



# SYNOPSIS

1920, in reaction to the nation's "Indian Problem", it was made compulsory for all First Nations children to attend boarding schools. Children were taken unwillingly and without the consent of their families. In Saskatchewan, Sara, Joseph, and Dorothy are taken from their parents Paul and Beth, and brought to a religious boarding school directed by Father O'Leary. The school is merciless and brutal, attempting to work and beat the Indian heritage out of the children. Many of the children do not survive, including Sara.

In 1956, Dorothy and Joseph cope with the troubles of their childhood. Dorothy is an exhausted single mother of five, with only one child left at home, five year old Peter. Dorothy copes with alcohol addiction and is unable to give Peter that care he needs. Joseph runs an illegal bootleg operation, providing alcohol to habitants of the reserve. When Dorothy asks to be a part of the operation, Joseph hesitantly agrees, taking her and Peter on his journeys. After a night of drunk driving, Joseph dies in a car accident with Dorothy and Peter in the car.

In 1972, Peter, now 21, runs away from the reserve. He travels to Winnipeg in hopes of finding a job, but is greeted with ubiquitous discrimination against Indians, making it difficult to find a position. He finds a job at a granary, and meets Nancy, a pretty redheaded receptionist. They start a secret relationship that is interrupted when her racist brother and father find out. Peter is fired and attacked by Roger, Nancy's brother. In self-defense he stabs Roger and ends up on trial for murder.

In 1993, Mary, Peter's 14 year-old daughter is struggling with her father's drug and alcohol addiction, while trying to succeed socially and academically. She buries herself in books in an attempt to forget the stresses she has to deal with in real life, but when it gets too much to bear, she calls social services, who takes her away from her father.

In 2010, Mary is a successful publishing editor. She discovers that she's pregnant, but is hesitant to commit to her boyfriend Daniel, since she has had only troubling relationships in the past. When he proposes and reassures her that he loves her regardless of her baggage, she finally tells him that she is carrying. Unaware that her grandmother Dorothy is dying, she is startled by the appearance of Peter, her father whom she hasn't spoken to in years. Daniel convinces her to visit her grandmother on her deathbed, and the goodbye is a catharsis for Mary. Upon delivery of her child, Mary forgives her father for her arduous childhood.