I'M PROUD OF YOU

Written by

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(Based on the memoir by Tim Madigan)

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EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET, IN MINIATURE - DAY

Colorful BALSAWOOD HOUSES and PLASTIC TREES pepper the streets. MODEL CARS wait for the passing toy TROLLEY.

A familiar vibraphone chimes in.

Up ahead, a quaint YELLOW HOUSE comes into focus.

We are in the opening credits of MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD.

INT. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD HOME - CONTINUOUS

FRED ROGERS (71) swings open the door, smiling.

FRED (SINGING)
It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood. A beautiful day for a neighbor. Would you be mine? Could you be mine?

At the closet, Fred takes off his sport coat and hangs it up. His movements are slow - he's not as young as he once was.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
It's a neighborly day in this beauty wood. A neighborly day for a beauty. Would you be mine? Could you be mine?

He plucks a RED CARDIGAN off the hanger.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
I've always wanted to have a neighbor just like you.

Fred points right into the camera. *You.*

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
I've always wanted to live in a neighborhood with you. So, let's make the most of this beeeeutiful day.

He playfully zips up the sweater before sitting on the bench.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
Since we're together we might as well say.

Fred slips off his dress shoe and tosses it to his other hand. He replaces it with the BLUE BOAT SHOE and ties it tight before moving on to the next foot.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
Would you be mine, could you be mine? Won't you be my neighbor? Won't you please, won't you please? Please won't you be my neighbor?

He smiles and settles in - then, that soft warm voice.

FRED (CONT'D)
Hello, television neighbor.

Fred pulls out a large WOODEN BOARD checkered with several little patterned DOORS.

FRED (CONT'D)
Do you see this big board that I brought to show you? It has lots of little doors on it. Different material for each door. Behind these doors are pictures of people. Look who this one is.

Fred opens a door to reveal a soft-focus headshot of LADY ABERLIN (40s), brunette.

FRED (CONT'D)
It's Lady Aberlin. Look here.

He opens another - this time, MISTER McFEELY (50s) in a white wig, goatee, and hat.

FRED (CONT'D)
Who is that? It's Mister McFeely. He says "speedy delivery," doesn't he?

He closes it, then opens a couple more.

FRED (CONT'D)
All these are friends. You know what it means? A friend? It means I know that person. I know how that person looks. And what kind of things they do. And I like to be with them. Most of these friends are people that I've helped you to know on television. Today I'd like to introduce you to a new friend.

He opens the last door. TIM MADIGAN (37), with a fat bloody lip and the look of a spooked deer. Something awful happened to this guy.

FRED (CONT'D)
Tim Madigan. He lives in the state of Texas. We haven't known each other very long, but we have grown to be very close. Like many men his age, Tim doesn't have many friends, he's not particularly interested in his chosen profession, and he lives his life avoiding the things that are hardest for him. Of course, the things that are the hardest are also the most important.

Fred smiles, but his eyes wrinkle with a touch of sadness.

FRED (CONT'D)
Let's go say hello to my friend Tim, shall we?

We travel out the window and into...

THE MINIATURE NEIGHBORHOOD

The same houses, cars, trees and trolley - in reverse.

We expand out to reveal much more than just Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. Now we see all of...

MINIATURE PITTSBURGH

And then further out, to the entire...

MINIATURE UNITED STATES

We stop over TEXAS, then DIP DOWN to a cul-de-sac of tract homes, passing a sign that reads "Welcome to Fort Worth."

Behind the sign, a comfortable three bedroom with the name MADIGAN carefully etched onto the tiny mailbox.

Through the BEDROOM WINDOW, we're suddenly in...

INT. MADIGAN HOME - BEDROOM - MORNING

Tim lies in bed awake, unblinking, staring at a hairline crack in wall. His paunch peeks out from under the sheets.

Light pours in the window. The sound of TV News burbles in from downstairs.

Very faintly, almost inaudibly, Tim MOANS.

Tim's wife CATHERINE (35) appears in the door. She's pretty, all-American, in an old bathrobe.

CATHERINE
Honey, I need get to ready. Can you keep an eye on Patrick?

Nothing.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
(louder)
Tim.

Tim stirs.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
I need to get ready.

KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Cluttered. CNN drones from the small TV on the counter.

Tim pours milk onto some Crispix. His son Patrick (3) looks on - he's got a mop of brown hair, bright blue eyes and a perpetually runny nose.

TIM
Here you go bud. Grab yourself a spoon.

Patrick gets one from the drawer, takes the bowl and plops down in front of the TV in the LIVING ROOM.

PATRICK
Dad.

Tim hits the remote, turning the TV on, stopping on POKEMON.

The sound of cartoon violence intermingles with the news - it's a peaceful American morning.

Tim dumps Nescafe into a coffee mug, sits down at the kitchen table, unfurls the paper and settles in with the box scores.

ANCHOR (ON TV)
Now, just two weeks after the horrific disaster at Columbine High School, our thoughts and prayers have turned to introspection and reflection.
(MORE)

ANCHOR (ON TV) (CONT'D)
How did we let this happen to our children? I'll turn it over our panel...

Catherine hurries in.

CATHERINE
Can we talk about this wedding?

Tim doesn't look up. Catherine glances into the living room and frowns.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Patrick, sweetie.

Catherine opens a drawer and takes out a CHILD SPOON, then heads over to Patrick and replaces the LARGE WOODEN SPOON he was using.

PATRICK
Mom!

CATHERINE
Sensible spoons, P.

She kisses his forehead.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Three minutes.

She crosses back to the Kitchen, where Tim hasn't looked up.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
He was eating with this.

TIM
(to Patrick)
You're supposed to use regular spoons, buddy.

CATHERINE
I looked at the invitation, and the rehearsal dinner starts at five, so we're not gonna make it on time to sit down, but we can probably get there for toasts if we wear what we're gonna wear on the plane.

TIM
I'm thinking we skip the rehearsal dinner.

CATHERINE
Aren't you giving a toast?

TIM
Wasn't asked.

CATHERINE
Is Steve giving one?

TIM
He did at her first wedding.

Catherine smiles, remembering the awkwardness.

CATHERINE
All those awful plumbing metaphors...

Tim shakes his head.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
He was trying so hard. It was sorta sweet.

Patrick karate chops his hand in sync with a monster on the screen.

PATRICK
Slam!

CATHERINE
(to Patrick)
Come on honey, we gotta go.

PATRICK
Slam - slam!

Catherine turns the TV off. It's noticeably quieter - but the news continues to drone on the kitchen TV.

PATRICK (CONT'D)
Mom - I was *slamming*.

CATHERINE
We're late sweetie.

PATRICK
Nooo.

CATHERINE
(to Tim)
What was that?

Tim shrugs.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
What was he watching?

TIM
(shrugs)
I was in here.

CATHERINE
Hug daddy.

Patrick gives Tim a loose hug.

TIM
See ya later, kiddo.

CATHERINE
What time are you home tonight?

TIM
Depends. Late probably.

She kisses him.

CATHERINE
Okay.

Catherine grabs her purse, work bag, Patrick's lunch box, her keys, and her travel mug of coffee, and fumbles with the doorknob. She finally gets it open, but -

She gets caught between the door and the screen-door.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Honey -

Tim finally looks up.

TIM
Oh. Sorry.

He heads over and opens the screen door for her.

CATHERINE
Thanks.

The screen door whips back, clapping shut just in front of his nose. He stares through the metal mesh at his family.

TITLE: BASED ON A TRUE STORY

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD HOME - DAY

Fred stands by the door.

FRED
Welcome back, television friend.

There's a knock at the door.

FRED (CONT'D)
Is that knock in your pretend or is it right here in my place?

Another knock.

FRED (CONT'D)
It's here. Let's see who's at the door.

Fred looks out the window.

FRED (CONT'D)
Oh, it's Mr. McFeely.

He opens the door.

MR. MCFEELY
Speedy Delivery. Speedy *newspaper* delivery.

Mr. McFeely hands Fred a newspaper.

FRED
Oh, newspapers are filled with all sorts of interesting information. Let's take a look.

Fred reads the paper. The headlines are all about Tim.

"*TIM'S SISTER PICKS OUT WEDDING DRESS.*"

FRED (CONT'D)
Looks like Tim's sister has finally picked out a special dress for her wedding day.

"*POKEMON SELLS OUT MADIGAN LIVING ROOM AGAIN*"

"*TIM PLANS WORK TRIP TO SAN DIEGO*"

"*CATHERINE'S FRIENDS SAY: LEAVE HIM!*"

FRED (CONT'D)
Everyday, my friend Tim and a whole group of people work very hard to make a newspaper.

MR. MCFEELY
That reminds me. I have a video I found, and I thought you and your neighbor may like to see it.

FRED
What is it?

MR. MCFEELY
It's called "How People Make a Newspaper." I know a lot of people like newspapers so I thought you might find this interesting.

FRED
I certainly would - do you have time to show it to us?

MR. MCFEELY
I'd be glad to see it again.

FRED
Let's put it on Picture Picture.

Mr. McFeely takes the video out of the sleeve.

MR. MCFEELY
Here's the tape.

Fred takes the tape and slides it in the wall by the painting.

FRED
We'll take a look at Picture Picture and see how people make a newspaper.

In the painting: video of an historic four-story building. A green awning reads *Fort Worth Star-Telegram.*

We push INTO the painting...

INT. FORT-WORTH STAR TELEGRAM - NEWSROOM - DAY

Busy and drab. Industrial carpeting underfoot, fluorescent lights overhead.

INSIDE TIM'S OFFICE

A PEABODY AWARD sits on a rickety stand covered in a dusty lucite box.

Behind the award, the front page of the Telegram, with Tim, ten years younger, smiling wide, and the headline:

MADIGAN WINS PEABODY FOR JUAREZ DRUG CARTEL REPORTING

Tim studies the brochure for SAN DIEGO OFFSHORE FISHING EXCURSIONS.

In the brochure: an ANGLER reels in a huge MARLIN.

On his desk: a picture of Tim and Catherine, giddily happy in ski gear on a snowy mountaintop.

The sweet pushover of a sports editor, GREG DRURY (40), appears.

GREG
Hey Tim.

TIM
Morning Greg.

Tim looks at this watch.

TIM (CONT'D)
Editorial?

GREG
Yep.

Tim grabs his notebook and coffee. They head down the hallway.

GREG (CONT'D)
So hey. Iván Rodríguez is throwing a benefit for his foundation next week, I was thinking you - the sports desk gets four tickets, and it's at the Four Seasons - maybe you and Catherine wanna come with Vicky and me. Free champagne and stuff.

TIM
I got my sister's wedding this weekend.

GREG
The event's next week, but...

Tim gives him a look - not gonna happen.

GREG (CONT'D)
Yeah, okay.

They walk into the...

CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The meeting's already in progress.

ELLEN THE EDITOR (40s, rapid fire) presides over her staff, a dozen REPORTERS, mostly middle-aged men.

ELLEN
We're pulling Kosovo coverage from Reuters for the lead, unless anyone wants to strap on a bullet proof vest and get me a human interest angle?

CHARLIE, the oafish prick city writer, slaps his gut.

CHARLIE
I would, but I'm too big a target, boss.

Laughter.

ELLEN
And Dwayne's gonna get us copy for the appeal of the Clinton acquittal, right Dwayne?

A chirp from the phone on the table.

DWAYNE (O.S.)
You got it.

ELLEN
Okay, that's national. Tim - are we going to find you up front this week, or in features?

There's undeniable respect for Tim in the room, but no one likes him except Greg.

TIM
Features - but I think this one might strike a chord.

ELLEN
Let's hear it.

Charlie mutters to the prim NICOLE (20s) from the Business desk.

CHARLIE
(sotto)
A baby sloth is born...

NICOLE
(sotto)
A blind girl sees...hope.

Tim takes his time, milking a dramatic silence.

TIM
Obviously, the Daphne Reynolds nursing home strangling was big news.

ELLEN
Two years ago.

TIM
Well, does anyone remember her son Bob?

CHARLIE
Ooh - I *knew* he did it.

Everyone leans in, excited.

TIM
Not exactly, but he and his wife Lydia Reynolds have relocated to San Diego, where they run a botanical supply shop.

A beat.

CHARLIE
Are you saying he hid the body in his flower shop?!

ELLEN
No one hid the body. It was in the living room

TIM
So his shop is called *Daphne's*.

CHARLIE
So?

TIM
Named after his mother.

Silence.

GREG
Jeez, Tim, that's great.

ELLEN
You wanna go to San Diego for a follow up with her kid?

TIM
Fort Worth still cares about the Reynoldses.

ELLEN
I like the sentiment, but there's no story.

TIM
Really?

ELLEN
I think I wanna stick with Columbine.

Tim is incredulous.

TIM
Ellen - It's over. Frankly I think it's time to leave the families alone.

ELLEN
You might be right.

NICOLE
It *is* all they talk about on TV.

Ellen taps her pen on the table.

ELLEN
How about that?

TIM
What?

ELLEN
TV. What if the angle is about all the TV coverage?
(quickly)
No that's horrible.

DWAYNE (O.C.)
How about violence on TV again?

TIM
Wasn't it violence in *videogames*?

CHARLIE
It was Marilyn Manson. Case closed.

GREG
He’s no Alice Cooper, I can tell ya that.

ELLEN
Okay, yes. We go way back, back to what the shooters were watching when they were young. Barney and Sesame Street. Ask *them* about violence on TV. Haven’t seen that.

TIM
Just, okay here me out? The Reynolds case -

ELLEN
I like this Tim.

TIM
Sesame Street?

ELLEN
People want to be comforted.

TIM
Come on, really?

ELLEN
No one does comfort like you.

Ellen’s moved on. Tim has his assignment.

ELLEN (CONT’D)
Okay. Sports.

Greg perks up.

TIM’S DESK - LATER

The fishing brochure is in the trash.

Tim’s leaving a phone message.

TIM
...with the Fort Worth Star Telegram, and I’d love to do an interview with the Captain. I mean, Mr. Keeshan. Kangaroo. Captain Kangaroo. Take care.

Tim hangs up, then dials another number.

Across the hall, Charlie bear-hugs Greg.

CHARLIE
Free champagne!

The phone rings in Tim's ear. A overly earnest SECRETARY answers.

SECRETARY (O.S.)
Thank you so much for calling Family Communications.

TIM
I'd like to schedule an interview with Fred Rogers...

EXT. FORT-WORTH STAR TELEGRAM - PARKING LOT - LATER

Ellen catches up to Tim, who's walking to his car. She's determined, fired up.

ELLEN
Hey Tim -

TIM
What's up?

ELLEN
I just wanted to remind you that when you came to the Telegram, your first dozen pieces were so awful I had to rewrite every word.

TIM
(smiles)
I'm pretty sure I thanked you then.

ELLEN
My point is that it's not just business. I consider you a friend.

TIM
I consider you a friend too-

ELLEN
If you're hoarding good stories because you're moving to a bigger paper, you need to tell me, Tim. I have a right to know.

Tim cocks his head.

TIM
I'm not going anywhere.

Ellen's a little surprised.

ELLEN
Oh.

She giggles to herself.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
That's embarrassing!

Another thought hits her. She locks eyes with Tim, concerned.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
So then, is everything okay?

INT. TIM'S EXPLORER ON THE ROAD - EVENING

The Rangers' game is on the radio.

Tim turns into his cul-de-sac. He's approaching his house. Catherine's MINIVAN is parked in the driveway.

Tim slows down to park, but... he can't stop.

He passes his house, turns out of the neighborhood, and back onto the MAIN ROAD.

His cellphone rings. Catherine.

Tim turns the radio.

TIM
Hello?

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Hey, where are you?

TIM
Uh - I'm stuck at the office.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Oh, okay.

TIM
They're making me do some awful assignment.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
What is it -

TIM
Anyways, I don't want to bore you. You gonna be okay with dinner and everything?

The car behind Tim HONKS. He covers the receiver.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Hello?

TIM
I need to jump in.

Tim pulls off, into the parking lot of a CRACKER BARREL restaurant.

TIM (CONT'D)
Love you.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Love you too.

INT. CRACKER BARREL - MOMENTS LATER

Chock full of knickknacks and flare.

Tim waits in line to be seated, behind two ELDERLY COUPLES catching the early-bird special. They all wear cardigans.

Tim's cell phone rings.

TIM
Tim Madigan.

FRED (O.S.)
Hello, Tim. This is Fred Rogers.

That familiar voice. Very sweet, *very* slow.

TIM
Oh, Hi...that was fast.

FRED (O.S.)
Well, I figured if you wanted to talk to me, I should want to talk to you.

Tim snorts. Yeah right.

TIM
Can I set a time for an interview with you, or should I go through your office?

The PRETTY HOSTESS smiles at Tim.

PRETTY HOSTESS
How many?

Tim holds up a finger: just one.

PRETTY HOSTESS (CONT'D)
This way.

FRED (O.S.)
I'm happy to schedule something, except for one thing.

TIM
What's that?

FRED (O.S.)
You have me here right now.

A beat.

TIM
Yeah, okay. One sec.

Tim grabs a crayon and kids menu from the stand. The activity on the back has a TROLLEY on it.

INT. MADIGAN HOME - KITCHEN - SAME

Catherine makes scrambled eggs and toast. Patrick whines at her feet.

PATRICK
I need to poop.

CATHERINE
Okay, then go in and sit down and-

PATRICK
I want help.

CATHERINE
I'll come in and help you after you go.

PATRICK
I want help *now*.

CATHERINE
I can't help you up right now. I'm sorry, you're a big boy now and I need to make dinner.

PATRICK
That's eggs.

CATHERINE
I know. Sorry, I just...
(selling it)
We're having breakfast for dinner.

Patrick grabs his behind.

PATRICK
Ahhh. Mommy, it's coming. The poop is coming!

Catherine quickly turns of the gas, pushes the pan off the heat, picks up Patrick and bolts to the bathroom.

We stay on the soupy, half-cooked eggs.

INT. CRACKER BARREL - SAME

A RETIREMENT PARTY carries on at the next table over. Patrons gather around an AGED MAN.

A perfect bacon cheese burger and fries have just arrived at Tim's table.

FRED (O.S.)
I try to look through the camera, into the eyes of each child watching, and speak to them, as if individually, trying to be fully present to their feelings and needs.

Tim rolls his eyes and scribbles notes on the kids menu in crayon.

TIM
Okay.

The retirement party CHEERS.

Tim scowls.

FRED (O.S.)
This is important when people of *any* age come together, under any circumstances.

TIM
Right.

PARTYERS
Bryan! Bryan! Bryan!

The Retirement Partyers distribute commemorative hats with the face of the Aged Man screen-printed on it.

TIM
Can you hang on for a second? There's some idiotic thing happening here.

FRED (O.S.)
It sounds like a great deal of fun.

TIM
I'm sorry?

FRED (O.S.)
Do you know what the most important thing in the world is to me, right now?

TIM
Uh, no.

Tim takes a big bite. The Party has quieted down.

FRED (O.S.)
Talking to Tim Madigan on the telephone.

Tim stops chewing.

INT. MADIGAN HOME - PATRICK'S BEDROOM - LATER

Catherine tucks Patrick into bed.

CATHERINE
What song do you want to hear?

Catherine wipes Patrick's runny nose - it's automatic.

PATRICK
Rudolph.

CATHERINE
Christmas isn't for months, honey.

PATRICK
I like Rudolph.

CATHERINE
Okay.
(then, sings softly)
Rudolph the red nosed reindeer...

Patrick settles in.

BEDROOM - LATER

Catherine's asleep. Tim climbs into bed and stares at the hairline crack in the wall.

Patrick CRIES in the other room.

Tim doesn't move. Catherine gets up and heads out to comfort Patrick.

Off the chime of a VIBRAPHONE...

DALLAS FORT WORTH AIRPORT, IN MINIATURE

A tiny plane rumbles down the runway.

THE AMERICAN MIDWEST, IN MINIATURE

We lift off from Texas, soar over the flat green plains, until the sparkling lakes of Minnesota come into view - we dip down toward a tiny rental car on I-35, headed north.

INT. RENTAL CAR - FREEWAY - NIGHT

Rain pours down. Catherine and Patrick are asleep. Tim's eyes are locked on the road.

He takes the exit for DULUTH.

His jaw is clenched tight and his mind is elsewhere. Suddenly, he sucks in a blast of air, then exhales quickly. He's been holding his breath for miles.

Catherine stirs, eyes still closed, she reaches over and rubs the back of Tim's neck.

INT. SHERATON - FRONT DESK - LATER

Tim checks in. Catherine holds a sleeping Patrick.

Tim hands his license to the front desk ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT
(looking at the card)
Thanks, Mr. Madigan.

The Attendant punches at the keyboard.

TIM
(to Catherine)
Did my sister say if anyone else is staying here?

CATHERINE
It was the hotel on the invitation.

ATTENDANT
Looks like we have you in a king bed for two nights.

TIM
Don't you have two queens?
(turning to Catherine)
I'm sure we requested that.

Catherine nods.

ATTENDANT
Unfortunately, we are sold out tonight - I can put a request in for tomorrow -

TIM
No that's fine, it's fine. I don't wanna have to move rooms.

The sound of a group of DRUNK MIDDLE-AGERS cutting across the lobby pulls Tim's attention. They're all wearing boat shoes.

Tim quickly turns around - trying and failing to be subtle.

Catherine laughs.

CATHERINE
You know them?

TIM
Who?

CATHERINE
Tim.

ATTENDANT
Okay here are your keys and room number. Elevator is down the hall.

Tim snatches them -

TIM
Thanks.

- and moves quickly to the elevator.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Catherine and Tim get into their pajamas.

Patrick is stretched out in the middle of the bed, asleep.

CATHERINE
How long has it been since you've seen everybody?

TIM
I don't know.

CATHERINE
Was it Mason's christening?

TIM
Long time.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERATON - RECEPTION HALL - EVENING

The GROOMSMEN in rented tuxes and a handful of BLONDE KIDS make up the wedding party up front. The groom, TODD (35), is a bearded and heavy-set guy who's nervous as hell.

The BRIDESMAIDS walk down the aisle.

Tim sits near the back in a suit but no tie. Catherine looks beautiful, but tense, by his side. Patrick rolls a toy car along the back of the seat in front of him.

The music STOPS.

WOMAN (O.C.)
(singing)
My darling I....

The doors at the back of the hall open.

The small crowd stands and turns.

LORRAINE MADIGAN (35), the bride, Tim's kooky, addled sister, holds a microphone, as she walks down the aisle.

The opening bars to “Can’t Get Enough Of Your Love,” kick in...

LORRAINE
(singing)
Ooh I don’t know don’t know don’t know why / I can’t get enough of your love babe...

CATHERINE
Oh my god she’s singing.

Lorraine sees Tim and her smile brightens. Tim waves.

Escorting her is STEVE MADIGAN (40s), Tim’s brother, who looks skinny and haunted.

Steve shoots Tim a playful but menacing smile - the smile of an older brother.

Tim nods back, then and looks away quickly.

LORRAINE
(singing)
The more you give, the more I want, and baby that's no lie...

OUTSIDE THE RECEPTION HALL - LATER

Lorraine and the Groom walk through the small greeting line, her TWO BLONDE KIDS by her side.

She works her way toward Tim and family.

LORRAINE
Tim! Ahh! I’m so glad you’re here.

She leaps into his arms with a big hug.

TIM
Congrats, Lorraine.

LORRAINE
(to Catherine)
And, hi honey!

CATHERINE
You look so beautiful.

LORRAINE
Second time’s a charm!

TIM
Yeah, congrats.

He notices Todd the groom.

TIM (CONT'D)
To you both. I'm Tim, Lorraine's brother.

TODD
I know. I'm the husband!

Lorraine gasps when she sees Patrick.

LORRAINE
And look at you! Last time I saw you, you were a peanut.

PATRICK
I'm not a peanut. I'm Patrick.

LORRAINE
Aww!

That's the cutest thing Lorraine's ever heard. The FLOWER GIRLS troop by.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)
Patrick, this is Mason and Maddy.

They couldn't care less.

Tim notices Steve on the other side of the room. He's lecturing his two BOYS about some rule they broke. Standing next to them is CALLY, his plump and pretty wife.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)
So, I have to work my way down the line, but I'm gonna see you later, right?
(adding, singsong)
We rented out the ba-ar.

TIM
I have a flight out super early.

Catherine looks very confused.

LORRAINE
(stung)
Really?

CATHERINE
(to Lorraine)
Of course we'll be there.

LORRAINE
Oh good.

Lorraine moves down the line.

CATHERINE
Did you change our flight?

TIM
Mister Rogers invited me to meet him in person.

CATHERINE
Where?

TIM
Pittsburgh.

CATHERINE
So we'll go back alone?

TIM
It's work, you know?

INT. SHERATON BAR - LATER

Crowded and festive. Lorraine and Todd duet to "Brick House" on the karaoke machine.

Catherine does the twist with Patrick.

Tim finishes his beer at the far corner of the bar.

Steve approaches - he's trying to come off relaxed but there's tension in his voice.

Steve sits down and nods to the BARTENDER, signaling another drink for Tim.

STEVE
He'll have another.

Tim stiffens at the sound of Steve's voice. He spins around.

BARTENDER
You got it. And for you?

STEVE
Rootbeer.

TIM
Rootbeer?

STEVE
Glad you're here, Tim.

TIM
(nodding)
Glad to be here.

The Bartender sets down Tim's beer.

STEVE
Work good?

TIM
It is.

Tim sips his beer.

STEVE
Well, Madigan Plumbing is a mess. I mean I'm busy, not busy enough, but it's just me and Cally.

TIM
I know.

STEVE
She's answering phones all day and people are always pissed at us, so we're pissed at each other.

The Bartender brings Steve's rootbeer.

STEVE (CONT'D)
They don't understand that I'm not the problem. I'm there to unclog the pipes. The roots busting through the pipes are the problem. People don't want to chop down the tree cause it's been there forever, and they don't want to pay to move the pipes, so food and crap keeps coming up their pipes over and over. It's good for me I guess cause it's work, but people think I didn't do the job like I'm supposed to, like I'm ripping 'em off but, it's the roots, or their wife's hair that keeps falling out. I'm not the problem. But you know all this already.

TIM
Yup.

Tim takes another pull off his beer.

STEVE
You see Cally and the boys?

TIM
Not yet.

STEVE
They're over there.

Across the room Steve points out Cally - talking with Catherine.

ACROSS THE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cally and Catherine sip white wine. Cally's genuinely relieved.

CALLY
I'm so glad they're talking.

CATHERINE
Me too.

CALLY
Steve's been avoiding this.

Catherine raises her eyes, avoiding what?

CALLY (CONT'D)
I wish they'd talk all the time. I mean, they deserve each other, those two jerks.

Cally laughs. So does Catherine - unsure if it's a joke.

BACK AT THE BAR

Steve chuckles to himself.

STEVE
You coulda borrowed a tie, you know.

Tim shrugs.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Surprised you're not wearing one of those cowboy string things, whatever they're called.

TIM
Huh?

STEVE
Man - I haven't seen you in so long. Feel good to be back in Duluth?

Tim nods.

UNCLE JERRY (60s, big hair) leans over.

UNCLE JERRY
Hey Stevie, you got a cig for me?

STEVE
Sorry Jer. There's a machine in there I think.

UNCLE JERRY
But that ain't free.

Steve shrugs.

TIM
(to Steve)
You quit?

STEVE
Uncle Jer, this is *Tim*.

UNCLE JERRY
Well, I'm sorry about that - didn't recognize you. Blame it on the lack of free nicotine. How are ya, son?

TIM
I'm fine.

UNCLE JERRY
Auntie Carol is over there. Mickey's right there.

TIM
Yeah, I know that.

UNCLE JERRY
(calling out)
This is Timmy!

TIM
Know what, Steve, I'm gonna turn in.

STEVE
Oh come, on. Don't get upset. They don't ever see you and they're old.

TIM
It's okay, I'm beat.

STEVE
They just wish they saw more of you. We all do.

Tim is starting to boil.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Look, I'm not trying to rile you up.

Tim reaches for his wallet.

TIM
I'm fine. I just want to go.

STEVE
Sit down, please. I need to tell you something.

TIM
No really, it's okay. You know, I should just get back to the room. I have a flight-

STEVE
Can you just shut up for a second?

TIM
(to the Bartender)
Can I have the bill please!

Tim gets up and rifles for some cash in his wallet.

UNCLE JERRY
It's open bar, son.

Uncle Jerry's been watching the whole thing.

STEVE
Can we just sit down?

Tim starts to go.

Steve grabs him by the arm and holds him there.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Sit down, Tim.

TIM
Don't touch me.

Tim tries to pull away. Steve won't let go.

STEVE
Why? So you can sneak back to Texas? Leave us when we need you, but always pop in for a wedding? For the fun stuff?

TIM
Oh, I'm having a *great* time.

Steve pulls Tim in, right to his face.

STEVE
If mom and dad were around they'd be ashamed of you. The way you turn your back -

Tim explodes.

He punches Steve under the chin. Steve grabs Tim's shirt as he falls back, bring them both down.

LORRAINE
Stop! Stop it!

Steve BANGS against Lorraine, who dumps her drink on her dress.

TODD
Whoa, whoa! Knock it off!

Tim takes an awkward swing at Steve, who swats Tim's fist away and shoves him back.

Catherine grabs Patrick and moves towards the door, shielding his eyes.

Tim falls back against the bar. Steve swings a wild fist at Tim and connects with his mouth.

Blood dumps out onto Tim's chin. Tim LUNGES for Steve - but Todd and Uncle Jerry pull them apart.

STEVE
What's wrong with you?

Tim looks around the room. Faint vibraphone music chimes in.

TIM
(panting)
I know! I know. My fault. It's my fault everyone.

Silence.

Tim's eyes land on Catherine, who is consoling Patrick, who is hyperventilating.

PATRICK
Mom-my. Mom-my. Mom-my. Mom-my.

HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Catherine walks several feet in front of Tim. She holds Patrick, trying her best to comfort him. He's stopped crying but he's still gasping heavily as his little body calms down.

Tim staggers, holding a bloody bar towel to his mouth.

A CRACK in the wall follows Tim, spreading toward his hotel room.

INT. TIM'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Catherine positions Patrick on the bed.

She hears Tim wince as he cleans his wound in the bathroom.

Catherine takes off her earrings and steps out of her dress, then puts on a T-shirt.

She lays down next to Patrick, facing the wall.

Tim comes in. The cut on his lip is no joke. His eye is swelling.

TIM
Wish we had two queens. I'm getting up at four. Do you want to return the car?

Silence.

TIM (CONT'D)
Yeah, I can do it. Three-thirty, then.

Catherine eyes Tim as he sets the alarm clock.

Tim turns on ESPN. He leans back and tries to get comfortable.

Tears are welling in Catherine's eyes.

CATHERINE
Tim.

Catherine tries to gather the courage.

TIM
What?

Unable to say what she wants to say, she shakes her head and rolls over.

We PUSH IN on Tim's face - his broken nose, swollen eye and split lip.

INT. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD - LIVING ROOM - DAY

We pull out on the photo of that same face.

Fred sits beside the big Wooden Board with little patterned doors.

He stares at Tim's photo as a jazzy vibraphone riff floats in.

FRED (SINGING)
What do you do with the mad that you feel When you feel so mad you could bite? When the whole wide world seems oh, so wrong. And nothing you do seems very right?

As the song continues...

INT/EXT. RENTAL CAR - JUST OUTSIDE PITTSBURGH - MORNING

Tim speeds toward the Fort Pitt tunnel, the engine whirring.

In the rearview mirror, he notices his lip has started to bleed.

As the car enters the tunnel, Tim grabs a jacket and holds it up to his face.

He wipes the blood from his face and chin - then notices it's all down the front of his shirt.

TIM
Oh, man.

Driving out of the tunnel, the skyline of downtown Pittsburgh comes into view - the sun gleams off the towers of glass, the shimmering Monongahela River.

It's unexpected, almost magical - for a moment, it grabs Tim, taking his attention off himself.

FRED (O.S.) (SINGING)
What do you do? Do you punch a bag? Do you pound some clay or some dough? Do you round up friends for a game of tag? Or see how fast you go?

Tim accelerates.

EXT. WQED STUDIOS - PITTSBURGH

Tim pulls up in front of the cement building.

He pulls clothes from his suitcase and changes in the street, trying his best to stay hidden behind the open car door.

Across the street, a HOMELESS WOMAN hollers at him.

HOMELESS WOMAN
That ain't right!

INT. WQED STUDIOS - HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Tim spots a stocky, tattooed guy helping himself to a candy bar at craft service. This is NICK (45).

TIM
Excuse me, I'm looking for Fred Rogers?

NICK
Who?

TIM
I'm here for an interview with, um, Mister Rogers?

Nick shrugs. Never heard of him. He heads toward the Stage Door.

TIM (CONT'D)
I'm from the Fort Worth -

NICK
I’m messing with you, guy.

Nick kicks open the stage door.

NICK (CONT’D)
This way.

INT. STAGE B - CONTINUOUS

The sweet sound of JOHNNY COSTA noodling on the grand piano.

NICK
(re: Tim’s face)
You’re not gonna fight him are ya?

TIM
Oh, no. Softball league. Play at the plate.

NICK
Cause Mister Rogers would mess ya up.

Nick and Tim round the corner, and suddenly they’re in the iconic set: The fish tank, the stop light, the closet full of cardigans, the boat shoes, and the magical Trolley that bridges Mister Rogers house with the “Neighborhood of Make Believe.”

Johnny Costa’s BAND-MATES chat while sipping coffee.

The CAMERA OPERATORS sit behind the cameras, ready.

On the famous brown couch, at the center of all the commotion, sits a very focused Fred Rogers.

He’s deep in conversation with a severely disabled BOY and his MOM and DAD.

NICK (CONT’D)
(to Tim)
Sorry guy. Could be a minute.

TIM
Is this a Make-a-Wish thing?

Producer MARGY WHITMER (40s) stern, walks by. The FIRST AD trails her.

NICK
How we doing Margy?

She points to her watch.

MARGY
He’s ruining my life.

NICK
How long?

MARGY
Half-hour already, which puts us seventy... three minutes behind.

FIRST AD
Yikes.

MARGY
I gotta go in. Cover me.

Margy’s face and body language transforms from stern to warm as she enters.

Tim observes as she points to her watch *most* apologetically.

The Dad lifts his Boy from the sofa as Mom stands and hugs Fred, tearful.

Fred pats her shoulder, comforting.

Fred watches the family walk off the set. Tim’s not buying the sincerity of the moment.

TIM
Is this for the cameras?

NICK
What?

TIM
How often does this happen?

NICK
Everyday.

As soon as the family is gone, Fred moves to his mark in front of the couch.

A PRODUCTION ASSISTANT hands Fred a helium balloon.

FRED
Thank you.

Margy nods to the First AD.

FIRST AD
(calling out)
Okay here we go! Quiet please. Everyone settle.

NICK
(whispering to Tim)
Just step back here.

Tim follows Nick, well behind the cameras.

FIRST AD
Roll sound.

SOUND GUY (O.C.)
Speed.

FIRST AD
Mark it.

The LOADER steps in front of the camera and snaps the slate.

FIRST AD (CONT'D)
And...

Fred spots Tim.

FRED
I'm sorry, one sec.

He leaves his mark and marches quickly across the set, balloon in hand. He grins with delight.

FIRST AD
Hold please!

MARGY
We can't fire him can we?

FRED
You must be Tim! Welcome to our neighborhood.

Fred extends his hand. Tim shakes it. Behind Fred, a sea of glares.

TIM
Why don't we chat afterwards?

Fred notices his face.

FRED
Oh, dear. Are you alright?

TIM
Softball. Play at the plate.

FRED
It looks like it hurts.

MARGY
We *have* to keep moving Fred.

FRED
Can we have Evan look at him?

TIM
No, no - I'm fine. We can talk later.

MARGY
I'm sorry, Fred.

FRED
Yes, I know. Thank you for being here. I do look forward to talking with you. I truly do, Tim.

He looks to Margy.

FRED (CONT'D)
After this. Everyone, that's Tim Madigan!

Silence.

MARGY
Thank you, Fred.

FIRST AD
Okay, resetting.

Fred stands at his mark.

FIRST AD (CONT'D)
Roll sound.

SOUND GUY (O.C.)
Speed.

FIRST AD
Mark it.

The Loader snaps the slate.

FIRST AD (CONT'D)
And action.

FRED
Do you know what this is? I'll bet you do. It's a balloon. And not just any kind of balloon. It's a *hee-lee-um* balloon...

INT. WQED STUDIOS - LUNCH - LATER

Tim lines up behind Fred, waiting behind the rest of the crew at the buffet.

Fred loads up on veggies and rice.

TIM
Are you a vegetarian?

FRED
I can't imagine eating anything with a mother.

Tim helps himself to half a chicken.

FRED (CONT'D)
Let's take our lunch over to my office so we can talk.

INT. FRED'S OFFICE - LATER

Small and cluttered. Rust carpet and old, cheap furniture.

The walls are filled with children's drawings sent from all over the nation.

Tim's tape recorder is running. Their plates are empty.

FRED
Oh yes, I've had to defend this television program before. In 1969, the US Senate held hearings about the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which funds PBS. I testified because there was a proposal from Richard Nixon to cut the budget in half.

TIM
What did you think of him?

FRED
I'm afraid I never had a chance to meet him.

Above Fred's desk : *L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux.*

TIM
What's that?

FRED
A good daily reminder.

On a filing cabinet, Tim notices a collection of gold statues, like neglected bookends.

TIM
Are those Emmys?

FRED
I don't know how to speak of it.

TIM
They're covered in dust.

FRED
If it's the outside stuff that's going to nourish you...

TIM
Well, a few Emmys couldn't hurt.

On the shelf behind Fred sit a handful of puppets from "The World of Make Believe." Fred notices.

FRED
Oh, let me introduce you.

Fred takes them down, one by one. First is the puppet of a QUEEN.

FRED (CONT'D)
This one's Queen Sarah.
(in a falsetto)
How do you do? My name is Queen Sarah.

Next he reaches for a BLUE OWL.

FRED (CONT'D)
(in a southern drawl)
And I'm X the Owl. I surely love flyin' around.

Next is a KING.

FRED (CONT'D)
(deep and majestic)
And of course I am King Friday the 13th. Tim Madigan, I presume?

Tim smiles politely.

Finally, he takes down DANIEL STRIPED TIGER, a beat-up tiger puppet without any stripes to speak of.

FRED (CONT'D)
(in his own voice)
And here's Daniel Striped Tiger. He's often too shy to talk.
(to Daniel)
But that's all right Daniel.

TIM
Shall we move on?

Fred sets Daniel down.

FRED
All right.

TIM
So, obviously Columbine is still on everyone's mind.

FRED
It hurts my heart.

TIM
And everyone is looking for someone else to blame.

FRED
I tell the children there are many things you can do with your feelings that don't hurt yourself or anybody else, particularly the so-called negative feelings.

TIM
Like what?

FRED
Why, you can pound a lump of clay. Or kick a ball. Or play the lowest keys on the piano all together.
(pretending to play)
BOOM BOOM-BOOM.

Tim laughs - but he's not buying it.

TIM
Pounding clay is one thing, but sixteen-year-olds with assault rifles-

FRED
(singing)
What do you do with the mad you feel when you feel so mad you could bite?

This startles Tim. Fred looks right into Tim's face.

FRED (CONT'D)
We can't give up on children.

King Friday stares at Tim too.

Fred gestures to Tim's wedding ring.

FRED (CONT'D)
I see you're married.

TIM
I am.

FRED
Are you a father, Tim?

Nick knocks on the door frame.

NICK
We're back, Fred.

FRED
Oh, thank you.

Fred gets up. Tim shuts off the tape recorder.

FRED (CONT'D)
You know, Maggie Stewart taught me the most beautiful piece of sign language last week.

Fred interlocks his index fingers.

FRED (CONT'D)
It means "friend."
(then)
You will stick around, wont you?

THE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Tim's phone rings. The Caller ID reads "STEVE."

Tim snorts, ignoring it.

STUDIO A - NEIGHBORHOOD OF MAKE BELIEVE - LATER

The whimsical fantasy land, crafted in cardboard around a flimsy looking CASTLE.

Daniel Tiger sits on the ledge of a large Grandfather CLOCK.

The Crew settles in.

Tim wanders to the side of the set. He runs his fingers along the Trolley. This place is ridiculous.

Nick slaps Tim on the back.

NICK
So how was the interview?

TIM
I'm more of a Captain Kangaroo guy.

Nick shakes his head.

FIRST AD
Daniel, you set?

Daniel Tiger turns and responds to the First AD.

DANIEL
(in a sweet falsetto)
Set.

FIRST AD
Thank you, Daniel. Let me know when you're ready, Lady.

LADY ABERLIN (50s), takes her mark.

LADY ABERLIN
Okay.

FIRST AD
Trolley... Action.

The Trolley comes out of the TUNNEL and into the Neighborhood of Make Believe.

TROLLEY
TOOT TOOT!

It glides by Lady Aberlin, who sprays a VINTAGE PERFUME ATOMIZER around the castle and the leafy tree.

She sniffs between sprays as she approached Daniel's Clock.

DANIEL
Hi, Lady Aberlin.

LADY ABERLIN
Oh - Hi Daniel.

Nick brings Tim around the back of the camera.

DANIEL
Are you making that funny smell?

LADY ABERLIN
Uh, you mean that *skunk* kinda smell?

DANIEL
Yes, I've been smelling it for a little while now.

LADY ABERLIN
No, I'm trying to help that smell go away.

DANIEL
By squirting another smell?

LADY ABERLIN
That's right. A sweet smelling smell. Wanna smell?

DANIEL
Okay.

Daniel leans in - she pulls the sprayer away from him.

LADY ABERLIN
Don't get too close.

She sprays, and Daniel takes a few sniffs.

Tim chuckles.

TIM
(to himself)
This is ridiculous.

From where Tim is, he can see Fred crouched under the scenery, his hand reaching up into the Daniel Tiger Puppet.

Fred strains to stay crouched. He's getting too old for this.

DANIEL
Hmm - that does smell good. Where did the bad smell come from?

LADY ABERLIN
That was mister skunk. He got scared and he just sprayed this smell - that's what skunks do when they get scared.

DANIEL
Did he spray it right on anybody?

LADY ABERLIN
Yes. He sprayed it right on Handyman Negri and Audrey Duck.

DANIEL
Oh no.

LADY ABERLIN
And they were all feeling pretty upset about it.

DANIEL
Especially Mister Skunk, I guess.

LADY ABERLIN
I'll say.

DANIEL
Did he say he was sorry?

LADY ABERLIN
Oh yes, and he knew it was a mistake - and he was really feeling ashamed about it.

DANIEL
You know something Lady Aberlin?

Fred's voice cracks. He teeters on his feet - but rights himself, powering through his obvious discomfort.

LADY ABERLIN
What, Daniel?

DANIEL
I've been wondering something myself.

LADY ABERLIN
Something about Mr. Skunk?

DANIEL
Something about mistakes.

LADY ABERLIN
What is it?

DANIEL
I've been wondering if *I* was a mistake.

Tim is TRANSFIXED - his breathing quick and shallow.

LADY ABERLIN
If *you* were a mistake? What do you mean Daniel?

DANIEL
Well, for one thing, I've never seen a tiger that looks like me.

LADY ABERLIN
No.

DANIEL
And I've never heard a tiger that talks like me.

LADY ABERLIN
No.

DANIEL
And I don't know any other Tiger who lives in a clock.

LADY ABERLIN
No, neither do I.

DANIEL
Or loves people.

Tim gasps for air.

TIM
(to himself)
Oh, man.

LADY ABERLIN
Oh, Daniel.

Lady Aberlin takes Daniel's little hand.

DANIEL
Sometimes, I wonder if I'm too tame.

Johnny Costa's band starts in.

DANIEL (SINGING) (CONT'D)
Sometimes I wonder if I'm a mistake. I'm not like anyone else I know. When I'm asleep or even awake, sometimes I get to dreaming that I'm just a fake....

Overcome, Tim slips out the stage door.

As the song continues...

THE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tim brushes by Nick.

NICK
Take care, guy.

EXT. WQED STUDIOS - CONTINUOUS

Tim staggers to his car.

The Homeless Woman across the street clucks at him disapproving.

HOMELESS WOMAN
You keep that shirt on.

INT. RENTAL CAR - CONTINUOUS

Tim sits at the wheel, catching his breath.

THE MIDWEST, IN MINIATURE

From Pittsburgh back over to Texas, then down.

INT. FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM - NEWSROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Tim pulls up to his office, carrying a box filled with VHS tapes and DVDs.

It's the end of the work day. The newsroom is emptying out.

There are FIVE STICKY NOTES stuck to his computer. He grabs one.

1:45 - Your brother called.

Greg comes up.

GREG
Hey Tim, I got press passes to the Yankees series, and thought-

TIM
You know where the AV cart is?

GREG
Arts, usually.

Tim is gone, down the hall.

CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

He drops the box on the table. He rolls the cart in and plugs it in. He puts in a DVD.

INT. MADIGAN HOME - PATRICK'S ROOM

Catherine searches through Patrick's closet.

Patrick sits on the floor, barefoot.

CATHERINE
Come on Patrick, we're in a hurry. I need you to help find your shoes.

PATRICK
They're in the car.

CATHERINE
Did you take them off?

Patrick nods.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
From after school? You walked inside barefoot?

Patrick nods.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Honey.

PATRICK
Where's Dad?

CATHERINE
I don't know, honey.

From the kitchen, the phone rings. Catherine bolts downstairs. Patrick follows.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
(calling)
Maybe that's him.

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Before she can get there, the answering machine picks up.

Beep.

TIM (ON THE MACHINE)
Hi. This is the Madigans. Leave a message.

PATRICK
That's dad.

CATHERINE
Honey, that's the machine. It's a recording.

Beep.

FRED (ON THE MACHINE)
Hello, this is Fred Rogers calling from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

This stops her. She picks up Patrick.

FRED (ON THE MACHINE) (CONT'D)
I wanted to say how wonderful it was having you for a visit and sorry we didn't get a chance to say good-bye. I hope we can do it again. And to Catherine and Patrick, thanks so much for sharing him with me.

She picks up.

CATHERINE
Hello?

FRED (O.S.)
Catherine?

INT. FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Tim’s sipping coffee, staring at the TV screen on a roll-away media cart. A stack of VHS tapes sits at his elbow.

It’s old footage, black and white.

ON THE SCREEN: A MUCH YOUNGER Fred Rogers sits behind a microphone at a congressional hearing.

SENATOR PASTORE, a gruff man in his 50s, gets things started.

SENATOR PASTORE (ON SCREEN)
Alright Rogers, you've got the floor.

Fred gestures to a document.

FRED (ON SCREEN)
Senator Pastore, this is a philosophical statement and would take about ten minutes to read, so I'll not do that.

SENATOR PASTORE (ON SCREEN)
Will it make you happy if you read it?

The audience laughs. Fred is unphased.

Charlie and Nicole barge in, Chik Fil-A in hand.

CHARLIE
You working?

TIM
Yes.

NICOLE
We’re doing the city council election preview. Need to spread out. It’s a news thing.

TIM
Sorry. I have the room checked out.

NICOLE
That Mister Rogers?

TIM
Yes.

NICOLE
He was like my dad growing up.

CHARLIE
You think he’s a perv?

TIM
Guys.

Tim half-hears an exchange on screen.

SENATOR PASTORE (ON SCREEN)
Do you narrate it?

FRED (ON SCREEN)
I'm the host, yes. And I do all the puppets and I write all the music, and I write all the scripts-

CHARLIE
Any idea when -

TIM
Can you guys - I mean, I’m in the middle of something.

Charlie mouth-farts. Nicole giggles.

Tim turns his attention back to the TV.

FRED (ON SCREEN)
I end the program by saying, "You've made this day a special day, by just your being you. There's no person in the whole world like you, and I like you, just the way you are."

SENATOR PASTORE (ON SCREEN)
Well, I'm supposed to be a pretty tough guy, and this is the first time I've had goose bumps for the last two days.

The crowd laughs.

FRED (ON SCREEN)
Well, I'm grateful, not only for your goose bumps, but for your interest in - in our kind of communication.

SENATOR PASTORE (ON SCREEN)
I think it's wonderful. It's wonderful. Looks like you just earned the 20 million dollars.

The crowd applauds.

Tim pauses the VCR, capturing Fred looking directly to camera, smiling.

Charlie and Nicole stand behind Tim. They never left, and they're floored.

CHARLIE
Wow.

NICOLE
Wow.

Tim ejects the disc and puts in another...

SAME - THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

The rest of the office is empty and dark.

Tim's eyes are fixed on the screen: Mister Rogers holds up a pair of galoshes.

FRED (ON SCREEN)
And would you look at this pair. This is a shoe that you might wear when it's raining outside and you don't want your feet to get wet.

Tim feels a low rumble.

On Screen: the TROLLEY scoots along the track.

TROLLEY (ON SCREEN)
Toot toot.

FRED (ON SCREEN)
(to the Trolley)
That's right. They would be useful in the neighborhood of make believe today.
(MORE)

FRED (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)
(to camera)
Let’s have some pretend, shall we?

Behind him, the TROLLEY pulls up along the edge the table.

TROLLEY
TOOT TOOT!

TIM
Shhh.

Tim looks back. The Trolley’s gone.

He pushes his chair back. He’s done for the night.

INT. MADIGAN HOME - MORNING

Tim enters, holding the box of tapes and DVDs.

He sits down on the couch and puts on the TV.

Catherine hurries around the corner from the hallway.

TIM
Hey honey.

CATHERINE
Tim! Are you okay?

TIM
Yeah, why?

CATHERINE
What do you mean why?

TIM
What’s wrong?

Patrick watches at the top of the stairs.

CATHERINE
What’s wrong? Your flight was supposed to get in last night.

TIM
It did.
(then)
I slept at the office. I mean, I didn’t sleep there.

CATHERINE
I’ve been calling you.

Tim looks at his phone.

TIM
Oh, sorry.

CATHERINE
You slept at the office?

TIM
I got caught up watching these old Mister Rogers' videos.

Catherine swallows her anger.

CATHERINE
I'm gonna start the bath.
(then)
I'm glad you're okay.

She goes.

Tim pulls out a DVD and slides it into the player.

The opening theme of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood comes on.

Patrick slowly walks down the stairs, curious and a little scared.

He reaches the bottom. Tim sits on the couch. Patrick settles on the floor, with his back against the couch.

FRED (O.S.) (SINGING)
Would you be mine, could you be mine...

BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Catherine draws a bath. Her hands tremble.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tim and Patrick watch the episode of Mister Rogers in which Fred learns break-dancing with a boy.

Patrick stares with rapt attention.

FRED (O.S.)
That's a really neat way to move.

On screen, Fred does the wave with his arms. It's incredibly awkward. Even the boy on screen knows he's not cool.

TIM
(to Patrick)
It’s called break-dancing. Wanna try it?

Patrick doesn’t move.

PATRICK
I can’t.

A pause.

PATRICK (CONT’D)
He talks so slow.

TIM
He does.

PATRICK
Is Mister Rogers your friend?

TIM
I talk to him cause of work, bud.

Catherine appears.

CATHERINE
C’mon. Tub’s ready.

Catherine moves over, lifts Patrick up, and carries him upstairs.

BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Catherine bathes Patrick. She takes a handful of suds and puts it on his head. She rubs in the shampoo, hands still trembling.

CATHERINE
Okay, sweetie. Lean back. Let’s rinse you out.

PATRICK
I don’t like the rinse.

CATHERINE
I know, but we gotta do it. You wanna go slow or fast.

PATRICK
Fastest.

CATHERINE
Okay, I have your head.

She cradles the back of his head, supporting him. She uses her shoulder to wipe tears from her eyes.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Ready, fast... go.

She dips him back quickly...

PATRICK
Ahhh.

And back up.

CATHERINE
See. That was nothing.

Catherine's barely able to talk - she's losing it. Patrick doesn't notice.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Let's get you out. You want Buzz or Woody?

PATRICK
Buzz.

She wraps Patrick in the Buzz towel, hugs him tight. Tears stream down her face.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Catherine comes down the stairs and sits next to Tim - he is still deep in an episode, and barely acknowledges her.

TIM
He asleep?

She turns off the TV.

TIM (CONT'D)
I need to watch that, hon.

CATHERINE
I have to say something.

TIM
Can we do it after I finish this?

She shakes her head, no.

CATHERINE
I think you should get a place.

TIM
A place for what?

CATHERINE
For you.

TIM
What?

CATHERINE
I'm sorry but...

She's careful in choosing her words.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
I think you need to be by yourself.

TIM
What are you talking about?

CATHERINE
Tim.

TIM
You can't just come out of nowhere and kick me out of my own house.

CATHERINE
You think this is out of nowhere?

TIM
Yeah.

CATHERINE
You think I've been happy?

TIM
I don't know! You've never said anything. I guess not.

Another pause as Catherine measures it out.

CATHERINE
You're hurting us.

TIM
Cath, *what* are you talking about?

CATHERINE
I'm exhausted.

TIM
Being a parent is hard.

CATHERINE
That's it. That's exactly it. What I want from you is to go through this together. I don't want you to tell me it's hard. I want you to know it's hard and to care that it's hard and to come out of it together.

TIM
What? Do you want to go on vacation? Do you want to go on a weekend by yourself? Do you want to be in counseling?

CATHERINE
Please listen to me.

TIM
I work late. I'm sorry, but that's the job. I mean, I can try -

CATHERINE
Listen.
(then)
Patrick loves you so much.

TIM
I know.

CATHERINE
He wants to be important.

Tim's not getting it.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
To you.

TIM
He is...

CATHERINE
But?

TIM
If your problem is I'm not paying enough attention to him-

CATHERINE
It's not just that-

TIM
Then why would you want me to go away?

CATHERINE
Because-

TIM
That doesn't make sense.

CATHERINE
It's not fair for him to only have this part of you.

TIM
What part?

CATHERINE
The part that hides behind his laptop. The part that lies just to eat alone at some weird restaurant instead of coming home, to us. The part that doesn't think about calling home - to check in, to say hi, to say I love you. The part that, I pray, cares about something more than itself.

TIM
Honey-

CATHERINE
Tim. I need you to go.

Tim is worked up. He's sucking air.

TIM
Where am I supposed to go?

CATHERINE
I don't know.

TIM
Cath...

CATHERINE
You're choosing, for some reason, not to participate in your own life and-

Tim's mouth is moving like a fish.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
I love you, Tim.
(then)
But, please get out of this house.

EXT. EXTENDED STAY AMERICA - NIGHT

Generic, by the highway. Tim's Explorer pulls up.

INT. EXTENDED STAY AMERICA - MOMENTS LATER

Again, at a hotel front desk. He snaps his credit card down.

FRONT DESK CLERK
One bed or two?

Tim holds up one finger.

INT. TIM'S ROOM - LATER

Tim sits in bed typing on his laptop. Through his headphones he listens to his voice recorder. He hears -

FRED (O.S.)
(singing)
What do you do with the mad you feel when you feel so mad you could bite?

Tim types.

FRED (O.S.) (CONT'D)
We can't give up on children.

A pause.

FRED (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I see you're married.

TIM (O.S.)
I am.

FRED (O.S.)
Are you a father, Tim?

The sound of a knock.

NICK (O.S.)
(barely audible)
We're back, Fred.

FRED
Oh, thank you.

The recording continues, but it's just static. Dead air.

Tim's heart is pounding. He presses his hands against his chest trying, somehow, to slow it down. He tries to calm himself with deep breaths.

Suddenly: a wisp of GAS creeps into his nose. He grimaces at the foul smell.

TIM
Hey -

A SKUNK is crouched in the corner of the room, tail raised high, menacing.

Tim pushes the computer off his lap.

TIM (CONT'D)
Help!

He blinks. The skunk is gone.

He's having a panic attack.

TIM (CONT'D)
Oh no.

He falls to the floor, gasping.

TIM (CONT'D)
I need air.

He pulls himself up and staggers to the window, pushing it open.

TIM (CONT'D)
I - I think I'm dying.

Suddenly - Fred is next to him, wearing pajamas.

Fred lays a hand on Tim's shoulder.

FRED
Anything mentionable is manageable.

Johnny Costa's vibraphone music floats in, but now it's distorted and spooky.

Tim is now dressed as Daniel Tiger. Furry ears stick out of his head, and a tail drags on the floor.

TIM
No -

He tugs at his ears - they're attached.

A sharp, jagged CRACK creeps up the wall. Light pours in.

Tim looks out the window: it's not the highway. It's the Neighborhood of Make Believe.

Now, he's on the ledge of the Grandfather Clock.

FRED (O.S.)
Well hello. This is Fred Rogers, please leave me a message and I'll try my best to return your call.

EXT. PITTSBURGH AIRPORT - MORNING

Tim exits, still dressed as Daniel Tiger.

TIM (O.S.)
(choking down tears)
Hello, uh, Fred. This is - I'd like to come see you.

INT/EXT. RENTAL CAR - JUST OUTSIDE PITTSBURGH - MORNING

Tim drives.

TIM (O.S.)
I realize it's very late, sorry, but I'm writing the article or I'm staring to... Anyway I was hoping I could speak to you again. If you might have some time to... sorry for calling so late. Bye. Oh, this is Tim Madigan. Wondering if I can come back to Pittsburgh.

Driving out of the tunnel, the skyline of Pittsburgh, the sun off the buildings, the river. It all seems smaller, further away than before.

In the river, an ANGLER pulls a gigantic MARLIN into his boat.

The TROLLEY crosses on an overpass right in front of Tim.

EXT. WQED - STREET

Tim pulls the rental car up.

The building is no longer concrete - it's BALSAWOOD. The trees are PLASTIC.

Across the street, the Homeless Woman BREAK-DANCES.

INT. MISTER ROGERS NEIGHBORHOOD SET

Mister Rogers is sitting at the bench.

FRED
Welcome back, neighbor.

A knock at the door.

FRED (CONT'D)
Is that knock in your pretend or is it right here in my place?

Fred moves to the window and looks out.

FRED (CONT'D)
It's our friend Tim.

Fred opens the door and Tim walks in, still in costume.

FRED (CONT'D)
Hi Tim.

TIM
Fred.

FRED
What can I do for you?

TIM
(struggling)
I think I'm getting a divorce.

FRED
Oh, my dear. That can be so difficult for a family.

TIM
I don't want a divorce. I don't want to be alone.

Tim's phone rings. Catherine.

FRED
Answer it.

Tim does.

TIM
H-hey honey.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Hi, Tim.

TIM
Miss you.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
I miss you too.

TIM
I'm in Pittsburgh. I know you asked me to tell you where I'd be... so.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Tim.

TIM
Have you changed your mind?

CATHERINE (O.S.)
No.

TIM
I've never been alone.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
I know.

TIM
I wanted to go to San Diego alone.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Tim.

TIM
I wanna come home.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
I need to tell you something.

TIM
I just want my family back.

The distant sound of the Trolley distracts Tim momentarily.

TROLLEY (O.S.)
Toot toot!

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Steve's been calling all week.

Jagged CRACKS shoot up the walls.

TIM
I don't want to hear him apologize, and feel guilty and do it all again. I have nothing to say to him.

Tim hops over a splintered section of flooring.

FRED
You should listen to Catherine, Tim.

The entire set QUAKES.

TIM
I - I have to go.

Tim snaps his phone shut, hanging up on Catherine. The RUMBLE intensifies. The Trolley grows close.

TROLLEY (O.S.)
TOOT TOOT!

The Trolley zooms forward - now it's LIFE-SIZE - and SMACKS into Tim.

Now he's on the Trolley, trying his best to hang on as it barrels into...

THE TUNNEL

Pitch black, then...

A faint light ahead of him grows brighter.

The Trolley rushes forward, and into...

THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF MAKE BELIEVE

Tim's eyes adjust. Fred is there, smiling at him.

FRED (SINGING)
You are my friend.

Fred signs the signal for “friend”, inter-locking his fingers, every time he sings the word.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT’D)
You are special. You are my friend. You're special to me. You are the only one like you. Like you, my friend, I like you.

Tim looks over to Johnny Costa at the piano - except it’s not Johnny, it’s Gary Drury from the office playing the piano. His band is made up of other folks from the office.

ALL (SINGING)
In the daytime. In the nighttime. Any time that you feel's the right time. For a friendship with me, you see. F-R-I-E-N-D special/ You are my friend / You're special to me.

Cast and Crew gather in to sing along - but now they’ve all been transformed into people from Tim’s life...

Catherine is Lady Aberlin. Steve is Mr. McFeely. And Patrick is Nick the PA.

Catherine/Aberlin steps forward.

CATHERINE
I was trying to tell you something...

FRED
Listen, Tim.

Steve/McFeely steps forward and turns to Catherine.

STEVE
I’ve been trying to call him.

CATHERINE
I know.

STEVE
It’s kinda serious. It’s in my throat. It’s about the size of a golf ball.

CATHERINE
(to Steve)
I’m so sorry, Steve.
(to Tim)
I’m so sorry, Tim.

FRED
I hate cancer. With everything I have.

Tim's hyperventilating.

FRED (CONT'D)
It's okay, dear. Take deep breaths.

The room spins around Tim.

Fred kneels next to Tim and breathes. He strokes Tim's hair, cradling his head.

FRED (CONT'D)
You are special.

Tim blinks and everyone is back to normal: Lady Aberlin, Mister McFeely, Johnny Costa, Fred, and the crew all staring down at Tim with looks of concern.

FRED (CONT'D)
In and out. Breathe.

Tim's eyes roll back and he's out.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ROGERS HOME - GUEST BEDROOM - EVENING

Tim lies on top of the bed.

A wet washcloth rests on his forehead. A glass of cool water sits on the nightstand.

A Chopin piano duet wafts in from another room.

HALLWAY

Tim ambles through, in socks. He notices pictures hanging along walls. Fred with President Reagan. With Eddie Murphy backstage at SNL. With the entire cast of CATS.

LIVING ROOM

Spacious and well appointed, but not showy in the least. The room is dominated by two GRAND PIANOS.

JOANNE ROGERS (stout, late 60s) sits at the piano closest to the window playing effortlessly, her fingers light on the keys.

Fred sits at the other, not quite as good, but heartfelt, and keeping up.

Light pours in as the sun sets.

Tim watches and listens.

The music stops.

FRED
(to Tim)
Oh good, you're up.

JOANNE
Goodness, I didn't know you were there, I would have stopped all the racket.

TIM
You're incredible.

FRED
She certainly is.

JOANNE
Hello, dear. Joanne Rogers.

TIM
Tim.

Joanne laughs.

JOANNE
I know who you are, darling, but nice to officially meet all the same.

Fred grabs a camera off the mantle and snaps a photo of Tim and Joanne.

JOANNE (CONT'D)
Him with his pictures.

FRED
I'll bet you're hungry.

Tim shrugs.

FRED (CONT'D)
How about some Chinese food?

TIM
Okay.
(then)
Don’t you have to film today?

FRED
I cancelled the day.

JOANNE
Go, go. I need to practice.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - LATER

A hole in the wall. Two couples and a small family eat beside Fred and Tim, who sip tea, menus out before them.

Everyone steals sidelong glances at the famous Mister Rogers. Fred’s comfortable. Tim isn’t.

FRED
Joanne really is a special person. I’m not one to brag, but in this case I think it’s okay... we are about to celebrate our fiftieth wedding anniversary.

TIM
Fifty.

FRED
That’s no small feat these days.
(then)
She’s such a blessing to me and our two boys.

TIM
You have children?

FRED
James and John.
(then)
Brothers.

TIM
I never asked that.

FRED
(smiling)
Well. I have three-grandsons too.

TIM
Thank you...for...

Tim is frozen with hurt. Fred reaches for his hand.

Tim pulls back, then gives in, allowing Fred to take his hand.

FRED
We all have people who have helped us along the way. Who have helped us become who we are. Who cared about us and who wanted what's best for us in life. I know you have several of these people, Tim.
(then)
Let's try something, shall we?

Tim glances around - everyone's staring. Fred notices, but rather than whisper, he speaks a little louder.

FRED (CONT'D)
Together, let's take one minute to remember the people...

The patrons lean in.

FRED (CONT'D)
...who loved us into being. I think you know who they are. One minute of silence.

The WAITRESS approaches.

WAITRESS
Have you decided -

A WOMAN at a nearby table politely shushes her.

The Waitress freezes.

FRED
I'll watch the time.

TIM
I can't do this.

FRED
Please, Tim.

Ten seconds in, Tim sniffs.

He sniffs again.

Now his eyes are welling.

His face contorts as the emotions build.

For once, finally, Tim experiences a brief moment of clarity.

FRED (CONT'D)
Thank you for doing that with me. I feel much better.
(then)
I think you have some work to do.

Fred smiles at Tim, who is a mess. Tears falling.

The Woman nearby dabs her eyes with a napkin. The Waitress clutches her hands to her chest.

TIM
Thank you.
(then, joking)
What you all looking at?

Laughter.

INT/EXT. FRED'S HONDA - PITTSBURGH HWY 79 - DAY

Fred's old, shabby car crossing the Sewickly Bridge in the slow lane.

He probably should be driving faster - cars fly by him.

Tim doesn't mind - he looks out the passenger window, at the river shining through the slats of the bridge.

EXT. PITTSBURGH AIRPORT - DROP OFF - LATER

Tim waits by the curb.

Fred leans toward the open passenger window.

FRED
Please all and let me know you've arrived safely.

TIM
(laughs)
I will.

Fred snaps a PHOTO.

He pulls away - then hits the brakes too hard. *Screech*.

He turns back to Tim. He links his hands together making the sign for "FRIEND."

HONK! - traffic piles up.

However embarrassing, Tim returns the sign.

HONK!

Fred rights the car and putters off.

INT. FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM - DAY

Tim's at his desk, typing away. He's sitting up a little straighter.

Greg and Charlie walk by.

GREG
Hey, wanna eat?

TIM
Is it lunch?

Annoyed, Charlie nods and keeps walking.

TIM (CONT'D)
No thanks, guys.

Greg turns to go.

TIM (CONT'D)
Actually, yeah. I do. I want to eat with you.

GREG
(surprised)
All right.

INT. MONGOLIAN BBQ - LATER

The COOKS stir-fry food, while Greg, Charlie and Tim sit side-by-side, awkwardly.

GREG
So, um. How's it going?

TIM
Not bad.

GREG
What seasoning did you get?

TIM
Chimichurri.

GREG
Same.

CHARLIE
Peanut Curry.

Another pause.

GREG
How’s Patrick?

TIM
He’s three.

GREG
Three! Oh man.

CHARLIE
Being a parent is hard.

GREG
They say terrible twos but really three is the worst.

TIM
You have kids?

GREG AND CHARLIE
Nah.

TIM
We should do this everyday.

GREG
We do.

INT. TIM’S CAR - ON THE ROAD

Nervous, Tim talks into his phone.

TIM
I just don’t know if this is a good idea.

FRED (O.S.)
I know it’s hard, but it’s important. And she’ll understand, I assure you.
(then)
She will understand.

INT. OUTSIDE THE MADIGAN HOME - NIGHT

Tim drives by slowly, staring in. The lights are on.

He doesn't stop.

A beat.

He reverses back to the driveway, and pulls in.

INT. TIM'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Tim stares at the front door.

With one final sigh, Tim leans to open the car door.

INT./EXT. MADIGAN HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Tim approaches the front door. He takes out his key - then decides to knock.

He hears laughing and music inside.

Catherine answers, surprised.

TIM
Hi.

CATHERINE
Hi.

Inside, a group of WOMEN drink wine, argue and laugh.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Book club.

Tim glances inside - the Women have quieted down. They're trying to eavesdrop. It's embarrassing.

TIM
Aw jeez. Hi Trisha.

TRISHA (O.C.)
Hi Tim.

Laughter from inside.

TIM
Anything good?

CATHERINE
Probably, but no one read the book.

TIM
Patrick asleep?

She nods.

TIM (CONT'D)
I know it's late, but I felt like I needed to come here. I -

CATHERINE
This isn't the time.

TIM
Cath - it's sort of important? Maybe we can sit in my car for a second.

CATHERINE
I'm not going to do that.
(then)
Did you call Steve?

TIM
Actually, I'm going to see him.

This grabs her attention.

TIM (CONT'D)
Tomorrow.

CATHERINE
I'm glad.
(then)
How is he?

TIM
Not really sure.
(then)
That's actually why I'm here...

CATHERINE
Okay?

TIM
I'd like to bring Patrick with me.

CATHERINE
To Minnesota.

Catherine steps out and closes the door behind her.

TIM
I'm gonna drive. I thought he could come with.

CATHERINE
No way. It’s two days in the car!

TIM
Day and a half?

CATHERINE
I appreciate the thought, Tim, but this is...this is *not* the thing to do.

TIM
I need to see Steve.

CATHERINE
I agree.

Catherine softens at this - a bit.

TIM
Catherine, I want to do a better job with Patrick, but you need to let me start.

They share silence. Tim kicks at the ground, sheepish.

CATHERINE
Okay.

TIM
Okay?

CATHERINE
Yes.

TIM
Okay.

INT. TIM'S HOTEL ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

He grips his cell phone. Gathering the courage, he dials.

TIM
(into the phone)
Hey, Cally. It’s Tim.
(then)
Yeah, Tim.

EXT. MADIGAN HOME - THE NEXT MORNING

Tim's car is in the driveway - the doors and trunk are open.

Patrick runs in circles on the front lawn.

Tim's legs hang out of the back door - he struggles to get the car seat latched in.

TIM
Come on.

He gives up.

TIM (CONT'D)
(calling)
Hey Cath?

Catherine comes out of the garage with several bags and a suitcase.

TIM (CONT'D)
I can't get that thing to latch. Where's it supposed to go - there's a hole on this side, but -

CATHERINE
I'll do it.

There is still a coldness between them.

TIM
Where am I supposed to loop it through on that side?

She sets down the bags and hops in the back seat of the car.

CATHERINE
He has snacks and his water bottle in his rocket bag and he has plenty of clothes if he has an accident. But, remember, if he says he has to go, he *has* to go. It's a matter of seconds, till -

She puts a knee into the car seat, using all her weight to press it down.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Blast off.

TIM
I know.

CATHERINE
And keep the toys where you can reach them, so when he wants one you can just hand it back.

TIM
Cath, I know this stuff.

CATHERINE
I know you do.
(to herself)
This is good.

She reaches behind the seat and loops the latch through the base. Click. She pulls the strap tight and shakes the seat. It doesn't budge.

Tim shakes his head - how did she do that?

TIM
(to Patrick)
Come on, bud.

Catherine kneels and grabs Patrick, wrapping him up in a hug.

Patrick’s mood suddenly changes.

PATRICK
I don’t want to go.

CATHERINE
Daddy’s gonna take good care of you.

PATRICK
No!

Patrick begins to WAIL.

PATRICK (CONT’D)
I want to stay here with you.

Catherine kneels down to Patrick and whispers in his ear.

Patrick’s tears slow.

PATRICK (CONT’D)
(to Catherine)
Yes.

Catherine whispers some more to him. Patrick calms down. It’s pure mom magic.

PATRICK (CONT’D)
I will.

CATHERINE
(to Patrick)
I love you, sweetie.

Patrick grips her tight. Catherine wipes his nose.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
Come on, time to go.

Patrick goes to the car. He gives Tim a little look - almost suspicious.

TIM
Let's go bud, hop in.

Patrick climbs in the car and Tim straps him into the car seat.

CATHERINE
I'm gonna go inside, so he doesn't freak.

Tim nods.

Catherine walks back inside. Tim begins to call out to her - but decides against it.

PATRICK
Mom said we are a road trip, dad.

TIM
We are a road trip.

EXT. TIM'S CAR - ON THE ROAD - MINUTES LATER

Tim's car pulls on to the freeway.

We crane up on the long road ahead. Just as the car is about to disappear into the horizon, not more than a hundred yards from the on-ramp - Tim pulls over.

He runs out, opens Patrick's door, unlatches him, picks him up and hurries to the side of the road.

Patrick pees.

They get back in the car and pull back onto the freeway.

INT. TIM'S CAR - ON THE ROAD - LATE NIGHT

Tim drives in the RAIN. His mind wanders. Patrick sleeps in the back.

Tim's on his phone.

TIM
He really didn’t want to go with me.
(then)
I just don’t want mess him up.

FRED (O.S.)
It’s okay to believe in your own goodness.

Tim hangs up, and takes a deep breath.

His phone rings.

TIM
Hello?

FRED (O.S.)
Do you believe in your own goodness yet?

INT. TIM’S CAR - ON THE ROAD - LATER

Tim sees a Cracker Barrel up ahead. He looks to Patrick in the rearview mirror.

TIM
Hey bud, you hungry?

Patrick nods.

INT. CRACKER BARREL - MOMENTS LATER

Same as usual. Tim and Patrick wait behind an ELDERLY COUPLE.

HOSTESS
Hello there. How many?

Tim holds up two fingers.

TIM
Two please.

Patrick puts his two fingers up and points them at solitary MAN behind them in line.

PATRICK
That's two.

AT THE TABLE - LATER

Patrick draws on his paper place mat.

Tim fiddles with the table's puzzle game.

TIM
Do you know where we are going?

PATRICK
Nimmesota.

TIM
Right. You know why?

Patrick shakes his head.

TIM (CONT'D)
To see Uncle Steve.
(then)
He's my brother.

PATRICK
Is he Mom's brother too?

TIM
No.

PATRICK
Will Mom be there?

TIM
No. It's just gonna be you and me.

Patrick lowers his eyes.

TIM (CONT'D)
You miss her?

Patrick nods his head.

TIM (CONT'D)
Are you mad at me?

Patrick nods.

Tim reaches into his computer bag and pulls out a little tub of play-dough.

TIM (CONT'D)
Here.

He takes out the dough and passes it to Patrick.

TIM (CONT'D)
You can mash it or punch it, or whatever you want to do with it.

Patrick takes the dough. In seconds, he's distracted, pounding on the dough and making sound effects.

Under the table, Tim's mashing some playdough too.

EXT/INT. TIM'S CAR - NEIGHBORHOOD - DULUTH, MN - DAY

Tim drives through the quaint neighborhood of simple tract homes.

He's looking for addresses.

PATRICK
Is that one it?

TIM
Nope.

PATRICK
Is that one it?

A beat-up plumbing van marked MADIGAN PLUMBING is parked in the driveway.

TIM
Actually...

He pulls in.

PATRICK
We're here?

EXT/INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Tim and Patrick are at the door. Luggage at their feet. Cally answers.

CALLY
Tim and Patrick!

She hugs Tim - he's rigid, nervous.

CALLY (CONT'D)
Come on in.

Cally gives Tim a real hug - a hug with meaning behind it.

CALLY (CONT'D)
I'm so grateful you're here.
(relaxes)
You're *here.*
(then)
Everyone's out back. I'll meet you out there with some Arnold Palmers.

BACK PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Steve is fragile, thin and bald. His voice is raw and dry.

STEVE
Scoot back. I'm gonna send it way out there, so you gotta scoot.

TIMMY (9) and TYLER (7) jockey for the best position. Tyler has random hockey pads on - he shoves his older brother.

TYLER
This one's mine. It's mine.

Steve swings a whiffle bat sending the ball over the fence.

STEVE
Sorry.

There's a big basket of balls at Steve's feet. He tosses up another and whacks it behind the boys.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Go!

Patrick yells in excitement and runs past Steve - chasing the ball.

Steve sees Tim - a big grin appears on his face.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I thought you might've crapped out on me.

TIM
I wouldn't do that.

STEVE
(smiling)
Sure ya would.

Steve puts his hand out.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Great to see you.

Tim shakes his hand.

TIM
Oh, I got something for the boys.

Out of a bag, he pulls a Dallas Stars and Texas Rangers jersey.

STEVE
Nice.

Steve holds up the Stars jersey.

STEVE (CONT'D)
They'll fight over this one. Stars used to be a Minnesota team, ya know. Before moving to Texas.

Tim takes the shot with a smile.

TIM
I know.

Cally arrives with drinks, a bowl of pretzels and an Ensure weight-replacement drink for Steve.

STEVE
You spike it with Jack like I like?

CALLY
Oh shut up.

She heads back inside.

Tim and Steve watch their boys - full of energy and joy, running, falling and rolling in the grass.

TIM
I want to apologize for the wedding.

STEVE
No need - there was a lot going on.

TIM
Of course there's a need. I punched you in the face.

STEVE
Hey, I got a few in too.

TIM
Fine. So we're good?

STEVE
(a wry smile)
It’s done.
(then)
Should we just get the rest of this out of the way?

Apprehensive, Tim nods.

STEVE (CONT’D)
It's lung cancer. It's in my liver too. Inoperable. I'm about to finish my second round of chemo. I’m tired and I upchuck a lot but I'm okay.

TIM
Upchuck?

STEVE
Vomit? Puke? Barf? What do you like better? Honk?

Tim struggles to crack a smile.

TIM
Okay.

STEVE
Sit down. Watch this. Tyler loves him some Steve Miller Band.

Steve flips on old boom box - out blasts some tinny “Fly Like an Eagle.”

TYLER
Yes!

Like clockwork - the boys start a dance off. Tyler has moves.

TIMMY
Mommy!

Cally comes flying out from the kitchen.

CALLY
Here comes Mama!

She joins in doing some hippy-mom-noodle dance.

Patrick tries his best to break-dance like Fred in the video.

Tim leans in to Steve, who is dancing in his own way.

TIM
I'm not really sure what to do, Steve.

STEVE
About what?

TIM
You have a matter of weeks, months, what?

STEVE
Years if I can help it.

TIM
"Inoperable" means years?

STEVE
Why not? I'm doing what I can.
(then)
Beyond that, I’m trying hard not to think about it.

TIM
That’s great, but... what do I do? What does a brother do here?

STEVE
(incredulous)
You wanna help?

TIM
Anything.

Tim nods, so Steve takes Tim's hand...

STEVE
Here.

He puts it on Tim's hip.

STEVE (CONT’D)
And this one.

He takes Tim's other hand and puts it in the air, pointing his index finger to the sky.

STEVE (CONT’D)
Now shake it.

Tim does.

TIM
You’re a moron, you know.

Trying to forget the seriousness of the situation.

STEVE
Now turn.

Tim turns slowly.

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN TABLE

Tim and Patrick join the family for dinner. At the end of the table sits an empty chair with a full plate of food.

TIM
A real Duluth vacation. I haven't had tater-tot casserole in years.

CALLY
I don't know how you live.

TIM
I barely survive.

Everybody finishes their last bites.

TYLER
Can we have dessert?

CALLY
How does strawberry milk sound?

TIMMY
Yes!

CALLY
But we have to clear the table.

Timmy and Tyler scoot out and grab plates.

Patrick follows their lead - already shadowing the boys' every move like a poodle.

Steve comes out of the bathroom. He's sweaty and flushed.

STEVE
Do I get dessert?

CALLY
You didn't eat your dinner.

TIM
You all right?

STEVE
Routine upchuck.

The boys run by, Steve turns and chases them into the Living Room.

The home phone rings.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Money phone!

Cally answers in the makeshift office in the corner of the kitchen.

CALLY
Madigan Plumbing.

She jots down info.

CALLY (CONT'D)
Okay... It's after hours, so it's time and a half... He'll be there in about fifteen minutes.

Steve takes her note, grabs his work shirt.

STEVE
Time to pay the bills.

Steve exits.

TIM
(to Cally)
Excuse me.

Tim goes out the sliding door to the...

BACK PORCH

Tim picks up the whiffle bat and ball. He tosses the ball and swings hard, missing.

He tries again. Whiff.

He picks up the entire tub of balls and HUCKS it into the yard.

He KICKS a straggler.

He's panting, overcome with guilt and anger.

His breath slows.

He starts picking up the balls.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

TV blares from the living room.

Tim washes dishes at the sink. Cally dries them and puts them in the cupboard.

She opens a cupboard next to the sink. Inside, Tim catches a glance at the dozen or so bottles of medication.

TIM
I can't believe he's still going on jobs.

CALLY
Has to.

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT

On the pullout couch, Tim types on his laptop, connected with an ethernet cable draped over a sleeping Patrick.

On TV: Fred and Mister McFeely talk to LOU FERRIGNO dressed in green make-up on the set of *The Incredible Hulk*.

Tim gazes at the flashing cursor at the top of his article...then types the title, "Mister Nice Guy."

He emails it off.

Patrick whimpers in his sleep.

Tim rubs his back, soothing him.

Suddenly Patrick jolts awake in terror, screaming.

Tim sits up. He grabs the boy, holding him tight, trying his best to comfort him.

PATRICK
Mommy. Mommy. Mommy.

Tim picks him up and stands.

TIM
It's okay, it's okay. It's me. Take deep breaths, bud. In and out.

Patrick starts to calm down - but he's still gasping for air.

PATRICK
(quietly)
Dad.

TIM
You're okay.

Tim rocks him slowly. He reaches for a Kleenex and wipes Patrick's nose.

Down the hall Tim hears Steve get home.

Tim peaks out the door.

Steve's got bags under his eyes. He shoots Tim an exhausted smile, then lumbers into his room.

INT. HOCKEY RINK - THE NEXT DAY

Timmy practices with his team on the rink.

Steve hollers at the kids on the ice, still managing to coach.

STEVE
Keep your head up Cam! How are you gonna stop him if you're staring at your skates?! Set it up again!

Tim, Patrick and Tyler watch at the glass, sipping cokes. Tyler still has his leg pads on from an earlier practice.

Tim notices a HOCKEY DAD going for a donut. None left. He slams the box down in frustration. He looks to the other parents.

HOCKEY DAD
Somebody take two donuts?

STEVE
(to the team)
That's a two on one! Give and go, Timmy! Give and GO!

Steve blows the whistle and gets up. It takes some effort.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Alright guys, bring it in. I wanna try that again, but we're gonna change it up -

Steve's legs begin to wobble.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I wanna... I...

His legs GIVE OUT. He goes to the ice hard, his body falls limp.

TIM
Oh, no...

Cally screams and runs to Steve.

HOCKEY DAD
Call 911! Somebody.

Tim dials.

INT. HOSPITAL - OUTSIDE STEVE'S ROOM - LATER

Tim paces, Patrick sits in a hallway chair.

TIM
(into phone)
Yeah, the tumor's wrapped around his spinal cord. He can use his arms, but has no feeling below that.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Oh, honey.
(then)
Is that something he'll get back?

TIM
Probably not.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Are you with him?

TIM
Cally's in there right now.

PATRICK
(to Tim)
Is that mommy?

CATHERINE (O.S.)
That P?

TIM
Yeah, he misses you.
(to Patrick)
You wanna say hi?

Patrick shakes his head no.

TIM (CONT'D)
You sure?

Tim holds the phone out. Patrick won't take it.

TIM (CONT'D)
Well, he's being shy.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Kiss him for me.

TIM
I will.
(then)
So, Cath, I know I was supposed to come back tomorrow, but Steve's gonna need my help. I'm gonna need to stay here. For a while.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
How long is a while?

TIM
I don't know. He's not gonna be able to work, so...

CATHERINE (O.S.)
How will Patrick get home?

TIM
Maybe he could stay here too.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
He should come home.

TIM
He should, but...

Silence.

TIM (CONT'D)
(sighs)
No, you're right. I'll get a one way for him and the cheapest round trip I can find for me.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
He just needs to be -

Catherine's changing her mind, but it's very hard for her.

CATHERINE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I don't know. I just can't see him, so I don't know how he is.

TIM
It's awful to say, all things considered, but he's having the time of his life. He's got two older brothers who are off for summer break.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
(reluctant)
That's a pretty good life.
(then)
He should stay - for a little while.

TIM
Why don't you come up here?

CATHERINE (O.S.)
I don't think I'm ready for that.

TIM
Okay.

Cally comes out of Steve's room. She's trying to stop her crying - her face is red and her eyes are swollen.

Timmy and Tyler trail behind.

TIM (CONT'D)
I have to go.

Tim hangs up and picks up Patrick.

TIM (CONT'D)
(to Cally)
You okay?

CALLY
We're gonna get some sleep.
(then)
Come on boys.

Cally and her boys and Patrick head down the hall.

Tim and Patrick poke their heads in the room.

Steve's body is covered. He's conscious, but weak.

TIM
You're awake.

STEVE
There he is.

TIM
How are you feeling?

STEVE
Sit, sit.

Tim takes a deep breath.

STEVE (CONT'D)
It's the weirdest thing.

Steve points to his chest.

STEVE (CONT'D)
It's like I stop right here. Like it's just empty space, but I can see it all down there.

TIM
You in pain?

STEVE
I'm not sure.

TIM
Cally gonna be okay?

STEVE
She's just worried. I'm expensive.

TIM
I know. Can I help you?

STEVE
Tim.

TIM
You're gonna need help. I'll give you whatever money I have, but it's not a lot. What about a fundraiser or something?

Steve starts to resist.

TIM (CONT'D)
You can be pissed at me, you can whine all you want, but I can totally beat you in a fight now. And I will. I will fight you.
(then)
Let me do this.

INT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

An EMPLOYEE packs up three large boxes for Tim, who's got his phone up to his ear — it's connecting.

ELLEN (O.S.)
So, Tim. This article...

TIM
Ellen - I know it wasn't what you wanted. The Columbine angle just didn't jive. There was just more to the story, something more personal, so I'm sorry, but-

ELLEN (O.S.)
Oh dear. So you haven't been following? We printed it, Tim.

Tim pays for donuts and carries them outside in one hand.

ELLEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
AP picked it up, Reuters too.

TIM
Oh. Wow, I um - that's great.

ELLEN (O.S.)
You've got mail, Tim.

INT. FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM - TIM'S OFFICE

Ellen the Editor thumbs through a HUGE PILE of fan mail on Tim's desk.

ELLEN
Mister-Rogers-saved-my-life-too mail.

TIM (O.S.)
Really?

ELLEN
It's getting to be an issue.

Charlie and Gary walk by.

CHARLIE
Is it true that Mister Rogers was a green beret?

GREG
God, I hope so.

INT. HOCKEY RINK - LATER

Tim has a big box of coffee along with the donuts. He joins Cally and the other PARENTS in the stands.

TIM
(to Cally)
Hey there.

CALLY
(re: the donuts)
Wow, Tim.

He sets down the donuts. The Parents notice.

TIM
Time to make some friends.

He opens the box of donuts.

A Dad looks over. Tim reaches out and shakes his hand.

TIM (CONT'D)
Tim Madigan - I'm Tyler and Timmy's uncle...

EXT. STEVE'S NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - DAY

Tim knocks on the door, with a flyer and a donut. The NEIGHBOR opens the door.

TIM
Hi, I'm Steve's brother, Tim. We're having a little party to help raise some money.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

There's a huge potluck set up in the kitchen. Kids and parents everywhere.

A hospital bed is set up in front of the TV, where Steve sips a beer from a straw. There's a tight huddle round him. He's animated, but gaunt and wasted, much worse than when we last saw him.

A stack of *Minneapolis Tribunes* rests at the foot of Steve's bed. The top issue is turned to the Arts and Leisure section, where TIM'S ARTICLE appears on the front page.

Lorraine and Todd enter bearing two tubs of ice cream.

Lorraine gives Tim a big hug.

LORRAINE
Thanks for doing this.

STEVE
You see this?

Steve holds up the paper, proud as can be.

LORRAINE
I bought copies for everyone at the office.

TODD
Pretty cool, man.

Lorraine turns to Cally, stricken.

LORRAINE
How is he?

STEVE
He’s right here with perfect hearing.

LORRAINE
And he’s a liar who won’t give me a straight answer.

Steve grumbles.

STEVE
(to Tyler)
Go get us some spoons, bud.

Tim’s phone rings.

TIM
Hello?

FRED (O.S.)
Tim I am so thrilled with the article, as was everyone in Pittsburgh.

TIM
Thanks, Fred.

Everyone stops cold. They’re mouthing to each other “that’s Mister Rogers!”

FRED (O.S.)
Tell me how you are.

TIM
Well -

PATRICK
Mister Rogers!

TIM
I'll be right back...

Tim walks out.

STEVE
(to Patrick)
Your dad is so cool.

EXT. STEVE'S HOUSE - DAY

Sunny and bright.

Tim steps outside.

The street is jammed with cars. Friends and family pour inside, past a large bouquet of red helium balloons.

A taxi putters up to the driveway.

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Tim enters the front door, light pouring in.

TIM
Look who I found.

FRED follows behind Tim. He's got a backpack, and he's wearing a heavy jacket despite the warm weather.

CALLY
Holy shit.

Fred laughs. Then, so does everyone.

FRED
Hello to you. I'm Fred Rogers.

CALLY
I'm sorry, I mean, I'm Cally.

Fred turns to Lorraine and Todd.

FRED
Hello, and congratulations on your wedding.

LORRAINE
Thanks.

FRED
May I take your picture?

CALLY
Oh my god, yes.

Cally, Lorraine, Todd and Tim smush together awkwardly. Click.

FRED
Lovely. And where is Steve?

Steve waves.

STEVE
The invalid.
(then)
I thought Tim was making things up.

FRED
Certainly not. Thank you so much for inviting me. Look at all of these people here to be with you today.

The party quiets down as the news of the guest of honor spreads.

Fred notices, and seizes the moment.

FRED (CONT'D)
Can everyone gather together? I'd love to snap of a picture of everyone.

The entire family obliges, gathering around Steve.

CLICK.

THE HALLWAY - LATER

A few Hockey Dads chat. A few people bid on items at the SILENT AUCTION in the Kitchen.

Fred and Tim have a lemonade. Tyler can't stop staring at Fred.

TYLER
Are you the real Mister Rogers?

FRED
I am.

Tyler runs to Patrick and Timmy who are waiting nearby.

TYLER
(calling)
I told you!

Tim looks to Fred.

TIM
I didn't think you'd come.

FRED
It was important for me to be here.
(then)
Is Catherine here?

Tim shakes his head, no.

FRED (CONT'D)
Look at these...

Fred studies the family photos on the wall. A small one in the corner grabs his attention: Two young boys, on the lawn, arms around each other.

FRED (CONT'D)
That's you, Tim?

Tim takes a close look.

TIM
And Steve.

FRED
You look inseparable. It's wonderful.

Fred smiles and sighs.

FRED (CONT'D)
I'm getting old.

TIM
Is everything alright?

FRED
It is, but I've been thinking about my last episode.

TIM
Something special?

FRED
I don't want anyone to feel as though I've abandoned them. It should feel like any other episode.

A MOM exits the bathroom.

FRED (CONT'D)
If you'll excuse me.

Fred enters the bathroom.

HOCKEY DAD
That's kinda weird.

TIM
I know what you mean.

KITCHEN - LATER

The massive clean-up effort is nearly complete, the party over.

Cally transfers a tea-bag from one cup to the next, and sets the steeped tea on the table beside Tim, who's adding up the checks.

CALLY
Good news?

TIM
Eight thousand and change.

Cally wraps her arms around Tim.

CALLY
This is unbelievable.

Over Cally's shoulder, Tim notices Fred sitting with Steve in the Living Room. He's leaning in close, intimate, speaking softly.

Tim can't make out what they're saying.

Steve looks confused.

Finally, Fred stands up and walks to the kitchen.

Steve wrinkles his nose, moved.

EXT. STEVE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Tim walks Fred to the waiting cab.

TIM
Thank you for being here.

Fred gives him a big hug.

TIM (CONT'D)
Can I ask you... What did you say to Steve?

FRED
I asked him to pray for me.

TIM
For you?

FRED
I figure anyone who's going through what he's going through must be very close to god.

Fred reaches into his pocket and hands Tim an envelope.

FRED (CONT'D)
My contribution.

TIM
You don't have to do that.

Fred struggles to get into the cab.

Tim takes his hand and helps him into the car.

FRED
Oh, brittle bones.
(then)
You're a good man. I'm glad you're my friend.

TIM
Can I ask you something?

FRED
Of course.

TIM
Why me?

FRED
Can I ask you something?

TIM
Okay.

FRED
Why *me*? I feel you've given me so much more than I've given you, Tim. Don't you know that?

TIM
That's not true.

FRED
We all deserve love. Why not you?

Fred shuts the door and waves as it drives away.

Tim glances in the envelope.

TIM
Wow.

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM - 4AM

Tim and Patrick lie next to each other in bed. Tim's wide awake.

INT. STEVE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - 4AM

It's dark and quiet except for the oxygen machine breathing in and out, next to Steve's bed.

Tim walks out of the bathroom.

STEVE
You didn't wash your hands.

TIM
What are you doing up?

STEVE
Gross.
(then)
Sit with me.

TIM
It's four in the morning.

Tim comes over and sits on the edge of Steve's bed.

STEVE
I can't believe Mister Rogers was here.

Tim nods.

The birds begin to chirp. Morning.

Tim puts his hand on Steve's.

TIM
I should have said this along time ago, but, I’m sorry for leaving you here. I’m not a plumber. But I should have been a better brother.

STEVE
You know it cost three hundred bucks to have the “Brothers” in Madigan Brothers taken off the sign?

TIM
I’ll pay you back.

STEVE
We can split it.
(then)
This really can be a new beginning for us *all.*

Tim leans over and kisses Steve on the forehead.

STEVE (CONT’D)
Were you gonna tell me you’re living in a hotel?
(then)
Why wouldn't you tell me that?

TIM
Didn't think it mattered, with everything going on.

STEVE
Okay.

TIM
Okay.

STEVE
Can I help?

Tim shrugs.

STEVE (CONT’D)
Do whatever she says. There, I’m helping.

They chuckle.

TIM
I don’t know if she wants me back. It’s hard.

STEVE
Lean into it.

Tears fall from Steve’s eyes.

STEVE (CONT’D)
I want you to know my kids. I want you to be part of their lives.

TIM
I want them to be part of my life.

STEVE
They used to think you were pretend.

TIM
I bet I was much more interesting.

STEVE
(laughs)
You really were.

TIM
(whispers)
You know I've loved you longer than I’ve loved anyone else in the world?

STEVE
I love you too.

Tim leans back.

Steve closes his eyes.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. MISTER ROGERS’ NEIGHBORHOOD - YARD

Fred sits on a grassy patch next to a house. He talks to camera, slow and introspective.

FRED
When I was very young I had a dog that I loved very much. Her name was Mitzi.
(MORE)

FRED (CONT'D)
And she got to be old, and she died. I was very sad when she died, because she and I were good pals. And when she died, I cried. And my grandmother heard me crying, I remember, and she came and just put her arm around me, because she knew I was sad. She knew how much I loved that dog. And my dad said we'd have to bury Mitzi, and I didn't want to. I didn't want to bury her because I thought I'd just pretend that she was still alive. But my dad said that her body was dead and we'd have to bury her. So we did.

Soft music starts.

FRED (SINGING) (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
Sometimes people get sad and they really do feel bad, but the very same people who are sad sometimes are the very same people who are glad sometimes. It's funny but it's true. Its the same isn't it, for me, isn't it the same for you.

INT. MADIGAN HOME - NIGHT

Catherine folds laundry, the phone rings.

She picks it up.

CATHERINE
Hello.

INT. CEMETERY - DULUTH

Friends and family walk to the grave site, where Tim, Lorraine, and Cally greet people.

At the end of a line of cars, a taxi. Catherine gets out.

Tim spots her.

TIM
(to the Hockey Dads)
Excuse me one sec.

PATRICK
(spotting Catherine)
Mommy!

Patrick runs over, Tim follows.

Catherine showers Patrick with kisses.

CATHERINE
I missed you so much!

PATRICK
My cousin Tyler plays hockey.

CATHERINE
He does?! That’s so cool.

PATRICK
Tyler!

TIM
He’s obsessed with Tyler.

Catherine hugs Tim. He hugs her back.

CATHERINE
Fred told me to give you an extra hug.

TIM
Oh really?

CATHERINE
(bashful)
He has good advice for everybody.

LATER

As the Pastor delivers the eulogy, Tim notices Patrick’s not there.

He gets up and finds him.

TIM
Hey bud.

PATRICK
Grandma and Grandpa are dead.

TIM
That’s right.

PATRICK
And Uncle Steve is dead.

TIM
He is.

A pause.

PATRICK
Can I be dead someday?

Tim smiles.

TIM
Not for a long, long time.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Patrick sleeps between Tim and Catherine.

TIM
I was thinking.

CATHERINE
Hmm?

TIM
I was thinking - that when we get back, for the time being, I should keep my hotel room.

CATHERINE
Okay.

TIM
And we should get a sitter... and go to dinner. On a date.

Catherine grins.

CATHERINE
Yes.

Tim looks away... and allows himself to smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Fred’s back with his wooden board with a patterned door for each of his friends. He looks at Tim’s photo - bruised and bloodied.

FRED
Welcome back, television neighbor. I hope you know that you've made this day a special day, by just your being you. There's no person in the whole world like you, and I like you, just the way you are.
(the)
This is my friend Tim.

He turns the board over, revealing one very large door.

FRED (CONT'D)
And these are my new friends. The Madigans.

He opens the window to reveal the group photo from Steve's party - everyone gathered around, smiling.

TROLLEY (O.S.)
Toot toot.

The Trolley passes by, then stops and comes back.

FRED
What's that?

TROLLEY
Toot. Toot. Toot.

Fred chuckles - Trolley is such a kidder.

FRED
Oh, I will, thank you.

The Trolley speeds away as Johnny Costa noodles on the vibes.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
It's such a good feeling to know you're alive. It's such a happy feeling.

Fred takes off his blue boat shoes, one at a time.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
You're growing inside. And when you wake up ready to say...

He stands and unzips his Red Cardigan, then moves to the closet and opens the door.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
"I think I'll make a snappy new day."

Fred snaps twice, once with each hand.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
It's such a good feeling, a very good feeling, the feeling you know that I'll be back when the week is new.

He carefully hangs up the sweater, then pulls his gray sport coat off a hanger.

FRED (SINGING) (CONT'D)
And I'll have more ideas for you. And you'll have things you'll want to talk about. I will too.

He grabs the board with windows on it from the bench.

FRED (CONT'D)
Be back next time.

He waves moves toward the front door.

FRED (CONT'D)
Bye bye.

He goes, smiling.

FADE TO BLACK:

CLOSING CREDITS

The show logo over the Miniature Version of Fred's house.

Credits roll as we pan out over the small mini neighborhood.

Then, a snapshot of the real Tim Madigan and Fred Rogers.

SUPER: Tim and Catherine are still married. Today, they are the happiest couple they know.

SUPER: From 1968 to 2001, Fred Rogers wrote, produced, and performed in 995 episodes of *Mister Rogers Neighborhood*.

Tim and Fred continued their friendship until Fred died in 2003, at the age of 74.

His red cardigan hangs in the Smithsonian. It was knitted by his mother.

The END