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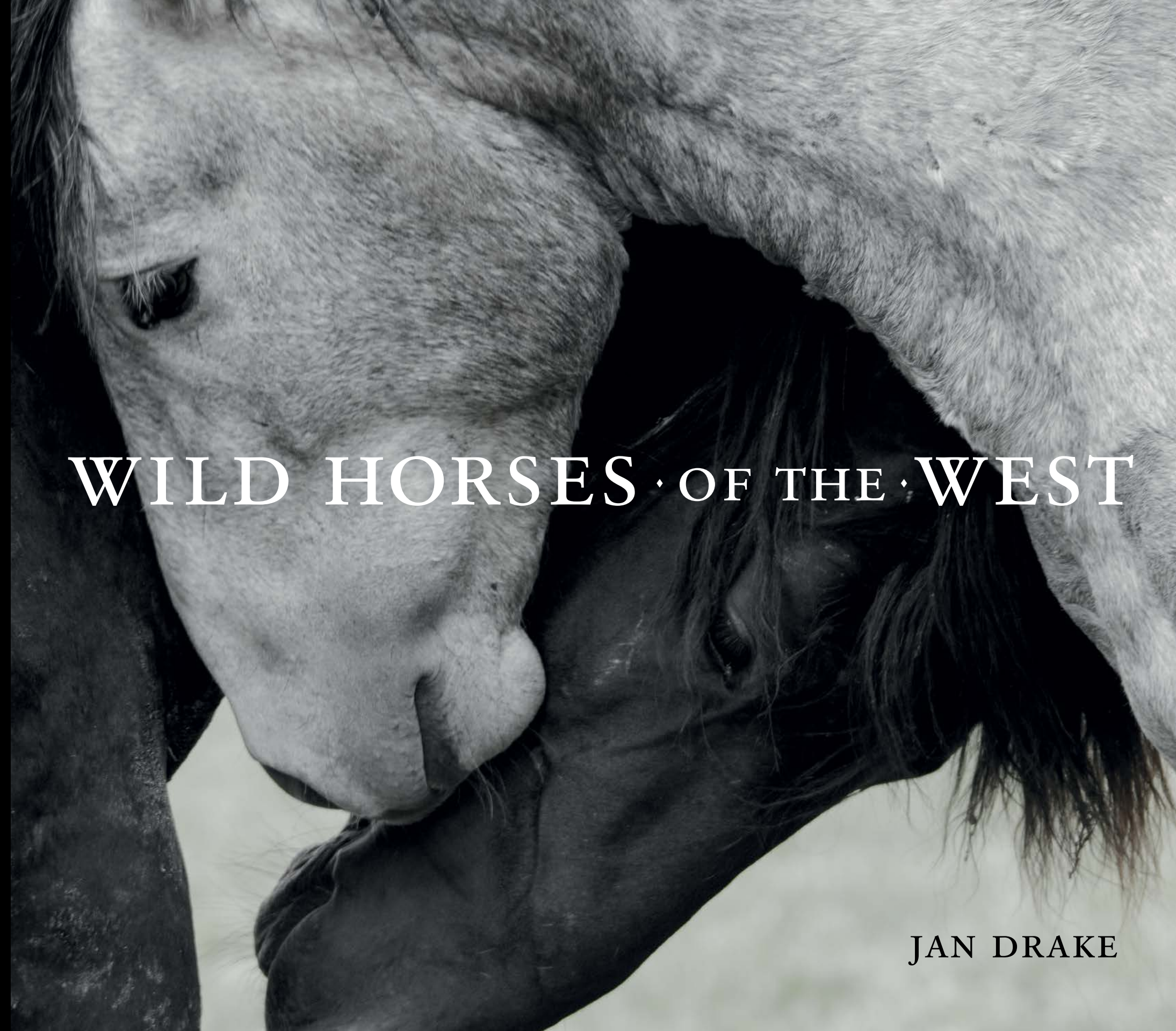
WILD HORSES OF THE WEST

WILD HORSES · OF THE · WEST

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GIBBS
SMITH



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OPPOSITE: Three generations of pintos. Pinto is a color, not a breed of horse; a pinto horse has a coat color that consists of large patches of white and any other color.



RIGHT: The beauty of morning's first sunlight reflects on this family band.



LEFT: It's been said that one's eyes are the windows to the soul. With the Old Man, pictured here, I'm sure his soul has many stories to tell.

OPPOSITE: The cremello bachelor stallion, wild and proud.



THE CREMELLO BROTHERS

The cremello colts were foaled in the spring of 2012 to separate mares—a buckskin mare and a pinto mare. Immediately inseparable, the colts, who became known as the Cremello Brothers, stayed at each others' side for more than four years.

As young bachelor stallions, they traveled the range together with two others. This small band worked often—mostly unsuccessfully—to steal mares from other bands. Failure did not deter them. Undaunted, they would work together to harass band stallions and their lieutenants in violent challenges that could last up to several minutes.

The Cremello Brothers went their separate ways in the fall of 2016. The larger stallion was able to steal a young mare and foal, only to lose them to their original stallion a few months later. He stayed close to a new band in the following years, eventually taking over the band and leading it.

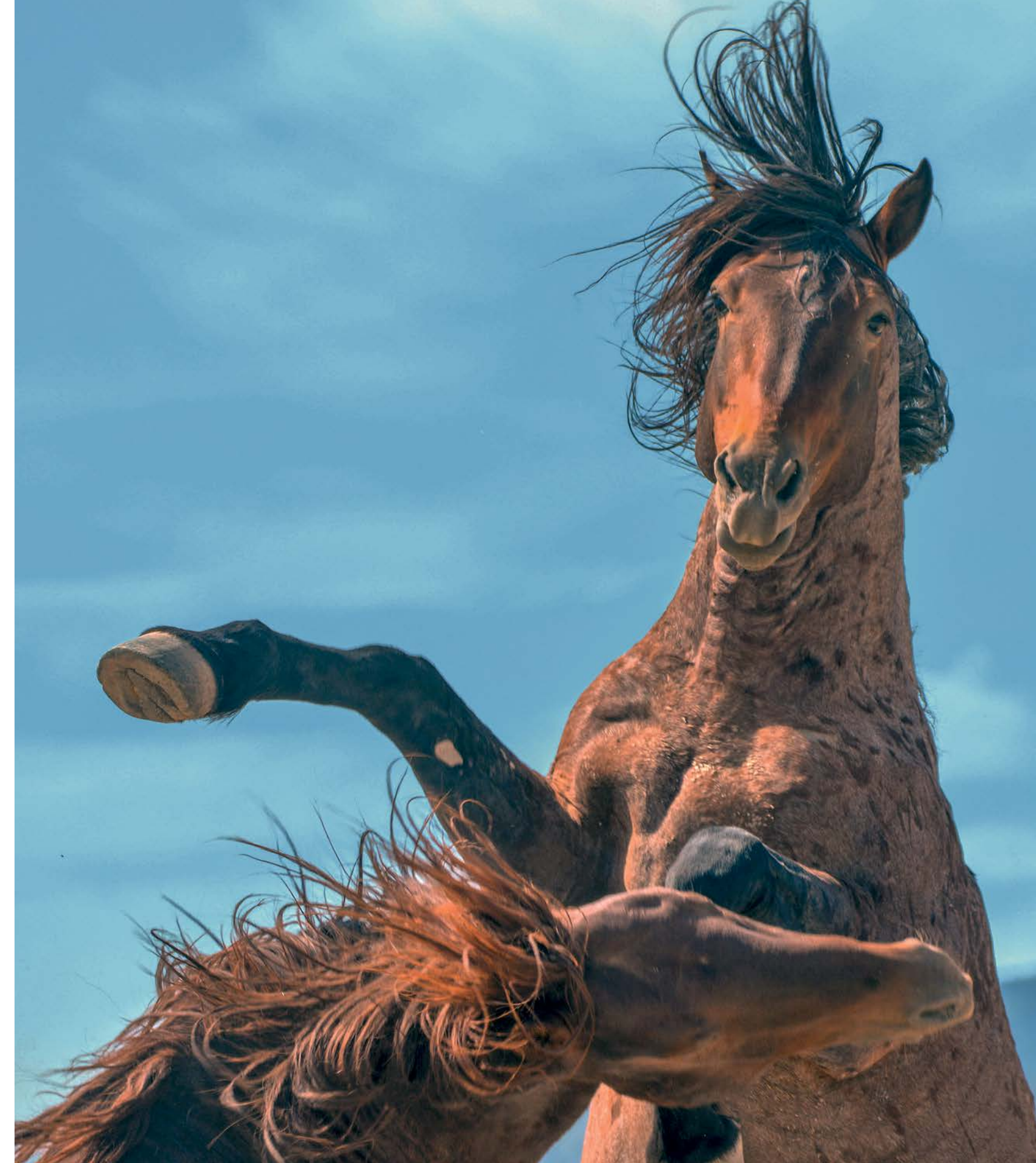
The smaller cremello stallion disappeared in late 2016, his fate left unknown.

The photographs of them are a record of the bond that earned them their name. They were brothers not by blood, but in everything else: fortitude, strength, and spirit.





OPPOSITE: Two shades of gray bachelor stallions, posturing before a fight, with one of the many unique rock formations of the Great Basin Desert in the background.



RIGHT: This stallion seems to have an advantage over the other smaller stallion.



LEFT AND ABOVE: Fights often involve the biting of ears and face, which tend to leave serious battle scars.



MARES & FOALS



Mares and foals are among my favorite group of horses to photograph—they're not only adorable, but they have so much spirit and personality.

The mare usually leaves to deliver the baby by herself, but the protective band stays near while she gives birth. It only takes three to four hours for the newborn foal to walk—their ability to move with the herd immediately is necessary for survival. While wild horses give birth at any time, new foals are usually born in the early to late spring; foals born in the winter months have a lower chance of survival.

The foals form bonds with other foals in the band as they age. The young colts play together, learning to fight in preparation for their departure from the herd. The fillies stay close to their mothers until they are old enough to be sought after by bachelor stallions hoping to form their own band.

Foals tend to be more curious than older horses—a boon for photographers, who find that adventurous foals are a delight to capture.



ABOVE: This pinto wild horse has a coat pattern called a tobiano (Toe-bee-ah'-no). The tobiano horse appears to be white with large spots of color overlapping the white.

OPPOSITE: If you watch a newborn foal for a while, he will always provide one adorable photo as he interacts with his mom.

