

# Orphan Train

Written by Toni Graphia

Directed by Jerry London

Rev. Blue, May 20, 1993  
Rev. Pink, May 21, 1993  
Rev. Yellow, May 25, 1993  
Rev. Green, May 27, 1993

Production Draft May 18, 1993  
Rev. Blue, May 20, 1993  
(c) 1993 CBS Inc. Rev. Pink, May 21, 1993  
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MICHAELA QUINN  
BYRON SULLY  
MATTHEW COOPER  
COLLEEN COOPER  
BRIAN COOPER  
HORACE  
LOREN BRAY  
JAKE SLICKER  
MYRA  
HANK  
ROBERT E.  
GRACE  
REVEREND  
DOROTHY JENNINGS  
JENNIFER - AGE 15  
JOSH - AGE 10  
NICK - AGE 12  
FARMER  
FARMER'S WIFE

FEATURED EXTRAS: ORPHAN WAGON DRIVER  
\*9 ORPHANS

ANIMALS

**WOLF**

**BACKGROUND: BARBERSHOP CUSTOMERS/BAR CUSTOMERS  
AUCTION CROWD/TOWNSFOLK**

**Set List**

**INTERIORS: BARBERSHOP  
CLINIC  
HOMESTEAD  
MYRA'S ROOM  
GENERAL STORE  
TELEGRAPH OFFICE  
SALOON**

**EXTERIORS: GENERAL STORE  
HOMESTEAD  
CHURCH  
LIVERY  
CLINIC  
TELEGRAPH OFFICE  
MEADOW  
SALOON  
GRAVEYARD  
WAGON  
GRACE'S CAFE  
\*BARBERSHOP**

**TEASER**

**FADE IN:**

**1 CLOSE ON A NEWSPAPER AD**

**which reads "ORPHAN TRAIN COMING!"**

**Loren (V.O.)  
(reading)**

**... Says here, "Children of all ages and sizes, available for immediate**

**adoption."**

**PAN TO REVEAL --**

**1A EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY ONE**

**A wagon approaching from the distance, loaded with a dozen scruffy children in the back.**

**Loren (V.O.)**

**"Mostly American-born orphans..."**

**Jake (V.O.)**

**"Mostly?"**

**Loren (V.O.)**

**Lemme read it... "Lacking in guidance and education."**

**Jake (V.O.)**

**Sounds like a sorry bunch.**

**Loren (V.O.)**

**You got it.**

**The wagon stops. Off the faces of the tired and dirty children --**

**2 EXT. BARBER SHOP - DAY ONE**

**Loren, still holding the newspaper, stands next to Jake on the front steps. As the two of them look sceptically toward the orphan wagon.**

**Jake**

**Bet some of 'em ain't even orphans. Cities back east're overflowin' so's they ship 'em out here.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**2 CONTINUED:**

**Loren**

**What're we supposed to do with 'em?**

**Jake**  
Put 'em back on the train.

Loren folds the newspaper and the two of them start walking toward --

### **3 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY ONE - CONTINUOUS**

Loren and Jake join the folks who've come out to see the arrival of the orphans, including Mike, Colleen and Brian from the clinic, Hank and Myra from the saloon, Horace from the telegraph office, Grace and Robert E. and the Reverend who greets the wagon driver.

**Reverend**  
I'm Reverend Timothy Johnson... I believe you're looking for me.

The driver stops the wagon and nods.

**Reverend**  
(smiles and waves)  
Hello, children.

They stare at him timidly. A few of them nod in response.

**Mike**  
Where'd they come from?

**Reverend**  
The New York Children's Mission.

Dorothy arrives with a notepad and pencil.

**Dorothy**  
These're some of the orphans that come on the train?

**Reverend**  
I've signed on as a volunteer.

**Jake**  
You asked for 'em?

**Reverend**  
That's right, and I'm gonna look after them until they're placed in good homes.

Loren and Jake look at him like he's crazy. But Mike and Dorothy show

**support.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**3 CONTINUED:**

**Mike**  
Why, that's very kind of you, Reverend.

**Dorothy**  
I'm gonna write up a little piece in the gazette.

She addresses the oldest looking girl, Jennifer, who's 15, but looks more worldly than her years.

**Dorothy**  
What's your name, sweetheart?

**Jennifer**  
Jennifer.

Jennifer's got her arm around her brother Josh, 10, who's on crutches. He's only got one leg. Another fellow, Nick, 12, stands there eyeing the townspeople with a defiant stare. Loren speaks up.

**Loren**  
You can turn that wagon around right now and take 'em back where they come from.

The kids react.

**Dorothy**  
Now, Loren... They rode all the way out from New York.

**Jake**  
Last thing we need is a bunch of vagrants, pickpockets and thieves dumped on us...

**Mike**  
They're children.

**Loren**  
Some of 'em come right outta the jails. Or they find 'em wanderin' the streets like dogs.

**Jake**  
Loren's right. We don't want anybody else's rejects.

**Sully walks up, sees what's going on.**

**Reverend**  
The children are entrusted to my care and I say they stay.

**(CONTINUED)**

**3 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Loren**  
I say we send 'em back.

**Sully**  
It ain't up to you, Loren.

**But Loren takes a step toward the wagon. It's a stand off with the Reverend. Mike steps to the Reverend's side. Sully follows suit, showing solidarity.**

**Mike**  
These children aren't going anywhere until we can find homes for them.

**She turns to the Reverend and she and Sully help him start unloading the kids. As Loren watches, a spit ball hits him in the head. OFF Nick's smile as he tucks his pea-shooter back in his pocket.**

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF TEASER**

**ACT ONE**

**FADE IN:**

**4 EXT. CLINIC - DAY ONE - ESTABLISHING**

## 5 INT. CLINIC - DAY ONE

Standing room only at the clinic. Mike goes from kid to kid examining each of them. Checking their eyes, throats, etc.. Colleen is assisting her. Brian and the Reverend are there to help also, as Sully ushers the last straggler in from the wagon.

**Mike**  
How long have you been on the train?

**Jennifer**  
We started out over a month ago.

**Mike**  
How many of you were there when you left New York?

**Jennifer**  
'Bout sixty.

**Mike**  
What have you had to eat?

**Jennifer**  
Bread and mustard, mostly.

**Mike**  
(to Reverend)  
Yes, I can see some signs of malnutrition. And apparently the conditions were less than sanitary.

She keeps diagnosing them as she goes.

**Mike**  
We've got three cases of scurvy... two cases of anaemia... I'm afraid this looks like rickets...

Mike turns her attention to Josh, the boy with the missing leg. She goes to where his pant leg has been folded over to hid his stump, attempts to examine him. But Josh stops her.

**Josh**  
No.

(CONTINUED)

**5 CONTINUED:**

**Jennifer**  
**(protectively)**  
**My brother don't like nobody messin' with his leg.**

**Mike**  
**How did it happen?**

**Jennifer**  
**Got crushed while he was unloadin' coal on the docks.**

**Mike**  
**This boy worked on the docks?**

**Meanwhile, Nick coughs violently. Mike goes to him.**

**Mike**  
**That's some cough you've got, young man.**

**She listens to his chest with her stethoscope, as Colleen comes over with a bottle of cough medicine. Mike gives him a spoonful.**

**Mike**  
**(to Colleen)**  
**They'll need baths and their clothes washed. I'm going to give them all a dose of cod liver oil and some iron and quinine pills.**

**(to Reverend)**  
**But what they really could use is sunshine and some proper food - meat, eggs and fresh vegetables.**

**In her own indomitable way, she takes the bull by the horns.**

**Mike**  
**Now where do you intend for them to stay?**

**Reverend**  
**(aside)**  
**I'm planning to convert the church.**

**Mike**  
**But there's no cooking or washing facilities, not to mention suitable beds.**

**Reverend**

**I'll make do...**

**(CONTINUED)**

**5 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Mike**

**They've been on a train for three weeks. What they need is a hot meal and to see what a real home is like.**

**That settles it. Off her own kid's reactions --**

**6 INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT ONE**

**Chaos reigns. Kids run wild. A couple of them are tossing a ball around inside. Another couple is wrestling on the floor, LAUGHING and SHOUTING and knocking things over. One little girl is CRYING. The Reverend tries to comfort her.**

**Reverend**

**Sshhh... it's all right, dear...**

**But the NOISE LEVEL is deafening. Far from the idyllic picture Mike had in mind. She tries to take charge.**

**Mike**

**Children? Could we please just settle down?**

**Colleen, Brian and Matthew stand watching their home under siege. Mike is hit on the head with the tossed ball.**

**Mike**

**(forcedly pleasant)**

**We usually play ball outside.**

**But the kids ignore her and keep playing. Mike attempts to organize things. She controls her exasperation.**

**Mike**

**Colleen, I need you to help me with dinner.**

**Colleen**

**What are we gonna make?**

**Mike**  
How about chicken?

**Matthew**  
We don't have enough chicken for all these people.

**Mike**  
Then... beans... potatoes... whatever we have enough of.

**Brian**  
Where're they all gonna sleep?

**(CONTINUED)**

**6 CONTINUED:**

**Colleen**  
How about in the barn?

**Matthew**  
(not pleased)  
Pretty cold in the barn.

**Mike**  
I'd like them to stay inside.

The little girl is still **WAILING**. Mike's getting out the pots and pans. A couple of them **CRASH** to the ground. Meanwhile, off in a corner, Nick lights up a cigarette and starts smoking it. Brian's eyes widen.

**Brian**  
Ma...

**Mike**  
What, Brian? Can't you see I'm...

She glances over and sees the smoke. Rushes over to Nick.

**Mike**  
What do you think you're doing?

**Nick**  
(matter of factly)

**What's it look like?**

**She takes the cigarette, stubs it out. Throws a look at the Reverend. He shrugs. It's going to be a long night.**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**7 EXT. HOMESTEAD PORCH - NIGHT ONE - LATER**

**Mike and the Reverend step out onto the porch. They speak in WHISPERS.**

**Reverend  
Dinner was delicious.**

**Mike  
(shrugs)  
We did our best.**

**Reverend  
That's the nice thing about you, Dr. Mike. No matter how much you give,  
there's always more where that came from.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**7 CONTINUED:**

**Mike  
(touched)  
Why, thank you, Reverend.**

**Reverend  
Thank you for helping with the children. See you tomorrow.**

**They trade a smile as they look back through the door at the children curled up like sleeping puppies. They're exhausted, yet share a mutual sense of accomplishment. As the Reverend leaves, Mike turns back around and goes inside.**

**8 INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT ONE - CONTINUOUS**

**Everyone's asleep. There're kids piled on top of kids. Four squeezed into**

Mike's bed, two in the trundle. The rest, including Colleen and Brian are spread out on the floor. There's literally no place left to sleep. Mike tip-toes over kids and goes to the chair. She sits down, closes her eyes...

DISSOLVE TO:

9 INT. MYRA'S ROOM - NIGHT ONE

Myra's asleep when the door opens and someone slips into the darkened room. Myra's eyes open, sensing her visitor, but she doesn't move. It's Hank. He sits on the edge of the bed.

Myra  
You want to talk to me 'bout somethin', Hank?

Hank  
Nah. That ain't what I want.

Myra  
It's late.

Hank  
You're right. Time for bed.  
(beat)  
I been missin' you, Myra.

No response.

Hank  
You miss me, too?

Myra  
Well... sure... it's just I'm pretty tired and all.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

Hank  
Never used to be too tired for me.

Myra

**It's just not a good night, Hank.**

**Hank**  
**I'll make it a good night.**

**He starts to lay next to her, to kiss her neck, instead Myra sits up, pulls away.**

**Myra**  
**Hank...**

**Hank**  
**You tellin' me no?**

**Myra**  
**It's just... I ain't feelin' well.**

**Hank**  
**Now, see, that's a coincidence. I seem to recollect you not feelin' well the last three times I wanted to be with you.**

**Myra**  
**I think it's my stomach.**

**Hank**  
**I think it's your memory. You forgot who you belong to.**

**He grabs her roughly this time. Pulls her to him.**

**Hank**  
**You're mine, Myra. I wouldn't go forgettin' that if I were you.**

**Myra, looking terrified, submits to Hank now. On Myra's face as he kisses her, glassy-eyed and blank -- pretending it's not happening --**

**10 EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY TWO**

**It's very early. Brian and Colleen are tugging at two ends of a towel.**

**Colleen**  
**I had it first!**

**(CONTINUED)**

**10 CONTINUED:**

**Brian**

**No you didn't! I set it down for just a second...**

**Colleen**

**Well, it's mine now!**

**Matthew comes out of the barn, still groggy and half asleep.**

**Matthew**

**What're you two yellin' about! I can't get any sleep out here!**

**Colleen**

**Then try sleepin' inside on the floor! With a pack of kids tossin' and snorin'.**

**Mike hears them yelling and comes out of the house.**

**Mike**

**Children! What's going on?**

**Brian**

**She took my towel.**

**Colleen**

**How am I supposed to wash up without a towel?**

**Brian**

**Fine. I won't wash up.**

**(to Mike)**

**Don't have any clean clothes anyway. You gave 'em to the orphans to wear.**

**Colleen**

**I'm goin' to get some sleep.**

**Brian**

**Me, too.**

**They head toward the barn, pouting.**

**Matthew**

**They say they can't sleep in the house 'cause of all those kids.**

**Mike catches them by the shoulders.**

**Mike**  
How about if I go inside and make us all a nice breakfast?

**(CONTINUED)**

**10 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Colleen**  
We already ran out of milk and bacon.

**Mike**  
Look, I know it's crowded and we keep running out of things, but don't worry, it's just temporary. The Reverend and I are going to take the children to the church today to interview families and find homes for them.

**As Mike puts her arms around them and leads them back toward the house...**

**Mike**  
Have a little patience, that's all I'm asking.

**11 EXT. CHURCH - DAY TWO**

The children are lined up in front of the church. The townspeople are gathered around them, including Dorothy, Loren, Jake, Horace, Hank, Sully, Mike, Colleen, Brian and Matthew.

**Reverend**  
Thank you all for comin'. I think you all know the orphans from the New York Children's Mission. They're in need of and deserve good homes. If all interested parties would please step to the front.

The crowd just stand there, regarding the kids. Robert E. and Grace are also watching from the bridge. A rough-looking RANCHER finally comments.

**Rancher**  
Slim pickin's if you ask me.  
(to Mike)  
They got a clean bill of health?

**Mike**  
I've examined them and the ones with ailments are being properly treated.

**A FARMER and his WIFE step forward.**

**Wife**  
**Which one's got ailments?**

**(CONTINUED)**

**11 CONTINUED:**

**Farmer**  
**We don't want no sickly child.**

**Wife**  
**(re: Jennifer)**  
**She looks healthy.**

**Mike indicates Josh.**

**Mike**  
**She prefers not to be separated from her brother.**

**Rancher**  
**I don't want two of 'em. Got enough mouths to feed already. Besides, he's a cripple. Can't get any work out of him.**

**The wife grabs one of the next-to-oldest girl's faces. She opens her mouth and looks inside.**

**Mike**  
**What're you doing?**

**Wife**  
**Checkin' her teeth.**

**Mike**  
**I beg your pardon?**

**Farmer**  
**(piping up)**  
**And her hair for lice.**

**The woman picks at the girl's hair. Mike is appalled by the behavior of the crowd, as are Grace and Robert E.**

**Grace**  
**(to Robert E.)**  
**It could be us up there.**

**Robert E.**  
**It was.**

**She presses close to Robert E. as the wife turns back to Jennifer.**

**Wife**  
**(to Jennifer)**  
**You any good with housework? Cookin'? Sewin'?**

**Jennifer doesn't respond.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**11 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Farmer**  
**I s'pose we could train her.**

**Mike**  
**Sounds like you want a servant, not a daughter.**

**Wife**  
**She been baptized?**

**But Hank's eyeing Jennifer, too.**

**Hank**  
**(grinning)**  
**Don't matter to me if she ain't baptized.**

**He approaches.**

**Hank**  
**How old are you?**

**Jennifer**  
**Fifteen.**

**Mike**  
**Hank, I'm afraid to even inquire as to your intentions.**



**Hank**  
I was intendin' on adoptin' her.

**Mike**  
Absolutely not.

The Reverend takes Mike aside for a moment.

**Reverend**  
I hate to say this, Dr. Mike, but none of them are gonna find homes if you keep going like this.

**Mike**  
But it's disrespectful, it's humiliating.

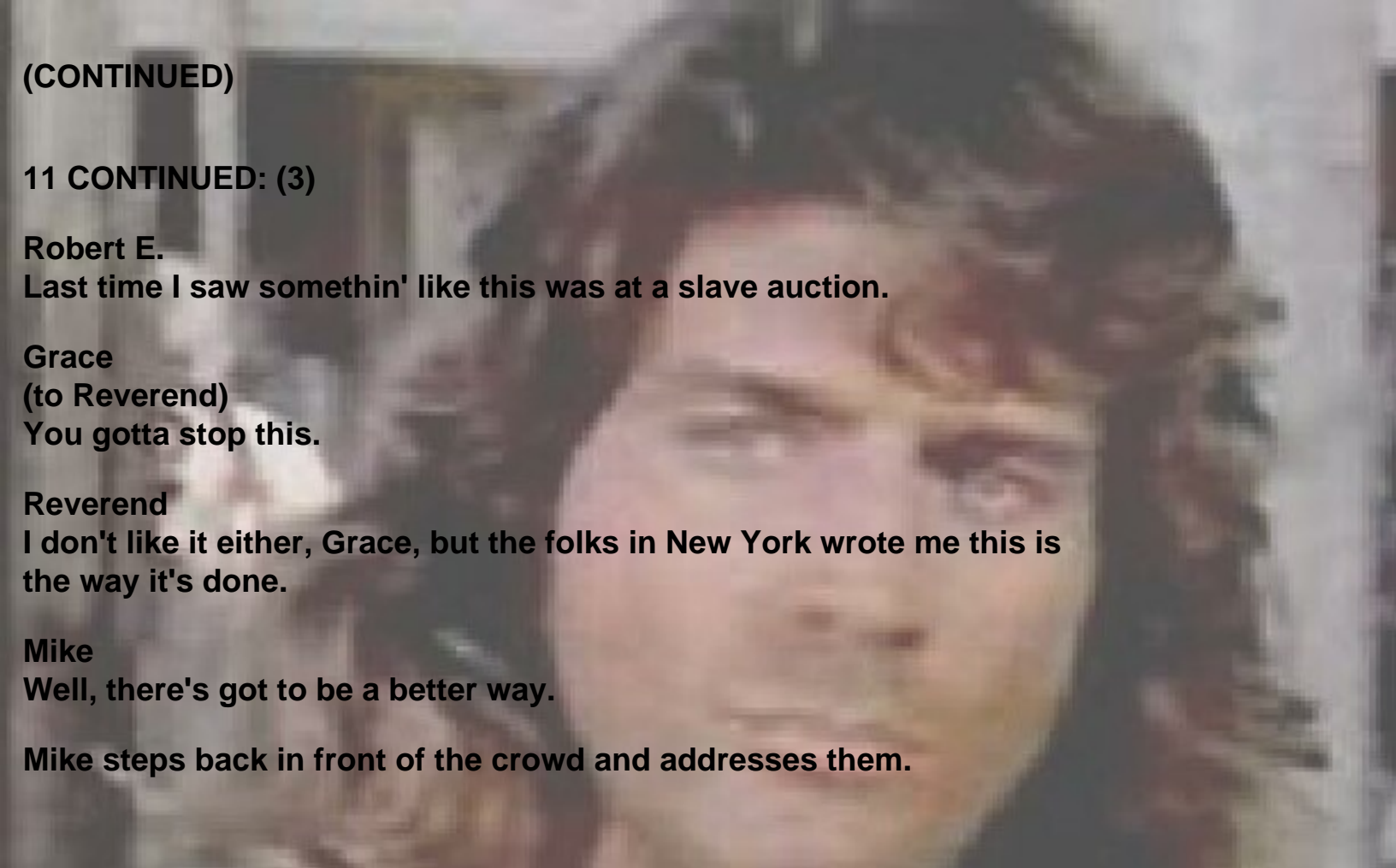
Robert E. steps over to the Reverend and Mike.

**Robert E.**  
It's wrong.

**Mike**  
I agree.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (3)



**Robert E.**  
Last time I saw somethin' like this was at a slave auction.

**Grace**  
(to Reverend)  
You gotta stop this.

**Reverend**  
I don't like it either, Grace, but the folks in New York wrote me this is the way it's done.

**Mike**  
Well, there's got to be a better way.

Mike steps back in front of the crowd and addresses them.

**Mike**

Excuse me! I would just like to specify that we are not at a cattle auction. These children need homes. Loving homes. They need to be taken in as part of a family.

Josh, suddenly embarrassed by the proceedings, tries to slip away, but he stumbles and drops one of his crutches. Jennifer rushes to help her brother, but Robert E. comes to the boy's aid, picks up the crutch for him.

**Mike**

Won't you consider sharing your love with them?

She glances over at the Reverend and he nods approval. The disinterested crowd stands there a beat, then walks away. The orphans are left forlorn, uncomfortable. Only the Reverend, Sully, Grace, Robert E., Mike and her kids remain.

**Brian**

What're you gonna do now, Ma?

Mike throws a look at the Reverend. A sigh.

**Mike**

I don't quite know.

The Reverend puts a comforting arm around Mike.

**Reverend**

Don't worry. We'll find a way.

**(CONTINUED)**

**11 CONTINUED: (4)**

Mike reacts to his embrace. Pleasantly surprised and comforted. The kids notice. Sully notices. The Reverend notices that everyone has noticed, and takes his arm away.

**Matthew**

Meantime, where're they gonna stay?

A beat.

**Mike**

**We take them back home with us.**

**OFF Colleen, Brian and Matthew as they exchange disappointed looks --**

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT ONE**

**ACT TWO**

**FADE IN:**

**12 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THREE**

**CLOSE ON LOREN --**

**Loren**

**I told ya, I ain't interested in those wicked little waifs. I don't even like kids...**

**13 REVERSE TO MIKE AND THE REVEREND**

**standing with three of the orphans in tow. They're taking them around like door to door salesmen in hopes that making a personal plea will get more positive adoption results.**

**Loren**

**If you ask me, I'd rather raise piglets. Lots cleaner, less noise and you can eat 'em after they're grown.**

**The Reverend and Mike look at each other. That pretty much says it all.**

**14 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THREE**

**CLOSE ON DOROTHY --**

**Dorothy**

**I'm sure they're nice children... they look so sweet, especially the little girls...**

**15 EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY THREE**

**SMASH!** Glass shatters on the porch. Colleen runs out to see her mirror in pieces at the feet of one little girl, who was playing with it on the porch.

**Colleen**

**I told you not to use my mirror! Now look what you've done!**

**The girl just looks up and shrugs.**

**16 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY THREE**

**BACK ON DOROTHY --**

**Dorothy**

**I'd love to take them, but I done raised four children of my own. I just don't want to start all over again -- especially with what I've just gone through. I'm sorry, Michaela.**

**The Reverend and Mike exchange another look.**

**17 EXT. LIVERY - DAY THREE**

**ON GRACE AND ROBERT E. --**

**Robert E.**

**A white child?**

**Grace**

**Not even in Boston, Dr. Mike.**

**Robert E.**

**Trouble somethin' like that would cause... well, just ain't fair to us, and it sure as heck ain't fair to the child.**

**Grace**

**Besides, we just got married. We'd like to wait a while, then start our own family.**

**The Reverend nods. Off Dr. Mike --**

**Mike**

**I understand.**

**18 EXT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY THREE**

**Horace**

They sure are cute. Some of 'em look like little angels...

**19 EXT. BARN - DAY THREE**

Brian comes out to the barn to find Nick smoking a cigarette.

**Brian**

Hey, what're you doin'?

Nick blows a big puff of smoke in his face.

**(CONTINUED)**

**19 CONTINUED:**

**Brian**

You shouldn't smoke!

But Nick just laughs and tosses his cigarette butt into a stack of hay. Smoke rises from the hay.

**Brian**

You're gonna burn down the barn!

As Brian grabs a bucket of water and tosses it on the smoking hay...

**20 EXT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY THREE**

**BACK ON HORACE --**

**Horace**

... I'd be happy to take one, but I got my nephew Lewis now.

On Mike and the Reverend's stony faces.

**21 OMITTED**

## 22 EXT. CLINIC - DAY THREE

Mike paces back and forth between Sully and the Reverend, who are standing, listening to her complain.

Mike

What kind of human beings won't take in an orphan?

(on a roll)

These poor children have been from town to town... How terrible not to be chosen. To be the last left. But everyone's got some excuse!

Sully

Raisin' a child's not easy.

Mike

It wasn't easy for me either, to take Charlotte's children. But when I was called upon, I did it.

(then)

What about you, Sully? Why don't you take one?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

Sully

You know the kind of life I lead. It's not for children.

Mike stares at him. It's a sore point with them anyway.

Mike

The Reverend would take one, wouldn't you, Reverend?

Reverend

I'd take them all.

Mike shoots a look at Sully, who shoots a look at the Reverend.

Sully

Well, you may have to. The town just ain't warmin' up to 'em.

(then to Mike)

'Bout time you realize that and quit paradin' around tryin' to make everythin' right.

**Mike**  
**(indignant)**  
**Someone's got to do it.**

**Sully**  
**But why does it always have to be you?**

**He leaves. HOLD ON Mike. A good question indeed.**

**23**  
**THRU OMITTED**  
**24**

**25 INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY THREE**

**Jake is finishing up a customer when someone clears his throat from the doorway...**

**Reverend (O.S.)**  
**Aheemmm...**

**Jake looks up to see the Reverend standing there.**

**Jake**  
**Somethin' I can do for you, Reverend?**

**Reverend**  
**Why, yes... I'd like...**  
**(beat)**  
**... a shave.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**25 CONTINUED:**

**All the customers look toward him curiously, including Loren who's there in his usual spot, hanging out with the paper.**

**Jake**  
**All right, who is it?**

**Reverend**

**Who's who?**

**Jake**  
**The woman.**

**Reverend**  
**I beg your pardon?**

**Jake**  
**I been in this business for seventeen years and I can tell ya, no man ever shaves his beard, 'lessin it's for a woman.**

**The other customers SNICKER. The Reverend is embarrassed.**

**Reverend**  
**I just thought it'd be a nice change, that's all.**

**Nobody buys it.**

**Jake**  
**Sit down.**

**Jake gestures to the now empty barber chair and he tentatively takes a seat. Loren pipes up.**

**Loren**  
**Wouldn't be the little redhead down at the feedstore?**

**Jake**  
**I think that Quigley girl's sweet on you. Seen the way she looks at ya all mooney-eyed at the church?**

**Jake and Loren trade a grin.**

**Reverend**  
**It's really not what you think, gentlemen. I haven't even had time for socializing -- with the orphans in town. Dr. Mike and I have been so busy...**

**(CONTINUED)**

**25 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Loren/Jake**  
**(a revelation)**

**Dr. Mike!**

The Reverend stops abruptly, like a kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar. He starts to deny it, but Jake grasps his jaw and starts in with the razor...

**26 EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY THREE**

Mike drives up and is met by Colleen and Brian, while the orphans play in the background.

**Colleen**

Ma! You're home! Look what happened.

She shows her the pieces of glass, wrapped in a handkerchief.

**Colleen**

(tears in her eyes)

She broke my mirror.

**Mike**

We'll get you another.

**Colleen**

It's the one Grandma gave me. It'll never be the same.

**Brian**

I can't find my favorite ball. I think one of them stole it.

**Colleen**

Jennifer borrowed one of my dresses without even askin'.

**Brian**

And Nick almost burned down the barn!

But Mike is at the end of her rope.

**Mike**

I believe some tolerance is in order.

**Brian**

Whattya mean?

**Mike**

Put yourself in their shoes.

**Mike notices some of the orphans, listening from near the barn.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**26 CONTINUED:**

**Mike**  
**You should realize how fortunate you are. How many things you have.**

**Colleen and Brian just look at her, disbelieving. She's never been this short with them.**

**Mike**  
**These children have nothing. No home. No toys. No grandmother to give them presents. The least you could do is be more understanding.**

**The kids take a beat, still unconvinced.**

**Brian**  
**All right, Ma.**

**Colleen**  
**We'll share.**

**Mike**  
**Good.**

**Brian and Colleen trade a look as they watch her go toward the other children.**

**Brian**  
**'Cept I want my ball back.**

**26A EXT. SALOON - DAY THREE**

**Jennifer approaches with Josh. She stops near the swinging doors.**

**Jennifer**  
**Wait for me.**

**But a moment after she goes inside, he wanders off...**

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

Hank's pouring drinks at the bar when he notices heads turning. He looks up to see Jennifer coming toward him through the smoke, the looks, the asides from the rowdy men there.

Myra, too, is there, watching.

Hank  
What can I do for you, little lady?

**(CONTINUED)**

**27 CONTINUED:**

Jennifer  
You're the man from yesterday?

Hank  
That's right.

Jennifer  
Sorry 'bout what happened.

Hank  
So am I. Had what I thought was a pretty fair proposition for ya.

Jennifer  
That's what I come to talk to you 'bout.

Hank  
I see.

Hank walks around to the other side of the bar and leans next to the girl.

Hank  
So you interested in comin' to work for me?

She nods.

Hank  
Do you know what kind of work, I'm talkin' 'bout?

**Jennifer**  
**Entertainin'.**

**Hank**  
**And what do you know about entertainin'?**

**Jennifer**  
**I know enough.**

**Hank**  
**(smiling)**  
**That right?**

**Jennifer**  
**How much is the pay?**

**Hank**  
**Half of what you bring in.**

**It's all the money in the world to her.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**27 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Hank**  
**You get food, a roof over your head and Sundays off.**

**Jennifer**  
**Sounds fair.**

**Hank**  
**Course, if ya want, you could always wait around for the Doc to scrounge up some folks for ya.**

**Jennifer**  
**When can I start?**

**Hank smiles. Glances around at the men still staring at her.**

**Hank**  
**Come back tonight.**

**OFF Myra watching Hank watch Jennifer go.**

**28 EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY THREE**

Mike stands outside with the kids as the Reverend drives up in his wagon. He tips his hat to Mike and gets down.

Mike  
Good day, Reverend.

She gazes at him a beat.

Mike  
Something's... different about you.

He almost blushes as he waits for her to figure it out.

Mike  
I don't know what it is, but... oh, my goodness.  
(beat)  
Your beard. You... shaved.

Reverend  
I thought it'd be a nice change.

Mike  
Oh... well, you look... very attractive. If it's proper to say that to a member of the clergy.

Reverend  
I don't think God would mind.

**(CONTINUED)**

**28 CONTINUED:**

Mike smiles. Besides the handsomeness, there's a humour in him she hasn't seen before. The kids come crowding around. He starts to lift the small ones into the wagon. They peer and point at his clean-shaven face. Some of the little girls giggle. Colleen and Brian have come out on the porch.

Mike  
Are you ready? We're about to leave.

**Colleen**  
**We're not goin'.**

**Brian**  
**We got chores.**

**Mike**  
**The chores can wait. Come with us. We're going to have a picnic, and swim...**

**Brian**  
**Don't feel like it.**

**Mike**  
**But you love swimming.**

**Colleen**  
**Not today, Dr. Mike.**

**Mike**  
**Well... goodbye then, see you later.**

**Brian and Colleen watch from the porch as Mike joins the rest in the wagon and they drive away.**

## **29 EXT. MEADOW - DAY THREE**

**A beautiful picnic lunch is spread out. Some of the children are playing, some are eating...**

**Mike**  
**Everyone ready for a swim?**

**Several of the kids nod, including Nick.**

**Reverend**  
**Swimmin' hole's down that way.**

**Nick heads off in that direction. What they don't see is that as soon as he disappears behind some brush --**

## **29A ANOTHER ANGLE**

**Nick sits down on a tree stump and lights up a cigarette.**

**BACK TO SCENE:**

**Mike**  
**(to Reverend)**  
**I can't recall a time when I've had this much fun, Reverend.**

**Reverend**  
**Call me Timothy.**

**Mike**  
**All right, Timothy. And you can call me Michaela.**

**She smiles and watches as he picks up one of the kids on his shoulders and races across the meadow, the enthralled kid laughing and loving it.**

**30 EXT. LIVERY - DAY THREE**

**Robert E. is at the forge. Reveal that Josh has hobbled up on his crutches and is watching.**

**Josh**  
**Whatcha doin'?**

**Robert E.**  
**Makin' horse shoes.**

**Josh**  
**Horses wear shoes?**

**Robert E.**  
**To protect their feet.**

**Josh**  
**Lotta my friends back in New York never even had no shoes.**

**Robert E.**  
**That where you're from?**

**Josh**  
**Yeah.**

**Robert E.**  
**Miss it?**

**Josh**

**No.**

**Robert E. looks at the boy. At his sadness. He knows what it feels like.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**30 CONTINUED:**

**Robert E.**

**It's hard when you're not like everybody else. When you're different.**

**Josh**

**Yeah.**

**Robert E.**

**People look at you and that's all they see. The difference. But they don't know, do they?**

**Josh**

**Nope. They don't know.**

**Josh leans over and picks up an old rusty horse shoe that's on the ground.**

**Josh**

**Can I keep this?**

**Robert E. nods.**

**Robert E.**

**They say it brings you luck.**

**The two of them stand looking at each other. The irony hanging between them.**

**31 INT. MYRA'S ROOM - NIGHT THREE**

**Hank barges right in with Jennifer in tow.**

**Hank**

**Myra, this is Jennifer. I want ya to fix her up -- get her a nice dress, some make-up, make her look real pretty.**

**Myra**

**Sure, Hank.**

Hank goes back out the door. Myra and Jennifer regard each other a beat.

**Myra**  
Wish I could say I'm glad to see ya, but I ain't. Truth is, I was hopin' you wouldn't come back.

**Jennifer**  
Why?

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

**Myra**  
'Cause I don't think you know what really goes on here.

**Jennifer**  
I know it's a job. And I need a job. Gotta look after my brother. He's a cripple.

**Myra**  
Ain't just a job. It's a life.

**Jennifer**  
Not a bad life.

**Myra**  
That what Hank told ya?  
(then)  
'Course he did.

Myra smiles at the irony.

**Myra**  
But then, ain't him who's livin' it.

**Jennifer**  
All I know is, there ain't no one else out there who wants me, and Hank does.

**Myra**  
And he'll have you, too. Because you'll belong to him. Do you know what that means?

**(beat)**  
I didn't, when I first came. But I do now. And I wish someone had told me.  
That's all.

**OFF Jennifer, pondering the words.**

**32 INT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT THREE**

**Matthew comes in the door to find Brian and Colleen sitting, alone.**

**Matthew**  
Hey, little brother. Hey, Colleen.

**Brian/Colleen**  
**(dejectedly)**  
Hey, Matthew.

**(CONTINUED)**

**32 CONTINUED:**

**Matthew**  
**(glancing around)**  
Where's Dr. Mike?

**Brian**  
Her and the Reverend took the orphans on a picnic.

**Matthew**  
But it's dark already.

**Colleen**  
They went swimmin' too, and then they were stoppin' by the church.

**Matthew**  
Still, they shoulda been back by now. Why didn't you go?

**Colleen and Brian exchange a look. But just then, there's a KNOCK on the door. Matthew rushes to it, expecting Dr. Mike. But it's Sully.**

**Sully**  
Where's Dr. Mike?

**Matthew**

She went out with the Reverend and those kids and she ain't back yet.

**Colleen**

All she cares about anymore are the orphans. She don't even want to be here with us.

**Brian**

She's always busy. I don't even think she likes us anymore. She likes those kids better.

**Matthew**

Brian...

**Colleen**

It's true, Matthew.

**Brian**

Yeah, we'd rather just live with you. Can we stay with you and Ingrid... after you get married?

Sully and Matthew exchange a look. This is serious. The conversation is broken by the sound of a WAGON pulling up outside.

### 33 EXT. HOMESTEAD - NIGHT THREE

It's the Reverend and Mike coming home. The Reverend jumps down and helps the kids out. They go off toward the house. Lastly, he helps Mike down.

**Mike**

Thank you, Timothy.

They stand facing each other now. In the dark. The kids disappear inside.

**Reverend**

It's been a wonderful day.

**Mike**

Yes, it has.

**Reverend**

The children really enjoyed themselves.

**Mike**

You're very good with them.

**Reverend**  
**Not as good as you.**  
**(quickly)**  
**You're awful special. I always thought so, but now...**  
**(flustered)**

**Well, now... I know so. Working closely with you, my respect, has grown to admiration. And I've been thinkin'... These children are so special. So deserving. I find myself wishing there was a way they could have a real home. A real family. And I think there may be a way.**

**Mike**  
**How?**

**Reverend**  
**Marry me?**

**You could knock Mike over with a feather.**

**Mike**  
**I beg your pardon?**

**Reverend**  
**I know it's sudden, but we make a good team.**

**Mike**  
**Well... yes, but...**

**(CONTINUED)**

**33 CONTINUED:**

**Reverend**  
**I'd be a good husband to you, Michaela. I'd take care of your children and these children, too.**

**Mike**  
**I... don't know what to say.**

**Reverend**  
**You don't have to say anything. Just think about it.**

**And with that he leans in and kisses her. She is caught by surprise, yet responds -- kissing him back for a moment. She turns to go back to the**

house, but first --

34 REVEAL SULLY AND MATTHEW

watching from the front porch.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

35 INT. CLINIC - DAY FOUR

Josh sits on the exam table. Mike pulls his pant leg aside.

Mike  
Here... let me just...

Josh  
(shyly)  
Don't look at me.

Mike  
I'm just going to clean it.

Josh is painfully vulnerable with his stump exposed to her. But he lets her swab it with alcohol and water.

Mike  
Does it ever hurt?

Josh  
Sometimes... even the part that's not there.

Mike  
That's common, actually. It's called "phantom pain." Even doctors don't quite understand why it happens, but it's normal and it fades with time.

The boy looks up, intrigued and reassured. Matthew enters.

**Matthew**  
Dr. Mike, we gotta talk.

**Mike** doesn't want Josh to be embarrassed.

**Mike**  
Matthew, would you wait outside, please?

**Matthew**  
(with edge)  
I forgot you were so busy with the orphans. Guess I shoulda made an appointment.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

**Mike**  
(to Josh)  
I'll be right back.

36 EXT. CLINIC - DAY FOUR - CONTINUOUS

Mike joins Matthew on the porch.

**Mike**  
Matthew?

**Matthew**  
I tried to catch you this mornin' but you left earlier than I did.

**Mike**  
I had work to do.

**Matthew**  
You always have work to do.

**Mike**  
My work is important to me.

**Matthew**

**And last night, was that what you call workin'?**

**Mike**  
**What are you talking about?**

**Matthew**  
**I saw you last night. With the Reverend.**

**There's accusation in his tone she's never heard before.**

**Mike**  
**I'm not quite sure what you're referring to...**

**Matthew**  
**You kissed him. What were you doin' kissin' him?**

**Mike glances around, not wanting anyone to overhear.**

**Mike**  
**I really don't see how it's any of your business! What were you doing?**  
**Spying on me?**

**(CONTINUED)**

**36 CONTINUED:**

**Matthew**  
**It's my business when my brother and sister ask to come live with me when I get married, because they feel like you don't want them anymore!**

**Mike**  
**What??**

**Matthew**  
**They feel like you put everyone else ahead of them!**

**Mike**  
**Did they say that?**

**Matthew**  
**Think I'd make it up?**

**She knows he wouldn't.**

**Matthew**

**They trusted you! We all trusted you!**

**Matthew storms out, leaving Mike there, stunned.**

**37 EXT. WAGON - DAY FOUR**

**Mike drives Colleen and Brian home from school.**

**Mike**  
**I've just heard some rather disturbing news from your brother.**

**They look away, knowing what's coming.**

**Mike**  
**That you don't want to live with me anymore. Is that true?**

**Colleen**  
**Seems like maybe you don't want us anymore.**

**Brian**  
**You're always busy.**

**Mike**  
**I'm merely trying to help the orphans... I didn't mean to make you feel like this.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**37 CONTINUED:**

**Colleen**  
**Then why did you?**

**Mike stops the wagon.**

**Mike**  
**I feel sorry for them. They have no one. So someone has to take them in.**

**Colleen**  
**Is that why you took us in? Cause you had to? Cause you felt sorry for us?**

**Mike**

**Of course not.**

**Colleen**  
**But it wasn't because you loved us.**

**Mike**  
**I learned to love you...**

**Brian**  
**You "learned" to love us?**

**Tears come to his eyes. Colleen jumps out of the wagon. Brian follows.**

**Mike**  
**Where're you going?**

**Colleen**  
**We're walkin'.**

**Mike jumps down and goes after them.**

**Mike**  
**I just mean that when your mother asked me to take you...**

**Colleen**  
**You couldn't 'xactly say no.**

**Mike**  
**I'd never thought about having children.**

**Colleen**  
**But now you'll take any old orphan.**

**Mike catches her by the arm.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**37 CONTINUED:**

**Mike**  
**(softening)**  
**Maybe I'm not enough for you. Maybe you need a mother and a father.**

**Colleen**

**That's not what you used to say.**

**Mike**  
**Maybe I was wrong.**

**Mike takes a deep breath.**

**Mike**  
**As everybody knows, I'm not getting any younger, and... well... I thought I'd wait until the right man came along, but maybe he's been under my nose the whole time. After all, it does make perfect sense.**

**Brian**  
**What makes perfect sense?**

**A beat.**

**Mike**  
**The Reverend has asked me to marry him.**

**Colleen and Brian are in shock.**

**Mike**  
**He's a good man, a stable man. And the best part is... we can adopt all the orphans and be one big, happy family.**

**Colleen and Brian just look at her like she has lost her mind. This is not the solution they had hoped for.**

**38 EXT. SALOON - DAY FOUR**

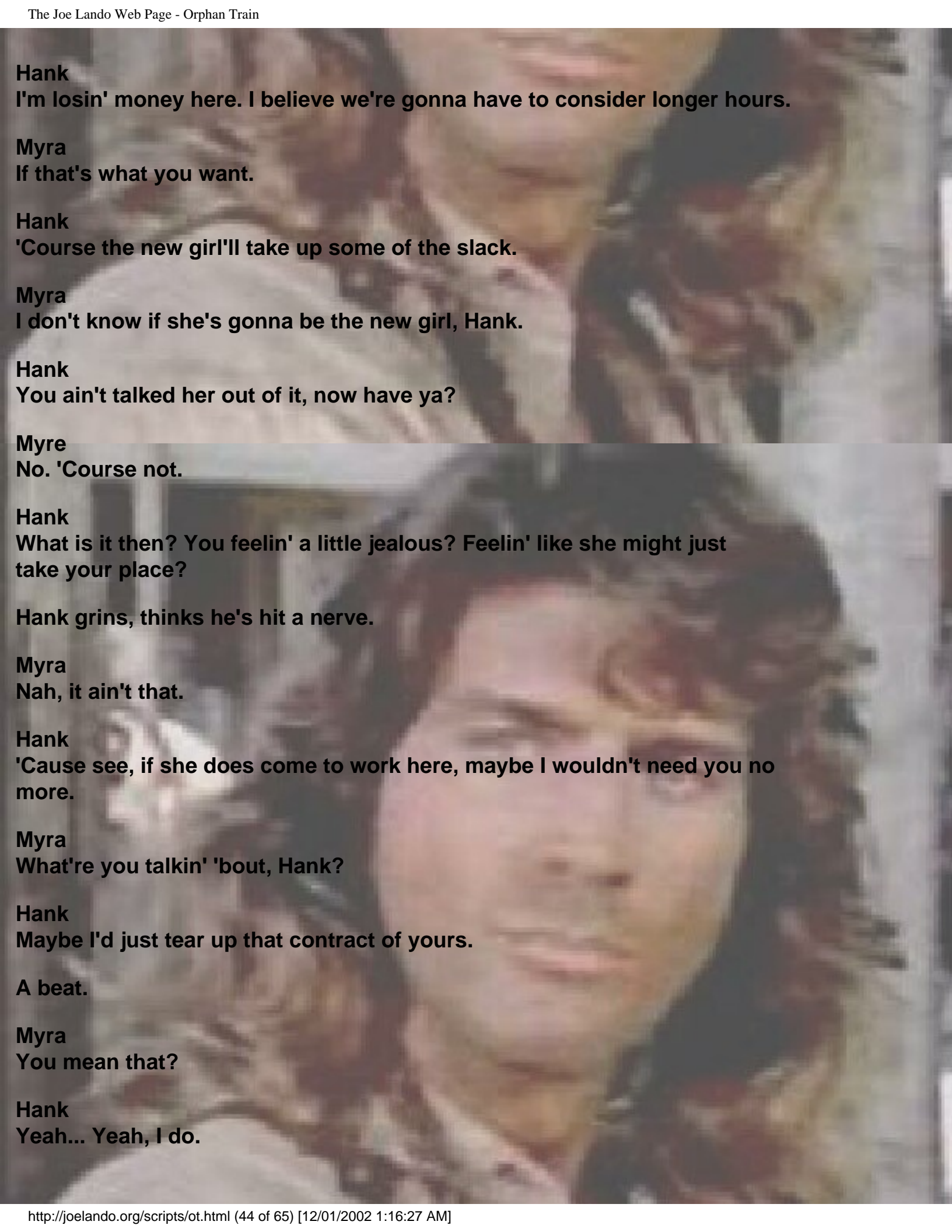
**Hank's having a cigar on the porch when Myra comes out through the swinging doors.**

**Hank**  
**Where're ya goin', Myra?**

**Myra**  
**It's my day off.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**38 CONTINUED:**



**Hank**  
I'm losin' money here. I believe we're gonna have to consider longer hours.

**Myra**  
If that's what you want.

**Hank**  
'Course the new girl'll take up some of the slack.

**Myra**  
I don't know if she's gonna be the new girl, Hank.

**Hank**  
You ain't talked her out of it, now have ya?

**Myre**  
No. 'Course not.

**Hank**  
What is it then? You feelin' a little jealous? Feelin' like she might just take your place?

Hank grins, thinks he's hit a nerve.

**Myra**  
Nah, it ain't that.

**Hank**  
'Cause see, if she does come to work here, maybe I wouldn't need you no more.

**Myra**  
What're you talkin' 'bout, Hank?

**Hank**  
Maybe I'd just tear up that contract of yours.

A beat.

**Myra**  
You mean that?

**Hank**  
Yeah... Yeah, I do.

**ON Myra, taking this in.**

**39 INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY FOUR**

**Myra rushes in and up to the counter.**

**Horace**  
**Myra...**

**Myra**  
**Horace, I just heard some news you ain't gonna believe!**

**Horace**  
**What, honey?**

**Myra stops to take a deep breath.**

**Myra**  
**Hank's gonna let me out of my contract.**

**Horace is stunned. He comes out from behind the counter picks Myra up and swings her around.**

**Horace**  
**That's wonderful!**  
**(then)**  
**What's the catch? Ain't just 'cause he's a nice fella.**

**Myra's joy sobers a little as well.**

**Myra**  
**No. It ain't.**  
**(beat)**  
**He wants that young girl, Jennifer... to work for him.**

**Horace**  
**The orphan girl?**

**Myra**  
**She'd be takin' my place.**

**Horace**  
**Oh, gosh...**  
**(beat)**  
**This is my fault. If I coulda saved enough money to pay off that contract,**

neither one of you would have to work for him.

Myra  
Horace, it ain't your fault.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

Horace  
I'll talk to Dr. Mike. I'll ask her to let me clean the clinic for her at night, and I'll save every penny.

Myra  
(touched)  
Horace, you're so sweet and wonderful. Thing is, the girl wants to do it.

Horace considers this for a moment.

Horace  
Myra, we been waitin' all this time. And there's only so far you can go to save a person.

Myra  
I know, but...

Horace  
If she wants to do it, who're we to say anything? I s'pose the decision is up to her.

Myra  
I s'pose so.

HOLD ON the two as they wrestle with their dilemma. Myra looks back at the saloon.

Myra  
Horace, I gotta go.

Horace  
I love you, Myra.

Myra  
I know you do.

Myra looks at him longingly, squeezes his hand, and hurries away.

40 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY FOUR

Loren's counting money at the register when Nick enters.

Loren  
Whattya you want?

Nick  
Nothin'.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

But Nick starts wondering around anyway.

Loren  
What're you lookin' at?

Nick  
Nothin'.

Loren  
Whattya think you're gonna buy in here?

Nick  
Nothin'.

Loren  
How about a dictionary? Learn a couple new words.

The kid ignores Loren. Disappears behind some racks of merchandise. Loren goes after him. Grabs him by the collar.

Loren  
Why don't you go bother somebody else?

He leads him toward the front door. Notices something.

Loren

**Whatcha got there?**

**Nick  
Nothin'.**

**But Loren pulls something out of the kid's pocket. A cigar.**

**Loren  
This don't look like nothin'. This looks like somethin'. Somethin' you  
didn't pay for.**

**With that, Nick breaks away from his hold and races to the front door. Loren  
follows, shaking his fist.**

**Loren  
Come back here, you dirty little thief!**

**41 EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY FOUR - CONTINUOUS**

**Loren steps out to where Brian is standing, watching the kid fly past.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**41 CONTINUED:**

**Loren  
(to Brian)  
I told your ma they were little criminals!**

**Dorothy runs out to see what the commotion is.**

**Dorothy  
What happened?**

**But Loren angrily goes back inside.**

**Brian  
Mr. Bray don't like the orphans.**

**Dorothy  
How do you feel about them, Brian?**

**Brian**

**I don't know. Guess I have to like 'em if they're gonna be my brothers and sisters.**

**Dorothy**  
**Brothers and sisters? How's that?**

**Brian**  
**Ma's gonna marry the Reverend and adopt 'em all.**

**OFF Dorothy's shocked face.**

**SMASH**  
**CUT TO:**

**42 COVER OF GAZETTE**

**it reads, "DR. MICHAELA QUINN ENGAGED TO THE REVEREND TIMOTHY JOHNSON"**

**43 EXT. BARBER SHOP - DAY FOUR**

**Loren's reading it to a small gathering, including Jake, Horace and Hank.**

**Loren**  
**Says here, Dr. Mike and the Reverend are engaged.**

**Horace**  
**Engaged!**

**(CONTINUED)**

**43 CONTINUED:**

**Jake**  
**(grabs paper)**  
**It don't say that! Lemme see...**

**Loren**  
**(grabs it back)**  
**You can't read! Gimme that.**

**Hank**  
**(amused)**

**Michaela and the preacher. Who woulda figured.**

**Jake**  
**Not me.**

**Hank**  
**On the other hand... kinda makes perfect sense.**

**Lots of WHISPERING and HUB BUB as more folks gather to gossip about the news. Then Sully approaches.**

**Sully**  
**What's goin' on?**

**Horace**  
**Dr. Mike's engaged.**

**HOLD ON Sully's stunned face.**

**44 INT. CLINIC - DAY FOUR**

**Mike's at her desk when Sully comes in and slaps down the gazette in front of her. She reads it and goes pale.**

**Sully**  
**Is it true?**

**Mike**  
**Well, no...**

**Sully**  
**Then you're not marryin' him?**

**Mike**  
**Well, he's asked me, yes, and I'm considering it.**

**Sully**  
**Have you considered what this'll mean to the other people in your life?**

**(CONTINUED)**

**44 CONTINUED:**

**Mike**  
Like who?

**Sully**  
Like your own kids. They think they're losin' you.

**Mike**  
They'd be gaining a father.

**Sully**  
And a dozen brothers and sisters.

**Mike**  
Lots of people have large families.

**Sully**  
Those kids have problems. You can't put bandages on 'em to fix 'em. You can't save the world!

**Mike**  
I can try! Someone has to take responsibility!

A beat.

**Sully**  
First that cowboy's baby, then Hank's boy, now these orphans... I just wonder what's missin' in you that you need to fill it up with everybody else.

**Mike**  
Nothin's "missing" in me.

**Sully**  
That what the Reverend says?

**Mike**  
At least he's willing to take in homeless children and...

**Sully**  
(interrupts)  
Do you love him?

**Mike**  
How dare you ask me that. You who told me you weren't ready to love anyone! You who comes and goes as he pleases!

**(more)**

**(CONTINUED)**

**44 CONTINUED: (2)**

**Mike (Cont'd)**

**You who's never so much as offered any kind of commitment to me or my children!**

**Sully looks away, stung.**

**Mike**

**I'm very fond of the Reverend. And he's made me a proposal that no one else, including you, has cared to do. I don't take that lightly.**

**Sully looks back.**

**Sully**

**If marriage is all you want, you've found the right man.**

**HOLD ON Mike as Sully walks out.**

**FADE OUT.**

**END OF ACT THREE**

**ACT FOUR**

**FADE IN:**

**45 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY FIVE**

**Loren's behind the counter when Nick slips in again.**

**Loren**

**Why, you little son of a gun...**

**Loren follows him to the back of the store.**

**Loren**  
**Let me save ya the trouble.**

**Loren reaches on the shelf and pulls out a handful of cigars.**

**Loren**  
**I'll give 'em to ya for free.**

**Nick**  
**You mean it?**

**Loren**  
**Only one catch. Gotta smoke 'em now. Right here.**

**He lights one up for the boy. Gives it to him. Nick just holds it, not sure what to make of this.**

**Loren**  
**Go on. Smoke it.**

**Nick**  
**What if I don't want to?**

**Loren**  
**Ain't ya man enough?**

**Nick**  
**Sure I am.**

**Loren**  
**Well, go ahead then. Smoke it.**

**Nick sits down on a nearby bench. He takes the cigar and smokes it. He coughs. Loren lights up a second one.**

**Loren**  
**Have another. Go on, have another, you like 'em so much.**

**Nick keeps on smoking as Loren watches.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**45 CONTINUED:**

**Loren**  
**So where'd you learn to smoke like that?**

**Nick**  
**Jail.**

**Loren**  
**What were ya in jail for?**

**Nick**  
**Stealin'.**

**Nick's looking a little green around the gills as he stamps the cigar out with his foot...**

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**46 INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY FIVE - LATER**

**Mike comes barrelling in and straight up to Dorothy, with the Gazette in her hand.**

**Mike**  
**Dorothy Jennings!**

**Dorothy**  
**Well, hello, Michaela.**

**Mike**  
**What possessed you to print such a story without checking with me?!**

**Dorothy**  
**I did check with you, you said it was true.**

**Mike**  
**That he asked me, I didn't say I said yes!**

**Dorothy**  
**But you didn't say you said no...**

**Suddenly Mike hears COUGHING. She looks to see Nick, still sitting there, only now there's a pile of cigar butts at his feet.**

**Mike**

**(to Loren)**  
**What are you doing to this poor child?!**

**(CONTINUED)**

**46 CONTINUED:**

**Loren**  
**This "poor child" stole from me.**

**Mike**  
**I don't care what he did, he shouldn't be smoking!**

**Nick looks queasy, runs out of the store to throw up.**

**Loren**  
**(satisfied)**  
**Don't worry. Kid'll never smoke again.**

**As Loren goes back behind his counter, MOVE IN ON Mike's face, realizing he taught the boy something she didn't.**

**47 INT. CLINIC - DAY FIVE**

**Mike gives Nick a spoonful of medicine. Josh is there, too, with Colleen and Brian.**

**Mike**  
**This'll calm your stomach.**

**There's a knock at the door. It's Robert E. He comes in.**

**Robert E.**  
**I'm lookin' for Josh.**

**Mike nods as Robert E. goes to the boy. He's got something wrapped in a cloth. He kneels down in front of Josh.**

**Robert E.**  
**Someday you're gonna appreciate bein' different, bein' special.**  
**(beat)**  
**But, when you're young, it feels good to fit in. So I made this for you.**

He unwraps the cloth and unveils a carved wooden leg, with a leather harness at the top so it can attach.

Robert E.

It'll help you stand on your own two feet.

MOVE IN ON Mike, as she watches the joy on Josh's face and realizes Robert E. knew what he needed.

DISSOLVE TO:

48 EXT. CLINIC - DAY FIVE

A small crowd has gathered in the street. The Reverend is there with the orphans, Horace and Myra, Loren, Jake, Grace, and Dorothy with her notebook. Robert E. carries Josh out of the clinic. Sets him down in the street. Sully comes up and stands next to Brian, Colleen and Matthew.

Sully

What's he gonna do?

Colleen

Robert E. made him a leg.

Brian

He's gonna walk.

Everyone holds their breath as Josh steadies himself on Robert E.'s strong arm. Then Robert E. lets go, Josh takes his first shaky steps with his new leg. The crowd voices its approval.

48A ANGLE ON MIKE:

as she watches Josh take another step, then hug Robert E.

BACK TO SCENE:

Even Jennifer has tears in her eyes. Myra sees and approaches her.

Myra

That's your brother, huh?

Jennifer

**I can't believe he don't need crutches no more.**

**Myra**

**But he needs you. You gotta stick with him. Find a real home.**

**Jennifer**

**It's too late. I got a contract with Hank.**

**Myra**

**Not anymore. I'll take care of it.**

**Jennifer, overcome, hugs Myra. MOVE IN ON Mike as she watches, knowing the sacrifice Myra has made for the girl.**

**49 OMITTED**

**49A INT. MYRA'S ROOM - DAY FIVE**

**Myra comes to the door, sees Hank laying a flower on her pillow.**

**Myra**

**Hank... what're you doin'?**

**Hank**

**I brought that for ya.**

**He sits down on the bed, motions for her to join him. She doesn't.**

**Myra**

**I got somethin' to tell ya Hank. The girl, she ain't comin' back.**

**Hank**

**But she's got a contract.**

**Myra**

**No. I'm stayin' on extra. In her place.**

**Hank**

**(reading into it)**

**I know why you're doin' this.**

**Myra**

**Why?**

**Hank**  
Must be because you got feelin's for me.

**Myra**  
No, Hank. That's not it. It's because I don't want this girl to go through what I did.

**Hank**  
Whattaya mean?

**Myra**  
Remember when you said I belonged to you? Well, you're wrong. I love Horace. I might work for you, but I belong to him.

**Hank makes a face. He'll never accept this.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**49A CONTINUED:**

**Hank**  
**(scoffs)**  
He ain't any kind of a man. Not like me.

**Myra**  
What kind of a man makes his woman spend the night with other men?

**Hank**  
That's different, Myra. It's business.  
**(then)**  
I went to all this trouble to show ya... I love ya.

**Myra**  
I feel sorry for you, Hank. You don't really know what love is.

**HOLD ON** Hank as he watches for the first time, Myra walking away from him. She may work for him but he doesn't own her. Not anymore.

**49B EXT. GRACE'S CAFE - DAY FIVE**

**Mike comes in and finds the Reverend sitting with all the kids as Grace brings heaping plates of food for everyone. The mood is celebratory.**

**Reverend**

**Michaela, we were just celebrating. Grace was kind enough to cook for us.**

**Mike**

**I need to talk to you, Reverend.**

**She steers him to another table where they can speak privately.**

**Reverend**

**What is it?**

**Mike**

**We're wrong, what we're trying to do. We can't save those children. The best we can do is make them stronger. Help them to help themselves. I didn't realize it until I saw that boy with his new leg, that all we can do is open the door, they have to walk through it.**

**(more)**

**(CONTINUED)**

**49B CONTINUED:**

**Mike (Cont'd)**

**(beat)**

**You know what I'm saying is true.**

**Reverend**

**(softly)**

**I do.**

**He knows what's coming.**

**Reverend**

**And us?**

**Mike**

**I can't marry you, as flattered as I am by your offer... It would be for the wrong reason.**

**Reverend**

**But I've grown to love you.**

**Mike**

**(gently)**

**But I don't love you.**

**Reverend  
Maybe with time...**

**Mike  
No... I'm sorry.**

**HOLD ON Mike, hating to have to hurt him with the truth. The Reverend gathers his composure.**

**Reverend  
And the children? Without you... I don't know if I...**

**Mike  
You couldn't take them all yourself.**

**Reverend  
Maybe... one of them.**

**Mike  
And which one would you choose?**

**He follows her gaze to the children; their smiling faces.**

**Mike  
It's too late for that.**

**The Reverend knows she's right.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**49B CONTINUED:**

**Reverend  
They'll have to be told.**

**Mike takes his hand. They stand up.**

**Mike  
We'll tell them together.**

**The two of them walk back to where the children are finishing their lunch.**

**Reverend  
Children...**

**He and Mike look at the children's faces, knowing not one of them found a home in Colorado Springs.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**49B CONTINUED: (2)**

**Reverend  
Children -- Dr. Quinn and I... would just like to say what a joy it was to have had you here. We wish with all our hearts...**

**He looks at her, she takes over for him.**

**Mike  
We wish with all our hearts that we could have found homes for you. But it seems for some reason, that wasn't meant to be. It's time for you to move on and you will find homes in the next town -- or the next one after that.**

**Reverend  
I'm going to telegraph Reverend Wilkes in Pueblo. He'll take good care of you.**

**Mike  
You're all very special and I know that wherever you do settle, the families who take you in will be the truly fortunate ones.**

**HOLD ON the children's faces as they hear a bittersweet dose of truth.**

**49C OMITTED**

**49D INT. SALOON - DAY FIVE**

**Hank's moping around behind the bar when an equally long-faced Reverend steps through the swinging doors.**

**Hank  
Reverend. Surprised to see you here.**

**Reverend**

**Surprised myself.**

**Hank**  
**What'll it be?**

**Reverend**  
**Sarsaparilla. Straight up.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**49D CONTINUED:**

**Hank pours it and hands it over. Sits there. Neither of them say anything. Lost in their separate misery. The Reverend finally says something.**

**Reverend**  
**Women.**

**Hank looks at him. The Reverend doesn't touch the drink, but digs in his pocket to pay anyway.**

**Hank**  
**It's on the house.**

**(CONTINUED)**

**49E EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY FIVE**

**Mike approaches Colleen, Brian and Matthew as they pay respects at Charlotte's grave. Sully is there, too.**

**Mike**  
**You want to know the truth?**

**The kids look at her.**

**Mike**  
**You were right. About everything you said. I was terrified when Charlotte asked me to take you. I tried to talk her out of it. I said I didn't know the first thing about raising children. But it was more than that. You were strangers. I've always been absorbed in my schooling, my books. I never made friends easily. I didn't know how to get to know you. How to love you. But**

it happened. And you've turned out to be the best thing in my life.

The kids stand there a moment.

**Colleen**

We're sorry for the way we acted about the orphans.

**Brian**

They're just like us, ain't they, Ma?

**Colleen**

They can stay.

**Matthew**

We can make it work.

A beat.

**Mike**

They're already gone.

The children look surprised.

**Mike**

I would have loved to give them more, but the truth is, they need more than I can give. And what I have, I want to give to you. We're still learning about being a family.

(CONTINUED)

49E CONTINUED:

**Brian**

What about the Reverend?

**Mike**

He understands.

A long look is exchanged between Mike and Sully. Then Colleen hugs her. Brian and Matthew follow suit.

**Mike**

Now... tomorrow, I thought we might all go for a picnic. Do some fishing.

**Matthew**  
**What about the clinic?**

**Mike**  
**I'm taking the day off.**

**Brian**  
**But we have chores.**

**Mike**  
**I don't think it'd hurt to miss chores for one day.**  
**(beat)**  
**Do you, Sully?**

**Sully**  
**Naw, I don't think it'd hurt one bit.**

**Brian lights up like a Christmas tree. Sully smiles and holds his hand out to Mike. She takes it, and puts her arm around her kids and they all walk away together, a family reunited.**

**50**  
**THRU OMITTED**  
**55**

**FADE OUT.**

**THE END**

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