**

**Why thank you, Michaela.**

**(CONTINUED)**

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**44 CONTINUED:**

**OLIVE**

**(to Hank)**

**It's a fine thing you're doin', Hank, sending Zack to that art school.**

**(then, to Zack)**

**They're lucky to have you.**

**MIKE**

**Miss Wellman agreed he deserved a special opportunity.**

**Mike turns to Zack. It's hard for her to let him go.**

**MIKE**

**This'll be quite a trip for you, young man.**

**MATTHEW**

**Good luck, Zack.**

**COLLEEN**

**Don't forget us.**

**SULLY**

**Take care.**

**BRIAN**

**Maybe you could draw something for me while you're there. Send it in the mail.**

**MIKE**

**Maybe he could bring it himself... when he comes home for Christmas.**

**She looks at Hank, an appeal. Zack looks up at Hank questioningly. A beat.**

**HANK**

**Yeah, sure. Christmas.**

**Zack smiles for the first time. It's a great smile. He and Hank board the coach. Everyone steps back as it pulls away. Zack waves from the window.**

**On the town, waving back as the coach disappears in the distance...**

**FADE OUT:**

**THE END**

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