

Adoption: Mike and Matthew

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00qsr5l>

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Animation Pre-production (VIS1060-N)

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Introduction

Premise: As Mike recounts the story of how he adopted his son, we see into their past and consider what could have happened had Matthew not been adopted.

This bible outlines ideas and development for an animation inspired by BBC4's Listening Project conversation "Adoption: Mike and Matthew." The conversation goes through themes such as family, history and love. The strong connection that the two character have inspired me to focus on that family connection, reimagining Mike as an angel, representing how much my and others' parents have helped children.

Transcript

Mike

I first saw you in January of 75 I had the opportunity to fly up to Saigon, I went up to the Newhaven orphanage quite an amazing sight met me when I walked into their courtyard there were little prayer mats with one or two babies per mat, there must have been at least 60 or 70 very small children and I learnt later that's what they called sunning their children so that they would get out of their dormitory cots and just get out in the sun which was going to be healthy for them. Little while later one of the staff came down with you in her arms, and she passed you over to me, and I will never ever ever and I can still see as we sit here your eyes looking at me and I just felt you're the you're the man, you're the you're the one for us, the bond was there immediately, and there was no way that I was going to say fine I'll have a look around and see if there's something bonnier and healthier because you had bandages on your arms you had scabies you, weren't the fittest little chap but as far as I was concerned you were the little chap for us.

Matthew

Do you think that was just instinct? That it wasn't even a thought mechanism?

Mike

It's just something you can't describe. It was just there.

Matthew

Someone is looking after me somewhere. To be able to say that somebody somewhere saved your life through a decision, which you had no control about. And I do think that decision has, will always affect how I treat other people. You see the world from different eyes I think once you've erm, think about things like this and think about, y'know what could've happened. Yeah, I am lucky I am lucky to be here. And I am lucky to have a very loving family.

Story Outline

1. Mike, an angel, flies up to an orphanage set on a cliff in Saigon, Vietnam
2. We see several children lying on prayer mats outside
3. A staff member arrives from the building with Matthew in her arms
4. The staff member hands over Matthew
5. Mike holds Matthew for the first time, embracing him with his wings protectively
6. As He looks into Matthew's eyes, we see into Matthew's short past
7. We see darkness until a flash of lightning reveals a silhouette in a doorway
8. A soldier enters, inside a small family huddles together
9. The mother and father are killed by the soldiers, with Matthew left alive
10. Scene zooms into Matthew's eyes again to see him happy and safe with his father Mike.

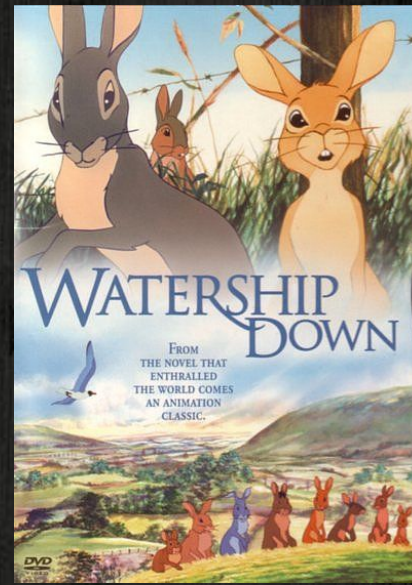
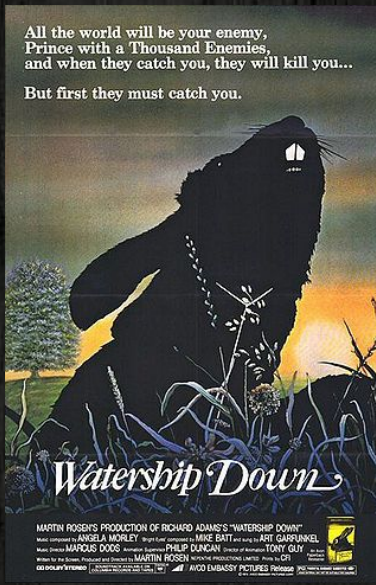


Moodboards



Set in Vietnam, iconic mountains and boats will help set the scene. To suggest isolation, the orphanage is set alone on a cliff. A wooden house also creates the feel of a village, rather than a built up city.

Place and Setting



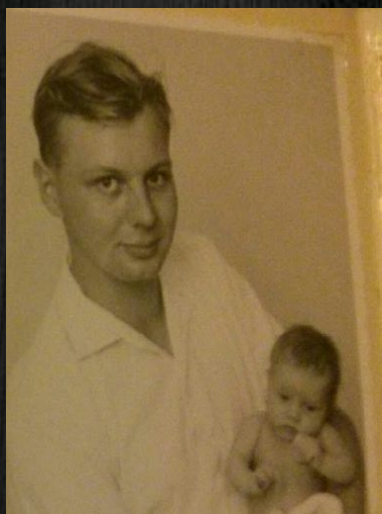
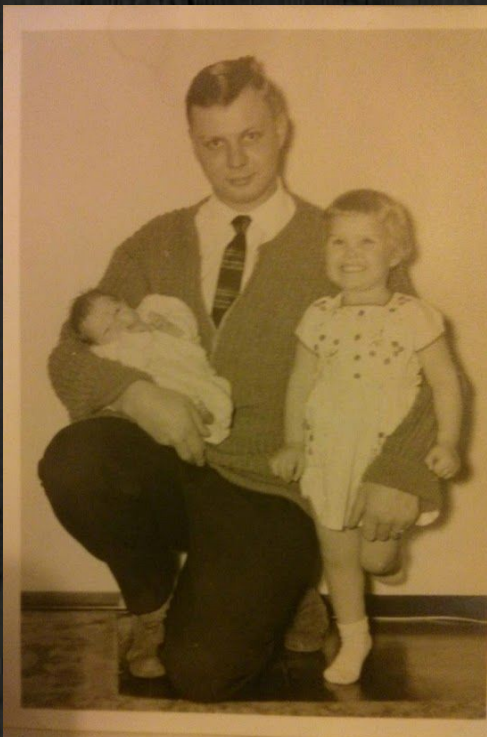
Set during and after the war in Vietnam, the animation will be a serious drama, appropriate for families. Watership down is a perfect example.

Time and Genre



The important thing to capture with the style is contrast - in the lines and colours- to mark the difference between Matthew's darker past and time of adoption. Seen here is the work of Danijel Zazelj, Ryan Woodward and Diego Maclean.

Visual Style



As Mike is in the RAF, I was reminded of my grandfather who served in the army. Using my grandfather as influence has helped reinforce the theme of family connections. The painting of Icarus by H.J. Draper is the perfect image to describe Mike as an angel.

Mike



The main feature of the staff at the orphanage is the traditional straw hat iconic to Vietnam. Matthew's character design is simple - a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Staff and Matthew



Characters

Mike

Protagonist

Age: Mid 20s

From: United Kingdom

Gender: Male

Personality: Loving and strong-willed. Wants to help others.

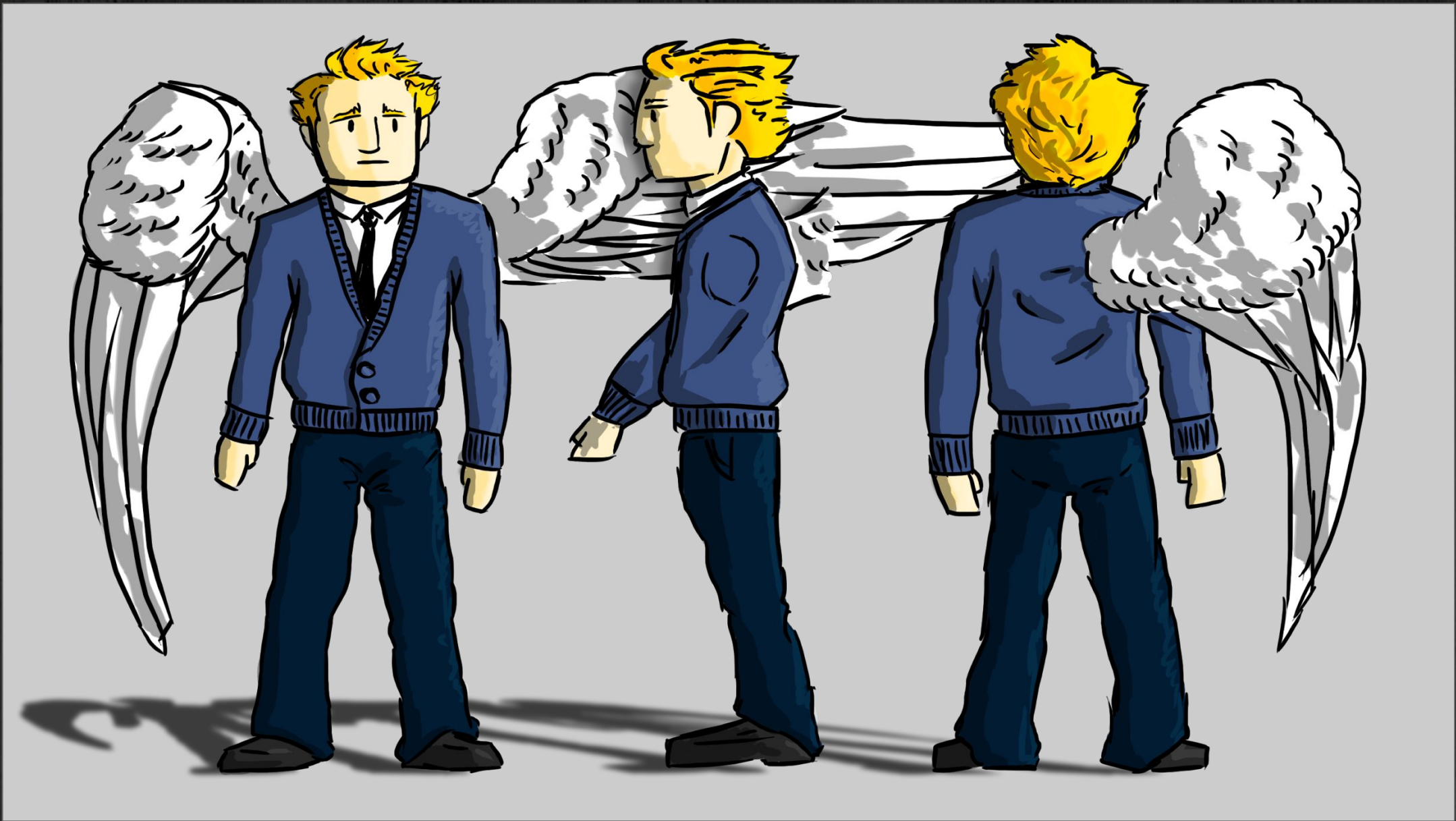
Physical appearance: Lean figure, blue eyes, short, army-style blond hair, swan-like wings.

Clothing: Cardigan and trousers

Posted in Vietnam as a member of the RAF, Mike developed a profound love of the Vietnamese whilst serving there after the war. Resolving to do all he could to help others, he made the decision with his family to adopt a child, who was Matthew.



Taking inspiration from my grandfather, I designed Mike with short hair and a smooth jaw. In later alterations I made the jaw more defined to make him look tougher and younger. Original designs included a RAF uniform, but this looked too formal, so I changed his clothing to a cardigan to make him look more fatherly. The wings create an imposing figure and strong silhouette, adding to the strong willed side of his character.



Mike

Staff Member

Supporting Character

Age: Mid 40s

From: Vietnam

Gender: Female

Personality: Caring and patient.

Physical appearance: Short with straw hat and black hair.

Clothing: Vietnamese dress

Working at the orphanage for many years, the staff member took Matthew in and cared for him greatly. When Mike arrived at the orphanage, she knew just the child for him to adopt. When presented with Matthew, she was delighted with Mike's reaction.



Taking the 19th century dress and straw hat I drew up some designs for the staff member. I also looked to Mulan to understand how to make cartoons look asian.



Staff

Soldier

Antagonist

Age: 30

From: United States of America

Gender: Male

Personality: Tough and unforgiving

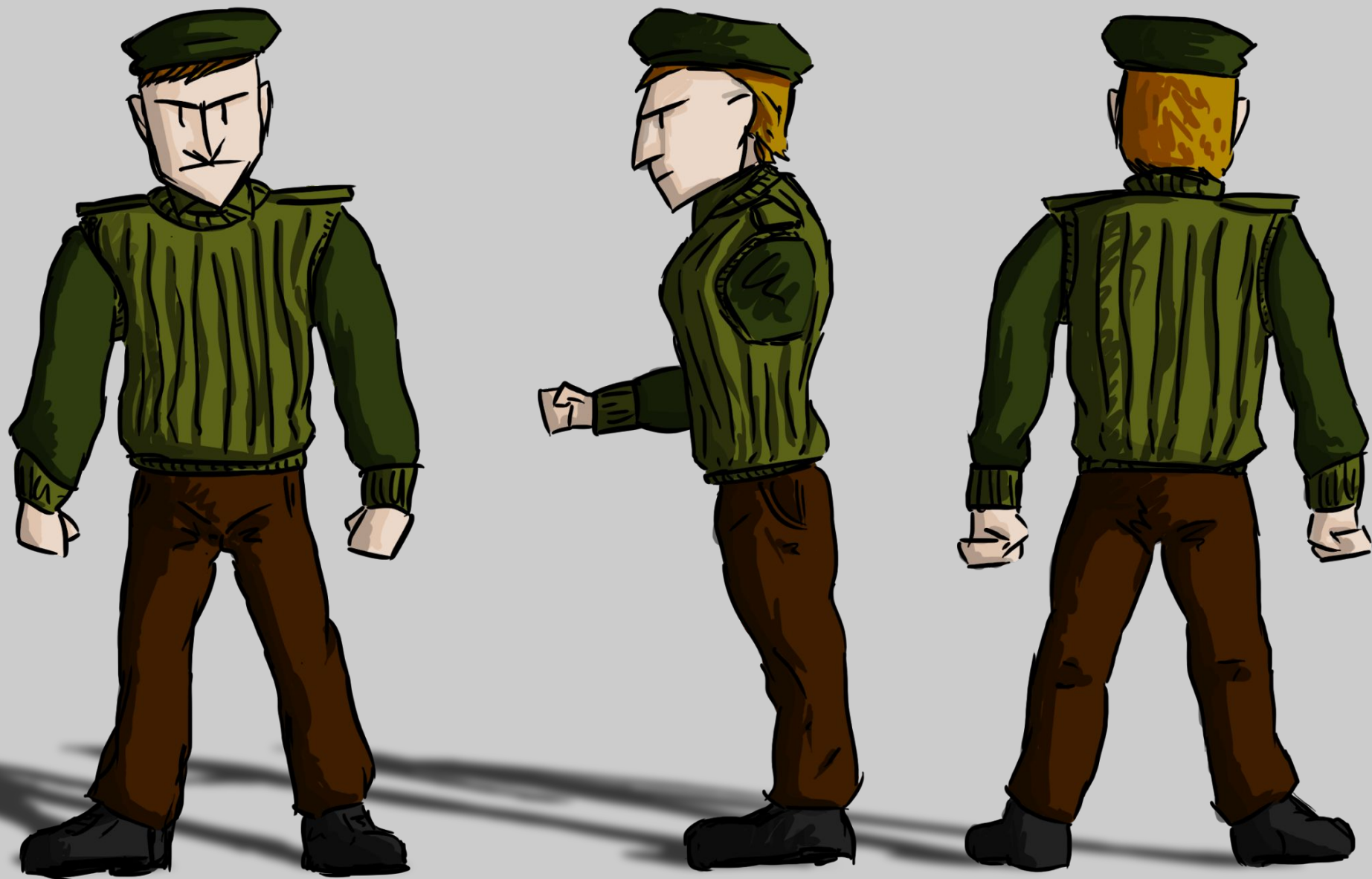
Physical appearance: Broad shoulders with pointed facial features.

Clothing: Military uniform

Ordered to decimate a Vietnamese village during wartime, this soldier happens upon Matthew's family. He shoots them, as per his orders, being the cause of Matthew becoming orphaned.



In contrast to the soft and homely look of Mike, the Soldier that kills Matthew's parents has very sharp and pointed features, suggesting danger and harshness. He is in his uniform, clearly identifying him as a member of the army.



Soldier



Location Designs



The lone building placed in the clear sky helps identify the orphanage as an isolated place, to mirror the isolation of being orphaned. The boat helps to identify the place as Vietnam, or somewhere in the east.

The Orphanage



Although we don't see Matthew's home in the animation, these sketches help to realise the kind of place Matthew would have lived.

Matthew's Home



The living room in which Mike and Matthew have their conversation. The oranges and reds create a warm impression, making the room inviting and homely.

The Living Room



Storyboard

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"I first saw you in January of 75 I had the opportunity to fly up to Saigon,"

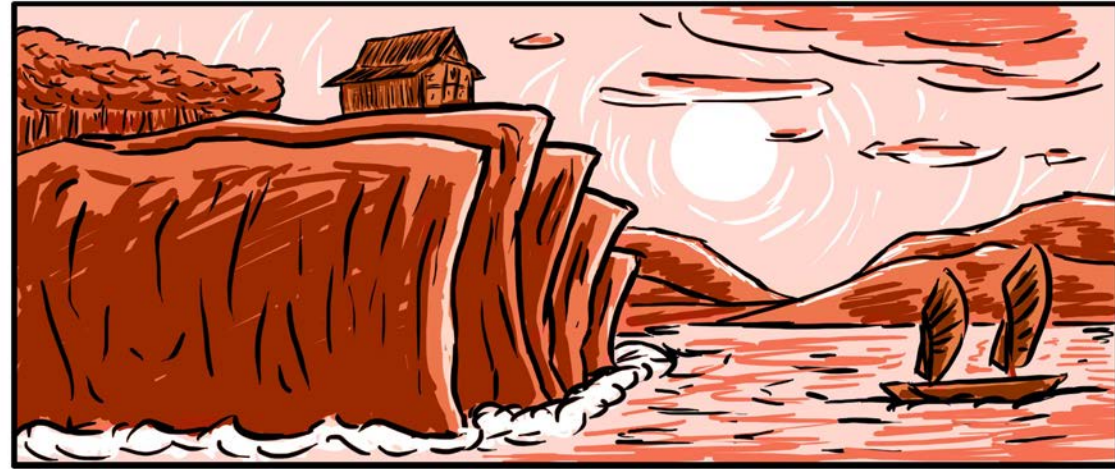
Panel 1 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Over the shoulder - Mike talking with Matthew.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"...I went up to the Newhaven orphanage ..."

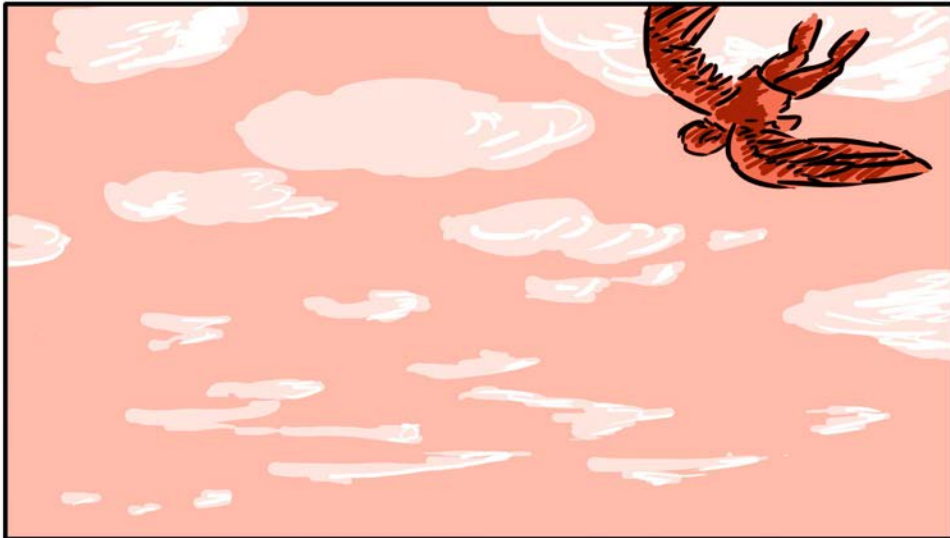
Panel 2 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Establishing shot - pan right showing orphanage.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"...orphanage ..."

Panel 3 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Wide shot.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"...I walked into their courtyard there were little ..."

Panel 4 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Close up - Matthew as an angel.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...prayer mats with one or two babies per mat, ..."

Panel 5 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmest.com

Wide shot - Mike flying towards the orphanage.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"... there must have been at least 60 or 70 ..."

Panel 6 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmest.com

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"... Very small children and I learnt later that's what they called ..."

Panel 7 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmest.com

Bird's eye view - we see the prayer mats as Mike describes.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"... sunning their children so that they would get out in the sun which was going to be healthy for them."

Panel 8 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmest.com

Wide shot - Mike approaches the staff member.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"Little while later one of the staff came down ..."

Panel 9 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Over the shoulder - Staff member revealed.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"...with you in her arms, ..."

Panel 10 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Mid shot - we see the staff and Matthew together.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"...and I will never ever ever and I can still see as we sit here ..."

Panel 11 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Close up of Matthew, showing some bruises.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
"...Your eyes looking at me and I just ..."

Panel 12 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Close up of Mike showing his happy reaction.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...felt you're the you're the man, you're the, you're the ..."

Panel 13 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Long shot, showing the silhouettes of the characters exchanging the child.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...one for us, the bond was there immediately, ..."

Panel 14 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...you had bandages on your arms you had scabies ..."

Panel 15 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Medium close up of Mike and Matthew as they embrace.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...but as far as I was concerned you were the little chap for us."

Panel 16 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
 "Do you think that was just instinct? That it wasn't even a ..."

Panel 17 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Camera zooms into Matthew's face into an extreme close up.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



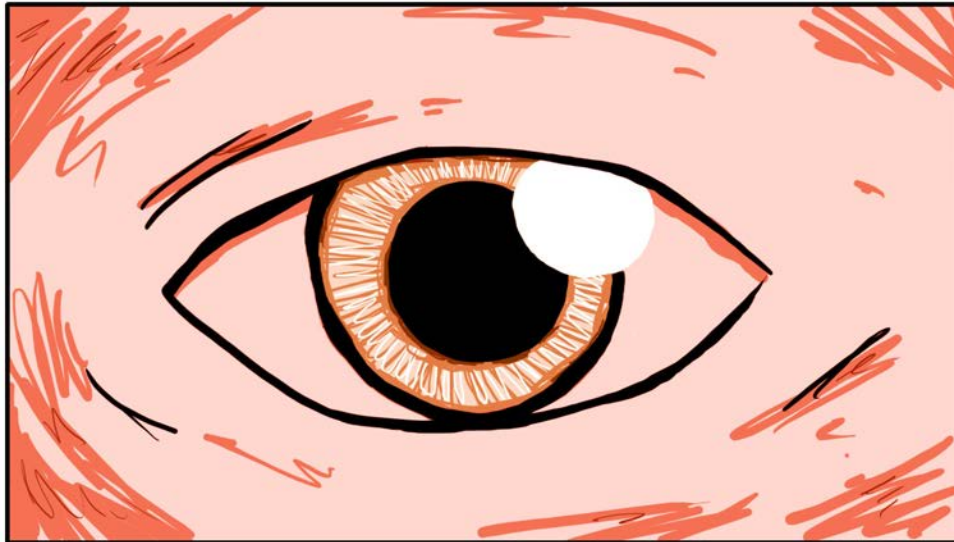
Dialog:
 "... thought mechanism?"
 "It's just something you can't describe. it was just there."

Panel 18 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
 "Someone is looking after me somewhere. To be able to say that somebody somewhere saved your life through a decision, ..."

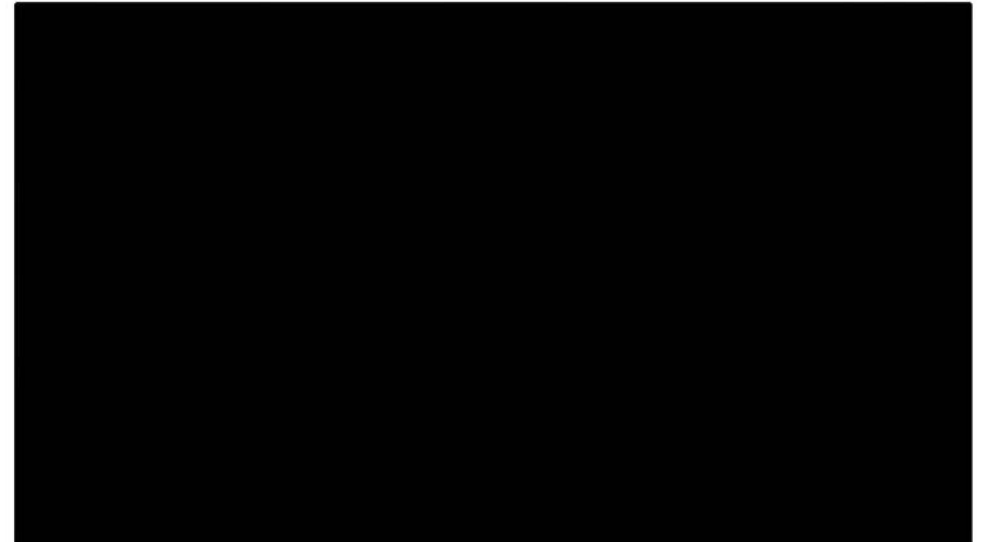
Panel 19 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Zoom into his pupil to delve into his past.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq. Scene



Dialog:
 "...which you had not control ..."

Panel 20 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmeat.com

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...about. And I do think ..."

Panel 21 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmastery.com

Full shot with tilt of a silhouetted figure. Change in colour to suggest cold.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...that decision ..."

Panel 22 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmastery.com

Zoom into a close up to reveal the soldier.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...has and will always affect ..."

Panel 23 of 29

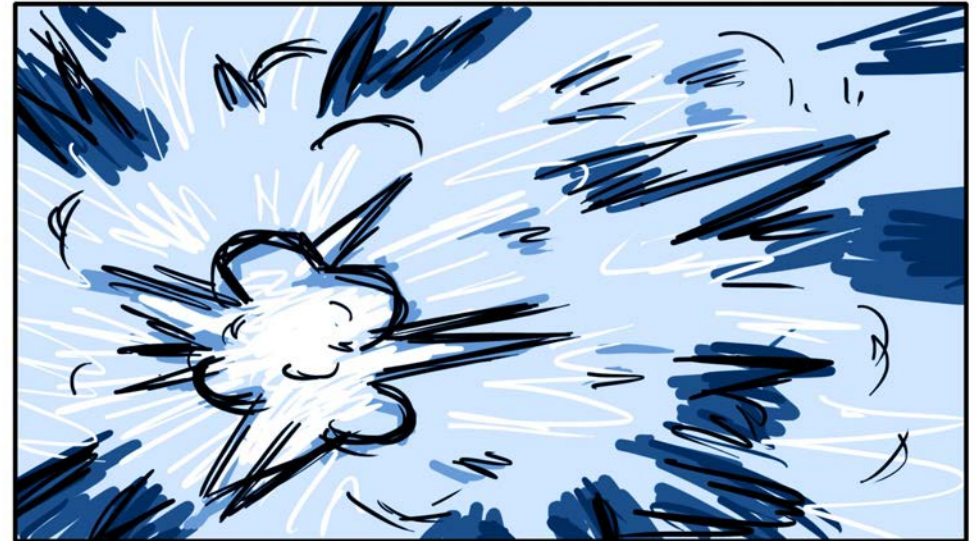
PDF created by www.animationmastery.com

Extreme close up of Soldier and his gun from the family's perspective.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...how ..."

Panel 24 of 29

PDF created by www.animationmastery.com

The gun fired.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...how I treat other people."

Panel 25 of 29

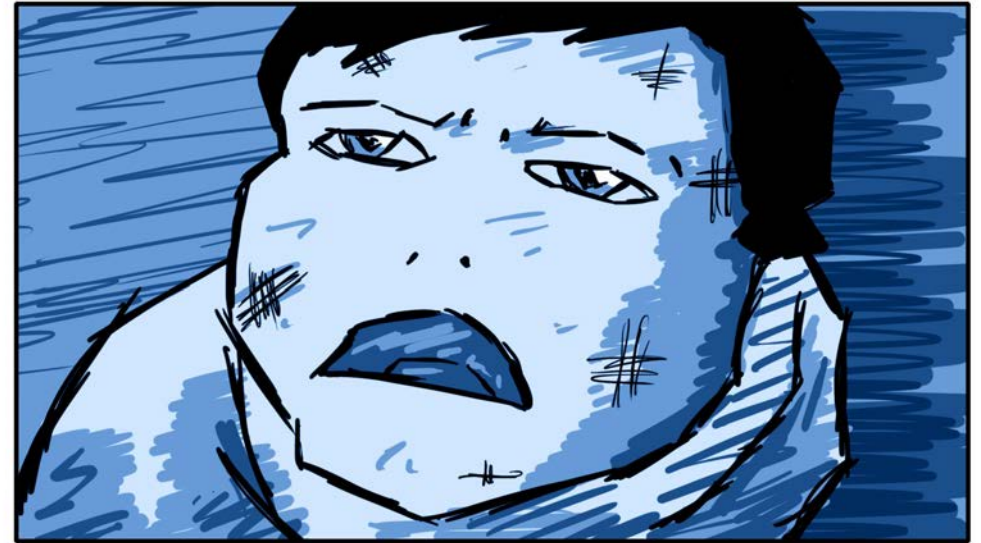
Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Full shot of Matthew, now orphaned.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"You see ..."

Panel 26 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Zoom into extreme close up.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...the world from different eyes I think once you've erm, think about ..."

Panel 27 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Camera zooms into his eye once again, revealing a picture of Mike and Matthew on a mantelpiece.

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:
"...y'know what could've happened. Yeah, I am lucky."

Panel 28 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Prod. Adoption: Mike and Matthew

Seq.

Scene



Dialog:

“I am lucky to be here. And I am lucky to have a very loving family.”

Panel 29 of 29

Pdf created by www.animationmeat.com

Over the shoulder - Return to starting shot, seeing Mike and Matthew comfortable at home.



References

Moodboard Images:

Page 7: From Google Images

Page 8: From Google Images

Page 9: Screenshots from:

“DmC Devil May Cry 5: Vergil's Downfall All Cutscenes Complete Movie【HD】”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIEwrXn0SLE>

“Thought of You - by Ryan Woodward”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBk3ynRbtsw>

“The Art of Drowning”

<https://vimeo.com/13110245>

Page 10: 3 images on the right, my own images; Google Images.

Page 11: From Google Images