

WARRIOR GIRL

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OVER BLACK -

Music Plays - "I'M DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS" fades into:

JOCKEY (O.S.)

Yah!

SOUND OF A GALLOPING HORSE...

FADE IN

EXT. A PRIVATE RACE TRACK - KANSAS - DAY

WORN LEATHER GLOVES grip a white rail fence as a chestnut STALLION races around a track, passing winter-bare trees glistening with ice...

A MAN'S DEEP VOICE (O.S.)

(quiet, intense)

Slow him down, slow him down!

Oblivious to the freezing rain, the man watches - stone-still, serious, long gray hair, prominent Native American cheekbones, intense dark eyes - JOSEPH WAHWASUCK, 70.

SOUND OF A HORSE SCREAMING, men race past him. The Horse's screams change to:

PRE/LAP - SOUND OF A WHISTLE, BARE FEET POUNDING ACROSS A MAT, A SPRINGBOARD...

INT. EAGLES GYMNASTICS - DAY

An elite blonde gymnast flies over a vault, lands, strong arms flying up. And through the "V" of her arms:

Another elite gymnast watches - stone-still, serious, short black hair, prominent Native American cheekbones, intense dark eyes - AMY MCDONALD, 14.

TITLE OVER: "WARRIOR GIRL"

The blonde gymnast, REBECCA BERKELEY, 15, waves to the cheering CROWD like a queen taking her due, runs to her wealthy father, HARRISON BERKELEY, 50s, and a RUSSIAN COACH.

Amy's best friend and Teammate, KIKI, 15, beautiful, mixed race, intricate braids, makes a face.

KIKI

I think I'm gonna throw up. Now her father bought her a Russian coach. Gross.

Amy continues to study Rebecca.

AMY

She's gotten really good, Kiki.

KIKI

Not as good as you. Never has been, never will be... no matter how much money he spends on her.

Amy finally looks at Kiki, shakes her head.

AMY

I don't know... home tutors so she can train all day in her private gym... Olympic coaches. How do I compete with that?

KIKI

Same way you always have... I bet you could do that vault. What was it, just one extra little twist?

AMY

Two.

Kiki raises an eyebrow. Amy smiles slowly.

AMY (CONT'D)

(sing-song)

We're gonna get in trouble.

KIKI

(grinning))

What else is new?

Snow blows from the entry as DENNIS, Amy's father, 40s, wearing carpenter's coveralls and a Santa hat, stomps snow off work boots, Irish blue eyes crinkled from laughter, sun and good beer.

COACH MANDY, 40s, Kiki's mother, a former elite gymnast with ivory skin, red hair and intelligent blue eyes that miss nothing, grins at him.

COACH MANDY

Nice hat, Dennis.

DENNIS
Thought you'd like it.

They join TREVOR, 40s, Black, Coach Mandy's handsome husband. A former lawyer and Dennis' best friend, he now runs the gym.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Hey, Trev, what'd I miss?

TREVOR
Rebecca learned a new vault. Pretty impressive. Amy's not too happy about it. Look.

CLOSE on Amy concentrating on the vault, blind to everything else, Kiki chattering away next to her, up to no good.

DENNIS
Uh-oh. I've seen that look before. Mandy?

Amy raises an arm. Coach Mandy, alarmed, sees, curses under her breath, runs forward.

COACH MANDY
Amy! Nooo!

Amy blasts off... SOUND OF BREATHING - EACH STEP LANDING... BOOM! Amy's hands hit the springboard - SLOW MOTION - she flips, flies, spins, does Rebecca's vault, even higher, lands. (BOOM!) Her arms fly up into a perfect V.

SILENCE then PANDEMONIUM as the CROWD CHEERS. Rebecca and Amy - long-time rivalry simmering between them - lock eyes across the room, expressionless. Kiki runs to Amy, high-fives.

KIKI
Ah, ha, ha! I knew you could do it!

Coach Mandy reaches them, crosses her arms.

AMY
Oops... Sorry, Coach. My body just sort of... did it.

COACH MANDY
Yeah, right. And I know who put you up to it.

KIKI
Who, me?

COACH MANDY
Both of you, gimme two...

The girls start to run laps, laughing.

SOUND of LAUGHTER changes to the HORSE SCREAMING...

EXT. THE RACE TRACK - SAME TIME - DAY

FOOTSTEPS CRUNCH on the icy ground as Joseph, long coat and braids blowing in the wind, strides toward the horse, his noble face grim. He carries a well-worn leather bag.

A grizzled IRISH TRAINER, reaching into a pickup truck with a horse trailer attached, frowns as Joseph passes.

Joseph pushes between TWO INVESTORS in long wool coats and the HORSE OWNER, 38, LA slick, who shivers in skinny jeans and a Ralph Lauren jacket.

JOSEPH
Get out of my way.

They step back.

A handsome Native American in a Haskell University letter jacket, ETHAN WHITEHORSE, 19, holds down the struggling horse with THREE FARMHANDS and the JOCKEY. Joseph arrives.

ETHAN
Leg's broken.

Joseph kneels down, strokes the horse's face, talking gently in KICKAPOO. The Horse quiets, looks at Joseph with pleading, liquid eyes, "*Help Me...*"

Joseph carefully feels the leg, pauses, holds his hand still, turns his face away, "listens." SOUND of a faint Native American flute, a heart beating, blood flowing, pain...

The IRISH TRAINER arrives, carrying a RIFLE. Joseph frowns.

JOSEPH
It feels clean. If we move quickly,
he may have a chance.

The Irish Trainer looks thoughtful. Slick Horse Owner scowls.

HORSE OWNER
Who is this guy?

IRISH TRAINER
(studying Joseph)
Joseph Wahwasuck... Kickapoo. A
healer.

HORSE OWNER
Does he know what he's talking
about?

IRISH TRAINER
Maybe... But it's a gamble, and
very expensive.

HORSE OWNER
How expensive?

IRISH TRAINER
They spent a couple o' hundred
grand on Barbaro, still died.

The Horse Owner looks at the Investors. They shake their
heads, head to a waiting RANGE ROVER, exhaust billowing into
icy-gray skies.

HORSE OWNER
On a horse with a broken leg? No
way. Do it.

He turns to follow the investors. The Irish Trainer steps
forward, raises the rifle. The horse SCREAMS, eyes wild...
Joseph leaps up, arms spread.

JOSEPH
Stop!
(calls after the Horse Owner)
I'll buy him! A thousand dollars!

The Horse Owner turns back.

HORSE OWNER
I paid a hundred grand for that
animal, Chief.

JOSEPH
As you said, his leg is broken. Two
thousand!

HORSE OWNER
I'll make more money on a write-
off.

The Horse SCREAMS again.

JOSEPH
Five!

A long pause as the Horse Owner looks at Joseph, crafty.

HORSE OWNER

Ten.

Joseph glowers, looks down at the Horse.

CLOSE on the Horse's beautiful eyes watching Joseph.

Joseph turns back, nods - DONE.

The Irish Trainer lowers the gun, relieved. Joseph takes a jar of salve from his bag, rubs it on the horse's broken leg, wraps it, starts making a splint.

HORSE OWNER (CONT'D)
(to the Irish Trainer)
Find me another damn horse.

The Irish Trainer shoves the rifle at him, hard, disgusted.

IRISH TRAINER
Find one yourself, ye son of a
bitch. I quit.

The Horse Owner storms away. The Range Rover tears off, fishtails on ice, churns up gravel, heads to a brick mansion sparkling with Christmas lights and freezing rain.

IRISH TRAINER (CONT'D)
How can I help?

Joseph nods toward the truck and trailer.

JOSEPH
I'll need your trailer.

The Irish Trainer runs to it. Joseph looks up.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Get Mike Pewamo on the phone.

Ethan holds out his cell phone.

ETHAN
Already done...

Joseph takes the phone.

JOSEPH
Mike, we'll be bringing in a horse
in about an hour, lateral condylar
fracture... Yes, I know... thanks.

He hands the phone back as the Irish Trainer arrives with the truck, opens the trailer.

ETHAN
Joseph... Ten thousand dollars? Do
you have that much?

Joseph ignores him, bends back down to the horse, looks up to the men watching - hesitates - like it's been a long time since he's asked anyone for help.

JOSEPH
I'll need your help getting him
into the trailer.

The Men nod, watching with deep respect as Joseph continues to work, *humming* under his breath...

INT. THE GYM - DAY

Coach Mandy watches Amy and Kiki run laps, hides a grin as Rebecca's father yells at the stoic Russian Coach.

TREVOR
Harrison doesn't look too happy.

COACH MANDY
(under her breath)
Wait'll he hears the news.

DENNIS
What news?

Coach Mandy and Trevor share a secret, excited look.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Somethin' I should know about?

Amy finishes the laps, sees Dennis, runs toward him.

AMY
Dad! Catch!

She leaps up, he catches her, pretends to stumble back, an old familiar routine.

DENNIS
Oof... I'm getting too old for
this, Monkey.

She jumps down with a cheeky smile.

AMY
So what did you think of my new
vault, Dad?

DENNIS
 (leaning forward)
 You should've seen Rebecca's face.

Coach Mandy BLOWS A WHISTLE, lifts a portable microphone.

COACH MANDY
 Hey kids, come on over and listen
 up. Elite team in front.

The Gymnasts stop what they're doing and run over.

CROWD
 Shh, shh.. Quiet! Hush!

Coach Mandy takes a letter out of her pocket, holds it high.

COACH MANDY
 One of you just got a heck of a
 Christmas present... an invitation
 to train at the USA Gymnastics
 Training Center in Illinois!

SQUEALS, CHEERS. EVERYONE looks at Rebecca. Behind her,
 Harrison exchanges a proud look with the Russian Coach.

COACH MANDY (CONT'D)
 And that girl is... Amy McDonald!

GASPS, SCREAMS as everyone turns from shell-shocked Rebecca
 to Amy. Kiki jumps up, screams, hugs Amy.

AMY
 Oh, my God! Me? Really? Oh, my God!

She races to Dennis, who hugs her tight.

DENNIS
 You did it, Kiddo! You did it!

She pulls away, tears in her eyes.

AMY
 No, Daddy... We did it.

Amy lets go, screams, races across the floor, does six back
 handsprings into a huge flip, flops to the floor, kicks her
 feet in the air, overcome with joy. Kiki and her teammates
 race after her, pile on her, laughing.

Behind them, Rebecca stands alone, face white, looking sick.
 Her father tosses her a jacket, grabs her gym bag, furious.

HARRISON BERKELEY

This isn't over. Come on.

They leave with the Russian Coach.

Coach Mandy frowns at her TWIN SONS, 17, who sit in the bleachers snickering at something on an iPhone. She grabs the phone, looks at it with disgust, confiscates it.

THE OTHER TWIN BROTHER

Mo-om!

She tosses them the car keys with a take-no-prisoners look.

COACH MANDY

Go scrape the windows and warm up the car.

They leave. Trevor picks up the microphone.

TREVOR

Okay, kids, time to wrap it up. Have a Merry Christmas and a nice break. See you next year!

Amy runs back. Dennis helps her with her jacket, pulls a matching Santa cap out of his pocket, puts it on her head. They grin at each other.

Arms around each other, they head outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE GYM - CONTINUOUS

Heavy snow falls, snow CRUNCHING underfoot.

AMY

Hey, you forgot to turn Rudolph on!

Amy runs ahead to an OLDER JEEP, reindeer ears on top, flips a battery switch on the bumper. RUDOLPH'S NOSE flashes RED as Dennis scrapes the windshield.

Amy opens the front passenger door, the seat stacked with Christmas presents, grins at Dennis.

AMY (CONT'D)

What are these?

DENNIS

None of your business. And I catch you peeking, you're toast. Sit in back.

She grins, gets in back, puts on her seat belt, leans back, shining her iPhone light on the letter - a loud sigh.

AMY

And it'll be a white Christmas!

PRE/LAP - BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... A HEART MONITOR.

INT. K STATE EQUINE HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The Horse is sedated, on an operating table, A HEART MONITOR BEEPS. A Native American VETERINARIAN, 40s, operates, a bright Latina INTERN, 20s, assisting. Veterinarian looks up toward Joseph and Ethan, who watch nearby.

VETERINARIAN

Joseph? Would you mind taking a look?

Joseph steps forward, pulls reading glasses out of his pocket, leans over, studies the surgery site.

VETERINARIAN (CONT'D)

Think it needs another screw?

JOSEPH

No... But of course, it's your call.

Veterinarian smiles at him, looks at the Intern, who watches the exchange curiously.

VETERINARIAN

Let's close.

PRE-LAP: "JINGLE BELLS" ON A RADIO...

EXT. INSIDE DENNIS'S JEEP - TRAVELING - NIGHT

Dennis wipes his arm on the foggy windshield, the wipers coating with snow. Amy, in back, looks up from her I-phone.

AMY

We need a new car.

DENNIS

Why? Old girl's only got 300,000 miles, I'm goin' for four.

AMY
 (frowning)
 Can we afford for me to go to
 Illinois, Dad?

DENNIS
 Hey, we've always found a way,
 haven't we?

He turns up the radio, looks back at her.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Oh what fun it is to ride...

Amy grins, then SCREAMS as a car spins in front of them, a SEMI-TRUCK swerves, heads straight for them. A HUGE CRASH.

EXT. THE ACCIDENT SITE - NIGHT

SIRENS, AMBULANCES, FIRE TRUCKS, SOUND OF A METAL SAW. SPARKS FLY as firefighters cut through wreckage.

Trevor drives slowly past the wreck, Coach Mandy and the kids peering outside.

TREVOR
 Kids, don't look.

Of course, they do. Kiki's POV - RUDOLPH'S NOSE blinks red.

KIKI
 Oh no! Oh, no!

COACH MANDY
 What? What is it?

KIKI
 Amy... It's Amy!

PRE/LAP - BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... A DIFFERENT HEART MONITOR.

INT. THE HOSPITAL ICU - NIGHT

Coach Mandy sits by Amy's bed as she lies unconscious, head bandaged, leg in traction. She moans and her eyes flutter.

AMY
 Daddy...

Coach Mandy gets up and calls outside.

COACH MANDY

Nurse!

A NURSE enters.

NURSE

Wait outside, please.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Coach Mandy enters the ICU waiting room. Kiki, her tear-streaked face in Trevor's lap, is asleep, her brothers sleeping nearby. Trevor moves Kiki's head, goes to Mandy.

COACH MANDY

She's waking up... calling for
Dennis...

She looks down, covers her face with her hands.

TREVOR

Baby...

She looks at him, eyes flooding with tears. Trevor hugs her, she holds on for dear life, whispering into his shoulder.

COACH MANDY

God in heaven... How am I gonna
tell her?

They embrace, crying. Over the PA, CHRISTMAS CAROLS PLAY.

INT. AMY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER - DAY

SLEET hits the Hospital window, cards and flowers fill the room. Amy stares blindly out the window, tears like silent rivers run down her cheeks.

Coach Mandy holds her hand. Trevor walks out of the room.

INT. A HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A woman in a navy blue suit, iron gray hair, SOCIAL WORKER, 60s, stands as Trevor enters, hands him a card.

SOCIAL WORKER

Mr. Whitaker? I'm Mrs. Bumgarner
with Child Protective Services.
I've been assigned to Amy's case.
How's she doing?

Trevor shakes his head.

TREVOR

Taking it pretty hard. She and her dad were close. It was just the two of them. Her mother died when she was a baby.

Social Worker nods, studying papers.

TREVOR (CONT'D)

My wife and I have talked, and we'd like to adopt her.

SOCIAL WORKER

That's admirable of you, but we'll need to contact her family first.

TREVOR

There isn't any. Dennis was a foster kid. There's no one.

SOCIAL WORKER

What about her mother's side?

Trevor frowns, not liking the question.

TREVOR

They were Native American, lived on a Reservation somewhere. That's all I know.

Social Worker sighs, closes the file.

SOCIAL WORKER

If her mother was a registered member of a tribe, the Tribal Courts will decide where she goes. And if a Native American relative is found who wants her? I'm sorry, but you won't have a prayer.

TREVOR

But they'd be strangers! Dennis would want her with us!

SOCIAL WORKER

I understand, and I'll do my best. But I've been through this before. This won't be easy... In the meantime, I've cleared it so you can take her home with you. I'll be in touch.

SERVICEABLE HEELS CLICK across the floor as she walks away.

INT. THE HOSPITAL - DAY

INSERT: An X-RAY on a WALL - Amy's leg - PINS AND SCREWS.

COACH MANDY (O.S.)
Will she be able to compete again?

A DOCTOR turns to Coach Mandy and Trevor, shakes his head.

A DOCTOR
I'm sorry.

PRE/LAP - SOUND OF A HORSE WHINNYING

INT. VET HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The horse, eyes wild, struggles in a sling in a stainless steel water treatment trough, flails in the water, his leg wrapped in a fiberglass cast.

VETERINARIAN
Lower the ramp.

The Intern pushes a lever and the water drains, a wide ramp rising under the water toward the floor.

VETERINARIAN (CONT'D)
Be careful, Joseph. He's still pretty woozy. Could be dangerous. Should we help?

JOSEPH
No. He won't hurt me.

Joseph walks down the ramp with a lead, his hands up, *humming* softly. The horse watches alertly, quiets.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Ethan, the doors.

Ethan opens sliding doors to blowing snow, the trailer waits outside, the door and ramp open.

The horse hobbles slowly, frightened, but follows Joseph like a lamb into the trailer. Joseph covers him with a blanket, wraps one around himself.

ETHAN
Joseph, you'll freeze.

JOSEPH
I'll be fine, take it slow... And
turn the music up.

Ethan nods, shuts the doors.

Joseph tucks a horse blanket closer around the horse as the trailer pulls away, wraps another around himself. Glen Campbell's voice singing "*By the time I Get to Phoenix*" filters from the truck.

The horse's ears perk up, he rubs his face against Joseph, nickers. Joseph smiles.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Yeah, I like it, too... I think
I'll name you... PHOENIX.

Veterinarian and Intern watch from the exit doors as the truck pulls out, MUSIC PLAYING.

VETERINARIAN
When I was a kid, my Dad got in a
bad tractor accident, gangrene set
in. Doctors wanted to take his leg,
Joseph saved it...

INTERN
He works on people, too?

He shakes his head sadly.

VETERINARIAN
Not for a long time... Hey, it's
Christmas, let's get out of here.

They go inside. Behind them, the truck lights fade into the falling snow.

INT./EXT. JOSEPH'S BARN - DAY

Joseph, bent down, hums quietly as he examines Phoenix's hoof below the cast. It is dim, the stable windows closed, Phoenix suspended from a sling mounted to the rafters. Joseph straightens, Phoenix tosses his head, not happy, snorts.

JOSEPH
I know, I know... Just don't want
any weight on that leg just yet.
Won't be much longer.

Joseph leaves, a black Lab, GALVESTON, trotting beside him. He stops at a CAGE where STUART PEWAMO (STUBBY), 12, a chubby, brilliant computer nerd behind coke bottle glasses, visits a RED-TAILED HAWK, (ROSIE.)

STUBBY

She's doin' really good, Joseph.
Watch!

Stubby tosses a piece of meat high in the cage, Rosie spreads her wings, leaps up, snatches it in mid-air.

JOSEPH

Good. Are you staying for dinner?
Samantha's frying chicken.

STUBBY

It's taco night at the Legion...
You should come sometime, Joseph.

Joseph doesn't answer, leaves. Stubby frowns after him.

INT. KITCHEN - JOSEPH'S FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joseph hangs his coat on a peg, walks into a cozy kitchen, pours black coffee from a corning ware pot, takes a sip. Galveston plops on a blanket by a wood stove.

SAMANTHA, 18, a sassy Native American girl in a red "Golden Eagle Casino" shirt, black hair streaked with purple and red, munches a chip as she pores over the "National Enquirer."

JOSEPH

Dinner ready?

She doesn't look up, avidly reading.

SAMANTHA

Yeah. Want it in there while you
watch your show?

Joseph nods, heading to the living room.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Hey, can you believe this!? "Mom
tries to Trade Baby for Chihuahua!"
They should give her the chair.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Samantha pushes aside a Farmer's Almanac, dog-eared crossword puzzle book and reading glasses, sets a TV dinner and mismatched silverware on a cloth-covered coffee table.

At a big old TV, Joseph, frustrated, adjusts foil covered rabbit ears then grabs the remote and starts pounding it.

SAMANTHA

What the heck are you doing? We've got cable now, I told you those things won't work anymore. Here.

She grabs the remote out of his hand, pushes a couple of buttons and "Wheel of Fortune comes" on. VANNA WHITE, smiling in an evening gown, turns over letters.

PAT SAJAC (O.S.)

There are three "A's."

SAMANTHA

Don't bust a gasket, there's your girlfriend.

Samantha peels plastic off the frozen dinner as Joseph sits.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Mmm. Get it while it's hot.

He sticks a fork in the mystery meat, disgruntled.

JOSEPH

Why didn't you fry the chicken?

SAMANTHA

I worked the graveyard shift and overslept. If you don't like it, come to the buffet at the casino. You can get fried chicken there.

He gives her a dirty look. Samantha grabs a Tater Tot from his tray and pops it into her mouth, chewing as she talks.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You know, I don't know why you hate the casino so much. It brings in a ton of money for the tribe. Besides, it's fun.

JOSEPH

You enjoy watching people throw their money away? Lose their pensions... their life savings?

SAMANTHA

Not my fault people are idiots. And it's the only place to work around here. I gotta make some money so I can get the hell out of Dodge!

Joseph glowers.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Sorry, "heck."

Vanna White turns over three "T's."

JOSEPH

Mushy - Tractors...

Samantha, a "Wheel of Fortune" whiz, glances at the tv.

SAMANTHA

Teenage mutant ninja turtles!

Joseph, glaring, stabs a bite of his Salisbury steak, grimaces but eats it, then hands her a booklet.

She looks at it like it is a death sentence.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You want me to get my GED? I'm gonna be a tattoo artist, what do I need to finish high school for? And I'm too old now anyway! C'mon!

Joseph gestures with his fork.

JOSEPH

Eighteen is not too old. You'll get your GED, and then you'll go to college. Or is your word no good?

They face off, glaring. A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

Samantha charges to the door, rips it open. Ethan's beautiful mother, DOCTOR WHITEHORSE, 40s, stands with Social Worker and four NATIVE AMERICAN MEN,(THE TRIBAL COUNCIL).

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE

Samantha, is Joseph home?

Joseph comes to the door, frowning.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE (CONT'D)

Joseph, we're sorry to bother you, but something's happened. May we come in?

He hesitates, nods, steps back as they enter.

EXT. A HILLSIDE - LATER - NIGHT

Moonlight shines on a gravestone under a large oak tree. It reads. "TEEKA WAHWASUCK - BELOVED WIFE AND MOTHER 1962 - 2001." Joseph touches it, whispers brokenly.

JOSEPH

Teeka... we have a granddaughter...

He drops to his knees, covers his face with his hands.

EXT./INT. AMY'S HOUSE IN OLATHE - DAY

A SALE SIGN in front of a pretty, suburban house. Amy walks up the sidewalk on crutches, Trevor and Coach Mandy on either side of her. Social Worker, on the porch, unlocks the door.

They go inside. Amy stops, stares at a Christmas tree, unopened presents still underneath - her first time home since the accident.

TREVOR

Where are the suitcases, honey?

AMY

In the hall closet...

He heads down the hall. Amy looks at Social Worker.

AMY (CONT'D)

What will happen with all our stuff?

SOCIAL WORKER

Whoever the Courts decide on as your guardian will figure that out.

AMY

But you told them I want to live with Coach Mandy and Trevor, right?

Coach Mandy shoots daggers at Social Worker, who looks away.

SOCIAL WORKER

Yes. I'll wait outside.

Amy, frowning, watches her leave, then sees her Dad's flannel shirt laying over the couch. She picks it up, eyes filling with tears.

AMY

Can I take this?

Coach Mandy, struggling not to cry, holds her.

COACH MANDY

Of course you can. Come on, let's start in your room.

AMY

Okay...

INT. A TRIBAL COURT - DAY

Doctor Whitehorse, now wearing Judge's robes, reads a letter, the Councilmen beside her at a table on a raised dais.

Joseph sits alone at a table in front, behind him, sitting between Stubby and Samantha, sits a tiny Native American woman, OLD MOTHER, 98, dark eyes missing nothing.

The room is packed with interested NATIVE AMERICANS.

Doctor Whitehorse studies Coach Mandy, Trevor and Social Worker, who sit at a table opposite Joseph. She sighs, looks at Joseph.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE

Joseph, the law is on your side, it is up to you what happens here. But perhaps coming here isn't the best thing for Amy...

She looks at the Crowd.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE (CONT'D)

The Indian Child Welfare Act was enacted in 1978 to right the wrongs of the past, when our children were taken from us and adopted out to white families against our wishes.

Nods, murmurs from the Crowd, a scowl from Old Mother. Doctor Whitehorse gestures to the letter, looks back at Joseph.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE (CONT'D)

But that isn't the case here. Amy wants to stay with the Whitakers, and they clearly love her. Coming here will be difficult for her... You will be a stranger to her, we all will. Joseph, are you sure you want to do this?

He stares straight ahead, a long pause, nods. Doctor Whitehorse picks up a gavel, pounds the table, stands.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE (CONT'D)
Full legal custody of Amy McDonald
is awarded to Joseph Wahwasuck.
Court is dismissed.

INT. KIKI'S BEDROOM - DAY

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. Amy, eyes down, sits with Kiki on the bed, crutches nearby, suitcases by the door.

KIKI
Come in.

Kiki's brothers enter, look sadly at Amy.

ONE OF THE TWIN BROTHERS
Mom told us to get your suitcases.

They grab them, leave. Trevor enters.

TREVOR
Amy, he's here.

Amy looks up. Brave, feisty Amy is long gone, her heart shattered like her leg. She whispers.

AMY
My dad said he was dead... Why
would my mother tell him that?

TREVOR
I don't know, honey... Look, if you
need anything... anything... we're
just a phone call away!

Kiki sobs. Amy grabs her crutches, heads out the door...

INT. FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Amy enters slowly, looking down at the floor. Joseph, next to Social Worker, stands, nervous, holding his hat, Coach Mandy furious but struggling to hide it, the twins watching.

SOCIAL WORKER
Amy, this is Joseph Wahwasuck, your
grandfather.

Amy looks at her, wounded, then back down at the floor. Social Worker looks away.

Joseph frowns, looks between them, talks in the gentle voice he uses with his animals.

JOSEPH

Hello, Amy.

She looks slowly up worn cowboy boots, jeans, a flannel shirt, up long silver braids into his solemn face.

A painful, awkward silence. Joseph reaches for a suitcase.

TREVOR

Boys?

Joseph and the Twins take the suitcases outside.

SOCIAL WORKER

Well, I'll be on my way...

She leaves. Coach Mandy reaches for Amy. She buries her face in her chest.

AMY

Please... I don't want to go. I'm scared...

Mandy holds her away, studies her, a rueful smile.

COACH MANDY

The last time I heard you say that you were seven. I was trying to get you to do a back walkover on the beam. Remember what you did?

AMY

Jumped off and said I was quitting gymnastics forever.

COACH MANDY

But then you saw Rebecca do a back walkover on the beam, so you...

AMY

Got back on and did two back walkovers and a flip...

Mandy takes Amy's shoulders in her hands, serious.

COACH MANDY

You're the bravest girl I've ever known... You'll get through this.

Amy looks at her, tears in her eyes, nods, looks toward Trevor and Kiki, who watch from the door.

KIKI

Call me...

Amy nods, turns and heads outside. Trevor, Kiki and Coach Mandy, heartbroken watch as Joseph's truck drives away...

INT./EXT. JOSEPH'S TRUCK - TRAVELING - DAY

Amy stares out the window as they travel down a two lane rural highway, pass winter brown Kansas fields, scattered farmhouses, a small rural town - 4H Club signs, a feed store.

Amy's POV- a long, rusty red cattle trailer, a pink neon sign "Trails Cafe - Family Dining," on a water tower - "HOLTON."

They continue on - down a two lane rural highway, turn onto a long narrow road, down a hill. Amy looks at an empty park with a sign - "Welcome Kickapoo to the Pow Wow Park."

They pass the Golden Eagle Casino, turn down a country road, pull into the long gravel drive of a one story Victorian farmhouse, a long porch along the front, park.

Amy doesn't move, looks at the house. Lights shine from tall windows - winter bare trees overhead. A porch swing waits for summer. WIND CHIMES RING SOFTLY in the breeze.

Joseph opens her door, hands Amy the crutches. She heads up a brick walk, steps into light shining from the house.

A HORSE WHINNIES. She stops, looks back at a large barn, Moonlight on her pale, wounded face. Another whinny...

JOSEPH

Come in. It's cold.

He reaches for her arm, she pulls away, face hard.

AMY

I don't need any help.

He frowns as she navigates the steps. The front door flies open, light spilling out.

INT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

PARTY HORNS BLAST. Samantha, Stubby, even the dog, Galveston, wear party hats. The table set for dinner, flowers in a vase, a handmade sign says "Welcome Amy."

SAMANTHA

You're here! I'm your cousin; well, second cousin twice removed or something... Samantha, but you can call me Sam. And this is Stubby, he lives next door, not that you'd know it.

Stubby runs forward.

STUBBY

Stubby the magnificent, or Stuart the Great, take your pick. I'm a genius.

SAMANTHA

He's a moron.

Amy looks around, overwhelmed, trying not to cry.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

So you busted your leg pretty good, I hear. I broke my arm when I was ten, hurt like hell.

Joseph enters carrying suitcases, glowers at Samantha, heads down the hall. She calls after him.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Sorry! "Heck."

She looks back at Amy with a rueful smile.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

He's kinda weird about language and stuff. Dinner's ready... Sloppy Joes... specialty of the house.

AMY

Thank you, but I'm not hungry. Could you show me my room, please?

Samantha and Stubby share a look.

SAMANTHA

Oh... Okay... sure.

Amy follows her down a hallway.

STUBBY

See you tomorrow, Am...

She doesn't turn, continues walking.

INT. AMY'S ROOM - NIGHT

They enter a bedroom with faded floral wallpaper, an iron bed with a white chenille bedspread, a crocheted throw, a hand braided rug on oak floors.

SAMANTHA

I emptied out the drawers and closet. The bathroom's down the hall, just the one, it's kinda lame, but hey, it's an old house.

Amy says nothing, just looks at the room. Samantha picks up a suitcase and groans, setting it on the bed.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Jeez, what's in here, rocks?

She starts to unzip the bag, Amy quickly stops her.

AMY

That's okay, I'll do it.

SAMANTHA

Oh... okay... I'll be in the kitchen if you need anything.

She walks to the door and looks back.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

And, um, Amy... I'm real sorry about your dad...

Samantha closes the door. Amy unzips the suitcase, looks down at trophies, pictures, ribbons, picks up a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH, looks at Dennis smiling as Amy holds up a trophy... Amy cradles it to her heart, curls up on the bed, beyond tears.

INT. THE KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Samantha stirs soup. Amy, wan and tired, enters. Plates and sandwiches on a checked tablecloth, the welcome banner gone.

SAMANTHA

You must be starving. Lunch is about ready. Have a seat.

AMY

Uh... Samantha?

SAMANTHA

Sam.

AMY

I can't get service on my phone.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, it sucks. Cell tower won't reach here. You have to use the land line.

AMY

What about internet?

Samantha shakes her head.

SAMANTHA

Nuh-uh. We finally got cable, but Joseph says internet's ruining our generation. But don't worry, I'll wear him down.

Amy looks upset, Samantha is sympathetic.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

There's wifi at the diner in town. We can go later if you like.

The back door opens and Ethan enters, hangs his letter jacket on a peg. Muscles bulge over his tight football t-shirt.

Samantha stirs the soup - pretends not to notice him. She has a mad crush on him, and he knows it.

ETHAN

Hey, Sam.

SAMANTHA

Oh... hey.

She stirs faster, oblivious to the tomato soup splashing all over her. He grins, hands her a dish towel.

ETHAN

Fashion statement?

She looks down, scowls at him.

SAMANTHA

Very funny.

She cleans herself up as he grabs a bowl, dishes up, smiling at her. She makes another face at him as the back door opens.

Joseph and Stubby enter, Joseph looking totally confused.

STUBBY

So, I started out using Python to program, but I moved on.

JOSEPH

This... Python? You use it to do what?

They hang up their coats.

STUBBY

Code. Ruby was okay, Yukihiro Matsumoto focused on a syntax that was pretty easy to read, but a little slow for me. I'm learning C++. Not that hard.

Samantha and Ethan exchange a look, smile as they enter.

JOSEPH

(looking pleased)
You made soup, Samantha?

She holds up an empty family sized Campbell's soup can.

SAMANTHA

Yeah... gourmet...

Ethan grins, sits next to Amy, crushes half of a pack of Saltines into his soup.

ETHAN

Hi, I'm Ethan. I help Joseph around the place when I'm not at school.

AMY

Hi.

Joseph and Stubby sit, begin to eat. Samantha gives up trying to clean her shirt, tucks in a dish towel, sits by Amy.

STUBBY

Rosie's flyin' all over her cage, Joseph. When do you think we can set her free?

JOSEPH

Not yet, a few weeks maybe.

STUBBY

So, Amy, how many kids were in your last school?

AMY

A couple of thousand or so.

Stubby pauses, his soup spoon in mid air.

STUBBY

Jeez... we've only got 57 this year. Had 65 last year.

AMY

In each class?

STUBBY

In the whole school. From kindergarten to senior year.

Ethan finishes his sandwich in two bites, drinks his soup, gets up, looks at Joseph.

ETHAN

I'll get the plows hooked up.

Joseph nods. Ethan looks back at Samantha, smiles - he is truly drop-dead gorgeous.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for lunch, Sam.

Samantha crunches a saltine, oblivious to the crumbs falling all over her, watches longingly as he leaves.

Amy, looking over her soup spoon, notices. Joseph picks up his bowl, drinks the last of his soup, hands Amy a list.

JOSEPH

These will be your chores, Amy.

He gets up, takes his dishes to the sink.

SAMANTHA

Uh, Joseph... If you haven't noticed, she's got a broken leg.

Joseph frowns at Samantha, dumps coffee grounds into a plastic bucket on the counter by the door.

JOSEPH

There's nothing she can't handle... This is a working farm, Amy, we all do our part. But if you have a problem, let me know.

He leaves. Samantha bows toward the closed back door.

SAMANTHA

Anything you say, Lord Vader.

Stubby grins. Amy, still studying the list, looks sick. Samantha grabs it.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Make your bed, dust the house, dry the dishes... You'd think he could spring for a lousy dishwasher, feed the chickens... nothin' too hard.

AMY

I've never been on a farm. I don't know anything about chickens...

SAMANTHA

Ah, they're a piece o' cake. It's the rooster ya gotta worry about. Come on, we'll show you around.

Samantha grabs the plastic bucket from the counter, heads outside. Amy gets up reluctantly, Stubby holds out an extra jacket that hangs on a hook as she walks toward him.

STUBBY

Here, wear this, it's cold out.

He holds her crutches while she puts it on, smiles at her as he holds the door open.

EXT. BEHIND THE HOUSE - DAY

Amy follows Stubby and Samantha down a brick path, watches as Samantha opens a white picket fence gate.

A scarecrow in a PATRICK MAHOMES JERSEY guards the winter fallow garden, corn husk "hair" spiking up under a bandana. Samantha empties the bucket of eggshells, coffee grounds, vegetable peels into a metal compost bin, turns a crank.

SAMANTHA

Gotta feed the compost. Joseph calls it "black gold." Gross.

Behind the garden, the windmill creaks in the breeze, pumping water from a well beneath to a cistern nearby.

In the distance, Joseph and Ethan drive tractors toward distant fields.

AMY

Why are you here, Sam?

STUBBY

Joseph talked the Judge into letting her come here instead of jail.

SAMANTHA

Real nice, Stub!

She adjusts stuffing under Scare Crow Patrick Mahomes jersey - he now has a beer belly.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

I'm not a criminal or anything, just got caught growing some pot. Hell, it's legal everywhere else.

STUBBY

She told the Judge she thought it was basil and she was gonna make pesto.

SAMANTHA

I am seriously gonna kill you.

She heads toward the barn, Stubby and Amy following.

AMY

Why aren't you with your parents?

She shrugs - but Amy's question hits a nerve...

SAMANTHA

(tough girl act)

Never knew my dad. My mom took off when I turned 18, met some guy on Tinder, probably an ax murderer, but anybody'd be an improvement on the last one.

Amy watches her walk to the chicken coop.

STUBBY

She's had it kind of rough.

Stubby and Amy follow, stop at the hawk cage. The hawk studies them with bright, intelligent eyes.

STUBBY (CONT'D)

This is Rosie. She fell out of her nest, coyote had her, but I scared him off. Joseph fixed her wing, she's almost ready to fly.

HUGE SQUAWKING AND A SCREAM BEHIND THEM.

Amy turns as Samantha swings a bucket, jumps out of the chicken coop, barely escaping a mean ROOSTER. Samantha slams the gate just in time.

SAMANTHA
Stuff it, Glen!

AMY
The rooster's name is Glen?

SAMANTHA
(a cheeky grin)
Yeah. I named him Glen Campbell.
Pisses the hell out o' Joseph.
C'mon.

They pass a TRACTOR BARN, the doors open, filled with equipment, enter the MAIN BARN. Stubby runs over to a one-eyed barn cat nursing kittens. Amy sees it, grimaces.

AMY
What happened to the cat?

STUBBY
Probably got too close to a possum.

SAMANTHA
Chicken feed's in here. Fill the trays after you collect the eggs. Before breakfast or Joseph will have a cow, which thank God we don't have. I draw the line at squeezing cow boobs.

A HORSE WHINNIES. Amy, startled, turns, looks toward the back of the darkened barn, curious.

AMY
You have horses?

SAMANTHA
Just Phoenix, but don't go back there. Joseph doesn't want us to bother him.

Amy frowns, looks toward the back of the barn.

AMY
Why not?

Stubby looks up, a kitten in his lap.

STUBBY

He broke his leg a couple of months ago. They wanted to shoot him, but Joseph wouldn't let them.

AMY

Is he a Vet or something?

Samantha and Stubby exchange a look. A long pause.

SAMANTHA

Something like that. Come on, let's go to town so you can call your friends.

STUBBY

Can I come? Chenoa might be there.

SAMANTHA

Oh, all right. But she's out of your league, Stub.

He looks at her, raises a James Bond eyebrow - cocky as hell - "No, she's not."

Belly bouncing and arms pumping, he runs toward Samantha's beat-up Camry. Amy and Samantha follow.

AMY

Who's Chenoa?

SAMANTHA

Ethan's sister, she's gorgeous just like him. Stubby's in lo-ove... He says he likes older women.

Amy's first smile...

They walk to the Camry. Stubby reaches for the front passenger door.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

In your dreams. Get in back.

He opens the back door, junk food bags, aluminum cans fall out. Inside is a MOUNTAIN of trash.

STUBBY

Are you serious? This is disgusting.

SAMANTHA

Fine. Stay home. Somebody else can impress Chenoa with their pinball skills.

He literally crawls over the trash. Samantha shoves the door closed. She and Amy get in. Amy struggles to find somewhere to put her feet around the trash on the floor.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Sorry, been busy at work.

She reaches down, grabs a BANANA PEEL, tosses it in back, it hits Stubby in the head, he loses it.

STUBBY

I'm calling the health department!

Samantha pulls down the drive, tosses back a SONIC CUP.

STUBBY (CONT'D)

Stop!

A half-eaten TWINKIE flies over the seat. He holds up his hands to protect himself, sinks into the trash.

STUBBY (CONT'D)

You're gonna have to use the jaws of life to get me out of here! -- I'm gonna get e-coli!-- Oh, god! Something's crawling on my foot! Ah!!!

Samantha turns onto the street, grins at Amy, turns on a CD full blast to drown him out, sings along...

SIR MIX-A-LOT AND SAMANTHA

*I like big butts and I can not lie,
You other brother's can't deny,
That when a girl walks in with an
itty, bitty waist and a round thing
in your face.*

Amy smothers a laugh, Samantha moves the steering wheel back and forth in time to the beat, trash flying all over Stubby, he SCREAMS. Amy can't stop laughing.

FROM ABOVE - the Camry dances back and forth across the road... Sound of...

SIR MIX A LOT/SAMANTHA

*You get sprung, wanna pull up
tough...*

INT. TRAIL'S CAFE - DAY

Homey, harvest tables with red and white checked plastic tablecloths, red booths, trophies, football team pictures.

SOUND of a PINBALL MACHINE - bells, whistles.

STUBBY (O.S.)

Yes!

Stubby plays a vintage pinball machine in the back.

Amy, in a corner booth by herself, face-times on her iPad. Kiki on the screen in the gym. SOUND of a whistle.

KIKI

I'm coming! Sorry, Am, gotta go.

AMY

Okay, say hi to everybody for me...

Ethan walks in with a Native American FOOTBALL BUDDY and his beautiful sister, CHENOA, 14. Samantha plays darts, sees Ethan, misses the dartboard, a WAITRESS ducks, just in time.

Ethan grins at Samantha as he and his buddy sit at the counter. She scowls back.

CHENOA (O.S.)

Hello. Are you Amy?

Amy looks up at Chenoa, nods.

CHENOA (CONT'D)

I'm Chenoa Whitehorse. Ethan told me you're like an elite gymnast or something? I love gymnastics.

Amy nods, sees Stubby standing a few feet away staring at Chenoa, mouth hanging open. Chenoa turns.

CHENOA (CONT'D)

Oh, hi Stubby.

She frowns, waves her hand in front of his face.

CHENOA (CONT'D)

Stubby? Are you okay?

STUBBY

(snapping out of his
trance)

I'm cool. Can I buy you a coke?

She looks at Amy, hides a smile, slides into the booth.

CHENOA

Sure, get one for Amy, too.
 (to Amy as he runs off)
 I think he has a crush on me...

EXT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE - LATER - DAY

The screen door creaks open. Joseph exits the house.

By the barn, Stubby and Amy help Samantha clean her car, fill black plastic bags with trash. Samantha pulls out a red shoe.

SAMANTHA

I wondered where this went.

CRASH! A SCREAM! YELLING IN KICKAPOO from a beat up PINK CADILLAC as Old Mother, who can barely see over the steering wheel, smashes into the mailbox.

Joseph runs forward as TIRES BURN RUBBER as it backs up. A HORN HONKS as she barely misses a car heading to the casino.

A gnarled old hand flips the bird as she speeds forward, runs over a flower bed, sideswipes a fence, screeches to a stop on the brick sidewalk, barely missing the front porch.

The PASSENGER DOOR flies open and Doctor Whitehorse, wearing medical scrubs, frazzled, falls out, clutching her heart as Joseph arrives, yelling

JOSEPH

What are you doing letting her drive?

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE

(yelling back)
You try stopping her!

Samantha and Stubby race toward the pink Cadillac, excited.

STUBBY AND SAMANTHA

Old Mother!

Charm bracelets jingle as they help her out, hug her, hand her a tall walking stick.

Her face and body may be old and bent, but not so her mind. And there is something about her - a strength and nobility that belies her black velour jogging suit, hot pink bedazzled video poker T-shirt and Golden Eagle Casino fanny pack.

She pats their cheeks, reaches into her pocket, gives each of them a Hershey's kiss. They help her sit on a couch on the porch, then eat their candy.

JOSEPH
What's she doing here?

Doctor Whitehorse looks toward Amy.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
Think you'd keep her away?

Old Mother points her walking stick at Joseph, scowling.

OLD MOTHER
(in Kickapoo. SUBTITLED)
You! Bring her to me!

Joseph crosses his arms and scowls. Old Mother scowls right back. Amy looks between them, frowning.

Doctor Whitehorse walks to Amy, studies her, smiles.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
I'm Mary Whitehorse. Your mom and I
were good friends... Welcome home.

SAMANTHA
Amy! Come over here.

Amy frowns, uncertain. Mary smiles reassuringly.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
Come on, her bark's bigger than her
bite.

Glancing warily at a still scowling Joseph, Amy heads to the porch with Doctor Whitehorse.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE (CONT'D)
This is Joseph's mother... your
great grandmother, honey. She's 98
years old. We call her Old Mother.

Amy stares at this strange, forbidding creature, frightened yet intensely interested.

AMY
Does she... speak English?

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
Of course, but she won't... She's
stubborn.

Old Mother yells something in Kickapoo to Mary.

AMY
(whispers)
What did she say?

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
That she... well, I better not say
that... She said "If it wasn't for
her, our language would die."

Old Mother pats the couch beside her. Amy sits. Old Mother
lifts gnarled hands to Amy's cheeks, studies her.

OLD MOTHER
(in Kickapoo, subtitled)
*Oh, Little Wounded Bird, I would
know you anywhere.*

Old Mother puts a hand on Amy's leg above her cast, tilts her
head to the side, "listens." Amy's eyes widen. Old Mother
takes her hand away, glares at Joseph.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
(in Kickapoo, subtitled)
She's hurt! You will - help her!

He turns his back, walks away. Old Mother swings her walking
stick and smashes the pottery vase to the ground, her eyes
flashing. Joseph stops, his back stiff, but doesn't turn.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
(in Kickapoo, subtitled)
Coward! Stubborn fool!

Joseph storms away. Amy, frightened, jumps up. Old Mother
pulls her back, reaches into her pocket, sets Hershey's
kisses on the table.

Amy slowly reaches forward, takes one, starts to unwrap it,
then changes her mind, holds it out to Old Mother.

Nodding in approval, Old Mother opens it, puts it in her
mouth as Amy opens another, eats it. Together they chew,
studying each other.

AMY
I... like your car. I've never seen
a pink Cadillac...

Old Mother grins - chocolate all over her mouth, leans close,
whispers in rusty English, holding up a bent finger.

OLD MOTHER
Ma-ry Kay! Number one!

EXT. JOSEPH'S TRUCK/THE SCHOOL - DAY

Joseph drives down a long country road, Amy and Stubby beside him. They pass farmhouses, pull into a tiny, rural town.

A sign reads "*Powhattan, Population, 90.*" Joseph pulls up to the KICKAPOO NATION SCHOOL, a newer one-story brick building looking out of place among turn of the century farmhouses.

JOSEPH
Go on. You don't want to be late.

Amy gets out. SOUND OF NOISY BIRDS, ROOSTERS CROWING. Amy looks up at a bird-filled tree, a colorful flock of chickens and roosters behind a chain link fence below, a rusty 60 year-old tractor parked in tall grass nearby.

STUBBY
Come on, Am.

He pushes an intercom button by the door, another thing seeming out of place. The door clicks open, they go inside.

INT. THE SCHOOL/VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS

Amy follows Stubby into the entrance, curious Native American KIDS watch as they walk down the HALL. Chenoa runs over.

CHENOA
Come on, I'll show you to class.

Amy and Chenoa enter a CLASSROOM, a MALE TEACHER looks up.

MALE TEACHER
Class this is Amy Wahwasuck.

AMY
McDonald.

MALE TEACHER
Amy... McDonald. Grab a seat.

A NATIVE AMERICAN BOY WITH ACNE makes a fart sound as Amy sits in a desk across from him. LAUGHTER. Chenoa, behind him, smacks him in the back of his head with a notebook.

Amy, embarrassed, opens her backpack, pulls out her iPad. Chenoa shakes her head, hands her the notebook and a pen.

INT./EXT. - THE SCHOOL BUS - LATER - TRAVELING - DAY

A tiny school bus pulls away from the school, Stubby in front, talking a mile a minute to the bus driver. Amy, in back, looks forlornly out the window.

Chenoa, a row ahead, lifts up her cell phone in unison with eight other KIDS, looks back at Amy.

CHENOA

There's cell service for about three miles.

Amy quickly pulls out her phone, searches, thumbs flying.

INSERT: Amy's iPhone screen - an APPLICATION FORM. She begins to fill it out. They go down a hill, the screen goes black.

AMY

Damn.

Chenoa turns around.

CHENOA

I know. Did you get hold of your friend?

AMY

No, I was trying to fill out an application.

CHENOA

For what?

AMY

The U.S. Gymnastics Competition. I have the scores to qualify.

CHENOA

Wow, you must be really good. But, what about your leg?

AMY

(looking away)

It's five months away. I'll be better by then.

INTERCUT/ INT. JOSEPH'S KITCHEN - KIKI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy, in pajamas on the floor in the dark kitchen, talks to Kiki on the land-line phone and eats a cookie.

KIKI

Okay, are you ready for this...
Chuck Raidl asked me out!

AMY

No way! I thought he was dating
Sherrie...

KIKI

She dumped him for Kenny Burgess.
He has a corvette. Gold digger.

AMY

How did you do at Regionals?

KIKI

Fell on my ass, twice. Everybody
did terrible, with you and Rebecca
gone, we completely suck.

AMY

(chewing her cookie)
Where's Rebecca?

Kiki frowns, bites her lip... a long pause.

KIKI

Training in Illinois... They gave
her your spot... I'm so sorry.

A long pause. Amy is devastated.

KIKI (CONT'D)

Am? Are you still there?

AMY

Yeah. Hey, um, I better go.

KIKI

Okay... Goodnight. Love you.

AMY

Love you, too.

INT. SAMANTHA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SOUND OF HEARTBREAKING SOBS. Samantha tries to sleep, covers
her ears with her pillow. MORE MUFFLED SOBS. Samantha looks
at the ALARM CLOCK - 1:30 - throws off the covers.

INT. AMY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Samantha enters, wearing a "Got Beer" nightshirt. Amy is in bed, utterly broken, crying into her Dad's FLANNEL SHIRT.

SAMANTHA

Scoot over.

Amy turns toward the wall. Samantha gets in beside her, strokes Amy's hair, whispers.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

It's gonna be okay. Go to sleep.

EXT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE - DAY

Amy and Samantha in the garden. Samantha hands Amy a cut up potato.

SAMANTHA

Plant it about two inches down.
Make sure the eye side is up.

Amy digs a hole, looks at the potato.

AMY

Why do they call them eyes?

SAMANTHA

How the hell do I know? Hey, look.

Joseph leads Phoenix slowly from the barn, ties him to a fence, unwraps a bandage from his right front leg.

AMY

He's not even limping.

SAMANTHA

Joseph can heal anything.

Amy gets up, trowel in hand, watches as Joseph takes a green jar from his pocket, massages salve onto Phoenix's leg.

Phoenix sees Amy walk closer, tosses his head, whinnies.

AMY

What are you putting on his leg?

JOSEPH

Just a salve I make.

AMY

What does it do?

JOSEPH
Eases tenderness, helps the tendons
stretch and rebuild.

AMY
Does it work on people?

A long pause. Joseph sees Samantha watching. She raises an eyebrow. He frowns, turns away.

JOSEPH
It's for horses.

He rewraps Phoenix's leg, straightens.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Amy, there are long distance
charges on the phone, over a
hundred dollars.

AMY
I didn't know... Long distance is
free on cell phones.

JOSEPH
Things are different here... I'll
see about some kind of long
distance card. Until then, don't
use the phone.

AMY
I can't call or text, there's no
internet... How am I supposed to
talk to my friends?

JOSEPH
This is your home now. You'll make
new friends. Finish the potatoes.

She tosses her trowel into the dirt, grabs her crutches,
heads to the house, looks back.

AMY
I don't want new friends and this
will never be my home!

She rips open the screen door, it hits the wall.

JOSEPH
Emily! Get back here.

She looks back at him.

AMY
My name is Amy!

She goes inside, slams the door.

SAMANTHA
Why'd you bring her here?

JOSEPH
She belongs here.

SAMANTHA
No, she doesn't. And I'm sick of hearing her cry herself to sleep every night! She's miserable, and you're not helping.

JOSEPH
What's that supposed to mean?

SAMANTHA
You barely talk to her, except to give orders with your "mean Indian face." Think feeding the damn chickens is gonna make her happy?

JOSEPH
Watch your mouth.

SAMANTHA
Gonna kick me out for telling the truth? Is that what happened with your daughter? Your precious Emily didn't follow your rules either?

He takes a step toward her, raises his hand.

JOSEPH
Enough!

She looks at his hand, lifts up her chin.

SAMANTHA
Go ahead, won't be the first time I've been hit... Look, I don't know why your kid ran away and never came back... And frankly, I don't care. But I do care about Amy, even if you don't... She is desperate to get back to gymnastics, it's all she cares about... And I'm kinda worried what she'll do when she finds out she can't...

She walks to the door, looks back.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 All my life I've heard stories
 about the great healer Joseph
 Wahwasuck... And if you heal that
 frickin' horse and you won't help
 her... You're gonna lose her just
 like you lost your daughter.

She storms inside.

Joseph, stricken, stares after her, looks down at his hand...

INT. ILLINOIS TRAINING CENTER - DAY

Rebecca flies over a vault, doesn't stick the landing, glares
 at a MALE COACH, 30s, ignores his outstretched hand.

MALE COACH
 You're coming out of the tuck too--

REBECCA
 You're making me worse, not better!

She charges toward her father, grabs a towel, wipes her face.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
 I can't work with him. I need Coach
 Mandy.

HARRISON BERKELEY
 He's the top vault coach in the--

Rebecca tosses the towel down, angry.

REBECCA
 Coach Mandy understands how I move.
 He doesn't.

HARRISON BERKELEY
 He's the third vault coach we've--

REBECCA
 Do you want me to win or not, Dad?

EXT. NEAR THE BARN - THE NEXT MORNING - DAY

Amy feeds the chickens. Joseph and Stubby at the hawk cage.

STUBBY
 Are you sure she's ready? I mean...
 she could get hurt out there.

Joseph pulls on a leather glove, opens the cage, reaches in,
 looks toward Amy. She looks away.

JOSEPH
 She isn't happy in a cage, Stuart.
 She was born to fly...

He talks gently, softly in Kickapoo... Rosie cocks her head,
 hops onto his hand. He slowly brings her out of the cage,
 raises his arm.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 (in Kickapoo, SUBTITLED)
Fly!

CAW! Rosie leaps into the sky, spreads her wings, circles,
 swoops down momentarily, then soars into the sky. Joseph,
 Stubby, and Amy watch as she disappears...

STUBBY
 I'm sure gonna miss her.

The School Bus honks. Amy and Stubby head down the drive.

INT. JOSEPH'S ROOM - RIGHT AFTER - DAY

Joseph sits on his bed, looking at a framed photo -

INSERT: EMILY, his daughter, 15 - looks just like Amy - in a
 white fringed dress, a beaded headband around her forehead, a
 YOUNGER JOSEPH and his wife, TEEKA smiling beside her.

He rubs his finger over the picture, sets it down, goes to:

INT. AMY'S ROOM - DAY

Joseph walks into Amy's room, hesitates, opens her closet,
 sees gymnastics trophies, albums, takes one down, sits on the
 bed, turns pages, sees:

Blue ribbons, team pictures, newspaper clippings, awards. He
 closes the album, frowns, thinking.

EXT. NEAR THE BARN - LATER - DAY

Amy walks up the drive on her crutches. The Rooster squawks
 at her, it sounds like "Fuck You." Amy scowls at him.

AMY

Yeah, same to you, Glen.

HAUNTING MUSIC STARTS. PHOENIX NICKERS. His eye peers through a crack in the wood. Amy pauses, watching as his eye moves to the next crack as she walks.

She glances toward the fields, sees Joseph plowing on his tractor, goes into the barn.

INT. THE BARN - CONTINUOUS

Sun rays shine through the cracks of the barn, turning dust motes to silver. On her crutches, she walks slowly toward the darkened back of the barn, squinting to see.

AMY

You've been watching me...

PHOENIX NICKERS.

AMY (CONT'D)

It's so dark in here, I can barely see you...

She pulls a rope to open a barn window, ties it. Sunlight shines on Phoenix's glossy coat as he walks forward, puts his head over the rail, looks at her with his beautiful eyes.

AMY (CONT'D)

Oh! You're so beautiful...

She reaches out carefully, pulls back, then reaches forward again, strokes the side of his face, smiles.

AMY (CONT'D)

Hi... I'm Amy.

He rubs his head against her hand, stamps his foot, whinnies. Amy's face changes as she falls in love, heart opening up.

AMY (CONT'D)

So, you broke your leg, too... It's awful, isn't it?

A TRACTOR MOTOR TURNS OFF, Joseph enters.

JOSEPH

You're not supposed to be in here.

Amy stiffens, guilty, but continues to pet Phoenix.

AMY
I'm not hurting him. He's lonely in
here all by himself.

He reaches up to close the window.

AMY (CONT'D)
Don't! He doesn't like the dark.

JOSEPH
(gently)
It's dark for a reason, Amy. He
needs to be still and quiet so he
doesn't hurt himself.

He starts to shut the window, stops, makes a decision, leaves
it open, turns to leave.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
He likes carrots.

He leaves. Amy looks after him, surprised. She turns back to
Phoenix, petting him.

MONTAGE -

INT./EXT. THE BARN - DAY

-- Amy heading to the barn with carrots.

-- Amy straddling the rail to Phoenix's stall braiding his
mane. Joseph enters, smiles, leaves.

-- Amy in Phoenix's stall, doing her homework.

-- Amy doing pull-ups from a beam in the barn, chattering
away to Phoenix.

-- Joseph walks in, stops as he sees Amy, her arms around
Phoenix, her head against his neck.

-- Amy walks out of the house, sees Joseph lead Phoenix from
the barn. Phoenix tosses his head, whinnies.

-- Joseph hands the lead to Amy, she walks him slowly around
in a circle, smiling.

INT./EXT. OLD MOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Joseph pulls up in Old Mother's driveway, parks next to the
Pink Cadillac. The front door flies open.

Old Mother, in a red jogging suit and fuzzy BUNNY SLIPPERS beams as Amy gets out of Joseph's truck.

JOSEPH

I'll pick you up tonight.

He drives off. Amy walks to the porch, navigates the steps with ease. Old Mother pats her cheek.

OLD MOTHER

A-my, come.

Amy's POV - comfy, well worn furniture, a Native blanket covered couch, lotto tickets and Hershey's kisses in pottery bowls on the coffee table, the walls covered with family pictures.

Amy stops at the same PICTURE OF HER MOTHER in the white fringed leather dress that Joseph had.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Like you.

Amy nods, looks longingly at the picture, follows Old Mother to the:

KITCHEN. The table is set for breakfast. Old Mother goes to the stove, gestures for Amy to come over.

Old Mother uncovers a bowl of dough, drizzles it with oil, pats it with her old hands, expertly pinches off a golf ball sized piece, flattens it, drops it into sizzling oil, turning it as it puffs up, turns golden brown, sets it on a paper towel covered plate with others to drain.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Fry bread. You try.

Amy carefully copies her.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Good. You cook for father?

Amy nods sadly. Old Mother pulls another cast iron skillet forward, plops in butter, points to a bowl of brown eggs.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Show.

Amy, with one hand, cracks one into the pan, then another, cries out. It has two yolks.

AMY

Look!

OLD MOTHER
Ni-isswi!... Two yolk... Lucky!

Amy puts the eggs on plates as Old Mother carries the bread to the table, gestures toward the honey.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
 My honey - put on bread.

Amy drizzles it on the fry bread, takes a bite.

AMY
 Mmmmm. Sooo good...

Old Mother pushes the whole plate toward her.

OLD MOTHER
 Your mother favorite...

Amy looks up at her, frowns.

AMY
 Would you... tell me about her?

OLD MOTHER
 After... *IiOeniwa*... Eat!

LATER - Amy sits on the couch next to Old Mother, piles of photo albums around them. Old Mother opens one, shakes her head sadly.

Amy's POV- THREE YOUNG NATIVE AMERICAN MEN SMILING PROUDLY IN ARMY UNIFORMS.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
 My boys. Only Joseph left now.

AMY
 What happened to them?

OLD MOTHER
 Vietnam.

She puts the album away, pulls out another, opens it, smiles.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Ah... here Emily.

Amy's POV - Emily, 15, holding a blue ribbon near a horse.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
 She always number one, like me.
 Ride crazy fast... beat all boys.
 Scare Joseph and Teeka to death.

Amy turns more pages, stops at - A PICTURE OF JOSEPH and TEEKA, smiling down at a beaming EMILY... Amy frowns.

AMY

They look so happy... What happened, Old Mother? Why did my mother run away?

Old Mother sighs, gathers her thoughts, looks at Amy.

OLD MOTHER

Teeka hide sickness from us until cancer all over - too late for even Joseph fix. Emily so angry, wanted mother in Hospital, have that bad Che-mo. Teeka say no, she want die at home...

Old Mother grabs a tissue, wipes her eyes as Amy thinks.

AMY

Chemotherapy didn't save my mother. She had leukemia.

OLD MOTHER

Che-mo bad, kill good blood, make too weak to fight sickness in blood. Joseph could have fixed Emily maybe... make strong with special medicine, but she run away after Teeka die. Joseph look and look for her, never find...

She wipes her eyes again, looks at Amy.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

He so broken, talk to no one, put away medicine, never smile again.

Old Mother blows her nose, loud. Amy closes the album, taking it all in. Old Mother reaches out, takes her hands, smiles.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

But you home now, A-my. We all smile... Come, have surprise!

LATER - Amy sits at a make-up table surrounded by Mary Kay cosmetics as Old Mother applies blue eye shadow to her eyelids. A KNOCK ON THE DOOR. Old Mother gets up to open it.

AMY

Shouldn't you ask who it is?

Old Mother grabs a fly swatter, looks back at Amy, grins.

OLD MOTHER
Nobody mess with me.

An older Native American WOMAN is at the door, coughing, covering her mouth. Old Mother sets the fly swatter down, goes into the kitchen, comes out with a medicine bottle - gives it to the Woman, who smiles at Amy, leaves.

AMY
What did you give her?

OLD MOTHER
Medicine for cough - I make.

AMY
What's in it?

OLD MOTHER
Teaspoon ginger, pinch Cayenne pepper, not too much, three spoon apple cider vinegar - two spoon, clover honey - my bees only. Store bought honey no good - spray crop, make poison. Stupid, kill bees, we all die.

AMY
You're a healer like Joseph.

Old Mother nods, taps her chest.

OLD MOTHER
My side family. I teach you next.

She takes Amy's chin.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
Need more blush.

INT. AN EXPENSIVE HOTEL SUITE - ILLINOIS - NIGHT

On a large TV - a GYMNAST WITH PONYTAILS tumbles across a balance beam, dismounts, arms up.

OLDER WOMAN COACH (O.S.)
Natalie Johnson. She's the one to beat on beam.

Harrison, Russian Coach, an OLDER WOMAN COACH and Rebecca at a dining table. A waiter clears plates, refills wine. A WAITRESS passes out creme brulee, sets one in front of Rebecca. Rebecca smiles at her, picks up her spoon.

HARRISON BERKELEY
None for my daughter.

The waitress frowns, removes it. Rebecca puts down her spoon, resentful, watches everyone eat.

Harrison clicks the remote:

Amy, on the TV, races toward the vault, flies over, amazing, a perfect landing, arms up.

WOMAN COACH
Wow. Who is she?

HARRISON BERKELEY
Amy McDonald.

He sips his wine, sets it down.

HARRISON BERKELEY (CONT'D)
Thankfully we don't have to worry
about her anymore.

Rebecca stares at him, appalled. He stares back, sips his wine as the doorbell RINGS.

Coach Mandy enters pulling a suitcase. Rebecca runs, hugs her, looks up.

REBECCA
I'm so glad you're here!

Coach Mandy puts her hand on Rebecca's face, frowns, sees broken blood vessels around her eyes, a sign of bulimia.

COACH MANDY
You okay? You've lost weight.

HARRISON BERKELEY
She's fine. Stronger than ever.
We're looking at the competition,
shall I order you some dinner?

Coach Mandy looks toward the TV - frowns as she sees Amy frozen on the screen, arms up, smiling.

COACH MANDY
Thanks, but it's been a long day.
Think I'll go to my room. See you
tomorrow Rebecca.

She leaves. Rebecca looks back at Amy on the TV, frowns.

INT. OLD MOTHER'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy, her face plastered with blue eyeshadow and blush, sits on the table scraping SCRATCH TICKETS with a penny, Old Mother watching. Amy shakes her head, tosses it into a pile.

OLD MOTHER
Thieves, all fixed!

Amy hides a smile. The front door opens. Joseph enters with a sack of groceries, takes them to the kitchen, returns, sees the pile of photo albums.

JOSEPH
Time to go.

Old Mother hands two photo albums to Amy.

OLD MOTHER
You take.

Amy takes them reverently, smiling.

AMY
Kepiih-cihi in-enie.

Old Mother is delighted, nods approvingly.

OLD MOTHER
You wel-come, A-my. Wait!

Old Mother goes to the makeup table, shoves piles of makeup into a MARY KAY BAG.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
For touch-up.

Amy hugs her, grabs her crutches, follows him outside, hands them to him. He hands her the albums and bag, throws the crutches in the truck bed, gets in, looks at her.

JOSEPH
What's on your face?

She pulls down the mirror, looks at herself.

AMY
Ma-ry Kay...

Her chin starts to wobble, she bursts out laughing uncontrollably. Joseph smiles as she continues to laugh.

INT. AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy is on her bed looking through albums - the ones Old Mother gave her and her own. Her trophies are now on the dresser. Samantha sticks her head in, notices.

SAMANTHA

Can I come in?

AMY

Sure.

She gets on the bed next to Amy, grabs an album.

SAMANTHA

Did Old Mother give you these?
Cool.

She looks through them.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

You look a lot like your mom.

AMY

Yeah...

Samantha grabs another album, one of Amy's, flips pages.

SAMANTHA

You sure won a lot of contests.

She turns another page.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Who's the blond girl next to you in all these? She had to be pissed you always won first place.

AMY

She won sometimes. Rebecca Berkeley. We probably would have been friends if it wasn't for her dad... He's all about winning, no matter the cost... She's bulimic, trains every single day.

She rubs a finger over her dad's picture.

AMY (CONT'D)

My dad didn't care if I won or lost... he loved me no matter what.

SAMANTHA

How much did you train?

AMY

A couple of times a week when I was little. When I was eleven, I started training three hours before school every day, four hours after, then all day Saturday when we didn't have meets. That's what it takes to be an elite gymnast. But my dad wouldn't let me train on Sundays or over holidays.

SAMANTHA

God, you like, gave up your childhood...

AMY

(staring into space)
 Pretty much... but when you run like the wind... fly... land a perfect vault...
 (looks at Samantha)
 It's worth... everything...

Samantha stares at her, concerned. A HORN HONKS FROM OUTSIDE.

SAMANTHA

We better get out there before he busts a gasket.

AMY

Do I have to go?

SAMANTHA

Tonight's a pretty big deal, Am. Joseph hasn't done anything with the tribe for years. I can't even believe he's going. He's doing it for you. Come on, tacos are great.

Amy, unhappy, gets up.

EXT. THE AMERICAN LEGION - MAYETTA - NIGHT

Stubby's face lights up as Amy and Samantha walk up with Joseph, who wears a starched white shirt, a Legion cap.

STUBBY

You came! Come on, Old Mother's saving a table.

He sees Chenoa, runs.

STUBBY (CONT'D)
Hey, Chenoa! Wait up!

INT. THE AMERICAN LEGION - MAYETTA - NIGHT

A noisy, packed hall, Vets and their families, mostly Native American, chatter away, eat tacos. A VET passes out bingo cards.

Joseph walks in behind the kids, head tall, looking straight ahead. Total silence, heads turn, whispers, smiles.

DIFFERENT PEOPLE
Joseph? Good to see you! Joseph!

Joseph, embarrassed by the attention, sees Old Mother waving, Mary Whitehorse beside her.

He heads to her table, but is stopped by OLD FRIENDS, who shake his hand, pat his arm, say hello to Amy.

STUBBY
Save us some seats, Am, we'll get
the tacos. Come on, Sam.

They head toward the taco line, a cute Native American boy in a LEAVENWORTH HIGH SCHOOL jacket, RILEY, 15, waiting in line with Ethan, looks toward Joseph and Amy.

RILEY
That Joseph's granddaughter? She's
cute.

ETHAN
I'll introduce you.

Samantha and Ethan arrive.

SAMANTHA
Hey, Riley, didn't know you were
back.

RILEY
Yeah, dad got deployed again so mom
wanted to come home. Sucks, we had
a really good basketball team.

Ethan nods toward Joseph, smiles at Samantha.

ETHAN
Can't believe he's here.

SAMANTHA

Me, neither.

They head toward the table. Riley sits across from Amy. Ethan sits next to Samantha, grins as he glances down at the six tacos on her plate.

ETHAN

You aren't hungry, are you?

She crunches a taco, talks with her mouth full.

SAMANTHA

Bite me.

ETHAN

Amy, this is my cousin, Riley.

AMY

Hi.

RILEY

Hi.

LATER - tables cleared, bingo in full swing... An OLDER VET pulls a number out of the BINGO BALL MACHINE.

OLDER VET

B-7

Joseph and Mary Whitehorse are frantically trying to help Old Mother stamp her TEN BINGO CARDS.

Amy leans over, stamps Joseph's card - B-7.

AMY

You have bingo.

He scowls, looks at his card, does NOT want bingo. He tries to cover his card. Old Mother sees, SCREAMS AT HIM IN KICKAPOO - A tug of war with the card.

She grabs it, hits him over the head with it.

OLD MOTHER

Bingo! Bingo! My son has bingo!

CHEERS, Joseph sinks down in his chair, Amy laughs. Samantha and Ethan look at each other, smile.

INT. THE BARN - A WEEK LATER - DAY

Amy enters the barn, carrying carrots - hears:

JOSEPH (SINGING)
*And I need you more than want you,
 and I want you for all time...
 And the Wichita Lineman... is still
 on the line...*

Amy ducks behind a wall, peeks out, watches Joseph unwrap Phoenix's leg.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 Hold on, let's see what we've got.

He puts his hands on Phoenix's leg, looks away, "listens" with this hands, looks up at Phoenix, smiles.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 I think we did it, Boy.

Phoenix sees Amy - and the carrots - whinnies, tosses his head. Amy brings over the carrots.

AMY
 Will he be able to run again?

A long pause.

JOSEPH
 We'll see. His bone should be stronger now than before the accident... A callous of extra strong new bone forms around the broken one.

She sees the green jar on a ledge, picks it up, looks at it. Joseph takes it from her, sets it down.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 A horse has 205 bones, 80 of them in their legs... ligaments, tendons, cartilage... But not muscles like humans. Time to go.

Amy follows him.

INT. NATIVE AMERICAN CLINIC - RIGHT AFTER - DAY

A CAST SAW BUZZES as Doctor Whitehorse cuts through Amy's cast. Joseph studies an X-ray on the wall, then turns to watch, arms crossed.

Doctor Whitehorse reaches for a tool, carefully separates the seam, cuts through the padding under the cast, removes it.

Amy's leg is scarred, a chunk of muscle missing... Amy is shocked, horrified.

Doctor Whitehorse gently examines Amy's leg, looks at her.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
We think of scars as a sign of
strength... It feels good, Amy.
You're a very lucky girl.

Amy looks at her, at Joseph, her eyes filling with tears.

Joseph takes Amy's arm, helps her up.

JOSEPH
How much do I owe, Mary?

MARY WHITEHORSE
Nothing.

She watches, concerned, as Joseph helps Amy limp toward the door.

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE
She needs to start physical therapy
right away...

INT. JOSEPH'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS- DAY

Joseph helps Amy into his truck, gets in and glances at her. Tears run silently down her face.

JOSEPH
Amy, it's not as bad as it looks...
We can...

AMY
I don't want to talk about it!

Joseph looks at her, frowns, then pulls away from the curb.

EXT. THE BARN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Joseph sits on a stool, Phoenix's hoof in his hand, Ethan watching closely. Samantha runs in, frantic.

SAMANTHA
Joseph! Come quick, Amy's gone
crazy!

He puts down the hoof, runs after Samantha. Ethan shuts the stall, follows.

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Joseph runs inside. YELLING FROM UPSTAIRS, A CRASHING SOUND. GLASS BREAKS.

JOSEPH

Stay here.

Joseph runs up the stairs to Amy's room. Amy, hysterical, has trashed her room, trophies broken, albums on the floor, team uniforms torn up, pictures ripped, glass shattered. She holds a framed team picture, breathing hard.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Amy... stop this!

AMY

Why? My life is over! I would have been better off dead!

She throws the picture violently against the wall right next to his head, he holds up an arm as glass flies everywhere.

AMY (CONT'D)

I hate it here and I hate you! No wonder my mother said you were dead! Get out!

She falls to the floor, sobbing. Joseph stares at her, turns and leaves, passing Samantha and Ethan.

SAMANTHA

Joseph... She's just upset about her leg... She didn't mean it...

He walks out the back door.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Oh, God...

She runs to the telephone.

EXT. THE GRAVESITE - LATER - DUSK

Old Mother walks slowly up the hill toward Joseph, Mary Whitehorse watching from the door.

Old Mother reaches him, looks down at now three graves, Dennis and Emily's headstones beside Teeka's.

JOSEPH

I brought them here. I think Teeka would have wanted that.

Old Mother nods.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Is she alright?

OLD MOTHER
(Kickapoo, subtitled)
Yes.

Joseph nods, agonized, puts his hand on Teeka's headstone.

JOSEPH
Emily said I killed her. Maybe I
did... The night she left...

He can't go on. Old Mother says something quietly under her breath in Kickapoo, shakes her head, breaks her rule, speaks to him in broken English.

OLD MOTHER
If anyone could have saved Teeka,
it would have been you. It was just
her time.

Joseph looks up at her, reveals a long-held secret.

JOSEPH
(quiet, agonized)
I hit her. My only child. I hit my
Emily. That's why she left...

A long pause. Old Mother shakes her head sadly.

OLD MOTHER
And all these years you've punished
self... You were good father! And I
think, if Emily not die, she would
have come home...

She puts her hand on his heart.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Now, it long past time you forgive
self. Come back to us, Joseph! We
need you. We miss you.

He finally looks up, his face shattered, whispers.

JOSEPH
But, I've lost... everything...

She reaches up, smiles, puts her gnarled hand on his cheek.

OLD MOTHER
Not everything...

Joseph stares at her a long moment, then slowly turns and looks toward the house. Lights shine from the windows.

JOSEPH
I don't know how to help her any more than I did Emily...

OLD MOTHER
Of course you do. Heal the heart, the rest will follow.

INT. AMY'S ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Joseph opens the door, walks in, snaps the window shade open, light floods in. Amy, in pajamas, looks up, exhausted, covers her eyes. The room is cleaned up.

AMY
What?

He rips off her covers.

JOSEPH
Get up.

AMY
I'm tired.

JOSEPH
Too bad. Give me your leg.

She backs up on the bed.

AMY
What, no!

He pulls up a chair, drags her forward by her leg, pulls a YELLOW JAR of salve out of his pocket, opens it and slaps some on her leg, rubbing it in.

JOSEPH
Yellow, not green.

AMY
Ouch! Are you crazy? What are doing? Let me go!

He tosses the salve on the bed, opens her closet, finds sweat pants and a T-shirt, throws them at her, looks at her with his meanest "don't mess with me" look. She scoots backward.

JOSEPH
Meet me outside. You have five
minutes.

He glares at her, slams the door. She stares at it, wide eyed, starts to unbutton her pajamas.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Amy limps outside. Phoenix is saddled, Ethan holding the lead. Samantha and Stubby watching quietly.

AMY
(sullen, disrespectful)
Okay, I'm here. What do you want?

Joseph steps next to Phoenix, puts his hands together.

JOSEPH
Up you go.

She takes a step back.

AMY
I don't know how to ride...

JOSEPH
Then it's time you learned. I need
him to get used to weight again,
you're the right size.

She looks back at Stubby.

AMY
What about Stuart?

STUBBY
I'm too short, I'll fall off.

Amy looks at Samantha, who holds her hands up.

SAMANTHA
No way. I don't do horses.

AMY
Traitors.

Amy scowls at Joseph, limps forward, lifts up her good foot. Joseph tosses her way up, she hangs on for dear life. Joseph adjusts the stirrups, takes the lead from Ethan. Phoenix walks, Amy looks terrified.

AMY (CONT'D)
Don't let go!

Joseph lets out the lead, makes a clicking noise. Phoenix circles, breaks into a trot, Amy bouncing.

AMY (CONT'D)
Stop! That's too fast!

JOSEPH
Follow his motion, lift up in the stirrups as he comes down.

Amy, looking terrified, flexes up.

Joseph's POV - CLOSE on Amy's bad leg stretching up, down, up, down, up, down... Amy gradually relaxes, concentrates. Joseph makes a clicking sound, Phoenix goes faster.

The wind blows Amy's hair. She turns her face up, closes her eyes, remembering...

MEMORY FLASH - Amy running toward the vault, flying through the air...

BACK TO PRESENT - Phoenix NEIGHS, slows, looks back at Amy. She smiles, rubs his neck, whispers.

AMY
Good boy, Phoenix... good boy.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Joseph is at the table, drinking coffee, reading a newspaper. Amy enters, stops.

JOSEPH
Good morning.

AMY
Good morning. I, uh, overslept...
I'll go feed the chickens.

JOSEPH
Samantha will take care of the chickens from now on. You'll be taking care of Phoenix.

He raises an eyebrow at her.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 He likes you... probably because of
 the carrots... Sit, please. I'd
 like to look at your leg.

Amy sits warily. Joseph kneels down, glances up for
 permission, pushes up her sweat pant leg. He looks at it,
 feeling the muscles and tendons carefully, then stops, looks
 away, his hand still on her leg, "listens."

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 (quietly, to himself)
 Alright, I can work with this.

AMY
 What do you mean?... Are you going
 to fix my leg?

JOSEPH
 If you're going to be ready for
 this competition, I guess I'll have
 to. What is it? When?

AMY
 The U.S. Gymnastics Championship...
 The top eight finishers qualify for
 the Olympic trials... Five months.

JOSEPH
 Hmmm... Alright, but you will have
 to do exactly what I say... even if
 you don't like it, understood?

Amy nods, wide-eyed, excited.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
 And there will be no - flipping or
 whatever it is you do - until I say
 you are ready and not a moment
 before. I don't want you getting
 hurt. Do I have your word?

AMY
 Yes... But, when you say I'm ready,
 I'll need a coach... Should I call
 Coach Mandy?

JOSEPH
 When you're strong enough, I will
 call her. Until then, I'm in
 charge. Do you understand?

AMY
 You're in charge.

He takes her foot, flexes it to the right, the left, holds it, feels the Achilles tendons.

JOSEPH

Is this where it hurts the most?

Amy, grimacing, nods.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

One of the screws is too close to the Achilles tendon... We'll have to build more muscle... Three times a day use the salve I left in your room. Push your foot up as far as you can, hold it for ten seconds, four times a day.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Oh, and no junk food, no soda, very little sugar. You will eat what I say and when I say.

AMY

Do I have to eat... liver?

He raises an eyebrow, crosses his arms.

JOSEPH

Do you want my help, or not?

AMY

Okay, I'll eat liver.

He hands her a BROWN JAR.

JOSEPH

Before bed, take a hot bath with Epsom salt - one cup, it's under the sink. Then rub this in, but only at night, it's strong. You might want to open your window.

Amy opens it, smells it, rears back, wincing, her eyes watering. Samantha enters in pajamas, her hair a mess, makes a face, waves her hand in front of her nose.

SAMANTHA

Holy Mother of God, what died in here?

Joseph scowls at her and stands up.

JOSEPH
 You asked for horse medicine, you
 got it. Amy, come with me.

They leave. Behind them, closes her eyes, squeezes her hands
 tight.

SAMANTHA
 Yes!

MONTAGE OF SCENES - VARIOUS

MUSIC - Glen Campbell sings "*Southern Nights*"

--INT. THE BARN - DAY

Joseph on a hay bale, reads a newspaper, looks over reading
 glasses as Amy curries Phoenix. CLOSE on her leg as she
 stretches on tiptoe to reach the top.

--EXT. THE PADDOCK - DAY

Joseph holds the lead, Amy rides Phoenix in a circle, over
 and over, posting, her leg moving up and down. Stubby and
 Samantha sit on top of the fence.

Beyond... the corn is just peeking out of the ground...

-- EXT. THE FIELDS - DAY

Hay bales set up as obstacles, Joseph sits behind Amy on
 Phoenix, teaching her to ride, how to maneuver right, left,
 back, slow.

-- INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Three cast iron frying pans on the stove - one with onion,
 one with bacon and... Joseph looks at Amy, LIVER wriggling
 from a fork. He drops it in - it SIZZLES...

Old Mother and Joseph dig into their liver/bacon/onion feast.
 Amy looks down, takes a deep breath, takes a bite, chews,
 looks shocked... Good! She grins at Joseph, stabs another
 bite... chews. Samantha looks on in disgust.

--INT. THE BARN - DAY

Joseph backs a trailer into the barn with his tractor, gets
 off, hands Amy a manure shovel. She wrinkles her nose, starts
 shoveling.

-- EXT. THE FIELDS - DAY

Joseph rides Phoenix, Amy and Galveston jog beside him. Joseph clicks his heels, goes faster, Amy keeps up.

The corn is now a foot tall...

-- INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy, on the couch with Samantha, watches EXTRA and eats popcorn. Joseph comes in, props Amy's leg up with a pillow, drops a bag of frozen peas on her leg.

He grabs the remote and changes the channel to Wheel of Fortune, hands Samantha the GED guidebook and points to the kitchen table. Amy grins, hands him the popcorn.

END MONTAGE

INT. OLD MOTHER'S KITCHEN - DAY

Amy grinds herbs with a mortar and pestle, pours them into a saucepan, cuts open an ALOE VERA LEAF, squeezes it in, looks up at Old Mother for approval, who is packing baskets with food and medicine.

AMY

Thanks for coming to get me, I needed a break. What's this one for?

Old Mother smiles, brings over an empty brown medicine JAR and a small FUNNEL, watches as Amy pours the salve into a jar, fills out a hand made label.

OLD MOTHER

For the arth-ri-tis, sore muscle. Good job, A-my. O-kay, time go, busy day. Take medicine to clinic then deliver Mary Kay. In closet.

Amy opens a closet. PILES of Mary Kay boxes fall out.

AMY

Oh my God! How did you get all these orders?

OLD MOTHER

Stuart build web-site on computer. Say, soon, we go vee-ral! Come, when we done, we have ice cream!

INT./EXT. OLD MOTHER'S CAR - DAY

SOUND of a straw sucking up the last of a MILKSHAKE. Old mother, driving, tosses the Tastee-Freeze cup in the back seat. She has chocolate all over her mouth.

OLD MOTHER

Good.

Amy finishes hers.

They pass CORN FIELDS three feet tall...

AMY

Old Mother, what does Kickapoo mean, anyway?

OLD MOTHER

Mean "move from here to there." We smart people, bad times come, we no fight, we move... Now, get tape from box. My music.

Amy picks up a cassette.

AMY

(reading)

Engle..

OLD MOTHER

Engle-donk-hump-dick.

Amy snorts. Old Mother grabs the tape, the car weaving across the road, tosses it into the box, digs, finds another as Amy holds on for dear life.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Engle-donk, he good, but here best singer in world! Father Cherokee, mother Patawomeck. I know, in fan club thirty year.

Amy loses it as Old Mother sings off key with WAYNE NEWTON.

WAYNE NEWTON AND OLD MOTHER

Donkey-shame, darling Donkey-shame.

Music continues, Amy laughing as Old Mother sings louder, bouncing her head, and the car, back and forth.

WAYNE NEWTON AND OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Remember day, tore you dress, what a mess, I confess... Donkey-shame...

From ABOVE - Old Mother's PINK CADILLAC goes about 20 miles an hour on a two-lane country highway, "Donkey-shame" blaring from the open windows, a huge line of frustrated cars and semi-trucks following. A HORN HONKS.

Amy looks back, sinks down in the passenger seat.

AMY

Think maybe we could go a little faster?

Old Mother looks in her rear view mirror, without slowing, swerves onto the shoulder, almost hitting a fence. Amy bounces, shrieks.

A LADY passes, flipping the bird, Old Mother yells in Kickapoo out the open window as the cars pass. She starts to pull out, a SIREN SOUNDS as a POLICE CAR pulls in behind her.

OLD MOTHER

Sheet.

She turns off the cassette player, rolls up the windows, stares straight ahead, trying to be invisible.

A large NATIVE AMERICAN POLICEMAN, taps on the window.

POLICEMAN

Old Mother, roll down the window.

She glares at him, digs in her purse, opens the window, starts to hand him her license, he holds up both hands.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

Don't even think about givin' me another one of your phony IDs! Out of the car!

She scowls at him, yelling in Kickapoo as he opens the door.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

You can yell all you want, but I warned you the last time I stopped you what would happen if I caught you driving again.

Amy gets out, runs over, holds Old Mother's arm protectively.

AMY

You're not taking her to jail are you?

POLICEMAN

No, I'm taking her home. But I'm impounding this car before she kills somebody.

Old Mother goes ballistic, her arms spread over her beloved car, screaming in Kickapoo, the words "Ma-ry Kay" frequent.

AMY

Please, Officer, don't take her car, I'll drive her home. I promise I won't let her drive again! Please!

POLICEMAN

Who are you?

AMY

Amy... Wahwasuck...

POLICEMAN

Joseph's granddaughter? I heard something about that. Got a license?

AMY

Uh, yes, but... I left it at home.

He sizes her up.

POLICEMAN

Okay, but you tell Joseph next time, I'm takin' her in!

Amy helps Old Mother into the Passenger seat, still screaming at the Policeman, who rolls his eyes, drives away.

OLD MOTHER

I never like that fat boy!

Amy has a death grip on the steering wheel, looking scared.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

Go.

AMY

Uh... I lied, I don't really have a license. I don't know how to drive.

Old Mother waves a hand, turns the car key.

OLD MOTHER

Easy, I teach. Foot on gas, go.

Amy pulls out slowly, frowning in concentration. Old Mother puts her foot on top of Amy's, they fly forward, Amy screams as the car skids all over the road.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
See? Piece cake.

INT. ILLINOIS GYM - DAY

Rebecca finishes a difficult vault, lands perfectly, arms up, high fives Coach Mandy, grins. She looks happy and healthy.

COACH MANDY
Perfect. Now do it again.

EXT. THE FIELDS - DAY

The corn is four feet tall.

Joseph drives a tractor, an attached hay baler dropping square bales on the ground behind him. Amy follows, leaping on and off them, Galveston barking and leaping beside her.

Ethan, Stubby and Samantha follow, load the bales onto a trailer behind her, look at each other, grin.

PRE/LAP - SOUND of voices - including off-key Old MOTHER -

VOICES INCLUDING OFF-KEY OLD MOTHER
*Happy birthday dear Amy, Happy
birthday to you!*

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Balloons and empty birthday cake plates... A banner "HAPPY 15TH BIRTHDAY" above the table.

Wearing birthday hats, Old Mother, Mary Whitehorse, Ethan, Stubby, Chenoa and Samantha - trying to ignore Ethan - watch as Amy opens presents.

Amy opens the last box, a present from Old Mother, pulls out a lime green velour Golden Eagle Casino jogging suit.

AMY
Oh... I love it. Thank you.

Samantha makes faces behind Old Mother, Amy tries not to laugh. Old Mother reaches in the box, pulls out eye shadow.

OLD MOTHER
 Not all. Eye shadow to match.
 Green, make eyes pop!

Samantha snorts. Old Mother turns around, reaches in her purse and hands Samantha eye shadow.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Not your birthday, but brought
 purple eye shadow for you, match
 crazy hair.

Samantha takes it, touched.

SAMANTHA
 Thanks!

Stubby gets up, covers Amy's eyes.

STUBBY
 Come on, there's one more present
 outside.

They all get up, follow Stubby and Amy outside.

EXT. BEHIND THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS- DAY

Stubby uncovers Amy's eyes. A BRIGHT RED BOW is tied on Phoenix's bridle. Joseph hands the reins to Amy.

JOSEPH
 Happy birthday.

She looks at Joseph, incredulous.

AMY
 Really?

JOSEPH
 Really. He was yours from the
 moment he saw you...
 (he strokes Phoenix's face)
 He chose you.

She hesitates, then wraps her arms around him in a big hug, buries her face in his chest.

AMY
 Thank you, grandfather...

He hugs her back, a profound moment, then holds out his hands for a leg-up, she grins at him, ignores his hands, leaps up without help, her leg strong.

Amy clicks her heels, Phoenix takes off at a trot, rides faster. CLOSE on Amy's beaming face.

EXT. THE GARDEN - DAY

Amy runs from the fields, the CORN IS FULL GROWN, she runs to the hose by the garden, where Joseph picks tomatoes, drinks, wipes her mouth, catches her breath.

AMY

Ten miles... Am I ready yet? Can we call Coach Mandy? We only have two and a half months!

JOSEPH

Soon.

She groans, runs inside, Joseph smiles after her.

EXT. THE FIELDS - DAY

PHOENIX WHINNIES. Joseph unhooks the lead, looks up at Amy.

JOSEPH

Not too fast now.

AMY

I thought you said he was good as new.

JOSEPH

You still have to be careful, he has six screws in his leg.

AMY

How many do I have?

JOSEPH

Four. Slow... and don't go far.

AMY

Okay.

Amy grins, clicks her heels, Phoenix canters. Joseph watches, heads to the barn as Ethan arrives with a load of lumber, hops out, opens the tail gate.

Joseph looks back as Amy rides, the wind blowing her hair, smiling, strong, free.

EXT. THE CORN FIELDS - DAY

LATER - Amy, confident, happy, canters atop Phoenix down a narrow path between SIX FOOT TALL CORN.

AN OMINOUS RATTLE - A HUGE RATTLESNAKE slithers from the corn. Phoenix rears, Amy flies off, hits the ground hard - right in front of the snake. She SCREAMS, scoots backward as she stares at it's tongue, rattle shaking...

Phoenix SCREAMS and BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! His sharp hooves pound the snake into a bloody pulp.

Amy breathes hard, looks from the snake to Phoenix - who tosses his head proudly, paws the ground, whinnies.

Amy gets up, wraps her arms around him.

AMY

Thank you, boy. Thank you...

She grabs the reins, gets on, races back to the barn.

Joseph and Ethan are hammering in a fence rail as Amy and Phoenix race in.

AMY (CONT'D)

Grandfather! Grandfather!

Joseph looks up, alarmed, a nail in his mouth as she jumps off, runs her hands up and down Phoenix's legs.

JOSEPH

What happened?

AMY

There was a huge rattlesnake in the corn... I fell off, but Phoenix killed it! He saved me! Did it bite him?

Joseph takes the nail out of his mouth, walks over, examines Phoenix's legs.

JOSEPH

No, he's fine. Are you hurt?

AMY

No. Are you sure he's okay?

JOSEPC

Yes. Go cool him down.

He turns, goes back to the fence. Amy leads Phoenix into the barn, talking to him the whole time.

ETHAN
She's not limping anymore.

Joseph nods, a small smile, hammers in a nail.

-- EXT. THE PADDOCK - DAY

GALVESTON BARKS. Joseph, Chenoa, Samantha and Ethan watch as Amy, atop Phoenix, sails over a series of jumps, rides back, hops off, takes off her helmet, hands the reins to Joseph.

JOSEPH
Alright... Now you do it.

AMY
You're serious...

He crosses his arms, raises an eyebrow. She turns, looks at the jumps, then back at him, crosses her arms right back, raises her eyebrow.

AMY (CONT'D)
And if I can?

JOSEPH
Then I'll call your Coach.

She smiles slowly, turns, concentrates and blasts off - one - two - three - jumps... Not slowing, she charges toward the last, higher jump, YELLS, does a round off, back handspring over the jump, HUGE EXTENSION, lands, arms flying up to a V.

Stubby, Samantha, and Ethan CHEER!

INT. THE KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Samantha fills out papers at the table, Joseph watching.

SAMANTHA
Did you get hold of Amy's coach?

JOSEPH
She's calling me back. Stop stalling. Finish your GED application.

She scowls, signs it, shoves it to Joseph.

SAMANTHA

Here. Hope you're satisfied. I'll probably flunk the damn thing anyway... Oh, so sorry, "darn."

He frowns at her, puts on reading glasses, looks at it.

JOSEPH

Why did you sign like that?

She grabs it back, belligerent.

SAMANTHA

What?

JOSEPH

You printed your name. A signature should be cursive.

SAMANTHA

Uh, hate to break it to you, Joseph, but they don't teach cursive anymore... They teach keyboard... as in computer... as in internet.

Looking like someone has stabbed him, Joseph leans forward, takes off his glasses.

JOSEPH

(in an awful voice)
They're not teaching penmanship?

SAMANTHA

Nope.

Samantha also leans forward, says in an equally awful voice.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

And if I pass this stupid thing, and get into college, I'm gonna need a computer... with internet!

He straightens, stubborn.

JOSEPH

For what?

SAMANTHA

All kinds o' stuff! Research, word processing... spell check.

JOSEPH

Spell check?

SAMANTHA

Yeah, if you spell a word wrong,
the computer fixes it for you.

Looking like he is going to explode, he storms over to a bookshelf, throws a dictionary at her, hard. She catches it.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

What's this?

JOSEPH

(evil)
Spell check.

The phone RINGS, Joseph gets up.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I'll take it in the other room.
Shut the window, rain's coming.

He walks into the living room, pulls the pocket doors closed.

JOSEPH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hello, this is Joseph.

Samantha goes to the window, sees Stubby and Amy run from the school bus up the drive. THUNDER rumbles in the distance. Phoenix sticks his head out the window, neighs hello...

AMY

Sorry, boy, don't think we can ride today, it's gonna rain. But I'll be back with your carrots.

Samantha closes the window, locks it.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Amy and Stubby enter, see Samantha listening at the closed door, upset. They stop as Joseph's raised, angry voice comes through the door...

JOSEPH

You refuse to even see her? I thought you cared about her!

A Pause... Sound of the phone CRASHING DOWN...

Amy stands stricken. Samantha takes her hand. The pocket doors slide open, Joseph enters.

AMY

I don't understand...

JOSEPH

She doesn't believe your leg is strong enough to compete... And, even if she did, she can't. She's training... Someone else.

AMY

Rebecca...

Joseph takes her shoulders, bends to her level.

JOSEPH

You are going to that competition, *Awehali*. Whatever it takes, you will go. I give you my word.

She stares at him, unblinking, grabs carrots out of the refrigerator, goes outside.

SAMANTHA

Should we go after her?

JOSEPH

I'll go. Samantha, drive Stuart home. Stuart, I need you to look on your computer. We need to find a coach.

STUBBY

On it.

They head to the door, grab their coats.

INT. EAGLES GYMNASTICS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - SAME

Trevor enters, sees Coach Mandy with her head in her hands.

TREVOR

What's wrong? What did he want?

COACH MANDY

He asked me to coach Amy.

TREVOR

Coach her? For what?

COACH MANDY

The competition. He said she's healthy, strong. Completely healed.

He sits down, takes her hands.

TREVOR

That's impossible. The doctors said she'd never be able to compete again.

COACH MANDY

What if they're wrong? Kiki said her horse is jumping now. Maybe he's got some Native American voodoo or something. You know what a fighter she is...

Trevor looks at the suitcases waiting nearby, frowns.

TREVOR

What about Rebecca? You signed a contract.

COACH MANDY

Could I get out of it? Rebecca has a team of coaches. Amy has no one.

TREVOR

Harrison Berkeley would sue us for every dime we have.

Coach Mandy leans back in her chair, closes her eyes.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

SOUND of RAIN hitting the windows and roof, THUNDER.

Samantha opens the back door. Against a FLASH OF LIGHTNING, she sees:

Amy riding Phoenix, racing toward the woods.

SAMANTHA

Joseph! Amy's riding out into the storm!

Joseph grabs his coat and hat, pushes them aside, runs out.

JOSEPH

Galveston, come! Find Amy!

Galveston races after him, barking, Joseph runs.

EXT. THE FIELDS BEHIND THE HOUSE - DAY

Wind blows Joseph's coat and braids as he follows Galveston, barking, racing toward the woods.

THUNDER CRASHES, LIGHTNING A SECOND AFTER. Rain begins to pour. Joseph pulls up his collar, runs.

EXT. THE WOODS - CONTINUOUS - DAY

THUNDER BOOMS. Amy, riding Phoenix, sees a tall Sycamore tree ahead, white branches towering above the other trees.

AMY

Come on.

Phoenix fights as she turns him under the branches, dancing, struggling against the bit, not liking the tree.

AMY (CONT'D)

Phoenix, stop! We have to get out of the rain!

He quiets, shudders, she rubs his neck, crying, frightened, looks up into the tree, whimpers.

AMY (CONT'D)

Dad...

EXT. NEAR THE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Joseph's POV - MORE THUNDER, LIGHTNING FLASHES, silhouetting Amy and Phoenix under the tall Sycamore, Galveston racing toward them. Joseph cries out, his voice lost in the storm.

JOSEPH

Amy, get out from under the tree!

CRACK! Lightning strikes the Sycamore, blasting it apart, burning wood showering down. Amy screams, Phoenix rears, Amy flies through the air, hits the ground. Phoenix races away.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Amy!

Galveston races in, frantic, whining, licking Amy's face. Joseph pushes him aside, drops to his knees.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Lie still. Are you hurt?

AMY

(stunned, weak)

I don't think so... Lightning... it hit the tree... Phoenix...

Joseph gets up, puts his hands to his mouth, whistles. Phoenix trots back obediently, goes to Amy, nudges her, smells, reins trailing over her.

AMY (CONT'D)
(starting to cry)
I'm so sorry, Boy... Is he okay?

JOSEPH
He's fine.

Amy covers her face with her hands, starts to sob in earnest.

AMY
My Dad... I miss him so much...

He holds her, rocks her as she sobs, strokes her hair.

JOSEPH
I know.

AMY
He worked so hard all those years... spent all his money so I could compete. Did you know he worked two jobs? And I - I trained my whole life. All for nothing... I can't go...

JOSEPH
Why not? Your leg has healed.

AMY
Not enough to compete, I've been lying to myself. Coach Mandy is right... It's over.

Amy sobs, utterly broken. Joseph stares at her, a muscle ticking in his cheek. He gets up, grabs Phoenix's reins, leaps on, kicks his heels, snaps the reins, yells.

JOSEPH
Yah!

Phoenix races down the hill, lightning speed.

Amy, startled, sits up, shocked, watching as Joseph turns Phoenix back, snaps the reins, heads straight for a tall fence...

AMY
Nooooo!

SLOW MOTION as Phoenix and Joseph, lightning-lit storm clouds flashing behind them, fly over the fence, race back to Amy, slam to a stop. Phoenix whinnies, tosses his head, proud.

Joseph looks down at Amy from the tall horse, stalwart, steadfast, waiting...

Amy stares up at him, hope beyond hope lighting her eyes.

AMY (CONT'D)
You really think my leg is strong enough?

JOSEPH
I do. But it doesn't matter what I believe, you have to believe it.

AMY
(whispering)
But I need a coach.

JOSEPH
Then we'll find one.

He reaches a strong hand down.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Come on, I'm too old for this.

He pulls her up in front of him, wraps his coat around her.

They ride slowly through the woods, Galveston trotting beside them. Amy reaches forward and pets Phoenix's neck.

AMY
You told me not to go fast...

JOSEPH
I was afraid you'd fall off.

They come out of the woods.

The storm has moved on, rumbling in the distance. The sun peeks out from the dark clouds, filling the sky with a beautiful rainbow.

AMY
Oh, look...

Joseph looks at it, frowns, thinking.

JOSEPH
This won't be easy. And you may not win. What matters is that you try.

Amy turns back to look at him again.

AMY
Did you say that to my mom when she
was barrel racing against the boys?

JOSEPH
I did.

AMY
Did she believe you?

JOSEPH
No. She was so stubborn.

Amy turns forward, smiles slowly, "Warrior Girl" waking up.

AMY
So am I.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY - DAY

Amy watches Stubby and Joseph walk toward Joseph's truck.

AMY
Why can't I come? He doesn't know
anything about finding a coach!

JOSEPH
This may take a few days. You need
to work out, not sit in a truck.

He gets in, slams the door, sticks his head out.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Don't forget to feed the chickens.

They drive away. Amy walks to the chicken coop. Rooster Glen Campbell squawks at her.

AMY
Oh, shut up.

MONTAGE OF SCENES - VARIOUS

-- INT. KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY GYM - MANHATTAN - DAY

Joseph talks to a FEMALE COACH, she shakes her head "sorry."

-- EXT. UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS - KANSAS CITY - GYM - DAY

Joseph and Stubby walk down the steps, frowning, a dead end, get into his truck, Stubby working on the I-Pad.

-- EXT. A PRIVATE GYM - DAY

Joseph and Stubby leave, looking upset, Joseph grabs the I-Pad, looks at it.

-- INT. MOTEL 6 - NIGHT

Joseph snores, snorts, mouth open. Stubby, in the bed next to him, covers his head with a pillow.

-- INT./EXT. - IN THE TRUCK - I-70 - DAY

Stubby on this cell phone, pleading for an interview, a thumbs-up to Joseph. A sign - Next exit - LAWRENCE, KANSAS. Joseph takes the exit.

-- INT. KANSAS UNIVERSITY GYM - LAWRENCE - DAY

An ASIAN COACH listens sympathetically as Stubby pleads. She looks at Joseph, shakes her head. He leaves.

Stubby and the Asian Coach watch as Joseph walks out into the empty gym, looks around.

Joseph's POV - the UNEVEN BARS, the VAULT, the TRAMPOLINE, the MATS. He walks toward a BALANCE BEAM, studies it, bends down.

HIS HANDS run across the beam... changes to...

-- EXT. THE HOME DEPOT - TOPEKA - DUSK

JOSEPH'S HANDS tie a red flag on boards sticking out of the back of his truck. He and Stubby get in, drive away.

INT. THE LIBRARY - TOPEKA - EARLY EVENING

Stubby's FINGERS fly over a KEYBOARD, Joseph frowning as he adds a long list of numbers in a spiral notebook.

STUBBY

Bingo! Found used uneven bars in Wichita - \$1,600 - says they're like new. That'll save about a thousand bucks.

Joseph sits back, deep in thought, sighs. Stubby frowns.

STUBBY (CONT'D)
Still short?

Joseph nods, stands.

JOSEPH
Help me with these.

STUBBY
We have too many, I'll put some on
my card.

They take a huge pile of videotapes and books to a check out counter. Stubby checks out half, gathers them. Joseph steps up, hands a tattered Library Card to a NERDY MALE LIBRARIAN.

NERDY MALE LIBRARIAN
Uh... do you have another card by
chance? This one expired in 1962...

Joseph has had it, gives his meanest look to the Librarian, who gulps, steps back.

NERDY MALE LIBRARIAN (CONT'D)
Uh... I'll get you a new card.

EXT. HOLTON TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

A historic Victorian town square. Gas lights turn on. A Courthouse, antique shops, a diner, a variety store.

Outside of JAYHAWK TV AND APPLIANCE, Stubby supervises as Joseph and a man load a huge old TV into his truck next to the lumber.

EXT. OLD MOTHER'S HOUSE - RIGHT AFTER - NIGHT

Joseph pulls into Old Mother's empty driveway.

JOSEPH
Where would a woman her age be this
time of night?

STUBBY
I told you, the casino. There's a
slot tournament, everybody's there.

Joseph shakes his head in disgust, pulls out.

EXT./INT. THE GOLDEN EAGLE CASINO - NIGHT

Joseph parks in a packed parking lot, grips the steering wheel, does NOT want to go in. Stubby frowns.

STUBBY
I'll go find her.

JOSEPH
You're not going in there. Wait here.

He gets out, grimly walks toward the door. Two large Native American SECURITY GUARDS raise eyebrows as he enters.

SECURITY GUARD
Never thought I'd see him in here...

SLOT MACHINES RING. The place is packed, smoky. Samantha, pushing a drink cart, sees him.

SAMANTHA
What are you doing here?

JOSEPH
My mother... Where is she?

SAMANTHA
Right over there... Did you find a coach?

He ignores her, heads with long strides to where a crowd watches a packed slot tournament. Heads turn as he passes. Samantha pulls off her apron, hands it to an OLDER WOMAN.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Clock me out, okay?

Samantha chases after Joseph. Joseph pushes through the crowd, sees Old Mother pushing the button on her machine as fast as she can. Joseph grabs her arm.

JOSEPH
I need to talk to you.

OLD MOTHER
(in Kickapoo, subtitled)
I'm ahead! Go away!

She continues frantically pushing her button. BELLS RING, WHISTLES BLOW as THREE SEVENS hit on her machine, THE CROWD CHEERS, she cackles, excited, pushes faster. A LARGE WOMAN next to her scowls. Joseph holds his hands up, exasperated.

JOSEPH
I need your help! A loan. For Amy.

She barely glances at him, continues pushing. The Large Woman's machine hits THREE SEVENS. She yells in excitement. Old Mother curses under her breath, scowls, pushes faster.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Mother!

OLD MOTHER
How much?

JOSEPH
I don't know yet, a couple of
thousand.

She kicks a large, tattered purse toward him. Joseph opens it, his eyes widen. CLOSE UP ON THE OPEN PURSE - hundreds - thousands - of dollars stuffed inside.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
What the... where did you get all
this?

OLD MOTHER
Luck-ee day!

BELLS, WHISTLES as Old Mother hits THREE SEVENS again! Old Mother hands him a huge pile of money, turns back to her machine. Joseph shakes his head, leaves.

EXT. THE TRACTOR BARN - RIGHT AFTER - NIGHT

Ethan sweeps the concrete floor of the now empty tractor barn, fluorescent lights shine above. Joseph's truck pulls up; he and Stubby exit. Samantha jumps out of her Camry. Joseph opens the tailgate as Ethan comes out.

ETHAN
I cleared it out like you asked,
tractors are out back. What's goin'
on?

JOSEPH
Ethan, Stuart, help me unload.

Ethan helps him lift a huge old TV, Stubby gets the books and tapes out of the cab. Samantha arrives.

SAMANTHA

What's that old dinosaur for? And why are you putting a TV in the barn?

JOSEPH

Maybe I want to watch my shows in peace!

The door to the house opens and Amy runs out, Galveston beside her. The lights from the barn shine behind Joseph.

AMY

You were gone so long! Who did we get?

JOSEPH

I'm sorry, Amy, everyone was busy.

A long pause. Amy is crushed, but puts on a brave face.

AMY

So I guess that's it then.

He goes to her, puts his hands on her shoulders.

JOSEPH

No. We will do the best we can with what we have... That's always been our way. Come.

Joseph walks her into the empty barn, looks around.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

We'll train here. I brought lumber. I'll build some of the equipment and buy the rest. And we have video tapes from the Olympics, rule books. We'll study them, and then we'll train. You and I.

STUBBY

(carrying video tapes)
I'll help too, I'm good at stuff like that.

SAMANTHA

Me, too.

ETHAN

I'm in.

Amy looks at them all, overwhelmed, nods. Joseph puts his arm around her.

JOSEPH

And we aren't alone, I found a coach who said she would Zom.

The kids all look at him, confused.

AMY

Zom?

Joseph glowers, a bit unsure.

JOSEPH

Yes, you know, on the computer. She will watch from her computer and tell us what to do. Zom.

The kids burst out laughing, Joseph frowns as Samantha shoves him.

SAMANTHA

It's zoom, not zom, you old buzzard... and that means we gotta get Internet! Whoo-hoo!

EXT. INSIDE THE TRACTOR BARN - NIGHT

Work lights on, Joseph planes a long beam with a hand planer, stops to carefully measure its size with a folding hand rule. He walks to the table, puts reading glasses on and studies a book, nods.

He pauses, rubs his back, turns on a cassette player - Glen Campbell sings *"By the Time I get to Phoenix."*

Stubby, running wires from a computer to the massive TV, looks at Joseph, annoyed.

STUBBY

Why do we have to listen to Glen Campbell all the time?

JOSEPH

He was my wife's favorite, reminds me of her...

STUBBY

What's your favorite?

JOSEPH

Me? I like soul music...

Stubby sets up the internet.

STUBBY
Like Otis Redding? Marvin Gaye?
They're cool.

JOSEPH
(reverently)
James Brown...

STUBBY
(typing)
You ask and you shall receive...
Welcome to the wonders of the world
wide web...

He ceremoniously clicks a button - and...

JAMES BROWN (THOUGH SPEAKERS)
*Owww! I feel good (do-do, do-do,
do-do, do-do, do!.... I knew that I
would now... I fee-ee-el good...*

Stubby rocks out, doing his "moves"... Joseph's head bobs in time to the music as he continues to plane the board...

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRACTOR BARN - DAY

Ethan and Riley drive up in Joseph's pickup, get out. The truck bed is piled with brightly colored gymnastics mats.

ETHAN
We got six more right when they
were about to toss them. They're
kinda torn up but I think we can
salvage most of them.

JOSEPH
Bring them inside.

INT./EXT. AMY'S GYM - DAY

Amy, sweaty, jogs in from the fields, Galveston beside her. They stop at a water hose, she drinks, wipes her mouth with her arm, fills Galveston's bowl. The Tractor Barn opens.

ETHAN
Amy, Joseph wants you.

Amy heads to the barn, goes inside, gasps. Her gym is finished, the floor a kaleidoscope of multi-colored mats and black tape, a beam, a vault, bars, a trampoline, a foam filled pit. Stubby, Samantha, Ethan and Joseph stare at her.

AMY

You finished it! And the equipment came!

JOSEPH

Well, what are you waiting for?
Show us what you can do.

Amy smiles, takes a deep breath, then races ahead, flies into a round off, two back handsprings, a twisting flip high in the air, ending with her arms up in a perfect V, the happiest girl in the world.

Everyone is shocked, Joseph most of all.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

Samantha shoves him, laughing, then she and Stubby race forward and jump into the foam filled pit.

SERIES OF SHOTS - AMY'S GYM -

JAMES BROWN (FROM THE SPEAKERS)

*This is a Man's World, this is a
Man's World, but it wouldn't be
nothin, nothin, without a woman or
a girl... (MUSIC CONTINUES)*

-- Amy leaps onto the uneven bars... Joseph spotting.

-- Stubby looks up from the TV, shakes his head, Joseph points toward the bars, Amy tries again.

-- Amy lands perfect, grins, high fives Joseph.

-- TWO ROPES hang from the rafters. Stubby clicks a stop watch. Ethan, shirt off, muscles bulging, races Amy hand over hand up the ropes. Amy wins, grinning, Ethan shakes his head, sees Samantha watching him. He smiles at her, she pretends not to notice, leaves, nose in the air.

-- Joseph zooms with the Asian Coach - Old Mother frowns at the TV, at Joseph, walks over and looks into the camera. The Asian Coach screams, rears back as her face appears on the screen.

-- CLOSE UP on the TV, CARLY PATTERSON on the beam, Amy, Stubby and Joseph studying it. Amy nods, goes to the beam.

-- Amy, face determined, stares at the vault, blasts off... A perfect landing! Old Mother, Samantha, Ethan, CHEER!

Riley grabs a bottled water, takes it to Amy, she smiles, drinks, looks at him, flustered. He is REALLY cute.

RILEY

That was... great.

AMY

Thanks.

RILEY

Hey, uh, I was thinking... maybe we could grab a pizza or something some time.

AMY

Oh... okay.

He grins, leaves, Amy watching. Samantha comes up to Amy, shoves her, Amy laughs. Samantha sees Old Mother scowling.

SAMANTHA

Uh-oh. You're gonna get "the talk."

AMY

What talk?

Samantha points toward Old Mother, who is giving Riley the evil eye. He frowns, hurries outside.

SAMANTHA

Her version of Sex - Ed...
(imitating) "Boy touch leg at dinner, you pick up fork..."

She makes violent stabbing motions to "Psycho" sounds. Amy laughs. Joseph sees them, calls out as Ethan hands Old Mother her walking stick.

JOSEPH

Samantha, drive my mother home, and bring her car back. I'm not paying another ticket. Then go inside, you have studying to do. Your GED test is next month.

SAMANTHA

Gee, I can hardly wait.

She heads out, rolling her eyes, Ethan helping Old Mother.

ETHAN

I gotta head back to school.
Looking good, Am.

AMY
Thanks, Eth.

They head out, Samantha turns back with a grin.

SAMANTHA
Hey Amy, don't forget now... run
fast, there's a big herd of buffalo
chasing your ass!

Samantha taps her hand over her mouth - a war cry - and leaves. Stubby and Amy laugh. Joseph tries to hide a smile, looks at Amy and points toward the beam.

AMY
Okay, I'm going.

Amy hops on the beam, spins, falls off, upset, frustrated, lays on the ground.

AMY (CONT'D)
Oh! What's wrong with me? That's
the third time this week! I've
never fallen on a wolf turn! I
can't find my balance!

STUBBY
You'll get it, Am.

Joseph has been watching, deep in thought.

JOSEPH
Take a break. I'll be right back.

EXT. AMY'S GYM - RIGHT AFTER - DAY

JOSEPH (O.S.)
Amy!

Amy comes out, smiles when she sees Phoenix, unsaddled, Joseph holding a lead. She strokes his neck.

AMY
Hey, boy.

Joseph holds out his hands for a leg up.

JOSEPH
Get on.

AMY
I'm not wearing shoes.

JOSEPH
You won't need them.

He tosses her up.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Okay, stand up. Slowly.

AMY
What? Are you crazy?

He raises an eyebrow, Amy stands up slowly, arms out.

JOSEPH
Got it?

AMY
I guess. You know, the balance beam
doesn't move and it's a lot closer
to the ground! What if I fall?

JOSEPH
Don't.

He begins to lead Phoenix in a circle. Amy, arms out,
concentrates. Scene fades to:

EXT. THE FIELDS NEAR AMY'S GYM - A MONTH LATER - DAY

AUTUMN, the trees red and gold, corn stubble in the fields.

Phoenix leaps over hay bales. Amy, barefoot, stands on his
bare back, reins in one hand, the other out for balance,
strong, confident. Joseph, by the Gym door, whistles, Amy
turns Phoenix toward him, stops.

JOSEPH
Stop fooling around, we have work
to do. Get down.

AMY
Okay, catch.

She leaps off. Joseph catches her.

JOSEPH
Show off.

She grins at him, hops down, follows him toward the gym. A
HAWK CRIES. AMY pauses, looks up.

AMY
Hey, Rosie, is that you?

Wings spread, Rosie circles in the blue sky. Amy cocks her head to the side, thoughtful, stretches her arms out.

INT. AMY'S GYM - DAY

Amy, alone in the gym, turns on a CD Player. NATIVE AMERICAN MUSIC. She listens, frowns, shakes her head, hops on a TRAMPOLINE.

She listens to the music, spreads her arms wide, thinking, then - jump - jump - jump - flips, throws her arms wide like the hawk, tries to spin, but doesn't complete the spin in time to land on her feet, crashes on her stomach, groans.

Stubby, dressed in a traditional Native American costume, enters, frowning.

STUBBY

You shouldn't be working without a spotter. You okay?

AMY

Yeah. What do you think of that music for my floor exercise? Ethan's mom brought it over.

STUBBY

Kinda old fashioned.

Amy hops off the trampoline, turns it off.

AMY

I know, it needs something...

STUBBY

What were you tryna do up there?

AMY

I saw Rosie flying, got this crazy idea for a new vault - with my arms out like a hawk.

She wipes her face with a towel.

STUBBY

That'd be cool, they could name it after you, like the Yerchenko or the Biles.

AMY

I'd have to be a hawk to get enough height. Hey, you look great.

STUBBY

Come on, you gotta get dressed.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - RIGHT AFTER - DAY

Samantha plays poker at the kitchen table with Old Mother. Stubby, Ethan, Doctor Whitehorse watch. Old Mother wins, cackles, rakes in a pile of pennies. Samantha groans.

ETHAN

You never had a prayer, Sam. She always wins.

Joseph enters, dressed in a starched white shirt and dark slacks, struggling to tie a tie.

JOSEPH

Better check her sleeves.

Doctor Whitehorse helps him with his tie. Amy enters, a little shy in a beautiful fringed white leather dress.

OLD MOTHER

Joseph...

Joseph looks up, eyes shining. Old Mother says something to him in Kickapoo. He nods, heads down the hall. Amy frowns at Doctor Whitehorse.

AMY

Do I have it on wrong?

DOCTOR WHITEHORSE

No, honey. You look beautiful.

Joseph enters, carrying a cardboard box, pulls out a photo album, hands it to Old Mother. She opens it, points at a page, gestures to Amy, who comes over, sees:

EMILY IN THE WHITE FRINGED DRESS, Joseph and Teeka smiling behind her.

AMY

It's the same dress! I wonder what happened to the headband?

Old Mother says something to Joseph in Kickapoo. He nods, reaches into the box, pulls out a pink and white jewelry box, opens it. *"Someday My Prince Will Come"* plays as a plastic ballerina twirls.

Joseph digs inside, hands Amy the beaded headband, closes the box. THE MUSIC STOPS. Amy puts it across her forehead, smiles up at Joseph. Samantha, flipping through the album, stops.

SAMANTHA

Oh - my - God! Who is that!?!

Joseph turns away from Amy, looks over Samantha's shoulder, sees:

A black and white photo of a handsome Native American YOUNG MAN sitting on a horse, long dark braids hanging down his bare muscular chest.

JOSEPH

Me.

He walks toward the door with attitude, looks back.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Pretty hot, huh? Come on, we're going to be late.

They all get up and follow, smiling.

EXT. THE POW WOW PARK - RIGHT AFTER - DAY

Joseph stands proudly with Native American Vets, flags flying in a semi-circle around a marble monument that says:

"Dedicated to the brave Kickapoo Men and Women who gave their lives in the defense of this land."

Names of the dead are engraved in the monument - two of them - "Wahwasuck."

A young, KICKAPOO FEMALE MARINE in full dress uniform steps up to a Microphone.

KICKAPOO FEMALE MARINE

Our young people will now recite the "Warrior's Prayer."

Amy, Stubby and SCHOOL CHILDREN, all dressed in Native costumes, step forward, Joseph bursting with pride.

STUBBY

Oh, Great Spirit, Hear this warrior's plea. I am a warrior. I was born free. Free like the clouds in the sky...

TWO LITTLE GIRLS

*I moved across Grandmother Earth
like a gentle breeze... on a swift
pony...*

TWO BOYS

*I became a warrior. I fought with
courage and honor. I fought on the
land. I fought on the water. I
fought in the sky...*

STUBBY, AMY AND CHILDREN

*While I fought, I was shot at,
wounded, and even gave my life...
still I fought on bravely...*

AMY'S FACE, moved, proud, profound.

AMY

*I am free now, my spirit soars like
the eagle in the sky... I am free
now, in the hands of our Creator.
I was a warrior.*

EXT. BLUE VALLEY NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

Kiki runs out of the school, jumps in Trevor's van.

COACH MANDY

About time, gotta catch the red
eye.

KIKI

Sorry. Oh shoot, forgot my
backpack... Be right back.

TREVOR

Hurry.

She runs back inside, leaves her cell phone on the seat. It
RINGS. Coach Mandy picks it up, frowns.

COACH MANDY

It's Amy...

TREVOR

Don't you think it's about time you
talked to her?

Coach Mandy bites her lip, answers.

COACH MANDY

Hi, Amy.

INTERCUT - TREVOR'S VAN/THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amy in the kitchen, still wearing the white dress.

AMY
(with longing)
Hi, Coach...

COACH MANDY
(eyes tearing up)
Hi, sweetie... How are you doing?

AMY
Good... My leg's better.

COACH MANDY
Your grandfather told me. I'm so glad...

AMY
Um, I hear you're training Rebecca...

COACH MANDY
Yeah... Amy...

AMY
It's okay. I understand. But I wondered if maybe you guys could come see me some time... I know it's far, but... I miss you.

COACH MANDY
We miss you, too. It's not that far. Let me look at the schedule.

AMY
We're having a party next weekend at the farm after my cousin's graduation. Next Saturday, around four... And I'm gonna do some gymnastics... I learned a new vault...

Coach Mandy frowns. Kiki runs out, jumps in.

COACH MANDY
We'll see what we can do. Here's Kiki.

INT. INSIDE AN OLD BRICK SCHOOL - DAY

Joseph, in a suit, sits with Old Mother, Stubby and Amy at the crowded GED graduation ceremony. Samantha on stage in a gigantic blue gown and a graduation cap bent on the corner with the other graduates - a motley crew, 16 to 50 years old.

Samantha crosses her eyes at Amy.

A WOMAN WITH GRAY HAIR steps up to a microphone.

WOMAN WITH GRAY HAIR
Ladies and gentlemen, I give you
the 2019 Brown County High school
graduating class!

APPLAUSE. The graduates throw their hats in the air - except for Samantha - who looks at everyone like they are complete aliens as they walk off the stage.

JOSEPH
(very formal)
Congratulations, Samantha.

SAMANTHA
(equally formal)
You're welcome, Joseph. Now could
we please get the "heck" out of
here before somebody sees me.

He hands her a wrapped present. Samantha smiles at Stubby and Amy, opens it, looks shocked.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
You got me a laptop? Really? Has
the sky fallen or something?

STUBBY
I picked it out. Eight gigs.

SAMANTHA
(momentarily serious)
Thank you, Joseph.

JOSEPH
You're welcome. Now let's get home,
everyone will be there in an hour.
I'll get the car.

EXT. THE TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

They step into the town square as Ethan screeches up to the curb in his pickup. Samantha tries to hide behind Amy.

SAMANTHA
Oh God... please, no.

Too late. Ethan sees her, grins.

ETHAN
Are you hiding?

SAMANTHA
I look like a giant blue whale, I
smell like mothballs and I think
somebody sat on this hat.

He grins, LOVES her sense of humor. He steps closer, his
voice getting husky.

ETHAN
You could wear a feed sack, you'd
still be the prettiest girl I've
ever seen...

They stare at each other... He reaches into his pickup, pulls
out flowers.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
Here... Since I'm transferring to
KU and now you have your GED, maybe
you could apply. We could... see
each other...

For once, she is stone-cold silent. Ethan frowns.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
(looking insecure)
I mean, unless you don't want to.

Amy shoves Samantha.

AMY
She wants to...

ETHAN
Can I drive you home?

SAMANTHA
(goo-goo eyed)
Okay...

Ethan opens the truck door for a dazed Samantha, gets in,
pulls out.

AMY
Finally!

HIP-HOP music sounds from Ethan's truck as they pull away. Amy listens, a "light bulb" moment growing on her face.

STUBBY

What?

AMY

I just had an idea... Do you know anything about producing music on the computer? Beats and stuff?

The worlds' greatest computer nerd looks over thick glasses.

STUBBY

You are kidding, aren't you?

Joseph pulls up in the pink Cadillac, Old Mother beside him. Stubby and Amy get in.

Amy's phone beeps, she looks at it, her face falls.

STUBBY (CONT'D)

What?

AMY

Coach Mandy's flight is late. Kiki doesn't think they can come.

STUBBY

I'm sorry, Am.

She shrugs, looks out the window.

EXT. BEHIND THE HOUSE - DAY

A party in full swing. NEIGHBORS walk from tables covered in red and white plastic tablecloths toward Amy's gym.

Joseph checks the racks of ribs on the smoker, walks around the front of the house.

Ethan and Samantha, still in her graduation gown, are making out on the front porch swing. Joseph hides a grin, clears his throat. They pull apart.

JOSEPH

Samantha... Tell Amy to hurry up, everyone's ready. Ethan...

Samantha, embarrassed, rushes inside.

Ethan walks with Joseph toward the barn. Joseph looks at him, raises his eyebrows. Ethan grins. They head toward Amy's gym.

Behind the house, Samantha and Amy, in gymnastics clothes, run toward the gym, don't see Trevor and Coach Mandy's mini-van pulling in the drive...

INT. AMY'S GYM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Samantha, Amy following, enters in all her blue whale graduation gown glory, takes off her crooked hat, throws it in the air.

HUGE CHEERS AND APPLAUSE. She bows, leans over to Ethan.

SAMANTHA

Can I please take this shit off?

He grins, helps her take it off, tosses it into a trash can, stands with her on the side, his arm around her. The room is packed, ready for a show...

SOUND of Native American drums... a flute... (*WARRIOR GIRL SONG*) the room is quiet, hushed. Kiki, her brothers, Trevor, and Coach Mandy rush in as:

Amy does an amazing floor exercise routine, starting out lyrical, graceful, then the music changes to a Native American inspired, powerful rap, as Amy flies, twists, turns... then ends on her knees - both arms to the sky.

The room is silent, everyone amazed, shocked and no one more than Coach Mandy... Tears run down her face.

Amy sees her, runs as the crowd cheers. Coach Mandy, Trevor and Kiki hug her, wipe away happy tears. Joseph, Stubby, Ethan and Samantha watch nearby.

COACH MANDY

How did this - miracle - happen?

AMY

Grandfather...

COACH MANDY

But, your skills, the level of difficulty... Who coached you?

Amy gestures to Joseph, Stubby, Ethan and Samantha.

AMY

They did.

Coach Mandy looks at Joseph, takes a deep breath.

COACH MANDY

Mr. Wahwasuck... I can't begin to tell you how sorry I am for doubting you... and how grateful I am for what you've done.

Joseph studies her, nods his head.

JOSEPH

Come. Dinner's ready. I hope you like ribs.

TREVOR

Love 'em!

EXT. AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELDS - DUSK

Trevor, Stubby, Chenoa, Doctor Whitehorse and Old Mother play gin rummy; Old Mother winning of course.

Coach Mandy stands at a fence watching Amy ride Phoenix in front of cornflower blue skies, Kiki behind her holding on for dear life.

Joseph walks beside her, waits.

COACH MANDY

It's beautiful here.

Joseph nods. She gets up her courage, looks at him.

COACH MANDY (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry I didn't believe you. I just couldn't imagine she could heal like that. And, I was afraid. I just didn't want to see her hurt anymore.

She looks back at Amy and Kiki.

JOSEPH

You love her.

Coach Mandy nods.

COACH MANDY

You know I'm coaching Rebecca Berkeley. She and Amy have been neck and neck for years. Amy usually won.

JOSEPH

Why are you telling me this?

COACH MANDY
Rebecca's gotten really good.

JOSEPH
As good as Amy?

COACH MANDY
I guess we'll see...

JOSEPH
I guess we will.

They watch Amy and Kiki riding against the Kansas sky, Amy laughing... Joseph smiles.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Whatever happens, Amy will be fine.

COACH MANDY
I'm so glad they found you.

JOSEPH
(still watching Amy)
So am I.

EXT. THE HILLSIDE OVERLOOKING THE FIELDS - DUSK RIGHT AFTER

Amy stands on the ridge by the oak tree. A HORN HONKS. She waves as the pink Cadillac and the mini-van drive away.

She turns back, looks out over green corn fields surrounded by dry laid stone walls that seem to go on for miles. Joseph walks up beside her, looks toward the setting sun, gestures toward the fields.

AMY
Did Coach Mandy tell you anything
about Rebecca?

Joseph shrugs, looks out over the fields.

JOSEPH
When I was a boy, these fields were
all trees... Honey locust with
wicked thorns, Osage orange,
cottonwood... My grandfather and my
father cut the trees by hand, then
used oxen and a plow to clear it.
See the stone walls?

Amy nods.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

My brothers and I followed the plows and pulled every one of those rocks from the soil. I was the youngest.

AMY

I saw their names on the monument.

JOSEPH

Yes... First Caleb, a year later, Jacob.

AMY

Old Mother showed me the pictures. You were in Vietnam, too.

He nods. Amy reaches out, takes his hand and looks up at him. He looks down at her and smiles.

JOSEPH

When your mother was little, she'd stand here and watch the sunset with me... just like this.

They smile at each other, he puts his arm around her and she leans against him. They watch the sun go down.

INT. ILLINOIS GYM - A FEW WEEKS LATER - NIGHT

Rebecca works on the uneven bars, amazing, powerful, she flips, flies high, tucks, lands, incredible. Harrison enters.

HARRISON

How's she doing?

COACH MANDY

Solid as a rock. Rebecca, enough, save some for tomorrow.

HARRISON

No, she can work a while longer.

He sits down, scrolls on his I-Phone. Rebecca looks at him, resentful, exhausted, but leaps for the bars.

Coach Mandy frowns.

INT. AMY'S GYM - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Amy runs for the vault, springs over, but doesn't stick the landing. She looks upset, frustrated. Old Mother frowns, says something to Joseph in Kickapoo.

JOSEPH

Amy, enough. You need to get some sleep. We leave very early.

AMY

But, I've gotta get it right. If I do that tomorrow, I'm finished!

OLD MOTHER

Amy... Come, sit by me. Tell story.

Joseph argues in Kickapoo. She curses right back in Kickapoo, he rolls his eyes, throws up his hands as Amy sits.

JOSEPH

Okay, okay.

OLD MOTHER

Tomorrow, you wear beaded headband.

AMY

My mother's?

OLD MOTHER

I loan to her, but it mine...
father give to me...

She looks at Amy... Serious, intense.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)

When I was girl, white Church people come to reservation... Take me and little brother... five other children. Take us to school in Nebraska... They cut hair, make us wear white people clothes... Say we have to speak English. If we speak Kickapoo, they punish, beat us.

AMY

Why?

OLD MOTHER

They try to... take away who we are. Not just Kickapoo... Sac and Fox... Cherokee... Many children sent to live with white families, never see again. Many die... I know they going to take little brother soon, so middle of night, I take him, and we run...

She looks away, voice getting soft.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
Two weeks it take to get home...
one hundred sixty mile... No food,
water gone... Almost die. I carry
little brother last two days.

AMY
How old were you?

OLD MOTHER
Nine years. Little brother five...

She looks back at Amy, smiles.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
When I wake up, my father give me
headband, call me *Ihkwe'a We-Ta-Se!*

She puts her gnarled old hands on Amy's cheeks.

OLD MOTHER (CONT'D)
And you, Am-ee, you just like me...

AMY
Ihkwe'a We-Ta-Se... What does that
mean?

A quiet, deep voice...

JOSEPH (O.S.)
Warrior Girl...

Amy's face - serious, determined...

INT. AMY'S ROOM - BEFORE DAWN

THE ROOSTER CROWS. Amy lays in bed, wide awake, holding her
DAD'S PICTURE to her heart. Lights turn on in the hall.
FOOTSTEPS, A KNOCK ON HER DOOR.

JOSEPH
Amy, time to get up.

AMY
I'm up.

She kisses the picture, sets it down, gets up, sees the
jewelry box on the dresser, opens it. "*Someday My Prince Will
Come*" plays, the ballerina spins. She pulls out the beaded
headband, stares at it.

EXT. THE FRONT PORCH - DAY

SAMANTHA (O.S. FROM OUTSIDE)
Amy, come on!

Amy grabs her gym bag, steps outside, holds a hand up to the rising sun.

CHEERS! HORNS HONK! DRUMS BEAT! The yard is packed, the road lined with cars, a yellow school bus painted "Go Amy!" Native Americans on horses in full regalia raise decorated lances, bang drums, hoot and holler.

Joseph proudly leads Amy through the crowd, people patting both of them, high-fives, hugs.

They reach the Pink Cadillac, Old Mother in back with Stubby.

Amy and Joseph get in with a last wave to the Crowd. Amy grins as Joseph pulls a cassette out of his pocket, holds it up, pushes it in.

JAMES BROWN (V.O. FROM THE RADIO)
*I'm goin' to Kansas City, Kansas
City here I come...*

Music continues as the Pink Cadillac pulls out.

HORNS HONK, CHEERS as Ethan's truck follows, leading a caravan of cars, trucks, the school bus, passing lines of NATIVE AMERICANS cheering, waving, holding signs.

Amy waves out the window, sees Phoenix racing along the fence. He sees her, rears, WHINNIES, races away like the wind... Amy turns forward with a huge smile.

INT. THE SPORTS ARENA - DAY

Joseph, Stubby and Amy enter glass doors, followed by a huge group of excited, boisterous Native Americans, who head for the stands.

KIKI
Amy!

Kiki and her old TEAMMATES race to Amy, surround her, huge hugs, jump up and down, all talk at once.

KIKI AND GIRLS
A-my! Good luck! We're so excited!
You're gonna kill it!

RILEY

Amy!

Riley runs up, grabs her shoulders, kisses her on the mouth.

RILEY (CONT'D)

For luck.

He heads toward the stands, smiling back at Amy, who watches him with a shy smile.

A TEAMMATE

I wanta move to the Reservation...

THE GIRLS laugh and leave.

COACH MANDY

Amy! Wait up!

She comes over, wearing a "Team Rebecca" jacket.

COACH MANDY (CONT'D)

How are you doing? Feeling strong?

Amy nods. Coach Mandy takes her shoulders.

COACH MANDY (CONT'D)

Listen to me. You just stay
focused. You can do this.

She hugs her, leaves. Amy watches, subdued, then heads toward the arena.

Joseph enters the arena, stops, shocked, looks at the huge crowd - thousands - TV cameras - announcers - he had no idea.

JOSEPH

Oh, my...

Amy enters. NATIVE AMERICAN WAR CRIES, CHEERS - Old Mother front and center of the huge group, Trevor, Kiki, and her twin brothers squeezing in next to them. Amy waves, turns, comes face to face with Rebecca, Coach Mandy behind her.

REBECCA

Amy? What are you doing here?

AMY

Competing, same as you. Hi.

They stare at each other. A WHISTLE BLOWS. They don't move.

A BUZZER RINGS. They still don't move.

A VOICE (O.S.)
Gymnasts, five minutes.

KIKI AND THE TEAMMATES
A-my!, A-my, A-my!

Rebecca frowns at her old teammates, betrayed. Her face turns hard, determined... She walks back to Coach Mandy.

REBECCA
Did you know she was going to be here?

COACH MANDY
Yes.

She's hurt, but hides it with anger.

REBECCA
It doesn't matter, I'll still win.

INT. REBECCA'S CORNER - CONTINUOUS - DAY

REBECCA'S "TEAM," the Russian Coach, an ASIAN COACH, TWO ASSISTANTS, Harrison, turn as Rebecca and Coach Mandy arrive.

COACH MANDY
Alright, now remember to...

Rebecca, angry, cuts her off, heads toward the uneven bars.

REBECCA
I know what to do. Let's just get this over with.

CLOSE on THE CHALK BOX - REBECCA'S HANDS. She rubs them together, stares at the bars, looks across the floor at Amy.

Their eyes lock. They may have been here before, but this time is different. MUSIC STARTS. The battle is on...

Rebecca leaps onto the bars, handstand, dead on, half pirouette into a kip, huge extension, perfect toes, giant release, (CHEERS FROM THE CROWD), toe on full pirouette, Geinger Salto, dismount... SLOW MOTION...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
A huge double front half, look at that elevation!

Rebecca lands, solid, firm, her arms fly into the air. No expression on her face. THE CROWD ROARS.

ANNOUNCER (V.O. CONTINUES)
An incredible start for Rebecca
Berkeley!

Coach Mandy raises her hand to high-five, Rebecca ignores her, walks woodenly to the side, stares at the SCOREBOARD, 15.75! CHEERS, APPLAUSE.

INT. AMY'S CORNER - CONTINUOUS - DAY

AMY
She's so strong...

Joseph looks at her, calm, steadfast as always.

JOSEPH
So are you.

ANNOUNCER
Next up on bars is Amy McDonald.

INT. THE UNEVEN BARS - CONTINUOUS - DAY

HUGE CHEERS, WAR CRIES as Amy puts her hands in the chalk, takes a deep breath, stares at the bars, runs forward.

ANNOUNCER(V.O.)
Great open shoulders, a big high
Yeager... Into a handstand...
Beautiful... Nice release into
somersault, here we go... Wow, a
huge double twisting double layout!

Amy lands, her arms flying into the air. THE CROWD ROARS. Amy glances at Rebecca as they read her score.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
15.60, an amazing start for Amy
McDonald!

Coach Mandy tries to hide a smile, Rebecca sees.

INT. THE BLEACHERS - DAY

HUGE CHEERS! Old Mother clutches her walking stick, her head darting from side to side as she tries to understand, Samantha clutching Ethan and biting her fingernails.

SAMANTHA
I'm gonna have a heart attack.
What's next?

ETHAN
Balance beam, then floor.

SERIES OF SCENES - CONTINUOUS - DAY

MUSIC STARTS

-- **THE BEAM** - Rebecca - back walkover into back flip, switch leap, full pirouette, a huge double twist, sticks the landing, arms fly up. Rebecca's first smile appears...

-- **THE SCOREBOARD** 16.25... The CROWD ROARS.

-- **AMY'S CORNER** - Joseph smiles at her. She smiles back, heads toward the beam....

-- **THE BEAM** - Amy - a perfect handstand into a V, raises one arm, supporting herself with one hand, flips, blasts forward in a burst of speed - switch leap, layout step-out, aerial front flip, perfect landing - huge full-in back dismount, incredible height, perfect landing, arms fly up.

-- **THE SCOREBOARD** - 16.25

-- **THE BLEACHERS** - the CROWD goes wild!

-- **REBECCA'S CORNER** - Coach Mandy looks down, trying again to hide a smile. Rebecca storms over to her father, who nods, goes to Coach Mandy, who listens, argues, pulls off her "Rebecca Team" jacket, tosses it at him, walks to the sidelines, arms crossed. Rebecca heads out to the floor.

-- **FLOOR EXERCISE** - Rebecca - MUSIC STARTS... Powerful, intense, angry... Rebecca blasts off, incredible height, speed, double layout full twist, wolf turn, controlled power, tuck, double, double.. A slight wobble at the landing, but incredible... on the money. Rebecca is excited.

-- **THE SCOREBOARD** - 16.43! HUGE CHEERS!

-- **AMY'S CORNER** - Amy sees Coach Mandy on the sidelines, without her jacket. Coach Mandy smiles, holds a thumb up. Amy smiles back, heads to the floor.

-- **FLOOR EXERCISE** - Amy - MUSIC STARTS - NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE/DRUMS - Amy's POV - the mats SHIMMER, dissolve into a FOREST...

Amy blasts forward to the NATIVE AMERICAN/HIP HOP MUSIC. She is running with the deer, flying high with the eagles, graceful, powerful, untouchable... The crowd is silent, rapt, then on their feet CHEERING before it ends...

But on her last huge, high, unbelievable pass, she lands, twists her ankle, grabs it, rolling in agony. The Crowd is dead silent as Joseph races to her.

AMY

Oh, God, oh, God, oh, God!!!

Joseph feels her leg, then takes her face in his hands.

JOSEPH

Amy... Look at me. It's just a sprain. Come on, let's walk it out.

-- **THE SIDELINES** - Amy limps along the side, Joseph supporting her, CHEERS! Amy looks at the SCOREBOARD - 16.25

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Next up on vault is Rebecca Berkeley.

Coach Mandy runs to Amy and Joseph.

COACH MANDY

You okay? Think you can you go on?

AMY

I think so... Why aren't you with Rebecca?

She sticks out her bottom lip, talking in a baby voice.

COACH MANDY

I got fi-erd. Waa-ah!

Amy grins through her pain. Joseph feels her leg, she grimaces, closes her eyes. Joseph frowns, looks up at her.

JOSEPH

Amy, one of the screws... You don't have to do this.

She stares down at him, pulls the beaded headband out of her sleeve, looks at it for a long moment, at him...

AMY

My great-grandmother ran 160 miles, I can run 82 feet.

She puts it across her forehead. Joseph nods slowly. Coach Mandy, moved, looks between them.

COACH MANDY

Alright then, there's something you should know.

(MORE)

COACH MANDY (CONT'D)
 Rebecca's going to do an Amanar.
 And if she pulls it off, she'll get
 huge points for difficulty.

AMY
 An Amanar...

COACH MANDY
 Have you ever done one?

Slowly, solemnly, she shakes her head, pauses, then with a
 small, mischievous grin, cocks her head, smiles slowly.

AMY
 Doesn't mean I can't try...

Coach Mandy grabs her in a huge hug, kisses her head,
 whispers.

COACH MANDY
 Go get 'em, Champ!

A BELL RINGS.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
 This is it, folks. Next up on the
 vault is Rebecca Berkeley.

-- **THE VAULT** - Rebecca - The crowd cheers as Rebecca walks
 toward the Vault, cocky, supremely confident, waving at the
 crowd with both arms. She looks at Amy, dismissive, salutes
 the Judges and roars down the lane toward the vault.

With amazing power she does an Amanar, sticks the landing.
 The Crowd cheers, Harrison and her Coaches hug each other.

ANNOUNCER
 Well, that should clinch it for
 Rebecca Berkeley, folks! An amazing
 Amanar vault! She'll get huge
 points for difficulty! Let's see
 the score. 16.625!

The Crowd CHEERS, Rebecca jumping up and down.

-- **NEAR THE VAULT** - Amy, oblivious, stone still, stares at
 the vault with intense concentration, in her own world, just
 as she did when we first met her. Rebecca waves at the crowd
 then passes Joseph.

REBECCA
 Time to go back to the Reservation.

Amy hears. Her head snaps up, a muscle moves in her cheek.
POUNING FROM THE BLEACHERS. Amy looks up...

-- **THE BLEACHERS** - Old Mother, stands, pounds her walking stick on the metal bleachers. Behind her, serious, the Native Americans stand, stamp their feet, clap in time behind her.

Old Mother makes a sign and throws down her walking stick, standing tall, arms out wide, without support.

-- **NEAR THE VAULT** - Amy stares at Old Mother.

AMY
(quietly)
What's she doing?

JOSEPH
Sending you her strength.

Not taking her eyes from Old Mother, Amy walks to the chalk box, puts both hands in, then lifts them to her face. (BOOM!) Chalk war paint on one cheek (BOOM!) Chalk war paint on the other.

The Auditorium is dead silent, dead still, as Amy turns slowly, stares at Rebecca, who frowns, looks frightened, sick. The Announcers are as fascinated as the silent Crowd.

-- **The PRESS BOX** - the ANNOUNCER covers the microphone, leans over to a REPORTER.

ANNOUNCER
(in a hushed voice)
What's going on?

The Reporter smiles gleefully, leaning forward.

REPORTER
It looks like little Amy McDonald
just declared war on Rebecca
Berkeley... I'm going out there.

-- **THE VAULT** - Amy limps to the vault, stares at it, raises an arm in salute...

SLOW MOTION - With only the SOUND OF HER BREATH, she limps, gains strength, YELLS, pounds down the lane. A round off back handspring - a perfect two and a half twist Amanar - and to the CRY OF A HAWK - her arms fly out wide - impossible, beautiful.

(BOOM!) She lands, her powerful thighs flexing like two strong trees planted in the ground, her arms flying up into a perfect V.

Behind her, the SCOREBOARD reads 17.0!

THE CROWD ROARS as Joseph runs, lifts her high, raises her right arm high in victory, carries her through the crowd.

REPORTER (CONT'D)
They'll be naming that vault after
you, Amy! The McDonald!

Amy, safe in Joseph's arms, shakes her head, looks at Joseph.

AMY
No... The Wahwasuck.

REBECCA (O.S.)
Amy! Amy!

Rebecca fights through the crowd. Joseph stops.

REBECCA (CONT'D)
You were... great.

AMY
So were you...

They smile at each other, CAMERAS FLASH as two girls who should have been friends - TEAMMATES - find each other again.

AMY (CONT'D)
See you next time?

REBECCA
You're on.

Joseph carries Amy through the cheering crowd...

PRE/LAP "FROSTY THE SNOWMAN" fades to: DING - DING

PAT SAJAC (O.S.)
Time's running a little short, I'll
just give the wheel a final spin...

SOUND OF THE WHEEL SPINNING...

INT. JOSEPH'S KITCHEN - CHRISTMAS NIGHT - DUSK

Joseph, wearing an ugly Christmas sweater, a colorful Christmas tree blinking in the corner, stands watching Wheel of Fortune from the kitchen, the remote in his hand.

And on the TELEVISION:

PAT SAJAC
 We'll add a thousand to whatever I
 land on, which happens to be...
 \$5,000! Wow, so \$6,000 for every
 consonant. Mike?

Samantha, wearing a KU sweatshirt and a Santa hat walks up next to Joseph licking a wooden spoon, Ethan's CLASS RING on her finger, concentrating on the Board.

MIKE (A CONTESTANT)
 "T."

INSERT: Three Contestants and Pat Sajak below the EMPTY BOARD - three "T's appear.

PAT SAJAC
 There are three "T"s.

SAMANTHA
 (concentrating)
 "The... little?"

JOSEPH
 The Little Old Lady from Pasadena!

Samantha, shocked, looks at Joseph, narrows her eyes.

SAMANTHA
 Wait a minute...

She grabs the remote from him, fast forwards to "The Little Old Lady from Pasadena."

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 You old stinker, you finally
 learned how to use the remote!

He pulls it out of her hand, scowling, then breaks out laughing with Stubby, Ethan, Riley and Old Mother, who watch from the kitchen, in on the joke.

A BUZZER goes off, Ethan pulls lasagna out of the oven.

ETHAN
 Foods on. Somebody get Amy. She's
 out back.

Joseph, still laughing, snatches a piece of garlic bread from a basket, pulls on a coat, heads to the back door.

JOSEPH
 I'll go.

EXT. THE HILL OVERLOOKING THE FIELDS - SUNSET

Joseph walks up the snow covered hill, Christmas lights twinkling on the house behind him. He pauses, smiles as he sees poinsettias on the three graves, looks toward the hill.

Amy, in silhouette to the setting sun, holds Phoenix's reins in her left hand. Wearing a shiny white jacket, bright against a darkening sky streaked with pink, she looks out over snow covered fields.

JOSEPH

Dinner's ready... Amy... Are you okay?

With a beautiful smile, tears in her eyes, she turns, reaches out her right hand.

AMY

Yeah... I'm great. Wanta watch the sunset with me?

Joseph takes her hand, smiling down at her with all the love in the world.

Her head on his shoulder, his arm around her waist, they turn and watch the sun go down in the beautiful Kansas sky.

Her jacket reads "U.S. Olympics Gymnastics Team."

THE END

FADE OUT