

*(The DEAD MINERS turn to their respective children.)*

## START

PETE

Dad?

DEAD MINER

Pete.

PETE

Are we dead?

DEAD MINER

No, not yet.

PETE

You—you look like—just-like a regular person.

DEAD MINER

Am I a disappointment?

PETE

No.

*(PETE motions to DUSTY)*

This is my bestest friend, Dusty.

DUSTY

Hello, sir.

DEAD MINER

I sure remember you. You used to come over and eat all Pete's cereal, then cry buckets 'cause you felt so bad.

*(PETE and PETE & JAKE'S DAD look over to JAKE. JAKE is huddled in himself)*

DEAD MINER

Jake?

JAKE

This isn't real.

**DEAD MINER**

It isn't? The last night 'fore I was gone, you two pushed out through the front door and jumped on the porch swing. You were swinging 'til I had to drag you by your necks into bed. Swinging side by side. Pete, you makin' up tales Jake couldn't get enough of. And Jake makin' sure you didn't fall off when you both got to laughing too hard.

**PETE**

I don't remember that.

**DEAD MINER**

How do you think you two got through all these years still standing? How do you think you two got down here?

**PETE**

I was trying to protect you.

**DEAD MINER**

Not me. Think you were lookin' to save the other.

**JAKE**

I don't have a choice.

**DEAD MINER**

Would you be wantin' it any other way?

**JAKE**

No ... but... I don't know ...

**DEAD MINER**

Son, what're you wanting?

*(JAKE shakes his head)*

Jake, what do you want?

**JAKE**

I don't know. I don't know anything. I just, I just, don't want to rot away, rot away, before I, I see something else.

*(Turning towards him)*

Dad. Dad. Is that okay?

*(PETE & JAKE'S DAD hugs JAKE)*

**END**