

160 ACRES: THE SARAH RECTOR STORY
EPISODE 1

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EXTERIOR - DAYTIME - QUAINF FARMHOUSE JUST OUTSIDE KANSAS
CITY, MI - 1965

From a distance we see a pleasant farmhouse. It is well maintained, clean with small garden next to it, plenty of tall sunflowers swaying in the soft breeze, a large chicken coop and an average size barn with a red door.

CUT INSIDE - KITCHEN

From behind we see an African American woman standing at the farm sink attending to washing some dishes. She is wearing a flowered patterned farm dress with an apron. As she washes the dishes she sings softly to herself.

CUT TO THE FACE OF THIS WOMAN AT THE KITCHEN SINK

The warm sunlight illuminates the face of this woman. She is pretty, her hair is neatly arranged and she is smiling as she sings and looks out unto the land she shares with her husband William Crawford. This is 63 year old Sarah Rector.

It is quiet with the exception of the water running and the gentle scrubbing of the dishes. We continue to watch this idyllic setting and then...comes the loud sound of a sickly car that is trying to turn over its engine and two male voices yelling commands to each other.

Sarah's calm face changes and her brow furrows a bit. She looks out the window to see what is going on. We see the car out front of their house with the hood up. Under the hood of this 1957 Chevy Bel Air Sport is one of Sarah's sons, Clarence with a long wrench in his hand. In the driver's seat is Clarence's friend Brooklyn Davis and this is his car. Sarah gives a concerned look to the boys out front and goes back to her dishes.

We hear more yelling and banging and it is getting louder.

Sarah sings but with the sounds of the yelling starting to annoy Sarah her scrubbing gets more intense.

We hear the engine squealing and trying to turn over again.

Sarah breathes out forcibly, puts the last dish in the drying rack and while turning and walking to the door she takes off her apron quickly and puts it on one of the wall hooks as she exits.

CUT TO CLARENCE AND THE CAR

From the POV from the car we see Sarah walking towards this make shift garage repair setting. There is big tool box sitting next to the car and some tools spread out on a large dirty rag.

While Clarence is deep under the hood we see Sarah walk straight up to the tool box. She immediately goes to a drawer with the knowledge of being well versed in tools and takes a tool out. She spins it in her right hand like spinning a Colt 45 revolver and takes the few steps up next to Clarence.

Clarence does not notice her as he is deep into the engine. Sarah looks at him, smiles and then with the tool in her right hand she nudges his body with the tool. Clarence rises up, looks at his mother, he looks like he is going to be schooled, Sarah nods her head in a "step aside Sonny" gesture. Clarence steps aside.

Sarah takes the tool and reaches into the car engine and quietly works.

Clarence's friend Brooklyn steps out of the car and comes around to the front not aware of what is going on.

BROOKLYN DAVIS

Clarence! What are you doin'? I'm
turnin' the key...

Brooklyn stops seeing Clarence standing there and his mother now under the car hood.

Clarence turns to Brooklyn and as he does, shakes his head and with his index finger goes to his lips telling him to be quiet. Brooklyn stops and they both turn watching Sarah diligently working on the engine.

A moment goes by.

Sarah then rises from the engine, turns to see Clarence and Brooklyn looking at her. She smiles and hands the tool she was using to her son.

SARAH RECTOR

Here, put this away.

Sarah turns and heads around them to the drivers side and climbs in.

Brooklyn looks at Clarence and he gives Brooklyn a shrug and a "I don't know" sort of look. Clarence turns to return the tool to the tool box and...

Then suddenly the engine roars to life! It sounds like 50 lions growling.

Clarence has just put the tool away, turns towards the car and smiles. He turns to Brooklyn while still smiling to see the dumbfounded look on Brooklyn's face. Clarence chuckles but we can't hear it with the roaring of the engine.

Clarence and Brooklyn walk together to the drivers side that has the window down watching Sarah revving up the engine.

We see Sarah sitting there looking straight ahead captured by the sound of this mighty car engine. She has a devilish smile on her face and she seemed to have turned into a 25 year old.

Sarah then turns to the boys.

SARAH RECTOR (CONT'D)
Well?...GIT IN!

The boys smile at each other and without saying a word Clarence opens the back seat door and climbs in while Brooklyn gets into the passenger side.

CUT TO THE CAR TAKING OFF DOWN THE GRAVELLY ROAD

With footage of the car driving down these country roads the song "No Particular Place To Go" by Chuck Berry plays.

CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF THE CAR

The car is heading down this road at a steady pace. Sarah drives with confidence. Brooklyn turns to the back and smiles at Clarence.

The music continues as they are having a wonderful ride on these vacant rough roads. Everyone has a happy face.

Brooklyn reaches over to the volume knob of the radio and turns the music up.

We see a close-up of the speedometer and it says 40mph.

The Chevy turns onto a more paved road and increases speed.

We see a close-up of the speedometer and it says 50mph.

More happy face images and Brooklyn looks to Clarence with a thumbs up indicated towards Sarah.

BROOKLYN DAVIS
(Loud over the engine noise) You're
mom is like Fireball Roberts!!

CLARENCE RECTOR
 (Smiles towards Brooklyn) BETTER!!
 AND SHE'S MY MOM!

Sarah hears this compliment and a smile crosses her face.

Her foot goes deeper on the gas pedal.

We see a close-up of the speedometer and it says 60mph.

With the steady beat of the music we see from above the Chevy zipping down the road.

We see a close-up of the speedometer and it says 70mph.

Up ahead we see an old billboard with a faded message that says...

"Slow Down, Pa

Sakes Alive

Ma Missed Signs

Four And Five - Burma Shave"

And with that they roar past this billboard.

Behind the billboard, sitting, waiting was a local motorcycle policeman.

The policeman kicks over the motorcycle engine and takes off in pursuit.

He turns on the siren and increases his speed.

CUT INSIDE THE CAR WITH SARAH AND THE BOYS

Clarence and Brooklyn hear the sound of the police siren and turn to look out the rear window to see the motorcycle cop in pursuit.

CLARENCE RECTOR (CONT'D)
 (To his mom -loudly over the engine noise) Looks like we have some company!

Sarah keeps up the speed, looks into the rear view mirror with a smile while the boys look nervous.

SARAH RECTOR
 (Loudly back) OH REALLY???

Sarah gets that devilish smile on her face again and then we hear...the engine getting louder.

We see a close-up of the speedometer and it says 80mph.

Clarence and Brooklyn look at each other with an "I don't know?" look.

The boys look to the back and the Chevy starts to leave the motorcycle cop behind.

Then we see the motorcycle cop rev up his engine to keep up the chase.

Sarah keeps up this speed for a little more. She still is smiling.

Then we hear her decelerate the engine and we see the speedometer indicator start going down.

Sarah pulls the Chevy over to the side of the road, puts it in park and shuts off the engine.

There is silence and the boys sit not speaking waiting for what will happen next. They are all black and of course the motorcycle cop is white and this is Missouri, 1965.

From Sarah's outside rearview mirror we see the policeman walking up to the Chevy with purpose and determination. He is an older policeman, 5ft 11 with lines of age on his face. There is grey hair that can be seen under his police cap. He is in his early 60's and has a little weight on him but not overweight..

Sarah rolls down the car window and the policeman looks in. He is staring at Sarah and has a serious look on his face. There is a moment where nothing is said and then...the policeman's serious face starts to thaw and a smile crosses over his face.

ARCHIE CALHOUN

Sarah, Sarah, Sarah...now what are you doin' gittin' my heart going all waaaaay too fast for my age! Don't you know I'm retiring soon and Hazel would like me around to fix the chicken coop and what have you.

SARAH RECTOR

Well I am sorry Archie, I truly am but my boy Clarence...(indicating to the back seat) you remember my son Clarence don't you?

Archie looks into the back and acknowledges Clarence.

ARCHIE CALHOUN

(A little annoyed but being polite)
Yes I remember him. (Looking to
Clarence) How you doin' son?

CLARENCE RECTOR

I'm doing good Mr. Calhoun sir.
How's your son Grady?

ARCHIE CALHOUN

Oh he's doing ok I guess. Damn fool
joined up and went to that place
Vietnam and now he's a sergeant.

CLARENCE RECTOR

Well you must be proud of him being
a sergeant and all?

ARCHIE CALHOUN

Ya, ya, ya. But his mother is
always in a tizzy every time we put
Walter Cronkite on the TV.

Archie is lost in a thought for a moment and then he regains his focus and turns back to Sarah.

ARCHIE CALHOUN (CONT'D)

Now Sarah what are you doin racing
this car an all'? Were ya chasing a
jackrabbit!?

SARAH RECTOR

Oh, oh, oh...I'm sorry Archie but
this is my son's friend's
Chevy...(turning towards Brooklyn)
I'm sorry where are my
manners...this is Brooklyn, Archie
and this (Turning towards Archie)
is his car.

BROOKLYN DAVIS

Nice to meet you sir.

Archie a little annoyed again be remains Southern polite and looks into the passenger side.

ARCHIE CALHOUN

Nice to meet you too.

SARAH RECTOR

And you know what Archie that boy was studying to be an engineer at Miss U, graduated and is now working at some big engineering company in Chesterfield.

Archie is being polite again waiting for Sarah to finish.

She seems to be and Archie opens his mouth and...

SARAH RECTOR (CONT'D)

He's Doreen's boy...you remember Doreen right? Her husband brought some great steaks that you loved from that meat factory he works at up off of North Ambassador Drive.

Archie gets a smile on his face and is drifting in a memory of the steaks. He shakes his head and returns his gaze to Sarah.

ARCHIE CALHOUN

Now Sarah why are you tearing up my roads in this here car!!

SARAH RECTOR

Well I'm sorry Archie...I really am but you see my son's friend Brooklyn here just does NOT know how to treat a fine piece of machinery like this and I needed to school him you see. You know pull out the blackboard and draw him the BIG picture. It may be a machine Archie but it needs to streeeeetch out on the road and ROOOOAR!

Archie scrunches up his face a bit and lets out a huff. He has given up.

ARCHIE CALHOUN

Well Sarah would you please keep the speed down in this classroom?

Sarah smiles at Archie and he returns one and starts to turn but before he finishes turning...

ARCHIE CALHOUN (CONT'D)

Sarah you might have been a fancy millionaire at one time but it's your good friends that remember you even when you don't have a nickel.

Archie fully turned and is heading to his motorcycle.

Sarah calls out to him.

SARAH RECTOR
You and Hazel still coming for
Sunday dinner?

Archie raises up his arm in a waving motion but does not turn.

ARCHIE CALHOUN
We wouldn't miss it Sarah, we
wouldn't miss it.

CUT INSIDE THE CAR

Sarah settles back into her driving position and we hear Archie's motorcycle turn over.

Brooklyn is looking over at Sarah, then he looks at Clarence and then back at Sarah.

BROOKLYN DAVIS
Did he say you are a millionaire?

Sarah is still looking forward, she hears the question and does not turn right away and then...

SARAH RECTOR
Was. (Beat) I was a millionaire
when I was very young. I was just a
teenager really.

BROOKLYN DAVIS
Well how did you get it. Did you
inherit it or something?

Clarence sees his mom's face and interjects.

CLARENCE RECTOR
Hey Brooklyn, that was a long time
ago for my mom and well she might
not want to talk about it.

BROOKLYN DAVIS
(Turning to Sarah) Oh I'm sorry
ma'am I didn't mean to be rude or
nosy but...

Sarah interrupts him.

SARAH RECTOR
(Looking at Clarence) It's ok
Clarence honey. It's just another
chapter in my book really.

Sarah turns and smiles at Brooklyn.

SARAH RECTOR (CONT'D)
Once in a while it's good to turn
back the pages a bit to see things
with a new light.

Sarah turns to face forward, turns the key and starts the engine. She puts it into gear, does a U-turn and then heads back home.

SARAH RECTOR (CONT'D)
You remember not too many
generations ago we were all slaves.
But everybody only thinks of slaves
being owned by some white cotton
farmer in the south. I am a
descendant of slaves that were
owned by the Muscogee Creek Nation
Indians, better known as the Creeks
that lived in what is now Oklahoma.
Well after the Civil War the Creeks
made their slaves they owned free
and also made us citizens of the
Indian Nations. And as part of the
treaty with the government and the
Indians they was given an
allotments of land and because we
were members of this tribe we ex-
slaves were given allotments of
land as well. Each one got 160
acres of land.

CUT TO AN OLD GOVERNMENT OFFICE

It is a long narrow room and the east side it is partitioned off by wood railings where behind clerks in bright white clean shirts and black pants with suspenders wrote in ledgers. On the west side there were two rows of chairs where black people waited to pick up their allotment certificates of the land.

Sarah's voiceover narrates the scene in the office.

We see Sarah's father Joe sitting in front of the rail talking to a clerk. Sitting next to him was his wife Rose and in her arms a baby Sarah.

SARAH RECTOR - VO

I was there when my Pappy Joe picked up the allotment of land I was granted. Of course I don't remember that day, I was just a baby in my Mamma Rose's arms. But my pappy signed for it and was happy to have an extra 160 acres to farm and make some money to keep us all, my sister Rebecca and Lou Alice and brother Joe Jr and the others to come fed.

CUT TO EXTERIOR - DAYTIME - THE LAND ALLOTMENT OF SARAH

Sarah's father Joe is standing surveying Sarah's land allotment. Beside him is wife Rose with baby Sarah in her arms. Joe does not look happy.

SARAH RECTOR - VO (CONT'D)

Of course the land allotments were administered by the white clerks and we had no choice in the matter. The land I was given was 50 miles northwest from where we lived and it wasn't all in one place. Forty acres was in one township and the rest was eight miles southwest with the Cimarron River running through it. But the biggest problem was...

CUT TO JOE PULLING HIS HAND UP WITH DRY SANDY SOIL

We see the sand run from his hands and then he looks up and we see the terrain.

SARAH RECTOR - VO (CONT'D)

The land was not farmable. The soil was terrible, would need a lot of work and there were rocks everywhere!

We see Joe rise up, brush the dirt off his hands, takes Sarah into his arms from Rose.

SARAH RECTOR - VO (CONT'D)

And having a yearly land tax of \$30 what could my Pappy do?

The camera pulls away from the three of them and as it does we see truly how terrible this land was.

CUT TO A CLOSE-UP OF TWO HANDS POURING LIQUID INTO A BEATEN
AND WEATHERED METAL COFFEE CUP

At the bottom of the screen there is a chyron that says...

"SARAH'S 160 ACRES, EASTERN OKLAHOMA - 1912"

Over the pouring is the voice of Rose Rector, Sarah's mother.

ROSE RECTOR

Sarah honey take this over to your
Pappy please.

We pull back and see Rose handing the cup to Sarah. Sarah is now 9 years old. Her dress is made up of cloth that her mother could find and stitched together by hand. It is not like a store bought dress but it was still made with love. She has a multi-colored hair band made by her mom that keeps her hair back. Sarah likes multi colored clothes.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Your Pappy thinks that we can find
some use for this land they gave
you but I'm doubtful. But he is
such a hard worker and does not
give up that easy.

Sarah just listens and stands in front of her mom holding the cup of cold water.

Rose stops for a moment and is looking at her second oldest. She gets a smile on her face.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Sarah honey, you have a light in
your eyes like your great granma. I
wished you knew her. Ahhh she would
have loved you child, she would.
She was always laughing EVEN when
it was tough for us and when I see
how you help your Pappy I see her.

There is a moment while she still looks at Sarah and then she comes back to the moment. She reaches out and sees the dress Sarah is wearing is getting frayed.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Will you look at this dress of
yours. It's already tearing up like
some raccoons bit into it. I'm
going to have to find some more
materials to make you a new one.

Sarah looks down at her dress and then back up to her mother's face.

SARAH RECTOR

Can I help you next time? I'd really like to momma. Maybe I can find some cloth with big yellow and orange flowers on it and enough for sister Rebecca too. I can help make her too!

Rose gets a smile on her face.

ROSE RECTOR

Ohhh child you better get your Pappy that drink of cold water before he dries up from thirst. We'll talk about the dress later ok?

SARAH RECTOR

(In a quiet polite tone) Yes momma.

Sarah turns and we see her walk over to her father as he is digging in the tough earth. He stops and takes a drink. We see he has a moment with Sarah where they smile at each other. Then Joe turns to Rose, smiles and nods at her. Rose returns, then gets up to reach some food wrapped up in paper to feed her husband, Sarah, Rebecca and brother Joe Jr.

We see a montage of clips of the family working together to try to get this soil to grow something to feed them all. Rebecca is using makeshift shovel and trying to dig, Sarah is using a rake to pull the rocks dug out of the soil, Joe Jr is putting the stones in a wooden bucket and dragging it to the pile already started and Rose is using a hoe to turn the soil.

CUT TO A BREAK IN THE ACTIVITY

Joe is wiping his brow with a rag and turns to Rose as she hands him another cup of water.

JOE RECTOR

(Doubtful and stern) What makes you think that company of Mr. Barnes will not just say forget about this land after shaking hands on the deal like the last one?

ROSE RECTOR

(Calmly and without drama) I know honey but if we don't take this money...even though it's less than the last deal, it will be hard to feed this family.

Joe stares at Rose for a moment with the seriousness of the situation.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

(With a little smile) Besides I don't think God would give us (waving her hand in the direction of their land) this land without a reason.

Joe is still staring but then a little smile appears on his face.

JOE RECTOR

Oh I hope so honey and this is not God showing his sense of humor.

Rose's eyes widen.

ROSE RECTOR

(Upset and defending God) JOE!! Don't you be bad mouthin' God! Ya here me!?

Sarah sees he mom's devotion and this rare heated enthusiasm.

Joe looks at Sarah with a quick wink and she tries to hide her smile.

JOE RECTOR

I'm sorry I didn't mean anything. It's just that...you know?...I'm trying my best to git a bit of farm out of Sarah's land...it's not easy.

Rose realizes their situation and Joe takes a couple steps to Rose, takes her in his arms and gives her a hug.

While they are hugging we hear the sound of a car engine. It stops and we hear the car door close.

ROSE RECTOR

Here's Mr. Barnes now. Be nice, we'll sign the deal and put it in God's hands.

CUT TO A SHORT TIME LATER

Joe and Mr. Barnes are standing at the back of the cargo truck with the back gate open which is being used as a desk.

Mr. Barnes is a white man in his early thirties, clean suit and a fresh white pressed shirt and tie. Not at all what one wears to a place like this.

There is a black leather bound book open with some papers being held down with a couple rocks but fluttering a bit.

FRANK BARNES

(He's enthusiastic like a used car salesman) Mr. Rector I don't know how to explain this...maybe it's the Lord guiding me, destiny?, I'm not sure but I have a good feeling about this, I do, I do. I bet the moment we put a drill in this here ground we're goin' to be seein' a mountain of black gold!

Joe looks at Rose smiling.

JOE RECTOR

Honey he sounds like he got bit by the same happy bug that you have.

There is a moment where they trade looks and smiles.

JOE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Ok, Mr. Barnes...where do ya want me to sign?

Mr. Barnes perks up and his smile gets bigger, if one could.

FRANK BARNES

And it's Frank, Mr. Rector...just call me Frank. (He smiles at Joe and then looks down at the papers) Down here on both of the certificates. Then I'll sign and you get to keep one and a copy of the lease deal. We've agreed to 50 cents an acre and I have a total of \$80 for you here right now in my pocket. (Smiling) And when we strike oil you...and your daughter...will make the standard 12.5 Percent of the oil produced.

JOE RECTOR

IF...you strike any oil.

FRANK BARNES

(Reaffirming) When we strike oil I
I will buy us all the biggest steak
dinner you have ever seen.

Joe looks at Rose and then back at Barnes.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

But since you're her guardian you
will need to administer and control
her business until she is
18...(Looking at Sarah and smiling)
she may want a bigger piece of
steak though.

Joe grins, looks at Rose, turns, dips the pen in the ink and
signs.

Joe hands the pen back to Barnes.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

And the most important signature we
need is Sarah's.

As he says this he dips the pen into the ink jar again and
quickly reaches his hand out towards Sarah. But with his
sudden movement Sarah gets scared and hides behind her mom.

Barnes looks at Joe and of this situation.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Oh I'm sorry...perhaps...does she
not know how to write?

JOE RECTOR

(Terse and his voice goes up) Of
course she can! What do you think
us ex slaves can't learn?!!

FRANK BARNES

No, no, no I'm sorry Mr. Rector...I
meant no offense at all...I wasn't
sure...you know...I'm sorry if I
made you uncomfortable. It wasn't
my intention.

ROSE RECTOR

It's ok, she's a little shy and you
scared her a bit.

Barnes looks their way and is humbled.

FRANK BARNES

(Lowers himself a bit) I'm sorry Sarah I didn't mean to scare you...I just get excited when I think good things are going to happen.

Sarah and Barnes look at each other for a moment. Barnes waits a bit to see if Sarah is going to be comfortable.

Rose bends down a bit and quietly encourages Sarah.

ROSE RECTOR

Sarah, it's ok honey. Go over there and put your name on the papers for Mr. Barnes. Show him how pretty your signature is. Just like we practiced honey.

Sarah looks at her mom and then back at Barnes.

Sarah steps forward and Barnes dips the pen in the ink again and hands it carefully to her.

We next see a close up of Sarah as she carefully puts her signature down letter by letter on both pages. Sarah is patient to make it look nice.

Her hand rises up when she finishes, we see the full signature written by this 10 year old.

Sarah hands the pen back to him. Barnes smiles. Sarah looks at her mom and she is smiling and we cut back to Sarah with a quiet look on her face.

Barnes picks up the two signed documents, blows on the ink a bit then folds one up, reaches in his pocket and pulls out a brown envelope with the \$80 in it.

FRANK BARNES

Here you go Mr. Rector. Your copy of the agreement and your \$80. You can count to make sure.

Rose looks at Joe and Joe turns to Barnes.

JOE RECTOR

(Sort of reluctant) That's OK Mr...I mean Frank.

Barnes smiles and reaches out his hand to shake.

They shake hands.

FRANK BARNES

We'll get started next week with the drilling team. I'll be in touch.

Barnes turns to Sarah with a smile.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Sarah soon you'll be able to buy all the fancy dresses you want and in any COLOR!

Sarah looks at her mom and then back at Barnes. Hold on her face showing the glimmer of excitement.

EXTERIOR - LATE AFTERNOON - DIRT ROAD

Rebecca and Sarah are walking down this packed dirt road on the way home.

Sarah is holding a cloth sack with a few grocery items inside that has weight to it.

REBECCA RECTOR

(Touching the sack) What do you think Mamma is going to make with all this and that big jar of molasses?

SARAH RECTOR

I don't know...a cake?

REBECCA RECTOR

No silly not for a cake. Oh! Maybe for some baked beans? I love Momma's beans. They're all sweet and good.

SARAH RECTOR

Maybe it's for cookies then?

REBECCA RECTOR

Cookies?, Cookies? Oh! Ya maybe some molasses cookies?

They walk along with Rebecca's mind on cookies.

SARAH RECTOR

Has Momma been teaching you cooking things?

REBECCA RECTOR

Well a couple things but mostly just stirrin' things and pouring some.

SARAH RECTOR

I don't think I'll cook as good as Momma.

REBECCA RECTOR

(Looks at her younger sister) No you'll do fine...I'll help you.

Sarah looks and smiles at Rebecca.

SARAH RECTOR

You know Becca I wish I had a lot of money so we could go to one of those fancy hotels in the city. You know and have someone cook for Momma and us?

REBECCA RECTOR

(Snickers a bit) Oh can you imagine? Momma wouldn't know what to do. She'd probably end up in the kitchen to help them cook.

They chuckle and then something catches Rebecca's attention.

REBECCA RECTOR (CONT'D)

Oh look...there's the Cooper brothers.

Rebecca gives a sigh of resignation and dread.

Sarah looks ahead.

We see their POV of the three Cooper brothers.

Ahead we see the Cooper brothers standing next to a homemade wooden wagon by the side of the road.

Elijah is the youngest, age 7. He doesn't say much. He is somewhat shy.

Percy is 11, a year older than Rebecca. He is kind and a little awkward with his height. He is taller than his brothers by a couple inches, handsome and athletic.

Abraham is 12. You can see he has an attitude just by the way he talks and moves. He is short but tries to be the tough older brother.

The brothers turn as the Rector sisters approach.

Abraham looks at them condescendingly.

ABRAHAM COOPER
Oh look, it's the Pecker sisters.

Percy looks despairingly at his older brother.

Without missing a beat Rebecca chimes in.

REBECCA RECTOR
Oh Sarah...look, it's the Poop-er
Brothers.

Percy turns to Rebecca surprised by her comeback.

Elijah has a smirk on.

Abraham's brow furrows.

ABRAHAM COOPER
THAT'S COOPER!!

REBECCA RECTOR
That's what I said.

Percy gets a smile and Rebecca smiles back. Percy likes Rebecca.

REBECCA RECTOR (CONT'D)
So what are you doin' here with the
wagon?

PERCY COOPER
Abe's going to ride it down the
hill.

We see the road stretching downwards. It's not steep but steep enough.

REBECCA RECTOR
So when's he goin' to do it? Or is
he just going to just stand there
flapping his gums.

ABRAHAM COOPER
Hey!! I'm going to do it!

REBECCA RECTOR
When? Are you chicken?

ABRAHAM COOPER

I'm not chicken! I'm going to do it
right now!

REBECCA RECTOR

You're not scared to go down this
hill in this...this thing??!

We see the wooden wagon in its homemade charm.

ABRAHAM COOPER

(Looking straight at her)
This thing? I built this thing and
its built tough! Not like girls.
Girls are like old trees. They
break so easy. No girl would do a
ride like this 'cause all girls are
scar-dee-cats!

Sarah quietly speaks up.

SARAH RECTOR

I'll do it.

They all turn towards Sarah but Elijah blurts out an
uncomfortable snort laugh.

Abraham turns to Sarah.

ABRAHAM COOPER

HAH!! You !!?

Sarah stands confident.

SARAH RECTOR

I will.

They look at Sarah.

REBECCA RECTOR

My sister can and I bet you she can
go the farthest down this road.
Farther than you can!

ABRAHAM COOPER

You'd bet me that she can go
farther? Whatta ya got to bet with?

Rebecca reaches into her pockets and pulls a couple things
out.

REBECCA RECTOR

(Showing her hands) I got a nickel
and my lucky rabbit's foot.

ABRAHAM COOPER
Ha ha ha, that's funny.

REBECCA RECTOR
I'll bet you what I got for your wagon.

ABRAHAM COOPER
My wagon!!?? Are you kiddin'?

There is a moment.

Then Percy speaks up.

PERCY COOPER
Do it Abe.

Abraham turns to his tall brother.

ABRAHAM COOPER
What? Are you crazy? Bet my wagon against a rabbit's foot and a nickel???

PERCY COOPER
Well you're the one that says girls can't do things?

Rebecca discreetly looks and smiles at Percy.

PERCY COOPER (CONT'D)
If you mean what you say what have you go to lose? A nickel will buy some candy for us and you'll have a lucky rabbit's foot too.

Abraham thinks for a moment. He turns to Rebecca.

ABRAHAM COOPER
(Smiling) Ok, let's do it! But I will go first. Your sister will probably hurt herself and worse than that, wreck my wagon.

REBECCA RECTOR
Ok by us...right sis?

We see Sarah just stand there and smile.

ABRAHAM COOPER
Ok, Elijah you go down there...way down there so you can bring the wagon back up.

Elijah gives him a dirty look.

ABRAHAM COOPER (CONT'D)
What? I'll give you some candy
we'll buy with the nickel.

Elijah thinks about it, then just starts off down the hill.

Some moments pass as Elijah gets into place.

Abraham moves the wagon into place. He climbs into the wagon on his knees and takes hold of the handle of the wagon and makes the wheels straight. He looks to Percy.

ABRAHAM COOPER (CONT'D)
Ok, Percy...give me a little push
ok.

Sarah and Rebecca watch as Percy steps over behind the wagon and places his hands on the back of Abraham.

ABRAHAM COOPER (CONT'D)
Hey Percy...you like jellybeans?

PERCY COOPER
Don't mind them.

ABRAHAM COOPER
Ok, we'll get some in a bit.

They smile at each other.

ABRAHAM COOPER (CONT'D)
Ok, ready.

With that Percy gives Abraham a push and off he flies down the hill.

We see Abraham picking up speed on the dirt road hill. The whole wagon shakes with the vibrations created by the hard packed dirt.

On board the wagon Abraham holds on. He's got a big grin and he howls with excitement as he picks up more speed.

We cut back and forth from the wagon and Abraham to Percy with Sarah and Rebecca.

Abraham is doing well and picking up more speed as he covers more ground getting farther down the road.

Then...he hits a little pot hole but because of the speed the wagon shakes and starts to swerve.

Abraham tries to control the wagon but hitting that hole sends him straight into the ditch.

The wagon flips over into the ditch and lands on top of Abraham.

We see the reactions of Percy, Sarah and Rebecca.

Elijah runs over and Percy runs down the hill to get to Abraham to see if he is ok.

Elijah and Percy reach Abraham. Percy lifts the wagon off him and reveal Abraham who is covered in dirt and debris and has an angry look on his face.

PERCY COOPER

You ok?

Abraham gives him a "what do you think?" look.

Abraham looks around him and up the hill to Sarah and Rebecca.

ABRAHAM COOPER

I got pretty far right?

Percy looks up and back.

PERCY COOPER

Ya Abe, pretty good.

ABRAHAM COOPER

Ya right!! Ha! I bet she won't get 10 feet!

Abraham gets up from the ground and turns the wagon over on it's wheels.

ABRAHAM COOPER (CONT'D)

Here Elijah, take the wagon up to them. We'll be eatin' some candy very soon.

Elijah takes the wagon away and up the hill.

CUT TO SARAH AND REBECCA AT THE TOP OF THE HILL

REBECCA

You ok doin' this?

Sarah looks at her, then down the hill, then back to Rebecca.

SARAH RECTOR

I don't know...but I'm going to try...besides, it looks like it could be fun!

At that point Elijah arrives with the wagon. He hands the handle to Rebecca.

REBECCA

(Looking at Elijah with a little smile) Thanks...Pooper.

Elijah turns in response. He stares for a moment, then a smile grows, he turns and walks away back down the hill.

Rebecca hands the wagon over to Sarah.

REBECCA RECTOR

Well, here you go.

Sarah is climbing into the wagon the same way Abraham did on his knees but she puts one foot on the ground.

REBECCA RECTOR (CONT'D)

You know you don't have to do this...we can just turn around and...

SARAH RECTOR

Becca my arms get tired carrying groceries and stuff all the time and a wagon would make it easier.

With that...she pushes off down the hill.

And off Sarah goes down this packed dirt road.

Because she is obviously lighter than Abraham she is picking up speed faster.

Her body shakes on this wooden wagon and her face has a neutral expression bordering on unsure.

Then with more speed something happens inside of her.

There is an awakening, a fuse that has been lit, a lightbulb that is getting brighter...with the speed.

A smile gets bigger until it gets so big that her mouth opens and she howls!

Sarah lets out a long howl.

We cut to where the Cooper brothers are standing. They look with some confusion.

Up on the top of the hill Rebecca looks down and with Sarah's howl Rebecca smiles.

Back in the wagon with Sarah. She is hanging on, shaking and bouncing but happy.

She's getting farther and farther and all of a sudden she is within a number of feet where the Cooper brothers are standing.

Then...she passes them all.

Elijah just stands there with his hands in his pocket.

Percy just looks in a sort of admiration of Sarah's gutsiness.

Abraham scowls at her as she passes. The scowl builds into frustration and his fist clench and he shakes in anger.

Back in the wagon with Sarah she sees the Cooper brothers as passes and knows she has won the wooden wagon.

Then...a loud horn **BLASTS** and disrupts her victorious composure.

Sarah turns to see an oil truck coming around the small bend in the road straight towards her.

There are no brakes in this wagon of course and she still is moving quite fast and heading straight to the grill of this truck.

Sarah tries to raise her right leg in order to push off the wagon and propel herself into the ditch on the right side of the road but the wagon starts to wobble a bit.

She holds on and shifting her weight to the left balances things out and manages to get her right leg over the side of the wagon. She carefully lowers her foot to the dirt road and her heel sticks into the dirt and a wash of dirt flies backwards.

We see the look n Sarah's face. It hurts but if she is going to stop she needs to dig in.

So she digs in and her heel starts to show blood and the blood mixes in with the dirt.

But she is slowing down and with her heel dug in creating a groove.

With the leg down it pulls her to the right.

The pull to the right forces the wagon into the ditch JUST as the old truck passes honking it's horn in more blasts.

CUT TO THE DITCH WITH SARAH

Sarah lies on her back in the ditch and the wagon intact lays on it's side a couple feet next to her.

She is laying there a little confused but happy to be alive. There is leaves and dirt in her hair, her clothes are dirty.

We hear footsteps running, coming closer to her.

First on the scene is the Cooper brothers.

PERCY COOPER

You ok? You almost got hit by the truck. Why didn't you just jump off the wagon?

SARAH RECTOR

(Smiling) What do mean? And wreck MY wagon???!!!

ABRAHAM COOPER

It's my wagon, it's not yours!

Just then Rebecca comes up from behind them just as Abraham said this.

REBECCA RECTOR

Hey, hey, hey Abe...a bet's a bet. You made the bet for the wagon and Sarah won it fair and square.

ABRAHAM COOPER

But I hit a hole! If I didn't hit that I would have gone farther than she would ever get!

REBECCA RECTOR

But you...

PERCY COOPER

(Looking at Abraham)...didn't Abe. Sarah flew past you and if it wasn't for that truck I bet she would still be going.

Sarah hears this in the ditch and smiles.

Abraham is quiet and just has another version of the scowl on his face.

PERCY COOPER (CONT'D)
(Reaches over and down to Sarah)
Come on, let's get you up.

Sarah rises up and as she tries to stand she flinches when her ripped up right heel touches the ground. She grimaces and lets out a little pain grunt.

REBECCA RECTOR
Oh Sarah, look at your heel...it's all bloody.

PERCY COOPER
You need to clean that up.

Percy reaches into his pants pockets looking for a hankie or something.

Into frame comes a hand and a bandana. Percy looks over to Elijah as Elijah stands there extending his hand with the bandana. Percy is surprised by this. Rebecca sees the bandana and reaches for it.

REBECCA RECTOR
Thank you Elijah. That is very nice of you.

Rebecca hands the bandana to Sarah.

SARAH RECTOR
Thanks Elijah.

Elijah looks down a bit, shy from the attention.

Sarah bends down and ties the bandana around the bottom of her foot and around her ankle to hold it in place. She stands.

SARAH RECTOR (CONT'D)
There...good as new. (Beat) Ok, sis...we better get home. Mamma has some cooking to do with the stuff in that bag.

Sarah turns over the wagon, takes the bag from Rebecca and puts it in the wagon, turns and starts to walk away a couple feet, favoring the right foot. Rebecca is still standing there. Sarah turns.

SARAH RECTOR (CONT'D)
Ya comin'??

Rebecca turns to the Cooper brothers.

REBECCA RECTOR
Well...I better go. See ya 'round.

Percy watches her as she starts to leave.

PERCY COOPER
See ya 'round Rebecca.

Rebecca turns and smiles at Percy.

REBECCA RECTOR
Oh...I hope so.

Rebecca turns and catches up with Sarah and off they go down the road to home.

CUT TO EXTERIOR NIGHT - DECEMBER

We see the two room shack that the Rector family lives in. It is a cold night with a dusting of snow on the ground. A cold wind blows.

CUT TO INTERIOR OF HOUSE

The only lights on inside are by candlelight and there are only a few that are lit.

We see Mamma Rose, Rebecca and Sarah. Because of no heating other than a pot belly stove they are wearing an extra layer. Their clothes are a bit ragged and showing some wear. They are doing the dishes from dinnertime. Joe Jr is sitting wrapped in a blanket with his little sister Lou Alice and father Joe is stoking the fire in the pot belly stove.

Mamma Rose crosses near where Joe is to pick a metal plate he was using.

ROSE RECTOR
(Quietly to Joe) I know there wasn't much for dinner but you didn't eat all of yours.

JOE RECTOR
Well I'm fine honey, I got enough...besides these kids need it more...they're growing and they need it more than me.

Mamma Rose looks at him and understands. She returns to the water tub to wash Joe's metal dish. Rebecca and Sarah step up to help with the cleaning of the dishes.

It is quiet and all we hear is the crackling of the fire and the washing of the dishes.

From the quiet Mamma Rose softly starts to sing.

She sings the first few lines and then Rebecca joins her.

Rebecca smiles and gently nudges Sarah and then she joins in.

Joe looks over with love.

It is a sort of crossover hymn and blues song. Mamma Rose sings the verse once and then it repeats with Rebecca and then Sarah joining in...

ROSE RECTOR

*"Looking for hope, in the a storm oh lord,
Looking for hope in a storm,
The sun will shine through,
When we all believe in you,
Looking for hope in a storm oh lord"*

Rebecca and Sarah starts to join in.

*"Looking for hope, in the a storm oh lord,
Looking for hope in a storm,
The sun will shine through,
When we all believe in you,
Looking for hope in a storm oh lord"*

They finish and there is a knock at their door.

Joe looks to Rose, shakes his head, picks up a stout branch of wood and walks to the door cautiously.

Joe is at the door and calls to whomever is there.

JOE RECTOR

Who's there!?

A voice is heard from behind the door.

FRANK BARNES

It's me Joe, Frank Barnes.

Joe looks at Rose and then opens the door. The wind has picked up and blows Barnes into the room.

Barnes steps in, takes his hat off and smiles at them gathered. He is carrying a canvas sack that seems to be weighed down a bit with a few things.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Hi Joe. (He looks over at the ladies) Hi Rose, hey Rebecca, hey Sarah...(He sees Joe Jr.) Hey there little man.

He turns back to Joe.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Joe, I know you were looking for me and I have not got back to you. I'm sorry. So I decided it would best to drive out to see you all, it's Christmas time and...

JOE RECTOR

(Joe cuts him off) I heard that they struck some oil on the Morgan land. It was a pretty good one and his land is not far from Sarah's so...

FRANK BARNES

I know Joe, I heard as well. Trust me Joe we are digging and digging all over your land. I know I may have been confident when we made the deal but we need to be patient.

Momma Rose looks at Barnes and then at Joe with a look of "please be nice".

JOE RECTOR

I know Mister...Frank...but you can probably tell (looking around them) things are a little tough these days.

There is a moment, Barnes looks around.

FRANK BARNES

Well my wife Maria said if I'm coming over here I need to make sure I don't come empty handed. Well Joe one thing led to another and I brought a few things for your family...I hope you don't mind?

Joe looks at Mamma Rose and she gives him a smile and nod.

ROSE RECTOR

That is mighty nice of you and your wife Frank but...

FRANK BARNES

My wife said that you would say "but" and I am NOT! to listen to you.

Franks reaches over to the canvas sack and rests it on the old wooden table. He reaches in.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Now it's not much but Maria thought we should share with what we have. (Smiling) She's Italian and I don't argue with her.

Franks pulls out the first item. It's a paper bag. He looks in, smells and a smile comes to his face.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Mmmmm, it's some of Maria's cookies from her mom's recipe. It's for the little ones.

He hands it to Rose and then reaches in again. Pulls some work gloves.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Maria says that everyone needs to have a pair to make sure one doesn't hurt their hands. So here you go Joe.

Joe takes them and looks them over.

JOE RECTOR

They're very nice but you know Frank I've never had a pair of gloves before...thanks.

Frank reaches in again and pulls out a book.

FRANK BARNES

Oh this is for Rebecca. It's got a wizard, a witch, a talking scarecrow and girl on a search for home.

Rebecca looks at her mom and Rose nods her head in the direction of Frank.

ROSE RECTOR
Go ahead honey.

Rebecca takes the book and she quietly thanks him.

REBECCA RECTOR
Thank you sir. Thank you very much.

Rebecca turns and returns to her mom. Frank reaches in again and pulls out a little drawstring bag. He hands it to Rose.

FRANK BARNES
This is for you Rose. Maria knows that you are a good Christian woman...well I told her...and she wanted you to have this.

Rose reaches into the bag and pulls out an old small silver crucifix. She looks at it and then to Frank.

ROSE RECTOR
Well Mister...Frank, it is very nice but I can't. This is very valuable and it is your wife's and...

FRANK BARNES
She told me that you might say that but she told me to tell you that she prayed and God told her that you should have it. Maria is a strong woman like yourself but says we all need the lord on our side.

Rose looks at the crucifix again and is touched.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)
Well that's what she told me and again Rose...I do NOT argue with Maria.

He chuckles and Rose chuckles as well.

Frank looks into the bag, smiles and reaches in again.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)
Ooooh this is what Maria wanted Sarah to have. She wasn't too sure on the size, she made it herself and thought Sarah would like it.

Frank pulls out a beautiful red dress with small white polkadots on it and a black cloth wrap belt.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Here you go Sarah.

Sarah is hesitant but her mom nudges her a bit and she takes the couple steps and takes it from Frank.

Sarah holds it in her hands. This is really her first real dress. Her clothes up to that point have been boys clothes, pants and shirts and clothes her mother would stitch. She looks at the colors and she is smiling.

ROSE RECTOR

Oh isn't it pretty Sarah?

Sarah turns to her mom and smiles. Rose nods her head to Sarah and she turns to Frank.

SARAH RECTOR

Thank you sir, it's very pretty.

ROSE RECTOR

Honey, you can wear it to church this Sunday. You will shine like a brand new penny.

Sarah puffs up a bit not knowing this unsure feeling of pride with an article of clothing before. She is still smiling.

There is a moment while they are all taking in this act of kindness.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Can we get you something Frank, some coffee or...

FRANK BARNES

Oh no Rose...I'm fine. It's late and I should get going home to Maria but thank you.

Frank gets up, folds the canvas bag and heads for the door.

Joe gets up and follows him to the door and Rose is behind Joe while the kids are preoccupied with what Frank has brought.

As Frank reaches the door he turns to Rose and Joe.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

(Quietly) You heard what happened to the Sells children right?

Joe looks at Rose and then back to Frank.

JOE RECTOR

Yes, Herbert was 14 and Estella was 12. What kind of person would blow up a house with two kids in it? They had no chance for God's sake...they were asleep.

FRANK BARNES

They say Herbert was killed instantly but poor Estella...well...she was trapped under the burning timbers.

Rose's hand rises up to her mouth as she struggles to hold back tears.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

And they just hit oil on the kid's land last month. Their lives were just starting to change for the good.

JOE RECTOR

Greed.

Frank looks at Joe.

FRANK BARNES

Yes Joe. I had heard that they think they might know who it was. This guy, Will Irwin was seen arguing with their stepfather trying to buy their land. I hear that the stepdad was in on this too.

ROSE RECTOR

Their stepdad?

FRANK BARNES

Yes Rose. (Beat) Look I know you two are good parents and you're their legal guardians but you may want to consider having an appointed guardian, someone who knows the systems and if and when Sarah's land or any of the kid's land produces any oil he would be able to keep things supervised and safe.

Joe looks at Frank.

JOE RECTOR
You mean a white man...

Frank is quiet for a moment.

FRANK BARNES
Joe I know it's not the best but it
could keep things safer for all.

Joe looks at Rose and then back at Frank.

JOE RECTOR
But how do we know that this person
is...well, you know, not...

FRANK BARNES
Crooked?

JOE RECTOR
Ya, not crooked.

FRANK BARNES
(Looking at them both) Do you trust
me?

JOE RECTOR
Well...we ain't seen anything yet
not to.

ROSE RECTOR
(Giving him a look) Oh Joe?

Frank looks at Rose.

FRANK BARNES
It's ok Rose...I understand he has
every right to feel that way after
they way you have been and the
Indians been treated. But let me
tell you if you go to the court you
will never know who they will give
you. But I know a good man who's a
guardian for a couple others that I
have known for years and I trust
him and he could keep an eye on
things for you.

Rose looks at Joe.

ROSE RECTOR
Who is this gentleman?

FRANK BARNES

His name is T.J. Porter. He's a farmer and cattle rancher that lives in Beland with his family, just a few miles south of here.

ROSE RECTOR

Is he a Christian man Frank?

FRANK BARNES

Well m'am I don't know but he and his wife Rosa have a family of 8 and they are well taken care of.

ROSE RECTOR

His wife's name is Rosa?

FRANK BARNES

Yes Rose.

ROSE RECTOR

(Smiling) Well with a name like that I like her already.

They all smile and there is a moment. Joe looks at Rose and then at Frank.

JOE RECTOR

Ok Frank why don't you and I go see this T.J. Porter then.

Frank reaches for the doorknob and turns.

FRANK BARNES

I know it's a little tough but we all must keep the faith. (He smiles) Well that's what my wife Maria keeps telling me.

Frank opens the door.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Merry Christmas to you all and we will see what 1913 brings us all.

Frank exits with the wind howling.

INTERIOR FRANK BARNES CAR - FEBRUARY 1913 - SUNDAY

We see Joe in the passenger seat and Sarah in the back seat. Both of them have their Sunday clothes on having just come from church.

Frank and Joe are taking in the scenery of the farmlands passing by them. There are sections of fenced off areas. The fence posts are big and painted white. There are multiple strands of thick gauge wire that span in between each post to retain the cattle inside.

JOE RECTOR

(To Sarah) Look over there honey.
There's a bunch of baby cows.

Sarah sits up and scoots over to the right window to see what her dad is commenting about.

The baby cows are cute and it has captured Sarah's attention.

FRANK BARNES

Have you seen baby cows before Sarah?

JOE RECTOR

Oh she sure has a few years ago at my uncle's farm. He had three newly born when we were visiting. Frank, Sarah got mad at her pappy because he wouldn't let her bring the baby cows home with us.

FRANK BARNES

Really Sarah?

We see the slightly embarrassed face of Sarah reacting. It says "yes, yes, yes I did".

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Well I think Mr. Porter may have some baby cows for you to see.

Sarah has a smile.

Frank slyly looks over at Joe with a slight smile.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

I guess I shouldn't tell you that one of his dogs just had puppies a week ago.

Hearing that Sarah's eyes light up.

Joe gives Frank a look of "Really Frank?, really?".

Frank gets a smile.

CUT TO THE CAR PULLING INTO A LONG DRIVEWAY

As they turn in there is an archway with a sign that says "Porter Ranch".

Frank's car pulls up to the side of a modest farmhouse.

They all exit the car. It is quiet.

We see them walk to the front door. Frank knocks and waits.

It is still quiet. Nobody comes to the door.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

Well that's odd. I told T.J. that we were coming over.

Frank is ready to knock again and we hear and really a loud moo of a cow in distress. Then a male voice yelling something.

Frank looks at Joe and Sarah.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

That doesn't sound good. The barn is in back.

Frank exits the front door area and Joe and Sarah follow.

We see the barn and the mooing again is really loud.

They walk quickly towards the door when T.J.'s wife Rosa comes out of the door. She sees Frank.

ROSA PORTER

Frank! Oh good you're here. We have a cow in trouble. Can you go in and give T.J. a hand?

Frank doesn't know how to respond. He is not a cattle man. Joe sees the uncertainty with Frank.

JOE RECTOR

(To Rosa) What seems to be the problem?

(CONT'D)

ROSA PORTER

One is giving birth but the calf is stuck or something. He's trying to help pull it out but it's all slippery. I need to get some big towels or something.

Joe looks at Frank.

JOE RECTOR

Ok, come on Frank.

Joe steps away and heads into the barn. Frank and Sarah follow behind.

CUT TO THE INTERIOR OF THE BARN

We see Thomas Jefferson Porter or better known as T.J. Porter. He is about 5ft 11, short receding hairline and a big mustache. He is wearing the suit he wore to church that day.

We see him in the stall with the cow and trying to pull the calf out and he keeps slipping. He turns when he sees Frank, Joe and Sarah.

T.J. PORTER

Oh Frank, I'm sorry, you must be Joe and Sarah...got a little bit of an emergency here. Frank can you give me a hand over here?

Frank doesn't respond that quickly. Joe steps up.

JOE RECTOR

Let me take a look.

Joe steps into the stall and in behind the cow.

T.J. PORTER

(Standing next to Joe) Came home from church and she was howling. I came in and found her shaking and trying to get the calf out. I had my hand around the leg that was sticking out but it's too slippery.

JOE RECTOR

It's a breech birth. I've seen this on my uncle's farm. We need to get that leg back inside her.

T.J. PORTER

Excuse me?

JOE RECTOR

The other leg must be twisted.

Without missing a beat Joe steps up and takes the calf leg and pushes it gently back inside. With his hand partially inside he slides his right arm deep inside of the cow.

Frank and Sarah watch in awe.

We see Joe focused inside the cow. There is a look of determination. He slides his arm out and he has both hoofs in his hand and trying to pull. It's not that easy. Joe looks around.

JOE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Sarah, see that rope hanging behind you? Pull it down and bring it to me.

Sarah turns, sees the rope and pulls it down and brings it to her pappy. Sarah now sees up close what is going on.

Joe ties the rope around both hooves of the calf that is part way out. He then ties the rest of the rope around his body. Joe starts to pull but it's slippery from the discharge and the straw on the floor of the stall.

T.J. PORTER

Here let me help you.

T.J. steps over next to the stall wall and plants his feet in front of Joe.

T.J. PORTER (CONT'D)

Put your feet against mine for leverage.

Joe listens and does what he is instructed. It gives Joe something solid to be able to pull. He starts to pull harder.

We see the calf is slowly coming out but it's very tough. There is progress and even more comes out and it's getting easier. T.J. reaches his arms out and takes hold of the rope near Joe's hands and starts to pull as well. The calf slides right out and on to the floor. Joe and T.J. both slide to the floor.

T.J. crawls over to see the calf's condition.

T.J. PORTER (CONT'D)

(With his hand on the calf) I think it may be dead.

Joe looks over.

Joe slides over next to T.J. and wipes debris from the calf's face. He listens for a moment.

JOE RECTOR

Quick! Give me a hand. We need to hang the calf face down over the stall.

Joe and T.J. grab the calf and lift it up and over the stall wall. It's body was hanging over. Joe steps on the other side to where the calf's head is dangling.

SARAH RECTOR

Is it ok pappy??

Joe is focused. He reaches up to the side of the chest of the calf, forms a fist and starts to pound the chest. There is embryonic fluids dripping down off the calf.

T.J. PORTER

Is it ok Joe?

JOE RECTOR

If this little guy came out normal it would have hung like this outside of momma and the fluids would have drained out it's mouth.

Joe pounds some more.

JOE RECTOR (CONT'D)

(To T.J.) Do you have a rag or something?

Just then Rosa walks in with old cloths.

ROSA PORTER

Here you go.

And she hands it over to Joe. He starts to wipe the face of the calf.

ROSA PORTER (CONT'D)

I don't think it's breathing. Is it dead?

There are looks of concern exchanged.

JOE RECTOR

Not if I can help it.

Joe's hand reaches into the calf's mouth. He is moving his hand and then a mass of fluids expel out of the calf's mouth and over Joe's hand to the floor.

He reaches farther into the calf's mouth to initiate a gag reflex. There is a snort, more fluids come out and it breaths it's first breath and a little moo.

There are smiles all around and Joe keeps wiping the debris and fluids from the calf's face and nostrils.

JOE RECTOR (CONT'D)

Give me a hand and we'll put him
next to momma.

T.J. and Joe lift the calf again and place it next to momma and she starts to clean it.

They all look at this miracle.

T.J. looks at Joe covered in fluids and straw.

T.J. PORTER

Oh I'm sorry about your suit Joe.

Joe finally looks down at his appearance and returns a smile to T.J.

JOE RECTOR

Oh Sarah your momma is not going to
be happy with me.

ROSA PORTER

I'll get some of T.J.'s clothes for
you and I'll see if I can clean
yours up a bit. (Looking at T.J.)
And you too!

Joe and T.J. exchange smiles.

T.J. PORTER

Thank you Joe. I don't think things
would have turned out the way they
did if it wasn't for you.

T.J. reaches over to shake Joe's hand.

Joe reaches over and shakes his hand but they both realize that there is still fluids and debris on both their hands. Their hands pull away and they laugh out loud.

CUT TO EXTERIOR - PORTER HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON - FRANK'S CAR

We see Frank standing next to his car. Sarah approaches him. She is wearing a dark coat that is slightly big for her and she is struggling a bit holding other clothes over her arm.

Frank holds the back seat door for her while she puts the clothes in the back seat. Rosa Porter is following behind her with even more clothes. Frank turns to see this.

FRANK BARNES

Oh Rosa this is very kind of you
but...

ROSA PORTER

Nonsense. The kids have outgrown
these and I'd rather have them
being used than sitting in a trunk
in the attic.

Rosa puts the clothes in the back seat with the others. She stand back and looks down and smiles at Sarah as she stands next to the car.

ROSA PORTER (CONT'D)

Now Sarah you make sure you share
these with your brothers and
sisters, ok? Your mamma may need to
adjust them (Rosa reaches down and
is rolling up the sleeves a bit of
the coat Sarah is wearing) but I'm
sure she'll be ok with that.

Exiting the Porter front door is T.J. Porter and Joe. Both men are wearing older work clothes. Joe is wearing some of T.J.'s clothes. They are slightly big for him. They stop before stepping down and over to Frank's car.

T.J. PORTER

Joe I can't thank you enough for
saving that calf's life. Sorry your
Sunday clothes got a little dirty.
Rosa will clean them up and I will
bring them by this week when I come
to visit.

JOE RECTOR

Well I think Sarah has already
named it.

T.J. PORTER

(Smiling) Oh really? What name?

JOE RECTOR

T.J.

T.J. PORTER

My name?

JOE RECTOR

No...the "T" is for your name
Thomas and the "J" is for my name
Joe.

T.J. PORTER

Ahhh she's a clever child Joe and I
am happy that you would like me as
her guardian.

JOE RECTOR

Well T.J. I can tell you have
respect for life, a straight
shooter and your children mean a
lot to you. And that's good enough
for me.

T.J. reaches out and shakes Joe's hand once again but this
time places his left hand on top of the shaking hands.

T.J. PORTER

Joe, I believe in being a good
person just like my father taught
me. He would say "a man will always
do good if he is given an honest
path". And I will always walk that
path with you Joe, for Sarah.

There is a moment when they look at each other and then the
hands release.

Joe gets into the front seat. Frank is behind the wheel
already. He leans out the window.

FRANK BARNES

Thanks T.J. And I'm glad things
have worked out with Joe.

Rosa steps up next to her husband.

T.J. PORTER

How could I refuse being Sarah's
guardian. (He looks at Sarah in the
back seat) She's a special child
Frank.

Frank fires up the car, puts it in gear and drives forward.
T.J. and Rosa wave goodbye to Sarah.

INTERIOR - RECTOR'S SHACK - MARCH 3RD 1913

The light is low and we are behind Rose as she walks towards their wooden kitchen table. Around the table is Joe along with the rest of the kids.

Sarah is holding a pie and inserted in the pie is one small candle that has been used a few times.

The pie is put down in front of Sarah. The candlelight reflects and flickers on her face.

ROSE RECTOR

Ok, let's sing for Sarah's 11th birthday. (Beat) Happy Birthday to you...

They all join in and finish.

Rose starts to cut the pie up into slices.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

It's not too much, Mrs. Lewis had some extra flour and inside is some berries you all helped pick.

JOE RECTOR

Oh Rose I'm sure it's all good. As long as it's sweet I have no problems.

Rebecca chuckles a bit.

JOE RECTOR (CONT'D)

(Smiling) What's funny Becca?

REBECCA RECTOR

Is that why you like momma so much, 'cause she's sweet.

There is a little chuckling among them all.

Joe looks to Rose, she sees, smiles and then looks at the kids.

JOE RECTOR

Oh Becca she's sweeter than a bucket of berries...but you know why I love her so?

Joe looks to the kids, waiting for an answer.

JOE RECTOR (CONT'D)
'Cause she gave me more sweet
things to love.

With that Joe reaches over and tickles the kids.

There is laughter from all.

Smiling Rose breaks things up.

ROSE RECTOR
Ok you all, let's have some pie.

CUT TO LATER AFTER THE PIE

Rose and the girls are drying some dishes.

Rebecca hands Rose the last plate.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)
Thanks Becca.

Sarah is drying a coffee mug.

REBECCA RECTOR
I'm tired mamma, I'm going to bed.

ROSE RECTOR
Yes honey...don't forget to say
your prayers.

REBECCA RECTOR
Yes mamma.

Rebecca leaves, leaving Rose and Sarah in the low light.

Sarah hands Rose the dried mug. She turns to go.

SARAH RECTOR
Good night momma. The pie was so
good, thank you.

Sarah turns and Rose calls her.

ROSE RECTOR
Come and sit with me for a moment.

Sarah returns to the table and sits.

The kerosene lamp illuminates the two of them sitting at the
table.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

When I was in town the other week I saw a beautiful dress in the window. Not for me, for you. I wanted to buy it for your birthday but...well honey...we need to spend money to feed us all. I'm sorry.

Sarah of course as a little girl disappointed but she puts on a brave face.

SARAH RECTOR

Mamma, it's ok, I...

Rose stops her.

ROSE RECTOR

But I have something for you that I think is pretty special.

Sarah is now curious.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

When we were still owned by the Creek tribe your great grandma became friends with the shaman of the tribe. The shaman was like a doctor and a preacher all rolled in one that they say could talk to the spirits plus made the medicines for the tribe.

Rose picks up a small burlap sack, reaches in and pulls out another smaller burlap sack.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

(Rose pulls out of the smaller sack a small hand stitched human like figure) This shaman made this one for her. He told her that she should keep inside the little sack and carry it with her wherever she goes as it will protect her from bad things and bring good things into her life.

Rose hands it to Sarah and she holds it delicately and turns it in her hands.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

She gave it to my grandmother, she gave it to my mother and now I am giving it to you.

Sarah looks up to Rose and has no words.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)
(Smiling) Now you know I think God
is the one that takes care of us
but...if this can help ol God out
sometimes...I'm ok with that.

Sarah and Rose share smiles.

Sarah gets up and gives her mother a hug and a kiss.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)
Ok now darlin'...you need to get
off to bed ok?

SARAH RECTOR
Ok momma...thank you momma.

Rose smiles at her, picks up the small sack and hands it to her.

ROSE RECTOR
Now here put it in the sack. It
will keep it safe as it protects
you.

Sarah puts it in the smaller sack, turns and exits.

CUT TO EXTERIOR OF RECTOR'S SHACK - DAYTIME - AUGUST

We see Joe Rector from behind sitting on a stool. He has a hammer in his hand and he is tapping into something.

CUT TO OVER HIS SHOULDER

We see the hammer in his right hand and in his left is a thin metal spike. The hammer comes down and hits the spike which is resting on a leather belt. The spike penetrates the weathered leather strip.

Joe puts the hammer and spike down, rises from the small stool he was sitting on but holding on to his pants. He slides the leather belt into the loops of his pants and tugs it tighter now and finds the new hole he just made.

As he is standing there adjusting the belt a short Black man approaches him.

They converse but we do not hear their exchange. Their heads nod and gestations with their hands.

It stops and the short black man raises his arms, smiles, turns and walks away.

Joe heads over to Rose and family who are all working on their little farm in the summer heat.

CUT TO JOE AND ROSE

Joe walks up to Rose.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)

What's Lloyd Jackson doing here again?

JOE RECTOR

Well...

ROSE RECTOR

(Terse) Is he asking again about Sarah's land?

JOE RECTOR

Rose that land is no good...well no good to us. Lloyd wants to set up a fishing bait shop and part of Sarah's land has the Cimarron river running through it with some good fishing for bass and catfish. We could trade him Sarah's land that would be perfect for him and we'd take his land that is mighty fertile. He doesn't want to farm anymore, he wants to run a bait shop.

ROSE RECTOR

But you signed, (looking at Sarah and then back to Joe) we all signed that deal with Frank Barnes.

JOE RECTOR

It's ok Rose, I'll just sign it over to Lloyd, Frank won't care. (Beat) We need land we can live off of not some stone garden.

ROSE RECTOR

I don't think we're allowed to sell the land we were given Joe. There's probably some penalties that we don't know about.

JOE RECTOR

We ain't selling it, we're just trading it. He can be the fishing king and we can put food on the table and sell the rest.

Rose waits for a moment.

ROSE RECTOR

I don't think it's a good idea. It feels like we've been on a long journey and before we get to the end you want to quit.

JOE RECTOR

Oh honey I don't want to quit...I just want to be able to provide for my family.

Rose reaches out and places her right hand on top of Joe's heart area.

ROSE RECTOR

I know honey...but we'll be ok. We've managed to get some good crops out of the other pieces of land and...well...I can try to get a job in the hotel in town.

Joe doesn't seem to be happy with Rose working at the hotel.

JOE RECTOR

But Rose...

At that point we hear the repetitive honking of a car horn getting louder and louder.

Rose and Joe turn towards the road. The honking is getting louder.

A black car pulls up. It's Frank Barnes. The dust from the sudden stop gets picked up into the wind and into Joe and Rose's faces.

A voice yells through the small dust storm.

FRANK BARNES

JOE! ROSE! JOE! ROSE!

And out of the small dust storm walks Frank Barnes. He has a wild look on his face, he has black greasy smudge marks on his face, his white shirt is not so white and his tie is undone and flapping in the wind.

CUT TO THE THREE OF THEM TOGETHER

Rose and Joe are looking at the disheveled face and body of Frank Barnes.

Frank stares at them and then a smile slowly builds on his face.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)
It's a GUSHER!!! It's a BIIIIIIIIIG
gusher!!

Joe and Rose look at each other, smile and then look back at Frank.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)
Joe I know you had you doubts and
well...yes I was starting to get
them too but...(looks to Rose) Rose
and the big man upstairs
knew...right Rose!?

Rose looks at Frank and has a small smile on her face.

ROSE RECTOR
Frank...I really never knew
but...you need to put your trust
into something and well...well God
has been doing pretty good for us.

Frank smiles at Rose.

ROSE RECTOR (CONT'D)
Just ask your wife Maria about
God...she'll tell you.

They smile at each other.

Then from behind them comes Sarah in the same dress she got at Christmas from Frank and his wife Maria. It's a little worn and the color is fading a bit.

Frank lowers himself down to Sarah's level. Sarah looks at the oil stained Frank.

FRANK BARNES
(Quietly with a smile) Sarah
remember when I told you that one
day you will be able to buy all the
fancy dresses you want and in any
color you want?

Sarah looks at Rose and then back at Frank.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)
(Smiling) That day has come my
dear...that day has come.
(MORE)

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

With the money you will be getting
you may even get a dress in a color
that has not been invented yet!

Sarah gets a smile on her face.

CUT TO INTERIOR - FRANK BARNES CAR

At the driver's seat of this fast moving car is Frank Barnes, Joe is in the passenger seat. In the back is the rest of the family. Sarah and Rebecca sit on either side of Rose.

The road is bumpy and they all are bouncing around inside the car. To the kids it's fun but for the adults it's a little annoying. Joe speaks over the noise of the rumbling car on this road.

JOE RECTOR

So Frank, how did this B.B. Jones
know where to drill?

FRANK BARNES

(Shakes his head a bit) Joe...I
don't know. This guy showed up at
the Blue Bird diner when I was
having lunch. He walked right up to
my table, stood there and without a
hi-dee-hoo he says "*Mr. Barnes, you
need my help and I...want to give
it to you*".

Barnes smiles at Joe and then refocuses back to the driving.

FRANK BARNES (CONT'D)

He told me that he went for a walk
in Sarah's acreage and he couldn't
walk away. There was something
calling him there. Calling him to
change people's lives.

JOE RECTOR

He wasn't drinking?

FRANK BARNES

No, no Joe, this guy had some
feeling...something guiding him to
the this area. He was a force that
I couldn't say no to. After we made
our deal to drill he looked me
straight in the eyes, shook my
hand, turned and started walking
around Sarah's land until he
stopped suddenly and said **HERE!**

Rose speaks from the back seat.

ROSE RECTOR
(Smiling) Maybe he was talking to
God?

A smiles crosses over Frank's face and at that moment they hit a good bump making Rose bounce up from her sitting position into the air and at the same time she lets out a little squeal.

Rebecca and Sarah bounce at the same time but come down laughing and giggling. They laugh at their mom's squeal.

FRANK BARNES
You ok back there?

ROSE RECTOR
My word all these bumps are re-
arranging all my insides!

Joe lets out a small laugh.

Rose stares at him from behind and then reaches forward and gives him a small punch to the shoulder.

Barnes sees this and he laughs a bit.

The cars starts to slow down and Frank puts it in park.

We see from the POV of inside the car to Sarah's land in front of them.

There is a beehive of activity. Men dealing with the gusher. They are all kinetically working together in unison. There are splashes of oil on the drill, the men, the ground and surrounding area.

CUT TO THE EXTERIOR OF THE CAR

Everyone is outside of the car taking this in.

Joe looks at Frank and Frank is smiling. Joe looks over at Rose and smiles at her.

Joe reaches his hand over to Sarah's hand, takes hold of it and draws her near to him and they stare out at all of this activity. This is the answer to all of their prayers.

As they are all standing there, seeing all of the action, one of the men breaks off from the group and walks right up to them.

He has oil splatter on his clothes with his face streaked with sweat and oil. It's B.B. Jones. He has a big smile on his face.

B.B. JONES

(To Frank) Hey Barnes (Looks to the Rectors) Welcome folks (his arms stretch out) isn't this amazing!? Mother Nature's liquid gold!

B.B. Jones looks down at the two girls.

B.B. JONES (CONT'D)

So who's the "plute" Barnes?

Rebecca and Sarah look at each other and so does Rose and Joe in confusion.

JOE RECTOR

(Not sure what that means and a little terse) Excuse me? What did you call my girls?

Barnes steps in.

FRANK BARNES

Oh no Joe, he meant no harm...being called a "plute" is not an insult.

JOE RECTOR

Well it sure sounds...

B.B. JONES

Oh no, no, no I'm sorry a plute is short for plutocrat...someone that is a very rich person.

We see Joe visibly calm down.

B.B. Jones looks to the girls again.

B.B. JONES (CONT'D)

Which one of you is Sarah?

Rose puts her arm on Sarah's shoulder.

ROSE RECTOR

This is Sarah.

B.B. Jones looks from Rose to Sarah.

B.B. JONES

(Looking to Sarah) Honey, your world is going to be all upside down from now on. (Pointing behind him to the well) This black stuff will turn into green stuff and you will have so much money it will be droppin' out of our pockets. But remember it's all ok to indulge in the joys of life but remember, keep appreciation for what life gives you and...help others when you can.

B.B. Jones rises up to face Rose and Joe.

B.B. JONES (CONT'D)

Mr. Rector, Joe...m'am...looks like Santa Claus will be coming early this year. This strike feels like a good long and wealthy one. Life is going to change for all of you.

CUT TO CU OF HANDS TYPING AWAY ON AN OLD TYPEWRITER

There is the single sound of the click clacking of the keys. It is joined by another set of hands typing and the imagery of that ghosts over the original set of hands. It is joined by another set and ghosted over. Another set of hands on another typewriter and that imagery ghosted over that. The sound of multiple typewriters builds until it is an orchestral crescendo of a click clacking of typewriters. It ends with a succession of each typist pulling the sheet from the machine and each page floats up, joins the next page floating up and another and another. All the sheets of paper spinning and turn into headlines of newspapers.

With that we cut to a montage of newspaper headlines that spin from one to another.

"Little Sarah Will Soon Be In The Plute Class"

"World's Richest Negress"

"Wealthiest Negro In The World"

"Negro Girl Rich From Oil Has Income of \$300 A Day"

END OF EPISODE 1