

# Washita

## Part I

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**TEASER**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. CHEYENNE LODGE - DAY ONE**

In a make-shift clinic, **MIKE** listens with a stethoscope to the back of a frail elder, **LITTLE THUNDER**. **SNOW BIRD** translates.

**SNOW BIRD**

Little Thunder says he feels much better.

**MIKE**

(surprised) I can't find any signs of congestion at all... (moves to chest) Please ask him to breathe deeply?

**SNOW BIRD**

(in Cheyenne) Medicine Woman asks you to take a strong breath.

Little Thunder draws a breath. As he exhales, Mike pulls back.

**MIKE**

What is that odor? It smells like ... garlic?

**SNOW BIRD**

Cloud Dancing gives it with his tea. And your medicine.

**MIKE**

Really? Garlic for the lungs?

**LITTLE THUNDER**

(in Cheyenne, proudly)  
I am strong like a bear.

**SNOW BIRD**

He says he is strong like a bear.

He suddenly hoists Mike up and slings her over his shoulder. Caught by surprise, Mike appeals to snow Bird, laughing:

**MIKE**

Please thank Little Thunder for the fine ... demonstration.

**SNOW BIRD**

(amused, in Cheyenne) Medicine Woman sees you are stronger.

Little Thunder puts Mike back down, then begins to scold her.

**LITTLE THUNDER**

(in Cheyenne)  
You must listen to Cloud Dancing. You know the fancy medicine of the Whites, but he is wise in the old ways.

**SNOW BIRD**

He says you must listen to Cloud Dancing. You know the fancy medicine of the whites, but he is wise in the old ways.

As Mike gently eases him toward the door of the lodge:

**MIKE**

Yes ... I will do that. Thank you so much... (as he leaves, to Snow Bird) *Little Thunder?*

They share a smile and follow him out.

**EXT. CHEYENNE LODGE - CONTINUOUS**

As they exit, **CLOUD DANCING** approaches carrying a blanket wrapped bundle which he carefully sets down.

**MIKE**

Cloud Dancing, you must tell me about your use of garlic

She stops as he unwraps **NO HARM COMES TO HIM**, an emaciated boy whose radiant spirit shines through his tired eyes. He smiles up at Mike, who looks questioningly to Cloud Dancing.

**CLOUD DANCING**

**His name is No Harm Comes To Him.**

**SNOW BIRD**

**(explains to Mike) When the soldiers destroyed our village at Sand Creek, his mother covered him with her body.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**His medicine is very strong.**

**Mike smiles back at No Harm and squats down to his level.**

**MIKE**

**No Harm Comes To Him, you have a big name for such a small boy.**

**NO HARM**

**My people call me No Harm. But I am not so small -- only tired.**

**MIKE**

**Well, perhaps I can find out why.**

**She begins a gentle exam, peering in his eyes, feeling his arms palpating his abdomen. As she works, No Harm pulls a small wooden flute from a pouch, looks to Cloud Dancing.**

**NO HARM**

**Cloud Dancing, I have practiced.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**Let us hear what you learn.**

**And No Harm begins blowing a simple MELODY on the flute.**

**MIKE**

**That's a very beautiful song.**

**NO HARM**

**(glows proudly) Cloud Dancing teaches me.**

**Mike smiles as he resumes playing his flute. Disturbed by her findings, she steps away, indicating for Cloud Dancing and Snow Bird to follow her. They talk quietly.**

**MIKE**  
He's quite a boy.

**SNOW BIRD**  
And very special to my husband. More, since Walks On Clouds --  
Catching Cloud Dancing's look, she stops.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
He is special to *all* our people.

**SNOW BIRD**  
(hopeful to Mike) You can tell us what is wrong?

Mike glances at Cloud Dancing, sees it's no mystery to him.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
I see what is wrong, but she will not hear it from me.

**MIKE**  
(gently to Snow Bird) No Harm has the same symptoms I've seen in so many of your people -- dry skin, exhaustion, the atrophied muscles --

**CLOUD DANCING**  
Speak plain. He is starving.

**MIKE**  
He's just not getting enough of the proper foods. (beat, hopeful) Sully's at Fort Lyon trying to retrieve government supplies. He should be back any day.

Off Cloud Dancing's skeptical look, Mike turns to watch No Harm still practicing. He smiles back -- giving Mike an idea.

**MIKE**  
But until then, perhaps No Harm could come home with me ... I could help nurse him back. If it'd be alright with the tribe?

Understanding, Snow Bird nods. Relieved, Mike asks No Harm.

**MIKE**  
Would you like that? I have a boy a little older than you. I know he would love a new

friend.

No Harm beams, looks hopefully to Snow Bird.

**SNOW BIRD**

Come, we will get your bundle.

She helps the boy out. Mike reads Cloud Dancing's concern.

**MIKE**

Cloud Dancing, if anyone can bring back those provisions, Sully can.

**CLOUD DANCING**

What makes you think this time will be different?

**MIKE**

Because I need to have hope. (off his nod) Do you have a moment?

**EXT. CHEYENNE CAMP - DAY ONE**

At her horse, Mike pulls a buckskin from her saddle bags and hands it to Cloud Dancing. He opens it revealing a partially made man's shirt. As Cloud Dancing admires her workmanship:

**MIKE**

I rubbed it with liver and used the rope as you suggested. I must admit it did get softer.

**CLOUD DANCING**

You have done your work well. Sully will be pleased.

**MIKE**

I hope so. I've never made a wedding gift for a husband before.

She takes the shirt back and returns it to the saddlebag. Cloud Dancing digs out items from a pouch at his waist.

**CLOUD DANCING**

I found the stones as I promised. And the claws of a hawk. They will give him courage to face the unknown.

**MIKE**

...You mean marriage to me? (OFF his sly smile) Thank you.

As Mike adds them to her saddlebag, **YELLS** and **RIFLE SHOTS** catch their attention.

**THEIR POV - DOG SOLDIERS**

**FIRING** rifles in the air, ride into camp towing horses with sacks of grain and sides of beef lashed on their backs. More **INDIANS** rush to unload the white man's goods. **BLACK KETTLE** steps from a lodge and speaks sharply to the Dog Soldiers.

**RESUME ANGLE**

Mike watches, clearly disturbed. Snow Bird approaches with No Harm, but stops short as Mike turns on Cloud Dancing.

**MIKE**  
Dog Soldiers!?

**CLOUD DANCING**  
You must go now.

**MIKE**  
You still allow them here -- after everything they've done? They killed your son!

**CLOUD DANCING**  
(tightens) I will not judge all by the actions of one.

**MIKE**  
But it's wrong! They're *all* stealing from innocent ranchers!

**CLOUD DANCING**  
They are feeding my people.

And he walks on past Snow Bird, who trades an uneasy look with Mike, then steps up with No Harm. Mike tries to calm, forcing a smile as she lifts the boy onto her horse.

**SNOW BIRD**  
(gently) Forgive him. My husband is ashamed. He feels responsible.

**MIKE**  
...So does Sully. (a troubled beat) Why is it the people of real heart always struggle, while the guilty sleep well?

She looks to Snow Bird, and the two women from different worlds share a silent understanding. Then:

**MIKE**

Snow Bird, surely you don't approve of the Dog Soldiers' raids?

**SNOW BIRD**

I have never found killing to be a true path to peace ... Nor has Cloud Dancing.

OFF her steady look, Mike turns back to watch the Dog Soldiers flaunting their victory, waving the spoils of their raid in Black Kettle's face. Cloud Dancing also watches, removed from the celebration. He looks back at Mike. As their gazes lock:

**FADE OUT.**

**END TEASER**

**ACT ONE**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY TWO**

Days later. DOROTHY skims through a newspaper as JAKE waits.

**DOROTHY**

It's gotta be here somewhere.

LOREN tabulates supplies which MATTHEW takes outside. Mike comes over with more goods.

**MIKE**

Loren, I don't see any peas outside.

**LOREN**

All I got left's in cans.

**MIKE**

Alright, I'll take five, please.

Mike checks over her list. MYRA enters with baby SAMANTHA CRYING, causing GRACE

to look over from her shopping.

**MIKE**

Hello, Myra ... I thought Samantha's crying had calmed down?

**MYRA**

It just started up again.

Loren returns with cans while Mike calmly checks the baby.

**MIKE**

Perhaps she's starting to teethe. If you stop by later, I can give you something to rub on her gums.

**MYRA**

Thanks Dr. Mike ... Loren, could I get two pounds 'a beans?

**LOREN**

(nods, then to Mike) Comes to seven dollars --

**DOROTHY**

Here it is ...

Getting everyone's attention, she reads from newspaper:

**DOROTHY**

"The Palmer homestead east of Colorado Springs was attacked Thursday morning by a Cheyenne war party of Dog Soldiers.

Mike tenses as she digs for money.

**JAKE**

I knew it. Hostiles're startin' up all over again.

He looks to Loren, who quickly moves off to get beans. Grace steps closer.

**GRACE**

Was anybody hurt?

**DOROTHY**

Says two of his best steers was stolen, along with half a ton of grain ... And his barn was burned clean to the ground... (reads) "Palmer hid in his cellar throughout the savage

attack. 'Thank the good Lord my woman and girls was in Denver,' Palmer said. 'Them bloodthirsty Injuns was lookin' to scalp us all.'"

**MIKE**

It sounds to me like they were looking for food.

Loren returns. Mike feels all eyes on her.

**JAKE**

By *torchin'* a barn?

**MIKE**

They're just striking out in frustration. They wouldn't be raiding farms if the government kept its promises to provide.

Stunned, Dorothy lowers the paper to stare at her friend.

**DOROTHY**

Michaela, you're the *last* person I 'spect to be defendin' Dog Soldiers!

Mike and Myra trade glances. Myra takes her beans and starts for the door.

**MIKE**

I'm *not* defending them, I'm merely suggesting there's more this story . That paper presents a very limited point of view. Chief Black Kettle and most of the Cheyenne people want peace.

In the b.g., Myra bumps into GENERAL CUSTER coming in.

**MYRA**

I'm sorry, I wasn't watchin'

**CUSTER**

No, I beg *your* pardon, Madame.

The familiar voice causes Mike to turn and look.

**ANOTHER ANGLE - DOOR**

where Custer, with a "may I" look, takes CRYING Samantha from Myra's arms. The baby calms as Custer cuddles it.

**CUSTER**

There, there, no crying allowed. (smiles at Myra) She is beautiful. My wife Libby and I hope to have a daughter -- (back to baby) just as pretty as you one day.

**MYRA**

Thank you. She is sweet.

Myra takes her baby back. Custer tips his hat as she exits, then moves to the counter. He smiles at an unsettled Mike.

**CUSTER**

Dr. Quinn, how lovely to see you again.

**MIKE**

(cool) I see no need for false pleasantries, Mr. Custer.

A strained silence as Mike counts out her money to Loren. Undaunted, Custer looks around at the others.

**CUSTER**

Well, perhaps this wild territory is in more need of civility than I even thought ... Any chance of getting some eggs, Mr. Bray?

**LOREN**

I can get four dozen to your camp by nightfall.

**CUSTER**

Fine. Can't be making souffles without eggs now, can we?

**LOREN**

Just come to me if there's anything more you need, *General*.

Loren makes his point with a look at Mike.

**JAKE**

Goes for me, too.

**CUSTER**

I will do that, Gentlemen. (nods at Dorothy) Ma'am... And good day to you, Dr. Quinn.

And he's gone. Mike follows with Jake and Loren on her heels.

**EXT. STORE - CONTINUOUS**

They exit to watch Custer mount with his waiting escort. Army wagons and Calvary race past. Custer catches Mike's stare.

**MIKE**

What are you doing back in Colorado?

**CUSTER**

I suppose you should ask General Sheridan that, since it was he who requested my return.

With a grin, Custer and escort gallop off to join soldiers headed into the distant field. Watching them go, Matthew returns from the wagon.

**MATTHEW**

I thought Custer got court-martialled.

**LOREN**

Lucky for us they changed their minds. That weren't nothin', anyways.

**MIKE**

He had his own men shot! Without so much as a trial.

**LOREN**

They were cowards. Deserters!

**MIKE**

(calmly pointed) And maybe they had good reason.

**LOREN**

(uneasy) Ah, there you go again, tryin' to twist things all around ...

Loren goes back inside. Jake studies Mike's reaction.

**JAKE**

Looks like the government's finally gonna do somethin' 'bout them savages.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**EXT. WOODS - DAY TWO**

**No Harm -- hardly the "savage" -- looks much stronger creeping along with BRIAN on a hunt. Brian's about to speak, but No Harm holds up his hand, dashes to a boulder, then motions. Brian joins him and they crouch. No Harm whispers:**

**NO HARM**

**When Cheyenne stalk buffalo, there can be no talk. Only sign. (demonstrates) The buffalo herd is over there.**

**Brian attempts to mimic No Harm's signs. No Harm suppresses a giggle, moves swiftly to another rock nearby. Brian follows, but steps on a branch that SNAPS. As they startle and look --**

**A RABBIT dashes out from behind a boulder and scampers away. The boys react, disappointed.**

**BRIAN**  
**I'm sorry -- stupid branch.**

**NO HARM**  
**You could not help it. You are not Cheyenne.**

**Growing weary, No Harm sits, taking out his flute to practice.**

**BRIAN**  
**What's bein' Cheyenne got to do with it?**

**NO HARM**  
**Being silent is everything to us ... If we laugh and the buffalo run off, we can not eat. If we cry and the enemy hears, our village could be attacked. (BLOWS a few notes) Cheyenne babies are taught never to cry.**

**BRIAN**  
**A baby that never cries? Go on.**

**NO HARM**  
**When the Bluecoats killed my mother, I made myself very small and she hid me under her. And when she died, I made no sound. Not until Cloud Dancing found me ... I did not cry, so I lived.**

**A moment as Brian tries to digest this. Then:**

**BRIAN**  
My real ma died, too. But I cried. A lot.

No Harm nods in sympathy, then brightens, excited.

**NO HARM**  
Brian! We can be kolas!

**BRIAN**  
What's kolas?

**NO HARM**  
It is Cheyenne custom. we will hunt together, share things, fight for each other in battle.

**BRIAN**  
Sort of like bein' best friends?

No Harm nods, then solemnly gives Brian his flute. Brian thinks a moment, then digs in his pocket and pulls out a jackknife he ceremoniously gives to No Harm. As they grin --

**INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT TWO**

Brian teaches No Harm checkers, WOLF asleep at their feet. Nearby, Mike and COLLEEN fit the buckskin shirt over Matthew.

**MIKE**  
It looks crooked. Does it look crooked?

She pulls one shoulder higher. Matthew looks, it is crooked.

**MATTHEW**  
It's fine.

**MIKE**  
But I want it to fit right.

**COLLEEN**  
Sully's gonna love it, just 'cause you made it. He already knows you're not so good at sewin'.

Mike hides her reaction to the innocent aside. Resigned, she grabs the hawk claws and a pencil from the table.

**MIKE**

I'll put these claws along the shoulder ... And the stones go over the heart. Cloud Dancing said they help to give you a long life because they last forever.

Wolf stirs, BARKS and goes to the door. Brian reacts:

**BRIAN**

It's Sully! Sully's back!

**MIKE**

Oh no, quick!

Panic hits. Colleen helps Mike try to pull the shirt over Matthew's head. Brian is already up and racing to the door.

**MIKE**

No, Brian -- *wait!*

They've got the shirt half-way up, but it's stuck on his head. Thinking fast, Mike pushes Matthew towards the back door.

**MATTHEW**

What're you doin'?

**MIKE**

Out the back. Hurry!

She shoves him outside as FOOTSTEPS are heard. Colleen grabs a book and sits. Mike does the same, diving for the table as the door opens. SULLY enters to Brian's surprise hug.

**SULLY**

Brian ... Ever'body.

**MIKE**

Welcome back.

**COLLEEN**

Hey, Sully.

They sit stiffly, trying too hard to appear normal.

**SULLY**

**No Harm, didn't expect to see you.**

**NO HARM**

**Brian is my new kola.**

**BRIAN**

**We're gonna watch after each other.**

**SULLY**

**Yeah? That's good ...**

**Sully drops his things and crosses, squeezing Colleen's arm as he passes. Then he leans down close and kisses Mike.**

**MIKE**

**I missed you.**

**SULLY**

**Me, too ... Watcha readin'?**

**MIKE**

**A book.**

**Sully looks. Amused, he turns the book right-side-up. Mike smiles meekly, closes it and rises to get him some coffee.**

**MIKE**

**How was your trip?**

**Sully's mood dampens immediately. Mike reads his look:**

**MIKE**

**You didn't get the supplies?**

**SULLY**

**Weren't there. And they ain't comin' either. Army wants all the tribes movin' south to that new Indian Territory.**

**MIKE**

**But their home is here now! (beat, lowers voice) I'm afraid I've bad news as well. The Dog Soldiers raided another ranch ... And Custer's back.**

**SULLY**  
You're jokin'.

**MIKE**  
I wish I were.

**SULLY**  
He's s'posed to be kicked out!

Mike doesn't know what to say. They share a frustrated moment.

**MIKE**  
There has to be a way to stop the Dog Soldiers from these attacks.

**SULLY**  
Black Kettle can't even stop 'em.

**MIKE**  
We have to try something.

OFF her determination, they look across the room to the boys. Oblivious, No Harm jumps Brian's checkers ...

**EXT. LIVERY - DAY THREE**

Sully and **ROBERT E** enter the work area.

**ROBERT E**  
Just came in yesterday.

**SULLY**  
Dr. Mike see it?

**ROBERT E**  
Nope, kept it covered back here.

A large, blanket-draped form leans against the wall. Robert E pulls it off to **REVEAL** a long, beautiful plank of mahogany.

**ROBERT E**  
Gonna make one fine bedboard...

**Sully nods, running his hand appreciatively over the wood.**

**SULLY**  
Never seen wood like this.

**ROBERT E**  
Don't 'spect so. Seein' it grows clear 'cross the ocean.

**Sully pulls out some carving tools, hands to Robert E.**

**SULLY**  
Could you sharpen these up?

**ROBERT E**  
(nods) Bring it all out in the mornin'.

**SULLY**  
Thanks ... Robert E, 'bout the rest I owe on this -- could it wait a few days? Somethin's come up.

**EXT. STORE - SAME MOMENT - DAY THREE**

**Loren sweeps around a pile of supplies; sacks of beans, corn meal, dried beef. Seated, an amused HANK slices an apple as he watches Mike and Matthew load them into the wagon.**

**HANK**  
That ain't gonna change nothin'.

**Mike ignores him. Dorothy exits, sees them working -- and Loren sweeping.**

**DOROTHY**  
Loren, why aren't you helpin'?

**LOREN**  
Last thing we oughta be doin' is *feedin'* 'em.

**MATTHEW**  
Didn't have a problem takin' money for all this.

**LOREN**

**That's business.**

**Annoyed, Dorothy starts to help, catching Mike's grateful look.**

**MIKE**

**It's good *business* to honor our promises to our Cheyenne neighbors. Perhaps if we did, all this fighting would stop.**

**HANK**

**Warrin's all them heathens know. It's what they live for.**

**MIKE**

**On more than one occasion, those "heathens" have come to this town's assistance.**

**HANK**

**Tried to burn it, too...**

**MIKE**

**Those were Dog Soldiers, and you know it.**

**HANK**

**A Indian's a Indian's a Indian, Michaela ... Won't be no peace round here 'til all of 'em's dead.**

**He moves on. Mike looks at Loren, who turns away and resumes sweeping. Sully approaches.**

**SULLY**

**Got enough for a couple more sacks a meal.**

**EXT. CHEYENNE CAMP - DAY THREE**

**Sacks of meal and other supplies are unloaded by Sully, Cloud Dancing and other Cheyenne. In the b.g., Mike receives a "thank you" from Black Kettle, then walks up to the wagon.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**No Harm -- he is well?**

**SULLY**

**Gettin' stronger everyday.**

**MIKE**

And beating Brian at checkers.

**CLOUD DANCING**

(smiles) Please tell him he is missed.

**MIKE**

We will ... There're beans here, corn meal, some dried beef --

She sees Cloud Dancing has stopped to examine a sack closely.

**CLOUD DANCING**

There are no markings on this. (OFF their uneasy silence) These did not come from the army. (puts it together) And how long do you think *you* can feed all my people?

**SULLY**

(a difficult truth) Government's shippin' supplies to Fort Cobb now. They want all you movin' south.

Unsettled, Cloud Dancing signals the others to stop unloading.

**MIKE**

Cloud Dancing, I know we can find a way --

**CLOUD DANCING**

And what way is that?

Mike doesn't have an answer. A **WAILING** grabs their attention.

A **YOUNG BRAVE** carries a man into camp followed by Children and an elder **CHEYENNE WOMAN** who **WEEPS** at their side. Others, including Snow Bird, rush over as the man is lowered --

Mike grabs her bag, runs after Sully and Cloud Dancing through the crowd to the man on the ground: Little Thunder. She examines him as Cloud Dancing asks the Young Brave:

**CLOUD DANCING** (in Cheyenne) How was he hurt?

**YOUNG BRAVE**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**(angry, in Cheyenne)**  
**He hunted Bear Creek.**  
**Bluecoats.**

**(translates for Mike)**  
**He was hunting by Bear**  
**Creek. Soldiers shot him.**

**SULLY**  
**... Custer!**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**(stunned) The Long Hair is back?**

**Sully nods. Devastated, Mike looks up and shakes her head.**

**MIKE**  
**Little Thunder's dead ...**

**Cloud Dancing looks at his people's sorrow, controls his rage.**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**It is done.**

**Dog Soldiers arise within camp, YELLING, gathering weapons, racing to their horses.**  
**OFF Snow Bird's pained look, Cloud Dancing makes a decision. He catches Black**  
**Kettle's troubled gaze, then scoops ash near a fire, wipes a smear across his face and**  
**heads for his horse. Sully's on his heels.**

**SULLY**  
**Where you goin'?**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**I will help my people in my own way now.**

**SULLY**  
**By joinin' the Dog Soldiers?! That ain't the way! Listen -- (grabs his arm) You do this 'n**  
**you'll be playin' right into their hands. You're just givin' the army reason to fight back!**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**Your Custer has tried to kill me twice. He will not have another chance.**

**He pulls free from Sully's grasp. Desperate, Sully pleads.**

**SULLY**

**Cloud Dancin', don't do this!**

**But Cloud Dancing mounts. He catches a rifle thrown at him by a Dog Soldier and joins the others racing from camp FIRING rifles. Sully trades troubled looks with Mike, who then looks across to Snow Bird, clearly shaken as we:**

**FADE OUT.**

**END ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. NEW HOMESTEAD - DAY FOUR**

**The house is nearly finished. Sully burns frustration sawing a porch board. He stops, seeing Robert E drive up in his wagon.**

**SULLY**  
**Mornin', Robert E.**

**ROBERT E**  
**Sully. Got your tools all sharp. (jumps down) Brought you a few 'a mine, too.**

**He hands the carving tools over. Sully takes them, surprised.**

**SULLY**  
**Thanks ... I thought you was carvin' yourselves a cradle?**

**ROBERT E**  
**I set that aside a spell.**

**Robert E avoids emotion, moving to the back of the wagon.**

**ROBERT E**  
**Not gettin' any answers to our letters 'bout adoptin' ... Seein' the cradle 'round, well, it just makes it harder on Grace.**

**As they unload the mahogany board:**

**SULLY**

Hope you ain't givin' up on the idea?

**ROBERT E**

Grace won't ... Me, I could be fine livin' the rest 'a my life just with her. But she's got her heart set on havin' children. A whole family...

**SULLY**

Then it'll happen. Just gotta give it time.

Robert E nods. As they carry the board to the house:

**EXT. GRACE'S CAFE - DAY FOUR**

In the b.g., tents are pitched in the field where soldiers run through drills. Custer holds court for a captivated audience: Jake, Hank, Loren, HORACE and others. Grace refills cups.

**CUSTER**

Red scarves glistening in the sun were a sight to behold. There were 1800 of us, all on horse. And when the Rebs saw us coming, their cannons quaked the earth like it would crack wide open.

**JAKE**

(after a beat) So what happened?

**CUSTER**

A soldier learns quickly to do what he must if the cause is just. (smiles pointedly at Grace) Thank you, Ma'am. (as Grace leaves) I could see the horses were skittish under the roar, so I turned to my musicians -- and ordered them to play "Yankee Doodle." And then we charged.

**LOREN**

(grins) I bet old Virginia regretted the day she ever saw the Seventh.

**CUSTER**

That she did, Mr. Bray. I can assure you.

He glances off, sees Dorothy waiting nearby with a paper.

**CUSTER**

Finished already, Mrs. Jennings?

**DOROTHY**

I figured you'd want to look this over, 'fore I did the printin'.

He takes it -- and her pencil, and skims the sheet.

**CUSTER**

It's fine work like this that's helping build a great America.

He hands it back. Dorothy blushes under his praise.

**DOROTHY**

This? This was nothing ...

**CUSTER**

I'm afraid you're wrong, Madame. (rises, serious) It is no act of chance that God has chosen *us* to settle this land. Always remember that ... Gentlemen.

Custer leaves. Curious, Hank snatches the sheet from Dorothy.

**HANK**

Lemme see that.

Hank looks, then reluctantly passes to Horace, who reads aloud:

**HORACE**

"With the compliments of Major General George Armstrong Custer, commander, Seventh Cavalry, United States Army... The honor of your company and escort is requested at a dinner..."

**EXT. CLINIC - DAY FOUR**

Mike hands the invitation back to Dorothy.

**MIKE**

You can tell him I decline.

**DOROTHY**

Why would you do that?

**MIKE**

Surely *you're* not accepting?

**DOROTHY**

I most certainly am. He's invitin' the council, all the important folks in town. (as Mike resumes sweeping) General Custer came here to do a job. He deserves our support.

**MIKE**

And what *job* is that?

**DOROTHY**

Why, protectin' our communities. And the railroad.

**MIKE**

(patience waning) Protecting? Yesterday his men shot a Cheyenne in the back!

**DOROTHY**

Well, he must've been doin' somethin'.

**MIKE**

He was an old, frail man trying to hunt. He was no threat.

**DOROTHY**

How do you know that? Did you see it happen?

**OFF** Mike's silence, Dorothy gives her back the invitation.

**DOROTHY**

If you're not goin', you're just gonna have to tell the General yourself.

Dorothy starts to go, but stops and looks back. Pointed:

**DOROTHY**

Michaela, maybe it's time you make up your mind -- whose side you're really on.

And she leaves. **HOLD** on Mike's troubled expression.

**INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT FOUR**

On the floor, No Harm teaches Brian a Cheyenne game. Sully, distracted, plays with them. Matthew and Colleen wash dishes while Mike writes letters at the table. Colleen looks over.

**COLLEEN**  
Who're you writin'?

**MIKE**  
The President, War Department. Now I'm writing General Sherman.

**COLLEEN**  
They won't listen. You already tried.

**MIKE**  
I believe opinions can be changed.

**COLLEEN**  
Everybody at school thinks Custer's a hero ... Just seems like you're all alone in this.

**MIKE**  
Standing alone doesn't make the fight less important, Colleen. You just have to try harder.

**MATTHEW**  
You ain't alone. Cheyenne've been friends to all of us.

**COLLEEN**  
Dog Soldier's aren't our friends.

Mike catches Sully's glance from across the room. It's grown more complicated, now that Cloud Dancing ...

**MIKE**  
No, they're not ... But I have to understand their desperation. Seeing their people killed, their land stolen, watching the railroad needlessly slaughter the buffalo ...

The SOUND of a birdcall pierces the night.

**SULLY**  
That's Black Kettle.

**MIKE**  
(grabs shawl) Matthew, please turn down the lamps. Colleen, watch the boys.

She joins Sully at the door, as does No Harm. Mike stops him.

**MIKE**

**No Harm, we need you to stay inside.**

**NO HARM**

**I want to see my Chief.**

**SULLY**

**It's dangerous for Black Kettle to be off the Reservation. Don't wanna call more attention than we gotta, understand? (OFF his nod) You'll see him soon, I promise.**

**Mike and Sully go out. The boys crowd at the window.**

**On the porch, Sully returns the CALL. Black Kettle rides out from a shadow. As Mike and Sully move to meet him...**

**INT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

**The boys at the window watch from the darkened room.**

**EXT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

**Black Kettle dismounts and signs a Cheyenne greeting.**

**SULLY**

**(in Cheyenne) Honored one, it is dangerous for you to come here.**

**BLACK KETTLE**

**(signs in Cheyenne) My son, my fears are for Cloud Dancing. Have you seen him?**

**INT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

**NO HARM**

**(reading signs) He is worried for Cloud Dancing. He asks if they see him**

**EXT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

**SULLY**

**(in Cheyenne) Not since yesterday.**

**BLACK KETTLE**

**SULLY**

(signs in Cheyenne)  
I know he rides with the Dog Soldiers, but I had hoped... My sons no longer listen to me. I do not know how to call him back to our village.

He knows Cloud Dancin' rides with Dog Soldiers, but he hoped to find 'im here ... Says his sons no longer listen to him. He doesn't know how to call Cloud Dancin' back.

A helpless beat. Black Kettle looks to Mike, signs:

**BLACK KETTLE**  
(in Cheyenne) You care for No Harm, is he well?

**SULLY**  
He's askin' 'bout No Harm.

**MIKE**  
(to Black Kettle)  
He's fine. He and my youngest boy have become kolas.

**SULLY**  
(in Cheyenne)  
He's fine. The boys are kolas.

As Sully translates, a wistful smile comes to Black Kettle's troubled face. He signs directly to Mike as Sully translates.

**BLACK KETTLE**  
(in Cheyenne)  
We are of different nations, but we are one people.

**SULLY**  
We are of different nations, but we are one people.

The old chief takes Mike's hand.

**INT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

Still reading the signs, No Harm grasps Brian's hand.

**NO HARM**  
I take your hand and my heart soars.

**EXT. HOMESTEAD - CONTINUOUS**

**MIKE**

I wish it was always like this.

**SULLY**

(in Cheyenne)  
It should always be like this.

Black Kettle studies Mike a long moment. He responds with a sign. Mike waits. OFF Sully's silence:

**MIKE**

What did he say? ... Sully?

**SULLY**

(with difficulty) He said, "I live in hopes."

**MIKE**

Hopes ... (in Cheyenne) Hopes.

Black Kettle reacts, nods. As they hold each other's look:

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. HOMESTEAD PORCH - NIGHT FOUR**

Much later. Deep in thought, Sully sit on the steps. Mike comes outside with mugs of coffee. She sits and gives him one.

**SULLY**

Thanks.

**MIKE**

The boys fell asleep on the floor.

**SULLY**

Should just leave 'em there, they'll stay warm by the fire ... You warm enough?

**MIKE**

It is a little cool.

**SULLY**

Good.

He puts an arm around her. Mike smiles, then quickly sobers.

**MIKE**

It's so hard trying to imagine Cloud Dancing riding with the Dog Soldiers. (studies Sully)  
It'd be like seeing you carry a rifle.

Sully kisses her forehead. A troubled silence.

**MIKE**

Snow Bird must be so worried ... Do you think he'll come back?

**SULLY**

Not with Custer around ... Figure Sheridan brought him back cause he knows Custer's like a loaded gun. Question isn't *if* he's gonna be used -- it's when ... (beat) 'Course, if somebody persuasive was to talk to Custer... maybe work his mind 'round a little ...

Mike catches his look, can't *believe* what he's suggesting.

**MIKE**

You think I should go to his dinner?

**SULLY**

Think about it. He's askin' ever'body who's got influence over the town. He ain't just here to kill Indians -- he's makin' sure folks think killin' 'em's the right thing to do.

She digests this a moment, but the idea is appalling.

**MIKE**

I could never sit there eating government beefsteak. Not with the Cheyenne going hungry just over the hill ... I'd choke.

**SULLY**

You're right.

**MIKE**

You're the one who always says you can't reason with the army.

**SULLY**

(knows she's hooked) It was a bad idea ...

Mulling it over, Mike tries to talk herself out of it.

**MIKE**

Custer would never listen to me.

**INT. ARMY MESS TENT - NIGHT FIVE**

**CUSTER**

I'm delighted you changed your mind, Dr. Quinn.

Custer holds a chair for Mike as Loren, Dorothy, the REVEREND, Horace, Jake, Sully, and TWO CAVALRY OFFICERS -- all in formal attire -- sit at the table drenched in candlelight, crystal, and food. ORDERLIES hover, serving the plates.

**MIKE**

Actually, I'm hoping you might do the same tonight.

Sully sends her a "slow down" look as Custer sits, chuckles.

**CUSTER**

Change my mind? I *am* intrigued.

**DOROTHY**

Your crystal is lovely, General.

**CUSTER**

Thank you. I do try to maintain a little oasis of civilization, even out here in the wilderness.

Mike stops an Orderly from pouring wine in her glass.

**MIKE**

No, thank you.

He moves on, skipping Custer, who catches Mike's reaction.

**CUSTER**

I see we finally have some common ground, Dr. Quinn.

**JAKE**

You sayin' *you* don't drink?

**CUSTER**

I am, Sir. Unlike many of my fellow officers, I believe liquor and war do not mix.

He pierces some meat from a platter and drops the chunks to his DOGS near his chair. Mike watches, concealing her disdain.

**MIKE**  
Is that what we're at, General? War?

**DOROTHY**  
(a tight smile) Michaela, can't we just enjoy our dinner?

**CUSTER**  
It's alright, Mrs. Jennings. I'm quite used to sparring with the olive branchers in Washington. I assure you a debate with a lovely lady -- is far more appealing.

**MIKE**  
You haven't answered my question, General.

**CUSTER**  
The United States does not wage war on the Indian. But if they refuse to abide by our treaties, they must suffer consequences.

A strained silence.

**REVEREND**  
I haven't tasted turtle soup since my days at the seminary.

Loren reacts, lowers his spoonful of soup --

**MIKE**  
They do suffer the consequences of our "treaties," General. Your dogs eat better than the Cheyenne people.

**CUSTER**  
(forces patience) Please try to understand, Dr. Quinn, the government has every intention of feeding the Indians who want peace. *South* of the Arkansas River, at Fort Cobb.

**MIKE**  
(a glimmer of hope) But Black Kettle *does* want peace. And they were promised they could stay in the north and hunt.

**CUSTER**

**The Treaty of Medicine Lodge gives no such promise.**

**MIKE**

**It was given to them verbally.**

**SULLY**

**I was there. Heard it.**

**REVEREND**

**(OFF the silence) Seems to me, if a promise was made, it shouldn't matter if it was written.**

**Mike and Sully react to his support. Cornered, Custer turns to Mike.**

**CUSTER**

**For one who was abducted by Cheyenne renegades, I find your attitude quite surprising.**

**MIKE**

**(calmly) I happen to believe hurting innocent people is wrong. No matter *who* the offender.**

**She holds his stare. A COMMOTION outside breaks the tense silence. A SOLDIER appears urgently at the flap.**

**SOLDIER**

**Sorry to interrupt, Sir, but the lady Doctor's needed right away.**

**All come to their feet as Sully helps Mike into her wrap.**

**MIKE**

**What happened?**

**SOLDIER**

**Railroad workers got attacked north 'a town. They're bringin' wounded in now.**

**DOROTHY**

**I'll get Colleen.**

**REVEREND**

**I'll go, too. You may need me.**

**Mike nods grimly. Custer turns to the Soldier.**

**CUSTER**  
Who attacked, Private?

**SOLDIER**  
Indian War Party, Sir. Cheyenne.

This stops Mike at the door. Custer meets her troubled look.

**CUSTER**  
Perhaps some powder and lead will be the best food for them now.

Shaken, Mike and Sully exit, followed by Dorothy and the Reverend. Custer faces the remnants of his party, and smiles.

**FADE OUT.**

**END ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT FIVE**

Confusion and alarm; **SHOUTS** and lanterns direct **SOLDIERS** unloading wounded **WORKERS** from army wagons into the clinic.

**INT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS**

Teeming with activity; the Reverend and Sully set up extra cots as Soldiers bring in the last of the injured on stretchers. Dorothy pours fresh water in pans. Colleen cleans the leg wound of a **WORKER** writhing in pain as Mike prepares a hypodermic.

**WORKER**  
Snuck up while we was eatin' ... (flinches) Most of us ain't even got guns.

**COLLEEN**  
I know it hurts, I'm almost done.

**WORKER**

**Had me a rifle, I 'da killed 'em all. Stinkin' devils ...**

**Colleen and Mike trade solemn looks as Mike gives him the shot.**

**MIKE**

**The morphine will help ease the pain. Try and lay still now.**

**WORKER**

**They can all burn in hell!**

**MIKE**

**(composed, to Colleen) When you're finished here, I'll need your help removing a bullet.**

**OFF Colleen's grim nod, Mike moves on as a stretcher passes with another worker, WILLIAM HAYLEY, on it. Mike quickly checks the wound in his shoulder and arm.**

**WILLIAM**

**I got a wife in Soda Springs -- she's gonna be worried.**

**MIKE**

**You'll be alright, I'm a doctor. (indicates to Soldiers) Please put him over there.**

**As they start off, he clutches Mike by the arm, pleading:**

**WILLIAM**

**Her name's Michelle ... Michelle Hayley. Can ya get word to her?**

**MIKE**

**We'll make certain she knows you're safe.**

**He lets go and the Soldiers move him on. Mike takes bandages to a MAN on a cot. As she wraps his head wound, Mike sees Dorothy give water to a YOUNG WORKER, his arm in a sling.**

**YOUNG WORKER**

**A bunch tried settin' fire to the trestle but we chased 'em off. Rest was raidin' the grub tent ...**

**Dorothy pulls her pencil, opens her pad. She catches Mike watching and their gazes lock for an uncomfortable moment. Then, Dorothy turns back to the man. Poised to take notes:**

**DOROTHY**

**How many were in the war party?**

**YOUNG WORKER**

**Dozen, maybe ... Hard to say -- they was whoopin' and hollerin' all over camp ...**

**Disturbed, Mike tries to re-focus her attention on her work ...**

**EXT. CLINIC - NIGHT FIVE**

**Later. Sully waits, watching Soldiers race by as Townspeople gather at the edge of town. Mike steps outside, clearly drained from the ordeal. Sully quickly rises with concern.**

**MIKE**

**There're some serious injuries, but everyone should recover... We were lucky this time.**

**SULLY**

**This time?**

**MIKE**

**Nobody was killed.. Maybe there won't be serious repercussions.**

**SULLY**

**They've killed before. And this ain't runnin' off a few stock, or stealin' food or some guns. This time the Cheyenne attacked the railroad ... Nobody's gonna forget this.**

**Mike struggles with this truth. Sully grabs his jacket.**

**MIKE**

**What're you going to do?**

**SULLY**

**I'm gonna find Cloud Dancin'.**

**MIKE**

**(stops him) Please, be careful.**

**She embraces him tightly -- then lets go. As Sully starts off, Mike turns her attention down the street.**

**EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS**

**A gathering riddled with fear. Jake is at the center, playing to the crowd that includes Hank, Loren, Reverend and Dorothy. In the field beyond, Soldiers prepare to ride.**

**JAKE**

**The railroad's bringin' the kind a progress we all want! And them Injuns know that! When they attack the railroad, they're attackin' the very heart of this town!**

**People ROAR approval. Mike moves to the edge of the crowd, finding Robert E and Grace, Horace and Myra holding her baby.**

**JAKE**

**(continues, to crowd) There ain't gonna be no gettin' 'long with the Indian. Sooner we all see that, the better!**

**MIKE**

**What's Jake doing?**

**ROBERT E**

**He's just rabble-rousin'.**

**GRACE**

**It's not takin' much. This attack's got people scared.**

**JAKE**

**(to crowd) We need action! And the man to do the job is right here! People of Colorado Springs, I give you General George Armstrong Custer!**

**Jake moves aside as Custer steps forward to the crowd's CHEERS.**

**ROBERT E**

**I don't like the feel 'a this.**

**MYRA**

**You can't blame folks. What's to stop that war party from headin' right into town?**

**MIKE**

**I'm sure that won't happen, Myra.**

**HORACE**

**... They done it before.**

**CUSTER**

**My good people, the Cheyenne -- all Indians -- are enemies to our civilization. We cannot allow them to carry out their barbarous warfare under any pretext they choose to allege.**

**Mike reacts. The Reverend weaves his way over with alarm.**

**REVEREND**

**Dr. Mike, we have to stop this!**

**MIKE**

**I agree.**

**CUSTER**

**And I assure you, I intend to use all of my powers to prevent them from doing so!**

**More CHEERS as Mike and the Reverend push forward, shouting:**

**MIKE**

**Listen to us, *please!* ...  
Please listen!**

**REVEREND**

**Everybody, stop! Please!**

**As the crowd starts to settle:**

**REVEREND**

**All Cheyenne are *not* our enemy!**

**MIKE**

**This attack was a small band of Dog Soldiers. The army knows Black Kettle wants peace, he signed a treaty with our --**

**CUSTER**

**(talks over her) What the army *knows*, Doctor, is the seven wounded men lying in your clinic -- all attacked by your "peaceful" Cheyenne.**

**Mike keeps appealing to the crowd.**

**MIKE**

**You know some of these people. And you know they don't want to fight. They just want to live on their land!**

**Loren holds her look, clearly uncomfortable, as:**

**HANK**

Ain't gonna be room for the both of us. Somebody's gotta go.

**LOREN**

(conflicted) Maybe they got a point. Ain't all of em causin' trouble. I gotta say -- I met some good Indians.

**CUSTER**

And / agree with my commanding Officer, Mr. Bray... "The only good Indian, is a dead Indian!"

And the crowd ERUPTS with approval and louder CHEERS. CLOSE on Mike, feeling the chances for peace slipping away...

**EXT. CREEK - DAY SIX**

It's early. Sully, in change of clothes, rides his horse along the creek bed. From the trees ahead, THREE DOG SOLDIERS ride out into the open to cut off his path. Sully stops, waits.

One of the Dog Soldiers is Cloud Dancing. He speaks to the others, who turn and ride away. Cloud Dancing rides on to Sully. They greet each other in Cheyenne, then:

**CLOUD DANCING**

You risk much by coming here.

**SULLY**

We gotta talk.

Cloud Dancing knows why Sully's there. They dismount and walk their horses along the creek. It's difficult for them both.

**CLOUD DANCING**

I have been thinking of my son, when he joined the Dog Soldiers... I think now he was right.

**SULLY**

And your father -- was he wrong?

**CLOUD DANCING**

(avoids his look) You have come about the train.

**SULLY**

**You ain't gonna be able to stop it. These attacks are only makin' things worse.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**When I was a boy, I could ride for many days and meet only my people. I could hunt when I wanted. And the buffalo, they were as many as stones in this creek. They could fill a valley as long as you could see ... (a quiet rage) Now I am told where I must put my lodge. Where I can hunt, what I can eat. And if I do not do as they say, they want to kill me. (stops walking, beat) Understand me, I do not wish for this fight.**

**SULLY**

**I *do* understand. Cloud Dancin', I know what your people've lost. But I can't figure what you think this is gonna accomplish.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**In the north, Red Cloud and the Oglala fight. They have driven off the soldiers.**

**SULLY**

**Only cause the settlers aren't movin' there. Once the white man wants the Powder River country, Red Cloud won't stand any more chance than you do.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**Is that a reason not to fight -- because it is impossible?... Is that what you would do? (quiet, pointed) My brother, is there nothing you would not fight for?**

**OFF Sully's silence, Cloud Dancing has his answer.**

**SULLY**

**And when war breaks out? What happens to the women and children, the old ones?**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**My people have been promised protection at Fort Cobb. Tonight Black Kettle moves them south, where they will be safe.**

**EXT. CHEYENNE CAMP - DAY (DUSK) SIX**

**Camp is dismantled; lodges, provisions all packed onto travois hitched to horses. The Cheyenne make final preparations to go; the mood somber. Colleen and Matthew are with Brian and No Harm. Sully stands nearby speaking with Black Kettle and MEDICINE WOMAN LATER, a dignified woman at his side.**

## **ANOTHER ANGLE**

Watching them talk, Mike helps Snow Bird tuck away the last belongings into Snow Bird's travois. Mike is curious.

**MIKE**

Who's that woman with Black Kettle?

**SNOW BIRD**

His wife, Medicine Woman Later.

Snow Bird is amused by Mike's surprise at the name.

**SNOW BIRD**

When Black Kettle gave you your name, you did not understand how it was special ... (considers Mike) You have been my good friend, Medicine Woman. You have stood with me through many sorrows.

Mike is working hard to contain her emotions. Softly:

**MIKE**

You've been my good friend, too.

Snow Bird hands her a charm made of feathers and quills.

**SNOW BIRD**

For your union with Sully. It has brought many happy suns over my lodge with Cloud Dancing.

**MIKE**

It's lovely ... Thank you.

Mike is clearly overwhelmed by the moment. Fighting tears, she looks around at her friends preparing to leave their home.

**MIKE**

Why does it have to be this way?

**SNOW BIRD**

(a wistful smile) One day, perhaps many seasons from now, my people and your people will come to understand one another, and no longer be afraid ... I know this truth because I know you.

**MIKE**  
(reacts, struggling) *I will see you soon.*

**ANGLE - BRIAN AND NO HARM**  
as Colleen and Matthew look on.

**BRIAN**  
You don't have to go. You can stay with us, long as you want.

**NO HARM**  
I am Cheyenne. I belong with my people.

A different movement starts around them; people are mounting their horses. Cloud Dancing approaches quickly.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
The sun will be gone soon, it is time.

He sees Snow Bird coming and he goes to meet her. They look at each other, their feelings tightly leashed.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
This is right to do. (she nods, stoic) You will be safe with Black Kettle. (she nods again)  
Do you have nothing to say?

**SNOW BIRD**  
You are a foolish man. You have always been a foolish man, I do not know why I sleep with you for so long.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
I am fond of you also.

He pulls her into an embrace. Snow Bird whispers in his ear:

**SNOW BIRD**  
I am afraid. (OFF his surprise; collects herself) Do not worry -- I go, but I do not have to be happy about it.

She swiftly mounts her horse then takes Cloud Dancing's hand. She holds it for a silent moment, then painfully lets go.

**Mike and Sully join the children as the procession starts off, Black Kettle in the front. No Harm passes, holding his jackknife for Brian to see. As Brian holds up the flute, Matthew drapes a supportive arm around his shoulder. Cloud Dancing joins the group as Snow Bird passes. She rides by stoic, without looking at Cloud Dancing, and never looking back.**

**CLOSE ON Mike and Sully as he pulls her closer, and they silently watch their Cheyenne friends moving on.**

**FADE OUT.**

**END ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. NEW HOMESTEAD - DAY SEVEN**

**Several days later. Mike hangs Snow Bird's charm by the open door. She smiles with the bittersweet memory and moves on; wandering the room, marveling at the progress. She discovers a form against a wall, covered by a blanket. Curious, she pulls the blanket off, revealing the carved bedboard, now almost finished... And Mike's reaction goes deep. She runs her hands over the beautiful wood, imagining what's ahead...**

**SULLY (O.S.)  
S'pose to be a surprise.**

**Mike turns to see Sully at the door, enjoying the moment.**

**SULLY  
It's your weddin' present.**

**Mike's embarrassed, knowing he was reading her thoughts.**

**MIKE  
Sully, it's so beautiful ...**

**SULLY  
Will be, when it's finished. (comes close) Figure we're gonna need a bed.**

He meets her shy smile warmly, and they stare at each other, already feeling the heat. Flushed, Mike breaks his look.

**MIKE**  
May I watch you work?

**SULLY**  
Sure.

Mike settles on the blanket as he selects a tool and begins.

**MIKE**  
I was thinking about how lucky we are, to have this house. I can't imagine having to suddenly pack up everything and leave ... It's only been a week, and it feels as if they've been gone a year.

**SULLY**  
I miss em, too.

**MIKE**  
Do you think they're alright?

**SULLY**  
Should be safe at Fort Cobb by now ... Once Custer gets his fill of chasin' Dog Soldiers, he'll move on. Maybe they'll be back.

He resumes carving. Something else has been haunting Mike.

**MIKE**  
Sometimes I can't help but wonder if you wish you'd gone with them.

Surprised, Sully stops and moves close as Mike tries to explain.

**MIKE**  
I mean, they've been your family for so long, and --

**SULLY**  
Cheyenne *are* my family. Always will be. So are you. (touches her face) When're you gonna understand -- my heart is yours now?

OFF her reaction, Sully kisses her gently. And Mike responds, slowly at first, then with a

passion she hasn't felt before. So the kiss goes on, growing heated -- as Sully gently pushes her down and Mike pulls him to her on the blanket. Just when things are about to go further, Mike pulls away, breathless.

**MIKE**

You'd better get back to work... Or we'll never have a bed.

Sully holds her sly smile, then groans, burying his head on her shoulder. Mike laughs. And Sully GROANS LOUDER playfully, dropping onto his back at her side. He looks over, watching her laugh.

**SULLY**

You're so beautiful when you laugh.

Mike looks back at him, overwhelmed by her pure joy.

**MIKE**

I never believed I could ever be this happy ... I love you so much.

As Sully brings her hand to his lips:

**INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY SEVEN**

Matthew enters, steps around a Soldier (met earlier) leaving in a hurry. Horace is busy tapping a telegram.

**MATTHEW**

Dr. Mike said she had some medicine comin' in?

**HORACE**

Hold on -- 'portant telegram for the army.

Matthew waits as Horace keeps tapping. From the back room, the baby starts CRYING. Horace forces concentration, to no avail.

**HORACE**

Myra had to go shoppin' *now*...

Flustered, he gives up and starts for the back.

**MATTHEW**

Horace -- the medicine?

**HORACE**

Under the counter -- go ahead.

He disappears in back as Matthew comes around the counter. He finds the package and starts to go, but curiosity gets the best of him. Matthew glances back to make sure he's alone, then peeks at the telegram Horace was sending. As he reacts:

**EXT. CLINIC - DAY SEVEN**

A bandaged Railroad Worker (Chinese) waits on a bench as Mike steps outside with Matthew.

**MIKE**

Are you certain?

**MATTHEW**

I read it twice. Said Custer was ordered to take the Seventh Calvary south of the Arkansas River.

**MIKE**

But that's into Indian Territory.

Disturbed, Mike glances down the street to the field where the Calvary is now breaking camp. Matthew lowers his voice:

**MATTHEW**

Think Custer's up to somethin'?

**MIKE**

Black Kettle will have sanctuary at Fort Cobb. They won't be in any danger ... (just to be sure) Sully's at the new homestead. Would you ride out and tell him?

Matthew nods, goes. Refocusing, Mike gestures for the Worker to come inside.

**INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT SEVEN**

Sully and Mike set the table, feeling especially close. Brian PLAYS his flute for Matthew. He finishes on a squeaky note. Matthew feigns impressed.

**MATTHEW**

**Gettin' pretty good, Brian.**

**BRIAN**  
**Not as good as No Harm.**

**MIKE**  
**He's been practicing much longer. I think he'll be impressed next time you see him.**

**BRIAN**  
**(thinks a moment) Think they'll come back in time for your weddin'?**

**Sully and Mike exchange uncertain looks.**

**SULLY**  
**I don't know, Brian. Hope so.**

**MIKE**  
**(to Brian) Could you tell Colleen supper's ready?**

**As Brian heads out the back door, there's a KNOCK at the front. Mike opens it. She's surprised to discover Cloud Dancing.**

**MIKE**  
**Cloud Dancing --**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**(rushing in) Sully; he is here?**

**MIKE**  
**We were just about to eat. Will you join us?**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**There is no time. (to Sully) I have come for your help.**

**SULLY**  
**What's wrong?**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**Black Kettle has been turned away from the Fort.**

**SULLY**  
**What?!**

**CLOUD DANCING**

The agent says he has no power to make peace with Cheyenne. Says Black Kettle must make peace with the big War Chief Sheridan.

Mike and Sully trade looks of alarm, fitting pieces together.

**MIKE**

Sheridan's just ordered Custer south of the Arkansas.

**CLOUD DANCING**

(a blow) You are sure of this?

**MATTHEW**

I saw a telegram.

**SULLY**

Army sure ain't sendin' Custer to talk about peace. Where's Black Kettle now?

**CLOUD DANCING**

They make camp along the Washita.

**SULLY**

We gotta warn 'em.

OFF Cloud Dancing's nod, Sully gathers his things. Mike starts to pack, with:

**MIKE**

I'm going with you. (catches Sully's look) They're my friends, too. And they may need me.

She turns to Matthew, who beats her to the punch.

**MATTHEW**

Don't worry bout us. I can sleep up here.

**MIKE**

No, I'll feel better if you ask Robert E and Grace to stay the nights with you. If they can't, you can all sleep at the clinic.

Matthew nods. As Mike continues packing, Sully stops her.

**SULLY**

We're gonna be ridin' for days. You sure 'bout this?

**MIKE**

We're wasting time.

Off her determination, Sully looks to Cloud Dancing. OFF Cloud Dancing's grim expression --

**A SERIES OF SHOTS AND DISSOLVES**

A) Cloud Dancing, Sully and Mike ride with urgency in the dark.

B) In the daylight, the trio pushes hard across a plain ...

C) Galloping toward the top of a rise ...

D) Dropping down from a hilltop toward a creek...

**EXT. CAMP ALONG CREEK - DAY (DUSK) EIGHT**

With horses grazing nearby, Cloud Dancing and Sully sit next to a small campfire. Mike dishes beans onto tin plates. She passes them along with an apology to Cloud Dancing.

**MIKE**

This won't taste like much ... (sitting) I'm afraid when most little girls were in the kitchen with their mothers, I was off helping my father set broken bones.

**CLOUD DANCING**

Your father wanted you to become a doctor?

**MIKE**

The desire was quite mutual.

**CLOUD DANCING**

My father passed the medicine to me also.

**MIKE**

(curiosity piqued) I've never heard you speak of your father.

As Cloud Dancing trades glances with Sully --

**CLOUD DANCING**

He was once a great warrior, won many scalps against the enemy... After the Treaty of Fort Laramie, he put aside the weapons and learned the medicine.

**MIKE**

What made him decide to change?

**CLOUD DANCING**

The Treaty brought many great nations together, but some were old enemies. On the way, a Cheyenne war party killed a Snake man. So a council was called. (a reflective beat) My people smoked the pipe with the Snake. Our Chiefs called on the warriors to stop fighting, and gifts were passed. The last gift was given to the grieving family of the Snake man. I still remember how the grandfather embraced the warrior who had killed his grandson. (with emotion) That warrior was my father.

As Mike digests this meaning for Cloud Dancing, she looks at Sully, sees he knows this story After a beat:

**MIKE**

What became of your father?

**CLOUD DANCING**

He died of the whooping cough. I did not know the medicine for this white man's sickness.

OFF Mike's troubled silence, he sets aside his plate and rises.

**CLOUD DANCING**

We must rest now. We have a long ride to the river.

As Mike watches him walk off into the shadows, FADE TO BLACK.

**EXT. PLAINS (STOCK) - DAY NINE**

FADING IN to a wide stretch of plains; empty, eerily call ... SOUNDS of thunderous HOOFBEATS arise, growing LOUDER until a troop of mounted CALVARY SOLDIERS charge past the camera --

**SULLY (V.O.)**

Michaela ... Wake up ...

**EXT. CAMP - DAY (DAWN) NINE**

**CLOSE ON MIKE** bolting awake **OFF Sully's** touch.

**SULLY (O.S.)**

Time to be goin'.

She stares up at Sully's face in dawn's light. Unsettled by the images of her dream, Mike sits up. Sully studies her.

**SULLY**

You alright?

**MIKE**

Just a dream ...

Covering, she rises quickly. **ON Sully** watching her:

**EXT. PLAINS - DAY NINE**

Mike, Sully and Cloud Dancing ride hard across a stretch of empty plains toward a small grove of trees in the distance.

**EXT. PLAINS - CLUSTER OF TREES - DAY NINE**

Below a small rise, the trio takes a water break. Mike stretches aching muscles as Sully comes around with a canteen.

**MIKE**

What's that? (freezes) Listen ...

They strain to hear ... Nothing. Sully shakes his head.

**SULLY**

Can't hear nothin'.

**CLOUD DANCING**

I do smell smoke ... Perhaps we are closer than I believed.

He grabs his horse's rope and hurries toward the rise. Mike and Sully do the same, rushing after him on foot.

## **ANOTHER ANGLE - THE RISE**

**As Sully, Cloud Dancing and Mike lead their horses toward the crest. Cloud Dancing picks up the pace, eager to see his village once again ... And Snow Bird ...**

## **CLOUD DANCING**

**We have moved our lodges here in the spring before. The grass is tall then, the river swollen --**

**They arrive at the top and stop abruptly, looking down towards the valley below -- in complete horror and shock.**

## **MIKE**

**Oh my God...**

## **THEIR POV - WASHITA BASIN**

**Below along the banks of the river lies the destroyed camp of Black Kettle: smoldering lodges, bodies of Cheyenne and dead horses strewn everywhere ... Nothing but stillness, total devastation, and overwhelming death ...**

## **RESUME ANGLE**

**Cloud Dancing -- now mounted -- releases a tortured CRY as he gallops down toward the remnants of his people... PUSH CLOSE ON Mike and Sully's frozen anguish and disbelief as we:**

**FADE OUT.**

**END PART ONE**

## **Part II**

**Teleplay by Kathryn Ford / Story by Kathryn Ford and Julie Kirgo / Directed by James Keach**

**ACT ONE**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. VALLEY OF THE WASHITA - DAY NINE**

The massacre site along the river is utter desolation; smoke pours from remnants of smoldering lodges burned to the ground, bodies of Cheyenne women, children and elders are scattered among a few braves, all lying where they fell. Dead horses line the outskirts of the decimated village ...

**A SERIES OF SHOTS AND DISSOLVES**

**CLOUD DANCING** -- helplessly stricken -- walks through the ruins looking for Snow Bird. **MIKE** and **SULLY** -- in complete shock and grief -- numbly wander apart through the devastating nightmare; turning bodies, checking futilely for survivors, reacting in silent anguish...

**ANOTHER ANGLE - BANKS OF WASHITA**

Mike squats at the body of a girl Colleen's age. Struggling with her sorrow, she looks off -- and something catches her eye. Mike rushes down the bank to the river where a man's body lies face down near the water. Mike touches the wound in his back, then turns over the chief who wanted peace; **BLACK KETTLE**. As Mike agonizes, she notices **MEDICINE WOMAN LATER** floating nearby, tangled in brush. Mike wades into the frigid water and struggles to pull the dead woman up onto the bank. Her private agony is interrupted by Sully's frantic **CRY**:

**SULLY (O.S.)**

Cloud Dancing! Michaela!

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Near a smoldering lodge, Sully leans over a woman lying on her back. Cloud Dancing and Mike run over. Sully looks up as they approach, and from his face, Cloud Dancing knows ... He drops to his knees next to **SNOW BIRD**, unmoving, and barely alive. Sully moves aside to let Mike in next to her with her medical bag.

**MIKE**

(heartsick) Snow Bird ...

With a strange mixture of relief and dread, Cloud Dancing gently cradles Snow Bird's head.

## **CLOUD DANCING**

I am here now ... I am here.

## **SNOW BIRD**

They fell into our camp before the sun ... We could not escape ...

Mike checks her wounds, takes a pulse. Cloud Dancing looks to Mike in frantic hope. OFF her grief-stricken expression, he realizes his wife is in the final moments of her life. Cloud Dancing leans close to Snow Bird's face. They SPEAK SOFTLY in Cheyenne, the words only meant for each other. Devastated, Mike exchanges looks with Sully -- until she feels Snow Bird's touch on her arm. Mike leans in close to her friend. Snow Bird gives her a weak, conspiratorial smile.

## **SNOW BIRD**

What will Cloud Dancing do without me?

As Mike stares back, Snow Bird closes her eyes ... and is gone. Mike is shattered. She reaches out to Cloud Dancing, but he ignores her. Slowly, he rises to his feet and pulls out his knife. Mike lunges to stop him but Sully holds her back -- and Cloud Dancing slashes at his own calves, then at both forearms, drawing blood. He cuts off a handful of hair and flings it to the ground, then looks blindly to the sky and CHANTS, his voice rising in agonized song. Sully numbly pulls Mike away.

## **SULLY**

Cheyenne death song ...

At a loss, Mike watches Cloud Dancing, her expression beyond grief. Finally, she looks to Sully, her voice flat ... distant.

## **MIKE**

I found Black Kettle and his wife by the river ... Shot in the back.

Sully contains his reaction, then walks off. Mike watches him go for a tortured moment, then backs away from Cloud Dancing, leaving him alone with his grief. The DEATH SONG CONTINUES as Mike resumes her tormented search for survivors. As she nears a cluster of brush

## **TROOPER (O.S.)**

Lady ... Lady, please ...

## **MIKE**

(looks, reacts) Sully -- over here!

**She drops to the side of a dying TROOPER, no older than twenty.**

**TROOPER**  
**Water ...**

**MIKE**  
**We'll get some ... Sully!**

**Mike stuffs a glove in the Trooper's shirt to stop the bleeding from his chest. The Trooper squirms in pain, gritting:**

**TROOPER**  
**Got hit right off 'n hid in here. Musta blanked out ... (a glance around) Where's ever'body?**

**MIKE**  
**(contained) They're gone.**

**TROOPER**  
**(disbelief) Can't be. Custer'd never leave without me.**

**MIKE**  
**Sully?!**

**Mike turns to look for him, and discovers Sully standing a few feet behind them, staring at the Trooper in a controlled rage.**

**MIKE**  
**Sully, please -- I need water.**

**But Sully's eyes never leave the Trooper. He steps forward as he snatches a rifle off the ground, and in one fluid motion has it pointed inches from the Trooper's bewildered face. Mike reacts, grabbing the barrel --**

**MIKE**  
**NO!**

**Sully knocks her hand off, keeping the barrel pointed at the Trooper frozen with terror. Mike latches on again, pleading:**

**MIKE**  
**Sully, no! You can't! ...**

**Sully shakes with rage, glaring into the Trooper's fearful eyes. He cocks the rifle preparing to fire -- and Mike holds on in desperation, trying to force the barrel away.**

**MIKE**

**No, Sully! *Please!* ... No...**

**Sully's battling his own demons as the tension mounts ... suddenly, hear THUNDERING HOOVES. Startled, they look up --**

**A SPOOKED HORSE charges wildly through the ruins behind them.**

**They watch the riderless horse stumble over a body and gallop past them racing into nothingness ... Sully looks back at Mike.**

**She shakes her head at him with pleading eyes, then Sully yanks the rifle away from her grasp. Backing up, he turns and flings the gun with an anguished YELL as far as he can throw it. Mike painfully watches him walk off without looking back. As Mike sags next to the Trooper --**

**STAY WITH SULLY**

**moving on, struggling to recover from his rage, what he came so close to doing ... And then Sully sees something and stops. The slight body of NO HARM is easily recognizable, lying in a ditch face down. Sully drops next to the boy, finds clasped in a tiny hand; Brian's jackknife. Sully gently pulls him up onto his lap ... And underneath, he sees a blanket-wrapped bundle. Laying No Harm on the ground, Sully reaches for the bundle.**

**ANOTHER ANGLE - MIKE**

**sits numbly at the side of the Trooper, now dead. The DEATH SONG of Cloud Dancing still pierces the silence fallen over the ruins ... And then, another SOUND; faint at first, and then growing louder. Mike reacts to the distant CRIES of a baby.**

**RESUME--- ANGLE**

**where Sully, on his knees now clasps the bundle tightly to his chest, as if clinging to life itself. Mike rushes over and stops, looking down at Sully holding the CRYING bundle in disbelief. Sully looks up at Mike heartbreakingly, tears streaming down his face. He chokes out the words:**

**SULLY**  
No Harm hid 'im ...

And gently rocking the CRYING BABY, Sully CRIES with it. Mike watches through silent tears, and slowly sinks to the ground by No Harm. Sully stares back, no longer able to speak. From the deepest of places, Sully WEEPS for all the dead ...

As the lone surviving baby CRIES louder ...

And in the distance, Cloud Dancing's death SONG continues ...

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. BANKS OF WASHITA - DAY NINE**

Cloud Dancing carries the body of Snow Bird along the river.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. WASHITA HILLSIDE - DAY NINE**

Mike places the blanket-wrapped baby inside Sully's jacket. Sully, somewhat recovered, approaches from the ruins. He watches Mike take the baby into her arms. A difficult beat.

**SULLY**  
There's nothin' else alive. Even slaughtered all their horses ... Custer must've taken prisoners. 'Bout forty, maybe fifty women and children are missin'...

Still in shock, Mike looks off blankly at Cloud Dancing down by the river carefully placing Snow Bird on the ground.

**MIKE**  
How could they do this?

There are no words to answer. A moment of shattering sorrow and disbelief. A SHOT rings out. They both duck and look up --

**THEIR POV - HILLTOP**

At the crest, a half-dozen ARAPAHO BRAVES on horseback charge towards them, YELLING and FIRING rifles.

## RESUME ANGLE

Sully pulls Mike with the baby to her feet and they take off running toward the river. The charging Braves swoop down upon them. As Sully realizes there's no escape, he pushes Mike on.

**SULLY**  
Keep goin'! RUN!

But Mike stands her ground as Sully turns to face the onslaught. With hands up, he YELLS to the Braves:

**SULLY**  
(in Cheyenne) We are friends!

The Braves quickly overtake and surround them, taunting, SHOOTING at their feet. Mike and Sully face their enraged attackers in helpless horror ...

**SULLY**  
(in Cheyenne) We are friends! We have come to help! *Friends!*

Mike tries to shield the baby. Sully prepares to defend them, but catches a bullet in the arm and falls to the ground --

**MIKE**  
Sully!

She drops to his side, then looks up in terror as one Brave takes close aim at her with his rifle --

## ANOTHER ANGLE - CLOUD DANCING

charges frantically toward them.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
(in Cheyenne) Stop! They are friends!

Cloud Dancing runs through the Braves to shield Mike and Sully.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
(in Cheyenne) Do not shoot! They are friends to our people!

**As the Braves hear Cloud Dancing's words, they lower their guns with great hesitation ...  
ON Mike and Sully's reaction:**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. WASHITA BASIN - DAY NINE**

**Two of the Braves quickly raid the body of the dead Trooper. Now holding the baby, Cloud Dancing speaks with the other Braves, who are wary and still on horseback.**

**Off to the side, Sully sits on the ground as Mike -- utterly drained and raw -- finishes bandaging his arm.**

**MIKE**  
**The bullet passed right through, missed the bone ... You're lucky.**

**She catches his look, realizes the horrible irony of her words. Then, she helps Sully to his feet. Cloud Dancing approaches as the other Braves watch. His sorrow is tightly contained.**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**The Long Hair has moved the soldiers down the river toward other villages ... It is not safe for you here -- you must go.**

**Mike can't imagine leaving him. At a loss, she surveys the multitude of bodies surrounding them.**

**MIKE**  
**There must be something we can do ... At least let us help you bury them.**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**We will leave my people where they fall. The birds and wolves will spread their flesh over the earth. There they will feed our mother again.**

**Mike looks helplessly to Sully, who nods in understanding. Cloud Dancing hands the bundled baby over to Mike.**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**Will you watch after this one for now?**

**MIKE**

**(devastated) We'll make certain he's safe.**

**Cloud Dancing nods. The three share a gut wrenching moment. Then, Cloud Dancing turns to go --**

**SULLY**  
**Cloud Dancing, wait!**

**Sully jumps to stop him. The waiting Braves react with their rifles, ready to protect Cloud Dancing.**

**SULLY**  
**What're you gonna do?**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**I will ride with my Arapaho brothers.**

**SULLY**  
**To look for Custer? (as Cloud Dancing starts off) When's the killin' gonna stop?!**

**Cloud Dancing turns to look back at them. He struggles to control his rage mixed with despair.**

**CLOUD DANCING**  
**Can you not see what is before you? It is already finished! (OFF Sully's pained look) Go now. Before it is too late.**

**He moves swiftly to the others. Grabbing the lead rope from a Brave, Cloud Dancing swings up onto his horse. The group charges quickly back up the hill.**

**Mike and Sully watch their friend disappear over the rise. Suddenly alone, they silently survey the destruction around them. As Mike pulls the baby tightly to her chest ...**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. CAMPSITE ALONG CREEK - NIGHT NINE**

**The Cheyenne Baby lies bundled in a blanket, sound asleep. Next to it is a small campfire, where Sully mashes corn in a plate. He pours water from a pot into the mash and stirs ... From the dark nearby, we can hear Mike RETCHING and COUGHING. Sully reacts, takes a pot from the fire and pours tea into a cup. He carries it over to the creek.**

## ANGLE - ALONG CREEK

Mike kneels by the water, where she's clearly been sick. She turns away from Sully's approach, wiping her face with a bandana. Sully squats and offers the cup, gently coaxing:

**SULLY**  
It's tea. It'll help settle your stomach.

Mike accepts it, avoiding his look. Her voice is hollow.

**MIKE**  
Thank you.

She forces herself to take some sips. Sully pulls the bandana from her hand and leans over the creek to soak it in water.

**SULLY**  
Got the corn ground up 'n soakin' like you want. But the baby's still sleepin'.

Mike nods, silent and numb. He wrings out the bandana, lays it on the back of her neck. She flinches at his touch. Moving away just slightly, Mike takes the bandana and wipes her face, fighting another wave of nausea. A somber, troubled silence as Sully waits, wishing he knew what to say. Finally:

**SULLY**  
We oughta try'n get some sleep too. Start fresh in the mornin'.

**MIKE**  
No ... The baby's going to need milk soon. We have to keep pushing on.

Sully knows she's right. He studies Mike's broken expression. Sully aches to comfort her, and tries reaching out again.

**SULLY**  
Michaela ...

**MIKE**  
(pulls away, rising) I'll want to check your arm before we go.

Mike quickly returns to the fire. OFF Sully's helplessness:

## **EXT. TRAIL - DAY TEN**

**Exhausted, Mike and Sully force themselves to keep riding, in silence, the baby bundled in a sling around Sully's chest ...**

## **EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT TEN**

**At a rest stop, Mike numbly dips a twisted corner of a bandana into a watery mash, then attempts to get the baby to suck it ...**

## **EXT. PLAINS - DAY ELEVEN**

**Mike and Sully continue their long ride home. Mike battles against falling asleep in the saddle. As Sully regards her:**

## **EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY (DUSK) TWELVE**

**MATTHEW chops wood. He sees something and yells out:**

**MATTHEW**

**Hey ever'body -- they're back!**

**ROBERT E emerges from the barn as GRACE, BRIAN and COLLEEN excitedly exit the cabin. They all rush to greet Sully and Mike wearily riding up.**

**ALL**

**Ma! Sully! Dr. Mike!**

**GRACE**

**We've been so worried ...**

**Sully hops down, favoring his hurt arm. The rush of relief turns solemn at the sight of their shattered expressions.**

**SULLY**

**Ever'body alright?**

**GRACE**

**We're fine -- but look at you!**

**Mike's silence is unsettling. Growing looks of concern circle the group. Mike hands the**

**baby down to Sully.**

**COLLEEN**  
Who's that?

**SULLY**  
Cheyenne baby ... His parents got killed.

**Sully hands the baby to Grace, then helps Mike down.**

**MATTHEW**  
How? ... What happened?

**Mike stiffly accepts worried embraces from Colleen and Brian, then quickly lets go.**

**SULLY**  
Custer attacked Black Kettle's village 'fore we got there.

**GRACE**  
Oh my Lord ...

**COLLEEN**  
(afraid to ask) Are they alright?

**MIKE**  
(numbly) Everyone's gone, Colleen.

**Stunned reactions. Matthew puts an arm around Colleen.**

**MATTHEW**  
Dead? You mean Snow Bird, Black Kettle ... ?

**He stops at their silence, realizing the worst.**

**BRIAN**  
No Harm -- where's he?

**Mike stares back, unable to answer. Brian looks to Sully.**

**BRIAN**  
Where is he?

**Sully squats down next to Brian, searching for the right words.**

**SULLY**  
Brian, No Harm was killed with the others ... He's dead.

**BRIAN**  
He can't be. He's just a kid.

**Confused, he looks back at Mike -- and sees from her hollow expression that it's true. It slowly sinks in.**

**BRIAN**  
Why didn't you stop 'em?

**He pushes against Mike in anger and tears. As Mike numbly absorbs the blows --**

**BRIAN**  
You shoulda stopped 'em!

**Mike is thinking the same. Brian runs off to the barn.**

**MATTHEW**  
Brian!

**SULLY**  
Let 'im go, Matthew.

**Matthew turns away to hide his grief. Mike numbly pulls her things from the horse as the others look on, feeling the horrible impact. Robert E grabs the horses, reins.**

**ROBERT E**  
I'll take care 'a these ...

**GRACE**  
We'll take this one home, get im fed. You both gotta get some rest.

**SULLY**  
Thanks.

**Robert E leads the horses away. A devastating beat.**

**GRACE**

If there's anything we can do ...

Mike shakes her head, a million miles away.

**MIKE**

There's nothing anyone can do. (empty) Thank you for watching the children.

With her spirit clearly broken, Mike walks to the cabin alone. Sully meets Matthew and Colleen's shattered looks, as we:

**FADE OUT.**

**END ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THIRTEEN**

At the counter, HANK rummages through cigars while JAKE hovers nearby. Grace cradles the baby as DOROTHY dotes over it.

**DOROTHY**

He is cute. Poor little thing ...

**GRACE**

Hardly cried a whip last night. And I know he's gotta be hungry.

**DOROTHY**

Michaela and Sully must feel just awful.

**GRACE**

They're mighty shook up.

LOREN comes over with some baby bottles.

**LOREN**

I'm not so sure you should be takin' care of that 'round here.

**DOROTHY**

*Loren!*

**GRACE**

And what do you suggest I do?

**LOREN**

(annoyed, gives Grace bottles) Ah, don't you start in, too.

**DOROTHY**

He's a innocent, little baby.

**JAKE**

Just gonna grow up to hate us. Like the rest of 'em.

**HANK**

You mean what's *left* of 'em.

Hank and Jake trade satisfied grins. Mike enters unnoticed.

**JAKE**

Yeah, Custer sure done what he come here to do.

Mike approaches the counter boldly, her feelings buried deep.

**MIKE**

Loren, I'd like some flour and coffee please?

The silence is riddled with awkward looks. As Loren moves off, Dorothy studies Mike with compassion.

**DOROTHY**

Michaela, are you alright?

**MIKE**

I'm fine. Have you received any more of that special chocolate?

**DOROTHY**

(a little thrown) We have, but ... Michaela, I feel terrible bout what happened. All your friends --

**MIKE**

**I'll take two blocks ... Please.**

**Conflicted, Dorothy glances at Grace, then moves on to a shelf. Mike dutifully regards Grace and the baby.**

**MIKE**  
**Grace, how is he?**

**GRACE**  
**He'll be doin' just fine, soon's I can get some milk in 'im.**

**A beat. Hank leans curiously toward Mike.**

**HANK**  
**Hear Custer took care of our little Injun problem down at the Washita.**

**He searches for a reaction, but Mike remains impassive. Behind them, the REVEREND enters and stops, surprised to see Mike.**

**JAKE**  
**Got a real hero's welcome back at Camp Supply. The whole command turned out for review.**

**DOROTHY**  
**(bristles) What do you think you're doin'?**

**HANK**  
**Just chattin' with Michaela 'bout the General's big victory.**

**Dorothy looks at Mike, unsettled by her unusual silence.**

**DOROTHY**  
**I think you're just tryin' to be cruel.**

**MIKE**  
**(eerily composed) I'll pick these things up later, when you're not so busy.**

**And before Dorothy can respond, Mike is on her way out rushing past the Reverend. He quickly follows her outside --**

**EXT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS**

**REVEREND**  
Dr. Mike --

Mike stops. The Reverend steps around to face her, uncertain.

**REVEREND**  
Dr. Mike, you do know ... not everybody is happy about what happened to the Cheyenne.

Mike stares back without any hint of emotion.

**MIKE**  
I believe the sentiment is a little late, don't you?

OFF his reaction, Mike steps around him and walks on. Helpless, the Reverend turns to watch her.

**REVEREND**  
I'll see you in church tomorrow?

As Mike keeps walking ...

**EXT. WOODS - DAY THIRTEEN**

The same place where Brian and No Harm hunted. Brian sits alone on a log, his face stained with tears. Sully comes un behind him and stops. Without turning, Brian knows he's there. He stoically wipes his tears as Sully moves to sit by him.

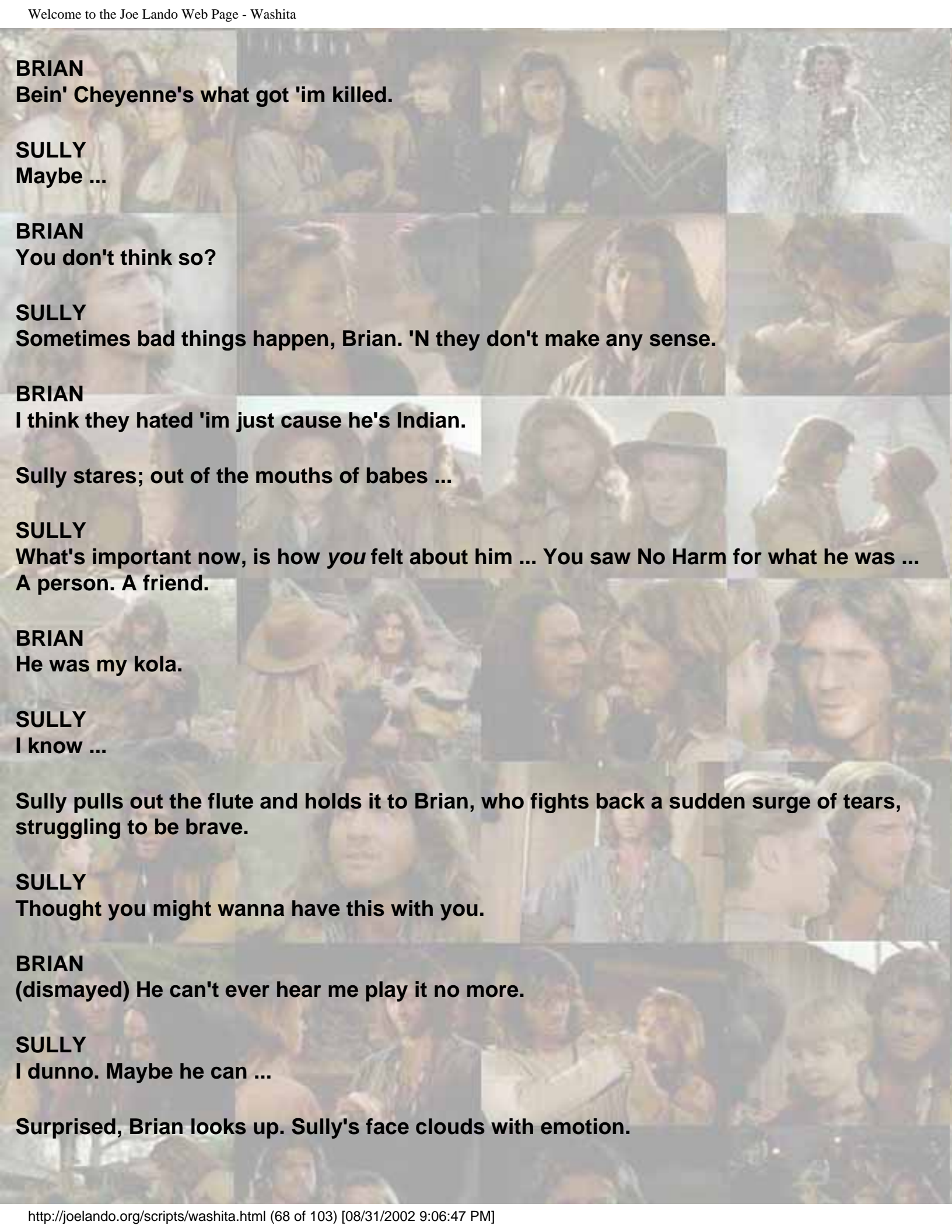
**BRIAN**  
I heard you comin'. (beat looking away) No Harm could walk 'round here without makin' a sound.

**SULLY**  
That's 'cause No Harm was Cheyenne.

**BRIAN**  
You make it sound like bein' Cheyenne's a good thing.

**SULLY**  
I think it is. Don't you?

Brian thinks hard. He picks up a rock and throws it.



**BRIAN**  
Bein' Cheyenne's what got 'im killed.

**SULLY**  
Maybe ...

**BRIAN**  
You don't think so?

**SULLY**  
Sometimes bad things happen, Brian. 'N they don't make any sense.

**BRIAN**  
I think they hated 'im just cause he's Indian.

Sully stares; out of the mouths of babes ...

**SULLY**  
What's important now, is how *you* felt about him ... You saw No Harm for what he was ...  
A person. A friend.

**BRIAN**  
He was my kola.

**SULLY**  
I know ...

Sully pulls out the flute and holds it to Brian, who fights back a sudden surge of tears, struggling to be brave.

**SULLY**  
Thought you might wanna have this with you.

**BRIAN**  
(dismayed) He can't ever hear me play it no more.

**SULLY**  
I dunno. Maybe he can ...

Surprised, Brian looks up. Sully's face clouds with emotion.

**SULLY**

Cheyenne would say No Harm's joined his ancestors with the Great Spirit. But his spirit is still here with us, too ... I think he's with you, every time you think 'bout him. Every time you play that.

Brian thinks about this a moment, then takes the flute. He tries to blow some notes. And slowly, his choked breaths turn to sobs. And Brian can't hold it back any longer. He begins to cry ... Sully puts an arm around the boy and pulls him close. As the two hold onto each other:

**INT. CLINIC - DAY THIRTEEN**

Mike is in control; all doctor as she feels the forehead of WILLIAM HAYLEY under Colleen's concerned, watchful eye.

**WILLIAM**

My shoulder's comin' 'long fine, but my arm's feelin' awful sore.

**MIKE**

You have a fever ... Have a seat, Mr. Hayley. Colleen, would you remove the bandage on his arm?

As he sits on a table, Colleen helps him remove his shirt. Mike moves off to gather supplies. Grace enters with the baby CRYING. Mike acknowledges her with a quick glance.

**MIKE**

Grace.

**GRACE**

Dr. Mike, I can't get him to feed on the bottle... He hasn't taken a thing since he come.

**MIKE**

(detached) You just need to be patient.

Grace comes closer, holding out the baby towards Mike.

**GRACE**

But if you could look at him, maybe somethin's wrong --

Mike steps back reflexively, avoiding contact with the baby.

**MIKE**

**You'll have to wait, Grace. I have a patient.**

**She returns to William as Colleen removes his bandage. Colleen glances at Grace who jiggles the baby to calm his CRIES. Mike forces concentration as she checks William's wound, reacts:**

**MIKE**

**This hasn't healed properly. Colleen, did you clean this like I asked?**

**COLLEEN**

**(thrown) ... Of course I did.**

**MIKE**

**Apparently not well enough. This arm is infected.**

**WILLIAM**

**(alarmed) 'Fected? But I gotta get back to the railroad ...**

**Crushed, Colleen watches Mike clean the oozing wound. The baby's CRIES start to rattle Mike's protective amour.**

**MIKE**

**(sharp) Grace, can't you keep that baby quiet?**

**Stunned, Grace exchanges troubled looks with Colleen. Unaware, Mike keeps probing the wound as William squirms.**

**MIKE**

**I'm afraid I'm going to have to lance this to let it drain.**

**Mike moves away to collect her instruments. She glances over and sees Grace is gone. Mike contains her reaction, her feelings tightly in check. As she quickly returns to work ...**

**INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT THIRTEEN**

**A strained silence as Mike, Sully, Matthew, Colleen and Brian finish a solemn supper. Mike picks at her food. Matthew and Sully trade grim looks. Matthew's small talk is forced.**

**MATTHEW**

**Stew's real good, Colleen.**

**MIKE**

**(flat) Yes, it certainly is.**

**COLLEEN**

**Thanks ... (tentative to Mike) I made a cobbler for dessert. Your favorite -- apple.**

**Mike forces a smile back. Matthew looks to Sully.**

**MATTHEW**

**What'll happen to all the Cheyenne prisoners they took?**

**Sully senses Mike tensing.**

**SULLY**

**Keep 'em locked up for a while. Probably move 'em to another reservation down south.**

**MATTHEW**

**Think Custer's ever gonna find Cloud Dancin'?**

**Mike pushes sharply away from the table, taking her plate off. Sully answers reluctantly, distracted by watching Mike.**

**SULLY**

**I dunno, Matthew ... Figure the army'll keep attackin' villages hopin' to draw in the Dog Soldiers. Army knows they'll wanna protect their people.**

**Mike collects her medical bag and coat. Sully rises.**

**SULLY**

**Where ya goin'?**

**MIKE**

**I have work to catch up on at the clinic.**

**Sully helps her into the coat. Mike avoids his eyes.**

**SULLY**

**Kinda late, don't you think?**

**MIKE**  
There's a lot to do.

**SULLY**  
I'll wait here then, 'til you get back.

**MIKE**  
You don't have to do that.

**SULLY**  
I want to.

With difficulty, Mike finally meets his look, then quickly turns to the children.

**MIKE**  
I'll see you in the morning.

Mike leaves. Silence. Colleen is visibly shaken.

**COLLEEN**  
She hardly touched a bite.

**SULLY**  
Just gonna take your ma some time, is all.

The children look worried. CLOSE on Sully hoping he's right.

**EXT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - NIGHT THIRTEEN**

Grace waits at the door holding the bundled baby. HORACE answers, surprised to discover Grace.

**HORACE**  
Grace ... ?

**GRACE**  
Horace, I'm sorry to be botherin' you so late.

MYRA appears behind Horace. Uncomfortable, Grace looks at her.

**GRACE**

**I was hopin' maybe you could help me?**

**MYRA**  
**What is it?**

**GRACE**  
**It's the baby. I've been tryin' to give him a bottle, but he just won't feed on it.**

**HORACE**  
**(confused) Can't figure how we can help, you should go see Dr. Mike.**

**But Myra understands. She holds Grace's desperate look.**

**GRACE**  
**He's gettin' so weak. I was hopin' ...**

**Horace looks at Myra, taking a moment to register. The realization is disturbing.**

**HORACE**  
**You want Myra to nurse a *Indian* baby?**

**Grace pulls the blanket aside to show the baby's face to Myra.**

**GRACE**  
**(pointedly) I'm askin' if you'll feed a hungry *baby*.**

**OFF Horace's troubled look, Myra comes to a decision.**

**MYRA**  
**'Course I will.**

**She gently takes the baby from a grateful Grace and carries him towards the back. As Grace follows, passing a stunned Horace:**

**EXT. GENERAL STORE - SAME MOMENT**

**From the porch, Dorothy watches the scene at the Telegraph Office. As Horace returns inside, her gaze shifts.**

**DOROTHY'S POV - THE CLINIC**

**Mike's horse is tied outside. Light filters from the windows.**

## **RESUME ANGLE**

**Dorothy thinks a moment, then starts into the street.**

## **INT. CLINIC - NIGHT THIRTEEN**

**The lamplit room is in complete disarray; all medicines, books and instruments are piled on tables and desks. With sleeves rolled up, Mike rigorously scrubs down the cabinets and shelves with a brush she dips into a pail of water. Mike ignores the KNOCK on the door. Dorothy enters and surveys the mess. Mike glances up as she keeps working. An awkward beat.**

**DOROTHY**

**You never came back for your supplies.**

**MIKE**

**I've been wanting to get to this for some time now. You can't imagine how much dust blows in.**

**Dorothy walks over, concerned.**

**DOROTHY**

**Michaela, you can't just go on like this.**

**MIKE**

**Like what?**

**DOROTHY**

**Pretendin' like nothin' happened. You gotta --**

**MIKE**

**I'm sorry, but I really don't have time to visit right now.**

**Mike quickly turns away to scrub another shelf. Dorothy considers her friend for a long beat. She reflects out loud:**

**DOROTHY**

**There've been two times in my life, when I figure I'd gotten 'bout as low in the barrel as I could ever be ... And both them times, it was you who helped me climb back out. (beat, softly) You're the dearest friend I've ever known. You ain't gettin' rid of me so easy. (OFF**

Mike's silence, worried) I never seen you like that today, all the fight gone out of you ... Michaela, I know you saw somethin' horrible. But you're gonna have to talk about it sooner or later.

Mike quickly returns medicines to the shelves. Dorothy moves to help, holding out bottles, catching Mike off-guard. She stiffly takes them and puts away. Dorothy tests the waters.

**DOROTHY**

A lot's gettin' written about that battle. Folks're believin' Custer's done a good thing. That he was mostly killin' warriors In braves ... That he's a *real* hero. (searches Mike's face, gently) Was he a hero, Michaela?

Disarmed, Mike looks over, her own battle raging inside.

**MIKE**

How should I know?

**DOROTHY**

I think you know better than anybody. You seen with your own --

**MIKE**

(tightens) I don't mean to be rude, Dorothy, but I really want to finish this tonight.

They stare at each other for an intense moment. Finally resigned, Dorothy crosses to the door and leaves. Mike takes the pail to another shelf. As she resumes her scrubbing:

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. HOMESTEAD BARN - NIGHT THIRTEEN**

Mike brushes down her horse. Sully enters, tentative.

**MIKE**

I see the children are still up.

**SULLY**

Wanted to wait up for you ... They're worried bout you. (touching her arm) So am I.

His touch is unsettling. Mike moves away to brush the other side of the horse. Sully hides his hurt. An awkward beat.

**MIKE**

I've been thinking. Perhaps you were right about the railroad coming here, about the changes it's bringing ... (OFF his look) I think we should consider living some place else.

She could be talking about the weather. Sully is stunned.

**SULLY**

You don't mean that.

**MIKE**

There's nothing to really keep us here --

**SULLY**

And where're we gonna go?

**MIKE**

I don't know. California. Oregon. I'm sure they need doctors out there.

Sully rounds the horse to study her, his look makes her uneasy.

**SULLY**

Runnin' away ain't gonna change what happened.

Sully gently grabs her arm, trying to break through her armor.

**SULLY**

Michaela ... Bad things can happen anywhere --

**MIKE**

(facade cracking) I can't ... Sully...

Mike struggles for composure, almost pleading:

**MIKE**

I can't do this ...

Shaken by her reaction, Sully lets go. An uncomfortable beat as he allows her a chance to regain some control.

**MIKE**

We don't have to say anything to the children just yet, but will you think about it?

**Disturbed, Sully considers her a moment, then nods.**

**MIKE**  
**Thank you.**

**She hangs up the brush, then painfully glances back at Sully.**

**MIKE**  
**Goodnight.**

**And Mike leaves. OFF Sully's reaction--**

**EXT. HOMESTEAD BARN - CONTINUOUS**

**Closing the door, Mike leans back against it, safely alone again. She musters every ounce of strength left to pull herself together, staring hopelessly into the dark, as we:**

**FADE OUT.**

**END ACT TWO**

**ACT THREE**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. LIVERY - DAY FOURTEEN**

**It's early. Robert E finishes trimming a horse's hoof as Sully approaches with the carving tools. WOLF is at his side.**

**ROBERT E**  
**Mornin', Sully...**

**SULLY**  
**Brought these back. 'Preciate you lettin' me use 'em.**

**Robert E accepts the tools, regards Sully's distracted expression. As Sully turns to leave -**

**ROBERT E**  
**How're you folks comin' 'long?**

**SULLY**

(cool) How do you expect us to be?

Robert E's taken aback by Sully's tone. OFF the strained silence, Sully moves on. Robert E calls after him.

**ROBERT E**

Maybe you oughta remember just *who* you're talkin' to?! (as Sully stops) 'Case you forgot, I got a Cheyenne baby sleepin' in my bed right this minute.

This truth blindsides Sully. Guilty, he turns back. Robert E steps closer, tries again with genuine concern.

**ROBERT E**

So, how you folks comin' 'long?

Sully stares at his friend, letting his guard relax.

**SULLY**

It's been rough ... (OFF Robert E's sympathetic nod) How's the baby?

**ROBERT E**

He's doin' better ...

**SULLY**

Hope he ain't much trouble?

Robert E returns to work, grins like a proud papa.

**ROBERT E**

Hardly cries at all. And he sleeps most the night, long as Grace can keep her hands off 'im. She's frettin' n fussin' ... Now that Myra's helpin' with feedin', I reckon he's gonna be alright.

**SULLY**

What's Dr. Mike think?

**ROBERT E**

Can't say. She ain't been by to see 'im.

**OFF Sully's reaction:**

**INT. HOMESTEAD - DAY FOURTEEN**

**Mike helps Colleen clean up after breakfast. Matthew repairs a saddle. The silence is deafening. Sully enters.**

**SULLY**  
**'Mornin'.**

**MIKE**  
**(forced cheer) Good morning, Sully... There're some eggs left on the stove.**

**SULLY**  
**No thanks. (pours some coffee) Thought we might go by and see the baby after church.**

**MATTHEW**  
**We ain't goin' to church.**

**SULLY**  
**Why not?**

**Matthew and Colleen trade looks. Mike catches it.**

**MIKE**  
**I told them they could go. I have work at the clinic.**

**SULLY**  
**Thought you done all that last night.**

**Brian tearfully bursts through the door holding his hand.**

**BRIAN**  
**Ma!**

**MIKE**  
**(alarmed) Brian, what is it?**

**BRIAN**  
**I was raking the barn -- it went in deep.**

**He holds his hand out. Mike quickly looks at it.**

**MIKE**  
A splinter?

**BRIAN**  
It hurts -- get it out!

**MIKE**  
(goes for bag) Have a seat ... Colleen, please?

Colleen comes over as Brian sits at the table. Mike sits by him, handing Colleen a magnifying glass and guiding her hand.

**MIKE**  
Hold it right there.

She takes Brian's hand and searches the injured finger, then starts to probe with a needle. Brian squirms in pain.

**BRIAN**  
Ow! That hurts!

**MIKE**  
I have to get it ... Hold still.

**BRIAN**  
You're hurtin' me --

**SULLY**  
Give her a chance, Brian.

**MIKE**  
I can't find anything.

**BRIAN**  
It's *in* there, I feel it -- OW!

He tries jerking his hand away. Mike holds on in frustration.

**MIKE**  
Honestly, Brian! It's just a *splinter!*

**Stunned silence. Sully and Colleen trade looks. Brian turns away with hurt, angry tears. Unsettled by her outburst, Mike releases his hand, awkwardly trying to repair the damage.**

**MIKE**  
**Why don't you try soaking it in some warm water?**

**But Brian only turns away further. After a beat, Mike rises.**

**MIKE**  
**Excuse me.**

**And Mike goes outside. Another troubled beat. Sympathetic, Colleen reaches for Brian's hand.**

**COLLEEN**  
**Here, let me try --**

**BRIAN**  
**It ain't nothin'!**

**Brian pulls away and rushes out the back door.**

**INT. HOMESTEAD BARN - SAME MOMENT**

**Mike enters, shaken. She grabs a rake and sweeps the straw in a tearful fury, trying to regain some control. The movement helps, until she backs into a post banging her elbow. Mike reacts to the sharp pain, grabbing her arm, then swinging the rake to smash against the post. The action fuels Mike's rage, and she finally explodes; throwing the rake, bucket, tools ... smashing anything she can get her hands on against anything in the way ... until Mike's anger spends itself out leaving her exhausted and raw. And feeling again ... And she can no longer hold back the pain. As Mike crumbles onto the hay SOBBING --**

**RACK FOCUS TO DOOR: open just enough for Sully to painfully watch through the crack. As he pulls the door closed --**

**EXT. HOMESTEAD BARN - CONTINUOUS**

**Sully steels himself, listening to Mike WEEP.**

**MATTHEW (O.S.)**

**What're you doin'?**

**Sully swings around to find Matthew. Matthew hears Mike's SOBS, adding to his own sadness and confusion.**

**MATTHEW**  
**Why don't you go to her?**

**SULLY**  
**It ain't the right time.**

**MATTHEW**  
**(upset) Right time? *Listen* to her!**

**SULLY**  
**(calm and low) She knows I'm here. But she's gotta do this alone.**

**But Matthew can't handle listening to Mike WEEPING. Miserable, he moves for the door -- and Sully blocks him.**

**MATTHEW**  
**We can't just leave her ... I *know* what she's goin' through!**

**SULLY**  
**It ain't the same, Matthew! This ain't just about losin' folks you care for. It's more'n that.**

**Conflicted, Matthew allows Sully to pull him away from door. Sully searches for a way to explain, filling with emotion.**

**SULLY**  
**I've never known anybody like your ma ... She's always tryin' so hard to see the good in folks, and ... 'n she believes she can do anything ... 'Cept she couldn't stop this. (beat, painfully) What she saw out there -- things can't ever be the same ... Your ma's lost somethin' inside herself, Matthew. She's gotta find a way to get her hope back.**

**Matthew struggles starting to understand. Mike's CRYING is softer now, filtering out from the barn. They both listen for a difficult moment.**

**MATTHEW**  
**What if she can't? I mean, maybe she's gonna need help.**

**The possibility never occurred to Sully. He chews on an idea.**

**SULLY**  
Go ahead, take Colleen and Brian in to church.

**MATTHEW**  
What're you gonna do?

**SULLY**  
(beat, decided) I'm gonna find some help.

**EXT. SKY - AN EAGLE (STOCK) - DAY FOURTEEN**

The majestic bird glides lazily... A CHANT carries us into:

**EXT. SACRED GROUNDS - DAY FOURTEEN**

Where Cloud Dancing finishes CHANTING his prayer. His face shows the pain from the recent tragedy. He adds sage to a small fire before him, then freezes. Without turning:

**CLOUD DANCING**  
How did you know I would be here?

**WIDEN** as Sully crosses over to his friend.

**SULLY**  
This is where I found you after One-Eye killed your son.

They clasp each other's arm in a silent, emotional greeting; much unspoken passes between the two men.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
How is the young one?

**SULLY**  
Robert E and Grace are takin' good care of 'im.

**CLOUD DANCING**  
(with regret) We had many babies in our village -- I do not know who gave this one life ... I do not know his name.

Cloud Dancing sits. Sully sits with him. A long silence.

**SULLY**

**It's dangerous for you to come back here.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**There is nothing more they can do to me ... I have seen my shadow.**

**SULLY**

**(stricken) Does the shadow always ...**

**He stops. Cloud Dancing offers what Sully's afraid to ask.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**It does not always mean death ... I cannot know what is ahead, but the Spirits told me I must first return here. To finish what I began with Medicine Woman.**

**SULLY**

**(a troubled beat) She's in a dark place.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**I know. I have been there also.**

**EXT. ROBERT E AND GRACE'S PORCH - NIGHT FOURTEEN**

**Grace rocks the baby while SINGING a soft lullaby. Robert E steps outside and takes in the sight: Grace in her glory.**

**ROBERT E**

**Gonna make that baby deaf with all your singin' ...**

**GRACE**

**(undaunted, glows) As a matter a fact, he just told me he liked it.**

**ROBERT E**

**He did now ... ?**

**GRACE**

**Said I got the prettiest voice he ever did hear.**

**She holds the baby out to Robert E. He eagerly takes it and cradles the baby gently, unaware how Grace is studying him.**

**ROBERT E**  
He *is* smilin' ...

**GRACE**  
That's cause he's takin' to you.

**ROBERT E**  
Yeah ... I think he is.

Grace rises, calm and resolved. She's thought this through.

**GRACE**  
I want us to look after him, Robert E. Always.

It takes a moment. Then Robert E looks at her in disbelief. Grace jumps in, before he can respond.

**GRACE**  
I been thinkin', maybe God didn't give us a child of our own 'cause he was savin' us for this one --

**ROBERT E**  
You're talkin' *crazy!*

He hands back the baby like a hot potato. Grace is steady.

**GRACE**  
I seen you with him. We can give him a good --

**ROBERT E**  
He ain't our *kind*, he's a Indian!

Robert E immediately wishes he could take it back. Grace cradles the baby protectively.

**GRACE**  
I'd expect that from just about anybody 'cept you.

Robert E forces calm, trying to reason:

**ROBERT E**  
Grace, we're gonna get ourselves a family. I promise you. But doin' this, in this town?  
This is trouble.

**GRACE**

We never run from trouble before.

**ROBERT E**

That baby's gonna know *nothin'* but hate! He's gonna have nobody wantin' to be with 'im -

**GRACE**

He'll have us. And he'll grow up inside a lovin' home. (as he turns away) You tell me, Robert E, who better to help this child? ... Who better to *understand* than us?

**ROBERT E**

This time you're askin' too much, Grace. It's too much.

He goes inside. As Grace sinks back into her rocker:

**INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT FOURTEEN**

Mike, drained, sits in her rocker with an open book. She doesn't read, but stares off blankly at nothing.

At the table, Matthew's stopped reading to watch her. Colleen glances up from her book and follows his gaze. Matthew meets her worried look, then closes his book and rises.

**MATTHEW**

Think Brian's got the right idea. I'm gonna get some sleep.

**COLLEEN**

'Night.

**MIKE**

Goodnight, Matthew.

Matthew pauses behind Mike and gently squeezes her shoulder. Mike freezes at his comforting touch, unable to look at him. They both cloud with emotions, with things they need to say.

**MATTHEW**

'Night, Ma.

Matthew lets go and moves on. As he stops to pull on his coat, Sully comes in the door. Relieved to see him, Matthew holds his look and they share a silent understanding.

**MATTHEW**

Colleen, help me in the barn?

**COLLEEN**

I want to finish

**MATTHEW**

Now?

Annoyed, Colleen looks over, sees Sully, and then understands. She accepts her coat from Matthew. As they exit, Mike absently looks up. She sees Sully and startles.

**MIKE**

Sully ... Where've you been?

**SULLY**

Busy.

**MIKE**

(uneasy, rises) I'm glad you're here. I want to see how your arm is healing.

Mike moves away quickly to retrieve her medical bag.

**SULLY**

My arm's fine.

**MIKE**

Still, I'd like to examine --

**SULLY**

I said it's fine.

A strained silence. Sully patiently steps closer, adding to Mike's discomfort. She goes for the stove.

**MIKE**

Would you like some coffee?

**SULLY**

Nope. Don't want nothin' to drink, don't want you tryin' to fix nothin' -- I just want you to stop ... And look at me.

**MIKE**  
(stops, unnerved) Sully ...

**SULLY**  
(gently urging) Just *look* at me.

Mike finally does. Sully sees how fragile her guard is now.

**MIKE**  
Why are you doing this?

**SULLY**  
I'm not tryin' to hurt you --

**MIKE**  
(totally disarmed) You'll make me remember. And I can't bear it. (a long beat, tortured) Sully, I know how your heart's broken ... Don't you think I hate myself for not being there for you? ... For the children?

**SULLY**  
(quietly) We're okay.

**MIKE**  
(composure slipping) But when you're around, all I see ... (can't finish) All I think about is how we let this happen.

**SULLY**  
We didn't *let* this happen!

**MIKE**  
We should've stopped it --

**SULLY**  
Some things you can't stop!

**MIKE**  
We should've tried harder! (heartbreakingly) Sully, they were our friends. And we let them down. (catching herself) No, I'm the one who sided with the town. *I* wanted the railroad ... I let them down.

**SULLY**  
(after a beat) Cloud Dancin' don't think that. (OFF her reaction) He's back, wants to see you.

**MIKE**  
(thrown) ... How could he?

**SULLY**  
'Cause he doesn't blame you.

Mike has to sit. It takes a moment to collect herself.

**MIKE**  
Why does he want to see me?

**SULLY**  
To finish teachin' you the medicine. His father came to him in a dream, told him he should do this.

**MIKE**  
... But I'm not Cheyenne.

**SULLY**  
He can't give you his powers, those come from the spirits. But he can finish showin' you all he knows. (OFF her silence) He needs to do this, Michaela ... Maybe you can help each other.

Mike sees how important this is to Sully as well. She's both overwhelmed and terrified by the idea.

**MIKE**  
What do I do?

**SULLY**  
Trust 'im. Like he trusts you.

His words have a great effect on Mike. Sully studies her.

**SULLY**  
When a medicine man teaches, he loses some of his own power. Cheyenne custom says you gotta offer some kind of gift.

**MIKE**  
What kind of gift?

**SULLY**  
Should be somethin' that speaks from your heart -- to his.

**MIKE**  
(at a loss) But I don't have anything ...

Then Mike thinks of it. She goes to a dresser, and pulls out the buckskin shirt. She tentatively brings it back to Sully.

**MIKE**  
It's your wedding present.

Sully is moved deeply by Mike's efforts in making the shirt. And he understands what she's now asking of him.

**SULLY**  
Cloud Dancin'll be honored.

They share an emotional moment, a first step in their healing.

**SULLY**  
I'd like to put it on -- just this once?

OFF Mike's tearful nod, Sully quickly pulls off his shirt. As he pulls on the buckskin, Mike moves around him, tugging here and there to make it fit right. She stops behind Sully, out of his view, and with great effort reaches out to squeeze his arm gently. It's the most contact she can allow for now. Sully reacts, covering her hand with his own. And this time, Mike doesn't pull away, as we:

**FADE OUT.**

**END ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

**FADE IN:**

## EXT. SACRED GROUNDS - DAY FIFTEEN

Early morning. Sully, carrying a blanket-bundle, leads Mike through trees and into a clearing. They find Cloud Dancing re-constructing a sweat lodge. Mike is not prepared for the moment of facing him again. She stops abruptly some distance away, as Cloud Dancing turns and sees them. Sully drops the bundle, trades looks with them both, then slips away. Mike stares at Cloud Dancing through a long, emotional struggle.

**MIKE**

I wish I knew what to say to you.

**CLOUD DANCING**

(also struggling) I know what is in your heart. It is also in mine. (with regret) I should never have let Snow Bird go on without me.

Mike reacts strongly, coming closer.

**MIKE**

But you didn't cause this! Cloud Dancing, it was *my* people who did this to yours! (stops, broken) I feel so sick ... And ashamed ...

A long, agonizing beat. Cloud Dancing steps toward Mike.

**CLOUD DANCING**

One cannot live in anger and blame ... It is time for us both to heal.

**MIKE**

(lost) But I don't know how.

**CLOUD DANCING**

The Spirits will help. Then we will talk of the medicine.

**MIKE**

(weary, uncertain) I can't say if your spirits exist or not. I'm not even sure how I feel about my own God anymore.

**CLOUD DANCING**

Just because we are angry with them, does not mean *they* go away.

OFF Mike's reaction:

## INT. NEW HOMESTEAD - DAY FIFTEEN

**Brian helps Sully fit the last poster to the new bedboard..**

**BRIAN**  
How long she gonna be gone?

**SULLY**  
Long's it takes. Few days maybe.

**Sully hammers a peg into both pieces.**

**BRIAN**  
I thought Cloud Dancin' already taught her stuff.

**SULLY**  
He wants her to know ever'thing now. Figures it'll help make your ma a better doctor. It's kinda his way of makin things right outta somethin' bad.

**Off Brian's puzzled look, Sully stops working.**

**SULLY**  
When awful things happen, if folks can find somethin' good comin' out of it, it helps ... Keeps 'em goin'.

**BRIAN**  
Is that what you do? (as Sully nods, thinks a moment) Kinda like Ma dyin', and us comin' to live with Dr. Mike?

**SULLY**  
That's right. (an emotional beat) When No Harm died, he covered up that baby so it could live ... Maybe he'll grow up to be a great leader like Black Kettle, work for peace. Maybe save somebody else.

**Sully watches this impact Brian. He holds out a peg.**

**SULLY**  
Wanna put in the last one?

**Brian fits the peg into a hole and takes the hammer.**

**BRIAN**  
Sully? Can we visit the baby?

**SULLY**

Sure. Soon's we finish.

Pleased, Brian starts pounding the peg:

**EXT. SWEAT LODGE - ESTABLISHING - DAY FIFTEEN**

**DRUMMING** and the **CHANTING** of Cloud Dancing comes from inside.

**INT. SWEAT LODGE - DAY FIFTEEN**

Mike is wrapped in a blanket sitting across from Cloud Dancing. She watches him intensely through the steam as he drums and prays in an ancient language. They're both drenched in sweat, and the **DRUMMING** and **CHANTING** has a powerful, almost hypnotic effect. Moved by his undying faith, Mike closes her eyes and finally lets go, allowing herself to feel all around her ...

**EXT. GRACE'S CAFE - DAY FIFTEEN**

Usual business in the b.g. Grace hands the baby to Brian as Robert E and Sully look on.

**GRACE**

Put your hand under his head ...

Brian does, cradling the baby carefully, studying his face.

**BRIAN**

Hey little guy... He looks happy. (sobering beat) Guess he don't know what happened to 'im.

Silence. All eyes fix on Brian as he talks to the baby.

**BRIAN**

It's real awful when ya lose your ma and pa ... Don't worry, you're gonna find people to love you. Just like me when my ma died.

He glances at Sully, who smiles back. Grace looks at Robert E, who can't take his eyes off Brian or the baby. Brian catches Robert E's stare, and decides to explain to him:

**BRIAN**

**My Kola saved his life. He hid 'im from the soldiers with his body. And his ma saved his life the same way ... So it's real important this baby grow up good.**

**Overwhelmed, Robert E nods back to the boy.**

**BRIAN**

**Sully says he could be a chief some day. Maybe get folks to stop bein' so mad and fightin' all the time ... (then, to baby) You can maybe even help save somebody's life, too.**

**ROBERT E**

**Maybe he already has ...**

**Robert E looks at Grace, holding out his hand. Grace knows what he's offering. As she clasps his hand lovingly ...**

**EXT. SACRED GROUNDS - NIGHT FIFTEEN**

**Mike is clothed again, seated with Cloud Dancing at a fire. She watches him offer more sage to the flames, then settle.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**To understand the medicine, you must know how it began ... One day long ago, the animals were angry at man for killing and eating them. So they came together in council, where each animal decided on a sickness he would give to man ... Now, when the plants heard about this, they were angry at the animals, who, after all, ate *them* in large quantities. So the plants decided they would provide man with the remedies for each sickness ...**

**As Cloud Dancing continues, Mike listens intensely, a spark of life returning to her pain-dulled face.**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. WOODS - DAY SIXTEEN**

**Cloud Dancing and Mike walk side-by-side through some trees, passionately locked in conversation.**

**MIKE**

**How much do you give them?**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**As much as they will drink ... You can find this cedar in the high hills. It grows short there, hugging the ground.**

**MIKE**

**I've seen it. It has a small berry.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**(impressed) That is right. If a tea cannot be made, the berry may be chewed and the juice swallowed ...**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. SACRED GROUNDS - DAY (DAWN) SEVENTEEN**

**Mike lies on the ground, wrapped in a blanket near a small campfire. She's wide awake, and has been all night. She turns over and looks off. Something catches her eye and Mike watches.**

**ANGLE - CLOUD DANCING**

**stands at the edge of a clearing nearby, looking very alone. Waiting for the sunrise, he stares off expectantly at the distant horizon. Mike steps up to his side. She looks off at the view, then studies him with compassion.**

**MIKE**

**You must miss them all terribly.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**(stoic) I carry them with me always.**

**MIKE**

**... So will I.**

**They share a moment of connection and sorrow. Mike looks out, appreciating the beauty for the first time in a long while.**

**MIKE**

**A friend once told me we should listen more to nature's song ... I'd forgotten how beautiful it could be. (beat) Thank you for helping me find it again.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**When we close our hearts to our pain -- they stay closed to all that is around us. To the**

joy as well as the sadness. Even to those we love.

His words hit home. He starts them walking through the trees.

**MIKE**

All I wanted to do was forget.

**CLOUD DANCING**

My people need you to remember. If the truth is not lost, perhaps something will be learned.

Mike nods, understanding.

**CLOUD DANCING**

I must leave soon. Will you bring to me the baby tonight?

**MIKE**

(stops, stunned) You're going away?

**CLOUD DANCING**

You have learned all I can teach --

**MIKE**

(panic rising) No ... I mean -- I still feel ... (can't find words) Cloud Dancing, I don't know where I belong anymore.

**CLOUD DANCING**

(a wistful smile) Sully once said the same words ... This answer is already within you. Or you would not have had the courage to come here.

**MIKE**

(still unsettled) Where will you take him?

**CLOUD DANCING**

Time for my people is short, few who are left know the old ways ... There is a band of Cheyenne in the north who refuse to live on a reservation. They hunt the land you call the Yellowstone. I know these people, they will raise this baby in the ways of my grandfathers ...

**MIKE**

And what about you? ... Where will you go?

And from his look, Mike knows he can't give her an answer ...

**EXT. GRACE'S CAFE - DAY SEVENTEEN**

**GRACE**  
He wants him *back*?

Grace stops cooking. Mike senses the glances coming from some customers. She keeps her voice down:

**MIKE**  
Could you bring him to the new homestead after dark?

**GRACE**  
No! He can't have him! Robert E and me decided, we're gonna raise him.

Grace lifts the baby from a basket on her counter.

**MIKE**  
Grace --

But Grace is heading for the Livery. Mike hurries after her.

**MIKE**  
Grace, I'm sorry. I didn't know.

**GRACE**  
You said his parents were dead!

**MIKE**  
But he's still part of a tribe. There're other bands. They share the same way of life, the same traditions. He'll be raised the way --

Grace cuts Mike off, defiant and hurt.

**GRACE**  
We can raise him right!

**MIKE**  
I know you can --

**GRACE**

He'd be *safe* with us.

Her point stops Mike momentarily. She sees Robert E watching from the Livery. He meets Mike's pained look and he knows.

**MIKE**

Grace, if there were no Cheyenne who could take this baby, I don't believe he could find two more loving people to care for him ...

Grace sees Robert E approaching with concern. She stares at the baby, trying to maintain dignity in the face of her pain.

**GRACE**

What kind of life can they give him, that we can't?

**MIKE**

A Cheyenne life.

**GRACE**

Bein' hunted by soldiers? Or starvin' on some horrible reservation?

Mike achingly knows this is probable. After a difficult beat:

**MIKE**

I suppose some of that will depend on us.

**EXT. NEW HOMESTEAD - NIGHT SEVENTEEN**

In the glow of a lamp, Mike -- with Sully at her side -- hands the buckskin shirt to Cloud Dancing. He stares at it, confused.

**MIKE**

To thank you for all you've taught me ... And for your friendship.

Emotions rising, Cloud Dancing looks at Sully questioningly.

**SULLY**

We both want you to have it.

Overwhelmed, Cloud Dancing opens the Cheyenne shirt and admires it. The air is charged with the things none of them can say.

**SULLY**

She put stones over the heart to help protect you ...

**MIKE**

And the claws of a hawk will give you courage, to face the unknown.

Cloud Dancing meets her look, moved that she remembers, understanding her meaning. Mike then adds sheepishly:

**MIKE**

It fits a little crooked. My sewing's not quite as good as my cooking.

They all manage slight smiles, then Cloud Dancing sobers.

**CLOUD DANCING**

I will wear it proudly.

**SOUNDS** of an approaching wagon grabs their attention. Cloud Dancing immediately slips into a shadow, Mike turns to Sully with an "I'll go" look. Sully stays back protectively as she heads down to the wagon. Recognizing it, Mike calls back:

**MIKE**

It's Robert E!

Cloud Dancing steps back into view, but stays by the house.

**ANOTHER ANGLE - THE WAGON**

Robert E stops it with Grace clutching the baby, at his side. The Reverend drives up a second wagon with Brian, Matthew and Colleen, who all quickly climb down. Mike is surprised.

**MIKE**

What're you doing here?

The children stay back, uncertain about Mike's state.

**MATTHEW**

Wanted to say goodbye, too.

**COLLEEN**

And we wanna be with you.

Mike is caught blindsided. She catches the Reverend's look.

**REVEREND**

I wanted Cloud Dancing to know that my prayers go with him. And all his people.

They share a moment of repair, then Mike looks at them all.

**MIKE**

I'm glad you're here ...

She turns her attention on Grace and Robert E; waiting, stoic.

**ROBERT E**

You take 'im, Dr. Mike. We said our goodbyes.

He puts his arm around Grace as she kisses the baby one last time, then hands him down. Caught off-guard, Mike is forced to accept it... And she finds herself really looking at the baby for the first time since that horrible day an eternity ago. Overcome with feelings, she meets Grace's tearful look.

**MIKE**

Cloud Dancing knows what you've done. When he's older, this baby *will* be told about you.

OFF Grace's stoic nod, Mike starts back toward the house --

Where Sully leads a horse to Cloud Dancing. The two men face each other, brimming with feelings. Mike stops to watch.

**SULLY**

I ain't sayin' goodbye ...

**CLOUD DANCING**

There is no such word in Cheyenne.

They embrace tightly. Then Cloud Dancing mounts and edges his horse to Mike. She turns her attention back to the baby, talking to him so that Cloud Dancing can also hear.

**MIKE**

**You must always remember -- how a negro couple took care of you when there was no one. And that a white woman nursed you at her breast ... And now you'll grow up part of a brave, proud people. (looks up at Cloud Dancing) Sully and I thought of a name ... (back to baby) We'll call you "Live In Hopes." (hands baby to Cloud Dancing) This way he can carry the words of his chief.**

**Overwhelmed, Cloud Dancing looks at the group watching him from the wagons in silence. Then he regards the baby in his arms, clearly struggling with deep feelings.**

**CLOUD DANCING**

**Live in Hopes. It is a good name.**

**He looks at Mike, then Sully. They share a powerful, emotional moment. Then he quickly reins his horse around and trots off.**

**As she watches him go, Mike finally gives in to a rush of feelings, and begins to cry. Colleen comes up behind her and stops, the boys not far behind. Mike turns to see her, and opens her arms. Relieved, Colleen rushes to Mike's embrace. And Mike cries harder -- quickly including the boys in her arms. As they cling tightly to each other, Mike reassures:**

**MIKE**

**I missed you ...**

**She sees Sully watching her -- and makes room for him. Sully steps into her embrace, and they hold on tight, neither wanting to ever let go. As the family begins to heal ...**

**EXT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT SEVENTEEN**

**CLOSE ON DOOR as it opens. In a sleeping gown, Dorothy peers out holding a lantern. She reacts with surprise:**

**DOROTHY**

**Michaela ... It must be three o'clock in the mornin'!**

**REVERSE TO Mike, full of feelings she's no longer fighting, a spark of fire back in her eyes. Mike's come with a purpose; her voice is quiet, but determined, and rich with emotion:**

**MIKE**

**The first time I met the Cheyenne people hey helped me search for Brian when he ran away ... Later, Cloud Dancing and Sully brought Black Kettle to the homestead. He'd been**

wounded by the army and they needed my help. That's when Black Kettle gave me my Cheyenne name: (says in Cheyenne) "Medicine Woman." (then) It means Medicine Woman ... (an emotional beat) I've never known a man who wanted peace more.

Tearing, Dorothy waits, relieved to see her friend talking and feeling again. She understands now why Mike has come.

**MIKE**

I want to tell you about Chief Black Kettle. About the Cheyenne Nation. I want people to know who they are ... And what's happened to them.

**DOROTHY**

You tell me the truth, Michaela, and I'll print it.

The two women share an emotional moment bonded by their mission ... and more. Dorothy steps back and lets Mike come inside. As the door closes, **MOVE DOWN BUILDING TO WINDOW:**

**CLOSE THROUGH WINDOW TO SEE** Mike sitting at a table with renewed strength and hope. Dorothy appears, setting down the lamp and sitting next to Mike with her pad and pencil ready.

As Mike begins to talk about her friends the Cheyenne ...

**FADE OUT.**

**THE END**

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