

Skull for a Skull

by

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Cast of Characters

Kaleb: White Mountain Apache.
Haskell Boxing Club coach.

Brie: White Mountain Apache. Boxer.
Indigenous and American
Indian Studies major.

Luke: White guy. Haskell Boxing
Club faculty sponsor. English
faculty. Dying of cancer.

Sol: Half African-American, half
Navajo. Boxer. Indigenous
and American Indian Studies
major.

John: Pit River Paiute. Wannabe
Business major.

Addy: Crow. Indigenous and American
Indian Studies faculty.
Practicing lawyer.

Earth Spirits: Two to four, gender
non-specific, doubling okay.

Drum Group: Native, certainly, Apache,
preferably.

ACT I

Scene 1

Drum group plays war song. As song ends the sounds of boxing can be heard. It is as though several people are hitting a side of beef with baseball bats. The bell rings as the curtain rises on the Haskell Boxing Club. KALEB and SOL(OMON) touch gloves in the center of the ring, walk to the ropes, and step out of the ring as LUKE walks onstage. JOHN is wrapping his hands, BRIE has clearly been working out, Luke drops his gym bag on the floor.

KALEB

YOU'RE LATE!

BRIE

Cut him some slack, he's dying of cancer.

KALEB

Everybody's dying of something.

BRIE

He's also your best friend.

KALEB

A little slack then.

SOL

You look like shit.

LUKE

I feel like shit.

KALEB

You box like shit. Keep your hands up or you're gonna get killed.

SOL

Nah, no need. Apache never hit back.

BRIE

You talk too much.

SOL

Bro, your *whole tribe's* like that. I read yesterday that Skull and Bones stole Geronimo's skull and the Apache ain't done *shit* about it.

Brie shoves Sol with one palm as she speaks.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

We sued 'em!

SOL

That's the white man's way.

John is groovin' while listening to his ear buds and wrapping his hands. He screws it up and has to start over again.

LUKE

What's Skull and Bones?

SOL

Yale secret society. George W. Bush's grandpa, Prescott Bush, was in on it.

KALEB

That skull's never coming back. It could be anywhere.

SOL

Eye for an eye, skull for a skull. If you can't get it back then take one of theirs.

BRIE

That's a damn good idea.

KALEB

There's no need to avenge Geronimo. Go'zhong-Yu' Oh-Yah', "He went to a better place".

BRIE

But without his head. Kaleb, if he doesn't have his skull then he doesn't have it with him in the afterlife either.

KALEB

I don't believe that.

BRIE

Geronimo did.

SOL

You wouldn't have to kill anybody. Just dig up Prescott Bush and take *his* head.

BRIE

We could ransom his head for Geronimo's!

LUKE

You'd be arrested.

BRIE

Even better. More attention to our cause.

LUKE

No attention, no cause, just jail time.

SOL

Hide the skull. Only give it up in exchange for Geronimo's.

John starts shadowboxing. He's really bad at it.

LUKE

It'll never work. Prescott Bush was the father and grandfather of two presidents. If somebody steals his skull they're going to call in the NSA, the FBI, everybody.

BRIE

Even so, some things are worth fighting for. They took Geronimo's *head*. What do you think Geronimo would have done?

Luke sits down, looking really tired.

SOL

Luke, you really do look rough.

LUKE

That last round of chemo was pretty hard, that's all.

SOL

We got a three day weekend starting tomorrow; use it to get some rest.

LUKE

I guess. I'd rather *do* something though. I don't think I'm going to get many more chances. As dumb as that skull idea is, it does sound like fun.

BRIE

Well, I got another idea then. How about instead of stealing his skull we make a *movie* as though we did it? I need to make a documentary for Ms. Levaldo anyway. This would be perfect.

LUKE

Now you're talking some sense. How long a road trip is it?

BRIE

I'll check.

Brie starts using her phone.

LUKE

I like it. Art's the best way to do battle anyway. Besides, you guys are going to want some video of me when I'm gone.

SOL

Don't say that. You gotta keep fighting.

LUKE

I'm not throwing in the towel, but that doesn't mean I'm going to win.

KALEB

You can't win if you stop throwing punches.

LUKE

I'm not done throwing punches.. but sometimes in life, as in the ring, if you're overmatched it becomes less about winning and more about losing with heart.

Everyone pauses, Luke looks tired, the others exchange glances. Nobody knows what to say. John takes out his earbuds. Kaleb and Sol start putting their gloves back on. Brie looks up from her phone.

JOHN

What are you guys talking about?

LUKE

Roadtrip this weekend. Wanna go?

JOHN

Damn right I do!

BRIE

He's buried in Putnam Cemetery, Greenwich, Connecticut.

KALEB

How far's that?

JOHN

Where we going?

SOL

To a cemetery.

JOHN

Really? Alright..

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

We'll go north to I-80 'cause of construction, so it'll take a little over 20 hours to get there.

KALEB

That's a *lot* of driving.

LUKE

It can be done in a weekend though. I've done it before. Let's all meet at my place tonight to plan it out.

BRIE

I'll borrow a camera to take with us.

LUKE

We can take my van.

SOL

There's no way I can go. Wish I could.

BRIE

Why not?

SOL

I got two papers due next week. I'll help you plan it though.

Kaleb slams his gloves together.

KALEB

Time to *BOX!* You going to keep your hands up this time?

SOL

You going to hurt me if I don't?

KALEB

I'm going to hurt you either way.

Kaleb and Sol step back in the ring. The bell sounds, they touch gloves and start to circle one another. Drum group plays again.

Scene 2

The drum group fades. Haskell classroom. Addy is beside a chalkboard on which are written numerous facts relating to the early years of Haskell. Luke waits outside the classroom watching Addy teach. Brie is sitting in class in front of her.

ADDY

In the early years of Haskell more than 100 Native children died of hunger, cold, and neglect. Most were buried in the campus cemetery but some were buried by their peers in the wetlands south of campus. The South Lawrence Trafficway is going to be built across these grave sites. There's nothing we can do about that now but if you want to pray for those children we're going to meet at the Medicine Wheel tomorrow at 8am.

The bell rings signaling the end of class. Luke enters the classroom. Brie gets up to leave.

ADDY

See ya tomorrow, Brie?

BRIE

No, I'm roadtrippin' this weekend, but I'll be back for the march.

ADDY

Thank you for all the work you've done to help organize it.

BRIE

Not done with that yet. I'll manage our social media over the weekend. I still think we ought to march *straight* up Mass street though.

ADDY

The city won't allow it.

BRIE

Which is why the city would pay more attention if we did it *anyway*.

ADDY

That'd be a good plan in different circumstances, but it won't be necessary here. The city will declare it Indigenous Peoples' Day as long as we get enough people to show up.

BRIE

I disagree. I think we need to make a bigger splash.

ADDY

They'll listen as long as we have enough people marching with us. No dramatics necessary, just numbers. Trust me on this one. Illegal and more aggressive activism are useful, but you've got to know your audience and your purpose.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

Okay, you're the boss, Dr. Starr. See you Monday.

ADDY

Have a good weekend, Brie.

Luke walks in as Brie walks out. They shadowbox at one another as they pass.

ADDY

Don't you have chemo today?

LUKE

I'm done with chemo.

ADDY

What do you mean you're done? I thought you had two treatments to go.

LUKE

I'm done for good. Doc thinks it's best we focus on quality of life, and I agree.

ADDY

Well I don't. What are you going to do? Just give up?

LUKE

Just giving up on chemo. I'm not asking your permission. You lost your vote when you left me. Once I'm incapacitated you're in charge, but until then I'm calling the shots.

ADDY

Is quality of life just code for smoking pot?

LUKE

No, and you know it.

ADDY

It's illegal.

LUKE

Where I'm going the laws of men can't reach.

ADDY

That is such *bullshit*. You get caught and you'll spend your last days in jail. Just as bad you'll end up in the paper and embarrass Haskell.

LUKE

You are such a prude. I won't get caught for cryin' out loud. How did we spend ten years together?

(CONTINUED)

ADDY

I ask myself that every day. I'm not a prude, I'm a lawyer, I've worked in the system, you know the shit I've seen.

LUKE

It isn't just being a lawyer, you were that way before law school too.

ADDY

You grow up on the rez, you start to see the danger in things. Tragedy isn't just some random accident, it's a fruit that falls from a tree, a tree we plant as a seed and carefully tend day after day after day for decades sometimes.

LUKE

Like cancer?

ADDY

Exactly like cancer.

LUKE

I didn't cause my own cancer.

ADDY

The *hell* you didn't. You spent your whole life setting the *conditions* for cancer. You tilled the soil, you fertilized it, you planted the seed, and then you were surprised when a plant grew. And *of course* you came crying to me for help. Just like the rez. Only there it's diabetes and drunk driving.

LUKE

And cancer.

ADDY

Yes, and *fucking* cancer.

Luke starts smiling.

LUKE

You always did say I was too rez for you.

Addy begins to laugh to herself, but then starts to cry. Addy and Luke embrace, and speak while holding one another. Their words are not angry, but very private and full of love.

ADDY

How did I end up with a white guy who was more rez than me? I should have left you the instant I realized it.

(CONTINUED)

LUKE

I'm glad you didn't. Lately I've realized that my best times were times with you.

ADDY

Just now realizing that?

LUKE

No, it's been coming to me for a while.

ADDY

I hate you sometimes.

LUKE

I love you sometimes.

ADDY

That's what I meant.

They rest their foreheads together. Luke kisses her on top of her head, and Addy hugs him fiercely.

ADDY

You call me if you need anything, you got me?

LUKE

I will. You take care of yourself too, okay? You've done everything you ever could for me. Thank you.

They end the embrace. Addy uses her palms and fingers to wipe tears from her cheeks and eyes.

ADDY

You're welcome. You going to get some rest this weekend? You look like shit.

LUKE

I'll get some rest, but on the road. I'm going with Kaleb and the club on a trip.

ADDY

Make sure they do the driving then, okay?

LUKE

Will do. I'll text you when I get back.

ADDY

Don't get arrested.

LUKE

Don't worry, I won't.

(CONTINUED)

ADDY

You're so dumb. Give me another hug.

They embrace again briefly. Luke kisses her on top of the head.

LUKE

Okay, I'll be in touch.

They turn to leave the stage in separate directions. Addy turns back to him.

ADDY

Hey! I love you still, you know.

LUKE

I love you still too.

They both smile and walk in opposite directions. Luke walks more slowly, as though tired. Drum group plays.

Scene 3

Luke's home. Drum group fades. Luke is on the couch and has just finished rolling a joint. Brie, Kaleb, John, and Sol walk up to the front door and knock. Luke presses his temples with his hands as though getting up would be too hard, grabs a cane and slowly walks to the front door (Luke walks with the cane from this point forward). He lets in the crew and exchanges verbal and non-verbal greetings with them. He gives Sol the boxing club handshake (a palm-slap and then a fist bump) as they enter; everyone but John sits down. Luke picks up the joint. Kaleb starts to fiddle with an electric guitar on the couch. Sol and Brie open up their laptops. John spots the joint and takes a dramatic stance.

JOHN

Is this a joint which I see before me, with its rolled tip toward my hand? Come, let me hold you.

He grabs at the air without touching anything. He takes a knee. He grabs again and makes as though to smoke it. Everyone is looking at him and continues to look at him as though he's just grown a candycane unihorn out of his forehead.

I don't have you but I can still see you. Fateful apparition, isn't it possible to smoke you as well as see you? Or are you nothing more than a spliff created by the mind, a hallucination from my fevered brain?

(CONTINUED)

LUKE

Nice Macbeth, I didn't know you had that in you.

In the next line John pronounces "soliloquy" and "Theatre" with an exaggerated, pretentious, faux-theatre inflection.

JOHN

I memorized and performed that soliloquy for Intro to Theatre. Never knew how useful it would be: "Is this a taco, is this a beer, is this a beautiful woman I see before me?" Shakespeare for all occasions.

BRIE

More useful than the one I learned. Now every time I spill something on my shirt I sound like a sleepwalking murderess. "Out, damned spot! out, I say!"

SOL

When did you start smoking weed? I thought you were sober.

KALEB

He is. Has been for ten years.

LUKE

They gave me a bunch of pills for pain. I'd rather smoke this if I can.

JOHN

I've got a medical marijuana card.

KALEB

You've got one? What's wrong with you?

JOHN

Nothing, I'm from California.

KALEB

You've got one but Luke doesn't. That's fucked up.

Luke sparks up the joint and takes a big hit. He twists it to make sure it's burning even, sticks his finger to his tongue and then rubs it along the side of the joint to balance the burn. He takes another hit. Sol and Brie are intent on their laptops.

BRIE

What's the wifi password?

Luke says the next line as he's exhaling his hit.

LUKE

Whiteboyzindahood. It's "da hood" not "the hood".

BRIE

With a "z"?

LUKE

Obviously.

SOL

What's that all about?

LUKE

Always thought it would make a good SNL skit.

Luke offers the joint to Brie. John sets his book on the side of the couch and sometimes shadowboxes while sitting. Kaleb works on mangling the star spangled banner on the guitar.

BRIE

You know we don't smoke that shit. Except John.

LUKE

John?

JOHN

No... thanks though. I quit.

That gets everyone's attention, except for Brie. Kaleb looks up from his guitar, Sol looks up from his laptop and closes it.

KALEB

When was this?

JOHN

Last Sunday. Been sober alllll week.

Sol touches Brie's shoulder with his fist, then slightly closes her laptop, and points to John. Brie responds with irritation.

BRIE

What? If I stopped working every time some Native guy said he was going sober I'd never get anything done. Talk to me when you've been sober 90 days.

SOL

That isn't fair.

JOHN

Yeahhh, it is. My chances aren't good.

KALEB

That depends. Luke and I been there.

*Luke puts his thumb and forefinger to his tongue,
and then uses the spit to put out the joint.*

Why'd you quit?

JOHN

I found out I'm going to be a dad.

*Everybody's silent for a brief instant. Brie looks
up and closes her laptop. Sol leans his upper body
backwards and puts his fist thumbside to his mouth
as he says the next line. The others make similar
if less exaggerated motions.*

BRIE, KALEB, SOL, AND LUKE

Daaaaammmmmmmmmmmnnnnnnnnnnn.

SOL

Who's the baby mama?

JOHN

This girl from high school I was working with this
summer. She's pretty cool. We'd go fishing together
after work.

KALEB

Looks like you caught one.

JOHN

She texted me last Sunday that she was pregnant.

LUKE

She *texted* you that she was pregnant?

JOHN

Yeah, said she'd been to the doctor, that she's going
to keep it.

BRIE

What'd you text back?

JOHN

Nothing.

Kaleb starts laughing quietly.

LUKE

Whoa.

BRIE

You asshole!

JOHN

I didn't know what to say!

KALEB

Well, you gotta say something! At least send an emoji for god's sake.

BRIE

An *emoji*? Which *one*? A thumbs up? Or the little see no evil hear no evil monkeys? Men are *so fucking stupid*.

JOHN

That's it though! I don't know how I feel. I'd have to send like 20 emojis because I don't just feel one way, I feel a hundred different ways about it. That's why I didn't text her back.

BRIE

Can I see the message she sent you?

JOHN

Sure.

John passes his phone to Brie.

LUKE

Well, what are some of the ways you feel about it?

John closes his eyes and looks inside.

JOHN

My first feeling was fear. Shock. Pride. Excitement. Love. I've always wanted to be a father. I love to read to kids and play with them. But none of that's gonna happen 'cause I'm a total *fuck up*. I've got a drinking problem, I'm fat, and I'm flunking college algebra so I'm not going to graduate. And then I'm not going to get a job, I'm not going to have any money, and I'm not going to be a good dad. Might as well walk out on 'em now and save everybody some time.

Everybody breathes and thinks for a moment. Sol gives a whistle.

KALEB

John, you want to know what my dad told me when I told him I didn't think I could quit drinking?

JOHN

Yes.

KALEB

Take a deep breath and hold it.

JOHN

Okay.

John takes a breath and holds it. Pause. John crosses his eyes at Kaleb.

KALEB

Let it out. Now take another deep breath and hold it.

John takes a deep breath and holds it. And holds and holds it, and releases it to humorous effect somewhere before his next line.

My dad told me that our breath and our fate are the same. Most of the time they run along on their own, but if we choose to exercise control over them we can. You can *choose* to quit drinking, pass college algebra, get a degree, a job, and be a good dad. Nothing can keep you from that but you.

SOL

If you choose to walk that road there are plenty of people there to help. Us included.

KALEB

It feels impossible, but it's felt impossible to every Native who's ever quit; and there are a bunch of us who have.

LUKE

You've got a crazy amount of potential, John. You're smart, you're funny, you read more than anybody I know, and I teach *literature*. Alcohol is like a fun-house mirror that distorts everything about you. Turns you from someone who could lead into a fool that no one would follow. When you were in my class you wrote two of the best papers *I have ever read*, and then I had to flunk you because you got so drunk you missed the final exam.

SOL

The hard part is staying quit.

JOHN

I don't know if I can do that.

(CONTINUED)

KALEB

You can but you gotta be smart about it. When you quit it leaves you empty; you have to fill that emptiness with something. For me it was boxing.

JOHN

Boxing will help but not like it helped you.

LUKE

Books will help. They're always there for you.

JOHN

That's true, but they're not as much fun on the weekend.

SOL

You could come to Native American Church with me.

JOHN

I'd like that.

KALEB

As long as you're with people who build you up 'stead of tear you down it doesn't matter what you do.

LUKE

Besides, you're going to have to work your ass off to pass College Algebra. You need to be spending your weekends studying. And getting a job too, to help pay for that baby.

BRIE

John, here's your phone back. I typed out a text for you, "I'm sorry I didn't text you back earlier. I'm excited and scared to be a dad. I will do everything I can to support you. I'm glad you're keeping it, you know we were never big on catch and release. Don't go fishing with nobody else mama, I got *all* the cane pole you ever gonna need!" I put in a rosy-cheeked smiley emoji at the end, but no LOLs.

Smiles as she hands the phone back to John.

JOHN

Hah! I'm going to erase that last part.

Starts messing with his phone.

BRIE

Good idea.

JOHN

Oh fuck, I sent it!

Panics. Smashes the phone on the ground.

KALEB, LUKE, SOL, AND BRIE

OHHHHH!!!!

Kaleb starts laughing, Brie is covering her smile with her hand, Luke and Sol are ready to laugh, waiting to see how John will react.

JOHN

Oh shit, you think it sent!?

LUKE

Probably.

BRIE

What'd you do that for?

JOHN

I panicked!

Kaleb is just laughing and laughing.

KALEB

Oh shit! You just smashed your phone!

Continues laughing.

JOHN

Luke, can I borrow your phone?

LUKE

Fuck no!

Kaleb continues to lose it.

JOHN

I want to Facebook her, not smash it!

SOL

Here, you can use mine. Have it all weekend for that matter. That thing's nothing but a distraction and I've got two papers to write.

BRIE

What are you going to say?

JOHN

Same thing, mostly, none of that fishing stuff though.

BRIE

Well, in that case why'd you smash your phone?

JOHN

I just panicked. I need to say it my way.

John starts looking intently at his/Sol's phone. Sol and Brie go back to looking at their laptops. Luke makes a move to clean up the phone, Kaleb makes him sit down then gets the broom and cleans it up. Luke plays on the guitar. He gives the guitar back to Kaleb when he returns, an action they've obviously performed a 1000 times.

SOL

Did you know that Skull and Bones has over 800 members worldwide?

BRIE

Prescott Bush, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush, and John Kerry were all in it when they were at Yale.

SOL

That means that in 2004 both presidential candidates were Skull and Bones members. And we're not supposed to be paranoid?

JOHN

Was Prescott Bush a president?

BRIE

No, a Senator and the father and the grandfather of a President. And a thief. He bragged about grave robbing Geronimo's bit, bridle, and skull.

SOL

There's a lot of evidence that they did it too. Kept it in their clubhouse for years. The only question is whether it was actually Geronimo's skull or not.

BRIE

Even if it wasn't it was some other Native's grave they robbed.

JOHN

Maybe we should bust into their clubhouse.

BRIE

Not possible. Besides it's not going to be there anymore. The tribe's brought several lawsuits. They

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRIE (cont'd)
will have moved it by now. It could be anywhere in the world.

SOL
I'm checking out the cemetery with satellite and street view.

BRIE
They're buried in the SW corner.

SOL
You guys can pull right up to the grave. There are some trees where you can park the van. You won't even need to jump a fence.

LUKE
We aren't *really* robbing the grave though.

BRIE
Yeah, but we've got to pretend that we are, that's part of it. We'll be a long ways off the road. The graves are surrounded by bushes so we won't be seen digging.

JOHN
The Bushes are buried in the bushes!?

Sol gives John a fistbump.

LUKE
What are we going to be digging up if we aren't digging up the grave? Doesn't seem like such a good idea to me.

BRIE
We've got to dig a hole to make it look realistic on film. If we've got gravestones in the background it makes it all the better.

LUKE
I think we're better off digging somewhere else. Get some footage of the graveyard and head out.

BRIE
Lettttt's decide once we get there.

SOL
Luke, is the van ready to go?

LUKE
Yep.

BRIE

Let's pack it now then. We leave early tomorrow, get there after nightfall, crook the grave, and get back before the march on Monday.

SOL

Crook the grave?

BRIE

That's what Skull and Bones liked to call stealing -- crooks.

KALEB

Like stealing Geronimo's skull was a damn joke.

BRIE

We'll see how funny it is when we steal a white man's skull.

LUKE

Not funny at all; they'd take it deadly serious. That's why we're not doing it.

BRIE

Sorry, just getting in character. Speaking of that though, we all need to be in character before we get on film, so be thinking of what your motivation is.

SOL

According to amateurexhumation.com we might need some chains and long metal bars or something to lift the lid on a burial vault. You got any tools, Luke?

LUKE

It's all in the shed. But..

BRIE

Kaleb, you and John get all that packed up. Don't forget anything. Sol and I are going to go to the store and get stuff for the road.

SOL

I'm looking at Prescott Bush's wikipedia page. Dude was a pretty good guy. He was a veteran.

BRIE

You know who else was a veteran? Fucking Geronimo.

Brie and Sol walk offstage. Luke gets bedding ready and lays it out. Kaleb and John walk out of the living room. They drag a large garbage bin of tools to the back of the van and start throwing them in.

KALEB

We're robbing a grave, not *gardening*.

JOHN

You never know.

KALEB

You never know what? What do we need a hoe for?

JOHN

Everybody needs a ho'.

KALEB

Point taken.

JOHN

Speaking of hos, how 'bout that Brie?

Kaleb shoves John HARD. He stumbles backward, maybe falls over.

KALEB

Watch your mouth!

JOHN

You know, violence is a juvenile sign of affection. You like me don't you?

KALEB

I'm going to like you a whole lot more if you don't shut your mouth.

JOHN

No, I get it, you like *her*.

Kaleb holds up the axe and looks at it before throwing it into the back of the van.

KALEB

What's Luke got an axe for?

JOHN

Beats me. Never trust a white guy with an axe, that's what my daddy always said.

KALEB

He always said that? Like every time he watched *The Shining*?

JOHN

Exactly. REDRUM! REDRUM! White guys are fucking messed up.

(CONTINUED)

John crooks his finger when he says REDRUM like the little kid from the Shining.

KALEB

You know that wasn't real right?

JOHN

White dude thought it up.

KALEB

That's true. Luke's a'ight though.

Sol and Brie return with groceries. John and Kaleb return after packing the van.

BRIE

Alright boys, I'll see you tomorrow just before 6am!
Get some sleep, we got a lot of driving to do.

Sol, John, and Luke yell out goodbyes. Brie waves to them, then finds herself standing in front of Kaleb. He looms over her and looks her deep in the eyes; they pause, then give one another an emphatic boxing club handslap and fistbump, just before she tries to fake him out with a punch to the stomach, which he blocks, they wrestle and giggle for a second before she heads offstage.

Adios fatty.

KALEB

See you in the mornin'.

Everybody lays down to go to bed. The lights dim and the next second an alarm starts blaring and the lights come back on. Luke walks onstage as though from the bedroom.

LUKE

Come on ladies, time to go!

Sol is quick to get up and head outside to do some sun salutations. Luke starts to clean out the front of the van. John tries to get out of bed and collapses. Kaleb barely makes it up, helps John up, who is really struggling, and they head outside. John brings his book with him -- which he will read pretty much anytime he isn't doing something else. Brie comes onstage with a big cup of coffee in her left hand, a backpack on her back, and a video camera strapped to her right hand which she uses to film most everything from this point forward. It has a flip out screen so she doesn't have to look through it to see what she's filming.

BRIE

You boys have a nice slumber party last night?

JOHN

Not sure why we got to leave so early.

SOL

So you can get there at the right time, dummy.

JOHN

But 6am? I thought you guys meant six Indian time.

BRIE

No such thing.

JOHN

Yeah, and yesterday white guys learned to jump.

BRIE

Totally different. One's biology and one's a learned behavior.

KALEB

Who'd you learn it from then?

BRIE

Taught myself. Coffee's the answer. Why you think white people are always drinking coffee?

JOHN

I'd be in the bathroom all day if I drank coffee.

LUKE

Saddle up folks, time's a wasting.

SOL

Let's have a prayer first.

Everyone gathers in a circle. Brie sets everything down, placing the camera in such a way that it can film the prayer. Sol says a prayer in Dine and then in English as everyone bows their head.

SOL

Creator, thank you for everything you have given us, this beautiful life, this beautiful day; we humbly ask you to bless this journey, see our friends safely east and back west again, please bless their film project, inspire them to create good works that bring about positive social change; Creator, we ask that you bless Luke's health and give him the strength to face the challenge before him. We ask that you share your love with us so we may serve you to the best of our ability.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOL (cont'd)

Thank you Creator for all the blessings you have bestowed upon us, Amen.

BRIE, KALEB, LUKE, AND JOHN
Amen.

SOL

A'ho.

JOHN

And may god bless this van, 'cause that's the only way it's going to make it.

Kaleb gives a high five to John.

KALEB

Amen to that, brother!

Sol gives a hug to Brie, and the boxing club handslap and fistbump and a man-hug to John, Kaleb, and Luke as everyone says their goodbyes. They take their seats in the van as the drum group starts to play.

Scene 4

The van on the road. The drum group plays softly, everyone is asleep except Luke, who's driving, and Kaleb. Brie is sleeping with her head on Kaleb's shoulder. Use John's sleeping posture and snoring for comedic effect. The drum song comes to a crescendo and everyone wakes up. Brie is a little embarrassed for having been asleep on Kaleb. She starts filming immediately.

KALEB

I think you drooled on me.

BRIE

I did not!

Brie shoves Kaleb.

KALEB

Nah, I'm kidding, but you were snoring.

BRIE

No, I wasn't.

They're both smiling at one another.

KALEB

How would you know?

BRIE

You're not the first person I've drooled on.

JOHN

Where we at?

LUKE

Osceola, Iowa.

Brie tilts her head to one side.

BRIE

That doesn't make any damn sense!

LUKE

Why not?

BRIE

Osceola wasn't Iowa, he was Seminole. You sure we're not in Florida?

Kaleb starts looking at his phone.

LUKE

No, it's definitely Iowa.

JOHN

Are there even any Iowa in Iowa any more?

BRIE

Yeah, there are Iowa in Iowa, not that any Iowans would recognize an Iowa if they saw one.

KALEB

Get this, there's an Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, and an Iowa Tribe of Kansas *and* Nebraska, but there's no Iowa Tribe of Iowa.

JOHN

How the hell did that happen?

KALEB

White people moved the Iowa out of Iowa and then named everything after them.

BRIE

Except Osceola, which they named after a Seminole.

(CONTINUED)

KALEB

Holy shit, white people took Osceola under a flag of truce, kept him in prison till he died, and then embalmed his head for study.

BRIE

Lovely.

KALEB

That's the same shit they pulled on Mangas Coloradas.

JOHN

Who's that?

KALEB

Greatest Apache war chief to ever live. They captured him when he came for peace talks, tortured him, killed him, boiled his skull for study, and then *lost* it.

BRIE

There are a thousand examples like that.

KALEB

Like we're not even human.

BRIE

Exactly.

JOHN

If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?

Kaleb slams/claps his hands together in a loud, violent motion.

BRIE

Any revenge you take now would be on the ancestors of those that did our ancestors wrong, and would be just as wrong as any wrong that was done to us.

KALEB

Then it's a good thing we're taking revenge on a corpse.

JOHN

Damn, Kaleb, you're a good actor.

BRIE

John, *goddammit*, stay in character.

KALEB

I forgot we were acting.

BRIE

Nice Shakespeare quote though. That was brilliant.

JOHN

Thanks. Still doesn't explain why there'd be a town in Iowa named after a Seminole.

LUKE

Seminole or not I'm going to pull over for gas.

The van pulls up to the gas station. Everybody but Luke and Kaleb immediately head inside.

LUKE

Hey Kaleb, hold up, would you get the windows?

KALEB

Sure thing.

Rest of the conversation occurs as Luke stands by the pumps and Kaleb washes the windows.

LUKE

So! What's up with you and Brie?

KALEB

Wellllll....

LUKE

Come on, man! You're my best friend. I told you about my marriage, my divorce, cancer, before I told anyone else. I've never seen you like this before.

KALEB

I like her a lot. She's smart, good looking, she can box, she's Apache. She's got everything I want.

LUKE

Have you done anything about it?

KALEB

No. I've been waiting on the right time, and nothing's come up. Kind of frustrating. It's been going on for a while.

LUKE

I know. We *all* know.

Kaleb pauses at that. Luke takes a moment to return the pump handle to the machine.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LUKE (cont'd)

Let me tell you something I've learned lately, Kaleb. Life is way too short to wait on the right moment. You gotta *make* the right moment.

KALEB

You're right.

LUKE

You're damn right I'm right. You guys should be together before we get back to Kansas.

KALEB

You think so? Where we going to get any alone time on this trip?

LUKE

We'll make it happen. There are some really beautiful rest areas on I-80. We'll stop at one of those at sunset or after dark. There's nothing like a roadtrip to get peoples' blood up.

KALEB

Alright, thanks bro, I'll do it.

Brie and John come back on stage, and everyone gets in the van. Van leaves the station with Luke driving.

BRIE

I was impressed that guy knew so much about Osceola.

JOHN

Well, he's lived here his whole life.

BRIE

Even he didn't know why they named the town after him.

LUKE

I'm Iowan, sort of, but I'm not Iowa.

JOHN

How's that?

Luke points to the left.

LUKE

I was born in Creston, 30 miles or so west of Osceola.

KALEB

You got any family there?

LUKE

Yeah, they're good people. My Mom was living by herself in a trailer when she had me. Couple years later she met my Dad and we moved to Kansas.

JOHN

Wait a minute, how's it you were born before your Mom met your Dad?

LUKE

My Mom was moving faster than the speed of light when she gave birth to me.

JOHN

What? Really?

Brie lightly smacks the back of John's head.

LUKE

She had one of those warp speed single-wides.

Brie throws a balled up piece of paper at Luke.

BRIE

Really, what's up with that?

LUKE

I don't know who my biological father was, but my Mom met my Dad when I was two, and when they got married he adopted me. I've never known anything different, and he was a great dad.

KALEB

You don't know your ancestry then?

LUKE

Half of it. My Mom's grandparents emigrated from Ireland during the potato famine.

BRIE

But you don't know where your biological father's people come from?

LUKE

Nope.

KALEB

So you could be anything.

LUKE

I suppose. Not that it matters. I look white and so do my parents and that's all anybody cares about anymore. Almost all, I suppose, we've always been poor and people care about that too.

JOHN

You look kind of dark to me and you got that curly hair. You could be Black.

BRIE

You're only Black if you look black.

KALEB

Like Sol. He's 1/2 Navajo and 1/2 Black and everybody on campus thinks of him as Black.

BRIE

That's cause his skin is black. What you're trying to say is African-American, that's his ancestry, black is just his skin tone.

LUKE

Nah, being Black's more than skin tone. It's ancestry, upbringing, it's being part of a culture.

BRIE

Like being Native, except we have the federal government issuing ID cards based on blood quantum.

JOHN

You got high cheek bones and you don't talk much. You could be Indian.

LUKE

I'd like to think that.

KALEB

Why? So your family could live on commods?

JOHN

Or get that awesome IHS healthcare?

BRIE

Or mocked by naming mascots and sports teams after derogatory terms for your ancestors?

JOHN

Or get that good Haskell education?

LUKE

Hey now! I love Haskell. Haskell's my tribe.

BRIE

Every hippie wants to be Native.

LUKE

That's not it.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

Then why?

LUKE

Because I've always wanted to say aaaayyyyyyyyyyy!!

Luke smiles and if it's handy he throws the wadded up paper back at Brie.

JOHN

That ain't it, you just want to 49!

LUKE

Nah, but I do like to snag.

Luke catches John's eye, they smile, and say the next line together.

LUKE AND JOHN

AAAAYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!!!!

Everybody laughs. Luke looks to the back seat.

BRIE

Aren't you curious though?

LUKE

Sometimes, but not much. I'm just me and nothing's going to change that. I'm half Irish, but that doesn't make me Irish. I'm half something else but I'm not that either, whatever it is.

BRIE

I'm half Apache, and I feel like that makes me mostly Apache.

KALEB

You're Apache.

LUKE

There's a difference though. I'd have no choice but to be Irish if there was still widespread discrimination aimed at Irish-Americans.

John says the next line with a faux Irish accent.

JOHN

I'm Irish on St. Patty's day.

KALEB

You're not Irish you're just an idiot on St. Patty's day.

LUKE

Besides that, you *speak* Apache, you're steeped in Apache traditions and culture, I've got none of that for Irish.

BRIE

I'm half white but that doesn't make me white.

KALEB

Half white makes some people white.

BRIE

Half white doesn't make anybody white. It makes you not white, but still too white to be entirely anything else either.

JOHN

Obama's half white but he's Black.

KALEB

That's cause he married a badass Black woman.

LUKE

Nope, but that does change our perception of his Blackness.

JOHN

Who makes this shit up?

LUKE

White people for the most part, historically, in the sense that being white is synonymous with increased access to privilege and opportunity.

JOHN

I don't know. Seems like there's a lot of Haskell students making up rules for who's Native and who's not.

BRIE

That's cause white people don't have a monopoly on racism. They are kind of the WalMart of racism though.

LUKE

That's not something I see much of. Who exactly's being racist to whom?

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

Everyone to everyone else: dark-skinned Natives acting superior to light-skinned students, rez Indians over city Indians, those raised traditional over contemporary, or those who know their language over those that don't.

JOHN

The blind leading the blind, what's the point?

John follows this conversation closely.

BRIE

Same reason for all racism: stratify campus so they can institute a hierarchy that gives their group preferred access to resources.

KALEB

What resources though? There's nothin' but Curtis Hall and the food's free for everybody.

BRIE

Oh, you know, social resources -- friendship, popularity, ego aggrandizement of all kinds.

JOHN

Seems like a white man's way of doing things.

LUKE

It *is* a white man's way of doing things. Racism wouldn't be nearly so powerful if it were just white people over non-white people. Instead it's white people over poor white people, poor white people over non-white people, Black people hating on Hispanics and Asians and vice versa, and Natives hating on other Natives 'cause of their skin color or the way they were raised.

JOHN

But *why*?

LUKE

Because racism is the best way to keep poor people from aligning their political interests along economic lines. It's why rich people build so many prisons: they're racism factories that force poor people to self-segregate into camps divided by color. They're a crucial element in making certain we don't come together politically. Which is only one of the ways prisons keep poor people poor, but it's a big one.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

White people *suck*.

LUKE

Ouch.

BRIE

Not all the people building those prisons are white.

LUKE

Just about though.

BRIE

True, but they're *all* rich, and the people in those prisons are almost *all* poor. Hate on 'em 'cause they're rich not 'cause they're white and we're onto something.

KALEB

I love hating on white people. I think it's hi-lar-i-ous.

LUKE

It's open season on us on social media.

KALEB

That's 'cause it's open season on us in real life.

LUKE

Doesn't make it any less hurtful... or patronizing, or mean. It's hard to go to work all day teaching Native students only to come home and have them posting nasty stuff about me and my family.

KALEB

When I post stuff about white people I'm not talking about *you*.

LUKE

Say that again, but real slowly.

BRIE

Exactly. Hating on white people doesn't do anything but piss off potential allies, and keep us complicit in racism. It's a good way to keep the focus on color instead of money.

LUKE

Which is not to say that a system that's designed to disempower poor people doesn't have a disproportionate effect on people of color.

BRIE

Yeah, well, we're not gonna fix racism with more racism.

LUKE

Is it *racism* though, when the playing field is so tilted in white peoples' favor?

Luke opens a bag and starts to eat.

BRIE

If it's not then it's prejudice, bigotry, and ignorance; and that's not okay either.

KALEB

Even if it's funny?

BRIE

For fuck's sake, Kaleb. Yeah, even if it's funny. Otherwise you're just starting an argument.

KALEB

Maybe we *need* to start an argument.

BRIE

Maybe so, but only if the purpose of that argument is to bring us closer together.. Which *damn* straight doesn't mean we censor ourselves to protect white sensitivities. It means we stand up for ourselves, we speak the truth, but we're smart and we're inclusive about it. Otherwise we're doing the devil's work for him.

JOHN

How so?

BRIE

By shifting the focus away from money and politics. Nothing changes until poor people of all colors start working and voting together. One look at White America and it's easy to see that race isn't the only thing holding us back in this country.

LUKE

It's a big one though. White privilege is *real*. I grew up in a trailer but all I had to do to fit in at college was buy a backpack and a new pair of jeans. If we get pulled over I'm the only one in this van that doesn't have to worry about getting kicked or killed 'cause of the color of my skin.

BRIE

It's true, and white people need to own up to that. But people of color need to own up to our own privilege. A lot of our problems are self created, and it's up to us to solve 'em. We can't end racism if we're using it as a crutch... or wielding it like a weapon, blaming white people for everything. We have to hold ourselves accountable for our own success.

KALEB

Privilege does *not* describe my family.

BRIE

Said every poor white person ever. Think about it, Kaleb: we're both citizens and we're both straight -- that's two layers of privilege right there. We live in a country with a free press, libraries, public education, and school loans. Compared to a lot of countries we enjoy "American Privilege".

KALEB

Except it's white people who have most of it.

BRIE

That's not going to change until poor people start voting together.

JOHN

What's that crunching sound?

KALEB

It's whatever Luke's eating.

BRIE

What are they?

Luke holds up the bag for Brie to read.

LUKE

It's something Sol gave us for the road.

BRIE

They're pinon seeds. You're not supposed to eat the shells!

LUKE

What? Why not? I just thought they had a chewy center!

KALEB

White people!

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

Just when we're getting used to you, you go and do something like that.

Luke just smiles and keeps eating.

LUKE

Shells or no they're pretty tasty this way.

JOHN

Are we ever going to get along though? We're not even the same. I read yesterday that the Bering Strait theory is malarkey.

KALEB

Malarkey?

BRIE

We're all the same. We all came from Africa, that's established fact. Websites print that shit to get a rise out of people. Same reason you see articles like "What do you think of Native Guys dating White Girls?"

John raises his eyebrows, smiles, and nods his head to show his approval for Native guys dating white girls. Brie lightly slaps at or toward his forehead.

They're trolling for clicks.

LUKE

There are a lot of Natives out there that don't want to believe it.

JOHN

It's not what my tribe's creation story says.

BRIE

No culture's creation story is meant to be taken literally unless it says we walked out of Africa three and a half million years ago. Exactly how and when we got to this continent is up for debate, but the journey started in Africa.

LUKE

That doesn't mean there isn't any truth or meaning to your tribe's creation story.

BRIE

It's just not *literally* true any more than my white grandma's belief that Adam and Eve were kicked out of the garden 6000 years ago.

KALEB

It seems cheap, like they're trying to rob us of something. If we all came from Africa then Natives don't have any more right to the land than anyone else and that's just not true.

BRIE

That's why I prefer First Nations peoples. We were here first and by a huge *huge* margin. We *evolved* here and the land evolved in concert with us. We belong to one another, we are part of one another, in the same way that two trees will become one if they grow up close. That's what Indigenous *means*. What it means to me anyway.

KALEB

It's just the last damn straw that we got white scientists trying to tell us where we come from.

BRIE

Well, first, those scientists aren't just white, and this isn't just our story, it's the *human* story. And it's an opportunity to look beyond what makes us different and focus on what we have in common. Second, it's a story that's paved with *facts*, lots of them, and no amount of wanting things to be different is going to change the facts.

LUKE

That said, Kaleb, consider how amazing Native peoples' story is in truth. You're descended from the greatest, the most intrepid explorers to ever live. They're the astronauts of the prehistoric age.

BRIE

Those early people were like seeds from which all our Nations grew. We were as much a part of the land as the birds and the trees when Europeans arrived. Nothing can take that away from us, much less the truth.

LUKE

I'm going to take this exit, we need to get some gas.

Turns the wheel and takes the off-ramp. They cruise for a couple seconds then Luke jerks the wheel and everybody sways one direction and then the other.

BRIE

Fucking squirrels!

KALEB

Damn they're crazy!

BRIE

It's gotta be the guy squirrels that do that shit. Only dudes would be that dumb.

JOHN

Little guy was just counting coup on the van.
(Said with an exaggerated rez accent.)

Van pulls up to some gas pumps. Luke gets out and heads straight for the toilet. The rest get out and stretch in an exaggerated and humorous fashion.

JOHN

This tank is on me folks!

KALEB

I was wondering if you were going to buy any gas.

JOHN

It's just like at the bar. If you've only got enough for one round buy it early so everybody remembers it.

Kaleb hooks a thumb in his jeans pocket, stares at John, and with his mouth closed pushes his upper lip forward with his tongue.

Plus, I'm the designated window washer.

KALEB

Well, that's something I guess. As long as you're not going to just stand out here and look at Sol's phone.

JOHN

I'm going to do both. Sol's got unlimited data. Here's \$80 cash -- I'll collect the change when I go in for snacks.

Kaleb shakes his head and walks offstage with a shadowboxing skip. Luke will spend the scene hugging and throwing up into the toilet. His health goes downhill from this point forward. While John waits for the pump to get turned on he picks his nose, looks at it, and wipes it on the pump. Then he pulls Sol's phone out of his pocket.

Siri, set a reminder everyday at 9am to poop!

Siri, set a reminder everyday at noon to check my balls to see if they're still the same size!

Siri, set a reminder everyday at 3pm to scratch my ass and wash my hands!

(CONTINUED)

Siri, set a reminder everyday at 5pm to stop breathing through my mouth!

Siri, set a reminder everyday at 10pm to use a sock to clean the cum off my stomach!

John gets the gas going and then speaks into Sol's phone.

Siri, play "I'm All About That Bass"

John puts the phone in his pocket and grabs the windshield cleaner as the song comes over the theater speakers. He gets DOWN as he dances all around the van cleaning the windows, sometimes using the windshield cleaner as a microphone. WORK IT. Brie and Kaleb come back on stage as John finishes the windows, the music ends and John stops dancing, only kind of embarrassed. John starts to walk off stage. Kaleb's got an energy drink in one hand and another one stuck in his back pocket. Brie has a reusable bottle that she filled with water.

BRIE

John! Check on Luke would ya? He's been in the bathroom a long time.

John waves his assent, and then dances his way off stage. Luke gets his shit together and leaves the bathroom.

KALEB

If the guy could move like that in the ring he'd be a better boxer!

BRIE

If he ever turns pro that should be his entrance song.

KALEB

Hah! If he stays sober John's got a future, but it's not boxing.

BRIE

What's kept you sober?

KALEB

Boxing... but it's deeper than that.

Kaleb pauses. Brie gives him time. Kaleb kicks at the ground a little and then continues.
Sobriety is just more fun.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

Really?

KALEB

Not at first it's not... Have you ever built a campfire?

BRIE

Yeah, once or twice.

KALEB

Having fun sober is like building a campfire. It takes time to get it going good so that it's a lot of fun. You have to get passionate about something -- boxing, dance, books -- doesn't matter as long as you love it. Once you got that you can find people that share your passion.

BRIE

And having fun with alcohol is... like a fire you feed with paper?

KALEB

Exactly! It's easy to start, it's bright, but it doesn't last, and it won't keep you warm at night.

BRIE

You got anything that keeps you warm at night?

KALEB

Nah, just my covers. How 'bout you?

BRIE

Same. Just my covers.

John and Luke come back onstage. John has an armload of snacks and sugary drinks - it's ridiculous.

John! You know we're going to stop for meals right?

JOHN

What? Yeah, these are just snacks for the road.

KALEB

You got three meals of snacks there, buddy.

BRIE

You aren't one to talk. You just bought at least a meal's worth of drinks.

KALEB

Nah, there's only 150 calories in one of these.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

150 calories per serving, ya dope. How many servings are there in a single can?

KALEB

Two.

BRIE

300 calories in a can, so 600 calories for both cans, and that my fat friend is a meal's worth of calories. Which is nothing compared to what John's got.

JOHN

Hey, I'm a heavyweight!

KALEB

You're a heavyweight *boxer*, not a sumo wrestler.

JOHN

I love my big round body.

BRIE

Bullshit! If you loved your body you wouldn't abuse it with junk food and soda. You're giving yourself diabetes and heart disease. At the rate you're going you could be wheelchair bound or have your feet amputated before your hair turns grey. You saying you love your body is like a drunk saying he loves his wife. Maybe you do but it doesn't mean a damn thing.

KALEB

Brie, you look good as hell, but you ain't exactly a featherweight.

BRIE

Eat good food, exercise, and love the result whatever it is. *That's* loving your body.

KALEB

I love the result.

Luke holds up the keys.

LUKE

Somebody else want to drive?

Luke sounds wore out. Brie grabs the keys and gets in the van.

BRIE

I'll take a shift.

LUKE

John throw that trash away. You're going to be a dad, it's the last thing you need to be eating. Better yet, go get your money back, you're going to need that too. Besides, we got plans for dinner.

JOHN

I can't throw this away, it's wasteful.

LUKE

Do what you want, but that food was wasted when it was manufactured. *Manufactured*, John. Eating it would be like smoking a pack of cigs 'cause you already bought 'em.

John reluctantly dumps all his food in the trash can, then gets in the van. Kaleb stops by the trashcan on his way to his seat, oohs and ahhs over what he finds, picks out a few snacks, opens one and starts to eat it as he gets in the passenger side front seat.

BRIE

Did you get that out of the trash?

KALEB

Perfectly good corn chips.

BRIE

You're a dog.

KALEB

Want some?

He offers some chips to Luke.

LUKE

Nah, I prefer my crunchy pinon seeds.

Luke has no plans to eat anything. Van leaves the station.

BRIE

John, I'm sorry I was raging on you back there. Everything I said was true, but.. I learned a long time ago, or thought I did, that I can't change my friends and family. I got to work on changing myself.

JOHN

Nah, you a'ight.

BRIE

It just hits close to home. I grew up pushing my Mom's wheelchair around helping her buy that shit. Even then I knew it was insane. We were spending all our money to buy disability. Made me *so fucking angry*. The worst part was how she complained and blamed; she'd be stuffing her mouth full of sugar, complaining how her life sucked, blaming everyone but herself.

LUKE

There wasn't a grocery store in five miles from where you grew up. And y'all didn't have a car. There are some real reasons why your nutrition sucked.

BRIE

None of that is an excuse. There were better choices to be had in the *gas station* we shopped at. There's no more personal decision than what to put in your own mouth. We're always learning how the "Native View" of nature emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things, and I know it does for some and did in the past, but what shocks me is how few Natives connect what they put in their mouth and how they feel and live afterwards. There are a lot of things out of our control as a people but not that, at least not entirely.

LUKE

But that's the thing, to some degree it *is* out of one's control. It takes education to make better choices, and education requires access to money and opportunity.

BRIE

No. No and *hell* no. The guy who beats his wife doesn't get to claim that his Dad beat his Mom. It's his responsibility to make a better choice. Europeans don't get to claim the way they treated Natives when they got here is some generational trauma held over from the black plague and the Middle Ages. They made their own damn choices, and so do we.

JOHN

Hey! She got back to me! "John, if you stay sober and get your degree you can have a place in this baby's life. Who knows, maybe you'll even get a chance to bait another hook LOL."

Kaleb gives him a fist bump, Luke punches him in the arm.

LUKE

All right, man!

KALEB

Nice work, bro.

BRIE

This calls for some music!

Brie turns the dial and some old school hip hop comes over the speakers. They all get down to the get down. Intermission.

ACT IIScene 1

Curtain rises. Our intrepid roadtrippers are in the van, John is "driving", Brie sits next to him, Luke and Kaleb are both in the back seat. Everyone is looking at their phones intently. John has one hand on the wheel but is otherwise absorbed in his phone. Some time passes. Brie looks up from her phone and lets loose with a terrified scream. Everyone else looks up, everyone screams and continues to scream, except Kaleb who seems to kind of scream and laugh at the same time (rollercoaster style). John tosses his phone and jerks the wheel. Phones go in all directions, everybody sways to one side then the other, forward and then back as the brakes are applied, still screaming and cursing. Brie starts slapping John on the head and shoulders to cow him and emphasize her words. Kaleb is laughing.

BRIE

GODDAMMIT, JOHN!! NO!!!! NO AND FUCK NO!!!! YOU DO NOT TEXT AND DRIVE!!! YOU FUCKING MORON, GAW, YOU NEVER EVER EVER GET TO DRIVE AGAIN, GAW, GET THE FUCK OUT, SOMEBODY ELSE IS DRIVING!!!

Curtain falls. Drum group starts to play.

Scene 2

Beautiful rest area at sunset. Drum group fades out.

BRIE

Luke was right, this was a good place to stop and rest. I've never been this far North before. I can't believe how beautiful it is.

KALEB

I prefer the Southwest, but the lakes here are incredible.

BRIE

Which one is that?

KALEB

Lake Erie. There's a bench over there, you want to sit down?

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

You mean dat bench ober der?

*Points with her lips at the bench, then grins;
Kaleb mimics her.*

KALEB

Yah, ober der!!

BRIE

Nah, I've been sitting too long. I want to stand... or even dance!

Brie begins and Kaleb soon joins her in a small impromptu ballet. They are close to one another and smiling as they finish dancing. They are holding hands (hers are palms down, his palms up holding her fingers), almost as though ready to kiss, and then they don't.

KALEB

Brie, for 10 years I've run the boxing club.

BRIE

I know.

KALEB

In that time I've been in a few relationships, nothing long term, not much to speak of.. but mostly on my own.

BRIE

I know. Sometimes we call you the boxing monk.

KALEB

Boxing takes discipline and heart, but mind as well, to control the body and push it past the limits it thinks it has.

BRIE

I've seen your heart, your mind as well, I've seen you do that. You've taught me that.

KALEB

I realize now that over the years I've gotten too good at it. I can ignore my body, ignore my heart, ignore what it wants. What *I* want.

BRIE

You're a good man, Kaleb, a good person. You deserve to be happy. You should allow yourself that.

KALEB

Until now it hasn't been an issue. But my heart has spoken to me, it asked me a favor.

BRIE

What was that?

KALEB

It spoke to me about you.

BRIE

About me?

KALEB

About you. It asked me to share my heart with you.

Kaleb lets go of Brie's hands, drops to one knee, folds his hands one over the other over his heart, and then extends them (cupped palms upwards and together) to Brie as though holding his heart in his hands.

It asked me to give itself to you, and say please share this with her, because I care for her. I care for her more than anyone else and I want to stay with her.

It said, she may not want to share or share so much, but promise me to make the offer. If she doesn't want to share it all, then ask her to take a small rose from our heart, to keep as our friend, but offer her everything and hope that she takes it.

BRIE

Give my thanks to your heart, Kaleb. I gladly accept.

Brie very carefully, as though taking a baby bird from his hands, uses her two palms to take the imaginary heart from Kaleb, and then presses it to her chest and closes her eyes.

I promise to take good care of it. Here is my heart for you.

Brie extends her hands, palms up. Kaleb carefully lifts her heart with his hands and presses it to his chest.

KALEB

I promise to take good care of it.

Drum group begins to play a slow, heartbeat-like rhythm. Kaleb and Brie embrace and kiss. The kiss grows more passionate, the drum group pauses, and a horn sounds. Drum group starts in again very low.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KALEB (cont'd)

Guess we gotta go.

BRIE

To be continued.

KALEB

My heart is beating hard.

BRIE

Correction, that's *my* heart that's beating hard!

Drum beat gets louder. They improvise a ballet on their way offstage.

Scene 3

Dark of night at the graveyard. Drums are still. Kaleb is at the wheel of the van, Brie is riding shotgun, John and Luke are in the back. Brie is filming, everyone else is looking intently at the cemetery, with the exception of Luke who seems a little out of it. The graveyard is silent, solemn, and frightening. Voices are subdued.

BRIE

Whoa.

KALEB

This is it.

JOHN

This is it.

BRIE

According to the map, he should be right over there.

KALEB

Nobody slam any doors. Hell, don't even close the doors. I already turned off the dome light. Grab a shovel, keep quiet, and stay alert.

Everyone does exactly as Kaleb says, even John. The drums start in low and slow as they exit the van. John and Luke head to the back of the van to open it. If casting allows for four Earth spirits, then at this time two Earth Spirits (disguised as the land/bushes/trees) rise up among the tombstones and move to surround the grave. As they move the tombstone crosses slowly sway and bend, almost imperceptibly. Kaleb surges towards the front of the van. The drums stop. Brie sees him do it and moves forward to film him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KALEB (cont'd)

Did you hear that?

BRIE

Hear what?

KALEB

Drums.

BRIE

I didn't hear anything.

KALEB

I swear I saw something move in the graveyard.

BRIE

You're just freaking yourself out.

They move toward the back of the van, Kaleb looking back over his shoulder. John passes out shovels and some other tools. The drums return.

All four head back towards the front of the van, Kaleb and Brie in the lead. Luke, using his shovel as a crutch, struggles to make the walk. A third Earth Spirit (part man, part grass/tree/bush, part scary-damn owl) and a fourth that's part scary-damn coyote rise to take up positions around the grave. As they do the tombstone crosses continue to gently bend and sway, almost unnoticeably. Kaleb holds up his hand for everyone to stop.

KALEB

Did you all see something move?

JOHN

Like what?

KALEB

The tombstone crosses...

JOHN

No, but I think I... think I might have heard something.

Kaleb shakes his head.

KALEB

Must have been nothing. Come on.

Kaleb waves for them to continue. Our gravediggers walk into the cemetery until they're standing by the grave of Prescott Bush. The Earth Spirits surround them and the grave. The drums stop.

LUKE

Here we are. Prescott Bush, 1895 to 1972, father of George Herbert Walker Bush, grandfather of George Walker Bush, veteran, strong supporter of Planned Parenthood, and a grave robber.

BRIE

Planned Parenthood? Wasn't he a Republican?

LUKE

Yes, just not a moron.

BRIE

This footage will be perfect. I'm going to get it from a bunch of angles. John, go and look for somewhere we can do some digging for the film.

Puts a hand on her hip to look at the grave.
You know, fuck that, I still think we ought to just do this for real and dig right here.

Luke speaks as he sits down, tired, his words spoken softly but uncharacteristically harsh with exhaustion.

LUKE

That's a fucking *stupid* idea, Brie.

KALEB

The *hell* it is. Of course we're gonna dig here. We didn't come all this way to dig somewhere else.

JOHN

Naahhh...

Kaleb grabs John as he's starting to walk off to look for a spot to dig.

KALEB

I'm not playing. We're going to dig right here.

LUKE

No. We agreed we're just getting footage to make a film about digging it up.

KALEB

Did Bush here just make a *movie* about stealing Geronimo's skull?

BRIE

You're in character, right? This is some meta shit, keep it rollin'.

KALEB

I'm not in character, and I'm not playin'. I'm digging up this grave and for once it's a white family that's going to feel what it's like to have the bones of their ancestors stolen.

LUKE

NO. It's *WRONG*. For god's sake Kaleb, come on, I'm too tired for this...

KALEB

It's not wrong, it's *fair*, and if you're too tired then go lay down in the van.

LUKE

Kaleb, I get where you're coming from but...

KALEB

The *FUCK* you do. Spending time at the club doesn't make you Indian. This guy didn't dig up your ancestors, he dug up *ours*.

JOHN

Come on Kaleb, let's just make a movie, like we said.

KALEB

No. Apache didn't make pretend war. We were the last to fall; and, tonight, we haven't fallen yet.

LUKE

Do this and you will fall, Kaleb, and we'll fall right along with you.

JOHN

It probably wasn't even Geronimo's skull they got, you said it yourself.

KALEB

Doesn't matter. Geronimo or not, Bush robbed a Native's grave, just one grave in a long line of graves his people have robbed.

JOHN

Yeah, but...

KALEB

But nothing! They've got some Native's skull sitting somewhere on a shelf for *decoration*. They took Osceola's head and boiled it to the bones. Mangas

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KALEB (cont'd)

Coloradas. They took his head and lost it. If he was here now you think he'd just make a movie about making war?

LUKE

He'd do what was right by his tribe.

Brie lowers the camera and shuts the screen to turn it off. The drums start in soft and easy.

BRIE

Which is exactly what Kaleb's doing.

Kaleb prepares to sink the shovel head into the ground.

LUKE

I'm going back to the van.

Luke gets up and stumbles. John steadies him.

JOHN

I'll walk you back there.

John hands his shovel to Brie and helps Luke to the van. The Earth Spirits part to let them pass, then close and start loosely circling Brie and Kaleb, hooting like owls as they move through the tombstones. The hoots are reinforced with vocal sounds and emphatic drum beats from the drum group. Brie and Kaleb freeze and look at one another. This is the first of three warnings that Kaleb ignores.

BRIE

That.. that can't be good.

KALEB

Ya scared?

BRIE

Nah, but that's a bad sign isn't it?

KALEB

Would be if we were back home, but those aren't Apache owls. We're a long way from Indian country.

BRIE

This was all Indian country at one time. And, we're Apache.. so aren't those Apache owls?

KALEB

No, you worry too much. The animals stopped talking to us a long time ago.

Kaleb sinks the shovel head into the ground. The owls and the drums stop. A drum group member strikes a deep, solemn bell once so that it rings loud and long. The lights dim on Brie and Kaleb; their shadows can be seen and heard to be digging. Lights rise on Luke and John.

JOHN

Did you hear those owls? My grandma used to say that when you heard several owls hoot death had come...

John looks pointedly at Luke. Luke is sitting on the ground with his head drooped, leaning against the van.

for someone.

LUKE

Hah! Goot one. I'm not dying, John.. not tonight anyway. It's them.. it's us, it's all of us. They're digging their own graves back there. They're digging our graves.. they're digging the club's grave.

JOHN

Death, though? Maybe that's too dramatic?

LUKE

Maybe. I stand just outside the door to death so I see it everywhere. It's always closer than we think.

JOHN

I can't have that, Luke. I'm supposed to be getting my shit *together*, not losing it.

LUKE

Take it up with Kaleb. I'm too tired to argue the point, and I don't think he wants to hear it from a white guy.

JOHN

It isn't just cause you're white. Kaleb isn't going to listen to me either.

LUKE

He's being an ass right now. Just goes to show that not drinking doesn't make a person perfect.

John looks towards the grave.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

They're digging. You think they can do it by themselves?

LUKE

No question. They're both stubborn and tough.

JOHN

That's true. I saw Brie so tired once she puked between rounds, put her mouthpiece in, and knocked the other girl out.

LUKE

Yeah. You remember Kaleb's 30th birthday?

JOHN

No..

LUKE

He went 30 3-minute rounds in a row against alternating opponents. I've never seen him give up or back down for anyone or anything. Ever.

John whistles.

JOHN

I wouldn't have thought that was possible.

LUKE

And that's what he chose to do for his birthday.

JOHN

Fucking Apaches. There's no stopping this then?

LUKE

Nope, the bell's already rung.

JOHN

Then what do we do?

LUKE

Help, or call the police. It's the only thing we can do.

JOHN

I'm not calling the police.

LUKE

Me neither. Give me a hand and we'll walk back over there. I can't do much but I'll do what I can. The faster we get this done the better.

(CONTINUED)

They walk back over to the grave. Brie and Kaleb are leaning on their shovels taking a break. Head nods or raised chins from Brie and Kaleb.

JOHN

You all need somebody in your corner. We figure this will go faster in shifts.

John and Kaleb give one another the boxing club handslap and fist bump.

LUKE

Besides, nobody should have to dig their own grave alone.

Fist bump from Kaleb.

JOHN

Here, let me take a turn.

Lighting gives the sense of time passing. There is silence except for the sound of digging. And then an audible farting noise.

BRIE

Come ON, John! Get out of the hole before you do that!

They've just climbed out of the hole.
It smells like you shit a rotting dog down there.

JOHN

Sorry. We're going to have to give that a minute.

KALEB

Where's it going to go? Are farts heavier than air?

LUKE

I don't know. Might depend on what you've been eating.

BRIE

That's a heavy fucking fart down there. You're going to have to shovel it out.

KALEB

Maybe we could fan it out with our jackets or something.

BRIE

Worth a try, 'cause there's no going down there till it's gone.

They all pick up or take off jackets and stand around the grave waving them to blow the fart out. They crinkle their mouths, cover their faces, and exclaim as wafts of the fart strike them on the way out.

LUKE, KALEB, BRIE
OOOhhhhh.
DAYYUUUUUMMMM. FUUuuck
Man.

BRIE
Nothing that smells like that should come from a living being.

JOHN
Just some good ol' Curtis Hall!

LUKE
Wow, is there anything you won't blame on Curtis?

KALEB
We'll be smelling the dead soon enough. I think we've almost got the casket completely uncovered.

John ties a bandanna over his mouth.

BRIE
Good thing too. I didn't realize this was going to take so long.

KALEB
That's what she...

BRIE
Don't you dare.

JOHN
I'll go down and get rid of the rest of the smell.

Lights dim. The sounds of shovels, chains, metal hitting metal, metal hitting wood, cursing, exclamations, etcetera, can all be heard, until the lights come up and everyone is standing around a casket. The Earth Spirits come closer.

BRIE
Gawwww that was heavy!

JOHN
How we going to open it?

KALEB

Give me some room, this crowbar should do it.

Everyone makes room for Kaleb who steps up to open the casket. The Earth Spirits start yipping like coyotes. The sounds of the Earth Spirits are reinforced with vocal sounds and emphatic drum beats from the drum group.

JOHN

What the hell is that?

KALEB

Just a bunch of coyotes is all.

JOHN

What's it mean though?

BRIE

Doesn't mean anything.

JOHN

Really? I'm not as traditional as you guys and even I know...

LUKE

It means you're not supposed to open that coffin.

KALEB

When did you start talking with the animals, Luke? It doesn't mean a damn thing.

Kaleb uses the crowbar to open the casket. Luke sits down. The Earth Spirits and the drums go silent as the casket comes open. A drum group member strikes the bell once. This is the second warning that Kaleb has ignored. Everyone except Luke gathers around the casket.

JOHN

Whoa.

BRIE

John, your farts smell worse than him and he's been dead over 40 years; what's that tell you 'bout your diet?

Crinkles her nose and frowns.
He don't smell good though.

John looks from one person to the next to see if anyone is going to stop this. Then tucks his chin to his chest and puts his hands on the back of his neck and brings his elbows together.

KALEB

Well, let's get this show on the road.

BRIE

Or back on the road as the case may be.

KALEB

John, get that bag. I'll use a shovel to separate the head and put it in there.

John looks up. The Earth Spirits start yipping like coyotes again; emphasized by vocals and drum beats from the drum group. John looks over at the bag. He decides to defy Kaleb -- this moment will change him forever; it's here that he really grows up.

JOHN

No. We shouldn't do this. It's *wrong*. Look at him, this was a human *being*, a real person, a father, a husband, he had friends, it's *wrong* to mess with him, it's wrong what we've already done.

KALEB

The *hell* it is. He's the father of *two* white Presidents, two white Presidents in a long line of white Presidents who had no problem taking past, present, and future from our people. He stood in front of an open grave like this one and *he himself* stole one of our skulls and you tell me it's *wrong*? It's not wrong, it's as close to justice as we're ever going to get.

JOHN

No. I don't care what he did, I care what we do. We're in charge of the present.. in charge of the future. Let's just leave the casket as it is, and write a letter to go with it or something.

Kaleb emphasizes each word with a motion of the crowbar in John's direction.

KALEB

Get. The. Bag.

JOHN

Get your own damn bag.

John walks back to the van. Brie silently goes over and gets the bag. The Earth Spirits hoot like owls and yip like coyotes, all emphasized by vocals and drum beats from the drum group. Kaleb puts down the crowbar, picks up the shovel and

(CONTINUED)

prepares to sever the head. At no time, however, is the skull to ever appear onstage or to the audience.

LUKE

Let it go, Kaleb.

KALEB

Too late to change course now.

LUKE

It's never too late.

Kaleb carefully places the shovel head into the front of the coffin. With one foot on the ground, he steps the other into the coffin and onto the shovel; and then with one big fluid motion he severs the head. This is the third warning that Kaleb has ignored. The Earth Spirits and the drums go silent.

KALEB

It is now.

A drum group member strikes the bell once; the Earth Spirits go to their knees, Luke drops his head. Kaleb and Brie each look into the eyes of the other. The bell is struck a second time -- the Earth Spirits go to their hands and knees, Luke puts his head in his hands; and then struck a third time -- the Earth Spirits collapse to the ground entirely. The lights go dark as the sound of the bell echoes throughout the theatre.

ACT IIIScene 1

Drum group plays. The van is on I-70. Luke is laying across the back seats, obviously not doing well. Kaleb is driving and holding hands with Brie who's riding shotgun, John is sleeping. Luke comes back to a sitting position. Brie and Kaleb stop holding hands.

LUKE

We almost there yet?

BRIE

Yeah, we're coming up to the Lawrence exit now.

LUKE

Dang, the sun's already up. We made bad time. That's my fault.

KALEB

If you gotta puke bro, you gotta puke. You doing alright?

LUKE

No, but... I was going to say, no but I'll live, but I don't actually think that's true.

KALEB

We're taking you straight to the hospital.

LUKE

No. Let's go home. I need to brush my teeth before I do anything else.

JOHN

Gaww, what day is it?

LUKE

Monday morning, Sunshine.

KALEB

Columbus Day.

BRIE

Nope, not this year. This year it's Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Kaleb lets out a war yip to celebrate this statement.

(CONTINUED)

LUKE

True, but tomorrow or the next day they're going to come for us. They're going to colonize us and the club, and it's going to be Columbus Day all over again.

BRIE

That's everyday. Now you know how it feels to be Native. White privilege is that this is the first time you've ever felt that.

Luke looks out the window for a second. Says the next line while still looking.

LUKE

Did you erase all your film footage?

BRIE

Yeah, and erased all the photos we took too.

KALEB

Home sweet home, the war party returns!

The van pulls up to Luke's house. Everyone gets out and walks inside. Kaleb is carrying the skull bag. John lingers by the van, and when he thinks nobody can hear him, he pats it. Sol is asleep on the couch inside.

JOHN

You're a good little pony.

John heads inside. Sol wakes up when the others enter.

LUKE

Mornin' Sol.

SOL

Welcome back.

Luke sits at the desk after giving a hug to Sol. The other three just line up and look at Sol. Luke gets paper and a pen from the desk and starts to write.

SOL

What's wrong with you three? You look like your mamas just caught you masturbatin'.

Kaleb raises the bag overhead.
What's that?

KALEB

It's the head of Prescott Bush.

SOL

You're kidding.

BRIE

Nope.

Beat. Sol looks to each of them, sees Luke writing, realizes it's true, balls his fists, takes a small step forward and whispers the next line (giving the impression of barely controlled anger).

SOL

Are you all *fucking stupid*? You were on a roadtrip to get footage not a *fucking skull*.

KALEB

We changed our mind. *I* changed our mind.

SOL

What do you mean you changed your mind?! There wasn't a menu of choices. We agreed to make a film, not commit a felony. You had no *right*.

KALEB

I have every right! This fucker stole a Native skull.

SOL

So you think you can make it right by stealing *another* skull? You think desecrating a grave is going to make it *right*? You think getting us all thrown in jail and disgracing the club is going to make it *right*?

Kaleb approaches Sol step by step shaking the skull bag at him to emphasize his words.

KALEB

I *built* this club and I'll *tear* it down. Warriors don't pray for a long life they pray for the strength to die in battle. We were sparring in my garage when you were still drinking on the rez. The HBC has never been an exercise gym, it's a fight club, a war gym, we've all said it but I guess I was the only one who *meant* it.

SOL

Get that *fucking* thing away *from me*. I asked the Creator to bless you before you left, to bless our club and this project, and you went and did *this*?

Points to the bag. Luke is coughing and starts to bleed from the mouth. John tends to him. Kaleb pays close attention to Sol's words.

You betrayed our *prayer*. You betrayed our entire *community*. Do you think the consequences of this are going to stop at us or the club? What do you think is going to happen when Congress finds out that a bunch of students from a federally funded university stole the skull of a *Bush*? You think they're going to *increase* our funding?

BRIE

Fully funding us is a treaty obligation. They owe us a hell of a lot more than they give and we can use this to point it out.

SOL

They're going to call to shut us down.

BRIE

And others will call to more fully fund us.

SOL

Don't even *pretend* like you thought this through. You got no idea what shit storm is about to hit us. Beyond that, we betrayed a prayer to the *Creator*, we robbed a grave. I don't care what color the man was, in death we're all the same. That man has a *family*. We desecrated a sacred space and we're going to pay for it.

BRIE

We? When did this become *we*? You did nothing of the kind.

SOL

I did though, and had no more choice in the matter than a baby born to an alcoholic. Y'all made choices for a lot of people out there beyond yourselves.

KALEB

I'll turn myself in.

Beat.

SOL

Don't you *get it*? That's not going to *help*. It'll still be an Indian that stole the skull of a *Bush*. And even though they've taken thousands of our skulls, this will give the appearance of there being *two* sides to a story that only has *one*.

BRIE

We've got a few days to put together a press release or..

SOL

Days? We maybe have *hours*. And a press release for *who*? The Indian Leader? Indian Country Today? They've got the New York Times, CNN, Fox Fucking News, and we've got a press release?

John is LOUD -- he is not asking, he is commanding.

JOHN

HEEY!! STOP IT! We've got bigger problems right now. Luke's bleeding from the mouth.

Everyone looks over. Luke looks up. He's wiped the blood away with a bandana.

LUKE

Everyone sit down. You're too damn tall standing up like that.

No one does anything but stare for a second.

JOHN

SIT DOWN!!

Everyone looks at John in shock and then immediately sit down.

BRIE

We've got to get you to the hospital.

LUKE

No time for that. Sol's right. We don't have days, we have hours at the most. Here's what I propose: you all are young, I'm dying, and I'm the faculty sponsor for this group so I should take the fall.

EVERYONE BUT JOHN AND LUKE

Huh-uh! No.. We can't let you do that..!

Luke waves them quiet with a hand gesture.

LUKE

You all would be at most accomplices to the act. You can say it was my dying wish.

(CONTINUED)

KALEB

But that's not fair, you tried to *stop* me at the grave.

LUKE

Fair doesn't matter. What matters is that we get this *right*. It'll help protect everyone to assign blame to a faculty member.

BRIE

But it will defeat the whole purpose to pin this on a white guy.

LUKE

The opposite is true.. I think. If we keep the blame focused on me then taking Bush's skull will illustrate to everyone how wrong it is to desecrate graves and bodies, but without allowing white people to assume the role of victim.

BRIE

But we can't just let you take all the blame.

LUKE

I'm not going to live very long anyway; and it would be an honor to do this. Besides that, it really *is* my fault it all went so far. You'll still suffer some consequences but this way you can claim the moral high ground and use any media attention or interviews to turn the conversation back to Geronimo, Mangas Coloradas, Osceola, and all the others besides the Bush family that have had this happen to their ancestors.

SOL

What makes you think they'll give us any attention at *all*? I figure they'll keep it quiet, and throw us in prison. We aren't white, my friend, so we've got no expectation of having our voices heard.

LUKE

Because we're not giving back the skull. Or at least not until we're good and goddamn ready. I'm going to bury it, and the only way they're going to get it back is if they bargain for your freedom.

KALEB

Where you going to bury it?

LUKE

The wetlands, but that's all the more I'm going to tell you. If they want the skull back they'll have to negotiate with a dying man.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

But they're building a road through the wetlands!

LUKE

That'll stop as soon as they realize the skull of a Bush is buried along the proposed route.

SOL

There's a bunch of Indian kids buried there and that hasn't stopped them.

KALEB

They'll put a lot more effort into looking for a white guy's skull.

LUKE

They can search all they want and they'll never find it. Not unless they trade for clemency.

SOL

They won't deal. They'll just find the skull and lock us up.

LUKE

If they disturb everything too much there's a chance they could lose the skull forever. Law enforcement will be under a lot of pressure to get the skull back *fast*. They'll deal with me to make it happen; especially as this solution gives them everything they need.

BRIE

A skull for a skull.

LUKE

Exactly. Somebody's head's gotta roll for this and it needs to be mine.

KALEB

On one condition.

LUKE

What's that?

KALEB

As soon as you're done at the wetlands you go *straight* to the hospital.

LUKE

Agreed. That's going to be the best place to turn myself in. If I'm lucky I'll never even see the inside of a cell.

(CONTINUED)

BRIE

That's some kind of fucked up luck, Luke, if you're counting on *cancer* to keep you from a jail cell.

LUKE

I suppose so, but I'll take all the luck I can get. Brie, I need you to take this note to Addy. She doesn't take Columbus Day off so you'll find her at Haskell. Don't be too quick about it. I need time to get the job done. Have her meet me at the hospital after she reads it.

BRIE

What about these fellas?

LUKE

You all go home, keep your heads down and your mouths shut. Don't talk to anybody about this, least of all the police. Addy will contact you with instructions, do *exactly* as she says. If the police come for you under no circumstances are you to resist arrest. Go with them but don't say anything without Addy in the room. Y'understand?

JOHN, KALEB, AND SOL

Yes. Uh-huh. Yep.

Everyone gets up. Kaleb sets the bag with the skull in it on the table.

LUKE

This may be the last time we're in the same room with each other... for a while.

John hugs Luke.

JOHN

Thanks for everything.

LUKE

You take care of yourself alright? Take care of that baby too.

JOHN

I will, I promise.

John hugs Brie, man hugs Sol and Kaleb.

SOL

You want a ride home?

JOHN

Nah, I'm going to walk. Been sitting in that van long enough. Besides, I need some time to think.

John exits.

SOL

Kaleb, I'll see you back at the house.

KALEB

You gonna throw my stuff to the curb?

SOL

No, but we're going to have a talk. You got my number Luke. You need anything between here and the hospital you give me a call okay?

LUKE

Will do. Thanks, Sol.

SOL

You take care brother.

Sol hugs Luke and then Brie before exiting the stage. Luke sits on the table with one foot in air and the other on the ground.

BRIE

You shouldn't be going anywhere by yourself right now, Luke, let alone the wetlands.

LUKE

It's best if I'm the only one who knows where it's buried. I'll go straight to the hospital afterwards.

BRIE

That's a promise you better keep.

Brie looks to Kaleb.

I'm going to deliver this letter to Dr. Starr, and then I'm going to come see you.

Brie says this line as she puts her hand on the back of Kaleb's head, draws his forehead to hers, and looks him in the eyes. They kiss, their lips only touching for a second. They linger with their noses and foreheads touching, their breath mingling as they utter their last lines to one another.

You take care of my heart okay?

KALEB

I will. You take care of mine.

BRIE

Always.

Brie kisses Kaleb on the forehead, gives him the boxing club handslap and fist bump; gives Luke the boxing club handslap and fist bump, then a fierce hug and a kiss on the cheek.

You get yourself to the hospital as soon as you can.

LUKE

Will do. You take care.

Brie exits the stage. Luke turns to Kaleb and raises his eyebrows as high as he can, and smiles without smiling.

So! You got something you want to tell me?

KALEB

At this point I am praying that we at least have till tomorrow to get arrested.

LUKE

You gave her the heart speech didn't you?

KALEB

Yeah..

(Seemingly embarrassed.)

LUKE

You've never given *anyone* the heart speech.

KALEB

She's the only one I trust with my heart.

LUKE

Good for you. You got some *fucked up* timing though. Why'd you do that and then go dig up a body?

KALEB

It was one because of the other. After I kissed her I felt like I could do *anything*. Take on anyone and win.

LUKE

I hope you do win. Both of you. I damn straight know you'll never give up. I expect neither will she.

KALEB

And neither will you. We'll come see you this afternoon in the hospital.

(CONTINUED)

LUKE

Maybe, maybe not. Addy will be in contact. Do exactly as she says; she's the sharpest knife in the drawer.

KALEB

Is that why she always draws blood when she talks with you?

LUKE

She'll draw a lot of blood over this one, from all of us.

KALEB

If you had reminded me about facing Dr. Starr at the graveyard I think I would have changed my mind. I *should* have changed my mind. It was a damn fool thing to do, and it's going to get everybody hurt.

LUKE

No sense in regret. This is a lot bigger than us now, and it's our duty to make the best of it. It's going to hurt but I think we've got a chance of making something good come from it.

KALEB

Nothing good is going to come from something that started with me disrespecting my dying best friend.

LUKE

That's not where this started. It started a dozen years ago with some mitts and a heavy bag in your garage on 6th street. Maybe it started a long time before that. We've shed blood on the mat together. I've known you longer than I knew my *Mom*. I'd argue about it but I'd take a *hundred* skulls before I let anyone mess with that.

KALEB

I'm ashamed of the way I spoke to you out there. That's how I should have known what I was doing was wrong. You were nothing but a white man to me, no face no name no nothing, just a color to hate. I am so sorry for that... Can you forgive me?

LUKE

I already did, brother.

Luke and Kaleb hug.

KALEB

I love you man.

LUKE

I love you too. It's been a helluva show.

Drum group starts to play.

Scene 2

Addy's office. Addy is sitting at her desk typing on a laptop, looking very productive and studious. Drum group fades. Brie knocks.

ADDY

Come in!

BRIE

Hey, Dr. Starr.

ADDY

Brie! Good to see you! What's up?

BRIE

Well, I went on a roadtrip with the Boxing Club. We just got back, and...

Addy stands up.

ADDY

Is it Luke? What's happened?

BRIE

It's not Luke, he's okay, well, he's not okay actually, he was coughing up blood.

ADDY

Coughing up blood!? He's got to get to the hospital! Is, is he at the hospital? Where's he at?

BRIE

He's headed to the wetlands to bury Prescott Bush's skull. He gave me this letter to give to you.

Tries to give her the letter.

ADDY

WHAT!?

BRIE

He gave me this letter to give to you.

Tries to give her the letter.

ADDY

WHAT!?

BRIE

He gave me this...

ADDY

WHAT!? WHERE IS HE?

BRIE

He's in the wetlands burying Prescott Bush's skull.

ADDY

He's coughing up blood? When?

BRIE

Yes. He was. This morning.

ADDY

He's in the wetlands burying Prescott Bush's skull?

BRIE

Yes.

ADDY

Who the *FUCK* is Prescott Bush?

BRIE

He's George W. Bush's grandpa.

Addy extends her hand, demanding the oft proffered letter. Brie hands it to her and watches her take it out of the envelope and read it.

He was George H.W. Bush's dad.

Addy pauses her reading momentarily to look over the top of the letter at Brie and responds in a low, menacing voice.

ADDY

Was he also Barbara Bush's father-in-law?

Brie almost responds, thinks better of it, and watches as Addy finishes the letter. Addy sets the letter down, puts both hands on the desk, and tucks her chin towards her chest for a moment before she looks up.

This is real? You all aren't putting me on?

BRIE

It's real.

ADDY

Because the only thing I can think of more *stupid* than pranking me with this... is to have *actually* done it.

BRIE

It's real.
(Sotto voce)

ADDY

As if cancer wasn't enough.
(Beat)

Okay, here's what we are going to do. You're going to go to Kaleb's house and the two of you are to *stay there* until you hear from me. I'm going to go to the wetlands to find Luke; from there I'll take him to the hospital. After that I'll be in touch with you. Got it?

BRIE

Yes.

Addy folds up the letter, grabs her keys, shuts the laptop and throws her jacket over her shoulder, seemingly all in one motion.

What should we do in the meantime?

ADDY

You pray!

They both exit in a hurry. Drum group plays.

Scene 3

Kaleb and Sol's apartment. Drum group fades. Kaleb flops onto the couch.

SOL

Have you slept at all since you left?

KALEB

No, I've been too wired to sleep.

SOL

Life-changing felonies and grave robbing will do that to you.

KALEB

It's that, but it's not *just* that... It's Brie.

SOL

Oh? Do tell.

(CONTINUED)

KALEB

I finally told her how I feel about her, and she feels the same way!

SOL

'Bout damn time. When was this?

KALEB

On the trip, around sunset..

SOL

Unbelievable. You just stole the skull of the patriarch of one of the most powerful families in America and you're swooning over Brie.

KALEB

It was beautiful.. overlooking the fields.. we danced even! I wish I'd told her sooner.

SOL

This was before you robbed the grave?

KALEB

Yeah, just before.

SOL

Decided to form a war party to celebrate?

KALEB

I guess so..

SOL

Fucking Apaches.

KALEB

I was just so jacked up, ya know? And then Luke told Brie he thought the idea was dumb..

SOL

It *is* dumb.

KALEB

I know, but he told *Brie* it was dumb; like it was *her* that was dumb, and it made me angry. Then looking at the grave made me angry too, like it was somehow considered more sacred than our graves, and his skull so much more sacred than ours.

SOL

You understand that Prescott Bush's skull would be considered more sacred than almost anyone else's skull, right? You could have robbed some random white guy's grave, no problem, but you picked a grave related to some *really* powerful white people.

(CONTINUED)

KALEB

Geronimo, Osceola, Mangas Coloradas, these were powerful people too, *our* people. More accomplished, more powerful than Prescott Bush.

SOL

Kaleb, you *know* I don't dispute that. But it was still *wrong*. You know it, I know it. Color doesn't make it any more right *now* than it did *then*.

KALEB

Yeah, I know it.

Sol looks through the curtains.

SOL

We got company, and it ain't the city police! I'd say it's the FBI or ATF or something!

Kaleb looks through the curtain.

KALEB

Well, *FUCK!*

Kaleb starts pacing.

SOL

This will be the first time I've ever been arrested *sober*.

KALEB

That was so *quick*.

SOL

What are we going to do?

KALEB

I thought we would have more time! I didn't even get a chance to see Brie!

SOL

Well, there's no use crying over it now.

KALEB

The back door! They might not have it covered yet.

SOL

Well, *then* what? Run? Even if we make it, what's that get us? Did you steal that skull expecting to get away with it?

Kaleb stops pacing and grows still. Drum group starts in soft and slowly gains momentum.

KALEB

No, you're right, we didn't steal that skull to run and hide. But.. *damn it*, I thought I'd get to see Brie first. I thought we were going to turn ourselves in *together!*

SOL

You're *unbelievable*. We got half the FBI pulled up to the curb, and you're upset you didn't get laid.

KALEB

Not *laid*, it's just, I didn't even say *good-bye* properly.

SOL

One thing I learned from life, you don't decide your good-byes, they decide themselves. The only choice you get right now is how we deal with *them*.

Sol points off stage. Kaleb takes a long deep breath, holds it, and then falls to one knee and bows his head in silent prayer; Sol does the same. The Earth Spirits come onstage, surround them in a circle, and also drop to one knee in prayer. Drum group grows louder and then fades out.

KALEB

We're going to go out with our hands up and our heads held high. It wasn't right, what we did, but I'm not ashamed of it either.

Kaleb gets up and helps Sol up. The Earth Spirits stand as well.

We didn't take that skull to keep in our damn clubhouse. We didn't take it so we could pat it on the head as we walked by. We took it for a purpose: to hold a mirror up for America to see the double standard of respect we have for Native and non-Native people, living or the dead.

SOL

Right on, brother.

They slap hands and then hug.

KALEB

I'm sorry I got you into this.

SOL

It's alright. I've always been in trouble, at least now I've got better company.

KALEB

Let's do this.

They start walking off stage when Sol's phone buzzes at him. He pulls it out of his pocket and reads it.

SOL

"Daily alert to check my balls to see if they're still the same size!" What the *FUCK*, John!?

Kaleb starts laughing, pushes Sol and they both laugh. They turn towards the door, put their hands behind their heads and walk offstage. The Earth Spirits put their hands behind their heads as well, and line up center stage to watch them go. From offstage come the sounds of indistinguishable shouting, then Sol screaming HEYY!!! Then the sounds of shouting, beating, more beating and shouting. The Earth Spirits drop to their knees with their hands still behind their heads. Then gunshots. The lights go red and a soul-chilling scream from Brie. Complete silence.

Scene 4

The wetlands. The Earth Spirits are disguised as elements of the vegetation and landscape. Luke limps on stage using the shovel as a crutch. His clothes are wet, his hands and boots are covered in mud.

LUKE

It is done and buried. His skull will never be found unless I show them where to look. I swam some of the way so that I could not be tracked, found a hole that was already deep and dug it deeper still, and covered it all with mud and leaves when I was done. No dog, no man, no woman, no instrument, no army could find it now.

As he is speaking the Earth Spirits rise to one or both knees and face Luke. They move slowly and unobtrusively, as though each moment is full of prayer.

Bush shares the same unmarked grave as no one knows how many Indian children. Children carried by children across campus, through the mud, the water and the reeds, children buried by children, mourned by their brothers and sisters and friends.. Before the white men who ran Haskell could find the bodies and bury them in their white man way.. their brothers and sisters forced to stand graveside in white man's clothes, if they were

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LUKE (cont'd)

allowed to attend at all, their hair cut, their language forbidden to them, praying white man prayers in the white man's tongue.

Luke starts coughing. An Earth Spirit rises and helps Luke drop to his knees. Luke still holds the shovel for support; he coughs more, blood pours down his chin which he partially wipes away with his sleeve. The Earth Spirit stays beside him, his/her hand on Luke's shoulder to steady him. Luke doesn't acknowledge the Earth Spirits but he unconsciously accepts and utilizes their assistance throughout.

Now I die. My death arrives unexpected. Our plan interrupted, I will never tell where I buried the skull; the secret of his grave I will take to my own. His bones and the bones of children will rest until the bulldozers disturb them all.

Drum group starts in softly. More coughing, more blood wiped away. Luke and the shovel waver. A second Earth Spirit rises, puts his/her hand on the shovel handle and Luke's arm to steady him. Luke is now partially supported on both sides by the Earth Spirits. He draws his last energy from this.

I do not fear death! For I have lived a life worth living. My hours, my days, my years, my breath I gave in service to others. Not so that I could save *them*, but because helping them allowed me to save *myself*. Save myself from a life focused on things that don't matter -- money, fame, idle time to indulge my excesses. As I kneel before my death what good would these things be to me now? When I helped my students succeed, I succeeded as well; I helped them learn, and in turn I learned.

Luke's voice fades out with weakness and his head drops. Drum group plays louder and stronger. An Earth Spirit that kneels beside Luke runs his/her hand once along Luke's hair as though to comfort him, then uses the side of his/her index finger to raise Luke's chin. The drum group hits one hard note together and then stops.

I learned what it means to be a whole person. My heart grew full and now... and now it overflows.

More coughing, more blood from the mouth. A member of the drum group plays a song for Luke on the flute. The Earth Spirits beside Luke help ease his slide to the floor where he grows still.

Scene 5

Flute song fades. Prison meeting room. Brie is dressed in an orange prison uniform, standing near a plain table that's clean except for a stack of newspapers. There are two empty chairs on Brie's side of the table. Addy walks onstage, her arms full of binders, books, and research materials that she sets on the table.

ADDY

The judge denied your petition to attend the funeral.

BRIE

What!? Why?

ADDY

Because they can't guarantee your security.

BRIE

Are they afraid they're going to shoot me like they did Kaleb and Sol? Guns going to jump out of their holsters and triggers going to start pulling themselves? What the *fuck!*? The only people I'd be afraid of at that funeral would be the *cops*.

ADDY

Mostly I think they want you out of sight. Them marches today are going to be huge, they're understaffed, and you're a potential source of conflict.

BRIE

And the cops who killed Kaleb and Sol?

ADDY

Paid suspension.

BRIE

It's not *right*, Addy. They *murdered* Kaleb and Sol and I'm the one in prison.. It's...

Brie collapses into her chair and starts to weep. I can't.. I can't do this, Addy, I can't do it.

Addy sits very close to Brie, brings her close, and hugs her head onto her shoulder.

ADDY

It'll be alright, honey. It'll be okay.

BRIE

They're gone, and I'm not even allowed to say *goodbye* to them. We were going to do this together, and now he's dead, and I have to do it *alone*.

(CONTINUED)

ADDY

You're not alone. We're here for you, okay?

BRIE

I *loved* him, Addy.

ADDY

I know.

BRIE

We were supposed to have *years* together, go through this together, there were supposed to be a thousand hellos, a thousand nights, a thousand kisses, and now he'll be buried and I won't even be there for that.

ADDY

I know..

BRIE

We just got together, *finally*. I only got to kiss him once.

ADDY

It's not fair.

Addy pets Brie's hair. Brie sobs as Addy holds her tight. Addy looks to the side, her face contorts with tears, one or more sliding down her cheek. Addy kisses Brie on the top of her head. Brie's crying stops. Brie pulls back from Addy a little so she can look her in the face.

BRIE

They're calling him a domestic *terrorist*.

Addy nods her head. They both wipe tears from their faces with the palms and backs of their hands.

ADDY

It's going to be our job to defend them, defend their memory, speak for them.

BRIE

If I could speak for Luke they'd waterboard me until I told 'em where the skull was buried.

They both smile, Addy gives an abbreviated chuckle as she continues to clean herself up.

ADDY

True...

(CONTINUED)

Addy looks to something only she can see. A warm memory touches her, she smiles at it, then sniffs and another tear falls from her eye. Brie sees the tear. Addy makes a small shake of her head and then speaks.

I can't believe the last thing he did was bury and lose the skull. He was a rez dog even in death.

BRIE

If we had known how sick he really was we would never have gone. That's what I regret more than anything. Kaleb too.

ADDY

Luke was an adult, he made his own decisions.

BRIE

He tried to talk us out of it, he..

Addy quiets Brie with a shake of her head and pressing her index finger to her own lips.

ADDY

That's not what he says in his letter.

BRIE

Well, we can't lay *all* the blame on Luke. I'm not ashamed of what we did.

Brie gets up. Addy follows.
We're activists not terrorists.

ADDY

There's a thin line between violent activism and terrorism.

BRIE

Violent? Who were we violent to?

ADDY

The Prescott Bush family.

BRIE

I'm sorry for the Bush family, but we dug a dead man out of the ground; those cops put two live men *into* the fucking ground. *That's* violence! *That's* terrorism!

ADDY

Without question. But violent protest always gives the perception of two sides to a story.

BRIE

Two *sides*!? Kaleb and Sol didn't *deserve* to be murdered. I'm wearing orange for activism, but the funeral black you're wearing? *That's* for terrorism. It's not our fault, it's not *my* fault, they're dead.

ADDY

No, honey, it's not your fault. Not even a little bit. What you all did was wrong, but not because Kaleb and Sol are dead.

BRIE

How could what we did be wrong? We tried to show people how it feels to be treated the way we are, and they *killed* us for it.

ADDY

I know that, Brie, but moral clarity was lost when your actions hurt that family.

BRIE

The nation thinks the *skull* of one dead white man is more important than the *lives* of two beautiful, brown, Native men. Native *children* are buried in the wetlands and that never stopped the construction of the South Lawrence Trafficway, but one white skull is lost out there and the bulldozers are stopped in their tracks. Moral clarity was lost a long fucking time ago.

ADDY

The marches will point that out to people. Peace in the presence of hate is the *only* way to effect a sea change in perception. It holds a mirror up for people like nothing else does.

BRIE

The marches would be *nothing* if we hadn't taken that skull.

ADDY

Wrong. The marches are for Kaleb and Sol. That skull's done nothing but cloud the message.

Brie picks up a couple of papers and shakes them at Addy.

BRIE

Looks to me like it's drawn attention to the message! Peaceful protest only works if the world is watching, and *now* they are.

ADDY

Have you *read* those? Taking that skull has divided people as surely as riots would.

BRIE

We're *already* divided! The only protest peaceful enough for these people is the one that doesn't happen! They want us to be quiet, be quiet, be quiet, and I'm *done being quiet*! You say we were violent 'cause we *robbed* a grave, but there's others out there digging them to *bury us*. Now's not the time to be quiet it's time to get up and get the fuck loud!

ADDY

Peaceful doesn't mean quiet! Peaceful doesn't mean passive! It doesn't even mean legal. But it does mean work. It means organization and follow through; and it's the only damn thing that'll make a real difference. Not some flash in the pan publicity stunt.

BRIE

That skull exposed a racial double standard in our society as clearly as an x-ray shows a broken bone; and I'll be *damned* if I regret digging it up.

ADDY

What you did threw up as many barriers as it brought down.

Brie looks at Addy, pauses and starts to tear up before speaking in a softer, more hesitant, and less argumentative tone.

BRIE

How can you say we were in the wrong when we live in a world where that.. where that could happen to Kaleb and Sol?

ADDY

A world that would kill Kaleb and Sol demands that you do something, *anything*, even if it's the wrong thing. What you all did wasn't right, but to do nothing would have been unforgiveable.

Beat.

BRIE

I wish I could join you for the march today.

ADDY

I do too. We'll keep working on it. I'm meeting with the rest of your legal team this afternoon.

BRIE

How many Natives are out there?

ADDY

All of 'em, seems like! They brought horses, campers, and their grannies.. It's not just Natives though. There are white and black people, police too, people of all colors marching together.

BRIE

I should be there.

ADDY

You are. Every word you write, every word you say has an effect. It's time to put that education to work.

Beat. Brie's face scrunches up as she fights tears.

BRIE

But.. I'm going to miss the funeral.

ADDY

I'm so sorry, Brie.

BRIE

Sol and Kaleb are *dead*, Addy, Luke is dead and *buried*, the boxing club is *gone*, and I'm going to spend god knows how long in prison. I didn't want revenge, I wanted to show everyone that we're the same, that our lives, our ancestors, our bones mean as much as theirs; that we're as human as they are, that we mean as much as they do, that...

Brie starts to cry and silently sob. Addy hugs her close.

ADDY

Oh, Brie... they didn't die in vain, we'll make sure of that. You changed the world, but.. but when you change the world, the world changes you back.

BRIE

Am I done changing the world yet?
(Sniffles.)

ADDY

No, honey, not even close.

Drum group plays.

Scene 6

Backstage of the Haskell Auditorium. John is in a suit. Addy has just come from the prison. The funeral is about to begin. Drum group fades out.

JOHN

I lied like hell to the FBI this afternoon. They still don't know I was with the others.

ADDY

They still think Sol was the fourth?

JOHN

Yes.

ADDY

Good. Let's hope it stays that way.

JOHN

That's not fair, is it? That Sol and Kaleb and Luke are dead, Brie's in jail, and I go free?

ADDY

What do you think *they* would want? You *know* what Brie wants.

JOHN

Even so. It doesn't seem fair.

ADDY

That's survivor's guilt talking. There's been too high a price paid for that skull already. Besides, we need you out here where things are happening.

JOHN

Prison would almost be easier. Easier than being a dad, easier than making their deaths *mean* something.

ADDY

That's the hardest thing there is.

JOHN

Nothing I do will bring them back.

ADDY

No, but what you do will honor them. As a kid we went to funerals all the time. For some of my cousins each death was like a stone tied to their neck, it dragged them down eventually.. but I thought of them like logs on a fire that would keep me going when things got bad, fuel for a fire I would use to honor them every day with my actions.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

Kaleb told me that my breath and my fate were both under my control. Or partially under my control anyway.

ADDY

He was right. Which makes now the time to take a deep breath... Is your speech ready?

JOHN

Yes.. but like you said, I'm only going to speak about their lives.

ADDY

That's good. Their lives haven't gotten nearly the attention of their deaths, and that's not right. Leave their murders to me.

JOHN

Okay.

ADDY

Good luck.

They hug and then walk offstage as the drum group begins to play.

Scene 7

The auditorium stage. Two coffins, surrounded by wreaths and flowers, each draped with a pall, a Pendleton blanket and a pair of boxing gloves, are on one side of the stage. A podium is center stage with a chair off to one side. Addy sits down on the chair. John walks out to the podium, takes some notecards out of his pocket and sets them down. During the eulogy John will abandon the podium (and his notecards), approach and address the audience stage left, stage right, and back to center stage to make the final prayer and call to action. The drum group fades out.

JOHN

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in one of his last speeches said, "The quality, not the longevity, of one's life is what is important." By this measure, our friends Kaleb and Sol lived very important lives indeed. Each was a pillar of our community. Kaleb was the volunteer Head Coach of the Haskell Boxing Club for 10 years. He donated his evenings, after he had already put in a full work day, to help Native and non-Native people alike learn the discipline and the rewards of boxing. Sol was a volunteer Math and English tutor, assistant coach of the Boxing Club, and a fixture of

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JOHN (cont'd)

the Native American Church; he spent countless hours helping students connect with the Creator, find and keep to their better selves. We knew them as devoted friends, and cherished members of our Haskell family. It amazes the mind and opens the heart to look upon this gathering and realize how *much* they were to so *many*.

We are better as a people for having known them. And this is no accident. They weren't lucky. They weren't rich. There was nothing particularly exceptional about them, except perhaps their generosity and endurance of spirit. They got up every day, no matter how they felt, no matter how hard it was, or how many setbacks they encountered, with no fanfare or rewards, and made real, incremental improvements in the lives of our community. They battled institutionalized inequity, poverty, and racism through education of mind, body, and spirit. They didn't spend their lives in complaint, self-indulgent behavior, or addiction; they didn't waste their days wallowing in blame, and anger, and discontent; they worked to bring about a better world for their family, for their friends... for all of us.

They will be missed.

We will feel their absence in our lives. It is our duty to mark this absence and honor the example that they set for us. Let their passing *awaken* in us our better selves, *incite* us to look beyond the barriers of our own needs and look to the needs of one another, *inspire* us to help one and all to the limits of our own small capacity for however long we draw breath. In so doing we will not only change the world, we will change ourselves.

As Kaleb would remind every would-be Muhammad Ali who walked through the door of the boxing club, nothing great happens overnight. It takes training, discipline, and determination; it takes getting knocked down again and again, getting back up, and doing it all over the next day. In the end, when you finally hang up the gloves, it doesn't matter what your record was. What matters is that you trained, you sweat, you stepped into the ring and fought with heart for what was right.

If you are able, please rise for our final prayer.

Addy rises from her seat. John indicates for the audience to rise, raising his arms palms up. If they are reluctant at all Addy gives the same gesture. Once everyone or nearly everyone is

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standing, John continues. Addy bows her head and interleaves her fingers in prayer, with her arms hanging low. Drum group starts in very low and slow.

Creator, we ask that you give us the strength and vision to see past our own suffering so that we might act with compassion and forgiveness to ease the suffering of others. Help us to control our want for material things so that we might desire the greatest of treasures, peace and fellowship with one another. We ask for the courage to stand up for what is right, to speak our minds, and work towards a better world for all. We ask for the wisdom to listen, to see the best in others, to understand their suffering even in the face of their fear and hate, regardless of their skin color, position, or politics.

And for our friends for whom the last ringside bell has rung, Creator, may you give them peace; for the rest of us, it's time to go to work. Amen.

Drum group plays final short prayer song. John and Addy stay standing with their heads bowed, their fingers clasped. End Play.